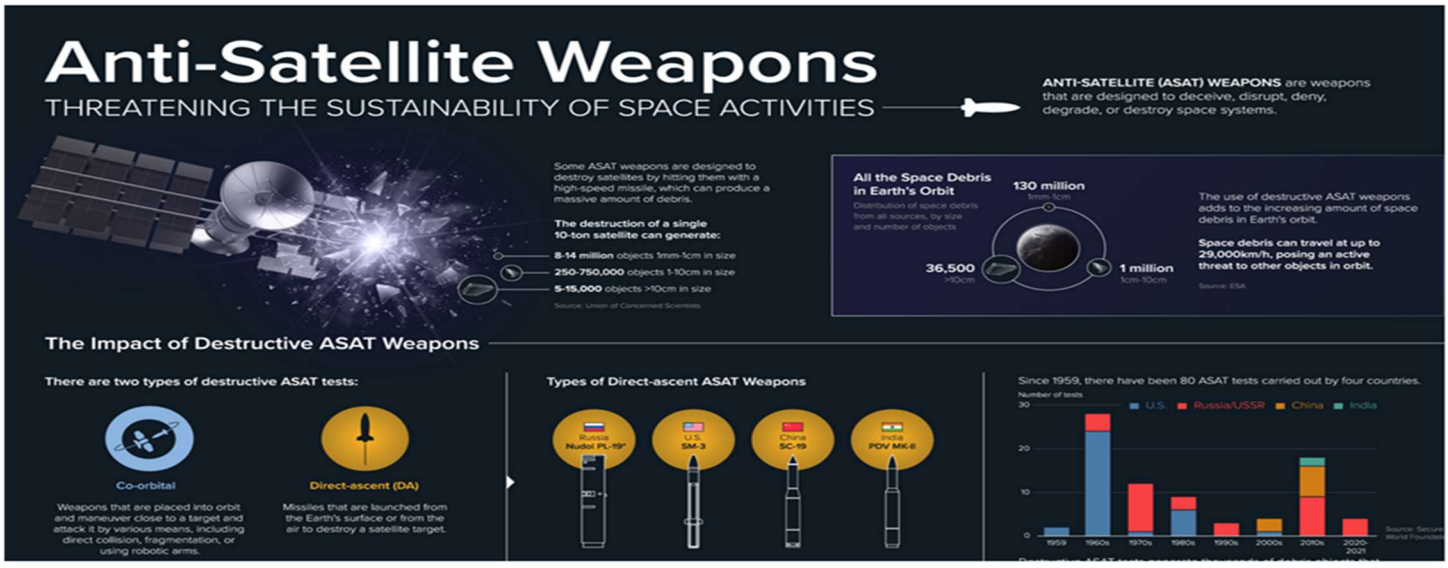
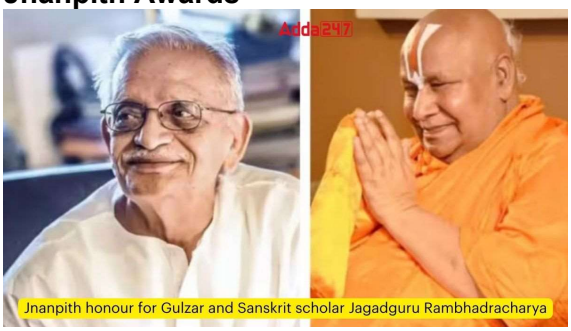
19 February 2024

National and International News

Anti satellite weapons	**Context:** **Russia** is developing a new anti-satellite weapon, which the US finds concerning. **About:** ● Anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons are **designed to disable or destroy satellites already in orbit.** ● This goes **against the Outer Space Treaty**, which prohibits damaging other parties' satellites and the harmful contamination of space. ● Most ASAT weapons **are kinetic, meaning they destroy satellites by colliding with them or detonating explosives** nearby, creating debris that can remain in orbit for a long time. **Effects:** ● The principal threats from a space-based nuclear weapon are **EMP(Electromagnetic pulse)** and the release of charged particles, which can affect satellites around the point of detonation, including **those of strategic allies and countries not involved in a conflict.** ● This can lead to the destruction of satellites and the creation of debris, potentially causing a **"collisional cascade"** that increases the amount of debris in orbit.



Jnanpith Awards



Context:

- The Jnanpith Awards, considered India's highest literary honor, were recently conferred upon **Gulzar and Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya.**
- The Jnanpith Award is presented annually since **1965 by Bharatiya Jnanpith, established in 1944**, to recognize outstanding contributions to Indian literature.

Gulzar

- Gulzar, also known as **Sampooran Singh Kalra, is a renowned Urdu poet,** Bollywood director, and writer, recognized for his contributions to Urdu literature and Hindi cinema.
- He has received numerous awards, including the **Sahitya Akademi Award, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Padma Bhushan, and National Film Awards.**
- He won an **Oscar and Grammy for the song "Jai Ho"** from Slumdog Millionaire and has introduced a new genre in poetry called **'Triveni'.**

Jagadguru Rambhadracharya

- He is a Sanskrit scholar, Hindu spiritual leader, educator, and writer, known for founding and leading **Tulsi Peeth in Madhya Pradesh.**
- He has written over 240 books, including four epics, and is a polyglot speaking 22 languages.
- He received the **Padma Vibhushan in 2015.**
- **He was born in 1950 in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh.**

Award Details:

- The award carries a cash prize of ₹11 lakh, a statue of Vagdevi, and a citation.
- This is the second time it has been awarded for Sanskrit and the fifth time for Urdu.

GSLV-F14/INSAT-3DS	**Context:** ● The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) fully funded the **satellite INSAT-3DS,** which was successfully launched by the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**, using the GSLV-F14 launch vehicle. **Aim and objectives:** ● INSAT-3DS aims to enhance I**ndia's meteorological services, c**omplementing the existing **INSAT-3D and INSAT-3DR satellites.** ● It will improve **monitoring of the Earth's surface, atmosphere, oceans, and environment,** enhancing data collection, dissemination, and satellite-aided search and rescue services. ● This initiative will **advance weather, climate, and ocean-related observations** and services in India, contributing to disaster mitigation and preparedness. **Specification:** ● Based on ISRO's I-2k bus platform, **INSAT-3DS has a lift-off mass of 2,275 kilograms**. ● It is equipped with state-of-the-art payloads, including an imager payload with **a six-channel optical radiometer for Earth imaging,** a 19-channel sounder payload for atmospheric information, and communication payloads such as a data relay transponder and a **satellite-aided search and rescue transponder.** ● Indian industries have played a significant role in the development of INSAT-3DS.
YUVIKA 	● Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has initiated a special program named **"Young Scientist Programme"** or **"YUva VIgyani KAryakram" (YUVIKA)** tailored for school children. ● The primary aim of this endeavor is to **provide fundamental knowledge in Space Science, Technology, and Applications** to young learners, exposing them to the latest advancements in these fields. ● ISRO has designed this program with the motto of **"Catch them young,"** acknowledging that the youth are pivotal for the future of space exploration and technology in our nation. ● YUVIKA also endeavors to inspire more students to pursue careers in **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).** ● **Since its inception in 2019, YUVIKA has been successfully conducted in 2019, 2022, and 2023, attracting increasing participation each year.**

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Context:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid his tributes to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on his **394th birth anniversary who was born on 19th Feb in 1630.**

About:

- Shivaji Bhonsale I, also known as Chhatrapati Shivaji, was an Indian ruler and a member of the **Bhonsle Maratha clan.**
- He established the Maratha Empire by carving out a region from the declining **Adilshahi sultanate of Bijapur.**
- In 1674, he was formally crowned as the Chhatrapati of his realm at **Raigad Fort.**
- He established the **Council of Eight Ministers, or Ashta Pradhan Mandal,** which included positions like the Peshwa (Prime Minister) for general administration, the Amatya for finance, and the Summant or Dabir for foreign affairs.

Recent contributions by GoI:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort, Sindhudurg, Maharashtra.
- The Maharashtra government has designated February 19 as a holiday to commemorate Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's birth, known as **Shivaji Jayanti.**

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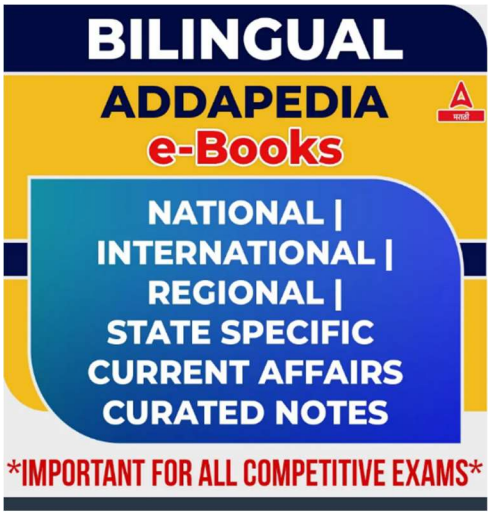
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