

Weekly Current Affairs PDF January 22 to January 28, 2023

Current Affairs PDF- January 28, 2023

NATIONAL NEWS

EPFO launches massive outreach programme in all districts through revamped 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat' programme

- Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO, launched a massive outreach programme in all the districts through a revamped 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat' programme for expanding its presence across the country.
- The aim of this programme is to reach all the districts on 27th of every month and strengthen the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders.

NITI Aayog's AIM, CBSE, and Intel India Collaborate to Bring Change in Education Sector

- NITI Aayog, Central Board of Secondary Education -Ministry of Education, and Intel India have collaborated to bring a change in the education sector by embedding future skills such as AI and Tinkering in the formal curriculum.
- The larger aim is to align the NEP 2020's guidance to increase the pace of tech integration for youth, the need to bridge the future skills gap in the country, and optimize the current infrastructure (ATLs, etc.) towards making India AI-ready.
- Together, they launched the AIoT Integration in School Curriculum in September 2022 and initiated a pilot

First edition of the SCO Film Festival begins in Mumbai

- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State (External Affairs and Culture) Meenakshi Lekhi inaugurated the 5-day SCO Film Festival at NPCA, Mumbai.
- The film festival is being organized by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in association with SCO Council of Heads of States.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MoU signed with South Africa to introduce 12 African Cheetahs into India annually; first batch to be flown in next month

- India and South Africa on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to introduce 12 African Cheetahs annually over the next eight to ten year.
- In terms of the agreement, an initial batch of 12 cheetahs will be flown from South Africa to India next month.
- The cats will join eight Cheetah brought in India from Namibia last year.

SPORTS

England's Ben Stokes and Nat Sciver win ICC annual awards

- England Test captain Ben Stokes and England all-rounder Nat Sciver are among the winners in the International Cricket Council's annual awards.

- All-rounder Stokes has been named Men's Test Cricketer of the Year while Sciver won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Data Privacy Day

- January 28 is celebrated as Data Privacy Day (DPD) across the world.
- The objective of the day is to sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles. It encourages everyone to own their privacy responsibilities to create a culture of privacy.
- The theme for this year is 'Think Privacy First'.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya launched World's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine

- Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister, launched the world's first intranasal COVID-19 vaccine, iNNCOVACC, in New Delhi on January 27, 2023.
- Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL) created it in conjunction with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance (BIRAC).
- The vaccine was unveiled in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (IC) for Science and Technology, and other authorities.

India elected as Vice-chair at the 12th session of FAO's Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (ITWG) on Animal Genetic Resources

- In the recently concluded 12th Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources at Rome. India was elected as Vice-chair and represented Asia & Pacific region. In 12th Session of ITWG, implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources, monitoring of AnGR diversity and preparing the 3rd Country Report were reviewed.

Naresh Lalwani has been appointed as new General Manager of Central Railway

- Naresh Lalwani has been appointed General Manager of Central Railway. He is a senior officer from the 1985 batch of the Indian Railway Engineering Service.
- He was Senior Deputy General Manager and Chief Vigilance Officer of Western Railway before becoming General Manager of Central Railway.
- He succeeded Ashok Kumar Misra, General Manager of Western Railway, who was also in charge of Central Railway.

National Child Science Congress to begin in Ahmedabad with more than 1400 delegates

- The 30th National Child Science Congress began in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The five-day event organized at Science City will conclude on 31st January. The program will be hosted by the Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, the Gujarat Council of

Science City, and SAL Education. More than 1400 delegates including child scientists, teachers will attend the congress.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Toyota names Koji Sato new CEO as Akio Toyoda takes chairman role

- Koji Sato, the automaker's 53-year-old chief branding officer, who is also president of Toyota's luxury brand Lexus, will take over as chief executive from April 1, as Akio Toyoda becomes chairman.
- The current chairman Takeshi Uchiyamada will drop his chairman title but remain on the board.
- Microsoft Invests \$10 Billion in ChatGPT Maker OpenAI
- Microsoft Corp. is investing \$10 billion in OpenAI, whose artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT.
- The deal will give a boost to Microsoft's Azure cloud, while providing OpenAI with additional specially designed supercomputers to run its complex AI models and fuel its research.
- Azure will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI, the company said.

Indian-American astronaut Raja Chari nominated as US Air Force Brigadier General

- Indian-American astronaut, Raja J Chari, 45, has been nominated by US President Joe Biden for an appointment to the grade of Air Force Brigadier General.
- Chari is currently serving as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center, Texas.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

- International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is observed on January 27. It is the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The United Nations Holocaust memorial ceremony in the United Nations General Assembly Hall will be under the theme 'Home and Belonging' for 2023.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

President approved 412 Gallantry Awards for Defence personnel

- President Droupadi Murmu has approved 412 Gallantry awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others. These include six Kirti Chakras, including four posthumous, and 15 Shaurya Chakras including two posthumous. These include one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry), 92 Sena Medal, including four posthumous, one Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry), 7 Vayu Sena Medal.

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NATIONAL

Republic Day 2023

- The 74th Republic Day Parade begins at 10:30 AM from Vijay Chowk and head towards Lal Quila. The Parade ceremony commence with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the National War Memorial.
- He lead the nation in paying solemn tributes to the brave hearts by laying a wreath. After that, the national flag unfurled followed by the national anthem with a 21-gun salute using 105-mm Indian Field Guns.

Sh. Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurates North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh

- Banwari Lal Purohit inaugurated North India's largest floating Solar project of 2000kWp at Water Works in Chandigarh. He also inaugurated a 500kWp floating Solar Project with Fountains at Dhanas Lake in Chandigarh.
- Both projects have been designed and executed by CREST (Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science and Technology Promotion Society).

President approves conferment of 106 Padma Awards

- President Droupadi Murmu approved conferment of 106 Padma Awards including three duo cases for 2023.
- The list comprises six Padma Vibhushan, nine Padma Bhushan and 91 Padma Shri awardees. A total of 19 awardees are women and the list also includes two persons from category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and seven Posthumous awardees.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Indian And Australian Scientists Develop Artificial Synapse For Brain-Like Computing

- A team of Indian and Australian scientists have developed brain-like computing using scandium nitride (ScN), a semiconducting material that is highly stable and compatible with Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor (CMOS) technology.
- In the current era of artificial intelligence, brain-like computing can help meet the increasing computational demands.

SPORTS

Suryakumar Yadav creates history, becomes first Indian men's player to clinch T20I Player of the Year Award

- Suryakumar Yadav has etched his name in the history books and become the 1st-ever Indian cricketer to be bestowed with the ICC Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year award. Suryakumar pipped the likes of Sikandar Raza, Sam Curran and Mohammad Rizwan to bag the top honour.
- The right-handed batsman piled up 1164 runs in 31 matches last year. He batted with a strike-rate of 187.43.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

UN slashes India's economic growth forecast by 20 bps to 5.8% for 2023

- The United Nations pared down India's growth forecast by 20 basis points to 5.8 per cent for 2023 calendar year, citing higher interest rates and risks of recession in the developed world weighing on investment and exports. The report has projected global trade to contract 0.4 per cent and the world economy to grow at 1.9 per cent in 2023.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

For ISRO's Aditya L1 project, IIA handed over Visible Line Emission Coronagraph payload

- The Visible Line Emission Coronagraph (VELC) payload for the Aditya-L1 mission was handed over to ISRO by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) on January 26, 2023.
- The event was organized at the Centre for Research and Education in Science and Technology (CREST) Campus at Hosakote, near Bengaluru.
- The VELC payload was conceived and built on the CREST site. At URSC, the payload would be integrated with the satellite.

International Customs Day

- The World Customs Organisation (WCO) marks International Customs Day on 26th January every year. The occasion commemorates the WCO's maiden session held in 1953.
- The day is dedicated to spreading awareness about the role Customs authorities play in the seamless movement of goods across borders and their importance in the cross-border regulatory apparatus.
- Every year, such authorities of WCO's member administrations organise events to celebrate International Customs Day

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NATIONAL NEWS

India's first Stack Developer Conference to be held in New Delhi

- The first India Stack Developer Conference will be hosted in New Delhi on January 25, 2023. The conference will focus on strategies and techniques to increase global acceptance of India's digital goods.
- Over 100 digital leaders from industry, government, start-ups and unicorns, and academia will attend the conference.
- G20 delegates and the G20 Secretariat have also been invited to the Conference.

Nagaland: 3rd edition of annual Orange festival 2023 underway in Kohima

- In Nagaland, the third edition of the annual Orange festival 2023 is being organised in collaboration with the department of Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development, Land Resources and Kohima Smart City at Rusoma village, Kohima

district. It is conceptualised to recognise and celebrate the hard work of the orange growers while facilitating them the market linkage.

Balkrishna Doshi, pioneer of modernist architecture in India, passes away

- Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, who is widely revered for his contribution in the field of architecture, has passed away. He was 95.
- For his outstanding contribution to the field of architecture, he was conferred with Pritzker Prize in 2018 and the coveted Padma Shri in 1976.
- The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has announced that Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi will be the recipient of the 2022 Royal Gold Medal

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Chris Hipkins sworn in as 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand

- Chris Hipkins was sworn in as the 41st Prime Minister of New Zealand in Wellington by the country's governor-general, Cindy Kiro on January 25, 2023.
- Chris Hipkins stated after formally assuming office that this was the greatest honor and responsibility of his life, and he was looking forward to the challenges ahead.
- Jacinda Ardern resigned as Prime Minister of New Zealand last week.

NASA to Test Nuclear-Powered Rocket by 2027 that will Make Space Travel Faster

- The United States space agency NASA has said the country plans to test a spacecraft engine powered with nuclear fission by 2027, an advancement seen as key to long-haul missions including a manned journey to Mars.
- NASA will partner with the US military's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop the nuclear thermal propulsion engine and launch it into space, NASA administrator Bill Nelson said

BANKING AND ECONOMY

India's Services Exports to Cross the Goal of 300bn \$ in this Financial Year

- The country's services exports are doing "extremely well" and going by the current trend these outbound shipments would register about 20 per cent growth in this fiscal and cross the USD 300 billion target despite global economic uncertainties, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said.
- He said that on the merchandise front also, exports are so far registering healthy growth despite the world being under recession, huge inflationary pressure, and overstocking of various commodities.
- With all these stress, where every global leader is talking of "very" tough times, India's exports rose 9 per cent year-on-year during April-December 2022-23

IMPORTANT DAYS

13th National Voters' Day (NVD)

- The theme for this year's NVD, 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure' is dedicated to voters which conveys individual's feeling and aspiration towards participation in the electoral process through power of their vote.

- Since 2011, National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year, to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India.
- National Tourism Day 2023
- India is celebrating National Tourism Day on January 25. The day is marked annually in order to raise awareness about the importance that the tourism industry plays in the country.
- In 2022, the National Tourism Day was part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75-week grand celebration marking 75 years of Indian Independence.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Siddharth Sharma appointed CEO of Tata Trusts, Aparna Uppaluri as COO

- Tata Trusts has appointed Siddharth Sharma as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trusts and Aparna Uppaluri as the Chief Operating Officer (COO).
- Their appointment will come into effect from 1 April 2023.
- Sharma, the chief sustainability officer at Tata Sons, will succeed N Srinath, who stepped down from the CEO's post in 2022 following his retirement.

Shamalbhai B Patel re-elected as chairman of Amul

- Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation that markets milk and dairy products under the Amul brand announced the appointment of Shamalbhai B Patel as its chairman and Valamjibhai Humbal as vice chairman. Shamalbhai B Patel is the chairman of Sabarkantha District Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd., Sabar dairy and associated with dairy cooperatives of Gujarat.

The Elephant Whisperers has been nominated for Best Documentary Short in Oscar Awards 2023

- The Oscar nominations were announced on January 24, 2023, and India received three nominations for the 95th Academy Awards.
- The Elephant Whisperers, a 41-minute short by Kartiki Gonsalves, was also nominated for Best Documentary Short.
- SS Rajamouli's RRR received only one nomination in the Best Original Song category for "Naatu Naatu," despite the fact that it has a big fan base in the United States. The film did not receive nominations for Best Picture or Best Director.
- All That Breathes by Shaunak Sen was nominated for Best Documentary Feature Film.

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NATIONAL

President Draupadi Murmu confers Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- President, Draupadi Murmu conferred this year's Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to the awardee children and their parents in New Delhi on January 24, 2023.

- The prizes were given to 11 youngsters for their outstanding achievements in six categories: art, culture, bravery, innovation, social service, and sports. Six boys and five girls from 11 states and union territories received awards.
- Each awardee got a medal, a one lakh rupee cash prize, and a certificate from the President.

After Co-Win, Govt Launches U-WIN To Digitise Universal Immunisation Programme

- Named U-WIN, the programme to digitise India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has been launched in a pilot mode in two districts of each state and Union Territory.
- The platform will be used to register and vaccinate every pregnant woman, record her delivery outcome, register every newborn delivery, administer birth doses and all vaccination events thereafter.

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann launches Schools of Eminence Project

- Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann launched Schools of Eminence in Mohali and said it is a revolutionary step for ensuring golden future of the students. Inspired by Delhi's Schools of Specialized Excellence, in the first phase, 117 existing government schools will be upgraded as 'Schools of Eminence'.

IndiGrid to acquire 100% stake in Khargone Transmission for Rs 1497 crore

- India Grid Trust will acquire a 100 per equity stake in Khargone Transmission at an enterprise value of about Rs 1,497.5 crore. The acquisition will be for a cash consideration of an enterprise value not exceeding Rs 1,497.5 crore. The Khargone Transmission was incorporated on November 28, 2015. The transmission project was awarded by the Ministry of Power for 35 years.

Business 20 inception meeting began in Gujarat; Minister Piyush Goyal asks businesses to adopt sustainable & green business

- Several policymakers, including Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal besides business leaders and senior executives represented businesses of the G20 countries are participating in the three-day B20 India inception meeting. The Business 20 is amongst the most prominent official engagement groups in G20. The three day B20 inception meeting was held in Gandhinagar.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Indian Army launched a joint training exercise Cyclone-1 with Egypt

- The first-ever combined exercise between the Indian Army's special forces and the Egyptian Army, dubbed "Exercise Cyclone-I," has been underway at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, since January 14, 2023.
- The exercise intends to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation by focusing on the exchange of professional skills and interoperability of Special Forces in a desert environment while conducting counter-terrorism, reconnaissance, raids, and other special operations.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Girl Child Day

- National Girl Child Day is marked on January 24 to celebrate the girl child. The day, an initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development, has been celebrated in India every year since 2008. It was celebrated for the first time with an aim to raise awareness about the inequalities faced by girls and women in society at various levels.

International Day of Education

- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as the International Day of Education with an aim to emphasise the role of education for peace and development. The theme for 2023 is 'To Invest in People, Prioritize Education.' UNESCO has dedicated this year's International Education Day to women of Afghanistan who are being deprived of their right to education.

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NATIONAL NEWS

ECI hosts 2nd International Conference on 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' in New Delhi

- Election Commission of India (ECI) is hosting the 2nd International Conference on the theme 'Use of Technology and Elections Integrity' at New Delhi on 23-24 January, 2023. ECI is leading the Cohort on Elections Integrity which was established as a follow up to the 'Summit for Democracy'.
- 'Summit for Democracy', was an initiative of US President and hosted in December 2021.
- Govt switches bonds with RBI in a cash-neutral deal
- The Indian government bought back bonds maturing in 2024 from the Reserve Bank of India, while also issuing bonds maturing in 2032 worth a similar quantum. The government bought back 6.18% bonds maturing in 2024 worth 226.10 billion rupees (\$2.78 billion) at a price of 98.62 rupees while it issued 8.28% 2032 bonds worth 210.26 billion rupees to the RBI at 106.05 rupees.

Vedanta Cairn Oil and Gas appoints Nick Walker as CEO

- Vedanta Cairn Oil & Gas, India's largest private oil and gas exploration and production company, announced it has appointed Nick Walker as Chief Executive Officer, effective January 5, 2023. Before this appointment, Walker was President and Chief Executive Officer at Lundin Energy, a large European independent E&P companies.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurates 'International Craft Summit

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday inaugurated an 'International Craft Summit' in Jajpur. This is the first-of-its-kind craft summit featuring a confluence of

pioneering craftspeople, culture, and art enthusiasts. International delegates from 15 countries have arrived in Jajpur to engage with local artisans and other stakeholders, informed the government

SPORTS

Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn wins India Open Badminton title

- Thai shuttler Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the India Open title. He defeated World No.1 Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the men's singles final of the India Open Badminton Championship 22-20, 10-21 and 21-12 today at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. Korean sensation An Seyoung won the Women's singles final. She beat World No.1 Japanese Akane Yamaguchi 15-21, 21-16, 21-12.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Parakram Diwas 2023 celebrates as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Birth Anniversary Parakram Diwas 2023:

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti or Netaji Jayanti is a national event celebrated in India as Parakram Diwas on January 23 to mark the birth of prominent Indian freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- This year nation celebrates 126th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. For the first time, Netaji Jayanti was celebrated as Parakram Divas in 2021 on the occasion of his 124th birthday.
- In West Bengal, Jharkhand, Tripura, and Assam, it is a recognised holiday.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

New Goa Manohar International Airport wins best sustainable greenfield airport award

- GMR Goa International Airport (GGIAL), a subsidiary of GMR Airports Infrastructure, has won 'Best Sustainable Greenfield Airport' award under aviation sustainability and environment at ASSOCHAM's 14th International Conference-cum-Awards for Civil Aviation 2023. The award was presented for "excellent initiatives" taken by GGIAL in implementing sustainability.

Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 announced

- For the year 2023, Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Lunglei Fire Station (LFS), Mizoram, both in the Institutional category, have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2023 for their excellent work in Disaster Management.

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INTERNATIONAL

Chris Hipkins to replace Jacinda Ardern as New Zealand prime minister

- New Zealand's former Covid-19 response minister Chris Hipkins will replace Jacinda Ardern as prime minister after receiving the only nomination from fellow MPs, the ruling Labour Party said.

- Hipkins, currently the police and education minister, will take his party into an uphill battle to win general elections in October, as it lags in latest opinion polls.

NATIONAL NEWS

Business 20 inception meeting to be held in Gujarat

- The Business 20 (B20) inaugural meeting, which is part of the G20, began on January 23, 2023, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- The inaugural meeting is attended by Union ministers Piyush Goyal and Ashwini Vaishnaw, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, India's Sherpa for the G20, Amitabh Kant, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, and a slew of national and international business executives.

Fifth Kalvari class submarine INS Vagir to be inducted into Indian Navy

- The Indian Navy commissioned the fifth Kalvari class submarine Vagir, on January 23, 2023.
- Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff, was the Chief Guest during a ceremony conducted at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) of Mumbai produced the submarine in conjunction with M/s Naval Group of France. Four Kalvari class submarines have already been delivered to the Indian Navy.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

India cenbank to guide inflation towards 4% target by 2024

- The Reserve Bank of India's 2023 monetary policy objective is to hold inflation within the mandated tolerance band and guide it towards the medium-term target of 4% by 2024, it said in its monthly bulletin published recently.
- The government has mandated the central bank to keep inflation at 4 per cent with a +/- 2 per cent band.

RANKING

Jio is India's strongest brand, ranked ninth globally: Brand Finance report

- Reliance Jio has been ranked as the strongest brand in India and placed ninth among the world's strongest brands, according to the latest report 'Global 500 – 2023' published by Brand Finance.
- 'Jio' was placed ninth among the world's strongest brands ahead of brands like EY, Coca Cola, Accenture and Porsche, and behind the likes of Google, YouTube, Deloitte and Instagram.

IMPORTANT DAYS

UNESCO to dedicate the 2023 International Day of Education to Afghan girls and women

- Marking the occasion of the International Day of Education, being held on January 24, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced the decision to dedicate the day to girls and women in Afghanistan who have been forcefully stripped of their basic right to education.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Nepalese ophthalmologist Dr Sanduk Ruit wins Bahrain's ISA Award for Service to Humanity

- Himalayan Cataract Project Co-Founder Dr Sanduk Ruit has won the ISA Award for Service to Humanity, a top civilian award of Bahrain.
- The award carries a cash prize of USD 1 million, a certificate of merit and a gold medal. Dr Ruit is pioneer in delivering high-quality microsurgical procedures in remote eye camps.
- In 2018, the Government of India awarded him the Padma Shri.

Vikram Dev Dutt appointed as next DGCA director general

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on Saturday approved the appointment of Vikram Dev Dutt as the next Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Dutt will take over the charge as the DGCA chief on February 28 after the superannuation of Arun Kumar, the incumbent DGCA chief.
- Dutt was the last government-appointed Chairman & Managing Director of the Air India.