

Current Affairs – June 2016

1. India gets first women fighter pilots; Commissioned 3 pilots in Batch-1:

The Indian Air Force (IAF) on **18 June 2016** commissioned **first three women fighter pilots**. The batch of pilots was inducted at the Combined Graduation Parade at Air Force Academy, Dundigal near Hyderabad. The **first three women fighter pilots of India** are –1) Flying Officer **Avani Chaturvedi**, 2) Flying Officer **Bhawana Kanth**, 3) Flying Officer **Mohana Singh**. However, they will get to fly fighter jets like the Sukhoi and Tejas only in 2017 after their Stage III training at Bidar in Karnataka in 2017.

2. NASA unveils X-57 Hybrid Electric Research Plane:

The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** on 17 June 2016 unveiled the iconic X-57 Hybrid Electric Research Plane nicknamed as **Maxwell**. The plane is fixed with 14 electric motors turning propellers and all of them are integrated into a uniquely-designed wing. NASA will use this plane to test new propulsion technology.

3. World Refugee Day observed on 20 June :

World Refugee Day was observed on **20 June 2016**. It is observed annually to draw attention to the plight of refugees, celebrate their courage and resilience and renew commitment to solve refugee problems. The UN General Assembly via its resolution 55/76 on 4 December 2000 decided to observe the World Refugee Day on 20 June every year.

4. URJA Mobile app launched to enhance consumer connect with Urban Power Distribution sector :

Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal and New and Renewable Energy Piyush Goyal on 16 June 2016 launched the URJA Mobile application. The **URJA**, which stands for **Urban Jyoti Abhiyaan**, was launched on the on the side-lines of Conference of Power Ministers at Cansaulim in South Goa.

5. BRICS Working Group Meeting on Energy Saving and Energy Efficiency begins in Vishakhapatnam :

The first meeting of the BRICS Working Group on Energy Saving and Energy Efficiency commenced on 4 July 2016 in Vishakhapatnam. The meeting will be concluded on 5 July 2016. The two-day meeting will be attended by all **5 members of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)** countries. The Union Power Ministry is hosting the meeting of the Working Group. During the meeting, a Joint Statement will be agreed upon. The statement will be a guiding tool for the BRICS Working Group on Energy Saving and Energy Efficiency.

6. India's first Integrated Defence Communication Network launched

India's first Integrated **Defence Communication Network (DCN)** was launched on 30 June 2016. The DCN was inaugurated by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar at South Block. The network enables the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Special Forces Command to share situational awareness for a faster decision-making process. It is the first tri-service communication and IT network of the Armed Forces, this tri-communication network makes voice data and video data accessible to the three services over a secured network. The network has been fully designed and developed in India by **HCL Infosystems**.

7. India-Israel co-developed Barak-8 missile successfully test-fired

India on 30 June 2016 successfully test-fired a medium range **surface-to-air missile (MR-SAM)** from a mobile launcher in the Integrated Test Range (ITR) **at Chandipur off the Odisha coast**. The Barak-8 missile, as it is called, was co-developed by the Defence Research Development Laboratory (DRDL) of DRDO in partnership with the Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The missile, along with MF-STAR, will provide the users with the capability to neutralise any aerial threats. These missiles will be produced at the Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in Hyderabad.

8. China to operationalise the exascale supercomputer Tianhe – 3 by 2020

China is all set to operationalise the 'exascale supercomputer' by 2020 which will be capable of performing at least a billion calculations per second. The supercomputer will be named **Tianhe -3** and it will be operationalised three years before the US plan to install such computers. The development of the 'exascale supercomputer' is part of the China's national plan for the next generation of high performance computers. It will be developed during the 13th Five-Year-Plan period (2016-2020).

9. Draft National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2016 released

Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy on 14 June 2016 released **Draft National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2016**. The policy was unveiled as part of Union Government's attempt to reach the target of **175 Gigawatts (GW)** of installed capacity from renewable energy sources by 2022. It includes 100 GW from solar and 60 GW from wind. Main goal of this policy is to reach wind-solar hybrid capacity of 10 GW by 2022.

10. Union Government launches Scheme for setting up 1000 MW Wind Power Project connected to CTU

Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) on 15 June 2016 launched Scheme for setting up of 1000 MW Wind Power Project connected to **Central Transmission Utility (CTU)** transmission network. The launching of the scheme is in line with the Union Government's ambitious target of achieving 175 GW power capacity from renewable energy resources by 2022. Out of 175 GW, 60 GW will come from wind power.

11. India's membership of the International Continental Scientific Drilling Program has been approved

The Union Cabinet on 15 June 2016 gave its approval for Indian membership of the International Continental Scientific Drilling Program (ICDP) consortium. The approval clears the path for signing a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **GFZ – Helmholtz Centre Potsdam (German Research Centre for geosciences)**. The GFZ is a government-funded, Public Law Foundation of the State of Brandenburg, Germany.

12. India, Taiwan MoU/Agreements on bilateral relations approved

The Union Cabinet on 15 June 2016 gave its ex-post facto approval to the MoU for the cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sector. Besides, the cabinet also gave its nod to the signing of Air Services Agreement between both the countries.

13. Norway becomes first country to prohibit deforestation on 26 May 2016

Norway in the first week of June 2016 became the first country to prohibit deforestation. On 26 May 2016, the Norwegian Parliament had pledged to make government's public procurement policy deforestation-free. The step was taken after a committee of MPs recommended imposing regulations to ensure the state did not contribute to deforestation of the rainforest.

14. India signs Europe-led clampdown on tax evasion and corruption

India on 8 June 2016 signed a Europe-led scheme that seeks to clam down on tax evasion and corruption by committing to automatically exchange information on beneficial ownership. India joined a group of nearly 40 nations that are signatories of a scheme. Under the scheme, the signatories commits to the initiative to automatically exchange information on beneficial ownership. The next stage will be for the development of a global standard for this exchange.

15. NATO launches biggest ever Joint Military Exercise Anaconda-16 in Poland

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members and partners on 6 June 2016 launched **Anaconda-16 Exercise**, the biggest ever joint military exercise in Poland. The drill is part of NATO's exercise program and is being held just weeks before NATO's summit in Warsaw that is expected to decide that significant numbers of NATO troops and equipment will be based in Poland and in the Baltic states.