

## Current Affairs of the Day

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## Women officers can now get permanent commission in Army

- The Ministry of Defence has issued the formal Government Sanction Letter for grant of permanent commission (PC) to women officers in the Army.

### 10 streams:

- The order specifies the grant of permanent commission to SSC women officers in all the 10 streams in which they presently serve — Army Air Defence, Signals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence Corps, in addition to the existing streams of Judge and Advocate General and Army Educational Corps.
- The order follows a Supreme Court verdict in February that directed the government that women officers be granted PC and command postings in all services other than combat.
- Following this, Army chief Gen. Manoj Naravane said it was an enabling one and gave a lot of clarity on how to move forward. He stated that the same procedure for male SSC officers would be followed for women to give permanent commission.
- About 322 women officers had approached the top court and the issue of command postings came up in the discussion on subsequent avenues after the grant of PC.

## India and Israel to work on rapid test

- In the next few weeks, a special flight from Israel will land in India with a team of high-ranking Israeli Defence Ministry research and development team to develop rapid testing for COVID-19 in under 30 seconds along with their Indian counterparts.
- The flight will also bring breakthrough emerging Israeli technologies for combating COVID-19, which have been donated by the Israeli Foreign Ministry (MFA) and private sector, meant to bolster India's response to the outbreak. Finally, the plane will deliver mechanical ventilators which were given special permission by the Government of Israel for export to India.



- The Israeli delegation led by the Directorate of Defense Research and Development in the Ministry of Defense, will conduct a series of tests to determine the effectiveness of a number of rapid diagnostic solutions along with Indian scientists and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

### **New technologies:**

- The technologies to be tested in India include an artificial intelligence based online voice test and breathalyser test, isothermal testing and testing using polyamino acids. The voice test analyses recording of a human voice and aims to identify changes in the patient's voice and/or deterioration in the condition of his/her respiratory system as part of system developed for detecting the virus using Terra-Hertz (THZ) waves.
- Isothermal testing allows detection of the virus in a saliva sample with the help of a chemical reaction and produces a result within 30 minutes, while testing using Polyamino acids too detects virus proteins in a saliva sample in a few minutes.

## **China launches ambitious Mars mission**

### **Tianwen-1, or Quest for heavenly truth:**

- China launched its most ambitious Mars mission yet on Thursday in a bold attempt to join the U.S. in successfully landing a spacecraft on the red planet.
- A Long March-5 carrier rocket took off under clear skies around 12-40 p.m. from Hainan Island, south of China's mainland.
- China's space agency said that the rocket carried the probe for 36 minutes before successfully placing it on the looping path that will take it beyond Earth's orbit and eventually into Mars' more distant orbit around the sun.
- China's tandem spacecraft — with both an orbiter and a rover — will take seven months to reach Mars, like the others. If all goes well, Tianwen-1, or "quest for heavenly truth," will look for underground water, if it's present, as well as evidence of possible ancient life.
- It marked the second flight to Mars this week, after a UAE orbiter blasted off on a rocket from Japan on Monday. And the U.S. is aiming to launch



Perseverance, its most sophisticated Mars rover ever, from Cape Canaveral, Florida, next week.

### Solo attempt:

- This isn't China's first attempt at Mars. In 2011, a Chinese orbiter accompanying a Russian mission was lost when the spacecraft failed to get out of Earth's orbit after launching from Kazakhstan, eventually burning up in the atmosphere.
- This time, China is going at it alone. It also is fast-tracking, launching an orbiter and rover on the same mission instead of stringing them out.
- Landing on Mars is notoriously difficult. Only the U.S. has successfully landed a spacecraft on Martian soil, doing it eight times since 1976.

### Expert panel to soon clarify on data sharing between rivals

- S. Gopalakrishnan, the Infosys co-founder and angel investor who is heading the expert committee on Non-personal Data Governance Framework, on Thursday said the committee would soon come out with some clarificatory points on sharing of such data between competing businesses or organisations.
- In case of any dispute over fairness of the request to share non-personal data, the non-personal data authority would be the arbitrator.
- The government has invited feedback from the public on the draft report prepared by the expert panel, which was set up in September last year, to deliberate on framing rules for non-personal data governance. The government had fixed August 13 as the last date for submission of the feedback, following which the committee would finalise the report.

### Credit platform for MSMEs takes shape

- A countrywide pilot of the newly-developed credit protocol infrastructure for the democratisation of credit will start within a fortnight, said a think tank, Indian Software Products Industry Round Table (iSPIRT), that developed the platform.



## Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN):

- The credit protocol infrastructure, known as Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN), will mediate the interactions between loan service providers, usually fintechs and mainstream lenders, including all large banks and NBFCs.
- Meanwhile, private equity and venture capital players, angel investors, high networth individuals and others will also could be part of this exercise as investors.
- To start with, iSPIRT will work with lenders such as the State Bank of India.
- The architect of Aadhaar Nandan Nilekani, who is involved in the project, said, “OCEN is a common language for lenders and credit seekers. With this, credit will become more accessible for a large number of entrepreneurs and small businesses in the country.”
- Some 63.38 million MSMEs account for about 45% of manufacturing output, over 40% of exports, contribute to over 28% of the GDP and employ about 111 million people.

## No trading window curbs on OFS: SEBI

- SEBI on Thursday allowed **offer for sale (OFS)** and rights entitlement transactions during the trading window closure period. Under market norms, listed companies need to use a trading window to monitor transactions by designated persons in a bid to prevent insider trading. The compliance officer is responsible for closing the trading window, in case the designated persons are expected to be in possession of unpublished price sensitive information.
- SEBI said: “trading window restrictions shall not apply in respect of OFS and RE transactions carried out in accordance with the framework specified by the Board from time to time.”