

# Asteroid Named After Pandit Jasraj

February 1, 2021

**In News:** The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has named an asteroid, discovered in 2006, after Indian classical singer Pandit Jasraj.

## What

- All names proposed are judged by the 15-member Working Group for Small Body Nomenclature (CSBN) of the IAU, comprising professional astronomers with research interests in minor planets and/or comets from around the world.
- As of September, there are 5,41,131 numbered minor planets of a total of 7,97,078 observed bodies, with the rest being unnumbered minor planets.
- Pandit Jasraj is the first Indian musician to receive this honour.
- The asteroid, or more formally known as a minor planet – 2006 VP32, is located in the asteroid belt, between Mars and Jupiter.
  - The asteroid belt is a region of the solar system falling roughly between the planets Mars and Jupiter where the greatest concentration of asteroids can be found.
  - It also serves as a sort of dividing line between the inner rocky planets and outer gas giants.
- It was discovered on 11th November 2006 by the Catalina Sky Survey.
  - The Catalina Sky Survey (CSS) is a NASA funded project to discover and track near-Earth objects (NEOs). It is based in Arizona in the United States.
  - Near-Earth objects (NEOs) are asteroids or comets

with sizes ranging from metres to tens of kilometres that orbit the Sun and whose orbits come close to that of Earth's.

- As minor planet discoveries are confirmed, they are given a permanent number by IAU's Minor Planet Centre.
  - 'Pandit Jasraj' minor planet can be seen on their official website with the number 300128, his date of birth in reverse order (28/01/30).

## **Pandit Jasraj**

- Sangeet Martand Pandit Jasraj (b. 1930) is an exponent of Indian classical vocal music.
- Jasraj is the recipient of numerous awards, honours, and titles, including the prestigious Padma Vibhushan and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.
- His distinctive voice traverses a remarkable four-and-a-half octaves, reads an IAU citation available on the California Institute of Technology's database on small planetary bodies.

## **International Astronomical Union**

- The International Astronomical Union (IAU) was founded in 1919, headquartered in Paris, France.
- Its mission is to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy in all its aspects, including research, communication, education and development, through international cooperation.
- It is the global authority for naming planetary features in the solar system.