

September - 07

## NATIONAL

### Southern Zonal Council Meeting



- ❖ The 30th council meeting was hosted and chaired by Kerala.
- ❖ The union home minister is the Chairman of this council.
- ❖ The meeting provides a platform for discussions on Centre-state relations and relations between the member States.
- ❖ It comprises the States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

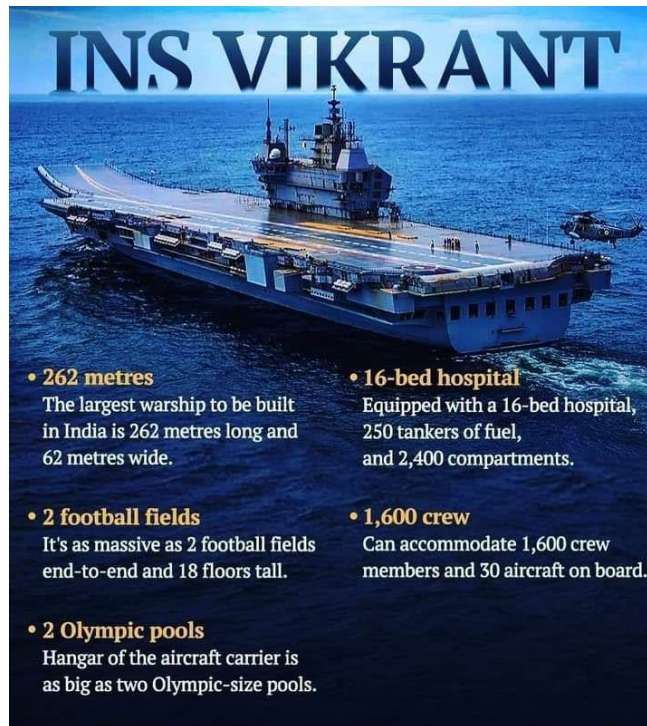
### NALSA

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Justice Chandrachud as the executive chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- ❖ He takes up the position that became vacant after Justice UU Lalit was elevated as the 49th Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- ❖ The NALSA has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- ❖ It aims to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society.

- ❖ While the CJI is the Patron-in-Chief for NALSA, the second senior most judge of the Supreme Court of India is the executive chairperson of this Authority.



### **INS Vikrant inauguration**



- ❖ PM Modi unveiled a plaque to mark the induction of INS Vikrant into Indian Navy at Kochi.
- ❖ It is designed by Indian Navy's in-house Warship Design Bureau (WDB) and built by Cochin Shipyard Limited, a Public Sector Shipyard under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.



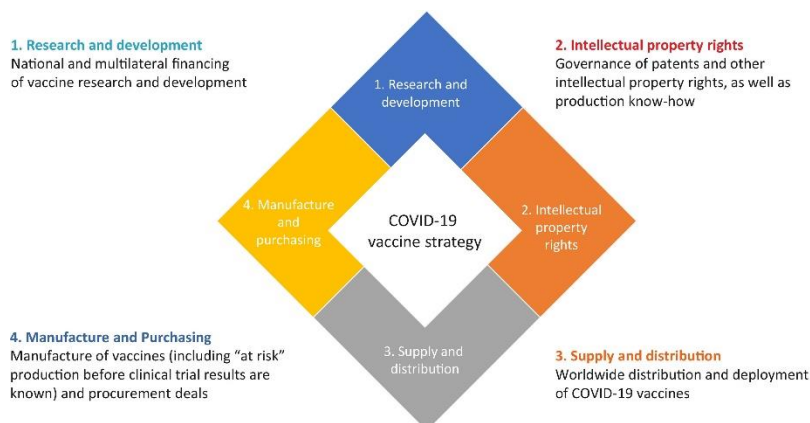
- ❖ It is the largest ship ever built in the maritime history of India, as big as the size of two football fields.
- ❖ It has a maximum designed speed of 28 Knots (approx. 52 KM per hour) with endurance of 7,500 Nautical Miles.
- ❖ It is built at a cost of ₹20,000 crore.
- ❖ It is a 262-meter-long vessel.
- ❖ The 45,000-tonne warship has been built at a cost of Rs. 20,000 crores.
- ❖ It is termed as a floating city with 18 floors.
- ❖ Countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, China, Russia, France and Japan are the others have the capability to create such large warships.

### **Village Defence Guards Program 2022**

- ❖ It is a programme with a defence component.
- ❖ It was launched concurrently with the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- ❖ It was only recently introduced for the state of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).
- ❖ It is an effort to improve security in Jammu's border regions
- ❖ It involves both the Indian Army and the Police in training volunteers from local communities.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **India Covid-19 Procurement: Challenges, Innovations, and Lessons**



- ❖ It was a report published by the World Bank.
- ❖ In this, the World Bank applauds India's effective response to the COVID-19.



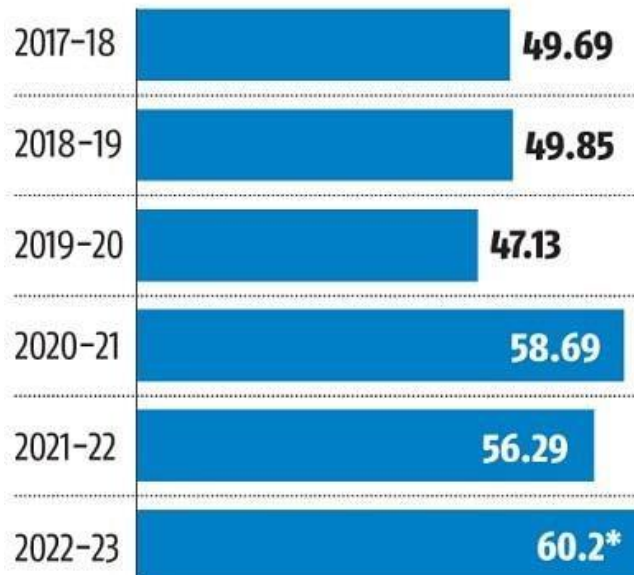
- ❖ Early export restrictions worked in its favour during the public health emergency in the country.
- ❖ The World Bank acknowledged the Indian government's decision to have centralised procurement, support for long-term market development and production of Emergency Medical Equipment (EME).
- ❖ The development of strong inter-ministerial bodies enabled the government to decide quickly on a centralised procurement to aid the state.
- ❖ The "Covid-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Strengthening Project" was jointly funded by the World Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for \$1.5 billion.

## ECONOMY

### India's external debt - March 2022

## BALANCING ACT

Centre's debt-to-GDP ratio (in %)



Note: \*Budget Estimates  
Sources: RBI, finance ministry

- ❖ According to the finance ministry, India's external debt increased by 8.2 percent year on year to USD 620.7 billion.
- ❖ 53.2 percent of it was denominated in US dollars.
- ❖ Indian rupee-denominated debt, estimated at 31.2 percent, was the second largest.

- ❖ External debt as a ratio to GDP was 19.9 per cent, while reserves to external debt ratio were 97.8 per cent.
- ❖ The long-term debt is totalled USD 499.1 billion, accounting for 80.4% of the total.
- ❖ While short-term debt is totalled USD 121.7 billion, accounting for 19.6% of the total.
- ❖ The sovereign debt increased by 17.1% year on year to USD 130.7 billion, owing primarily to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) additional allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) during 2021-22.
- ❖ Non-sovereign debt is increased by 6.1% to USD 490.0 billion as of end-March 2021.
- ❖ Commercial borrowings, NRI deposits, and short-term trade credit is accounting for up to 95.2 percent of the total.
- ❖ While NRI deposits fell by 2% to USD 139.0 billion, commercial borrowings at USD 209.71 billion and short-term trade credit at USD 117.4 billion increased by 5.7% and 20.5%, respectively.
- ❖ The debt service ratio fell significantly to 5.2 percent during 2021-22 from 8.2 percent the previous year, reflecting buoyant current receipts and moderating external debt service payments.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Night Sky Sanctuary



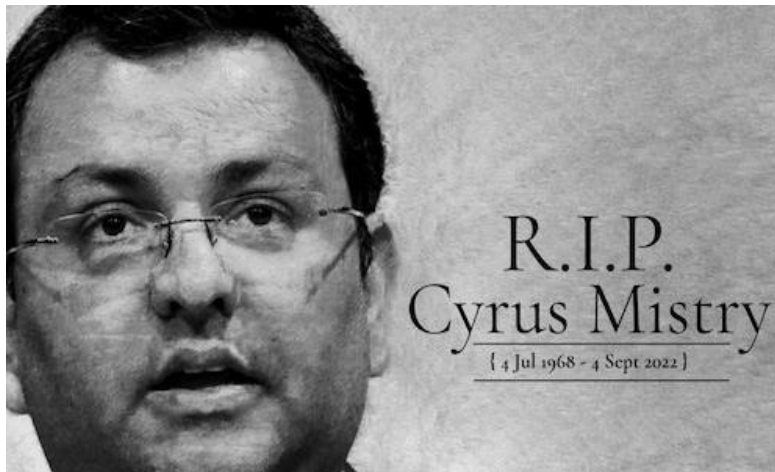
- ❖ India is to set its first night sky sanctuary at Hanle.



- ❖ A tripartite MoU was signed recently among the UT administration, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh and the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) for launching the Dark Space Reserve.
- ❖ It is a part of Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ❖ Hanle is best suited for the project as it is located in Ladakh's cold desert region
- ❖ It is away from any form of human disturbance.
- ❖ And clear sky conditions and dry weather conditions exist throughout the year.
- ❖ It will boost Astro-tourism in India.
- ❖ It will be one of the world's highest-located sites for optical, infra-red, and gamma-ray telescopes.
- ❖ Hanle is already home to an IIA observatory - a high altitude station atop Mt Saraswati.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS**

### **Cyrus Mistry (54)**



- ❖ The Tata Group's Ex Chairman died in accident near in Maharashtra's Palghar.
- ❖ He was an Indian-born Irish businessman.
- ❖ He was the younger son of construction magnate Pallonji Mistry.
- ❖ Both of his parents belong to the Zoroastrian faith and have roots in India.
- ❖ He was the chairperson of Tata Group from 2012 to 2016 after Ratan Tata announced his retirement.
- ❖ He was the sixth chairman of the group.
- ❖ He was only the second (after Nowroji Saklatwala) to not bear the surname Tata.

- ❖ Mistry was an Irish citizen and a permanent resident of India (having acquired Overseas Citizenship of India).

## SPORTS

### **Serena Williams**

- ❖ She retired from Tennis after playing US Open Tennis tournament.
- ❖ She is an American professional tennis player.
- ❖ She was ranked world No. 1 in singles by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) for 319 weeks.
- ❖ She won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, the most by any player in the Open Era.
- ❖ In 2012, she claimed Olympic gold.
- ❖ Thus, she became the first tennis player to win a Career Golden Slam in singles as well as doubles.

