

**February 23<sup>rd</sup> news:**

**International:**

**Pakistani ex-PM Nawaz Sharif banned from leading his party**

Pakistan's Supreme Court has disqualified former prime minister Nawaz Sharif as head of his party. Mr Sharif was ordered to step down as prime minister last year amid corruption allegations that he denies. The court ruled that his earlier dismissal from office made him ineligible to lead the PML-N.

All decisions that were taken by Mr Sharif while head of the party were declared void, including nominations for candidates in Senate elections due in a fortnight. The ruling is being seen as a blow to Mr Sharif who has consistently claimed he is the victim of a political conspiracy.

**National:**

**India at 81st rank in global corruption perception index**

India has been ranked 81st in the global corruption perception index for 2017, released by Transparency International, which named the country among the “worst offenders” in terms of graft and press freedom in the Asia Pacific region.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, placed India at the 81st place.

In the 2016 India was in the 79th place among 176 countries. The index uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. India’s score in the latest ranking, however, remained unchanged at 40. In 2015, the score was 38.

Transparency International further said, “in some countries across the region (Asia Pacific), journalists, activists, opposition leaders and even staff of law enforcement or watchdog agencies are threatened, and in the worst cases, even murdered. Philippines, India and the Maldives are among the worst regional offenders in this respect.

These countries score high for corruption and have fewer press freedoms and higher numbers of journalist deaths,” it added.

In the latest ranking New Zealand and Denmark were placed the highest, with scores of 89 and 88, respectively.

On the other hand Syria, South Sudan and Somalia were ranked lowest with scores of 14, 12 and 9, respectively. Meanwhile, China with a score of 41 was ranked 77th on the list, while Brazil was placed at 96th with a score of 37 and Russia was at the 135th place with a score of 29.

Further analysis of the results indicates that countries with the least protection for press and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also tend to have the worst rates of corruption. The analysis, which

incorporates data from CPJ, showed that in the last six years, 9 out of 10 journalists were killed in countries that score 45 or less on the index.

## **Economy:**

### **Agriculture Ministry Adds 6 New Features In E-NAM Platform**

Agriculture Minister affairs Radha Mohan Singh launched six new features in the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform to make it more user-friendly. The six new features of e-NAM platform includes-

- MIS dashboard for better analysis,
- BHIM payment facility by traders,
- Mobile payment facility by traders,
- Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile,
- Integration of farmer's database, and
- e-Learning module.

e-NAM was launched in 2016 with the objective of providing competitive and remunerative price to farmers for their products through an online competitive bidding process. Currently, 479 mandis across 14 states and 01 union territory are covered under it.

## **Science and Technology:**

### **India Successfully Conducts Night Trial Of Prithvi-II Missile**

India successfully conducted trial of its indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile with a strike range of 350 km, from a test range in Odisha on 21<sup>st</sup> February. The surface-to-surface missile was test-fired from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha. The perfect test launch came after the successful trial of the Agni-5 missile.