# THE IAS GAZETTE

A House Journal of APTI PLUS

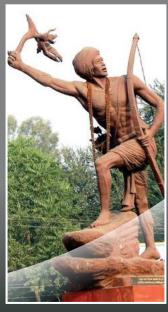




PROJECT DOLPHIN



PROJECT LION



TRIBAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS' MUSEUM



NATIONAL RECRUITMENT AGENCY



ORGANIC FARMING



# Testimonial

## VENKATRAMAN KAVADIKERI RANK 363 UPSC CSE 2019

#### Profile of the candidate

Hello.

I come from a remote village in Western Ghats region - Karwar district of Karnataka. I did my school education till 12th standard in my home district, mostly from government schools in Kannada medium. I worked as IC Design Engineer in US based company after my B. E. for a brief period. Also, I worked as Officer in State Bank of India.

I cleared Civil Services Examination in my 5th attempt. I had appeared for mains in all attempts and also, I have appeared for interview in all attempts except the first one. My optional subject is Literature of Kannada Language.

## Inspiration: How did the journey start?

First of all, my father wanted to become civil servant. But he could not as he did not get the support which was needed. He wanted his son to become a civil servant. I had constant support of my parents throughout my preparation stage.

Secondly, I had opportunity to interact with many civil servants who are my college seniors during my college days. Their selection, their work experience and the way they were contributing to the society which I was able to view closely were inspirational. Finding this inspirational aspect (finding proper answer to "Why civil service?") is quintessential to keep yourself motivated despite multiple failures throughout this long journey which may last even 6-7 years.

My dream of becoming civil servant is decade old now. As Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam sir said dream is something that which doesn't let you sleep. So, need to keep working amidst odds, chaos which you may face in your journey.

## Book list for the preparation

Prelims and Mains (Integrated approach) (Buy latest editions of books as far as possible)

- New NCERTs for History, Polity, Society, Geography, Economics, Science, Biology (all 6th to 12th)
- Old NCERTs for Ancient and Medieval History, World History Arjun Dev
- Modern History India's Struggle for Independence by Bipin Chandra, Spectrum
- Art and Culture Nitin Singhania book
- Geography Goh Cheng Leong for Physical Geography of the World, PT and Mains 365 (of VisionIAS)
- Society Vision Notes (VAM Value Addition Material)
- Polity Laxmikant, PT and Mains 365
- Governance, Social Justice Vision VAM, Mains 365
- International Relations PT and Mains 365
- Economy and Agriculture Vision VAM, PT and Mains 365
- Science and Technology PT and Mains 365
- Environment ShankarlAS Environment, PT and Mains 365
- Disaster Management Vision VAM, Mains 365
- Security Vajiram Yellow Book, Mains 365
- Ethics G. Subbarao book, Lukmaan Notes, Solve old papers as many questions are repeated including case study themes.

## How important was newspaper reading?

I had habit of newspaper reading since my childhood. But I was reading The Hindu mildly since 2011 and in-depth study of The Hindu started from 2014. Since then it has been integral part of my preparation. I suggest you to subscribe to hardcopy as it helps in better retention if you underline in original newspaper.

## Internet sources vs hard copy materials

Question in prelims and mains are made very dynamic nowadays. Hence reading multiple sources has become essential. Internet plays huge role here. Some articles you can easily bookmark and also print them in PDF format to keep them in folders for future reference. If you are tech savvy you can make online notes using evernote or onenote.

However, internet cannot replace hardcopy materials. Many books, coaching notes you need to read in hardcopy. I use to take hard copy of even PT 365 and Mains 365 so that I can refer them during last minute study. Ultimately making notes in hardcopy also helps in writing practice.

I suggest during preparation integration of both is required. You should not rely completely on one aspect. Always, prepare keeping syllabus and Previous Year papers in front of you.

## Scoring above the cut-off marks in prelims

Take calculated risk and use elimination method extensively with common sense and logics. But these are no shortcuts for study and revision. Prelims is knowledge intensive test. Hence this aspect can't be ignored by having some shortcut tricks.

## **Strategy for Prelims**

**General Studies** – Don't run behind too many test series. Read basic texts and revise them multiple times.

**CSAT** – Didn't prepare specifically here as I had already prepared for SBI PO exam. So, can't suggest any. Ensure you get 66.67 marks in this paper.

## Strategy for mains

**GS-I** – Do not ignore society and geography. Go through previous year questions and prepare accordingly.

**GS-II-** Integrate current affairs examples with Laxmikant knowledge in polity and constitution. Use newspaper and internet sources extensively here.

GS-III – 50% paper is Economy and Agriculture. Rest form 50%. Distribute time accordingly. Use newspaper and internet sources extensively in this paper. Do not ignore static parts.

**GS-IV** – Make own notes for definitions, examples. Use them in answers if relevant. Solve as many case studies as possible and get them evaluated.

**Essay** – Collect quotes, stats, reports etc. for keywords like poverty, education, women empowerment – repetitive themes, so that you can use them in essays.

**Optional Subject** – Literature – Use theories, thinkers of Paper I in critical, analytical answers of text-based Paper II. Paper I needs multiple revisions and own short notes. Paper II needs literary criticism approach to get good marks. Avoid writing stories in your answers. In paper II quote from original texts extensively to show the examiner that you have read them.

**Compulsory Language Papers** – Just ensure you practice old papers if you are not comfortable to get 75/300 marks. I did not prepare for these papers exclusively.

## Mains answer writing strategy

- 1. Point format works better
- 2. Justify with examples, stats, reports etc.
- 3. Use diagrams, maps, flow charts
- 4. Have proper intro and conclusion for some repetitive keywords like inclusive growth, poverty, globalisation, PRIs etc.

## Time management

Main benefit of test series for mains is you will understand whether you will be able to complete the paper or not. You need to make micro level strategies accordingly. Distribute time to each question, and write using timers. Completing paper is sine quo non nowadays to get an interview call.

## Hard work vs smart work

Doing hard work smartly is the key to clear this exam nowadays. There are thousands of candidates toiling hard. But where (material, spending time etc.) you are putting your hard work matters a lot to get edge over others.

#### Questions asked in the UPSC Interview

Almost 80% questions for me were profile based – related to work experience (banking), hobbies, technology etc. 20% questions were related to IR and Ethics related questions. UPSC boards have very experienced people, they know how to assess you. Do not worry about it. Prepare and give your answers 'honestly'. If you are hiding or giving false answers, you may be entering big trap.

## Challenges faced during the preparation process

Nowadays lack of materials and guidance are not the major problems. But overflow of them is. You need to chose right things at right time. Do not chase materials. Keep them limited.

This process is also test of your patience and mental calibre. So keep your mental state healthy by practicing meditation and body by exercising or through Yoga.

If you have financial problems, do not hesitate to work and prepare. Financial security is important to bring mental peace. Otherwise it can spoil whole preparation which you have done for years. Find at least 3-4 hours a day even if you are working and need to slog in these hours even if your body is not so cooperative. And need to slog for 12-14 hours on weekends as they are power play overs.

Finding right motivation (Why Civil Service) is important to sustain and be consistent throughout preparation.

## It's a long journey. What kept you motivated?

Finding right answer to Why Civil Service kept me motivated throughout this long journey. This clarity was important to have peace with what I was doing.

## How does it feel after landing your dream job?

It's really exciting. I would say it's not an achievement. Through this, if I am able to contribute to the nation, our society, that would be an achievement. This is just a first step in right direction.

## Credits (family, friends)

I am really fortunate to get such loving and caring parents who constantly supported me despite many odds. Also, I give credit to my sister who use to take dig at me whenever I tell her I did this and that and keeping me to the reality during preparation and helping in self-criticism for improvement. I am fortunate to get friends, seniors who guided me, kept me motivated saying I will clear this exam one day even when I was failing multiple times in previous attempts. I do pranaam (Salute) to my teachers who guided me in this journey.

## How did the IAS Gyan materials & DAF Questionnaire helped you?

I had gone through IASGYAN current affairs materials before my interview to get overview of topics which may be asked in the interview. Also, many questions were directly asked in interview from DAF Questionnaire sent to me by **APTI PLUS** due to which I could answer well. I wish **APTI PLUS** academy keeps guiding future aspirants and contribute to nation building in this way.

Waradike;

## SEPTEMBER 2020

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## **Sources**

The Hindu | The Indian Express Live mint | The Economic Times PIB | PRS | ET Government & World Reports (NITI Aayog, Budget, WEF Economic Survey etc.) Hindu Business Line | NCERTs All standard reference books

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## LEPCHA TRIBE

## GS-I INDIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE

#### Context

Folk musician and Padma Shri awardee Sonam Tshering Lepcha passed away.

#### **Lepcha Tribe**

Feature	Details			
Alternate Name Rong				
Distribution	Nepal, Bhutan, India			
Origin Mongolia, Tibet				
Language Lepcha (Sino-Tibetan language & in UNESCO's endangered languages list)				
Residence in India Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and parts of West Bengal.				
Religion Animism & Buddhism				
Subsistence Originally hunters and gatherers. Now engaged in farming & rearing livestock.				
Craft Basketry, weaving, spinning, and carpentry				
Marriage custom	Endogamous. Largely patrilineal.			



## RAL GANGADHAR TILAK

GS-I MODERN HISTORY

#### Context

Recently, 100<sup>th</sup> death anniversary observed.

#### **Facts & Contributions**

#### **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**

- Social reformer, Indian nationalist and freedom fighter.
- Conferred with the title of "Lokmanya"
- Called as "The father of the Indian unrest" by the British author Sir Valentine Chirol.
- Called as "The Maker of Modern India" by Mahatma Gandhi

## **Social**

- Founded the Deccan Education Society in 1884 along with Gopal Ganesh Agarkar.
- Aim- to create a new system of education that taught young Indians nationalist ideas through an emphasis on Indian culture.
- Deccan Education Society established the Fergusson College in 1885 for post-secondary studies.
- Started events like the Ganapati festival and Shiv Jayanti to build a national spirit & politicize masses.
- Conservatism: Strongly opposed to liberal trends such as women's rights and social reforms against untouchability. He was against the **Age Of Consent Bill 1891** (to raise min. age of marriage for girls from 10 to 12 years). Refused to sign a petition for the abolition of untouchability in 1918.

## Political (Independence movement)

- Joined the Indian National Congress in 1890
- Political Ideology: Radical Nationalism, Extremist.
- Supported by fellow Indian nationalists Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai. Referred to as the "Lal-Bal-Pal triumvirate".
- Criticized British Govt. for 1896 bubonic plague that had spread from Bombay to Pune.
- Wrote inflammatory article in his paper "Kesari" supporting the killing of Lt. Ayerst by the Chapekar brothers. Imprisoned for 18 months.
- Adopted a new slogan coined by his associate Kaka Baptista: "Swaraj (self-rule) is my birthright and I shall have it."
- Encouraged the Swadeshi movement and the Boycott movement during 1905 Partition of Bengal. (Viceroy- Lord Curzon)
- Tried for sedition charges thrice by British India Government in 1897, 1909 and 1916.
- Welcomed The Indian Councils Act, popularly known as Minto-Morley Reforms.
- Started the **All India Home Rule League (1916–18)** in **Maharashtra, Central Provinces, and Karnataka and Berar region.** (Annie Besant's Home Rule League was active in the rest of India.)





## 1897

- •For preaching disaffection against British Raj & criticizing Govt. for 1896 bubonic plague.
- •Sentenced for 18 months.

## 1909

- Sedition and intensifying racial animosity between Indians and the British.
- Lawyer Muhammad Ali
   Jinnah appeared in defence

## 1916

- Defending Prafulla Chaki & Khudiram Bose for Muzaffarpur Conspiracy Case. Six years jail sentence.
- Lawyer Muhammad Ali Jinnah appeared in defence.

#### Work

- **Weeklies:** Kesari ("The Lion") in Marathi and Mahratta in English. Recognized as 'awakener of India', as Kesari later became a daily and continues publication to this day.
- Books: "The Arctic Home in the Vedas", "The Orion", "Shrimadh Bhagvad Gita Rahasya"



## ARUS

## GS-I INDIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE

## **Context**

• Bru community displaced from Mizoram have rejected the new sites proposed by the Joint Movement Committee (JMC), an umbrella group of non-Brus in Tripura for their settlement.

#### **Bru Tribe**

Did iiibc	
Feature	Details
Alternate Name Kau Bru or Reang	
<b>Distribution</b> Tripura, Mizoram and parts of southern Assam	
<b>Recognition</b> Particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in Tripura	
Language Reang dialect of Kokborok language (Tibeto-Burmese)	
<b>Religion</b> Vaishnav school of Hinduism. Claim Kshatriya status.	
Subsistence	Agrarian Tribe. Practice Huk or Jhum cultivation. (Shifting cultivation)
Marriage custom	
Dance Hojagiri folk dance	
Festival	Buisu

## **Bru Refugee Crisis**

- Back in 1997, about half the Bru population in Mizoram fled to Tripura in 1997 following ethnic clashes with the Mizos.
- The government of India has been making several efforts for permanent rehabilitation of Bru-Reang since 2010. Two state governments, Tripura and Mizoram, were in a continuous process for settling them down through a permanent solution.

## Recent development: Bru agreement in January 2020

- Parties of the Agreement: Bru community, Central Govt., Govt of Tripira & Mizoram
- Consensus: All Bru currently living in temporary relief camps in Tripura will be settled in the state, if they want to stay on.
- The Bru who returned to Mizoram in the eight phases of repatriation since 2009, cannot, however, come back to Tripura.

## **PVTG**

- Particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) is a government of India classification created with the purpose of enabling improvement in the conditions of certain communities with particularly low development indices.
- The criteria for identifying Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups are: -
  - ✓ Pre-agricultural level of technology,
  - ✓ Low level of literacy.
  - ✓ Economic backwardness,
  - ✓ A declining or stagnant population.
- There are 75 Primitive Tribes in India. Odisha has the largest number of Tribes.



## LINGARAJ TEMPLE

GS-I ART & CULTURE

#### Context

• Recently, the Odisha government announced to give a facelift to the 11th century Lingaraj Temple to be renovated in similarity to its pre-350-year structural status.

**Details of Lingaraj temple** 

BUILT BY	Somavamsi Dynasty			
DEDICATED TO	Shiva			
ALTERNATE NAME	Ekamra Kshetra as the deity of Lingaraja was originally under a mango tree			
STYLE	Deula (element in a Hindu temple in the local style of Odisha temple in Eastern India.)			
COMPONENTS OF DEULA	<ul> <li>✓ Vimana (structure containing the sanctum),</li> <li>✓ Jagamohana (assembly hall),</li> <li>✓ Natamandira (festival hall) and</li> <li>✓ Bhoga-mandapa (hall of offerings)</li> </ul>			
ARCHITECTURE	Kalinga			
MAINTAINED BY	Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)			
RITUALS	Closely associated with nearby <b>Bindusagar Lake</b>			

## Somavamshi Dynasty

- Ruled parts of present-day Odisha in eastern India between the 9th and the 12th centuries.
- Their capitals included Yayatinagara (modern Binka) and Abhinava-Yayatinagara (modern Jajpur).
- Introduced a new style of art and architecture in Odisha.
- Their rule saw a remarkable shift from **Buddhism to Brahmanism in the region.**
- The Somavamshi rule ended in the early 12th century, when the Eastern Ganga ruler Anantavarman Chodaganga captured their territories.

## **ASI**

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is an agency attached to the Ministry of Culture.
- It is responsible for archaeological research and the conservation and preservation of cultural monuments in the country.
- It was founded in **1861 by Alexander Cunningham** who also became its first Director-General.



## REHRUPIYAS

## **GS-I INDIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE**

## Context

 Outbreak of Covid-19, has wreaked havoc on the livelihood and work of folk artists including Behrupiyas.

## Who are Behrupyias?

- The word behrupiya is a derivative of the Sanskrit word bahu (many) and roop (form).
- Behrupiyas are impersonators, mostly known to perform in villages and markets all over India.
- Currently, they are increasingly seen in stage shows, festivals and functions.

## **Behrupiya Festival**

 Takes place every year in a different locations- Delhi, Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Jaipur, Kumbh, Muzaffarnagar and others.

THEATRE	STATE
Bhand Pather	Kashmir
Nautanki	Uttar Pradesh
Maach	Madhya Pradesh
Bhavai	Gujarat
Jatra	West Bengal
Bhaona	Assam
Tamasha	Maharashtra
Dashavtar	Goa & Konkan
Krishanattam	Kerala
Koodiyatam	Kerala
Mudiyettu	Kerala
Yakshagana	Karnataka
Therukoothu	Tamil Nadu



In 2018 National Behrupiya Festival was organised by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

## **Significance**

- In the old days, Behrupiyas were the main source of entertainment everywhere—from village squares to royal courts.
- They assisted in circulating, transmitting and publicising the various knowledge forms in the popular domain of Samaj, the people.
- The vibrant tradition of **Ramlila is an extension of this practice** which continues even today.
- Due to their expertise with disguise and impersonation, good Behrupiyas were recruited as spies by medieval Indian Kings.

## YYARLI PAINTING

GS-I ART & CULTURE

## **Context**

• National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) a PSU under the Department of Fertilizers has displayed Warli painting on the outer walls of its Corporate Office to promote Indian Folk Art.

## WARLI PAINTING DETAILS

Origin	Maharashtra				
Depiction	Life and beliefs of the Warli tribe				
Technique Rudimentary wall paintings					
Usage of Geometric shapes such as circles, triangles and squares					
Pigment used White pigment made from a mixture of rice, clay paste and water, with gum as a binder					
Paint Brush Bamboo stick chewed at the end					
Background of Painting Brown. Mixture of mud and cow dung cakes					
Popular Theme Spiral chain of humans around one central motif.					
Dates back to 10th century A.D					
Central Concept Mother Nature					
Recently popularized by	ntly popularized by Padmashree Jivya Soma Mashe				

## **Warli Tribe**

- Indigenous tribe of Maharashtra-Gujarat border and surrounding areas.
- Animistic beliefs. Life, customs and traditions transformed as a result of acculturation. Adoption of many Hindu beliefs.
- Speak an unwritten Varli language which belongs to the southern zone of the Indo-Aryan languages.
- Traditionally semi-nomadic.
- Practice polygyny.



## MAHATMA AYYANKALI

GS-I MODERN HISTORY

## Context

· Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently paid tribute to social reformer Mahatma Ayyankali.

## Mahatma Ayyankali

- Social Reformer
- Worked for the advancement of deprived untouchable people in the princely state of Travancore,
   British India.
- Due to his efforts, Pulayars gained the right to access roads, temples and schools that were still inaccessible.
- Historian P. Sanal Mohan has described Ayyankali as "the most important Dalit leader of modern Kerala"
- Founded the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham (SJPS) (Association for the Protection of the Poor).
- It campaigned for access to schools and raised funds to set up Pulayar-operated schools in the interim.





- He prompted the Travancore government to issue an order mandating the admission of Dalit children in public schools in 1907.
- Sri Narayana Guru was his contemporary.
- Ayyankali led a rally to assert the rights of 'untouchables' at Balaramapuram. An 'upper caste' mob attacked them and a fight broke out.
- The walk Ayyankali took came to be known as 'walk for freedom' and the consequent riots as 'Chaliyar riots'.

## ARANIN DRANATH TAGORE

GS-I MODERN HISTORY

#### Context

• Recently, 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Abanindranath Tagore was celebrated.

#### **Contributions**

- Principal artist and creator of the "Indian Society of Oriental Art"
- First major exponent of Swadeshi values in Indian art.
- Founder of Bengal school of art, which led to the development of modern Indian painting.
- · Sought to modernise Mughal and Rajput styles to counter the influence of Western models of art.
- Abanindranath looked to ancient murals and medieval Indian miniatures for inspiration both for subject matter as well as indigenous material such as temper.
- He moved away from oil painting and subjects that were popular with British.
- Advocated in favour of a nationalistic Indian art derived from Indian art history, drawing inspiration from the Ajanta Caves.
- Nandalal Bose who illustrated the Constitution was Tagore's student.
- Integrated Chinese and Japanese calligraphic traditions in later works into his style.
- Books: Rajkahini, Budo Angla, Nalak, and Khirer Putul.
- Notable Paintings: Ganesh Janani, Bharat Mata, The Victory of Buddha, Asoka's Queen etc

The Bengal School of Artwas an art movement and a style of Indian painting that originated in Bengal, primarily Kolkata and Shantiniketan, and flourished throughout the Indian subcontinent, during the British Raj in the early 20th century. Also known as 'Indian style of painting' in its early days, it was associated with Indian nationalism (Swadeshi Movement) and led by Abanindranath Tagore. It was also promoted and supported by British arts administrators like E. B. Havell, the principal of the Government College of Art, Kolkata. Eventually it led to the development of the modern Indian painting.

## GAUTAM BUDDHA

**GS-I ANCIENT HISTORY** 

## Context

Recently, India & Nepal engaged in a war of words over the origin of Gautam Buddha.

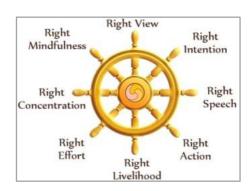
## **Important Places**

Birth of Siddhārtha Gautama	Lumbini, Nepal (566 BC)		
First sermon (Dharmachakra Pravartana)	Sarnath near Varanasi		
Shravasti	Spent 24 years		
Enlightenment (Nirvana)	Bodhgaya, Bihar		
Death (Mahaparinirvana)	Kushinagara (Uttar Pradesh)		

## Teaching Of Buddha

## (a) Four Noble Truths (Arya Satya's)

- 1. The world is full of sorrows (Sabbam Dukkam)
- 2. The cause of sorrow is desire (Dwadash Nidan)
- If desires are conquered, all sorrows can be removed (Nirvana)
- 4. This can be achieved by following the 8-fold path (Ashtangika Marga)





## c. Three Jewels (Triratnas)

- · Buddha (the enlightened)
- · Dhamma (doctrine)
- · Sangha (order)

## (d) Code of Conduct

- Do not covet the property of others
- · Do not commit violence
- · Do not use intoxicants
- Do not speak a lie
- Do not indulge in corrupt practices

(e) Belief in Nirvana (f) Belief in Ahimsa

## **Buddhist Scriptures**

## Hinayana Literature (in Pali)

- Triptikas
- 1. Vinaya Pitaka rules of monastic discipline for monks
- 2. Sutra Pitaka collection of Buddha's sermon
- 3. Abhidhamma Pitaka Philosophies of buddha's teachings

## Sects of Buddhism

- Vajrayana
- ➤Its followers believed that salvation could be attained by magical power, which they called vajra
- The chief divinity of the sect is Taras. Bengal and Bihar was the main area of concentration.
- Hinayana : The Lesser Vehicle • Mahayana : The Greater Vehicle

Buddhist	Location	Founder
Universities		
Valanda	Badagaon, Bihar	Kumaragupta-
Vikramshila	Bhagalpur, Bihar	Dharmapala
Somapuri	North Bengal	Dharmapala
agadal	Bengal	Ramapala
Odantpuri	Bihar Sharif, Bihar	Gopala
Vallabhi	Gujarat	Bhattarka

## Bodhisattvas

- 1. Vajrapani (holds thunderbolt)
- 2. Avlokitesvara/Padmapani (lotus bearer)
- 3. Manjushri (holds books describing 10 paramitas)
- 4. Kshitigrha (guardian of purgatories)
- 5. Maitreya (the future Buddha)
- 6. Amitabha/Amitayusha (The Buddha of heaven)

Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who postpone their own salvation in order to help all sentient being

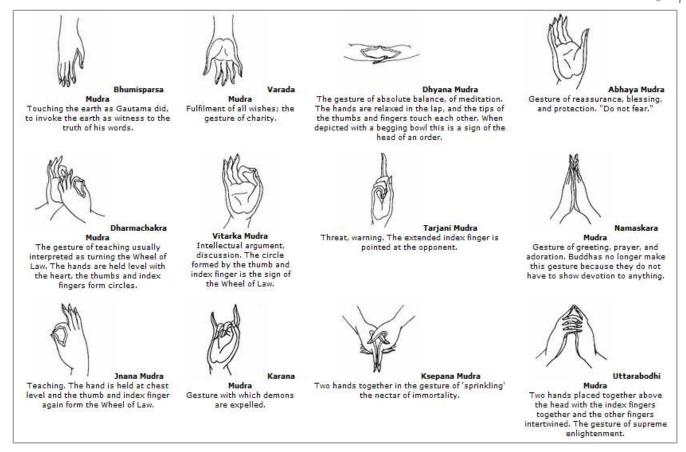
## **Buddhist Councils**

Buddh ist Counc il	yea r	venue	chairma n	Royal Patro n	Developments
1st council	483 BC	Saptaparn i cave, Rajgriha	Mahakassaa p a	Ajatashatr u	Compilation of sutta and vinaya pitaka
2nd council	383 BC	Vaishali	Sabakami	Kalasoka	Monks were split into sthavirmadins & maha sanghikas
3rd council	250 BC	Pataliput ra	Mogaliputta Tissa	Ashoka	Compilation of Abhidhamma pitaka
4th council	Ad 72	Kundalva n, kashmir	Vasumitra and ashwaghosha	Kanishka	Division of Buddhists into Hinayana & Mahayana

## Mudrā

- Buddhas and bodhisattvas often are depicted in Buddhist art with stylized hand gestures called mudras.
- The word "mudra" is Sanskrit for "seal" or "sign," and each mudra has a specific meaning.
- Buddhists sometimes use these symbolic gestures during rituals and meditation.





## INDIAN NATIONAL FLAG

GS-I MODERN HISTORY

## **Context**

Recently, birth anniversary of Pingali Venkayya was observed.

## Pingali Venkayya

Pingali Venkayya was an Indian freedom fighter and the designer of the flag on which today's Indian national flag is based.

## **Evolution of Indian National Flag**





Flag of 'Bhagini (Sister) Nivedita - 1905





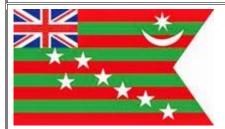
## Unofficial flag of India in 1906

The first national flag in India is said to have been hoisted on August 7, 1906, in the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park) in Calcutta now Kolkata. The flag was composed of three horizontal strips of red, yellow and green.



# The Berlin committee flag, first raised by Bhikaiji Cama in 1907

The second flag was hoisted in Paris by Madame Cama and her band of exiled revolutionaries in 1907. This was very similar to the first flag except that the top strip had only one lotus but seven stars denoting the Saptarishi. This flag was also exhibited at a socialist conference in Berlin.



## The flag used during the Home Rule movement in 1917

The third flag went up in 1917 when our political struggle had taken a definite turn. Dr. Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak hoisted it during the Home rule movement. This flag had five red and four green horizontal strips arranged alternately, with seven stars in the saptarishi configuration super-imposed on them. In the left-hand top corner (the pole end) was the Union Jack. There was also a white crescent and star in one corner.



## The flag unofficially adopted in 1921

During the session of the All India Congress Committee which met at Bezwada in 1921 (now Vijayawada) Pingali Venkayyaprepared a flag and took it to Gandhiji. It was made up of two colours-red and green-representing the two major communities i.e. Hindus and Muslims. Gandhiji suggested the addition of a white strip to represent the remaining communities of India and the spinning wheel to symbolise progress of the Nation.



# The flag adopted in 1931. This flag was also the battle ensign of the Indian National Army

The year 1931 was a landmark in the history of the flag. A resolution was passed adopting a tricolor flag as our national flag. This flag, the forbear of the present one, was saffron, white and green with Mahatma Gandhi's spinning wheel at the center. It was, however, clearly stated that it bore no communal significance and was to be interpreted thus.



Flag of Azad Hind Sena





## Official flag of independent India

**On July 22, 1947,** the Constituent Assembly adopted it as Free India National Flag. After the advent of Independence, the colors and their significance remained the same. Only the Dharma Charkha of Emperor Asoka was adopted in place of the spinning wheel as the emblem on the flag.

## **Colours of the Flag**

- In the national flag of India the top band is of Saffron colour, indicating the strength and courage of the country.
- The white middle band indicates peace and truth with Dharma Chakra.
- The last band is green in colour shows the fertility, growth and auspiciousness of the land.

#### The Chakra

• This Dharma Chakra depicted the "wheel of the law" in the Sarnath Lion Capital made by the 3rd-century BC Mauryan Emperor Ashoka. The chakra intends to show that there is life in movement and death in stagnation.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HYDERARAD

GS-I ART & CULTURE

#### Context

• Recently, Ministry of Tourism's DekhoApnaDesh Webinar Series reached a landmark of 50th session with the webinar titled "Cultural heritage of Hyderabad".

## **Aim of Webinars**

- To create awareness & promote various tourism destinations of India including the lesser known destinations.
- It also promotes spirit of Ek Bharat Sreshtha Bharat.

## **History of Hyderabad**

- Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (Delhi Sultanate) established Hyderabad in 1591 to extend the capital beyond the fortified Golconda.
- In 1687, the city was annexed by the Mughals.
- In 1724, Mughal governor Nizam Asaf Jah I declared his sovereignty and founded the Asaf Jahi dynasty, also known as the Nizams.
- Hyderabad served as the imperial capital of the Asaf Jahis from 1769 to 1948.
- Hyderabad was integrated into the Indian Union in 1948 and continued as a capital of Hyderabad State (1948–56).
   (Operation Polo- Operation Polo was the code name of the Hyderabad "police action" in September 1948, by the then newly independent Dominion of India. It was a military operation annexing Hyderabad into the Indian Union.)

## Significance of Hyderabad

- Charminar symbolises the city.
- Painting, handicraft, jewellery, literature, dialect and clothing are prominent still today. Through its cuisine, the city is listed as a **UNESCO** creative city of gastronomy.
- Until the 19th century Hyderabad was known for the pearl industry and was nicknamed the "City of Pearls".
- It was the only Golconda Diamonds trading centre in the world.
- Since the 1990s, the city has emerged as an Indian hub of pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.
- The City is famous for edible silver foil, Zardozi work, Calligraphy etc.

## Important cultural sites of Hyderabad

1) **Golconda Fort, Hyderabad**- a fortified citadel and an early capital city of the Qutb Shahi dynasty. Because of the vicinity of **Kollur Mine**, Golconda flourished as a trade centre of Golconda Diamonds. The region has produced some of the world's most famous diamonds, including the colourless Koh-i-Noor. Golconda Fort was first built by **the Kakatiyas**.





- 2) Chowmahalla Palace- Once the seat of the AsafJahi Dynasty. Chowmahalla Palace, has bagged the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Merit Award for Culture Heritage Conservation.
- 3) Charminar- The monument was erected when QuliQutab Shah shifted his capital from Golcondo to Hyderabad.
- 4) Purani Haveli- known for its remarkable exhibits of artwork and talent.
- 5) Mecca Masjid- Completed by Aurangazeb in 1693. The bricks used here are believed to be from Mecca, and hence the name.
- **6) QutubShahi Tombs** Located in the Ibrahim Bagh, QutubShahi Tombs are a group of small and big mosques and tombs built by the rulers of the Qutub Shah dynasty.
- **7)** Paigah tombs- Paigah Tombs are a group of tombs of the Paigah royal family.
- **8)** Salar Jung Museum- Is an art museum established in the year 1951 and located on the southern bank of the Musi River in the city of Hyderabad.
- **9) Warangal Fort** This fort existed since at least the 12th century when it was the capital of the Kakatiya dynasty. The fort has four ornamental gates, known as Kakatiya Kala Thoranam, that originally formed the entrances to a now ruined great Shiva temple.



GS-I GEOGRAPHY

#### **Context**

Recently, Indonesia's Mount Sinabung volcano erupted.

#### **Mount Sinabaug**

- Mount Sinabung is a Pleistocene-to-Holocene stratovolcano in the Karo plateau, North Sumatra, Indonesia.
- It is 40 kilometres from the **Lake Toba supervolcano**.

#### Why do volcanoes erupt?

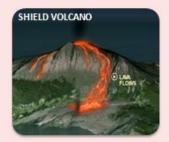
- A volcano can be active, dormant or extinct. An eruption takes place when magma (a thick flowing substance), formed when
  the earth's mantle melts, rises to the surface.
- Because magma is lighter than solid rock, it is able to rise through vents and fissures on the surface of the earth. After it has erupted, it is called lava.

## Are all volcanoes explosive?

- Not all volcanic eruptions are explosive, since explosivity depends on the composition of the magma.
- When the magma is runny and thin, gases can easily escape it, in which case, the magma will flow out towards the surface.
- If the magma is thick and dense, gases cannot escape it, which builds up pressure inside until the gases escape in a violent explosion.



#### **Types of Volcano**







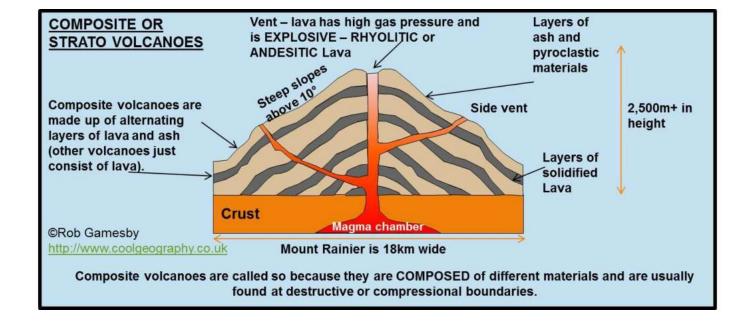


- Eruption Style: gentle, lots of magma, lava fountains and bombs.
- Magma: hot, low viscosity (runny), fast moving,
- · Gas: low levels, can escape from magma.
- Shape: wide and low with gently sloping sides (from layers of lava flows cooling)
- Example: Mauna Loa, Hawaii.

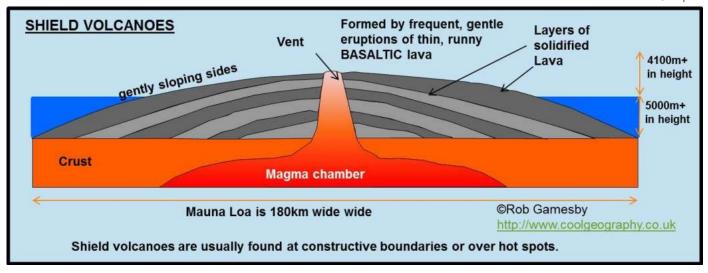
- Eruption Style: mildly explosive, erupt lava from a breach in side or base of volcano, gas-filled lava cools to become cinders.
- Magma: low viscosity, hot, soft.
- Gas: expands and forms bubbles in lava, high levels.
- Shape: steep sides, small crater, surrounded by debris of small red or black basalt rocks with little holes (rock solidifies around bubbles)
- Example: Paricutin, Mexico.

- Eruption Style: explosive, violent, lava flows, lahar, pyroclastic flows, cinders and ash clouds.
- Magma: slightly cooler, thick and sticky, very viscous, foams and explodes violently.
- Gas: high levels, pressure from gas bubbles trying to escape.
- Shape: regular shape, steep sided cones, rough landscape, layers of lava, rock and ash make it tall.
- Example: Mt Fuji, Japan.

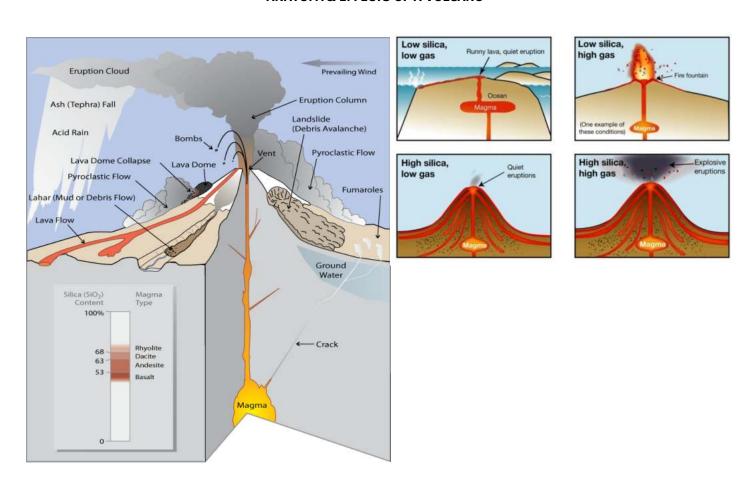
- Eruption Style: slow, can be violent, lava does not flow
- Magma: highly viscous.
- Gas: low levels.
- Shape: hardened, thick layers of rock.
- Example: Mt St Helens, USA







#### ANATOMY& EFFECTS OF A VOLCANO

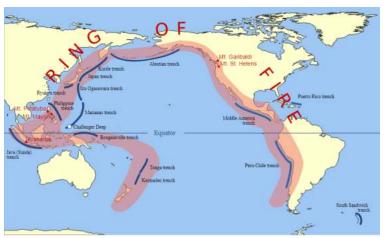


## Why is Indonesia prone to Volcanoes?

- The geography of Indonesia is dominated by volcanoes that are formed due to **subduction zones between the Eurasian** plate and the Indo-Australian plate.
- It is situated on the "Ring of Fire", or the Circum-Pacific Belt, which is an area along the Pacific Ocean characterised by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes.
- The Ring of Fire is home to about 75 per cent of the world's volcanoes and about 90 per cent of its earthquakes.
- Notable volcanic eruptions: Krakatoa for its global effects in 1883, the Lake Toba Caldera (supervolcanic eruption estimated to have occurred 74,000 years before present which was responsible for six years of volcanic winter), and Mount Tambora for the most violent eruption **in recorded history** in 1815.
- The most active volcanoes are Kelud and Merapi on Java island.
- Kelud has erupted more than 30 times, while Mount Merapi has erupted more than 80 times.

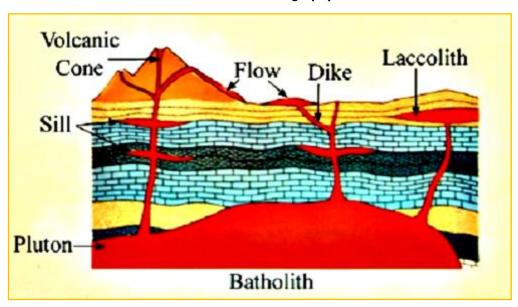








Intrusive Volcanic Landforms
Refer: NCERT Geography



NATESA

**GS-I ART & CULTURE** 

## Context

- A rare sandstone idol of the 9th century Prathihara style, is returning to the country after 22 years.
- Called as Natesa, it was stolen in 1998. Eventually, a London collector J. Kasmin, who had possession of it in 2003, handed it over to the Indian High Commission.

## **About Natesa**

- The sandstone Natesa figure stands tall at almost 4 ft.
- It is a rare and brilliant depiction of Shiva in the late 9th century Prathihara style of Rajasthan.
- A depiction of Nandi is shown behind the right leg of the Natesa icon.

## **Gurjara Pratihara**







Most successful under	Nagabhata II
Capital	Kannauj
Language	Sanskrit & Prakrit
Contemporaries	Gupta, Rashtrakuta, Pala
Known for	Sculptures, carved panels and open pavilion style temples.
Greatest development	Khajuraho, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site
Last important king	Rajyapala
De-established by	Mahmud of Ghazni in 1018



## TRIBAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS' MUSEUMS

GS-I MODERN HISTORY

#### **Context**

Ministry of Tribal Affairs is developing "Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums" dedicated to the contributions of the Tribal people
in India to the freedom struggle.

#### **Details**

- Tribal Resistance Movement was an integral part of Freedom movement of India.
- In this historic struggle, the heroic role played by many distinguished tribal leaders like BirsaMunda, Rani Gaidinliu, LaxmanNaik, and Veer SurendraSai and many others.

## Rani Gaidinilu

- She joined the Heraka religious movement at the age of 13.
- The movement later turned into political movement in Manipur and areas of Naga.
- The Heraka movement was started by her cousin Haipou Jadonang.
- Rani Gaidinilu became the leader of Guerrila forces fighting against the British.

## **Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh**

- He spearheaded the 1857 war of Indian independence in Chhattisgarh.
- He is also called "The first Chhattisgarhi Freedom Fighter".
- He looted grain stocks and distributed it to the poor during famine.
- He was executed by the British in December 1857.

## Birsa Munda

- He spearheaded a **tribal religious movement** that arose in the Bengal Presidency (now Jharkhand) in the late 19th century.
- The revolt mainly concentrated in the Munda belt of Khunti, Tamar, Sarwada and Bandgaon.
- Having gained awareness of the British colonial ruler and the efforts of the missionaries to convert tribals to Christianity,
   Birsa started the faith of 'Birsait'.
- Soon members of the Munda and Oraon community started joining the Birsait sect and it turned into a challenge to British conversion activities.
- He also raised his voice against the Indian Forest Act, 1882.
- Thus, Birsa, became a part of the anti-missionary and anti-government program.

## Alluri Sitarama Raju

- After the passing of the 1882 Madras Forest Act, its restrictions on the free movement of tribal people in the forest prevented them from engaging in their traditional podu agricultural system, which involved shifting cultivation.
- Thus, Alluri led the Rampa Rebellion of 1922.

## **Bhima Nayak**

He fought against the British in the Indian Rebellion of 1857. He was also known as Nimad's Robin Hood.

## **Tantia Bhīl**

Tantia Bhīl was labeled as a dacoit (bandit) by British Govt.

States where Tribal Freedom Fighters'
Museum have been sanctioned:

S. N.	State	Location
1	Gujarat	Rajpipla
2	Jharkhand	Ranchi
3	Andhra	Lambasingi
	Pradesh	
4	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
5	Kerala	Kozhikode
6	Madhya	Chhindwara
	Pradesh	
7	Telangana	Hyderabad
8	Manipur	Senapati
9.	Mizoram	Mualngo, Kelsih





But is recognized by Indians as a heroic figure. Accounts of both eras have described him as an Indian "Robin Hood".

#### Ramii Gond

- Ramji Gond fought a guerrilla campaign against the British Indian government to preserve his Gond kingdom.
- Nizam of Hyderabad Asaf Jah V, the British feudatory of the region, wanted to capture the Gond kingdom.
- Ramji took up arms against the Nizam's soldiers as well. His army, which included Rohilla and Gond soldiers defeated the Nizam's forces.

#### **Lakshman Naik**

- Nayak organised the rebels successfully against exploitation by the officials of **Jeypore Samasthanam**(Kingdom of Jeypore in Kalinga Region).
- He believed in Gandhian principles of truth, nonviolence and peaceful non-cooperation with the British Government.
- He carried a charkha, with the message of adult education and abstinence from alcohol to every tribal household of his area and brought about a total change in the rural scenario.
- He became the leader of mission in the Congress campaign in the Koraput Sub-division during the first ever election in 1936
- During Quit India Movement Nayak led a procession.

## **Veer Surinder Sai**

- He resisted the British and successfully protected most parts of Western Odisha region for some time from the British rule.
- Sai espoused the cause of the downtrodden tribal people in Sambalpur by promoting their language and culture in response to the higher castes and the British trying to exploit them to establish their political power in Sambalpur region.



GS-I ART & CULTURE

#### Context

Recently, the World Urdu Conference was organised by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL).

## Urdu

URDU DETAILS

Initial Development	During 'Delhi Sultanate' from 12th to 16th century	
Evolution	Apabhraṃśa register of the preceding Shauraseni language - a Middle Indo-Arya language	
First Major Poet	Amir Khusrau	
Spoken today in	India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal	
Status in India	Belongs to 8th Schedule of the Constitution	
One of the Official languages of	Kashmir, Telangana, UP, Bihar, New Delhi and West Bengal	
Speaker Base	44 million	

## **National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language**

- The National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language is an autonomous regulatory body in the Government of India.
- It is the main authority of Urdu language and education in India, being one of two authorities responsible for the regulation of Urdu.

## **Functions and objectives**

- To make available knowledge of scientific and technological development and ideas evolved in the modern context in Urdu
- Promotion of the Urdu language
- Provide diplomas in Urdu
- Increase IT literacy in Urdu
- Provide Publications in Urdu
- Provide Fund for Urdu related Seminars/ Workshops Etc.





## GALAPAGOS ISLAND

GS-I GEOGRAPHY

#### Context

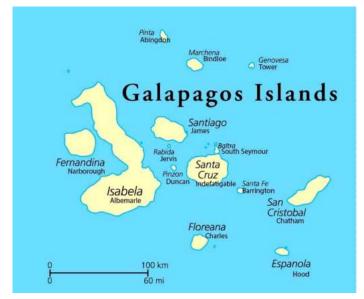
• Ecuador is on alert due to the appearance of a huge fleet of mostly Chinese-flagged fishing vessels off its Galapagos Islands.

#### **Galapagos Islands**

- Galapagos Islands are an archipelago of volcanic islands distributed on either side of the equator in the Pacific Ocean surrounding the centre of the Western Hemisphere. (off the west coast of South America.)
- The group consists of 18 main islands, 3 smaller islands, and 107 rocks and islets.
  - ✓ Archipelago is a chain, cluster or collection of islands.

## **Features**

- The islands are known for their large number of endemic species.
- Volcanism has been continuous on the Galápagos Islands.
- Located at the confluence of three ocean currents, the Galápagos are a 'melting pot' of marine species.
- Ecuador designated part of the Galapagos a wildlife sanctuary in 1935, and in 1959 the sanctuary became the Galapagos National Park.
- In 1978 the islands were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- In 1986 the Galapagos Marine Resources Reserve was created to protect the surrounding waters.
- Mount Azul, at 5,541 feet (1,689 metres) is the highest point of the Galapagos Islands.
- The archipelago is located on Nazca Plate& the islands are located at the Galapagos Triple Junction.
- Galápagos marine iguana, is a species of iguana found only on the Galápagos Islands (Ecuador).
- Unique among modern lizards, it is a marine reptile that has the ability to forage in the sea for algae.
- Algae makes up almost all of its diet. IUCN Status: Vulnerable



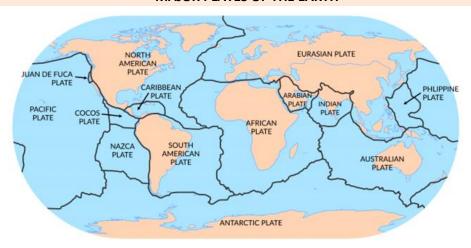


## **Galapagos Triple Junction**

- The **Galapagos Triple Junction** is a geological area in the eastern Pacific Ocean several hundred miles west of the Galapagos Islands where three tectonic plates the **Cocos Plate, the Nazca Plate and the Pacific Plate meet**.
- The Galapagos Microplate and the Northern Galapagos Microplate, are caught in the junction, turning synchronously with respect to each other and separated by the Hess Deep rift.



## **MAJOR PLATES OF THE EARTH**



## AGATITISLAND.

## GS-I GEOGRAPHY

#### What is in news?

- Recently, National Green Tribunal has granted an interim stay on felling of coconut trees in Agatti Island in Lakshadweep for the purpose of forming a beach road.
- It has constituted a committee to find out whether there has been any violation of the Integrated Island Management Plan of Lakshadweep.

## Chettlatt Bitra ▶ Kilttan Perumalpar Amindivi Agatti Kadamatt \* Andrott 5 Cardamom Suheli Kalpeni Nine Degree Channel Thiruvananthapuram Minicoy -8°N Eight Degree Channel Cape Comorin

## **Agatti Islands**

 Agatti Island is an island, situated on a coral atoll called Agatti atoll in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep.

✓ An atoll is a ring-shaped coral reef, island, or series of islets. An atoll surrounds a body of water called a lagoon.

LAKSHADWEEP	FEATURES	
Location	200 to 440 km off Kerala Coast. North of Maldives-Chagos group of islands.	
Surface Area	32 KM <sup>2</sup> (smallest Union Territory of India)	
Capital	Kavaratti	
Jurisdiction	Kerala High Court	
Population	64,473 (2011 Census) Majority- Muslim	
Occupation	Fishing and coconut cultivation	
Oldest Inhabited Islands here	Amini, Kalpeni Andrott, Kavaratti, and Agatti	
Largest Island	Minicoy	
11 Degree Channel	Separates Amini & Cannanore Island	
8 Degree Channel	Forms boundary between Minicoy & Maldives	
Maximum elevation of Islands	5m above sea level (Extremely Vulnerable to sea level change)	
Туре	Coral islands (Part of Reunion Hotspot volcanism)	
Northernmost Island	Amendivi Islands	
Southernmost Island	Minicoy island	
Topography	Flat. Absence of features like hills, streams, valleys, etc.	
Total No. of Islands in the group	25	

Note: Karavatti has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as asmart city under Govt's flagship Smart Cities Mission.



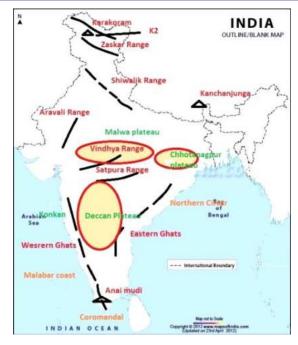
## ARAVALLI RANGE

## GS-I GEOGRAPHY

#### **Context**

Using leaf vines, women and children tied symbolic rakhi to the trees and took an oath to protect the Aravalli forests.

ARAVALLI RANGE	FEATURES	
Location	Starts near Delhi, passes through Haryanaand Rajasthan.Ends in Gujarat.	
Direction	South-West	
Highest peak	Guru Shikhar (1,722 metres (5,650 ft)	
Туре	Oldest range of Fold Mountains in the World &India	
Composed of	metasedimentary rock (sedimentary rocks metamorphised under pressure and heat without melting) and metavolcanic rock	
Passes	Pipli Ghat, Dewair and Desuri	
Rivers flowing through it	Banas and Sahibi (tributaries of Yamuna), & Luni River	
Major Nature Reserves	Sultanpur National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Ranthambore National Park, Mount Abu Wildlife Sanctuary, Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary	





## GS-I GEOGRAPHY

## Context

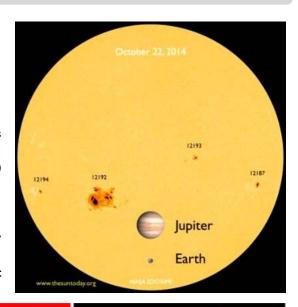
A massive Sunspot group, AR2770, was observed recently.

## What are Sunspots?

- Sunspots are areas that appear dark on the surface of the Sun.
- Sunspots are temporary phenomena on the Sun's photosphere.
- They appear dark because they are cooler than other parts of the Sun's surface.
- The temperature of a sunspot is still very hot though—around 6,500 degrees Fahrenheit!

## Why sunspots are relatively cool?

- It's because they form at areas where magnetic fields are particularly strong.
- These magnetic fields are so strong that they keep some of the heat within the Sun from reaching the surface.



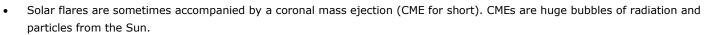


#### When are sunspots visible?

- Sunspots are a common sight on our Sun during the years around solar maximum.
- Solar maximum or solar max is the period of greatest solar activity in the solar cycle of the Sun, where one solar cycle lasts about 11 years.
- Around solar minimum, only very few or even no sunspots can be found.
- Sunspots form where magnetic field lines come up from the Sun's interior trough the solar surface meaning that every sunspot has its own polarity.
- A sunspot consists of two parts:
  - The dark part (umbra)
  - Lighter part around the dark part (penumbra)

## **Solar Flares**

- The magnetic field lines near sunspots often tangle, cross, and reorganize. This can cause a sudden explosion of energy called a solar flare.
- Solar flares release a lot of radiation into space. If a solar flare is very intense, the radiation it releases can interfere with our radio communications here on Earth.



They explode into space at very high speed when the Sun's magnetic field lines suddenly reorganize.

## **Effects of Solar Activity on Earth**

- When charged particles from a CME reach areas near Earth, they can trigger intense lights in the sky, called auroras.
- When particularly strong, a CME can also interfere in power utility grids, which at their worst can cause electricity shortages and power outages.
- Solar flares and CMEs are the most powerful explosions in our solar system.



## ROREAL SUMMER INTRA SEASONAL OSCILLATION

GS-I GEOGRAPHY

## Context

• Researchers at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad have reportedly found a way to better forecast waves using BSISO.

## What is BSISO?

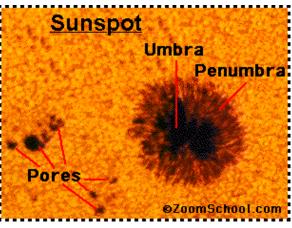
- BSISO is the movement of convection (heat) from Indian Ocean to western Pacific Ocean roughly every 10-50 days during the monsoon (June-September).
- They represent the monsoon's 'active' and 'break' periods, in which weeks of heavy rainfall give way to brilliant sunshine before starting all over again.
- The active phase also enhances monsoon winds and hence the surface waves.

## **Findings**

- The team used mathematical data-analysis models to study the relationship between various phases of BSISO and the height of waves.
- They found that waves induced by active phases of BSISO are nearly 0.5 meters higher than those which occur during other phases of BSISO.
- The active phases of BSISO occur between June and August which are the monsoon summer months.

## The method

- Active phases of boreal summer intra seasonal oscillation or BSISO induce high wave activity in north Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea.
- This will help improve wave forecasts along India's coasts and mitigate adverse impacts of high waves (coastal flooding, erosion, etc).
- Sea-navigation routes can also be better planned.





• It will aid in developing seasonal and climate forecast service for waves and coastal erosion for India.

Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) is an autonomous organization of the Government of India, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. INCOIS is mandated to provide the best possible ocean information and advisory services to society, industry, government agencies and the scientific community through sustained ocean observations and constant improvements through systematic and focused research.

## **RRAHMAPUTRA RIVER**

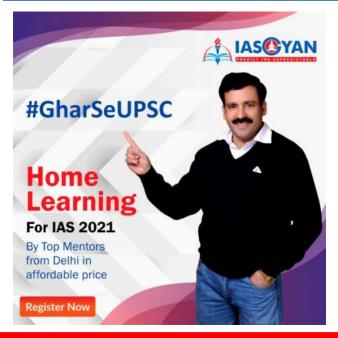
GS-I GEOGRAPHY

#### **Context**

India's 'longest' river ropeway was unveiled in Guwahati,
 Assam. It is built across river Brahmaputra.



BRAHMAPUTRA	FEATURES	
Source	Chemayungdung Glacier- Kailas Range (SE of Mansarovar Lake)	
Туре	Transboundary River	
Names	Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet, Siang/Dihang River in Arunachal Pradesh and Luit, Dilao in	
	Assam	
Flows through	Tibet, India and Bangladesh.	
Left Bank Tributaries	Dibang River, called by Dimasa tribe , Lohit River, Dhansiri River, Kolong River	
Right Bank Tributaries	Kameng River, Manas River, Beki River, Raidak River, Jaldhaka River, Teesta River,	
	Subansiri River	
Enters India	At Namcha Barwa (Arunachal Pradesh)	
Size	Volume wise largest river of India	
Forms	Largest no. of fresh water riverine islands in the world. Majuli (largest in the world)	
Enters Bangladesh	Near Dhubri (Assam)	







## ылт

## NATIONAL RECRUITMENT AGENCY INRA)

GS-II POLITY

#### **Context**

• The Union Cabinet **approved the proposal to set up the National Recruitment Agency (NRA),** marking a paradigm shift in government recruitment.

## **About the agency**

- National Recruitment Agency will be a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act.
- It will be headed by a Chairman of the rank of the Secretary to the Government of India.
- It will have representatives of Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance/Department of Financial Services, the SSC, RRB & IBPS.
- The Government has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1517.57 crore for the National Recruitment Agency (NRA).

## Features of the Common Eligibility Test (CET)

- The NRA will conduct the Common Eligibility Test (CET) for recruitment to non-gazetted posts in government and public sector banks.
- This test aims to replace multiple examinations conducted by different recruiting agencies for selection to government jobs advertised each year, with single online test.
- The Common Eligibility Test will be held twice a year.
- There will be different CETs for graduate level, 12th Pass level and 10th pass level to facilitate recruitment to vacancies at various levels.
- The **CET will be conducted in 12 major Indian languages.** This is a major change, as hitherto examinations for recruitment to Central Government jobs were held only in English and Hindi.
- To begin with CET will cover recruitments made by three agencies: viz. Staff Selection Commission, Railway Recruitment Board and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection. This will be expanded in a phased manner.
- CET will be held in 1,000 centres across India in a bid to remove the currently prevalent urban bias.
- There will be an examination centre in every district of the country.
- There will be a special thrust on creating examination infrastructure in the 117 aspirational districts.
- CET will be a first level test to shortlist candidates and the score will be valid for three years.
- There **shall be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate** to appear in the CET subject to the upper age limit.
- Age relaxation for SC/ST and OBC candidates as per existing rules will apply.
- CET will **work as a screening test**, and based on the CET score level, final selection for recruitment shall be made through separate specialised tier one and tier two exams, which shall be conducted by the respective recruitment agencies.
- The scores would be open for other agencies in the public as well as private domain to adopt it if they so choose.

## **Advantages**

- Removes the hassle of appearing in multiple examinations.
- Single examination fee would reduce financial burden that multiple exams imposed.
- Since exams will be held in every district, it would substantially save travel and lodging cost for the candidates.
- Examination in their own district would encourage more and more women candidates also to apply for government jobs.
- Applicants are required to register on a single Registration portal.
- No need to worry about clashing of examination dates.
- Removes the hassle of conducting preliminary / screening test of candidates.
- Drastically reduces the recruitment cycle.
- Brings standardization in examination pattern.
- Reduces costs for different recruiting agencies. Rs 600 crore savings expected.

## SUB-CATEGORISATION UNDER SC-ST

GS-II POLITY

## **Context**

Supreme Court has allowed sub-classification of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Central List.



#### Verdict

- States can sub-classify Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Central List to provide preferential treatment to the "weakest of the weak".
- Citizens cannot be treated to be socially and educationally backward till perpetuity.
- Those who have come up must be excluded like the creamy layer.
- It was a contrary view to a 2004 judgment delivered by another Coordinate Bench of five judges in the E.V.
   Chinnaiah case.
- Court held that sub-classifications within the Presidential/Central List does not amount to tinkering with it as no
  caste is excluded from the list.

## **About Chinnaiah judgment**

- It had held that allowing the States to unilaterally make a class within a class of members of the Scheduled Castes would amount to tinkering with the Presidential list.
- The court had called the Presidential list "homogenous" and said only Parliament can exclude a caste or a part or group of castes from this list

#### **About President List**

- The Central List of Scheduled Castes and Tribes is notified by the President under Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution.
- Consent of the Parliament is required to exclude or include castes in the List.
- In short, States cannot unilaterally add or pull out castes from the List.

#### **Origin of the Central list**

- According to the Constitution of India, under article 341(1), the President of India, after consultation with the
  Governor, may specify, "the castes, races, tribes or parts of groups within castes or races, which shall be
  deemed to be Scheduled Castes".
- Accordingly, the President has notified the Scheduled Castes in the order called 'Constitution (Scheduled Castes)
   Order-1950' and the 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List (Modification) Order-1956.
- The **complete list of castes and tribes was made on order of 1950** which had certain norms and criteria for inclusion of other community later.
- The list of Scheduled tribe was completely updated by 1958 with 744 enlisted tribes

## Amendment to the Central List

- Inclusion or exclusion of any caste subsequent to the President Order can be done only by an act of Parliament.
- In the case of SCs the criteria is untouchability. In the case of STs, the community must be shown to be a tribe which is isolated, and lives in vulnerable conditions. This has to be proved anthropologically.
- This is ensured by the long established process of referring every proposal for inclusion in the SC and ST list to the Registered General of India (RGI) that has an expert anthropological wing.
- Following this, the government moves a bill in the Parliament.

## **Debate on Creamy Layer**

- The concept has its genesis in a 1992 Supreme Court judgment in Indira Sawhney v Union of India.
- In the case, a nine-judge bench had upheld reservations for OBCs, but ruled that 'creamy layer' among backward class of citizens must be excluded "by fixation of proper income, property or status criteria" by the central government.
- It asserted that on these specifications, the people falling in the creamy layer would cease to be members of the backward class of citizens.

## **Sub-classification equal to exclusion?**

- The question was raised because Articles 341(2), 342(2) and 342A(2) allows only the Parliament to make a law for excluding or including any castes, tribes, races, tribal communities or groups from these Presidential lists.
- Court held that the preferential treatment would not amount to excluding other classes.

## **Need for it**

- SC list contains many castes and cannot be treated as a homogeneous group.
- There are sections of caste under Schedule caste for whom benefits of reservation has not trickled after 5
  decades of independence.
- If creamy layer can exist in backward class, it should also exist for other classes too.





- Many states already want to give the sub classification namely Punjab and Tamil Nadu. Now, they will be able to so.
- It will lead to better representation of the most marginalised section.
- There are existing hierarchy even in the SC which needs to be corrected.

#### Challenges

- Focus should be on better representation of the marginalised groups than dividing the Schedule caste into creamy and non – creamy layer.
- Supreme Court argument doesn't accept the reality that mere educational and economic mobility doesn't take away one from the clutches of caste oppression.
- It would lead to weakening of the demands for the rights of schedule caste as they will themselves be divided.

#### **Future**

• Now with two numerically equal Benches of judges holding contrary viewpoints, the issue has been referred to a sevenjudge Bench of the court.

## QUOTA FOR ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTION

GS-II POLITY

#### **Context**

The Supreme Court has referred to a five-judge Bench, the substantial question of law whether the grant of 10% reservation to economically weaker sections of the society is unconstitutional and violates the 50% ceiling cap on quota declared by the court itself.

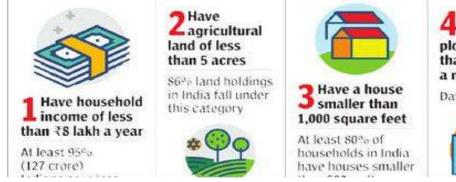
#### **About the EWS Quota**

- The Constitution (103rd Amendment) Act provides for 10% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions for the economically weaker section in the unreserved category.
- The Act amends Article 15 and 16 to provide for reservation based on economic backwardness.

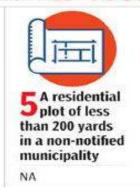
## **Criteria for EWS reservation**

- It is in addition to 50% reservation already provided to SC, ST and OBC communities.
- Declaration of EWS is based on fulfilling of following criteria:
  - Income should be less than 8 Lakh per annum.
  - One should not have more than 5 acre farm land.
  - Home size should be less than 1000 sq. feet.

## YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE 10% RESERVATION IF YOU:







## Petitioner's argument

- This move violates the 50% cap applied by Supreme Court for allowing reservation in Indira Swahney judgement.
- It is unconstitutional in nature since economic basis can't be the criteria for providing reservation.

## **Government argument**

- It is in the line with affirmative action as class system in the globalised world is akin to caste system.
- 50% cap applied by Supreme Court is **applicable for caste based reservation**. Constitution amendment has made it non applicable on this provision.





 Centre has highlighted that many committees have suggested providing an economic basis as a criteria of reservation.

#### **Positives of EWS reservation**

- It **provides legitimacy to already existing reservation**. Now, universities won't be segregated between merit candidates and reserved communities.
- It is secular in nature and includes all religions: Muslims, Christians
- Economic justice is the philosophy behind it. In an increasing economic society, class becomes a tool of oppression.
- It address contemporary reservation movements like Jats reservation, Patel reservation.
- 8 Lakh is creamy layer identified in OBC reservation. Hence, 8 Lakh is justified as a basis of class criteria.

#### Concerns/drawbacks of EWS reservation

- It violates Indira Swahney judgement of Supreme Court which applied 50% cap on the reservation.
- **Social justice has been the philosophy behind** reservation. Upper caste are at the top of caste pyramid and doesn't require any reservation.
- It is not based on any scientific data. A survey of 450 educational institutions had found 28% students belonging to EWS section.
- The criteria qualifies around 90-95% population.
- The reservation doesn't make any sense when jobs are on the rise in private sector. Public sector is already declining and not creating many jobs.
- This reservation move can be abused by changing the economic status by selling property or showing lower income.

#### **Conclusion**

- Administration must ensure that non-deserving population doesn't get the EWS certificate.
- Genuine poor and needy section should get the opportunity.

## PRADHAN MANTRIJAN AROGYA YOJANA (PALJAY)

GS-II POLITY

## Context

 According to official data, the nationwide lockdown had a significant negative impact on inpatient care utilisation under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

## **Official Data**

- Decline of claim volume by more than 50% due to lower hospitals visit in wake of Pandemic.
- Declines in admissions for child delivery and oncology because of the fear factor of coronavirus.
- A sharp fall in cardiovascular surgeries.
- slight shift from public to private hospitals for neo-natal care

## Reasons behind the decline

- Preoccupation of hospitals with COVID-19 preparations.
- Shutdown of public transport and reduced mobility
- Impact of economic crisis on seeking care
- Fear of getting infections at hospital About the Scheme:
- Target of 10 crore families or 50 crore Indian citizen.
- Identification of beneficiary based on

**Amartya Sen and Jean Dreeze had identified** and numerated issues around the Public healthcare through insurance medium.

- **Distortion Issue**: It is against preventive health services and more generally, against non hospitalization services. Most non-communicable diseases like diabetes, circulatory problems and cancer can be treated with pre-hospitalization where system focusses on Hospitalization.
- Targeting issue: Whom to cover? In absence of universal health care, targeting of families will always pose an issue. Another issue is, a person, relatively better off can be in dire need of public health insurance due to its cost.
- **Equity Issue:** Poor people having (social discrimination, low education and powerlessness) face inequality in accessing health insurance schemes. There is generally a large unsubsidized component in the health system, which further creates inequality.
- Irreversibility Issue: The health insurance industry can easily become a powerful lobby and establish a strong hold on health policy, making it very difficult to move away from that model if it proves ineffective.
- **Efficiency issue:** Insured patients and health care providers have little incentive to contain the costs.
- Reimbursing costs on some sort of 'presumptive' basis (e.g.
  fixed amounts for specific procedures such as a delivery or
  treatment of tuberculosis). Then the health care providers
  (doctors, hospitals and so on) have strong incentives to use the
  cheapest possible method for each procedure, even if it goes
  against the interests of the patient.



#### Socio - Economic Caste Census.

- · No restriction on the basis of Family Size, age or gender
- Unlike other insurance schemes, there is no waiting period for pre-existing diseases.
- The benefit cover pre and post hospitalization expenses.
- Incurred expenditure will be shared between Central and State government in a specified ratio.
- It will subsume the existing Rashtriya Sawasthya Bima Yojna, launched in 2008 and the Senior Citizens Health Insurance Scheme.
- It will create a network of health and wellness infrastructure across the nation (for primary health care services).
- The Government aims to open 5 lakh health and wellness centre by 2022 that will be equipped to treat various diseases.
- States have enough flexibility in terms of packages, procedures, scheme design, entitlements as well as other quidelines.

• States can implement the scheme through an insurance company or directly through the Trust/Society/Implementation Support Agency or a mixed approach.

## **Spending on Healthcare in India**

- Public health expenditure (Centre and State Governments combined) is constant at 3% of GDP.
- It is well below world average of 6%.
- It has resulted into poor infrastructure and lack of human resources.
- About 70% services are provided by Private sector.
- Massive healthcare expenditure can push back significant population into Poverty. It erases gains made out of rapid inclusive development.
- The out of pocket expenditure on healthcare is about 85.9% (World Bank).
- Providing subsidized healthcare will provide people to have more discretionary expenditure enabling higher investment.
- Healthcare expenditure is self-selective in nature meaning it targets most poor people directly.





## SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT OF PALCARES

GS-II POLITY

## Context

- The Supreme Court judgement on PM CARES.
- The Case was about seeking the transfer of funds received in PM-CARES Fund to the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to help in the fight against the pandemic.

## **Petitioner's arguments**

NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) had argued that:

- The fund is not under the audit of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- It has been kept out of the RTI ambit thus not under the public scrutiny.
- Contributions to it were "100% tax-free".

## **Government Arguments**

- PM CARES was created for voluntary donations and was separate from the NDRF, which comes under the Disaster Management Act of 2005.
- Government explained that funds like the NDRF, formed under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act of 2005, are provided for by the Central and State Budgets.
- These statutory funds do not take private contributions.
- PM-CARES is a "public charitable trust" to which "anyone can contribute".
- It is a "misconception" that contributions received by a public trust like PM-CARES can be transferred to a statutory fund like the National Disaster Relief Fund.





#### **SC Judgement**

- Court has declined to order transfer of funds received by the PM CARES Fund to the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).
- It held that the Centre can formulate a separate fund despite the fact that the NDRF is already in place.
- Court held that it is for the central government to take the decision as from which fund what financial measures are to be taken.
- The court rejected CPIL's contention that the rules under NDRF were amended to benefit the PM CARES Fund.
- Funds received by the NDRF can be utilised for Covid relief.
- It also held that any contribution/grant can be credited to the NDRF and it was open for anyone to contribute to the NDRF voluntarily.
- · The court opined there was no statutory prohibition on making any contribution by any person or institution to the NDRF.
- In the context of PM CARES Fund, the court said, contributions made by individuals and institutions are to be released for public purpose to fulfil the objective of the trust.
- The trust does not receive any budgetary support or any government money. It is not open for the petitioner to question the wisdom of trustees to create PM CARES fund which was constituted with an objective to extend assistance in the wake of public health emergency that is pandemic Covid-19.

## **About PM-Cares**

Created	Established on 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
Objective	To help people affected by the Covid 19 Pandemic
	To render financial assistance, provide grants of payments of money
	To undertake and support relief or assistance of any kind relating to a
	public health emergency or any other kind of emergency, calamity or
	distress, either man-made or natural, including the creation or
	upkeep of healthcare or pharmaceutical facilities
Board Structure	Chairman: Prime Minister
	Other Members: Home Minister , Defence Minister and Finance
	Minister
	Prime Minister shall have the power to nominate 3 trustees to the
	Board of Trustees who shall be the eminent persons in the field of
	research, science, health, social work, public administration law, and
	philanthropy.
Financing	It can't receive funds through government budgetary support.
	Consists entirely of voluntary contributions from
	individuals/organizations.
Other Details	Donations to PM CARES Fund qualifies for 80G benefits for 100%
	exemption under the Income Tax Act, 1961.
	Donations to PM CARES Fund also qualifies to be counted as
	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure under the
	Companies Act, 2013
FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulating Act)	Got exemption under the FCRA
status	A separate account for receiving foreign donations has been opened.
	Can accept donations and contributions from individuals and
	organizations based in foreign countries.
	ı

## **About National Disaster Response Fund**

- Establishment: constituted under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- Contributions/ grants can be made by any person or institution in NDRF.
- It **supplements SDRF of a State, in case of a disaster of severe** nature, provided adequate funds are not available in SDRF.





## **About State Disaster Response Fund**

- Establishment: constituted under Section 48 (1) (a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- It is the primary fund available with State Governments for responses to notified disasters.
- Usage: SDRF shall be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims.

## **Contribution to State Disaster Response Fund**

- The Central Government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category States/UTs and 90% for special category States/UTs (NE States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir).
- The annual Central contribution is released in two equal instalments as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.
- **Disaster (s) covered under SDRF:** Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.
- **Local Disaster:** A State Government may use up to 10 percent of the funds available under the SDRF for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be 'disasters' within the local context in the State and which are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs

## CONTEMPT OF COURT

GS-II POLITY

#### **Context**

• Supreme Court upheld lawyer Prashant Bhusan guilty of contempt of court.

#### **Court Comment**

- Advocate Prashant Bhushan's tweets of June 27 and June 29, one criticising Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA
  Bobde and the other raising questions about the conduct of former CJIs and the court are based on distorted
  facts and have the effect of destabilizing the foundation of the Indian judiciary.
- Allegations levelled are malicious in nature and have the tendency to scandalize the court.
- Indian judiciary is considered by the citizens as the last resort when they fail to get justice elsewhere.
- An attack on the Supreme Court will hamper not just the confidence that the public has in the Supreme Court but will also shake the confidence that judges of other courts in the country have in the Supreme Court.
- It may affect the national honour and prestige in the comity of nations.
- The two tweets were not fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary, or made in good faith or public interest

## **Filing of Petition**

- Private citizen had filed the petition of contempt of court.
- As per law, a contempt petition filed by a private individual should have the consent of the Attorney General before it can be listed before the Supreme Court for hearing.
- Individual's petition **did not have such consent but the court decided to proceed suo motu (on its own)** with the contempt case.

## **Punishment**

- A fine of Rs. 1 to be paid by September 15.
- A default would result in three-month imprisonment and a ban on him practising law for three years.

## **Contempt of Court in India**

- Supreme court is declared a **Court of Record under Article 129.** As a court of record, it has all the powers of such a court including the power to punish for its contempt.
- Under Article 129 and 142 of the constitution of the Supreme Court, it has been vested with power to punish for contempt of court.

## **Types of Contempt of Court**

- Contempt can be criminal or civil.
- Criminal contempt involves an intentional interference with the administration of justice.
- Civil contempt is disobedience to orders or judgments of the court.
- Criminal Contempt:
  - o Scandalises or tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court;
  - Prejudices, or interferes or tends to interfere with, the due course of any judicial proceeding;
  - o Interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner.





## **Contempt of Court Act-1971**

- Article 129 and 215 of the Constitution of India empowers the Supreme Court and High Court respectively to punish people for their respective contempt.
- Section 10 of The Contempt of Courts Act of 1971 defines the power of the High Court to punish contempt of its subordinate courts.
- Power to punish for contempt of court under Articles 129 and 215 is not subject to Article 19(1) (a).
- A contempt of court may be punished with simple imprisonment for a term, which may extend to six months, or with fine.

#### Reason behind its existence

- Needed to punish wilful disobedience to court orders (civil contempt),
- To prevent interference in the administration of justice.
- To prevent threats to judges.
- Insulate the institution from unfair attacks.
- Prevent a sudden fall in the judiciary's reputation in the public eye.

#### **Needs to reforms**

- Social Media is full of judiciary criticism. It is not good to waste the time of judiciary in exercising its power to punish for its contempt.
- England itself abolished the offence of "scandalising the court" in 2013, from where the idea has been borrowed.
- Contempt of law prevents media from looking at the functioning of judiciary.
- Definition of criminal contempt in India is extremely wide, and can be easily invoked.
- Suomotu powers of the Court to initiate such proceedings only serve to complicate matters.
- Criminal contempt is completely asynchronous with the modern democratic system, which recognises freedom of speech and expression as a fundamental right.

## **Way Forward**

• It would be a progressive move if the courts itself focus on improving its accountability and transparency, that can result in improving its public image.





## SWACHH SURVEKSHAN RANKINGS 2020

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### Context

• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs gave away the awards for Swachh Survekshan 2020, the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness urban survey conducted by the Ministry of

Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

## **Results of Swachh Survekshan 2020**

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Indore
- Cleanest State in >100 ULB Category: Chhattisgarh
- Cleanest State in <100 ULB Category State: Jharkhand</li>

## **Survey Methodology**

- Carried Out by Quality Council of India
- · Criteria and Weightage
  - Municipal documentation (solid waste management including door-to-door collection, processing, and disposal, and open defecation free status. These carried 45 per cent of the total 2,000 marks.
  - Citizen feedback 30 per cent (450 + 150 marks)
  - o Independent observation 25 per cent (500 marks)

#### **SWACHH SURVEKSHAN 2020** Indore Surat INDIA'S Navi Mumbai 3 (National >1 lakh population) 1/2 Best City in Maxim Best Mega City in Cleanest Mega City Citizen's Participation (Citizen 'Citizen's Feedback (>40L) Feedback and Social Media) (>40L) Ahmedabad Best 'Self-Sustainable Best Mega City in Innovation and Best Practices (>40L) Mega City' (based on GFC/ ODF/Cost Vs Revenue) (>40L) Cleanest Big City (10-40L) Greater Chennai Vijayawada Best Big City in Innovation Best Big City in 'Citizen's Best Practices Fastest Mover Big City (10-40L) Feedback' (10-40L) (10-40L) Jodhpur Best 'Self-Sustainable BigCity' Cleanest Medium City Fastest Mover Medium (based onGFC/ODF/Cost Vs (>3-10 L) City (>3-10 L) Revenue) (10-40L) Mysore Firozabad

## **Objective**

- Encourage large scale participation of citizens in cleanliness drives.
- Ensure sustainability of initiatives taken towards garbage free and open defecation free cities.
- **Create awareness among all sections** of the society regarding the importance of working together towards making towns and cities a better place to live in.

## **About Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U)**

• Objective of making urban India 100% open defecation free (ODF) along with 100% scientific solid waste management.

## Status in 2014

- No Concept of ODF in urban areas
- Only 18% Solid Waste Processing

## **Achievement of Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U)**

- 4,324 Urban ULBs have been declared ODF, 1,319 cities certified ODF+ and 489 cities certified ODF++ as per MoHUA's sanitation protocols.
- Construction of more than 66 lakhs individual household toilets and over 6 lakhs community/ public toilets.
- 96% of wards have complete door-to door collection while 66% of the total waste generated is being processed.
- A total of 6 cities (Indore, Ambikapur, Navi Mumbai, Surat, Rajkot and Mysuru) have been rated as 5-star cities, 86 cities as 3-Star and 64 cities as 1-Star, as per MoHUA's Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free Cities.

## About ODF+ and ODF++

Launched in August 2018

**Eligibility:** Cities that had been certified ODF at least once, on the basis of the ODF protocols, are eligible to declare themselves as SBM-ODF+ & SBM-ODF++.

**Objective:** Scale up and sustain the work undertaken by the cities after achieving the ODF status under Phase I of the Swachh Bharat Mission — Urban (SBM-Urban).

**Definitions:** ODF+ focuses on toilets with water, maintenance and hygiene, ODF++ focuses on toilets with sludge and septage management.

## **About Star Rating**

Launched in Jan 2018



 Objective: Institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve garbage free status leading to a higher degrees of cleanliness.

#### **Included Components**

- Cleanliness of drains & water bodies,
- · Plastic waste management,
- Managing construction & demolition waste

#### **Method of Giving Star Rating**

- Self-assessment and Self-verification
- Involvement of citizen groups for a transparent system of self-declaration.
- Self-declaration through an independent third party survey

#### **About SWACHH SURVEKSHAN**

- 1.87 crore citizen feedback received
- 1.7 crore citizens registered on Swachhata App
- · Over 11 crore impressions on social media
- Over 5.5 lakh sanitary workers linked to social welfare schemes and over 84,000 informal waste pickers integrated into the
  mainstream
- Over 4 lakh contractual employees employed by Urban Local Bodies
- Over 21,000 Garbage Vulnerable Points identified and transformed
- Surveyed a total of 4242 cities, 62 Cantonment Boards and 97 Ganga Towns

#### **About Swachh Survekshan League**

 A quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns done in three quarters with 25% weightage integrated into the final Swachh Survekshan results

#### **Future**

- · Safe containment, transportation and disposal of faecal sludge and septage from toilets
- Treatment of all wastewater before discharging into water bodies and their maximum possible re-use
- Provision of adequate safety gear and mechanized equipment to all sanitation workers
- Launched the sixth edition of the survey, Swachh Survekshan 2021

#### **About Swachh Survekshan 2021**

- Focus on parameters pertaining to wastewater treatment and reuse along with faecal sludge.
- Focus on crucial issues of legacy of waste management and remediation of landfills.
- Introduction of a new performance category, the Prerak DAUUR Samman: Total 5 additional sub -categories:
  - o Divya (Platinum),
  - o Anupam (Gold),
  - Ujjwal (Silver),
  - o Udit (Bronze),
  - Aarohi (Aspiring)
- In addition to the present criteria of evaluating cities on 'population category', this new category will categorize cities on the basis of six select indicator wise performance criteria.

#### **About Quality Council of India**

- Set up in 1997 by Government of India jointly with Indian Industry
- Autonomous body under the administrative control of the Department For Promotion of Industry and Internal
   Trade
- Operate the National Accreditation Structure for conformity assessment bodies
- Provide accreditation in the field of education, health and quality promotion
- **Promotes the adoption of quality standards** relating to Quality Management Systems (ISO 14001 Series), Food Safety Management Systems (ISO 22000 Series)
- Indian industry is represented in QCI by three premier industry associations namely ASSOCHAM; CII; and FICCI.

#### **Structure**

The Governing Council of QCI was initially constituted by the government as a part of the Cabinet decision of 1996.





- The initial constitution was of 31 members, with **equal representatives of Government, Industry and other stakeholders.** Currently, it has 38 members.
- The Governing Council is headed by Chairperson, QCI.

#### RESERVATION FOR LOCAL YOUTH

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### **Context**

 Recently, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister announced that those domiciled in the state would be eligible for government jobs in the State.

#### **Effects**

- It will create job opportunities for local talents.
- It will develop industry linkages with the Skill India mission thus enabling more skilled manpower.
- It will create a healthy competition between states for industrialization and lead to an inclusive growth.
- **Providing jobs in lieu of the land** is the most basic a company can do.
- It will ensure that wages of unorganized sectors don't go down because of the migration of labor from other states.

#### **Negatives**

- It will increase the cost of compliance for a company. Bigger corporates may shy away from investment in such state.
- One Nation, One market was the theme of GST. Such reservations distort the theme by creating artificial barriers.
- It may be unconstitutional in nature. Constitution provides for equality in employment and state can provide reservation for SC, ST, women and social & educationally backward caste. Local residential conditions are prescribed by Parliament only.
- It is **populist in nature and will create unhealthy competition** among states. Such competition will only create artificial barriers for migration eventually curtailing the cultural mixing.
- Definition of locals have not been specified.
- In the era of Ease of doing business, such legislations are unnecessary intervention by the government in economy.

#### **Way Forward**

- States must focus on skilling of its youth by imparting them knowledge of new technologies.
- It should focus on reducing cost of doing business thus attracting the businesses to invest in states. More investment will lead to better employment opportunities for the locals.
- It **should call high net worth individuals hailing** from the state to invest in the state.



#### ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### **Context**

- The integration of technology in the teaching-learning process for enhancing teaching-learning outcomes is an important policy prescription of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- The NEP emphasises the vital linkage between education and technology.
- An autonomous body called National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) will be entrusted with the task of advising
  institutions on the use of technology, capacity building, providing directions for research and innovation and creating
  avenues for exchange of ideas.

#### **Pros of Use of Technology**

- Reduction of cost
- Continuation of education in this pandemic.
- Can be accessed by anybody and anywhere.
- Can make best teachers available across the India thus overcoming issues of skilled teachers.
- Lectures can be recorded and viewed as per the convenience of the students.
- The technologies like big data, artificial intelligence, machine learning can help tailor the courses as per the student's abilities and interests.
- Technology can play a key role in providing additional learning inputs. This could enable better learning outcomes among the students. Eg., the use of virtual reality technology can help students visualize real components and processes, helping them understand the concepts better.





#### **Challenges of Technology**

- Doesn't let to socialization of children.
- Poor students having issues of access to digital medium are left behind.
- Generally private schools are faster to adopt digital education while government schools are lagging behind. It will further weaken the learning gap in students.
- With parents going back to office, support to children will decline.
- It puts pressure back on the women of the household to teach the children as they have to sit with their children.
- Children of lower class mainly up to 5<sup>th</sup> class has very little attention of span and online schooling won't support their education.
- In this technological age, efforts are underway to lure away children from usage of smart gadgets, but online schooling puts them back on smart phone.

#### Conclusion

- Though the NEP's emphasis on technology is a welcome step, the context and purpose of technology adoption are equally important steps.
- Universities and colleges should invest in ICT infrastructure keeping the larger goals of affordable, quality and inclusive education.
- This can help ensure the country's transformative journey towards a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.



### ONE RATION CARD FACILITY

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### **Context**

• The Union Food Minister has announced that three more States —Manipur, Nagaland and Uttarakhand — and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will now offer the 'one nation one ration card' facility.

#### **Legal Provisions**

- Under the National Food Security Act, 2013, about 81 crore persons are entitled to buy subsidized food grain rice at Rs 3/kg, wheat at Rs 2/kg, and coarse grains at Re 1/kg from their designated Fair Price Shops (FPS) of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).
- Currently, about 23 crore ration cards have been issued to nearly 80 crore beneficiaries of NFSA in all states and UTs.

#### **Existing System**

• In the present system, a ration cardholder can buy food grains only from an FPS that has been assigned to her in the locality in which she lives.

#### **About One nation One Card (ON-ORC)**

- Under the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system, the **beneficiary will be able to buy subsidised food grains from any FPS across the country.**
- It will identify a beneficiary through biometric authentication on electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices installed at the FPSs.
- Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS) portal provides the technological platform for the inter-state portability of ration cards.

#### **Preparatory Steps**

- Seeding of Aadhar Card with Ration Card
- Installation of PoS machines at all Fair Price Shops across India.
- Inter-State Portability of the ration card through Annavitran Portal

#### **Standard Format of Ration Card**

- For national portability, the state governments have been asked to issue the ration card in bi-lingual format having local language along with English or Hindi.
- 10-digit standard ration card number, wherein first two digits will be state code and the next two digits will be running ration card numbers.
- A set of another two digits will be appended with ration card number to create unique member IDs for each member of the household in a ration card.





#### **Benefits**

- Beneficial for migrant workers as they will be able to access the food grains from across the India.
- Target the prevailing hunger and urban poverty.
- Universal access to food grains
- Empowerment of Consumers as they will have choice to choose the fair price shop. It will give voice and Choice to consumers leading to enhanced accountability.
- Provide stronger data on status of migration in India which will help in making data driven policies.

#### **Challenges**

- Seeding with Aadhar card has witnessed exclusion error which can get amplified at national level with little scope of grievance redressal.
- Logistics issues as FPS receive the quota based on the beneficiary enrolled at the shop.
- ON-ORC will affect how the financial burden is shared between states.
- The larger issues of federalism and inter-state coordination: Many states are not convinced about a "one size fits all" regime because they have customised the PDS through higher subsidies, higher entitlement limits, and supply of additional items.
- Technological Challenges: ON-ORC requires a complex technology backbone that brings over 750 million beneficiaries, 5, 33,000 ration shops and 54 million tonnes of food-grain annually on a single platform.

#### **Way Forward**

#### Learning from the GST:

- Centre could provide an assurance like guaranteed compensation (as seen in GST) to "net inbound migration" states such as Maharashtra and Kerala that any additional costs on account of migrants will be covered by it for the five years.
- Government could create a specific council like GST council for inter-state coordination.
- Technological challenges could be overcome by developing the platform like GSTN for this scheme.
- The Nilekani-led task force recommended setting up of a PDS network (PDSN) to track movement of rations,
   register beneficiaries, issue ration cards, handle grievances and generate analytics.



#### LANGUAGE DEBATE IN NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### Context

TamilNadu rejected implementing the three language formula advocated in the National Education Policy.

#### **Brief History of language in India**

Debates in Constituent Assembly:

- Hindi as Official language of Union
- Freedom for states to choose their own language
- Use of English as communication language for first 15 years.
- Parliament can enact law after 15 years for use of English for specified purpose.
- Asked the government to appoint a commission at the end of five and ten years respectively to make recommendation with regards to progressive use of Hindi language.
- A parliamentary would be constituted to examine the recommendations and report its views to the President.
- The constitution leaves it upon the state legislature to choose any one or more languages spoken in the state, and/or Hindi as the official language.

#### **Constitutional Articles for Language**

#### Situation After 15 years:

- Widespread protests in the southern states.
- Demand to form new states based on linguistic basis.
- Keeping in mind the protests, the Government of India enacted Official Language Act in 1963 Article 29: Any section of the citizens who have a "...distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same."
- Article 343: Official language is to be Hindi in Devnagri script, and numerals should follow the international form of Indian numerals.
- Article 345 of the constitution deals with the official language or languages of a state. It empowers the state legislature to choose one or more of the languages.





- Article 344 of the constitution provides for the appointment of a language commission, as well as a Committee of Parliament on the expiry of five years from the commencement of this constitution.
- Article 120. Business in Parliament shall be transacted in Hindi or in English, unless a law is passed in the Parliament.

#### **Provisions of the Official Language act**

- Continued use of English alongside Hindi indefinitely.
- In 1967, the act was amended to make the use of English alongside compulsory in certain cases.
- Three Language Formula:
- First formulated by the Indira Gandhi government in 1968 and subsequently incorporated in the New Education Policy in consultation with the states.
- The idea was to make students learn another Indian language, different from their regional language.
- In Hindi-speaking states, the formula translated into learning Hindi, English and a modern Indian language (preferably south Indian).
- For students in non-Hindi speaking states, it mandated lessons in Hindi, English and the regional language.

#### **Failure of Three Language Formula**

- Since education is a state subject, the implementation lay with the states.
- In many of the Hindi-speaking states, Sanskrit became the third language instead of any modern Indian language (preferably south Indian language).
- Southern state implemented two language formula and didn't teach Hindi.
- Some boards/institutions permit even European/foreign languages like Spanish, French and German in place of Hindi or Sanskrit.

#### **Arguments for Three Language Formula**

- Learning new languages are an important part of a child's cognitive development. Its implementation promotes multilingualism and multilingual skills would add to the cognitive skills of the children.
- Promotes national unity by having a common link language.
- Two language formula in Tamil Nadu deprive students of an opportunity to learn Hindi, which acts as a link language.
- Encourages fulfilment of constitutional obligation of promoting the Hindi language as link language.

#### Arguments against the three language formula

- Heavy cognitive burden on a young child of five to seven years
- Several surveys, like ASER, have shown that a vast majority of children are failing to learn to read with comprehension even in one language.
- It will lead to 'homogenize' the diverse linguistic fabric of the country which consists of many regional languages.
- Forcing states to adopt mandatory three language takes away their freedom.
- The state governments often do not have adequate resources to implement the three-language formula.
- The lack of an adequate number of teachers and teachers with the necessary language skills remains a challenge.

#### **Way forward**

- The focus should be on using the children's home language,
- **Develop strong oral and reading and writing proficiency in the language** used as the medium of instruction (the state language).
- English should, initially, be taught only in an oral, communicative manner until Grade 3.
- Additional languages should be formally introduced at subsequent stages like from middle school.
- Develop English as link language.
- Focus on voluntary learning of the language than forced imposition as Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha which is focussing on voluntary teaching of Hindi language in Chennai.
- Encourage internal migration for making country multilingual.

#### EQUAL RIGHTS FOR DAUGHTERS TO INHERIT PROPERTY

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### Context

• The Supreme Court has held that daughters have an equal birth right with sons to inherit joint Hindu family property.





#### **SC Judgement**

- The right of **Hindu Women to be a joint heir to the ancestral property is by birth** and does not depend on whether her father was alive or not when the law was enacted in 2005.
- The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 gave Hindu women the right to be coparceners or joint legal heirs in the same way a male heir does.
- The right doesn't require father to be alive on or after 2005.

#### **About Hindu Succession Act, 1956**

- Hindu Succession act 1956 had governed succession and inheritance of property.
- It was based on The Mitakshara School of Hindu Law.
- It only recognised males as legal heirs.
- The law applied to everyone who is not a Muslim, Christian, Parsi or Jew by religion.
- Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and followers of the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj are also considered Hindus for the purposes of this law.

#### **Amendment in 2005**

- Recognised Women as coparceners or joint legal heirs for partition arising from 2005.
- Also gave the daughter the same rights and liabilities "in the coparcenary property as she would have had if she had been a son".
- The law applies to ancestral property and to intestate succession in personal property where succession happens as per law and not through a will.

#### Mitakshara law

- Hindu law school which deals with property rights and succession.
- Still in practice across most of India except for West Bengal and Assam.
- In West Bengal and Assam, Dayabhaga system is practised.
- The Mitakshara is a legal treatise on inheritance, **written by Vijnaneshwara**, a scholar in the Western Chalukya court in the 12th century.
- Recognises the right to Hindu Joint Family property is by birth.
- The Mitakshara School of coparcenary recognizes the birth right of son, son's son, son's son's son.

#### Significance of the verdict

- Corrected an anomaly in the interpretation of the 2005 amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956.
- Allowed the application of this prospective legislation to be retroactive.
- Gave full effect to the reformatory intent of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005.
- Will help in ending the gender discrimination in society.
- in consonance with the right of equality as enshrined under Article 14, 15, & 21 of the Constitution of India.

#### REVIEW OF THE AGE OF MARRIAGE

GS-II SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### **Context**

• The Indian Prime Minister has stated in his Independence Day speech that the government may take a **relook at the age** of marriage of women.

#### **Government Steps**

- The Budget Speech of 2020 proposed the setting up of a task force to look into the issue of age of a girl entering motherhood.
- Set up a 10 member panel in June 2020.

#### Details

- Early marriage has detrimental effect it has on the health and growth of the baby as well as the health of the
  mother
- Scientific studies have shown that children born to adolescent mothers (10-19 years) were more likely to be **stunted** (**shorter for their age**) than those born to young adults (20-24 years), and adult mothers.
- Increasing age at first marriage, age at first birth, can be a promising approach to improve maternal and child nutrition.



- Will lead to gender empowerment as more girls will opt into higher education
- Democratisation of the family as an adult female member would have greater say in working of the family
- Act as catalyst in population control as adult member won't go for higher no of children.

#### **Counter arguments**

- The National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns has asserted that increasing the legal age of marriage for girls
  will only expand the number of married persons deemed underage and criminalise them and may render underage
  married girls without legal protection.
- There are also arguments that the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 instead of curbing child marriages, has
  only played as a weapon in the hands of parents to punish their daughters for elopement and is used in
  conjunction with other laws to punish boys in self-arranged marriages.
- The reasons for early marriage vary across the country. The issue of poor nutritional status in teenage mothers is also due to poverty and lack of safety driving early marriage in girls.
- Some have argued that lack of proper education, poor economic status among teenage mothers also contribute to
  poor nutritional outcomes for the mother and child and emphasize the need to act on these factors first before lowering
  the marriage age.

#### **Way forward**

#### Focus on empowerment:

- Work towards empowering the girls by ensuring education, ensuring economic and social empowerment of women and airls.
- Increase girls' access to education and health, create enabling opportunities for economic independence of the girls, which will result in empowerment of the girls.



#### MENSTRUAL LEAVE



#### Context

- Recently, Zomato has given menstrual leave to its employees.
- It has introduced ten days of period leave.

#### **Opposition to it**

- Period leave will lead to gendering of the workplace.
- It is about using biology against women to offer equal opportunities and assignments.
- It will lead to further stigmatisation of the women and may reduce employment opportunities for them.
- Many women themselves are not comfortable with such types of leave.

#### **Need for it**

- Hormonal changes in the body don't keep the women at the most productive stage.
- Kerala had already granted its students menstrual leave since 1912 and Bihar has had special leave for women for two days since 1992 called, 'Special Casual Leave'.
- Period pain can be as "bad as having a heart attack" thus, they deserve a leave.
- Countries like Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, and Taiwan have been providing female employees with paid menstrual leave dating back to World War II.
- Certain medical conditions that are associated with menstruation such as menorrhagia, endometriosis, fibroids,
   pelvic inflammatory disease demands medical leave.
- If women need to tolerate their pain in silence just to 'fit' in and not be outcast then we surely are paddling the
  patriarchy cycle ahead.

#### **Way Forward**

- Companies can announce more medical leave for women with difficult periods.
- Overall no. of medical leaves must be enhanced for women.
- Company structure must be made more democratic and let individual women express themselves if they want such types of leaves.
- Need to have more access to Sanitary Pads and separate bathrooms.
- Focus should be on the de-stigmatization of menstruation.





#### GREATER MALE CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

#### **GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

#### Context

India will fund Greater Male Connectivity Project through USD 400 mn Line of Credit & USD 100 mn grant.

#### About the project

- This 6.7 kilometer bridge project connecting Male with Gulhifalhu Port and Thilafushi industrial zone will help revitalise and transform Maldivian economy.
- A regular cargo ferry service between India and Maldives will boost trade and commerce between the two countries.
- It will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in Maldives, connecting Male with three neighbouring islands- Villingili, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi.
- GMCP will include construction of a bridge-and-causeway link spanning 6.7 km.
- Once completed, the project will streamline connectivity between the four islands, thereby boosting economic activity, generating employment and promoting holistic urban development in the Male region.
- Apart from this, India is also extending financial support for construction of a port in Gulhifalhu.
- The COVID19 pandemic has brought the two nations even closer.
- India is also **starting an air travel bubble with Maldives** to sustain and promote the dynamic people-to-people ties between the two countries and it will be the first neighbouring country with which an air bubble is being operationalised.
  - An air bubble is a bilateral arrangement with a set of regulations and restrictions in which the carriers of the two countries can operate international flights.

#### **India-Maldives bilateral Relations**

India and Maldives are neighbors as they <u>share a maritime border</u>. Relations have been friendly and close in strategic, economic and military cooperation. India continues to contribute to maintaining security on the island nation.

#### **Historical relations**

- Both nations' were Britain colonies.
- India was among the **first to recognise Maldives after its independence in 1965** and to establish diplomatic relations with the country. India established its mission at Malé in 1972.
- India and Maldives share <u>ethnic</u>, <u>linguistic</u>, <u>cultural</u>, <u>religious and commercial links steeped in antiquity and enjoy cordial and multi-dimensional relations</u>.

#### Political relations

- India and Maldives have consistently supported each other in multilateral for a such as the **UN**, **the Commonwealth**, **the NAM and the SAARC.**
- **High connectivity:** High People-to-People contacts, as Air India operates daily flights to Malé from Thiruvananthapuram, Bangalore and Chennai.
- **Tourism:** The proximity of location and improvements in air connectivity in recent years has led to a very substantial increase in the number of Indians visiting Maldives for **tourism** (around 33,000) and business.
- Soft diplomacy: India is a preferred destination for Maldivian for education, medical treatment, recreation and business.
- Diaspora: Indians are the second largest expatriate community in the Maldives.

#### Why Maldives matters to India?

#### Strategic location:

- Maldives holds strategic importance for India under the Modi government's 'Neighborhood First' policy due to its location in the Indian Ocean.
- The **Eight Degree Channel** is one of the major maritime lanes of the world.
- **Stability, maturity and democratic systems** in the Maldives can ensure peace and security in the Indian Ocean.





#### **Major challenges**

#### **Chinese influence:**

- India has been quite apprehensive of the growing Chinese influence in Maldives even as it continues to give utmost priority to the island nation.
- There have been growing concerns regarding China's role in the Maldivian economy through so-called "debt-trap diplomacy."
- Maldives incurred a debt of about \$1.4 billion owing to loans from China to finance several of its infrastructure projects.
- Maldives and China had also entered into a free trade agreement.

#### India's position in Male crisis:

• During the pro-Beijing regime of their former President Abdulla Yameen, ties between the nations got strained. In fact, there came a point in 2018 when **India even contemplated a military intervention.** 

#### Measures taken so far

- After coming to power for the second time in May last year, Prime Minister Modi's first international destination was
  Maldives. He was also the only head of state to attend Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih's swearing-in
  ceremony in November 2018, when he came to power ousting Yameen.
- India has also **offered a \$1.4-billion development assistance package to Maldives**, which is being utilised in several projects.
- 30 years ago, in 1988, an intervention by the Indian armed forces codenamed 'Operation Cactus' trounced an attempted coup on the island nation. On November 3, 1988, when mercenaries attacked the Maldives, India was the first to respond.
- In 2004, when the tsunami hit Maldives, Indian naval ships were dispatched to assist rescue operation.
- During the Male water crisis. Within four hours Indian Navy and Air Force vessels delivered water.

#### **Way forward**

- Past learning's: Despite repeated calls for intervention, India firmly avoided military action against the Yameen regime. New Delhi thoughtfully coordinated its diplomatic response with other stakeholders, and put enormous pressure on Yameen to hold the presidential elections in a fair and transparent manner. This patience seems to have yielded a positive outcome as India finds itself in an advantageous situation now.
- Cautious approach: India needs to remain careful if it wants to avoid a Nepal-like situation, where New Delhi's perceived interference in Nepal's internal affairs had turned the Nepali people against India. Having a lighter diplomatic footprint is the only way forward in the Maldives.'

#### TEESTA RIVER

#### GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### Why in news?

- Bangladesh is discussing an almost \$1 billion loan from China for a
  comprehensive management and restoration project on the
  Teesta river. The project is <u>aimed at managing the river basin</u>
  efficiently, controlling floods, and tackling the water crisis in summers.
- Bangladesh's discussions with China come at a time when India is particularly wary about China following the standoff in Ladakh.

#### How has the Teesta dispute progressed?

- India and Bangladesh have been engaged in a long-standing dispute over water-sharing in the Teesta.
- The two countries were on the verge of signing a water-sharing pact in September 2011, when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was going to visit Bangladesh. However, West Bengal Chief minister Mamata Banerjee objected to it, and the deal was scuttled.
- PM Narendra Modi visited Dhaka in June 2015 and assured Bangladesh
   PM Sheikh Hasina that a "fair solution" on the Teesta through cooperation between central and state governments will be reached.

### Teesta River

- It rises in the eastern Himalayas, flows through the Indian states of Sikkim and West Bengal through Bangladesh and enters the Bay of Bengal.
- It forms the border between Sikkim and West Bengal.
- In India, it flows through Darjeeling district and the cities of Rangpo,
   Jalpaiguri and Mekhliganj. It joins the Jamuna River at Fulchhari in Bangladesh.
- Disputes over the appropriate allocation and development of the water resources of the river have remained a subject of conflict for almost 35 years, with several bilateral agreements and rounds of talks failing to produce results.

#### **Ground Reality**

• Five years later, the Teesta issue remains unresolved.



#### How has India's relationship with Bangladesh played out over the years?

- India has a robust relationship with Dhaka, carefully cultivated since 2008, especially with the Sheikh Hasina government at the helm.
- India has benefited from its security ties with Bangladesh, whose crackdown against anti-India outfits has helped the Indian government maintain peace in the eastern and Northeast states.
- Bangladesh has benefited from its economic and development partnership.
- Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia.
   Bilateral trade has grown steadily over the last decade: India's exports to Bangladesh in 2018-19



stood at \$9.21 billion, and imports from Bangladesh at \$1.04 billion.

- India also grants 15 to 20 lakh visas every year to Bangladesh nationals for medical treatment, tourism, work, and just entertainment.
- For India, Bangladesh has been a key partner in the **neighbourhood first policy** and possibly the success story in bilateral ties among its neighbours.

#### What are irritants in INDO-Bangladesh relationship?

- Proposed countrywide National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) passed last year.
- Bangladesh had cancelled visits by ministers, and Hasina has expressed reservations about CAA. She commented that the CAA and the proposed nationwide NRC are "internal matters" of India, the CAA move was "not necessary".

#### How have relations between Bangladesh and China been developing?

- "China is the biggest trading partner of Bangladesh and is the foremost source of imports.
- In 2019, the trade between the two countries was \$18 billion and the trade is heavily in favour of China,"
- Recently, China declared zero duty on 97% of imports from Bangladesh. The concession flowed from China's duty-free, quota-free programme for the Least Developed Countries.
- India has provided developmental assistance worth \$10 billion, but China has promised around \$30 billion worth of financial assistance to Bangladesh to overcome India assistance.
- Bangladesh's strong defence ties with Chinamakes the situation complicated. China is the biggest arms supplier to
  Bangladesh and it has been a legacy issue. Bangladesh forces are equipped with Chinese arms including tanks, missile
  launchers, fighter aircraft and several weapons systems. Recently, Bangladesh purchased two Ming class submarines from
  China.

#### How has India been engaging with Bangladesh post CAA?

- In the wake of the Ladakh standoff, India has become more sensitive to Chinese defence inroads into Bangladesh.
- India and Bangladesh have cooperated on pandemic-related moves. Hasina contributed \$1.5 million inIndia's regional emergency fund for fighting Covid-19 and India provided medical aid to Bangladesh.
- The two countries have also **cooperated in railways**, with India giving 10 locomotives to Bangladesh.
- The first trial run for trans-shipment of Indian cargo through Bangladesh to Northeast states under a pact on the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports took place in July.
- However, in recent weeks, Pakistan PM call to Hasina raised eyebrows in Delhi. While Islamabad portrayed it as a **conversation on Kashmir,** Dhaka said it was about **cooperating to deal with Covid-19.**



#### How has India sought to address China's latest move?

- During recent diplomats meeting with Hasina, "security-related issues of mutual interest" were discussed.
- The visit tried to address issues on areas that have emerged as potential irritants in the relationship.
- Bangladesh expressed "deep concern" at the rise in killings at the Indo-Bangladesh border by "BSF or Indian nationals" during the first half of this year, and the Indian side assured that the BSF authorities have been sensitised of the matter.

#### **Among other issues**

- The two sides **agreed that Implementation of projects should be done in a timely manner**, and that greater attention is required to development projects in Bangladesh under the Indian Lines of Credit.
- Bangladesh sought return of the Tablighi Jamaat members impacted by the lockdown in India, and early release of the 25 Bangladeshi fishermen in custody in Assam. India assured Bangladesh that its nationals would be able to return soon.
- Bangladesh requested for urgent reopening of visa issuance from the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, particularly since many Bangladeshi patients need to visit India.
- India was also requested to reopen travel through Benapole-Petrapole land port, which has been halted by the West Bengal government in the wake of the pandemic.
- Bangladesh told that it is ready to collaborate in the development of a Covid-19 vaccine, including its trial, and looks forward to early, affordable availability of the vaccine when ready.

#### What is the way ahead?

- While the Teesta project is important and urgent from India's point of view, it will be difficult to addressit before the
   West Bengal elections due next year.
- Now, the test will be if India can implement all its assurances in a time-bound manner.
- Or else, the latent anti-India sentiment in Bangladesh —, which has been revived after India's CAA -NRC push threatens to damage Dhaka-New Delhi ties.



#### INDIA MAURITIUS RELATIONS

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### **Context**

 Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Mauritius counterpart Pravind Jugnauth jointly inaugurated the new Supreme Court built in Port Louis with Indian grant assistance, reflecting New Delhi's sharpened focus on its "neighbourhood first" policy.

#### **About**

- In line with India's vision of 'SAGAR Security and Growth for All in the Region', this building is first India assisted infrastructure project located in Port Louis, completed on schedule and much below the cost estimated. It had received grant assistance of \$ 28.12 million from India.
- The **human-centric approach** is **the main philosophy of India's development cooperation**, these people-oriented infrastructure projects would help in further cementing the ties between the two countries.
- The new Supreme Court Building is a <u>symbol of cooperation and shared values between the two countries.</u>
- India's development cooperation is marked by the core values of 'Respect', 'Diversity', 'Care for the Future', and 'Sustainable Development'.

#### **Bilateral Relations with Mauritius**

#### **Recent Developments**

- India has been engaging with the country based in the Indian Ocean Region and it is focused on people-oriented projects.
- According to sources, a Special Economic Package (SEP) of USD 353 million was announced in 2016, and it was under India's grant assistance, for five priority infrastructure projects.
- These projects included the Metro Express Project- USD 275 m (Phase -1 completed); Supreme Court Building- USD 30 m (completed); New ENT Hospital- USD 14 m (completed); Social Housing project- USD 20 m (ongoing); e-Tablets- USD 14 m (completed).
- Lines of Credit (LOC) of USD 600 million at concessional terms have been announced and the focus is on developmental projects. Assistance in the health care sector is being extended for the construction of a Renal Unit; 4 Medi-clinics and two Area Health Centers AHCs (USD 12 million).
- "The <u>successful and timely completion of India-assisted high quality infrastructure projects</u> in Mauritius shall also create greater opportunities for Indian companies in Mauritius and in the region,"
- These projects are transparent and demand-driven, with full ownership for the Maldives government.





#### **COVID Assistance**

- India was the first to send a **medical consignment to Mauritius to deal with the COVID pandemic and this included Hydrocloroquine (HCQ) tablet and other essential medicines**. Also a medical team was sent, and a special consignment of Ayurvedic medicines too.
- New Delhi has taken several steps in recent days to revive economic activity amid the Covid-19 crisis and to shore up relations with key neighbours amid the border standoff with China.

#### **Diplomatic relations**

- Diplomatic relations between India and Mauritius were established in 1948.
- Mauritius maintained contacts with India through successive Dutch, French and British occupation.

#### **Political Relations**

- Following Mauritius' independence on March 12, 1968, the first Prime Minister accorded centrality to India in Mauritius' foreign policy.
- High level visits have been one of the significant aspects of bilateral relations.
- Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam was the **only non-SAARC leader to be invited to witness the swearing in ceremony of the new Government** in New Delhi in May 2014.
- India and Mauritius have signed a **wide range of bilateral agreements and MoUs**. Some of them are the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC-1982), Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA-1998), MoU on Cooperation in Ocean Economy (2015), and MoU in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine (2015) etc.
- Some high-visibility Indian-assisted projects in Mauritius include the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Cyber Tower at Ebene and the Swami Vivekananda International Conference Centre (SVICC).

#### **Commercial Relations**

- CECPA: The proposed free trade agreement between India and Mauritius is nearing finalization as both the sides have
  concluded the negotiations for the pact. The proposed India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and
  Partnership Agreement (CECPA) seeks to mutually benefit both the countries as negotiations were held across several
  sectors including goods, services, rules of origin, technical barriers to trade and sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, trade
  remedies and dispute settlement.
- **FDI:** Mauritius was the **second top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India** in 2018-19. India received USD 8 billion (about Rs 56,000 crores) foreign inflows from the country.
- **Trade:** The **bilateral trade** between the countries increased marginally to USD 1.2 billion in 2018-19 from USD 1.1 billion in 2017-18.
  - Besides petroleum products, main items of India's exports to Mauritius are pharmaceuticals, cereals, cotton, electrical machinery, apparel and clothing accessories.
  - Main items of Mauritius' exports to India are iron and steel, pearls, precious/semi-precious stones and optical, photographic and precision instruments.
- Eight Indian Public Sector Enterprises are currently functioning in Mauritius.

#### **Military relation**

- India also provides **extensive capacity building and training inputs** to the Mauritian armed forces, besides carrying out regular joint 4 patrolling/surveillance exercises and in the Mauritian EEZ.
- Over the past forty years, India has **extended several Lines of Credit to Mauritius** to assist in the development of its <u>infrastructure</u>, <u>human resource</u>, <u>skills development</u>, <u>capacity building</u>, <u>project appraisal</u>, etc.

#### **Cultural Relations**

- The **Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC)** at Phoenix is one of the largest centres of ICCR, which from March 2000, has emerged as an important venue for promotion of Indian cultural activities in Mauritius.
- Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) has been India's flagship capacity building programme since its inception in 1964 and has acquired a strong brand name in India's development partnership with Mauritius.
- The **Pan African e-Network Project** was inaugurated on February 26, 2009 in Mauritius, which connected it other African countries and India through a satellite and fiber-optic network.
- Around 100 ICCR scholarships are extended annually to Mauritian students for higher education in India.

#### **Indian Community**

Mauritius organises a Bhojpuri Mahotsav.





- As around 68 per cent of Mauritius's total population of over 1.2 million are people of Indian origin. Most of them are descendants of indentured labour taken from India between 1834 and the early decades of the 20th century.
- There are around 750 OCI Card holders and about 3500 PIO Card holders.
- To increase tourism inflow from India, Mauritian Government had introduced a visa-freeregime for Indian tourists.

#### Conclusion

- India and Mauritius long-standing and time-tested strategic relationship are based on deep emotional bonds of kinship and culture and new emerging area of cooperation like Blue Economy and collaboration in Africa.
- Early finalisation of the CECPA would pave the way for giving a strong impetus to the close bilateral economic partnership."Our close multifaceted relations have steadily developed over the years, based on the secure foundations of kinship and family ties, and of shared values of democracy, tolerance, peace and development".

## UAE ISPAEL ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS / GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### **Context**

United Arab Emirates and Israel have agreed to establish full diplomatic ties as part of a deal to halt the annexation of occupied land sought by the Palestinians for their future state. The announcement makes the UAE the first Gulf Arab state to do so and only the third Arab nation to have active diplomatic ties to Israel after Egypt (in 1979) and Jordan (1994).

#### Joint statement

- Israel and the United Arab Emirates, helped by the US, have arrived at an important peace agreement that has the potential to change the geopolitics of West Asia and beyond.
- The U.S., the UAE and Israel will sign deals on direct flights, security, telecommunications, energy, tourism and health care.
- The two countries also will partner on fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.
- "Opening direct ties between two of the Middle East's most dynamic societies and advanced economics will transform the region by spurring economic growth, enhancing technological innovation and forging closer people-to-people relations,"

## Turkey Lebanon Israel Kufa Jordan Qatar Saudi Arabia UAE

#### What is the big deal?

The UAE will establish diplomatic relations with Israel in return for giving up a stated plan to annex the West Bank, the main territory of a state that the Palestinians want.

#### What about the Palestinians?

- The Palestinian Authority, which seeks a **two-state solution**, lashed out against the deal as a "betrayal" by the UAE.
- It rejected and denounced the UAE, Israeli and US trilateral, surprising, announcement,"
- The Hamas, a Palestinian Islamist militant group that de facto runs the Gaza strip, and views the relationship with Israel as a fight to the finish, called it a "stabbing in the back of our people" by the UAE.
- For the Palestinians, the Israeli commitment that it will not pursue its plan to annex the West Bank, is an empty concession - the deal does not address the Palestinian demand for statehood.
- They have relied on Arab backing in their struggle for independence and the announcement marked both a win and
- As the deal halts Israeli annexation plans, the Palestinians have repeatedly urged Arab governments not to normalise ties with Israel until a peace agreement establishing an independent Palestinian state is reached.
- Unlike the past two Arab-Israeli peace agreements, Palestinians do not figure prominently in the current one.





- When Egypt and Israel made peace, the latter agreed to return the Sinai back to Egypt and signed "A Framework
  for Peace in the Middle East" agreement, which promised the establishment of an autonomous self-governing
  authority in the West Bank and Gaza and called for the full implementation of the UNSC Resolution 242 that
  demanded Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.
- The **Jordanian-Israeli treaty** came after Israel agreed to the formation of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza.
- But in the **UAE-Israel deal**, <u>Israel has not made any actual concession to the Palestinians</u>. The annexation plan was a threat. The withdrawal of the threat was packaged as a concession, which the Emiratis accepted.
- Israeli enters into a peace agreement with an Arab country without our returning to the 1967 borders.

#### How have the Arab states reacted?

- **Saudi Arabia** had strongly rejected the proposals for Israel-Palestine peace unveiled by the US in January this year, which included a plan to hand over Jerusalem to Israel and permit it to extend its sovereignty to all Jewish settlements in the West Bank.
- But, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) has been hailed as an ally by the Trump administration is silent on the
  deal.
- There is speculation that the UAE could not have taken its extraordinary decision on Israel without the backing and support of the House of Saud.
- The smaller Gulf States of **Oman and Bahrain** have quickly fallen in line behind UAE.

#### How does the region's geopolitics change?

- If the Arab states do fall in line, it would dramatically bring all Sunni nations in the region in an **anti-Iran alliance with Israel** that they have secretly wished for all these years.
- The deal will send ripples through other parts of the world. In South Asia, it will put pressure on Muslim dominated
   Pakistan.

#### **How does Trump gain?**

• The recognition grants a **rare diplomatic win** to Mr. Trump ahead of the November election as his efforts to see an end to the war in Afghanistan have yet to come to fruition while efforts to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians have made no headway.

#### India's response

 Many countries, including the European powers and India, have welcomed it, while Turkey and Iran have lashed out at the UAE.

#### Israel-Egypt peace deal

- Arab-Israeli ties have historically been conflict-ridden. Arab countries, including Egypt, Transjordan, Syria and Iraq, fought their first war with Israel in 1948 after the formation of the state of Israel was announced.
- After that, Israel and Arab states fought three more major wars the 1956 Suez conflict, the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War.
- After the 1967 war in which Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, East Jerusalem and the West
  Bank from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria, Arab countries convened in Khartoum and declared their famous three
  "Nos' no peace with Israel, no talks with Israel and no recognition of Israel".
- But it did not last long. After the death of Egypt President Gamal Abdel Nasser, his successor started making plans to get Sinai back from Israel. His efforts, coupled with American pressure on Israel, led to the Camp David Accords of 1978.
- A year later, Israel and Egypt concluded their peace treaty, as part of which Israel withdrew from Sinai in return for Egyptian recognition.

#### **Israel-Jordan peace deal**

- In 1994, Jordan became the second Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel.
- In 1988, after an initial agreement reached between the two countries collapsed, Jordan abandoned its claims to the West Bank and said it would accept a deal between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel.
- Following the **Oslo Accords**, under which the PLO recognised Israel and was allowed to form the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza, time was ripe for an Israel-Jordan deal.
- The enmity between the two countries came to an end in July 1994 with the **Washington Declaration**.
- The UAE-Israel agreement comes after 26 years. If more countries in the Gulf follow the UAE's lead, it would open a new chapter in Arab-Israel ties.





#### Why did the UAE sign the agreement?

- The old enmity between Arab countries and Israel has dissipated.
- The Sunni Arab kingdoms in the Gulf region such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE had developed backroom contacts with Israel over the past several years.
- One of the major factors that brought them closer has been their **shared antipathy towards Iran.** Both these blocs were wary of U.S. President Barack Obama's Iran outreach. U.S. arranged secret talks between the UAE and Israel, which laid the foundations for this agreement.
- · Arab countries have signaled that they are ready to live with Israel's occupation of Palestine.
- What they do not want is a major change in the status quo, which would put them under political and diplomatic pressure.

  Mr. Netanyahu's plan to annex the West Bank would have drastically changed the status quo, further putting in peril the two-state solution.

#### What are the geopolitical implications of the deal?

- The agreement could fast-track the changes that are already under way in the region.
- The Saudi bloc, consisting of Egypt, the UAE, Bahrain and others, see their interests being aligned with that of the U.S. and Israel and their support for Palestine, which Arab powers had historically upheld, is dwindling, while Turkey and Iran emerge as the strongest supporters of the Palestinians in the Muslim world.
- This tripolar contest is already at work in West Asia. The UAE-Israel thaw could sharpen it further.

## INDIAN DIASPORA IN AUSTRALIA.

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### **Context**

• Indians lead in acquiring Australian citizenship in 2019-20.

#### More about news

- More than 38,000 Indians became Australian citizens in 2019-2020, a **60% increase from the previous year** and the largest diaspora group to be granted the country's citizenship.
- Out of the over 200,000 people who became Australian citizens in 2019-2020, 38,209 were Indians, the highest number on record, followed by 25,011 Britishers, 14,764 Chinese and 8821 Pakistanis.

#### What does Diaspora mean?

'Diaspora' term describes people of one nationality or common origin living outside their home country.

- Indian Diaspora involves following three categories:
  - NRI's: Indian citizens staying abroad for indefinite period
  - o PIO's: Overseas Indian who have become citizen of the countries of their settlement
  - SPIO: Stateless Person of Indian Origin they have no documents to substantiate their Indian Origin

#### **Role of Indian Diaspora**

- Diaspora can play a crucial role in soft power diplomacy and in furthering India's foreign policy goals.
- They contribute in India's development by sending remittances, knowledge transfer, sharing resources, acting as unofficial Indian ambassadors and pushing India's interests abroad.
- They take up larger roles in politics, business and entertainment abroad and thus help in bringing investment, trade and technology to India.
- Countries with large Indian diasporas are more likely to support India in her bid to join the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)

#### Some recent instances when diasporas played an important role

- Passage of the India-US Nuclear Deal
- Under **Indian Pride Project** they have lobbied to bring back the famous Nataraja from Australia, and sandstone Yakshi from the United States
- Antonio Costa, Portuguese Prime Minister, and Leo Varadkar, Ireland's Prime Minister. Both belong to the Indian Diaspora, signed MOUs with India in science and technology, double taxation avoidance, space, energy etc.
- Diaspora also has **major implications for our national security**. For e.g. The **Khalistan** movement received major political, financial and material support from large sections of Sikh community's abroad same way **Kashmir militants** get funding through hawala route.





#### What is Soft power diplomacy?

- Diplomacy is an art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of states.
- Soft Power diplomacy is about winning the hearts and minds of people. Hence, there has to be a **people centric approach**.
- In international politics, soft power is the ability to attract and co-opt, rather than coerce (contrast hard power).
- The currency of soft power includes culture, political values, and foreign policies.
- It is part **of Track 4 Diplomacy**, which is Private Citizen or Peacemaking through Personal Involvement. Here, peace and development activities are carried through **citizen diplomacy**, exchange programs, private voluntary organizations and special-interest groups.

#### **Role of Soft power diplomacy in International relations**

- Diplomacy is the **main instrument of foreign policy**, through its broader goals and strategies; it guides a state's interactions with rest of the world.
- It is a channel for building economic, social, cultural, political, technological and mutual relationship among nations.
- It is means for establishing peaceful cooperation, negotiation, cohesion and harmony among nations.



#### UNION PEACE ACCORD III.

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### **Context**

Myanmar govt., armed groups sign framework accord for ceasefire implementation.

#### **About**

- The government of Myanmar and ten armed ethnic groups signed a framework agreement for the implementation of the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) at Nay Pyi Taw on the end of the 4th session of the Union Peace Conference 21st Century Panglong.
- The agreement also includes the <u>framework for implementation of various processes beyond 2020, and basic principles to establish a **democratic federal union**.</u>
- The peace accord called **Union Peace Accord III contains 15 provisions to implement the NCA.** These include <u>troop deployment, protocol to deal with skirmishes between government troops and the armed groups among others.</u>

#### **Background**

- Currently, the **4th round of the peace process** is being held between the government and armed ethnic groups that signed the NCA.
- The peace process in Myanmar was started in 2011 by President Thein Sein to end the long-standing conflict with ethnic armed groups active in the country.
- A National Ceasefire Accord (NCA) was signed in October 2015 with armed ethnic groups. Subsequently the dialogue to initiate a political peace process was started in 2016, which is continuing.

#### **India's Stand**

India supports the Myanmar peace process.

#### Why this move matters to India?

- **Maintaining Peace in northeastern states:** The comprehensive peace and national reconciliation in Myanmar will be conducive for peace and prosperity in India's northeastern region.
- Internal and External security: Myanmar is one of India's strategic neighbours and <a href="mailto:shares-a-1,640-km-long-border-with-a-number-of-northeastern-states">shares-a-1,640-km-long-border-with-a-number-of-northeastern-states</a> including militancy-hit Nagaland and Manipur. India has been concerned over some militant groups from the North-East region taking shelter in Myanmar. Myanmar has been assuring India that it would not allow any insurgent group to use its territory against India.

#### **India-Myanmar's Relations**

"Myanmar is India's gateway to Southeast Asia, India is Myanmar's gateway to South Asia."

#### Why Myanmar Should Matter to India

Myanmar is only country that sits at the intersection of India's "Neighborhood First" policy and "Act East" policy.





- Myanmar is an essential element in India's practice of regional diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific, and serves as a land bridge to connect South Asia and Southeast Asia.
- Myanmar is an important member of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), a multilateral sub-regional organization that is committed to fostering bilateral or regional cooperation among Bay of Bengal countries.
- To elevate its "Made in India" arms industry, India has identified Myanmar as key to increasing its military exports.
- Myanmar is **geopolitically significant** to India as it stands at the center of the India-Southeast Asia geography.
- Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country that shares a **land border** with northeastern India, stretching some 1,624 kilometers. The neighbors also share a 725-km **maritime boundary** in the Bay of Bengal.



#### Measures taken to improve ties

- It was one of only two Southeast Asian countries invited to attend the swearing-in of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he won re-election in May 2019.
- Facilitating connectivity is central to improving India-Myanmar economic relations. India regards Myanmar as a gateway to link up to the rest of Southeast Asia, and invested in ASEAN-wide infrastructural projects that are able to boost trade in the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area.
- Infrastructure projects:
  - The <u>India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport (KMMTT)</u>, to connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with the Sittwe deep-water port in Myanmar's Rakhine state by sea.

#### Sittwe port:

- As part of its policy for the Indian Ocean called Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), central to which is "port-led development," India developed the Sittwe port in Myanmar's Rakhine state.
- This port, which sits on the Bay of Bengal, serves as a critical node of the KMMTT initiative to connect southwestern Myanmar to northeastern India by creating a multi-modal trinary of sea, river and road transport corridor to hoos.
- West Bengal

  Haora Kolkata

  BANGLADESH

  Indo-Myanmar border

  Highway 129km in Myanmar

  Paletwa

  MYANMAR

  158 km

  River Kalandan

  Bay of Bengal
- river and road transport corridor to boost interconnectivity.
- India's long-term strategic goal is to create a Special Economic Zone surrounding the Sittwe port.
- The Sittwe port is meant to be **India's answer to the Chinese-fronted Kyaukpyu port**, which is intended to cement China's geostrategic footprint in Rakhine.
- India has been **providing humanitarian relief** even while deporting Rohingya refugees from India for security reasons, provoking the UN's ire.

#### **Challenges in India-Myanmar relations**

- China Factor: Beijing's bidding into Myanmar regional affairs. Myanmar is inevitability a "kingmaker" in Sino-Indian relations.
- **Trade deficit:** With a total bilateral trade of \$2 billion, India's economic engagement with Myanmar lags behind China. Myanmar is vital to fulfilling India's <u>ambition to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024.</u> India's **withdrawal from Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** can further increase this trade gap.

#### **Strengths of India-Myanmar relations**

- It is **the only Southeast Asian country** that has a **separate bureaucratic division** (shared with Bangladesh) in India's External Affairs Ministry, testifying to the continued importance of Myanmar to India's current foreign policy.
- **Operation Sunshine 1 and 2:** The Indian and Myanmar armies have carried out two joint military operations, Operation Sunshine 1 and 2, to fight militants along the borders of Myanmar's Rakhine state, which borders the northeastern Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram.





- **IMBAX-2017 and IMBEX 2018-19**: Seeing that Myanmar is critical to its national security interests, India provides military training and conducts joint military exercises with the Myanmar Army like the India-Myanmar Bilateral Military Exercise (IMBAX-2017 and IMBEX 2018-19), by which India had trained the Myanmar Army to be able to participate in UN Peacekeeping Operations.
- **Defense Cooperation Agreement**: To deepen their defense relations, India and Myanmar signed a landmark defense cooperation agreement in July 2019.
- **IMNEX-18:**Realizing the growing importance of the Bay of Bengal, the navies of both India and Myanmar conducted a historic bilateral naval exercise, IMNEX-18, in 2018. India also invited the Myanmar Army to participate in the India-led multilateral **Milan naval exercise** that occurs biennially in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Military purchases:** Myanmar bought India's first locally-produced anti-submarine torpedo, called TAL Shyena, a diesel-electric Kilo-class submarine, INS Sindhuvir.
- **Cultural diplomacy:"Buddhist Circuit" initiative,** which seeks to double foreign tourist arrivals and revenue by connecting ancient Buddhist heritage sites across different states in India, should resonate with Buddhist-majority Myanmar.

#### **Way forward**

- **Security Cooperation**: For **economic relations to improve**, India and Myanmar must boost their security cooperation at the border. The <u>more secure the border is, the greater the economic activity will be.</u>
- For example: Part of the reason why the KMMTT has faced delays is that the route of the project traverses a warzone in Rakhine state, where a battle rages on between the Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army rebels on the one hand, and on the other, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. Insurgents from India's Nagaland have also disrupted the completion of the KMMTT project.
- Handling Rohingya issue with care: Myanmar's geostrategic importance to India has meant that Delhi did not take a hardline approach on Naypyidaw vis-à-vis the Rohingya issue, even keeping its distance when Myanmar was hauled into the International Court of Justice over accusations of Rohingya genocide. India, which has a Hindu majority, will need to perform a balancing act between Muslim-majority Bangladesh and Buddhist-majority Myanmar as far as the Rohingya issue is concerned. The quicker the Rohingya issue is resolved, the easier it will be for India to manage its relations with Myanmar and Bangladesh, focusing instead more on bilateral and sub-regional economic cooperation.
- **India's Buddhist diplomacy** would bolster its tourist industry and could build up India's diplomatic reservoir of goodwill and trust with Buddhist-majority countries such as Myanmar.

#### **Conclusion**

- Potential in India-Myanmar relations has to be prioritized by both countries, and bilateral commitments translated should
  bear some practical outcomes. However, the responsibility remains on India as to how far and deep it is prepared to nurture
  its relations with Myanmar, knowing full well that Naypyidaw will matter much to Delhi in the next decade, not least if India
  wants to augment its standing as a regional power in the Indo-Pacific.
- India-Myanmar ties are on the **cusp of a remarkable transformation**. The moment is opportune and the atmosphere is conducive for the governments of India and Myanmar to **intensify efforts toward making India-Myanmar relations profoundly significant in each other's foreign policy.**



### PAKISTAN'S NEW MAP

GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### Why in news?

• Pakistan released a new political map, which depicts <u>J&K</u> as a disputed territory, and claims the regions of Sir Creek and the <u>erstwhile state of Junagadh in Gujarat as part of its territory.</u>

#### **Pakistan claim**

- On the eve of the **first anniversary of the withdrawal of Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370** and its bifurcation into Union territories, Pakistan released a new political map which depicts J&K as a disputed territory, and claims the regions of Sir Creek and the erstwhile state of Junagadh in Gujarat as part of its territory.
- The map depicts the entirety of Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory while also incorporating **Siachen as part of Pakistan**. It does not show any borders in the east of Kashmir, where China illegally occupied Aksai Chin. It also incorporates Sir Creek into Pakistani territory as well as parts of the erstwhile princely state of Junagadh.
- The map also shows the Federally Administered Tribal Areas as being part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.
- The Pakistan cabinet also approved the decision to rename a major road in Islamabad as **Srinagar Highway**. The road was previously called Kashmir Highway.



• This is not the first time Pakistan has tried to portray Junagadh as part of its territory. The 2012 Atlas of Islamic Republic of Pakistan also portrayed Junagadh as a separate territory.

#### India's stand

- Reacting sharply to the move, **India called it an "exercise in political absurdity"**, laying untenable claims to territories in the Indian State of Gujarat and our Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and of Ladakh.
- These assertions have neither legal validity nor international credibility.
- The new effort only confirms Pakistan's obsession with territorial aggrandisement supported by cross-border terrorism.

#### **Ground situation**

• The Survey of Pakistan site, a national surveying and mapping organization of the country, was inaccessible to Indian IP addresses to find the authenticity of the maps. Here is why Pakistan's claims are nowhere near reality.

#### Pakistan is nowhere near Siachen Glacier

India physically holds 267 thousand hectares of Siachen Glacier and areas around and Pakistan has no possession of it.

- The Line of Control (LOC) marked on the new map should logically indicate areas controlled by Pakistan.
- India took control of the Siachen Glacier in 1984 in 'Operation Meghdoot' carried out by the Indian Army.
- Pakistan's claim of controlling this area are imaginary.

#### Ladakh is frontier undefined

- The timing of Pakistan's new political map is more interesting as it comes amid the standoff between India and China in Eastern Ladakh, that has been going on for three months now.
- The areas beyond Karakoram Pass are also claimed by Pakistan in its new map.
- Until now, Pakistan had never claimed the areas of Ladakh because of its demographic dispensation. Locals there follow Buddhism and not Islam.
- Pakistan' government's claim on Ladakh seems to be part of a tacit agreement with China as there has been no objection raised by Beijing.

#### **Junagarh and Manavadar**

- The new Pakistan map has a special square superimposed, which supposedly shows Gujarat's Junagarh and Manavadar as part of Pakistan.
- The areas of Diu and Mendarda have been excluded from being part of Pakistan.
- This probably has a historical background of certain areas that belonged to the erstwhile state of Saurashtra.

#### **Implications of this move on Pakistan**

- The move may be an exercise to appease the domestic political sentiments but the move is fraught with serious implications. And none of them are good for Pakistan.
- Such maps were published in 1947-48 when Mohammed Ali Jinnah was Pakistan's first governor general. But the Islamic Republic had to rework the map that then had also included East Pakistan or the present day Bangladesh.
- The so-called new political map released by PM Imran Khan sounds a death knell to the self-determination movement
  among separatists in Kashmir Valley as Islamabad has now co-opted Jammu and Kashmir, leaving no space for either
  plebiscite or independent Kashmir.
- By showing the northern areas of **Gilgit-Baltistan** as part of **Jammu and Kashmir**, Islamabad's **promise of greater** autonomy to this mountainous region stands nullified as the region has been merged with predominantly Sunni regions of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad as also the Valley.

#### **Impact on Indo-Pak relations**

- By reopening the 1947-48 maps, Pakistan has given up on bilateralism of 1972 Shimla Agreement and 1999 Lahore
   Declaration the two agreements that committed both nations to resolving bilateral disputes bilaterally and paved a way for unilateralism.
- If Pakistan afford to give up 1972 Shimla Agreement and 1999 Lahore Declaration than it have to give up other bilateral pacts like the bilateral 1960 Indus Water Treaty that allows waters of Indus, Chenab and Jhelum to be used by Pakistan while allocating Beas, Ravi and Sutlej waters to India.
- The map opens up the route for unilateralism for India, nowit can choose to invoke it in future that Islamabad has indulged in unilateralism by issuing a new map that depicts territories firmly under Indian control as Pakistani territory.
- Map is also telling about Pakistan's relationship with its 'iron brother' China that has been engaged in a standoff with
  India for the last three months in East Ladakh. It has not only kept Shaksgam Valley and Aksai Chin out of its
  cartographic expansion but also left this frontier undefined to let China draw the line on the map.





- It is quite evident that Pakistan has followed Nepal way. Kathmandu had issued a map to emphasise its illegal claims on
  Lipulekh, Limiyadhura and Kalapani in India's Uttarakhand on 21 May 2020. It is not mere coincidence that both Pakistan
  and Nepal are close allies of Beijing with the latter pumping in money in form of infrastructure aid to prop up both
  regimes.
- Although India has **no desire to either expand its territorial claims or give up on bilateralism vis-a-vis Pakistan,** the map reflects the frustration within Pakistan government over its inability to get the international community to side with Islamabad on the Kashmir issue after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5 last year.



#### INDIA ISRAEL CULTURAL AGREEMENT

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### Context

 India and Israel signed a cultural agreement that outlines a three-year programme of cooperation to further strengthen their strategic bilateral relations. It aims to promote greater people-to-people exchanges.

#### **About**

- The agreement states that it <u>shall contribute to the development of their relations and to raising awareness, particularly among youth, of the history and culture of the people of both countries.</u>
- The programme of cooperation between the two countries for the years 2020-23 is based on the cultural agreement signed between them on May 18, 1993, a little more than a year after they established full-fledged diplomatic relations.
- The major areas of cooperation identified to promote cultural ties include the
  - Exchange of culture and art experts,
  - Encouraging cooperation in the protection of cultural heritage and archaeology with the help of israel antiquities authority (iia) and archaeological survey of india (asi) and
  - o Organising literary fests and book fairs while promoting the translation of famous works in each other's languages.
  - Student exchanges through scholarships, encouraging the participation of films and film-makers in each other's international film festivals, devising youth exchange programmes and encouraging sports-related interaction among youth.

#### Why Israel Matters to India?

These are five things that define the India-Israel relationship today:

#### Defence

- India is Israel's top destination for arms exports, Israel is India's third-largest source of arms.
- The earliest signs of collaboration came during the **1962 Sino-Indian war, when Israel provided India military aid**.

  Israel also assisted India during two wars with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971.
- The highlight of the partnership was Israel's supply of artillery shells during the Kargil war in 1999 when India faced a shortage.
- India's imported <u>Barak 1, an air-defence missile, unarmed aerial vehicles (UAVs) Searcher UAVs and Heron UAVs, SPYDER quick-reaction surface-to-air missile</u>
- India and Israel also closely cooperate on counter-terrorism issues through a joint working group on counter-terrorism.

#### **Diplomacy**

- Several ministerial and high-level official visits to Israel.
- Three Indian naval ships, destroyer INS Mumbai, frigate INS Trishul and tanker INS Aditya, made a goodwill visit at the Haifa port in May 2017 to mark **25 years of full diplomatic relations between the two countries.**

#### **Agriculture**

- An **Indo-Israel agriculture action plan for 2015-18 is operational**, and 15 of the proposed 26 **centres of excellence in agriculture** are being developed in India with Israel's help to showcase the latest technology to Indian farmers.
- India has benefited from Israeli technologies in <u>horticulture mechanisation</u>, <u>protected cultivation</u>, <u>orchard and canopy management</u>, <u>nursery management</u>, <u>micro-irrigation and post-harvest management</u>, particularly in Haryana and Maharashtra.

#### **Water Management**

- Union cabinet approved a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Israel on the National Campaign for Water Conservation in India.
- Technologically-adept Israel has developed water-management technologies, located as it is in a semi-arid region with limited sources of fresh drinking water.
- India and Israel had earlier signed an MoU on water resources management and development cooperation.





#### Trade

- Israel was India's 38th-largest trading partner, with trade of \$5.02 billion (Rs 33,634 crore) in 2016-17.
- Mineral fuels and oils are India's leading export to Israel, worth \$1.01 billion in 2016-17.
- India's major imports from Israel included natural or cultured pearls and precious stones, worth \$1.11 billion.
- Trade in diamonds accounts for nearly 54 per cent of the bilateral trade.

#### **Conclusion**

• "Relations with Israel are significant for India because of **cooperation in agriculture, defence and science/technology**"."Israel has been giving key weapons systems to India, including missiles; it has given us those weapons which we could not directly buy from the US for ideological reasons; cooperation in counter-terrorism from information sharing to techniques/doctrine of counter terrorism."



#### **BRICS SG INNOVATION BASE**

GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### Why in news?

• China is considering establishing a BRICS innovation base to strengthen cooperation among the five-country bloc including India in sectors like **5G**, **AI** and digital economy, industry and information technology.

#### **About**

- **Need:** The coronavirus pandemic has badly impacted the economies of all five countries in the bloc with Brazil, India, Russia, and South Africa in the top five, after the US, in terms of infected people.
- **Aim:** To strengthen BRICS members <u>cooperation on "...digital transformation, especially in 5G, AI, the digital economy and others, to promote the digital transformation of enterprises and their innovation capabilities, and to promote sustainable economic and social development".</u>
- **Hidden Agenda:** China's interest in promoting 5G within the BRICS bloc could be part of its interest in **pushing tech giant Huawei internationally** Huawei's name has come up as a contender to build the network in Brazil and South Africa even as it is embroiled in controversies in other countries.
- **Highlights of the meeting:** BRICS countries should cooperate to promote economic recovery, strengthen communication and sharing their experiences in epidemic prevention and control, guarantee medical supplies, resume work and production, and promote economic development during Covid-19,".
  - The BRICS multilateral bank, the New Development Bank (NDB) has loaned \$4 billion to China, India, South Africa and Brazil to fight the pandemic under the emergency assistance programme.
  - o In May, the Shanghai-based bank gave a **\$1billion loan to India** to help fight and contain the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - The 'emergency assistance program loan' to India was aimed at supporting the Indian government to contain the spread of Covid-19 and reduce human, social and economic losses caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

#### **BRICS**

- It is an **informal group** of states comprising the Federative Republic of **Brazil**, **the Russian Federation**, **the Republic of India**, **the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa**.
- Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (or "the BRICs"), before the induction of South Africa in 2010.
- The growing economic might of BRICS countries, their significance as one of the main driving forces of global economic development, their substantial population and abundant natural resources form the foundation of their influence on the international scene and are the driving forces behind the grouping.
- At the Fortaleza Summit (2014), in Brazil, important institutions were created: the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA).
- Among other areas of collaboration, matters pertaining to **drug trafficking** is an important area of cooperation among the BRICS member states.

#### **Concerns for India**

- India is **gradually phasing out Chinese vendors** from its telecom networks including Huawei following the deadly Galwan Valley clash on June 15.
- Indian intelligence assessments have also expressed concerns on the **possible direct or indirect links of several**Chinese companies, including Huawei, with the Chinese military.
- India, which is the **only country in the BRICS** grouping that is leaning towards <u>excluding Chinese participation in the roll-out of India's 5G network.</u> As Huawei, is banned by the United States.





- Recent moves to **tighten investment from China and to ban 59 Chinese apps**, citing national security concerns is pointing that India is unlikely to allow Chinese participation in 5G.
- India is still struggling with COVID-19, but growth in China's industrial economy is gaining momentum, in turn supporting the steady recovery of China's overall economy, and contributing to a new impetus and stability in the global industrial chain and supply chain.



## PROPOSAL OF SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE INITIATIVE

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### Context

• India-Japan-Australia decide to launch resilient supply chain initiative in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### How will this new idea on supply chains impact India?

- With COVID-19 and trade tensions between China and the United States threatening supply chains or actually causing bottlenecks, **Japan has mooted** the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) as a **trilateral approach to trade**, with India and Australia as the other two partners.
- The initiative is at the strategy stage and has some way to go before participants can realize trade benefits.

#### What does supply chain resilience mean?

- In the context of international trade, it is an approach that helps a country to ensure that it has diversified its supply risk across a clutch of supplying nations instead of being dependent on just one or a few.
- Unanticipated events whether natural, such as volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, earthquakes or manmade, such as an armed
  conflict in a region can disrupt supplies and put a halts on trade that could adversely affect economic activities of the
  countries.

#### What is Japan proposing?

- Japan has taken the initiative to include India and Australia, and potentially other Asian and Pacific Rim nations later, in a strategic dialogue.
- COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus that the assembly lines are heavily dependent on supplies from one
  country, the impact on importing nations could be crippling if that source stops production for involuntary reasons, or even
  as a conscious measure of economic coercion.
- Japan's imports from China fell by half in February, a period when the latter was battling the peak of the virus impact.
- **The U.S.-China trade tensions** have caused alarm in Japanese trade circles. If the world's two largest economies do not resolve their differences, it could threaten globalisation as a whole
- Japanese government recently earmarked \$2.2 billion to incentivize its companies to move their manufacturing out of China to other third countries

#### What is likely to have spurred Japan to eye India as a partner for the SCRI?

- Japan is the **fourth-largest investor in India** with cumulative foreign direct investments touching \$33.5 billion in the 2000-2020 period accounting for 7.2% of inflows in that period.
- Imports from Japan into India more than doubled over 12 years to \$12.8 billion in FY19. Exports from India to the world's third-largest economy stood at \$4.9 billion.
- Almost 1,400 Japanese companies operating in India is a clear reflection of both countries long-standing and deepening trade relationship.

#### Where does Australia stand?

- Australia, Japan and India are already part of another informal grouping, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Quad, which includes the U.S
- China has been Australia's largest trading partner and that it counts for 32.6% of Australia's exports, with iron ore, coal and gas dominating the products shipped to Asia's largest economy.
- But relations have been deteriorating for a while now. For instances: China banned beef imports from four Australian firms, levied import tariffs on Australian barley urges its citizens to 'no means travel to Australia' on account of rising 'racist incidents'.
- China's get angered from Australia's push for an enquiry into the origins of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.





#### What does India stand to gain, or lose?

- Following the border tensions between the two highly populous Asian neighbours, partners such as Japan have sensed that India may be ready for dialogue on alternative supply chains.
- But suddenly cutting links with China would be impractical as China's share of imports into India in 2018 stood at 14.5%, according to an impact analysis by the Confederation of Indian Industry in February 2020.
- In areas such as Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients for medicines such as paracetamol, India is fully dependent on China. In electronics, China accounts for 45% of India's imports.
- Chinese supplies dominate segments of the Indian economy. Sectors that have been impacted by supply chain issues arising out of the pandemic include **pharmaceuticals**, **automotive parts**, **electronics**, **shipping**, **chemicals and textiles**.
- Over time, if India enhances self-reliance or works with exporting nations other than China, it **could build resilience into the economy's supply networks**.

#### **Conclusion**

• While India appears an attractive option for potential investors both as a **market and as a manufacturing base**, there is a need to **accelerate progress in ease of doing business and in skill building**.



#### GCC RACKS UN ARMS EMBARGO ON IRAN

**GS-II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS** 

#### **Context**

• A six-nation bloc of Gulf Arab nations torn apart by internal strife endorsed an extension of a United Nations arms embargo on Iran, just two months before it is set to expire.

#### More about news

 The Gulf Cooperation Council sent a letter to the U.N. Security Council backing an extension of an arms embargo that's kept Iran from purchasing foreign-made weapons like fighter jets, tanks and warships.

#### **Background**

- The **U.N.** banned Iran from buying major foreign weapon systems in **2010** amid tensions over its nuclear program.
- It blocked Iran from replacing its aging equipment, much of which had been purchased by the shah before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.
- Iran's 2015 nuclear deal was seen as an end to Iran's arms embargo, but President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the deal in 2018
- It hurt Iran's already-ailing economy and led to a series of escalating incidents in the Mideast.
- Iran's shoot down a Ukrainian passenger plane and its navy accidentally killing 19 sailors in a missile strike during an exercise. Iran is suspected of launching a September attack on the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry.

#### Why GCC want extension of United Nations arms embargo on Iran?

- The GCC alleged Iran had "not ceased or desisted from armed interventions in neighboring countries, directly and through organizations and movements armed and trained by Iran."
- The Saudi-led coalition continues to battle Yemen's Houthi rebels, whom the U.N., the U.S. and armament experts have accused of receiving arms from Iran.
- Also, Iran arms Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and Syria and allegedly provides weapons to Shiite militias in Iraq and "terrorist groups" in Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.



#### GCC:

- The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf originally known as the Gulf Cooperation Council, is a regional intergovernmental political and economic union consisting of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates - except Iraq.
- All current member states are monarchies.

#### What Iran has to sav?

• It **criticized the Gulf Arab countries** for being "among the largest arms buyers in the region and the world," even amid the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic.



- Tehran denies arming the Houthis, even as Iranian armaments and components have repeatedly turned up in Yemen.
- Iran's condemned the GCC letter and called it an "irresponsible" statement that serves U.S. interests
- Extension of "U.N. restrictions will establish a consensus understanding of the threat to peace and stability Iranian proliferation represents".

#### **Qatar crisis angle**

- Due toongoing Qatar crisis, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates cut diplomatic ties and launch a boycott of the Qatar in 2017.
- Amid the crisis, Qatar had warmer ties with Iran and used its airspace while sharing a vast offshore oil and gas field with Tehran.
- Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates long have viewed Iran far more suspiciously, accusing it of stirring up dissent among Shiite populations in the region.

#### **Impact on India**

- Will hinder Chabahar port development: Iran-India relations are of vital importance for India strategically because of
  Iran's Chabahar port, which plays a fundamental role in India's trade connectivity with Afghanistan, Central Asia, Eurasia
  and Europe.
- **Oil price rise:** India being the second largest importer of crude oil from Iran has to make a plan to ensure that there is no shortage in supply by increasing imports from other countries.
- **Investment by Indian companies** in Iran's oil and gas development projects and pipeline projects **face restrictions** on loans, licenses and Ex-Im credit.





#### IBBI AMENDMENTS

GS-III ECONOMY

#### **Context**

• The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2020.

#### **Proposed Amendment**

- After evaluation of all compliant resolution plans as per evaluation matrix, the committee of creditors shall vote on all
  compliant resolution plans simultaneously.
- The resolution plan, which receives the highest votes, but not less than sixty-six percent of voting share, shall be considered as approved.

#### **About IBC code**

Year of Enactment	2016
Regulator	Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India
	• 10 Member Board
	Has RBI and Government representation
Entities created	Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPAs); Insolvency
	Resolution Professionals (IRPs);
	Information Utilities
Adjudicators	National Company law tribunal for
	Corporate entities and LLP etc.
	Debt Recovery Tribunal for
	For non-corporate entities such as individuals, partnership funds etc.
Required Time	180 days to resolve insolvency
	270 days in specific circumstances
Due Sharing ( Sharing of the Proceeds	Cost of Insolvency Process
received after liquidation with the	Workers, Secured Creditors
different claimants)	Employee Wages
	Unsecured Creditors
	Government due
	Any other remaining debt
	(This remains the order of Priority)
About the Different Entities	
Information Utilities	Process the financial information needed for the bankruptcy process
Insolvency Professional	To handle and proceed the bankruptcy process
Insolvency Professional Agencies	Provide code of conduct and rules to be followed by Insolvency Professional

#### **Achievement of the Code**

- Admission of the 1322 cases by the National Company Law Tribunal
- Disposition of the more than 4500 cases at pre-admission stage.
- · Fear in the debtor of proceeding at National Company Law Tribunal leading to timely payment of debt
- Transparent procedure of the successful completion of debt resolution
- Enhanced the ease of doing business rank of India
- Average time taken for the resolution is within 270 days which is significant improvement from 3-4 years taken in earlier days.
- Improvement in the recovery rates for financial creditors
- 2017 amendment had allowed the treatment of homebuyers at par with financial creditors thus protecting the interest of homebuyers.

#### **Challenges**

- Increasing backlog of the case
- Infrastructure constraint with National Company Law Tribunal
- Liquidation of the company is seen as failure of the IBC due to mind-set that every company will find a buyer.
- Many cases have prolonged beyond 270 days.
- · Continuous litigation regarding provisions of the act in the court leading to delay in the successful resolution





#### **Way Forward**

- Needs to bring clear cut separation between financially distressed firms and economically distressed firms.
- Needs to develop policy framework to attract the financial investors from abroad.

#### **Conclusion**

- IBC has been majorly a successful code.
- It has solved the issue of exit in Indian commercial entities.



#### ORGANIC FARMING

GS-III ECONOMY

#### Data

- India ranks first in number of organic farmers.
- Ninth in terms of area under organic farming.
- Major organic exports from India are flax seeds, sesame, soybean, tea, medicinal plants, rice and pulse.
- Sikkim became the first State in the world to become fully organic.
- Tripura and Uttarakhand have set similar targets.
- India exports around 1.35 million MTs of certified organic food

#### **Government Schemes**

1. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

#### **About The Scheme**

- Elaborated component of Soil Health Management (SHM) of major project National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)
- Promotion of Organic farming through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and PGS certification.

#### **Objective**

- Promotion of commercial organic production through certified organic farming.
- The produce will be pesticide residue free and will contribute to improve the health of consumer.
- It will raise farmer's income and create potential market for traders.
- It will **motivate the farmers for natural resource mobilization** for input production.

#### **Implementation So Far**

- Assistance to 40000 clusters.
- Coverage of area of about 7 Lakh Ha.

#### **Exports of Organic Production**

#### National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP):

- Launched during 2001 laid the foundation for systematic development of organic agriculture sector in the country.
- **Being managed by** Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (**APEDA**) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Main stay for quality assurance for organic agriculture products in India operated through 28 accredited certification bodies.
- All types of agriculture, horticulture and non-food crops are grown under organic certification process.
- Livestock, aquaculture, animal feed processing and handling, mushroom production, sea weeds, aquatic plants and green house crop production have also come under the ambit of organic certification.
- **TRACENET** is an on-line application tool managed by APEDA under NPOP for management of entire organic certification system in the country.

#### **Achievement**

- More than 4.45 million ha area is under organic certification, comprising 1.44 million ha under cultivation and 3.0 million ha under wild harvest collection.
- Producing wide range of crops under organic management with total production of 1180105 MTs which majorly covers Oilseeds, Sugarcane, and Cereal& Millets etc.
- Export kitty for organic food products is about US\$ 369.8 million
- The major export destinations are EU, USA, Canada, Switzerland, Pakistan, New Zealand and Australia.





#### **Organic Farming Regulatory System**

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) regulates organic food in the domestic market and Imports.
- Organic foods are also required to comply with the requirements of labelling of FSSAI in addition to that of NPOP or PGS-India.



#### **Existing Certification**

- 1. National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP):
- · Provide certificate through third party assessment
- Implemented by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Recognized by the European Commission, Switzerland and USA as equivalent to their respective accreditation systems.
- 2. Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS)
- Implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- Emphasize the participation of stakeholders, including producers and consumers
- Operate outside the framework of third-party certification.
- The government's 2015 PGS manual underlines that the system in India is based on "participatory approach, a shared vision, transparency and trust".

#### **Other Government Steps to Promote Organic Farming**

- Promotion of Contract Farming
- Encourage to concept of market led one district One product.
- Development of more clusters in the vicinity of bigger towns
- Promotion through strengthening of organic e-commerce platform www.jaivikkheti.in.
- Focus on infrastructure development like cold storage for better price realisation by farmers.

#### About Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)

- Statutory body established under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
   Act 1985.
- Under the Ministry of Commerce and Industries.
- Promotes export of agricultural and processed food products from India.
- Chairman is appointed by the Central Government.

#### **About Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**

- · Autonomous statutory body established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act).
- Under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare





#### **Objective of FSSAI**

- Lay down science-based standards for articles of food
- To regulate manufacture, storage, distribution, import and sale of food
- To facilitate safety of food



#### EXPORT PREPAREDNESS INDEX 2020

GS-III ECONOMY

#### **Context**

NITI Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020.

#### **Related Information**

- First Such Report
- · Data Driven report

#### **Parameters of Ranking**

#### 4 Pillars:

- Policy
- Business Ecosystem
- Export Ecosystem
- Export Performance
- **11 Sub Pillars:** Export Promotion Policy; Institutional Framework; Business Environment; Infrastructure; Transport Connectivity; Access to Finance; Export Infrastructure; Trade Support; R&D Infrastructure; Export Diversification; and Growth Orientation.

#### **Objective**

- Examine export preparedness and performance of Indian states
- Identify challenges and opportunities
- Enhance the effectiveness of government policies
- Encourage a facilitative regulatory framework.

#### Finding of the Report

- Most Indian states performed well on average across the sub-pillars of Exports Diversification, Transport Connectivity, and Infrastructure.
- Overall, most of the Coastal States are the best performers.
- Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu occupy the top three ranks, respectively.
- In the landlocked states, Rajasthan has performed the best, followed by Telangana and Haryana.
- Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand is the highest, followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh.
- Across the Union Territories, Delhi has performed the best, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.
- At present, 70 per cent of India's export has been dominated by five states Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka,
   Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- Many north eastern states were able to export more by focusing on their indigenous product baskets.
- Focused development of such baskets (like spices) can drive exports on one hand and also improve farmer incomes
  on the other in these states.

#### **Benefits**

- Identify the core areas crucial for export promotion at the sub-national level.
- Helpful guide for the state governments to benchmark regional performance with respect to export promotion
- Make States active participants in country's exports efforts.
- Will deliver key policy insights on how to improve and enhance the exports.

#### **Challenges faced in Exports**

- Intra- and inter-regional disparities in export infrastructure;
- Poor trade support and growth orientation among states;
- Poor R&D infrastructure to promote complex and unique exports.





#### **Way Forward**

- Emphasize on key strategies to address challenges faced during export: Undertake assessment of exports and bring changes. Like development of cold storage facilities, or testing labs for agricultural exports.
- A joint development of export infrastructure: States must come together for cluster based development in the border region. Similarly, coastal states must come together with landlocked states to provide access and remove any infrastructural constraints.
- **Strengthening industry-academia linkages:** It will promote innovation and value additions leading to market capture and higher exports.
- **Creating state-level engagements for economic diplomacy.** Different states must get into export agreement with countries best on their strength. States must undertake export promotion like they undertake investment summit.



#### TRANSPARENT TAXATION-HONOURING THE HONEST

GS-III ECONOMY

#### **Context**

- Launching of the platform "Transparent Taxation Honouring the Honest"
- It provides faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers' charter.

#### **About Faceless Assessment**

- Random scrutiny of returns of a taxpayer by tax officer
- Do away the need for any face-to-face contact between the taxpayer and tax official

#### **About Faceless Appeal**

- Available to all citizens from September 25 (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's birth anniversary)
- Allow the taxpayer to appeal against a tax official's decision without the need of making a physical representation.

#### **About Taxpayer's charter**

- Outlines the rights and duties of an honest taxpayer.
- Defines the commitment of the tax department and the expectations from the taxpayers.

#### **Benefits**

- Reduction in corruption
- Ease of Doing Business
- Reducing the chances of coercion and rent seeking
- Enhancement of the tax collection
- . Enhancement of the tax payer confidence on fairness and fearlessness of tax department.
- Maintain the privacy and confidentiality of income taxpayers.
- Empower citizens by ensuring time-bound services by the Income Tax Department.
- Help tax department in shedding its autocratic and lackadaisical image

#### **Challenges envisaged**

- Tax return are voluminous and complex in nature.
- Needs to be explained to new set of officers every year.
- Non clarity on getting effect for appeals or obtaining refunds.
- Operational issues of processing of millions of tax returns.
- Transitional issues as assessment of some taxes are already in pipeline.

#### **Taxation in India**

- Tax structure in India is a three tier federal structure.
- The central government, state governments, and local municipal bodies make up this structure.
- Article 256 of the constitution states that "No tax shall be levied or collected except by the authority of law".

#### Tax System in India

#### 1. Direct Tax:

• Levied directly on individuals and corporate entities.





- This tax cannot be transferred or borne by anybody else.
- Examples of direct tax include income tax, wealth tax, gift tax, capital gains tax.

#### 2. Indirect Tax:

- Taxes which are indirectly levied on the public through goods and services.
- The sellers of the goods and services collect the tax which is then collected by the government bodies.

#### **Tax Related Bodies**

#### 1. Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT):

- Part of the revenue department under the Ministry of Finance.
- It has a two-fold role:
  - o Provides important ideas and inputs for planning and policy with regard to direct tax in India.
  - o Assists the Income Tax department in the administration of direct taxes.

#### 2. Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC):

· Assisting the government in policy-making matters related to GST.



#### AGRICULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

GS-III ECONOMY

#### **Context**

Government has launched a new pan India Central Sector Scheme-Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.

#### **Objective**

• Finance will be to develop cold chain storage, processing facilities and other post-harvest management infrastructure at the farm gate and aggregation points.

#### **Features**

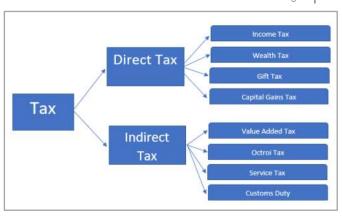
- One Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Marketing Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs), Self Help Group (SHG) etc.
- Disbursement of loans in four years.
- Interest subvention of 3% per annum up to a limit of Rs. 2 crore.
- Availability of credit guarantee for eligible borrowers.
- Total budgetary support: 10,736 crore.
- Will be managed and monitored through an online Management Information System (MIS) platform.
- The duration of the Scheme shall be from FY2020 to FY2029 (10 years).
- Government will bear the cost of interest subvention.
- Will be managed by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in association with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

#### **Significance**

- Provide an impetus to the creation of post-harvest management infrastructure and assets such as cold storage,
   collection centres, processing units, etc.
- Avoid distress selling by Farmers
- Better Price discovery by Farmers
- Cold Storage facility will help in reducing the wastage.
- Ensure uniform availability of raw material throughout the season thus tackling the persistent food inflation.
- Support to food processing units as raw material will be available throughout the year.
- Create numerous job opportunities in rural areas.

#### Challenges

- Mere creation of the storage facility won't help the small farmers meet their cash needs for day to day basis.
- No focus on the agri- future markets.







#### **Way Forward**

- Make availability of working capital to Farmer producer Organisation at lower interest rate where they can provide working capital to small and marginal farmers against the collateral of their produce.
- Use negotiable warehouse receipt system to create a network of Banks, FPO and small and marginal farmers.
- Government agencies like the Food Corporation of India (FCI), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and State Trading Corporation (STC) should increase their participation in agri-futures.

#### **About Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (NWR) System**

- Launched in 2011.
- Under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public distribution.
- Statutory in nature under Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007 (WDR Act).
- These are documents issued by warehouses to depositors against the commodities deposited in the warehouses.
- NWRs can be traded, sold, swapped and used as collateral to support borrowing.
- Allows loans from banks to farmers against use of the warehouse receipt which is issued against their produce.
- Recently, it was integrated with National Agriculture Market (E-NAM).



#### GST COMPENSATION

GS-III ECONOMY

#### **Context**

Borrowing options to meet the GST compensation requirement for 2020-21.

#### **Legal Provisions**

• The Constitution (101st Amendment) Act 2016 contains the following provision: "provide for compensation to the States for loss of revenue arising on account of implementation of the goods and services tax for a period of five years (emphasis added)".

#### Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act 2017

- Provide for the detailed mechanism of calculation and payment of compensation to the states.
- **Compensation payable is the projected revenue** (at a compound growth rate of 14% from the base figure of 2015-16) minus the actual revenue in each period.
- Compensation is to be paid only from the Compensation Fund.
- The compensation amount due to the states has to be paid every two months based on provisional accounts.
- · However, and it is not an obligation of the Government of India in the event of a shortfall
- It is for the GST Council to decide on the mode of making good the shortfall.
- The compensation gap cannot be bridged using the Consolidated Fund of India.

#### **Two Options**

- The shortfall arising out of GST implementation (Rs. 97000 Crores) will be borrowed by States through the issue of debt under a Special Window coordinated by the Ministry of Finance.
- The interest on the borrowing under the Special Window will be paid from the Cess as and when it arises until the end of the transition period.
- After the transition period, principal and interest will also be paid from proceeds of the Cess, by extending the Cess beyond the transition period for such period as may be required.
- Government will endeavour to keep the cost at or close to the G-sec yield, and in the event of the cost being higher, will bear the margin between G-secs and average of State Development Loan yields up to 0.5% (50 basis points) through a subsidy.

#### Option 2

- The entire shortfall of Rs 235,000 crores may be borrowed by States through issue of market debt.
- Centre will be committed to repayment of principal on such debt from Cess proceeds.
- The interest shall be paid by the States from their resources.
- To the extent of the shortfall arising due to implementation of GST (Rs. 97,000 crores) the borrowing will not be treated as debt of the State for any norms which may be prescribed by the Finance Commission etc.





#### Some figures

- Pending amount for April-July estimated at Rs 1.5 lakh crore.
- Estimated Cess Collection: 65000 crore
- Estimated shortfall in GST: 2,35,000 crore

#### **State Arguments**

- Centre must do the borrowing and distribute among the states.
- Rate of borrowing for centre is low compared to states because centre has more credibility and better avenues for raising the resources.
- It will negatively affect the states debt profile as states debt is already increasing due to pandemic affected borrowing.
- Kerala has said that enforcing a cut in compensation and bringing in a distinction between GST and Covidrelated revenue loss is unconstitutional.
- Borrowing would translate into "mortgaging of the future to live for the present" because future generation has to pay for it.
- · Violation of the principle of fiscal federalism

#### **Centre arguments**

- Borrowing by the centre will affect the debt profile and rating of the country.
- States are trying to politicise the issue as many states are already on board.
- Reduction in the GST collection is an output of pandemic which couldn't have been foreseen.
- Centre is already **providing a 0.5% relaxation** in the borrowing limit under **The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget**Management (FRBM) Act.
- The high rate of 14%, which has compounded since 2015-16, has been seen as delinked from economic realities.

#### **Significance of GST for States**

- GST accounts for almost 42% of states' own tax revenues, and tax revenues account for around 60% of states' total
  revenues.
- Strained finances of the states
- High Spending on the Covid related expenses

#### **About GST**

- Destination based taxation
- Levied at the final consumption Point
- Subsuming a gamut of 17 indirect taxes like excise duty, VAT, service tax, luxury tax etc.
- Taxes not subsumed under GST: Basic Custom Duty, Anti-Dumping Duty, Central Excise on Petroleum Products, VAT on alcohol for human consumption, Stamp Duty, Property Tax (levied by local bodies), Professional Tax etc.

#### **Key Terms related to GST**

#### 1. GST Council:

- Constitutional body under Article 279(A)
- Chaired by Union Finance Minister
- Other Members: Finance minister of states and Minister in charge of finance

#### 2. GSTN (Goods and Service Tax Network)

- · Not for Profit company
- To provide IT infrastructure and services to the Central and State Governments, tax payers and other stakeholders for implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).



#### JADNETARY POLICY MEET

GS-III ECONOMY

#### Context

Third Review of the Monetary Policy by the RBI.

#### **Decisions**

- Kept Policy rates unchanged
- Non extension of the moratorium period
- Allowed banks to restructure loans from large corporates, micro, small and medium enterprises as well as individuals.



- Rs. 10000 crore facility for National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the National Housing Bank (NHB) to boost rural lending and affordable housing.
- Enhancement of limits against gold
- Broadening of the Priority Sector lending by including start-ups and enhancing borrowing limits for renewable energy sectors.

#### **Effect of the Decisions**

- Shield the housing sector from liquidity disruptions.
- · Ease liquidity concerns at the bottom of the pyramid
- Funds to NABARD will help ameliorate the stress being faced by smaller NBFCs and microfinance institutions in obtaining access to liquidity.
- The facility to the NHB will augment the flow of finance to the sector through housing finance companies.
- · Restructuring of loans by banks will help stem the rising stress on incomes and balance sheets.
- Broadening of priority sector lending will allow start-ups functioning in different fields to access timely and adequate bank credit.

#### **About Priority Sector Lending**

• Development of Key sectors on priority basis for the development of the basic needs of the country.

#### **Guidelines of Priority Sector Lending**

- 40% of total credit Priority Sector
- 10% Weaker Section
- 18% Marginal and Small Farmers
- 5% Micro Enterprises
- Included Categories under Priority Sector: Agriculture , Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) , Export Credit , Education , Housing , Social Infrastructure , Renewable Energy , Others

#### **Priority Sector Lending Certificates**

- Mechanism to enable banks to achieve the priority sector lending target and sub-targets by purchase of these
  instruments in the event of shortfall.
- Incentivizes surplus banks as it allows them to sell their excess achievement over targets.

**About Monetary Policy Committee** 

About	Statutory in nature
	Created in 2016 by Amendment in RBI act-1934.
Objective	Price Stability
	Mind the Objective of Growth
Task	Fixes the Repo rate
	Maintain inflation level within 4+- 2%.
Meeting	Six Times in a Year
Composition	Total 6 Members
	3 Nominated by the Government
	3 From RBI
Chairperson	RBI Governor
Term	• 4 years
Remarks	No Government official can be member of it.
	No Veto Power with RBI Governor
	Will Have the casting vote in case of tie
Available	• Quantitative: Open Market Operations, Bank Rate, Repo Rate, Reverse Repo Rate, Cash Reserve
Tools	Ratio, Statutory Liquidity Ratio, Marginal standing facility and Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)
	Qualitative: refer to direct action, change in the margin money and moral suasion



#### MARS 2020 MISSION

#### GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### What is in news?

- Recently, NASA launched the Mars 2020 mission that carries its Perseverance robotic rover.
- This rover is equipped with sensors specifically designed to find evidence of ancient, microbiotic life on Mars.

#### **MARS 2020 MISSION**

MARS 2020 MISSION	DETAILS
Aim	assess possibility of past life on Mars, search for biosignatures, Gather rock & soil samples
Part of NASA'S Mar's Exploration Program	
Rover	Perseverance
Helicopter	Ingenuity Drone
Landing Site	Jezero Crater, Mars
Mission Duration	1 Mars years or 687 Earth days
Key Hardware	7 Instruments on Rover



## STUDENT ENTERPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME 2.0 🥢

**GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY** 

#### **Context**

Recently, the Student Entrepreneurship Programme 2.0 (SEP 2.0) was launched.

#### Who launched it?

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, in collaboration with Dell Technologies

#### Aim

To enable young student innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs to work closely with Dell volunteers

#### **Atal Tinkering Labs**

• An initiative of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), Government of India.

## Vision

• To 'Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators', Atal Innovation Mission.

#### Objective

• To foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds and inculcate skills such as design mind - set, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing, rapid calculations, measurements etc.

#### **Finance**

• Grant-in-aid that includes a one-time establishment cost of Rs. 10 lakh and operational expenses of Rs. 10 lakh for a maximum period of 5 years to each ATL.

#### **Eligibility**

- Schools (minimum Grade VI X) managed by Government, local body or private trusts/society to set up ATL.
- Also applicant school would have to provide at least 1,500 Sq. Ft. of built up space. Applicant schools from hilly / Himalayan
  and island states, UTs would have to provide atleast 1,000 Sq. Ft. of built up space.

#### **Atal Innovation Mission**

• Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

#### **Objective**

- To develop new programmes and policies for fostering innovation in different sectors of the economy.
- To provide platform and collaboration opportunities for different stakeholders, create awareness and create an umbrella structure to oversee innovation ecosystem of the country.

#### **Major initiatives**

- 1. Atal Tinkering Labs-Creating problem solving mindset across schools in India.
- 2. Atal Incubation Centers-Fostering world class startups and adding a new dimension to the incubator model.
- 3. **Atal New India Challenges-**Fostering product innovations and aligning them to the needs of various sectors/ministeries.
- 4. **Mentor India Campaign-** A national Mentor network in collaboration with public sector, corporates and institutions, to support all the intiatives of the mission.





- 5. **Atal Community Innovation Center-** To stimulate community centric innovation and ideas in the unserved /underserved regions of the country including Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- 6. ARISE-To stimulate innovation and research in the MSME industry.

#### REIDOU SATELLITE CONSTELLATION

**GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY** 

#### **In News**

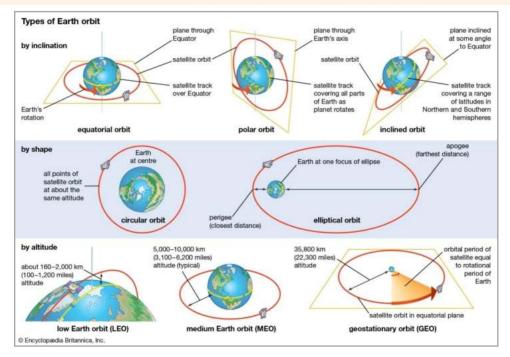
- China successfully completed the launched of all its members in its **Beidou** Navigation Satellite System constellation.
- ✓ A satellite constellation is a group of artificial satellites working together as a system.
- ✓ Unlike a single satellite, a constellation can provide permanent global or near-global coverage, such that at any time everywhere on Earth at least one satellite is visible.
- ✓ Satellites are typically placed in sets of complementary orbital planes and connect to globally distributed ground stations. They may also use inter-satellite communication.

#### **About Beidou**

- BeiDou offers services including accurate positioning, navigation and timing as well as short message communication.
- It can provide positional accuracies of under ten metres (GPS provides positioning accuracies of under 2.2 metres).
- It consists of 27 satellites in medium Earth orbit, five in geostationary orbit and three more in inclined geosynchronous orbits.

#### **Other Navigational Systems**

System	GPS	GLONASS	BeiDou	Galileo	NAVIC
Owner	United States	Russian Federation	China	European Union	India
Orbital altitude	20, 180 km (12, 540 mi)	19, 130 km, (11, 890 mi)	21, 150 km, (13, 140 mi)	23,222 km , (14, 429 mi)	36, 000 km, (22,000mi)
Period	11.97 h, (11 h 58 min)	11.26 h, (11 h 16 min)	12.63 h, [12 h 38 min]	14.08 h, (14h 5min)	
Number of satellites	32 (at least 24 by design)	28 (at least 24 by design) includ- ing: 24 operational 2 under check by the satellite prime contractor 2 in flight tests phase	5 geostationary orbit (GEO) satellites, 30 medium Earth orbit (MEO) satellites	4 in-orbit validation satellites + 8 full operation capable satellites in orbit 22 operational satellites budgeted	Total: 7 In Orbit: 7
Frequency	1.57542 GHz (L1 signal) 1.2276 GHz (L2 signal)	Around 1.602 GHz (SP) Around 1.246 GHz (SP)	1.561098 GHz (B1) 1.589742GHz (B1-2) 1.20714 GHz (B2) 1.26852 GHz (B3)	1.164-1.215 GHz (E5a and E5b) 1.260-1.300 GHz (E6) 1.559-1.592 GHz (E2-L1-E11)	L5-band 1164.45-1188.45 MHz S-band 2483.5-2500 MHz
Status	Operational	Operational	22 satellites operational, 40 additional satellites 2016-2010	8 satellites operational, 22 additional satellites 2016-2020	Operational





#### VIKRAMSARARHAL

#### GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Context

• Recently, ISRO paid tribute to Dr Vikram Sarabhai by announcing that Chandrayaan 2 Orbiter has captured the Moon images of "Sarabhai" Crater.

#### Sarabhai Crater

- Sarabhai is a small, circular, bowl-shaped crater on the Mare Serenitatis, in the northeast quadrant of the Moon.
- This crater is named after Indian astrophysicist Vikram Sarabhai- Father of the Indian Space Programme.

# Vikram Sarabhai: Innovator and Scientist

1966: Padma Bhushan 1972: Padma Vibhushan (Posthumously)

- Vikram Sarabhai established the Indian National Committee for Space Research in 1962, later renamed it Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
- It was Vikram Sarabhai's efforts that brought television to India. His consistent communication with NASA formed

AUGUST 12, 1919 30 DECEMBER 1971

the base for Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975.

- India's first satellite, Aryabhata was his brainchild.
- He completed his PhD in 'Cosmic ray investigations in tropical latitudes' under the Doctoral Advisory of Sir C. V. Raman.
- One of the founding members for Indian Institute of Management (IIM),
  Ahmedabad, in 1961.
- He was the vice president for the fourth UN peace conference organised in 1971. The topic of concern in this issue was 'Peaceful uses of atomic energy.'

Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad	Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad	
Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad	Faster Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR), Kalpakkam	
Community Science Centre, Ahmedabad	Variable Energy Cyclotron Project, Calcutta	
Darpan Academy for Performing Arts, Ahmedabad	Electronics Corposition Limited (ECIL), Hyderonics Corposition	
Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram	Uranium Corporation of India	



#### AMMONIUM NITRATE

**GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY** 

#### **Context**

- Recently, a catastrophic explosion at Beirut port, Lebanon killed at least 100 people and injured around 4,000.
- It was caused by over 2,700 tonnes of ammonium nitrate kept in storage for over six years.



AMMONIUM NITRATE	PROPERTIES & DETAILS				
Colour & Structure	White, Crystalline Chemical				
Solubility	Soluble in Water				
Nature	Hygroscopic				
Used in	Fertilizers and Explosives				
Pure ammonium nitrate	Not an explosive				
Explosion	When mixed with ingredients like fuel & Oil & detonated. (acts as a source of oxygen)				
Regulations	Industrial license must for manufacturing				
The Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012, India	For manufacture, conversion, bagging, import, export, transport, possession for sale etc. Storage in large quantities in populated areas illegal in India.				

- Lebanon a mountainous country in the Levant with a coastline on the eastern
   Mediterranean Sea.
- Lebanon borders Israel in the south, Syria in the north t. The country also shares maritime borders with Cyprus. Capital- Beirut



# Plasmodium Vivas

GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### What is in news?

- The parasite Plasmodium vivax, which is responsible for 7.5 million malaria cases worldwide, remains understudied.
- Not much is known about its dormant stage in the liver.
- However, recently, an international team has developed a system to breed these parasites in the lab and then infect cultured human liver cells with it. This can help establish a robust liver stage assay in P. vivax-endemic regions such as India.

# Plasmodium vivax

- <u>Plasmodium vivax</u> is a protozoal parasite and a human pathogen.
- This parasite is the most frequent and widely distributed cause of recurring malaria.
- Although it is less virulent than
   Plasmodium falciparum,
   the deadliest of the five human malaria parasites, P. vivax malaria infections can lead to severe disease and death.
- P. vivax is carried by the female Anopheles mosquito; the males do not bite.

Plasmodium type	Type that causes	Endemic area	Febrile seizures	Involvement and severity
Falciparum	tropical malaria	In all endemic areas	Irregular Crisis	Very serious It can cause death if not treated quickly and effectively.
Vivax	tertian malaria	South America and Asia	Every 2 days	Grave, but with a delayed onset.
malariae	quartan malaria	South America and Asia	Every 3 days	Moderate, less frequently.
Ovale	tertian malaria	Africa	Every 2 days	Moderate, less frequently.
Knowlesi	It is mistaken with quartan malaria	istaken Malaysia, Thailand with and uartan Cambodia		It can cause death if not treated quickly and effectively.





# DIGITAL QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX 2020

GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Context

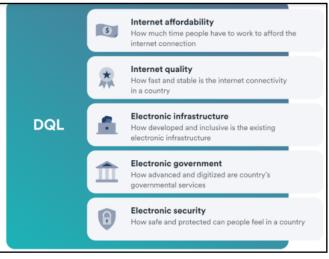
- As per the "Digital Quality of Life Index 2020", India occupies 79th place, ranking below countries including Guatemala and Sri Lanka.
- The Digital Quality of Life (DQL) index is published annually based on research conducted by the privacy protection company Surfshark.

# **Findings**

- India makes it into the top 10 in terms of Internet affordability. With a ranking of nine, it outperforms countries such as the U.K., the U.S. and China.
- India occupies the 15th place globally in e-governance, just below countries like New Zealand and Italy.
- But India's Internet quality is one of the lowest across 85 countries. In position 78, India is at the bottom of the pillar with unstable and slow mobile Internet dragging it down in the overall Internet quality index.

# Five pillars that determine the digital quality of life

Today, people's overall wellbeing is strongly influenced by their digital wellbeing. Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020 offers a unique insight into the overall digital quality of life based on five core pillars.







# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY INDICATORS 2018.

GS-III SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

# **Context**

 Science and Technology Indicators (STI), 2018, a periodic compendium of the state of scientific research in India, was released this month

# **About**

- The STI is prepared by a division of the Department of Science Technology, the National Science and Technology Management Information System.
- It is based on data provided by a range of scientific establishments across the country.

# **Findings**

- India's private sector research companies employ a larger proportion of women in core research and development activities than government-funded major scientific agencies do.
- The 2018 indicators reiterate the historic trend of India's scientists being overwhelmingly men.
- There are patriarchal attitudes in hiring practices; so many women are discriminated against, with administrators deciding that women 'should' be opting for family over a career.
- Social pressure on women to have a family is seen as incompatible with a professional career.



# NDC - TRANSPORT INITIATIVE FOR ASIA (TIA).

GS-III ENVIRONMENT

#### Context

NITI Aayog launched the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)-Transport Initiative for Asia (TIA) India Component.

#### More about News

 NDC-TIA India Component to focus on establishing a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform for decarbonizing transport in India.

#### What is NDC?

- Countries across the globe committed to create a new international climate agreement by the conclusion of the U.N.
  Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris in December 2015. In preparation, countries have agreed to publicly outline what post-2020 climate actions they intend to take under a new international agreement, known as their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The INDCs will largely determine whether the world achieves an ambitious 2015 agreement and is put on a path toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.
- With the aim to promote a comprehensive approach to decarbonize transport in India, Vietnam, and China, NDC-TIA
  is a joint programme, supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Ministry for the
  Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and implemented by a consortium of seven
  organizations, namely:
  - 1. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
  - 2. International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT)
  - 3. World Resources Institute (WRI)
  - 4. International Transport Forum (ITF)
  - 5. Agora Verkehrswende (AGORA)
  - 6. Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) Foundation
  - 7. Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century e.V. (REN21
- The India Component is implemented by six consortium organisations, all **except SLoCaT**. On behalf of the Government of India, **NITI Aayog**, the country's premier policy think tank, will be the **implementing partner**.
- The NDC-TIA programme has a **duration of 4 years** and will allow India and other partner countries to achieve accountable long-term targets by making a sectoral contribution through various interventions, coordinated with a large number of stakeholders in the domain.
- This will contribute towards achieving their NDCs and increasing their ambition in the transport sector of 2025 NDCs.

# **NDC Transport Initiative for Asia**

# **Project description**

Title: NDC Transport Initiative for Asia

Commissioned by: German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU)

Financier: International Climate Initiative (IKI)

Countries: Regional Programme with country components in China, India and Vietnam as well as a regional/global

component

**Lead executing agency:** China: Ministry of Ecology and Environment, Department of Atmospheric Environment, India:

National Institute for Transforming India (NM Aayog), Vietnam: Ministry of Transport, Department for Environment

Overall term: 2019 to 2024.

#### **India's present situation**

- India has a massive and diverse transport sector that caters to the needs of billion people.
- It has the world's second-largest road network, which contributes to maximum greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through all means of transportation.



 With increasing urbanisation, the fleet size i.e. the number of sales of vehicles is increasing rapidly. It is projected that the total number of vehicles will be doubled by 2030.

# The NDC-TIA India Component will focus on

- Establishing a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform for decarbonizing transport in India,
- Strengthening GHG and transport modelling capacities,
- Providing technical support on GHG emission reduction measures,
- Financing climate actions in transport,
- Offering policy recommendations on electric vehicle (EV) demand and supply policies,
- Evaluating business models through cost-benefit analyses.

# THE WAY FORWARD

India plans to cut emissions with afforestation, changes in power sector and urban reforms

# WHAT RISING LEVELS OF WHAT CO2 MEAN? DONE

Rising levels of CO2 lead to greenhouse effect. More heat is trapped in the atmosphere and the planet gets warmer than it should naturally be

# WHY INDIA NEEDS TO CUT EMISSIONS

Protecting biodiversity
India has 7-8% of all
recorded species and 4
out of 34 biodiversity hotspots

Conserving the Himalayan
Ecosystem | It forms the most
important concentration of
snow-covered region outside the
polar region

Disaster prone | Indian subcontinent among most disaster prone areas. Almost 85% of its area is vulnerable to hazards

Coastal impact | 14.2% of its population inhabits its 7,517km coastline which is most vulnerable to rising sea level. 1,238 islands are in danger

Agriculture | Droughts and floods are frequent and the sector is already facing high degree of climate variability

#### WHAT INDIA HAS DONE SO FAR

Power sector | Using renewables like solar, wind and biomass energy, hydro and nuclear power, to generate power | Efficient use through policies like National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency like promoting use of CFLs, labeling electrical appliances on power consumption

Smart City scheme | Smart Cities Mission to transform urban areas | Develop new-generation cities that promise clean and sustainable environment



one will not see | Mahatma Gandhi

Waste management | Incentivizing waste to energy conversion projects | Investing in solid waste and waste water management projects

Low-carbon economy

Dedicated transport systems like freight corridors, inland water transport | Moving 'people' rather than 'vehicles' through MRTS, metro rail

Afforestation | Increasing forest cover from 23.4% in 2005 to 24% in 2013 | Companies Act directing companies to spend CSR funds on environment initiatives

#### WHAT INDIA PROPOSES TO DO

- Reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33% to 35% by 2030
- ➤ Achieve about 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity from nonfossil fuel based energy resources by 2030
- Invest in development programmes in sectors vulnerable to climate change
- Build capacities, create framework for quick diffusion of cutting edge climate technology
- A significant focus will be given on **electric mobility**, which would require coupling of transport and energy sectors and receiving cross-sectoral expertise from ministries, international development agencies, think tanks, public and private organizations.
- Ultimately, the programme intends to support the development of policies and regulations to promote electric vehicle charging infrastructure uptake and smooth wide-scale adoption of EVs in India.
- The NDC-TIA programme team will work in close cooperation and coordination with India's government agencies, local decision-makers, researchers, industry experts, think tanks, and civil society organizations.
- The programme aims at high ambition in the transport sector directly supporting the country's NDC targets.
- Successful implementation of these activities requires the political will and interest of political partners and relevant stakeholders in the target countries.

# RIS DRAFT STANDARD FOR DRINKING WATER

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

# Context

• The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has prepared a draft standard for the supply system of piped drinking water and has invited comments from water utilities, including the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), on it.

#### **About**

- The quality standards for drinking water in India is prescribed by Bureau of Indian Standards laid down IS 10500: 2012.
- Labeled 'Drinking water supply quality management system requirements for piped drinking water supply service', the draft has been prepared by the BIS' Public Drinking Water Supply Services Sectional Committee.
- It outlines the process of water supply, from raw water sources to household taps, and has been developed keeping in view
  the Centre's Jal Jeevan Mission for providing safe and adequate drinking water to all rural households by 2024
  through tap connections.
- The standards are expected to make the process of piped water supply more uniform.



#### **About BIS**

- BIS is the National Standard Body of India established under the BIS Act 2016 for the harmonious development of the activities of standardization, marking and quality certification of goods and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto?
- BIS has been providing traceability and tangibility benefits to the national economy in a number of ways providing safe reliable quality goods; minimizing health hazards to consumers; promoting exports and imports substitute; control over proliferation of varieties etc. through standardization, certification and testing.
- BIS is involved in various activities as given below:
  - o Standards Formulation
  - Product Certification Scheme
  - o Compulsory Registration Scheme
  - o Foreign Manufacturers Certification Scheme
  - o Hall Marking Scheme
  - o Laboratory Services
  - o Laboratory Recognition Scheme
  - Sale of Indian Standards
  - o Consumer Affairs Activities
  - o Promotional Activities
  - o Training Services, National & International level
  - o Information Services

#### What does the draft say?

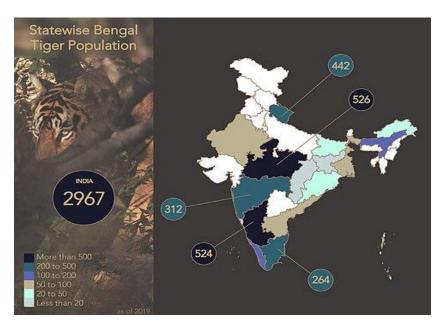
- The draft outlines the requirements for a water supplier or a water utility on how they should establish, operate, maintain and improve their piped drinking water supply service.
- It states that the treatment process should be planned in such a manner that after treatment the drinking water should conform to the **Indian Standard (IS) 10500 developed by the BIS.**
- The IS 10500 outlines the acceptable limit of various substances in drinking water, including heavy metals such as
  arsenic, and other parameters like the pH value of water, its turbidity, the total dissolved solids in it, and the
  colour and odour.
- There are guidelines on **water audit**, which is a calculation of the amount of water put into distribution against the amount that is consumed
- "Effort should be made by the water agency to bring down the water loss up to 15% of the total water supplied in the system," the document reads.

# PROJECT LION AND PROJECT DOLPHIN

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Independence Day announced the launch of Project Lion and Project Dolphin for the conservation of the two endangered species in the country using modern technology.
- India is showing its commitment for the promotion and conservation of biodiversity and is one of the very few countries where the forest cover is expanding. India has successfully carried forward **Project Tiger and Project Elephant**. As the Tiger and Elephants population has increased in India. On the lines of Project Tiger and Project Elephant, Project Lion and Project Dolphin would be launched.





#### PROJECT TIGER

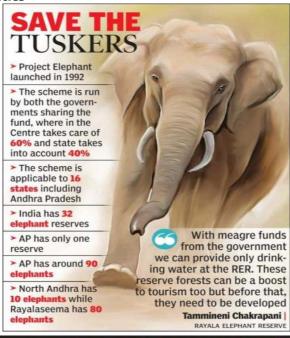
- Project Tiger is a tiger conservation programme launched in April 1973 by the Government of India during Prime
  Minister Indira Gandhi's tenure, with the aim of ensuring that the population of Bengal tigers is well-maintained
  in their natural habitats, this project continues to do everything possible to protect and save the tiger.
- The government has also set up a tiger protecting force that ensures there is **no poaching of any kind or any human-tiger conflict.**
- Project tiger was started in association with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and still gets its main funding from them.
- The monitoring system **M-STrIPES** was developed to assist patrol and protection of tiger habitats.
- Project Tiger was administered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.

# **Key highlights**

"Dolphins, are an indicator species, and Asiatic Lions a flagship species"

#### **Project Elephant**

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme, was launched in February 1992 to provide financial and technical support to major elephant bearing States in the country for protection of elephants, their habitats and corridors.
- It also seeks to address the issues of human-elephant conflict and welfare of domesticated elephants.
- The Project is being implemented in 16 States / UTs, viz. Andhra Pradesh , Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand , Karnataka , Kerala , Meghalaya , Nagaland , Orissa , Tamil Nadu , Uttarakhand , Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- The project aims to ensure the long-term survival to the populations of elephants in their natural habitats by protecting the elephants, their habitats and migration corridors.
- Other goals of Project Elephant are supporting the research of the ecology and management of elephants, creating awareness of conservation among local people, providing improved veterinary care for captive elephants.
- Project Elephant has been formally implementing MIKE (Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants) programme of CITES in 10 ERs (Elephant Reserve) since January 2004. It is mandated by COP resolution of CITES.



#### **Project Lion**

- It would involve conservation of the Asiatic Lion, and its landscape.
- It will entail habitat development by engaging modern technologies in management and addressing the issue of diseases in lion and its associated species through advanced world-class research and veterinary care.
- The project would also address the Human-Wildlife conflict. This would involve local communities living in the vicinity of lion landscape, and would also provide livelihood opportunities.
- Under Project Lion, the work will be done on the required infrastructure for the protection and security of Indian lions.

PROJECT LIC	N	100	-03		
Head	Year I	Year II	Year II	I STATE OF THE STA	
Translocation to Barda	54.21	24.21	9.21	9 8	
Monitoring of Lion	2.24	1.66	0.58		
MSTrIPES Patrolling	1.48	0.32	0.12		
Disease Profiling	1.22	1.15	1.15		
Other exenses	0.35	0.34	0.34		
SALIENT  > Rs 99 crore project approved for lion conservation	> 40-ode be radio	d lions w		Samples from feral dogs and cattle to be	
NTCA, Gujarat forest department and WII to implement it	Barda to be relocated and will receive			regularly collected to tes for CDV, rabies and other diseases	
➤ Barda to be developed as second			Samples from other wild animals will also be		
<b>home for lions</b> within Gujarat	➤ Vaccination of feral dogs and cattle			collected to monitor for diseases	

- The **Asiatic Lion Conservation Project**, that was launched with a budgetary contribution of Rs 97.85 Cr from Central Government has been extended for next three financial years—FY 2018-19, FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21.
- Project lion will not only entail enhanced finances and duration, but address all the issues required to conserve a species. Which includes using the latest technology, for health management and holistically providing world standard care, addressing all that is required to conserve this species.





 Vaccination of livestock, control of cats and dogs in lion habitat, identification of wildlife corridors, and improvement of habitat, legal aid, wildlife forensic systems, and attractive relocation packages for pastoral communities were the highlights of this project.

#### **Project Dolphin**

- It aims at the conservation and protection of the Dolphins in rivers and oceans of the country.
- It involves conservation of Dolphins and the aquatic habitat through the use of modern technology—especially in enumeration and anti-poaching activities.
- It will engage the fishermen and other rivers and ocean dependent population, and will strive for improving the livelihood of the local communities.
- The conservation of Dolphin will also envisage activities, which will also help in the mitigation of pollution in rivers and the oceans.
- It will also give a boost to biodiversity and also create **employment opportunities**. This is also a centre of **attraction for tourism.**

#### **About Asiatic lions**

- Habitat: They are confined to Gir National Park and its surrounding environs in Gujarat's Saurashtra. Five protected areas currently exist to protect the Asiatic lion: Gir Sanctuary, Gir National Park, Pania Sanctuary, Mitiyala Sanctuary, and Girnar Sanctuary. In the surrounding sanctuary only Maldharis have the right to take their livestock for grazing.
- PRESERVING OUR UNDERWATER FRIENDS 10-YEAR PROJECT TO FOCUS ON BOTH RIVER AND SEA DOLPHINS AIM TO STRENGTHEN BIODIVERSITY, CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ATTRACT TOURISM KILLING, HABITAT FRAGMENTATION BY DAMS AND BARRAGES AND INDISCRIMINATE FISHING HAS REDUCED THE GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN POPULATION FROM TENS OF THOUSANDS TO AROUND 3,700 OVER THE LAST CENTURY GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, A SPECIES OF FRESHWATER DOLPHINS, IS PRIMARILY FOUND IN GANGA AND BRAHMAPUTRA RIVERS, AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES IN INDIA, BANGLADESH AND NEPAL IN INDIA, THESE DOLPHINS ARE SIGHTED IN DEEP RIVERS IN ASSAM, BIHAR, JHARKHAND, MADHYA PRADESH, RAJASTHAN UTTAR PRADESH AND WEST BENGAL GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, OFFICIALLY DISCOVERED IN 1801, CAN LIVE ONLY IN FRESHWATER
- **Population:** In May 2015, the 14th Asiatic Lion Census was conducted over an area of about 20,000 km2; the lion population was estimated at 523 individuals, comprising 109 adult males, 201 adult females and 213 cubs. In August 2017, surveyors counted 650 wild lions. The 15th Asiatic Lion Census could not be conducted in 2020, as scheduled, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2020, an estimation exercise counted 674 Asiatic lions in the Gir forest region, an increase of 29 per cent over the 2015 census figure.
- Threats: The Asiatic lion currently exists as a single subpopulation, and is thus vulnerable to extinction from unpredictable events, such as an **epidemic or large forest fire.** There are indications of **poaching incidents** in recent years. There have also been a number of **drowning incidents after lions fell into wells**.
  - Nearly 85 lions in the vicinity of Gir Forest were found dead in October 2018, they had died because of canine distemper virus, the same virus that had killed several Serengeti lions earlier.
  - The Asiatic lion is confined only to the Gir protected area and its surrounding environs. Asiatic lion population is built from a very small number in the early 20th century and thus faces the additional **threat of genetic homogeneity**, which makes the species susceptible to diseases like canine distemper. "It is thus in the interest of long term Asiatic lion conservation that the species be reintroduced to other places in and outside Gujarat.
- Expert suggestions: Experts have called for the reintroduced of the species outside Gujarat for the long term conversation
  of the Asiatic lions. Reintroduction of lions to other habitats apart from Gir Sanctuary in Gujarat. For example, Kuno Palpur
  Sanctuary in MP is being considered by the ministry for reintroduction of lions.
- Conservation status: It is categorized as endangered on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List.



# Asiatic lion (Panthera leo persica) Status: Endangered Found: In and around the Gir Forest, Gujarat, India Body length: Up to 2.9 metres from nose to tail Weight: males 160-190kg, females 110-120kg Lifespan: 18-20 years Diet: deer, antelope, boar and cattle

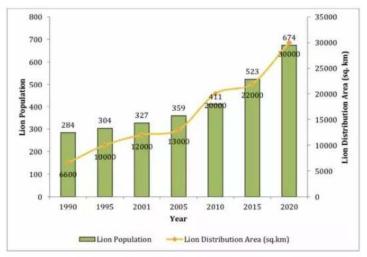
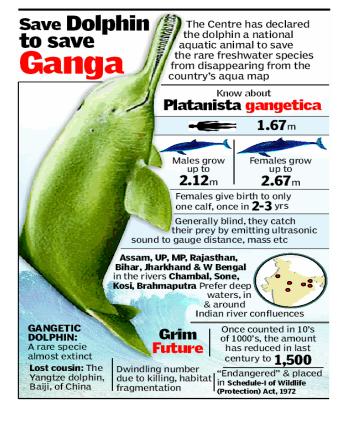


Figure 3: Population and distribution trend of Asiatic Lions.

# About South Asian river dolphin (Platanista gangetica)

- It is an **endangered freshwater or river dolphin** found in the region of Indian subcontinent, which is split into two subspecies,
  - o the Ganges river dolphin and the Indus river dolphin
- The Ganges river dolphin is primarily found in the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and their tributaries in India,
  Bangladesh, and Nepal, while the Indus river dolphin is now found only in the main channel of the Indus River in
  Pakistan and active channels connected to it between the Jinnah and Kotri barrages, and in the River Beas (a tributary of
  the Indus) in Punjab in India.
- The Ganges river dolphin has been recognized by the government of India as its **National Aquatic Animal** and is the **official animal of the Indian city of Guwahati.**
- The Indus river dolphin has been named as the National Mammal of Pakistan.





#### **Synonyms**

- **Ganges subspecies**: Gangetic dolphin, Ganges Susu, shushuk (Being a mammal, the Ganges river dolphin cannot breathe in the water and must surface every 30–120 seconds. Because of the sound it produces when breathing, the animal is popularly referred to as the Susu.)
- Indus subspecies: bhulan, Indus dolphin, Indus blind dolphin



#### **Distribution and habitat**

• The South Asian river dolphins are native to the freshwater river systems located in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

#### **Ecological importance**

The Gangetic dolphin is an indicator species, whose status provides information on the overall condition of the ecosystem
and of other species in that ecosystem, for the Ganga ecosystem and is extremely vulnerable to changes in water quality
and flow.

#### Conservation

- International trade is prohibited by the listing of the South Asian river dolphin on **Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.**
- It is protected under the Indian Wildlife Act, although these legislations require stricter enforcement.
- Both subspecies are listed by the IUCN as endangered on their Red List of Threatened Species.
- The species is listed on Appendix I and Appendix II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.
- The Ministry of Environment and Forest declared the Gangetic dolphin the national aquatic animal of India.
- **Dolphin Awareness Program** (Phase I) has been completed. Further strengthening of networking is being taken up in Phase- II with NGOs, schools and teachers in Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins.
- A stretch of the Ganges River between Sultanganj and Kahlgaon in Bihar has been declared a dolphin sanctuary and named **Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary**, the first such protected area.
- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in its efforts of biodiversity conservation in Ganga River basin has been
  working further on the Ganges River Dolphin Conservation Action Plan and has taken up steps to coordinate with various
  institutions to:
- build capacity for Ganga River Dolphin Conservation and Management;
- · minimize fisheries interface and incidental capture of Ganga River
- Dolphins;
- · restore river dolphin habitats by minimizing and mitigating the impacts of
- developmental projects;
- involve communities and stakeholders for sustainable efforts in Ganga River
- Dolphin conservation;
- · educate and create awareness and
- Set off targeted research.

# **Major Threats**

- Habitat loss /Degradation / Disturbances Annual flood, etc.
- Changing River course.
- Inland waterways / Movement of large cargo vessels.
- Various anthropogenic / religious activities.
- Excessive harvesting/hunting/food subsistence use/ local trade.
- Directed killing/ poaching.
- Accidental killing by catch/ fisheries related entanglements.
- Accidental mortality others.
- Water pollution Agriculture related on both the banks of River/chemical.
- Water pollution domestic / direct disposal of sewage / non-functional treatment plants.
- Pollution affecting habitat and/ or species, Industrial effluents.

#### The Irrawaddy dolphin(Orcaella brevirostris)

- It is a euryhaline species of oceanic dolphin found in discontinuous subpopulations near sea coasts and in estuaries and rivers in parts of the **Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia**.
- Although it is called the Irrawaddy river dolphin, it is not a true river dolphin, but an oceanic dolphin that lives in brackish water near coasts, river mouths, and estuaries.
- The Chilika Lake in Odisha has emerged as the "single largest habitat of Irrawaddy dolphins in the world", following a fresh monitoring survey that pegs the number of individuals of the endangered species at 155.
- Irrawaddy dolphins are classified as 'Endangered' in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.









#### **Conclusion**

• These projects will make India a global centre of attraction. It will improve India's image as a **responsible environment** and biodiversity conservationist nation.

# NATIONAL CLEAN AIR PROGRAMME

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### **Context**

• The National Green Tribunal has slammed the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) over its report on the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) which proposes 20-30% reduction of air pollution by 2024.

#### More about news

- The NGT disapproved the submission of the MoEF that a committee, upon further deliberation, has concluded that 20-30% pollutant reduction under the NCAP seems realistic. It said the MoEF's view was **against the constitutional mandate under Article 21.**
- The Environment Ministry told the tribunal that to assess the impact of technological and policy interventions on air quality levels, a mid-term nationwide review with the help of identified technical experts might be conducted and targets updated, if required.
- Right to Clean Air stood recognised as part of Right to Life and failure to address air pollution was denial of Right to Life.
- The enforcement of 'Sustainable Development' principle and 'Public Trust Doctrine' required stern measures to be
  adopted to give effect to the mandate of international obligations for which the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
  and other laws had been enacted.

# **About National Clean Air Programme**

- The Centre has launched a programme to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024.
- The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), is envisaged as a scheme to provide the States and the Centre with a framework to combat air pollution.
- The National Clean Air Programme is a pollution control initiative that was launched by **the Ministry of Environment** with the intention to cut the concentration of coarse (particulate matter of diameter 10 micrometer or less, or PM10) and fine particles (particulate matter of diameter 2.5 micrometer or less, or PM2.5) by **at least 20% in the next five years**, with 2017 as the base year for comparison.

#### Which cities will fall under this?

 Following reports by WHO and the air quality data obtained, 102 cities from 23 States and UTs have been chosen as non-attainment cities. With the exception of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru, most of those chosen are tier two cities.

# Who all will participate?

• Apart from experts from the industry and academia, the programme is expected to be a collaboration between the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of



Heavy Industry, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, NITI Aayog, and Central Pollution Control Board.

# What do experts say?

- Critics have pointed out that the absence of clarity on funding provisions and lack of legal framework might dilute the effectiveness of the programme. That only a paltry amount of Rs. 300 crores has been set aside for this too has been roundly criticized.
- "It is good to see the final version of NCAP out after a long wait with the vision of reducing air pollution levels across the country.
- · Lack of strong legal backing to take action against non implementation is also absent

# **Issues with the NCAP**

- Under the NCAP, the target was to achieve norms in 10 years and reduce load to the extent of 35% in first three years with further reduction of pollution later.
- It meant for 10 years pollution would remain unaddressed which was too long period of tolerating violations when clean air was Right to Life. Further, it was not clear what type of pollutants or all pollutants would be reduced.
- Non-Attainment Cities (NACs) cover cities where standards were not consecutively met for five years.
- No data: It is not clear as to what is monitoring mechanism for enforcement. There is no data how much pollution has been reduced in the last two years. In fact, in 2019, the number of NACs has gone up from 102 to 122,"
- NCAP for reduction of air pollution did not fully meet the mandate of sustainable development.
- Violation of laid down air pollution levels resulting in large number of deaths and diseases needed to be addressed
  expeditiously.
- Targeted time of reduction of pollution loads needed to be reduced and planned steps needed to be sternly implemented on the ground. The MoEF might take further action as per law.

# PLASTIC MARINE POLLUTION

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### **Context**

 A new study published in Nature Communications has estimated the amount of micro plastic pollution in the Atlantic Ocean and put it at 11.6-21.1 million tonnes.

# **About**

- It is well-known that pollution from plastic, especially smaller micro plastics, have reached the oceans and even some of the most remote corners of the Arctic.
- Even so, there is uncertainty about the magnitude of plastic pollution in marine environments and it cannot be exactly said how much pollution does plastic, especially micro plastics cause.

# **Recent Study**

 A new study published in Nature Communications has estimated the amount of micro plastic pollution in the Atlantic Ocean and put it at 11.6-21.1 million tonnes, indicating that the inputs and stocks of ocean plastics are much higher than determined previously.

#### What are micro plastics?

- Micro plastics are plastic debris smaller than 5mm in length, or about the size of a sesame seed.
- They come from a variety of sources, one of them is when larger pieces of plastic degrade into smaller pieces, which are difficult to detect.



**8mn** metric tonnes of plastic leak into oceans worldwide every year

•

**(4)** 

**5-13mn** tonnes of plastic entered the marine environment in **2010** 

(D)

About **60-90** % of marine litter is made up of plastic -- bags, polymers, fishing gear, food and beverage containers

9

**323 mn** tonnes plastic produced in 2015 = 900 Empire state buildings

 $\odot$ 

\$13 bn tonnes the cost of the environment damage caused by plastics

**(** 

1,200 total affected species and the number is rising

In India, seas near Mumbai, Kerala and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands among the worst polluted in the world





#### How does plastic reach the oceans?

- There are multiple pathways. For instance, **riverine and atmospheric transport from coastal and inland areas, illegal dumping activities and direct-at-sea littering from shipping, fishing and aquaculture activities**.
- According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), at least 8 million tonnes of plastic end
  up in the oceans every year and makes up about 80 per cent of all marine debris from surface waters to deep-sea
  sediments.

# Why is plastic pollution especially harmful?

- The **durability of plastic**, which implies that plastic can take hundreds to thousands of years to decompose depending on the type of plastic and where it has been dumped.
- In the oceans, plastic pollution impacts marine life, ocean health, coastal tourism and even human health.
- Over the past few years, various news reports have shown that marine animals such as whales, seabirds and turtles
  unknowingly ingest plastic and often suffocate.
- For humans, too, marine plastic pollution is harmful if it **reaches the food chain**. For instance, micro plastics have been found in **tap water**, **beer and even salt**.
- One of the first studies to estimate plastic pollution in human ingestion thatwas published in June 2019 said that an average
  person eats at least 50,000 particles of micro plastic each year. Consumption of plastic by humans is harmful since
  several chemicals that are used to produce plastics can be carcinogenic.

#### So what does this mean?

- In the study, scientists studied pollution of the **Atlantic Ocean caused by three types of plastics:polyethylene, polypropylene, and polystyrene**, which were suspended in the top 200 meters of the ocean. These three types of plastic are **most commonly used for packaging**.
- Smaller plastic particles are a hazardous as it is easier for them to sink to greater ocean depths and some marine species such as **zooplanktons show preferential ingestion of smaller particles**, making them easier to enter the food chain and their conversion to fast-sinking faecal pellets.
- Scientists say that pollution caused by micro plastics has been "severely" underestimated in previous assessments
  and that a considerable amount of small micro plastics are lost from the surface and are stored in ocean
  interiors
- They also estimate that based on plastic waste generation trends from 1950-2015 and considering that the Atlantic Ocean has received 0.3-0.8 per cent of the global plastic waste for 65 years, the Atlantic waters could hold 17-47 million tonnes of plastic waste.

# Conclusion

• "To date, a key uncertainty has been the **magnitude of contamination of the ocean** and findings demonstrate that this is much higher in terms of mass than has been estimated previously,"

# RIGETHANOL RLENDING OF PETROL

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### Context

• The government has set targets of 10 per cent bioethanol blending of petrol by 2022 and to raise it to 20 per cent by 2030 under the ethanol blending programme to curb carbon emissions and reduce India's dependence on imported crude oil.

#### **About**

• 1G and 2G bioethanol plants are set to play a key role in making bio-ethanol available for blending but **face challenges in** attracting investments from the private sector.

# What are 1G and 2G biofuel plants?

- **1G bioethanol** plants utilize<u>sugarcane juice and molasses, byproducts in the production of sugar, as raw material, while **2G plants**utilize<u>surplus biomass and agricultural waste to produce bioethanol</u>.</u>
- Currently, domestic production of bioethanol is **not sufficient to meet the demand for bio-ethanol for blending with petrol at Indian Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).**
- Sugar mills, which are the key domestic suppliers of bio-ethanol to OMCs, were only able to supply 1.9 billion liters of bio-ethanol to OMCs equating to 57.6 per cent of the total demand of 3.3 billion liters.
- Third generation biofuels (3G) These are produced from micro-organisms like algae.



• Fourth generation biofuels(4G) -These are produced from genetically modified (GM) algae to enhance biofuel production.

# Why are Indian plants not able to meet the demand for bioethanol?

- Many sugar mills which are best placed to produce bioethanol not have the financial stability to invest in biofuel plants and there and there are also concerns amona investors the uncertainty of the price of bio-ethanol in the future.
- The prices of both sugarcane and bio-

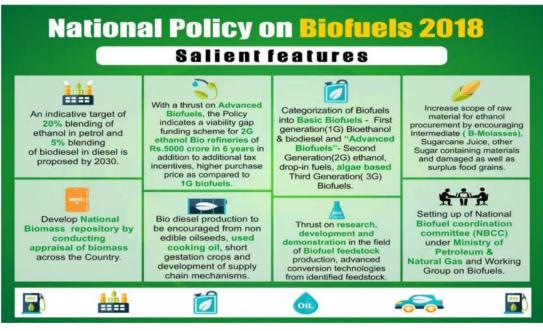
ethanol are set by the central government.



 The state governments needed to set up depots where farmers could drop their agricultural waste and that the central government should fix a price for agricultural waste to make investments in 2G bioethanol production an attractive proposition.

# What can be done to boost investment in bioethanol production?

- The government could provide greater visibility on the price of bioethanol that sugar mills can expect by announcing a mechanism by which the price of bio-ethanol would be decided.
- The impetus for bioethanol uptake was driven by government worldwide, and a target that a certain percentage of ethanol blending be done using ethanol generated from 2G plants would help boost investment in the area.





# **Conclusion**

• 2G bioethanol not only provided a clean source of energy, but also helped to provide greater income to farmers and prevent them from having to burn agricultural waste, which can be a major source of air pollution.

# ENVISTATS IN DIA 2020 REPORT

GS-III ENVIRONMENT

#### **Context**

Over 80% rise in heat wave days in 2019, Rajasthan worst-hit. The highest number of deaths due to acute respiratory infection were reported in West Bengal (732), followed by Uttar Pradesh (699), Andhra Pradesh (587), Delhi (492).

#### About

After declining for two years, the average number of heat wave days increased 82.6 per cent year-on-year to 157 in 2019, with the highest number recorded in Rajasthan (20 days) followed by Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand (13 days each), the state-wise data in the EnviStats India 2020 report released by National Statistical Office (NSO) showed.



- The National Statistical Office is the state statistical agency set up by an Act of the Parliament, Statistical Services Act (Chapter 386) 1980, responsible for collecting, compiling and disseminating official statistical information on a regular and timely basis.
- The highest number of deaths due to acute respiratory infection were reported in West Bengal (732), followed by Uttar Pradesh (699), Andhra Pradesh (587), Delhi (492).
- Among the seven metropolitan cities Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai in 2018, particulate matter size less than or equal to 10 μm was the highest in Delhi (243), followed by Ahmedabad (236) and Mumbai (166).

# The other key findings of the report are as follows

- The country had reported 510 deaths due to heat wave in 2016 and 2081 in 2015. Deaths due to cold wave recorded a sharp drop in 2019 by falling to 61 from 279 in 2018.
- Natural extreme events led to greater loss of cattle and damage to houses in 2018-19, even as 2045 people lost lives in 2018-19, lower than 2057 lives lost in the previous year.
- The **impact of Kerala floods** was visible with the state losing 477 lives and 6.54 lakh houses getting damaged in 2018-19, the highest among all states.
- Andhra Pradesh has the highest percentage of slum population to urban population (36.10 per cent), followed by Chhattisgarh (31.98 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh (28.35 per cent).

# LEOPARD POACHING

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### **Context**

• A recent study by TRAFFIC India on the seizure and mortality of 'common leopards' (Panthera pardus fusca) revealed that of

the total of 747 leopard deaths between 2015-2019 in India, 596 were linked to illegal wildlife trade and activities related to poaching.

#### More about news

- Indian leopards suffered 75% to 90% population decline.
- These records indicated that 140 leopards were killed by poachers and their carcasses were recovered from the forest areas, whereas body parts belonging to the equivalent of 456 leopards were seized during various operations by law enforcement agencies during the study period.
- The paper titled "SPOTTED' in Illegal Wildlife Trade: A Peek into Ongoing Poaching and Illegal Trade of Leopards in India' also said that the highest numbers of poaching incidents were reported from the States of Uttarakhand and Maharashtra.
- Among all the derivatives found in illegal wildlife trade, skin remained the most in-demand product, accounting for 69% of all seizures, while derivatives like claws, teeth and bones were also traded.



• It is also believed that bones of the leopard are possibly traded as tiger bones as they have a larger international demand for traditional medicines,"



 Another concern is the incidence of live animal trade involving leopard cubs in seizures in Chennai and in Maharashtra.

#### **TRAFFIC**

- TRAFFIC is a leading wildlife trade monitoring network across the world.
- Itis a leading non-governmental organization working on wildlife trade in the context of both **biodiversity conservation** and sustainable development.
- It is a joint program of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

#### **Leopard census**

- Unlike the tiger census held once in four years, there is **no dedicated census for the leopard**. However, a leopard count accompanying the tiger census of 2014 estimated its population to be 12,000-14,000 with about 8,000 in the vicinity of tiger habitat.
- The last formal census on India's leopards was conducted in 2014, which estimated the population between **12,000 and 14,000.** The results of a recent census of leopard sightings are likely to be released soon by the Wildlife Institute of India.
- Threatened by increasing habitat destruction and human-wildlife conflict around the country arising out of shrinking habitats and illegal trade, experts suggest that more emphasis should be given to the conservation of leopards. The conservation status of common leopards was elevated from 'Near Threatened' in 2008 to 'Vulnerable' in 2015 by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

#### **Plight highlighted**

 Plight of leopards in illegal wildlife trade has been highlighted from time to time through investigative reports and studies, and through various wildlife enforcement actions across the country. "However, this has not deterred wildlife smugglers, who are lured by high profits and low risk of detection, to target the species.

#### **About Leopard**

- The leopard (Panthera pardus) is one of the five extant species in the genus Panthera, a member of the Felidae.
- It occurs in a wide range in sub-Saharan Africa, in small parts of Western and Central Asia, on the Indian subcontinent to Southeast and East Asia.
- It is listed as **Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List** because leopard populations are **threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation**, and are declining in large parts of the global range.

# PAPLIMIRESERVE FOREST (RF)

**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### Context

• A study based on satellite data has flagged a high rate of deforestation in a major hornbill habitat in Arunachal Pradesh.

#### **About**

- Papum Reserve Forest (RF) adjoining the Pakke Tiger Reserve as well as a part of Assam affected by illegal felling and ethnic conflict.
- Papum RF is a nesting habitat of three species of the large, colourful fruit-eating hornbills: **Great, Wreathed and Oriental Pied.** The Pakke reserve houses a **fourth species, the Rufous-Necked.**
- Referred to as 'forest engineers' or 'farmers of forest' for playing a key role in dispersing seeds of tropical trees, hornbills indicate the prosperity and balance of the forest they build nests in.
- Hornbills used to be hunted for their casques upper beak and feathers for adorning headgear despite being cultural symbols of some ethnic communities in the northeast, specifically the Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh.
- But a 20-year-old conservation programme entailing the use of fibre-glass beaks defused the threat to the birds to a large extent.
- **Illegal logging,** agricultural expansion and conversion of forests to plantations or logging are major threats for hornbill survival.
- According to the Global Forest Watch 2020 report, Arunachal Pradesh lost 1,110 sq.km. of primary forest from 2002-2019.





#### **About Hornbill**

- The great hornbill also known as the concave-casqued hornbill, great Indian hornbill or great pied hornbill, is one of the larger members of the hornbill family.
- It is found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

#### **Pakke Tiger Reserve**

- Located in western Arunachal Pradesh
- Pakke Tiger Reserve, also known as Pakhui Tiger Reserve, is a Project Tiger reserve has won India Biodiversity Award 2016 in the category of 'Conservation of threatened species' for its Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme.
- In 2011, the **Hornbill Nest Adoption Program (HNAP)**, in collaboration with the Ghora-Aabhe Society (which is a village council) and the Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department was adopted.
- Hornbills play an important role in Nyishi folklore and culture. Today, the community
  helps hornbills by searching for, monitoring and protecting nests in the forests around
  their villages, thus becoming local guardians or nest protectors.

#### Reserved forests

- Land rights to forests declared to be Reserved forests or Protected forests are typically acquired (if not already owned) and owned by the Government of India.
- Unlike national parks of India or wildlife sanctuaries of India, reserved forests and protected forests are declared by the respective state governments.
- At present, reserved forests and protected forests differ in one important way: Rights to all activities like hunting, grazing, etc. **in reserved forests are banned** unless specific orders are issued otherwise.
- In protected areas, rights to activities like hunting and grazing are sometimes given to communities living on the fringes of the forest, who sustain their livelihood partially or wholly from forest resources or products.

#### **Global Forest Watch 2020 report**

- Global Forest Watch (GFW) is an open-source web application to monitor global forests in near real-time.
- GFW is an initiative of the World Resources Institute (WRI), with partners including Google, USAID, the University
  of Maryland (UMD), Esri, Vizzuality and many other academic, non-profit, public, and private organizations.



**GS-III ENVIRONMENT** 

#### Context

• The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched a new version of the India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS) with new functionalities and features.

#### **About**

Open to the public, and accessible through the web portal www.indiawris.gov.in, this portal contains information related
to Water Resources through dashboards for rainfall, water levels & discharge of rivers, water bodies, ground
water levels, reservoir storages, evapo-transpiration and soil moisture, as well as modules on water resources
projects, water bodies, hydro-met data availability and tools for GIS layer editing.

#### **Need of INDIA-WRIS**

- Water is key to life and development. Judicious use of water resources assumes utmost importance, particularly when increasing population, urbanization and related development creates additional pressure on available resources.
- Good planning of any resource requires a strong data base and a reliable information system.
- To address this need, the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS), under the National Hydrology Project, launched the first version
  of India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS) in July, 2019. Since then, a number of new functionalities and
  features have been added into the system.

## **India WRIS**

 At present, receiving data from many central and state agencies like Central Water Commission(CWC), Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat etc. on regular basis.







- Data from other agencies is also being integrated into the system, so that it becomes a comprehensive platform for any data related to water and land resources.
- The MoJS has established a dedicated organization, National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC) to maintain and update India WRIS.
- The basis for all hydro-met observation data is the **Water Information Management System (WIMS).** Through a secured login, Central and State Water Agencies can enter, analyse, validate and manage data for water level (Both Surface Water & Ground Water), flow, water quality, sediment and many climate parameters.
- The system includes time series data obtained through manual readings as well as telemetry data received by means of GPRS or satellite.
- Through this portal, **any stakeholder can visualize the information in a user friendly manner**, as well download the information in the form of excel reports and graphs.
- The key features of the system are Water information easily made available to users and general public, for decision
  makers, water managers, farmers & experts, Direct access to hydro-met information from Central and State agencies, Realtime data available with one click, Variety of modules for different needs, Latest technologies, continuous development and
  improvement.
- Individuals can use the data as per their requirement, to know the availability of water in their locality, ground water level, Level of water in the nearby river and such many facts.
- Planners and Administrators can utilize this data of their States, Basins for proper utilization of water and to **reduce the impact of Flood and Drought**.
- **Decision support System (DSS)** can be developed. Researchers can utilize the data for water related studies and modeling purposes as the data frequency required for such studies is available.



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# SOCIAL MEDIA AND ARMED FORCES

GS-III SECURITY

#### Context

Adopting a zero tolerance policy on security violations on social media and smartphones to prevent loss of classified
information, the Army has issued a long list of dos and don'ts to its personnel regarding usage of smartphones,
which include surprise checks to be conducted on individuals.

#### More about news

- The Counter Intelligence (CI) units of the Military Intelligence (MI) have been asked to be more pro-active in detecting violation of protocols for social media and smartphones.
- The guidelines have spelt out strict action to be taken against violators of social media and smartphone handling instructions under provisions of IPC/Official Secrets Act/Army Act/IT Act.
- Periodic surprise checks will be made on orders of formation commanders in order to ensure that security lapses are nipped in bud and that irresponsible handling of smartphones of social media is discouraged.
- The Army had issued instructions regarding social media handling in June this year under which a number **of social media sites and applications had been banned for serving personnel**. These included Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tinder, Tumblr, Reddit etc.Further, July 15 was set as the deadline for de-activiting accounts on the banned sites.
- However, certain social media platforms will be available for use by the Army personnel under restricted conditions. Skype,
   Whatsapp, Telegram and Signal can be used for exchange of information of general nature with known persons.
- Similarly participation on Twitter, You Tube and Quora has been permitted, but only for passive participation to obtain knowledge of information.
- Personnel have also been allowed to upload resume on LinkedIn for potential employers or employees but prior permission from the MI Directorate will have to be taken for this.
- Severe restrictions have already been in place regarding contact with foreign nationals on the internet without permission, but now the regulations have been reiterated with more strictness.
- A blanket ban has already been in force in carrying smartphones to important conferences and briefings and this has again been emphasized in the policy on smartphones usage.
- · Certain locations have been identified where smartphones are not to be carried even in switched off state.
- Usage of smartphones within Headquarters or units is being regulated and any waiver, which is to be given is closely monitored.
- Training modules are put in place by the **Army Training Command (ARTRAC)** which would help sensitize the **personnel** as well as their family members on the importance of cyber security.

# Rationale behind this move

- The army has a strict social media policy that restricts its usage by soldiers, but it has also noticed that it has become a **tool for recruitment of locals into terrorist ranks in Jammu and Kashmir.** Radicalization of local youth regularly takes place through several social media sites.
- Soldiers use social media as means of communication. And our adversary canutilize social media for **psychological** warfare.
- "Pakistan Intelligence Operatives (PIO) have been utilizing social media for accessing critical information.
- Social media could be used in **combating proxy war**.
- With social media boom and the penetration of smartphones among service personnel due to their affordability, the focus of
  espionage activities of intelligence agencies of inimical nations has shifted from physical domain to social media/cyber
  domain.
- The Counter Intelligence units have been asked to be focus on the detection of cyber violations as right now majority of the anomalies were being detected by sister intelligence agencies.
- The modus operandi of foreign intelligence agents, particularly Pakistan, is to identify serving personnel and their families on internet platforms through their uniforms, chats and friends list. This is why a complete ban has been placed in putting out photographs in uniform and those of identity cards, CSD cards and dependent cards.
- It has been noticed that smartphones are infected with **malware** by the Pakistani Operatives, which leads to leakage of sensitive information.

## **Way Forward**

• While it is not possible to completely do away with smartphones, yet the need of the hour is to **regulate their usage and comply with the orders regarding their usage.** 





- Instead of cutting the line of communication and making soldier that posted in tough terrain more vulnerable, there is dire
  need of making investments in strengthening data safety regulations that could safeguard the military's access
  to social media.
- Life in the army is rigorous. Leave is often difficult to obtain. The austerity and discipline with which the military conducts its life also renders several modes of recreation unavailable to armymen. The resultant stress has had telling, adverse consequences. The phenomenon of fratricide soldiers turning the gun on their comrades and themselves is not rare among the armed forces.

#### **Conclusion**

• Permitting some kind of social life and recreation with adequate regulatory checks and balances can be explored. This, in turn, could negate the perception of the army being a rigidly hierarchical and closed institution, unsympathetic to the proposition of ushering in change.

KAVKAI101D GS-III SECURITY

#### Context

• India will not be taking part in the joint Kavkaz-2020 war games in Russia, which will be attended by the militaries of 20 countries, including Pakistan and China.

#### **Background**

- Earlier Indian Army have confirmed that India is sending a tri-services contingent of around 200 personnel to Southern Russia in September for participating in a multi-lateral exercise, Kavkaz-2020. Along with several other countries, troops of China & Pakistan are also likely to participate in the event.
- All the bilateral and multilateral military exercises were put on hold due to the global pandemic of COVID-19 and are now starting to resume.
- Though India and China face-off in an escalating border-tension situation on Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, still in June, India and China also participated in the Victory Day Parade at Red Square in Moscow to mark the 75th anniversary of World War II.

# **About KAVKAZ exercise**

- Russian KavKaz 2020 is actually strategic command-post exercise or simply called war games.
- China and Pakistan have also received invitations to participate in KavKaz 2020 as both countries are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- India, China, Pakistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Syria, Iran, Egypt, Belarus, Turkey, Armenia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan were set to take part in Kavkaz 2020.
- The word **Kavkaz** is derived as a modern variant of Caucasus or Caucasia, a region between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and mainly occupied by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and southwestern Russia.
- The Kavkaz region is home to the Caucasus Mountains, including the Greater Caucasus mountain range, which has historically been considered a natural barrier between Eastern Europe and Western Asia.
- For the most part, Russia's large-scale military exercises are scheduled in four major drills on a rotating basis: Vostok (East), Zapad (West), Tsentr (Center), and Kavkaz (South), which correlate to Russia's military districts. So it was Zapad 2017, Vostok 2018, Tsentr 2019, and now Kavkaz 2020.

#### Reason behind India's withdrawal

- India-China border stand-off: India was ready initially. But India would have had thorough deliberations to have a complete re-look at the decision. And because there is no clear resolution of the border stand-off with China, India would have given the reason of coronavirus and its effect on the forces, which is also not entirely incorrect. The unofficial reason might be that India decided not to take part in the exercise with Chinese and Pakistani troops given the situation on the border. India did not want to send wrong signals to its own people and to the international community.
- National Interest: India has to look at its own national interest first. Preserving the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is not only India's responsibility. It is also the responsibility of others. If they want India on that forum, other nations like China and Pakistan will also have to behave like nations that would like to cooperate with India.

# Impact of this move on India-Russia relation

• India – Russia relations are **not dependent on how India's relations are with other countries** like China and Pakistan. India has its own importance to Russia.





- India and Russia need each other in the **defence sector**. There is no message for Russia as such because anyway the two ministers are likely to go for the SCO meetings.
- India only wants to send a clear message to China and Pakistan that we don't want to be exercising with you when your actions and intents on the border are hostile.

# MULTI STATE PHISING SCAM

GS-III SECURITY

#### Context

• Haryana's Police have pieced together about a new phishing racket that they suspect has been used to access over 300 nationalized and private bank accounts across five states — Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand.

# More about scam

- Police are yet to ascertain the amount of money involved. But they have made five arrests among the first in a racket involving e-SIM frauds. And four of those five are from Jharkhand's Jamtara, a district that has gained notoriety as a hub of cyber crime.
- The case is unique, with the use of e-SIMs as the main conduit and with preliminary investigations establishing procedural infirmities and lack of due diligence on the part of banks and telecom companies.

#### What is Phishing?

- Phishing attacks are the practice of sending fraudulent communications that appear to come from a reputable source.
- It is usually done through email.
- The goal is to steal sensitive data like credit card and login information, or to install malware on the victim's machine.
- Phishing is a common type of cyber attack that everyone should learn about in order to protect themselves.

#### How does phishing work?

- Phishing starts with a fraudulent email or other communication that is designed to lure a victim.
- The message is made to look as though it comes from a trusted sender.
- If it fools the victim, he or she is coaxed into providing confidential information, often on a scam website. Sometimes malware is also downloaded onto the target's computer.

# What are the dangers of phishing attacks?

- Sometimes attackers are satisfied with getting a victim's **credit card information or other personal data for financial** gain.
- Other times, phishing emails are sent to obtain **employee login information or other details for use in an advanced attack against a specific company.**
- Cybercrime attacks such as **advanced persistent threats (APTs**) and **ransomware** often start with phishing.

# Have the authorities taken any measures to prevent such frauds?

- The Reserve Bank of India, has been taking measures to improve awareness through its e-BAAT programmes and
  organising campaigns on safe use of digital payment modes, to avoid sharing critical personal information like PIN, OTP,
  passwords, etc.
- However, it pointed out, despite these initiatives, "incidence of frauds continue to bedevil digital users, often using the same modus operandi users were cautioned about, such as luring them to disclose vital payment information, swapping sim cards, opening links received in messages and mails, etc.".
- The central bank therefore directed **all banks and authorised payment system operators to undertake targeted multi-lingual campaigns** by way of SMSs, advertisements in print and visual media, etc, to educate their users on safe and secure use of digital payments.
- Additionally, the Maharashtra Police also recently issued advisories to people on how to avoid phishing.

# **Way Forward**

# 1. User education

- One way to protect from phishing is user education. Education should involve recognizing a phishing email and what to do when we receive one.
- Simulation exercises are also key for assessing how to react to a staged phishing attack.





#### 2. Security technology

No single cybersecurity technology can prevent phishing attacks. Network security technologies that should be implemented
include email and web security, malware protection, user behavior monitoring, and access control.

#### 3. Strict law enforcement

Strict law enforcement, strict punishment and fast & fair trials can help to reduce the incidence of phishing.

#### 4. Proactive investigation

Proactive investigation as per the globally acceptable standards can act as a deterrent against these crimes.

#### 5. Reform in law

• There is an urgent need to adopt a new reformed law, which includes all cyber threats or frauds.

DPEPP 2020 GS-III SECURITY

#### **Context**

- Ministry of Defence (MoD) released a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020).
- Over the years, transparent and streamlined Procurement Procedures,
   Production Policies and 'Make in India' initiatives have provided significant stimulus to demand for indigenous products.

# **Key highlights of the Policy**

#### Vision:

- To position India amongst the leading countries of the world in defence and aerospace sectors
- To provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.

#### Goals and Objectives:

- To achieve a turnover of **Rs 1, 75,000 Crores (US\$ 25Bn) including export** of Rs 35,000 Crores (US\$ 5 Billion) in Aerospace and Defence goods and services by **2025.**
- o To develop a dynamic, **robust and competitive Defence industry**, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products.
- To reduce dependence on imports and take forward "Make in India" initiatives through domestic design and development.
- o To promote export of defence products and become part of the global defence value chains.
- To create an environment that encourages R&D, rewards innovation, creates Indian IP ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.

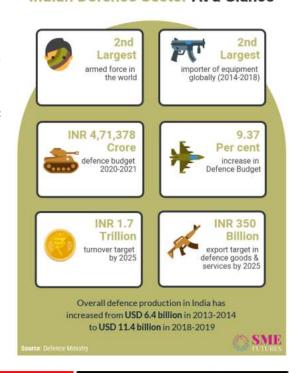
#### Focus areas:

# 1. Procurement reforms:

- DPP2020 relies on the emerging dynamism of the Indian industry to build domestic capabilities for designing, developing and manufacturing defence equipment.
- Following strategies are proposed for expanding the domestic defence manufacturing ecosystem:
  - A negative list of weapons/platforms would be notified with year-wise timelines for placing an embargo on import of such items from those dates.
  - A Project Management Unit (PMU), with representation from the Services, would be set up to support the acquisition process and facilitate management of the contracts.
  - A Technology Assessment Cell (TAC) would be created which would assess all the major systems/ platforms.
  - System integrators with Design, Development, production, testing & certification capability and ability to develop and sustain the ecosystem required for the next 25-30 years.
- A comprehensive review and overhaul of the trials and testing procedures would be done to reduce the procurement cycle time.

#### INDIAN DEFENCE PRODUCTION & EXPORTS Defence Exports Defence Production YEAR (in crore) (in crore) 2016-17 ₹74,121 ₹1,521 ₹4,682 2017-18 ₹78,817 2018-19 ₹80,502 ₹10,745 2019-20 (TARGETED) ₹90,000 ₹15,000 TARGETED DEFENCE EXPORT FOR 2024: ₹35,000 CROPE IANS GRAPHICS

# **Indian Defence Sector At a Glance**





- Efforts would be made to adopt a family of weapons approach to standardize and optimize inventory and supply chain management.
- All Acceptances of Necessity (AoNs) involving procurement from domestic sources would be reviewed for time-bound procurement.
- Efforts would be made to provide the industry greater visibility into the likely opportunities in the defence sector.

# 2. Indigenization and support to MSMEs/startups:

- An indigenization portal will be developed for DPSUs/OFB/Services with an industry interface to provide development support to MSMEs/Startups/Industry for import substitution.
- Defence Investor Cell in Department of Defence Production will provide handholding to MSMEs, investors and vendors in defence production for resolving issues with Central, State and other authorities.
- Vendor Development would be taken up by OFB/ DPSUs and use of TReDS platform would be mandated for improving their liquidity and timely payments.
- In case of the critical products and materials currently being imported, DPSUs/OFB would consider issuing long-term orders as feasible to incentivize the domestic industry.

# **NOT ENOUGH BANG FOR THE BUCK**

#### Military expenditure India is > Spent Defence budget Revenue outlay (65%) world's 5th 2020-21 is ₹3.37 **S80 bn** in largest military lakh crore. Another dwarfs capital ₹1.33 lakh crore outlay (35%) for spender after arms deals US, China, Russia over last for defence modernisation in & Saudi Arabia 15-16 yrs pensions defence budget Arms deals Operational hollowness Second largest arms importer, > Poor long-term planning, gets over 60% of requirements haphazard procurements, little tech from abroad due to poor domestic transfer despite mega deals defence-industrial base Army has critical gaps in Biggest suppliers Russia. artillery, infantry weapons, light Israel, France & US helicopters, night-fighting etc Around 65 capital acquisition IAF does not have enough contracts worth over ₹1.5 lakh fighter jets, mid-air refuellers, AWACS, drones etc crore inked with foreign vendors since 2016-17 Navy short of submarines, multi-Over 80% of domestic role helicopters, minesweepers etc acquisitions from five defence Maintenance of 15 lakh armed PSUs, four shipyards and 41 forces, pay & pensions consume ordnance factories bulk of the expenditure

#### 3. Investment Promotion

- o Investments would be encouraged to provide specific focus on certain identified segments and technological areas.
- Investments in aviation sector, which help in co-development and strengthening defence ecosystem, would be facilitated in association with the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

## 4. Ease of doing business

• The improvement in the India's ranking in World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) report, market size, demographic dividend and availability of diverse skill sets have been acting as a driving force.

# 5. Optimize resource allocation

 OFB/DPSUs will be mandated to increase productivity, enhance quality, reduce costs and ensure timely execution of orders by optimizing inventory management, greater vendor outsourcing at all levels, improving skill levels and overall project management.

# 6. Defence Corridors

The two Defence Corridors set up in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh would be specifically targeted by providing additional support as well as by offering higher multipliers for offset discharge for investments flowing into the Defence Corridors.

#### 7. FDI

o In the current FDI policy for Defence sector, FDI was allowed under automatic route up to 49% and above 49% through government route wherever it is likely to result in access to modern technology or for other reasons to be recorded.

#### 8. Innovation and R&D

- A comprehensive reform of the productionisation process would be undertaken to cut down the 'lab to lines' time
  by roping in production partners at early levels by bringing concurrent engineering practices between research and
  production agencies.
- Startups Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) has been operationalized to provide necessary incubation and infrastructure support to the startups in defence area.
- Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti was launched to promote greater culture of innovation and technology development and file greater number of patents in Defence PSUs and OFB.

# 9. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs)/ Ordnance Factories(OF)

- o Ordnance factories will be corporatized to make them competitive and to improve their productivity.
- o Disinvestment of DPSUs will be pursued.

# 10. Quality assurance and testing infrastructure

- The entire process of quality assurance and its time bound delivery would be rationalized and monitored by developing an IT platform with an industry interface.
- The existing testing infrastructure with Defence organizations would be made available for private industry use on equal priority.



 Efforts would be made to create testing infrastructure through **Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS)** by providing assistance to industry to set up common testing facilities.

#### 11. Export promotion

- o Defence Attachés have been mandated and are supported to promote export of indigenous defence equipment abroad.
- Domestically manufactured defence products will be promoted through Govt.-to-Govt. agreements and Lines of Credit/Funding.
- Export Promotion Cell set up to promote Defence exports through coordinated action to support the Industry would be further strengthened and professionalized.
- DPSUs and OFB would be mandated to have at least25% of their revenue from exports including success fee
  earned as target by 2025.

#### 12. Governance

The Department of Defence Production would be the nodal department for coordination on various components of the Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP) 2020 including obtaining approvals of the competent authorities for various schemes, programs and projects outlined in the strategies to achieve the objectives set in this Policy.

#### **Issues and Challenges**

- However, some defense experts and analysts said that the DPEPP is high on rhetoric but low on specifics.
- It **disregards financial reality**, which is grimmer now due to the rampant spread of the coronavirus that has hit economies worldwide.
- Achieving the \$25 billion target would be possible if the **current capital allocation** of \$18.52 billion for purchasing weapons and platforms is **doubled**.
- The draft policy fails to provide "a clear road map and direction for streamlining defense procurement and production."
- Defense production will only improve if there's **mutual trust**, **handholding**, **active participation and patience in the development process between the private and public sector**.

#### **Conclusion**

- There should also be a willingness from the Indian military to field a larger number of indigenous products and improved bureaucratic processes in the MoD.
- A more productive defense industry in India will depend on how much money the government can spare for local
  procurement as well as the availability of materiel in the domestic market two factors that should be a matter of
  concern, particularly with export targets.
- Military's arms requirements should **not be held hostage by efforts for indigenization**, especially in situations like the one we had faced with China, there is no alternative to buying equipment, platforms, ammunition from abroad if what is needed is not available in India.



# POLICE REPORMS IN INDIA: STATE POLICE MANUAL

GS-III SECURITY

# Why in news?

· Gujarat became second state after Andhra Pradesh to come up with a latest police manual

#### More about news

- · Gujarat has come up with a draft of a new manual, which includes topics relevant to current times.
- The new manual has been drafted for the Gujarat police force after a gap of 45 years.
- Some of the new points included in it are tools to detect cyber-crimes, forensic science, social media monitoring tools, multi-level marketing frauds, fake currency, human trafficking and organised crimes.
- The new manual will be uploaded on the "Pocket Cop" mobile application in the form of an e-book to maximise its reach among the police fraternity.

# Why it is necessary to bring police reform?

• The latest annual report of the National Human





Rights Commission says that nine people die in police or judicial custody every 24 hours.

- India's police system is plagued by the **lack of accountability and the absence of effective mechanisms** to deal with excesses committed by police officials.
- Expressing dismay over the state of police brutality, **the Supreme Court, in Prakash Singh vs. Union of India,** issued several directions to the Central and state governments.
- Along with other directions, the court emphasized on the establishment of a separate and independent complaints
  authority to entertain grievances against police officers. However, the court's directions have not been fully
  implemented by states.

#### **Way forward**

- There is an urgent need to establish an independent investigative body to look into the cases of police abuse. Currently,
  there exists a complex procedure regarding the investigation of complaints against police officials. Police officers are
  generally not inclined to investigate their colleagues and peers.
- Data released by the National Crime Records Bureau reveal that in 2018 none of the 89 cases of custodial violence could yield a conviction. Under such circumstances, it is extremely difficult to maintain the accountability of police towards civilians.
- In addition to the independent complaints body, a **civilian review board** is also necessary to oversee the functioning of the police. Collaboration between community and police must also be encouraged to facilitate efficacious policing.
- Further, police officials need to be trained in order to reduce systemic bias and transform the police into a professional organization committed to serving civilians.
- Excessive use of force by police officers is of great concern. Quality education and training would prevent officers
  from employing disproportionate use of force. Experts have also suggested simulation training as an effective tool. A
  number of simulators are available, focusing on issues like excessive use of force, implicit bias, ethical decision-making and
  community policing.
- There is also scenario-based training, which employs real-life situations to record the responses of participants. The
  scenario can be based on discussions among participants. Simulation and scenario-based training must be
  implemented with a clear idea about the objective of police training. These training modules would definitely help reduce
  police abuse.
- The police play an important role in law enforcement. An effective and accountable policing system is crucial for the rule of law and is a **hallmark of democratic society**.

# **Conclusion**

• Police reforms are immediately warranted; otherwise public faith in the justice system will wither away. Policing needs a complete overhaul in order to stop the violence and other human rights violations by men in uniform.









# SHORT NEWS ARTICLES

# **GENERAL STUDIES-I**

# **Swadesh Darshan Scheme**

- Recently, "Thenzawl Golf Resort" Project, was inaugurated under Swadesh Darshan Scheme- North east Circuit.
- Swadesh Darshan Scheme is a scheme of Ministry of Tourism. The scheme aims to promote, develop and harness the potential of tourism in India.
- This is a central sector scheme; i.e. 100% funded by Central Government of India.
- The funding available for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and Corporate Sector is also used in this scheme.
- The entire scheme is based on theme-based tourism. Each theme is called a "circuit" and composed of various tourist destinations.
- Buddhist circuit
- Coastal circuit
- Desert circuit
- Eco circuit
- Heritage circuit

- · Himalayan circuit
- Krishna circuit
- North-East circuit
- Ramayana circuit
- Rural circuit

- Spiritual circuit
- Sufi circuit
- Tirthankar circuit
- Tribal circuit
- Wildlife circuit

#### **Prakash Pura Utsav**

- Prime Minister Modi greeted the people on the occasion of the Parkash Purab Utsav of the holy book Guru Granth Sahib (19th August 2020).
- The first Prakash Purab Utsav marked the installation of Guru Granth Sahib in Harmandir Sahib, also known as the Golden temple, in 1604.
- The Guru Granth Sahib is the central religious scripture of Sikhism.
- The Adi Granth, its first rendition, was compiled by the fifth guru, Guru Arjan (1563–1606).
- The Guru Granth Sahib was composed predominantly by six Sikh gurus: Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan, and Guru Teg Bahadur.
- It also contains the poetic teachings of thirteen Bhakti movement saint poets and two Sufi Muslim poets.
- The vision in the Guru Granth Sahib is of a society based on divine justice without oppression of any kind.
- While the Granth acknowledges and respects the scriptures of Hinduism and Islam, it does not imply a moral reconciliation with either of these religions.

# Nuakhai Juhar

- Nuakhai Juhar is harvesting festival **of Odisha**. Nuakhai is a combination of two words, 'nua' meaning new and 'khai' means eat, it thus signifies "eating of new rice".
- People worship food grain on this auspicious day.
- The farmers offer the first produce from their lands to Goddess Samaleswari, the famous mother goddess of Sambalpur district of the state.

# Namatha Basai

- Namath Basai, IS Kerala Government's unique programme of teaching tribal children in their mother tongue.
- The programme, **implemented by the Samagra Siksha Kerala (SSK**), has succeeded in retaining hundreds of tribal children in their online classes by making them feel at home with the language of instruction.
- Samagra Shiksha is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.
- Broader goal:improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.

# **Trifood Project**

- Trifood Project was launched in Raigad, Maharashtra and Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh.
- TRIFOOD Scheme is a joint initiative of Ministry of Food Processing Industry, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED. It aims to promote value addition to Minor Forest Produce (MFP) by setting up Minor Forest Produce (MFP) processing units.





#### Rondas

- The COVID-19 pandemic has reached the Bondas, a tribal community residing in the hill ranges of Malkangiri district in Odisha.
- The tribe is one of the oldest and most primitive in mainland India.
- Bondas, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG), have a population of 7,000.
- Language- Remo (Munda branch of the Austroasiatic language family). Literacy Rate 14 %
- Bonda society Matriarchal Dominance. Women enjoy a privileged position. They are the primary workers and providers
  of food for the community.
- The Bonda are generally semi-clothed, the women wear thick silver neck bands. The Bonda attire is explained in a legend relating to the Ramayana.
- Among the men alcoholism is a major issue. Realizing that the Bonda people were in a cultural decline, the Government of Odisha brought to life the **Bonda Development Agency (BDA) in 1977.**

## **Edakkal Caves**

- The government recently constituted a nine-member committee to suggest measures for the conservation of Edakkal caves.
- Edakkal Caves are two natural caves at Edakkal, in Wayanad district of Kerala.
- Location: Ambukutty Mala, on the Mysore Plateau, in the Western Ghats. Discovered by: Fred Fawcett, Superintendent of Police, Malabar District in 1896.
- The Edakkal caves are believed to be shelters of the Neolithic community.
- The major part of images on the cave walls may belong to late Neolithic period (i. e., first millennium BC).
- Among other findings: Tamil-Brahmi inscription, containing the word Chera and Prakrit-Grantha inscription of Kadamba king Vishnu Varma.

# **Pulikali**

- Recently, during the Onam celebrations the annual folk art Pulikali (tiger play) festival engulfed Thrissur in Kerala.
- The origin of Pulikkali dates back to over 200 years, when the **Maharaja Rama Varma Sakthan Thampuran**, the then Maharaja of Cochin, is said to have introduced the folk art.
- During the Onam celebrations, performers painted like tigers and hunters in bright yellow, red, and black dance to the beats of instruments like Udukku and Thakil.
  - Onam is a rice harvest festival celebrated by Malayalis in Kerala irrespective of religion.

# **Pokkali Rice**

- The pokkali variety of rice is known for its **saltwater resistance** cultivated using extensive aquaculture in an organic way in the water-logged coastal regions of coastal Alappuzha, Ernakulamand Thrissur districts of Kerala
- The uniqueness of the rice has brought it the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Vyttila-11 is the latest variety OF Pokkali Rice.

# Korvai

• The Korvai of Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu is one of the prized textile techniques of the South. It involves a specialised process where the borders and pallu, in contrast colour with the body, are woven separately. **No GI Tag.** 

# Silk

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission is ready to set up the first of its kind training cum production centre of silk inChullyu village of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Arunachal Pradesh produces all four varieties of silk namely Mulbery, Oak Tasar, Eri and Muga. Oak Tasar is practiced in higher altitudes. Eri and Muga are practiced foothills areas and Mulbery is reared in middle altitude.
- India is the second largest producer of silk in the world. (1st China)
- Of the four varieties of silks, Mulberry accounts to 74.51%, Eri accounts to 16.5%, Tasar to 8.5% and Muga accounts to 0.55%.

# **National Handloom Day**

- On August 7, India celebrated its 6th National Handloom Day in memory of the **Swadeshi Movement** which was launched on the same day in 1905.
- The Swadeshi Movement was launched to protest against the partition of Bengal by the British Government. (Refer: Modern History)





# Parshuyan Parva

- Prime Minister NarendraModi on Tuesday wished Jains on the last day of 'ParyushanParva'.
- ParyushanParva is a major Jain festival that lasts seven days, culminating in 'SamvatsariParvi' (Forgiveness Day)
- On this day, Jains greet each other with "MichhamiDukkadam" and observe a day-long fast.
- 'MichhamiDukkadam' is an ancient phrase from Prakrit language, which is uttered by one seeking forgiveness for any ill-will or bad deeds and offering a renewal of relationship.
- Digambaras refer the event as **Das Lakshana Dharma** while Śvētāmbaras refer to it as Paryushana ("abiding" or "coming together").

# **Thumbimahotsav 2020**

- It is the first ever Dragon Fly Festival of Kerala. It is a part of National DragonFly Festival organised by WWF India, Bombay Natural History Society & Indian Dragon Fly Society in collaboration with National Biodiversity Board, UNEP, UNDP& IUCN.
- DragonFly Festival started in 2018 to educate people about role of dragonflies in our ecosystem.

# **Srisailam Dam**

- A major fire broke out in an underground hydroelectric power unit of at Srisailam project in Telangana.
- The Srisailam Dam is constructed across the Krishna River in Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh.
- It is the 2nd largest capacity working hydroelectric station in the country.
- The dam was constructed in a deep gorge in the Nallamala Hills.

#### **Black Sea**

- A Turkish ship had found some 320 billion cubic metres (bcm) of natural gas in Black Sea.
- Black Sea is a marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean between Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Western Asia.
- It is supplied by a number of major rivers, including the Danube, Dnieper,
   Southern Bug, Dniester, Don, and the Rioni.
- Black Sea is bordered by Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia, and Russia.
- The Black Sea ultimately drains into the Mediterranean Sea, via the Turkish Straits and the Aegean Sea.
- The Bosporus Strait connects it to the small **Sea of Marmara** which in turn is connected to the Aegean Sea via the **Strait of the Dardanelles**.
- To the north the Black Sea is connected to the Sea of Azov by the Kerch Strait.

# BLACK SEA EUROPE Werld Stars. Com World Stars. Com World Stars. Com Werld Stars. Com Werld Stars. Com World Stars. Com Werld Stars. Com Moldova Chisinau \*\* Odessa Berdyans'k 170 m Novorossiysk Russia Social Frankling Greece (Thrace Istanbul Zonguidak Sea of Stoit Admini Sea of Crete Lebanon

# **Belarus in News**

- Huge protests have taken place across Belarus against the embattled regime of Alexander Lukashenko.
- Belarus is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe.It is bordered by Russia to the northeast, Ukraine to the south, Poland to the west, and Lithuania and Latvia to the northwest.
- Its capital and most populous city is Minsk. Over 40% of its area is forested. Its major economic sectors are service industries and manufacturing.



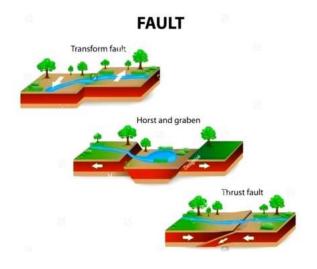
# The Kutch Mainland Fault (KMF)

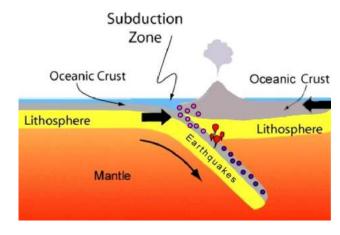
- According to a recent study the Kutch Mainland Fault which has been dormant for the last 1,000-odd years, has been
  accumulating stress within and could trigger an earthquake.
- The Kachchh Mainland Fault (KMF) is a major East-West trending fault in the Kachchh region of Gujarat extending >150 km from Lakhpat village in the west to the Bhachau town in the east.
- Fault is a planar fracture or discontinuity in a volume of rock across. This results from significant displacement such as rockmass movement.
- Large faults within the Earth's crust also result from the action of plate tectonic forces.
- · Largest faults form from the boundaries between the plates, such as subduction zones or transform faults.





- Energy release associated with rapid movement on active faults is the cause of most earthquakes.
- Faults may also displace slowly, by aseismic creep. Types of faults:





# **Zimbabwe**

- Recently, the U.S. Treasury has imposed financial sanctions on Zimbabwean government.
- Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in Southern Africa, **between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers**.
- It is bordered by South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique.
- The capital and largest city is Harare



# Mullaperiyar dam

- Rising water levels in the Mullaperiyar dam due to heavy rains and issuance of the first warning has triggered panic among people. Mullaperiyar dam:
  - ✓ a masonry gravity dam on the Periyar River in Kerala
  - ✓ located on the Cardamom Hills of the Western Ghats
  - ✓ Built by by John Pennycuick in 1887-95
  - ✓ Periyar National Park in Thekkady is located around the dam's reservoir.
  - ✓ The dam is built at the confluence of Mullayar and Periyar rivers.
  - ✓ Purpose- to augment the small flow of the Vaigai River in Tamil Nadu.
  - ✓ On 29 October 1886, a lease to Tamil Nadu for 999 years was made by Maharaja of Travancore, VisakhamThirunal Rama Varma.





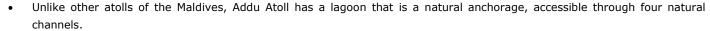
# Milne Ice Shelf

- The last fully intact ice shelf in the Canadian Arctic has collapsed, losing more than 40% of its area in just two days at the end of July- a consequence of global warming.
- The Milne Ice Shelf is a fragment of the former Ellesmere Ice Shelf.
- Location: In the Qikiqtaaluk Region, Nunavut, Canada.
- It is the second largest ice shelf in the Arctic Ocean.
  - ✓ The world's largest ice shelves are the Ross Ice Shelf and the Filchner-Ronne Ice Shelf in Antarctica.



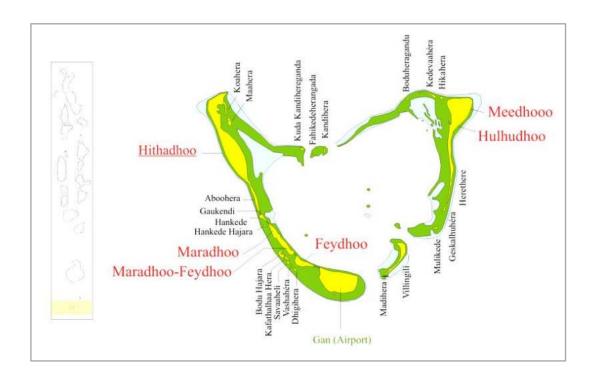
# **Addu Atoll**

- India & Maldives have inked a contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of island nation.
- These eco tourism zones are part of grant projects being implemented under the **High-Impact Community Development project (HICDP) scheme.**
- Currently, there are 9 such high-impact projects being implemented in the Maldives.
- The HICDP scheme was in March 2019. India had promised the island nation 85 million Maldivian rufiyaa (\$5.6 million) for the HICDP scheme.
- Under the High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) scheme,
  - ✓ three fish-processing plants would be set up in Maradhoo, Hithadhoo
    and Hulhudhoo in Addu city,
  - ✓ Addu Tourism Zone will be developed in Feydhoo, Meedhoo, Hithadhoo, Hulhudhoo and Maradhoo and
  - ✓ A bottled water plant would be developed in Hoarafushi.
- Also known as Seenu Atoll, Addu Atoll is the southernmost atoll of the Maldives in Indian Ocean. It extends in the Southern hemisphere.



 This results in a natural harbor that is very calm and safe for sea vessels at all times and is not affected by seasonal changes.







# **Death Valley**

- California's Death Valley registered a temperature of 54.4 degrees Celsius or 129.9 degrees Fahrenheit on August 16, 2020, which, once verified, could be the hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth.
- Death Valley is a desert valley in Eastern California, in the northern Mojave
   Desert.
- It **borders the Great Basin Desert**. It is one of the hottest places on Earth, along with deserts in the Middle East and the Sahara.
- Death Valley's Bad water Basin is the point of lowest elevation in North America, at 282 feet (86 m) below sea level.
- The highest point in Death Valley National Park is **Telescope Peak,** in the Panamint Range, which has an elevation of 11,043 feet.
- Death Valley is a graben that lies at the southern end of a geological trough,
   Walker Lane a geologic trough roughly aligned with the California/Nevada border.
- The valley is bisected by Furnace Creek Fault.

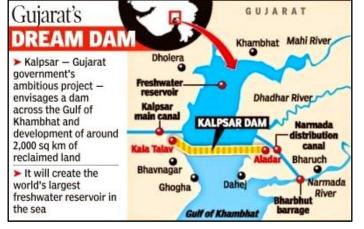


# **Bhadbhut project**

- It is planned to be a barrage with 90 gates, across the river Narmada.
- Narmada River flows into the Gulf of Khambhat. The barrage will stop most of the excess water flowing out of the Sardar Sarovar Dam (across Narmada) from reaching the sea and thus create a "sweet water lake".
- The project is part of the larger Kalpasar Project, which entails construction of a 30-km dam across the Gulf of Khambhat between Bharuch and Bhavnagar districts. The reservoir is meant to tap the waters of the Narmada, Mahisagar and Sabarmati.
- Bhadbhut project aims to
  - ✓ prevent flooding in years when rainfall is higher than normal.
  - ✓ prevent salinity ingress. (Due to the reduced flow of fresh water, saline seawater gushes into the Narmada estuary during high tide, thus increasing salinity along the banks).
  - ✓ The sweet water from the reservoir will meet the residential and industrial water requirements of Bharuch, Ankleshwar and Dahej.
- The barrage is expected to interfere with the migration and breeding cycle of hilsa A marine fish that migrates and arrives in the brackish water of the Narmada estuary. Once the barrage is built, it is expected to block their natural entry. Govt. has said it has planned fish passes for hilsa fish.
- Hilsa- National fish of Bangladesh and state symbol in the Indian states of West Bengal and Tripura. IUCN status-Least Concern.

# Mali in News

- Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa. Mali is the eighthlargest country in Africa. Its capital is Bamako.
- It borders Algeria on the north, Niger on the east, Burkina Faso and the Côte d'Ivoire on the south, Guinea on the southwest, and Senegal and Mauritania on the west.
- Most of the country lies in the southern Sahara Desert, which produces an extremely hot, dust-laden Sudanian savanna zone.
- Mali is mostly flat, rising to rolling northern plains covered by sand. Mali lies in the torrid zone and is among the hottest countries in the world.







- The vast northern desert part of Mali has a hot desert climate (Köppen climate classification BWh Geography NCERT)
- Mali has considerable natural resources, with gold, uranium, phosphates, kaolinite, salt and limestone being most widely exploited.

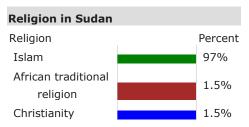
# **Teesta River**

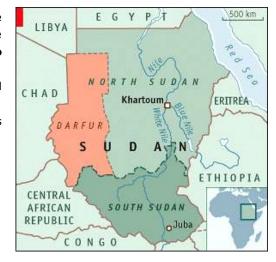
 Bangladesh is discussing an almost \$1 billion loan from China for a comprehensive management and restoration project on the Teesta river.

TEESTA	DETAILS
Source	Pahunri (or TeestaKangse) glacier in Sikkim Himalaya
Flows through	Sikkim, West Bengal & Bangladesh
Cities along the river	Kalimpong , Darjeeling district , Rangpo, Jalpaiguri and Mekhliganj(Coochbehar)
Enters plains at	Sevoke (NE of Siliguri)
Hydroelectric Projects	Teesta -V dam, Rangit III hydroelectric project, Teesta Barrage(Bangladesh)
Left Bank Tributaries	DikChhu, Rangpo River, Lang Lang Chu, Lachung River, Rani Khola
Right Bank Tributaries	RanghapChhu, Rangeet, RingyongChhu
Joins	Jamuna River at Fulchhari in Bangladesh

# **Sudan in News**

- Sudan is a country in North-East Africa.
- It is bordered by Egypt to the north, Libya to the northwest, Chad to the
  west, the Central African Republic to the southwest, South Sudan to the
  south, Ethiopia to the southeast, Eritrea to the east, and the Red Sea to
  the northeast.
- It is Africa's third-largest country. It was the largest country in Africa and the Arab world by area **before the secession of South Sudan in 2011.**
- Capital: Khartoum; Official languages: Arabic, English; River Nile flows through Sudan.(See Map)





# **Mansar Lake**

- Recently, the Govt. initiated the Mansar Lake Rejuvenation Project by holding a high level meeting to discuss the Detailed Project Report.
- Mansar Lake is situated 62 km from Jammu. The lake is fringed by forest-covered hills.
- It is a popular excursion destination in Jammu & also a holy site, sharing the legend and sanctity of Lake Manasarovar.
- Surinsar-Mansar Lakes are designated as Ramsar Convention in November 2005.

# **Ghana in News**

- Ghana is a country along the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean, in the sub-region of West Africa.
- Ghana is bordered by the Ivory Coast in the west, Burkina Faso in the north, Togo in the east, and the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean in the south. Ghana means "Warrior King" in the Soninke language.
- Capital: Accra; Major Religion: 71.2% Christianity.
- Ghana is Africa's largest gold producer. Ghana is also a major producer of bauxite, manganese and diamonds.







# **Fujiwara Effect**

- Two tropical storms, Marco and Laura formed in the western Atlantic Ocean at nearly the same time, are likely to impact the Gulf of Mexico, sparking concerns of the rare Fujiwhara effect.
- Fujiwhara effect is a binary interaction where tropical cyclones within a certain distance (300-750 nautical miles depending on the sizes of the cyclones) of each other begin to rotate about a common midpoint.
- If one hurricane is a lot stronger than the other, the smaller one will orbit it and eventually come crashing into its vortex to be absorbed.
- Further, the storms closer in strength can gravitate towards each other until they reach a common point and merge, or merely spin each other around for a while before shooting off on their own paths

#### **Meditarranean Sea**

- France reinforced naval forces in Mediterranean Sea mid tensions between neighbours Greece and Turkey over recently-discovered gas reserves.
- The countries surrounding the Mediterranean in clockwise order are Spain, France, Monaco, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco;
- Malta and Cyprus are island countries in the sea.
- In addition, the Gaza Strip and the British Overseas Territories of Gibraltar and Akrotiri and Dhekelia have coastlines on the sea.



- ✓ to the Atlantic Ocean by the Strait of Gibraltar in the west &
- ✓ to the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea by the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosporus respectively, in the east
- The 163 km long artificial Suez Canal in the southeast connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.

# **Kariye Musuem**

- After Hagia Sofia, Turkey's government has decided to convert another Byzantine monument called Kariye Museum in Istanbul.
- The Kariye Mosque, or formerly the Church of the Holy Saviour in Chora is a medieval Greek Orthodox church used as a Museum until now in Istanbul, Turkey.

# Togo

- Togo has become the first country in Africa to eliminate human African Trypanosomiasis or sleeping sickness, a disease caused by parasites transmitted through infected tsetse flies.
- Togois a Least Developed country in West Africa bordered by Bight of Benin in the south; Ghana to the west; Benin to the east; and to the north by Burkina Faso. Mono river flows through it.
- The country extends south to the Gulf of Guinea, where its capital Lomé is located.
- Official languages: French Yoruba; Recognised national languages: EweKabiye
- Ethnic groups: 99% Ewe, Kabye, Tem, Gourma; Religion: 43.7% Christianity

# **Channapatna Toy Industry**

- The COVID-19 pandemic has also dealt a crippling blow to the Channapatna Toy industry of Karnataka.
- The origin of these toys is dated back to the reign of Tipu Sultan who invited the artisans from Persia in order to train the local artisans in the art of wooden toy making.
- These toys have been given Geographical Indication tag by Government of India.





# **POLITY**

# **ECI Guidelines for Polls**

- Voters will be provided with gloves to press the EVM button and COVID-19 patients in quarantine will be allowed
  to vote at the last hour of the polling day, according to broad guidelines issued by the EC for holding elections during the
  coronavirus pandemic.
- The commission has recommended mandatory sanitisation of polling stations, preferably a day before the polls.
- Thermal scanners would be placed at the entry point of every polling station.
- There shall be maximum 1,000 electors instead of 1,500 electors in a polling station.
- A group of five people, including candidates but excluding security personnel, is allowed to take part in door-to-door campaigning.
- For road shows, convoys of vehicles should be broken after every five vehicles instead of 10 (excluding security vehicles).
- Public gatherings and rallies can be held subject to adherence to COVID-19 guidelines.
- The district election officer should identify in advance dedicated grounds for public gatherings with clearly marked entry and exit points.
- In all such identified grounds, the district election officer should put markers in advance to ensure social distancing norms are followed by the attendees.
- The district election officer and district superintendent of police should ensure that the **number of attendees does not exceed the limit prescribed by the State Disaster Management Authority for public gatherings**.
- Only two people can accompany candidate at the time of nomination.

#### **About Election Commission**

- The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India.
- The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies in India and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.

#### **Article related to election**

- Art.324: Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
- **Art.325:** No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
- **Art.326:** Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.
- Art.327: Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.
- Art.328: Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.
- Art.329: Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

#### **Function of Election Commission**

- The most important function of the commission is to **decide the election schedules for the conduct of periodic and timely elections, whe**ther general or bye-elections.
- The Commission also has **advisory jurisdiction in the matter of post-election disqualification of sitting members** of Parliament and State Legislatures.

# Arunachal groups push for 6th Schedule status

### **Context**

Demand to bring Arunachal Pradesh under the ambit of the Sixth Schedule or Article 371 (A) of the Constitution.

# **Reason for Demand**

- Arunachal Pradesh is under the Fifth Schedule that does not provide special rights for the indigenous communities, unlike the Sixth Schedule.
- 6th schedule area governance remain with the state.
- Autonomous district councils created under 6th schedule has legislative and judicial powers.

## **About 6th Schedule**

• The Sixth Schedule consists of provisions for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, according to Article 244 of the Indian Constitution.





- It seeks to safeguard the rights of tribal population through the formation of Autonomous District Councils (ADC).
- ADCs are bodies representing a district to which the Constitution has given varying degrees of autonomy within the state legislature.
- The governors of these states are empowered to reorganise boundaries of the tribal areas.
- The roles of the central and state governments are restricted from the territorial jurisdiction of these autonomous regions.
- The councils are empowered to make legislative laws on matters like land, forests, fisheries, social security, entertainment, public health, etc.

# **About Regional Council**

- The Sixth Schedule also provides for separate Regional Councils for each area constituted as an autonomous region.
- Each autonomous district and regional council consists of not more than 30 members, of which four are nominated by the governor and the rest via elections.

#### About 371 A

- Article 371A confers special status on Nagaland.
- Under this provision, no law made by Parliament in relation to Naga customary law and procedure, including civil
  and criminal justice matters, and ownership or transfer of land and resources will apply to Nagaland, unless the
  Legislative Assembly of Nagaland decides so.
- The protection of Naga laws and customs was written into the Constitution following the July 1960 agreement between the Centre and the Naga People's Convention, under which the State was later created.

# **New Rules for Administration of J& K**

#### Context

• The Union Ministry of Home Affairs notified new rules for that administration of Jammu and Kashmir.

#### **Rules**

- The functions of "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption" will fall under the purview of the lieutenant governor.
- Any matter which may affect the peace and tranquillity of the Union Territory or the interest of any minority
  community, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Backward Classes will be "submitted to the lieutenant
  governor through the chief secretary, under intimation to the chief minister, before issuing any orders".
- The council of ministers headed by the chief minister will decide upon service matters of non-All India Services
  officers, proposals to impose new taxes, land revenue, sale, grant or lease of government properties,
  reconstituting departments or offices and draft laws.
- There will be 39 departments in the government of the Union Territory.
- All communications received from the Centre, including those from the prime minister and other ministers, shall be submitted to the chief secretary, the minister in charge of the matter under consideration, the chief minister and the lieutenant governor – unless such communication is of a routine or unimportant nature.
- However, in case of difference of opinion between the LG and a Minister when no agreement could be reached
  even after a month, the "decision of the Lieutenant Governor shall be deemed to have been accepted by the
  Council of Ministers.

# **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

# **One Nation One Standard Scheme**

# **Context**

- Ministry for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution launched the online system of Registration and Renewal of Jewellers and online system of recognition and renewal of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centres.
- . It will bring about ease of doing business for both the jewellers and the entrepreneurs

# **Features:**

- Hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from 1st June 2021.
- There will be no human interface in processing the applications.





- Now, Jewellers can apply online and submit required necessary documents and fees for obtaining a licence through this
  online portal.
- Now BIS Hallmark will be issued for three categories only. They are 14 carat, 18 carat and 22 carat only.
- Entire process of recognition, which involves audit of the Centres, submission of audit report, and grant of recognition or renewal, has been automated.

#### **About BIS**

- BIS –The National Standards Body Of India Functioning Under Ministry Of Consumer Affairs
- Statutory body under Bureau of Indian Standards act 1986

#### **Objectives**

- Harmonious development of activities of standardization, marking and quality certification
- Providing new thrust to standardization and quality control
- Evolving the national strategy for according recognition to standards and integrating them with growth and development of industrial production and exports.

# **Council for Transgenders**

# Context

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons.

#### Framework of the Council

- Formed under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- headed by the Union Social Justice Minister.
- comprises representatives from 10 central departments, five states and members of the community.
- Representatives from five states or union territories, on a rotational basis, will be members of the commission.
- Five members of the community and five experts, from non-governmental organisations, have also been named to the commission.
- The tenure of the community members and experts shall be three years.

#### **Functions**

### According to the legislation, the council has five main functions

- Advising the central government on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons.
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons.
- Reviewing and coordinating the activities of all the departments.
- Redressing grievances of transgender persons.
- Performing such other functions as prescribed by the Centre.

# About Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

# **Objectives of the Act**

- To uplift and empower transgender persons by mitigating social stigma, social exclusion, abuse and crimes against them.
- To bring this marginalised section into mainstream society in order to build an inclusive society
- To make all stakeholders more responsive
- To make enforcement agencies more accountable for their actions especially when they are dealing with transgender persons.

# **Key provisions of the Act**

- It defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth, which includes transmen, trans-women, persons with intersex variations and gender-queers.
- It prohibits discrimination against transgender persons in educational institutions, government establishments, and while renting or purchasing property, receiving healthcare and using public services.
- Right of residence is granted to every transgender person. If immediate family is unable to provide care then on court orders a transgender person may be placed in a rehabilitation centre.
- A transgender person may make an application to the District Magistrate for a certificate of identity. In case person undergoes a sex reassignment surgery, then one must apply for another certificate to change their gender identity.





- Causing harm of any kind, including physical or sexual abuse, to a transgender person, could attract punishment from six months and extend up to two years.
- National Council for Transgender Persons will be formed to advise the government on formulating policies for the community, monitor its implementation and will address grievances
- Centre will provide healthcare services, including sex reassignment surgery and hormonal therapy.
- Educational institutions funded or recognised by the relevant government shall provide inclusive education, sports and recreational facilities for transgender persons.

# The Remote Learning Reachability Report

#### **Context**

It is issued by UNICEF.

# Finding of the report

- Just 24% of Indian households have internet connections to access e-education.
- There is a large rural-urban and gender divide that is likely to widen the learning gap across high, middle and low-income families
- Expressed concerns over children from economically disadvantaged families struggling with access to remote learning.
- Students, especially girls, from most marginalised communities do not have easy access to smartphones, and even if they do, internet connectivity is poor.
- Lack of Quality content in Vernacular languages.
- In India, over 1.5 million (15 lakh) schools have been closed due to the pandemic affecting 286 million (28.6 crore) children from pre-primary to secondary levels, (of which 49% girls).
- Even when children have the technology and tools at home, they may not be able to learn remotely through
  those platforms due to competing factors in the home, including pressure to do chores, being forced to work, a poor
  environment for learning and lack of support in using the online or broadcast curriculum.

# **Digital based education programme by Government**

#### 1. Swayam:

- An integrated platform for offering online courses and covering school (9th to 12th) to Post Graduate Level.
- NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) has been developing course modules for school education system in 12 subject areas.

#### 2. Swayam Prabha:

- SWAYAM Prabha is an initiative to provide 32 High Quality Educational Channels through DTH.
- Curriculum-based course content covering diverse disciplines.

# 3. National Digital Library:

- Project to develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility.
- There are more than three crores digital resources available through the NDL.

#### 4. Spoken Tutorial:

- 10-minute long, audio-video tutorial, on open source software, to improve employment potential of students.
- The languages are C, C++, Java, PHP, Python, PERL, Scilab, OpenFOAM, OpenModelica, DWSIM, LibreO and many more.

## 5. E-Yantra:

- Project for enabling effective education across engineering colleges in India on embedded systems and Robotics.
- The training for teachers and students is imparted through workshops where participants are taught basics of embedded systems and programming.

# About United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):

History	<ul> <li>Established on 11th December 1946 by united nations general assembly.</li> <li>To provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War 2</li> </ul>		
	• In 1953, UNICEF became a permanent part of the United Nations System.		
	• In 1959 declaration of the rights of the children.		
	In 1961 mainly focused on education to children		
Objective	To ensure the basic nutrition, health and education needs of children are met.		
	To give children the opportunity to expand their potential.		
	To create an international ethical standard of behaviour towards children.		
UNICEF- India	The organisation began its work in India in 1949.		





	1975 – launched Integrated Child Development Services for development of 0-6 years of child.      1985 – Launched National Mission on Immunication for bottom books automos 2013				
	• 1985 –Launched National Mission on Immunization for better health outcomes. 2				
	Undertook Polio Campaign for complete eradication.				
Organisation Structure	Headquarters in NEW YORK.				
	36 Members executive board				
Members have tenure for three years term.					
	Executive director has 5 year mandate.				
Goals	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.				
	Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day.				
	Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.				
Achieve universal primary education Ensure that all boys and girls complete a primary schooling					

#### Students' Learning Enhancement Guidelines

#### **Context**

- Education ministry has launched Learning Enhancement Guidelines for continuing education of the students in this time of coronavirus pandemic.
- It has been formulated by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

#### The NCERT's new set of guidelines suggest measures for three types of situations

- Students not having any digital resource
- · Students with limited digital resources
- Students with available digital resources for online education.

#### **About the Guidelines**

- These guidelines emphasise upon the community working closely with the school to get learning materials such as workbooks, worksheets, etc. delivered at the doorsteps of children by teachers and volunteers.
- It suggests **teaching local students by volunteers or teachers setting up television** at the community centre and maintaining social distance norms.
- It talks about setting up of a helpline at the community centre with the help of members of the community and Panchayati Raj.
- It recommends the orientation of parents to support and participate in the learning of their children.
- These guidelines will help children, who do not have digital resources to get learning opportunities at home with their teachers or volunteers.
- It will also help in efforts to overcome the learning deficiencies of all those students who are learning at home through various alternative ways i.e., using radio, TV, smartphone, etc.

#### **About NCERT:**

ADOUT NCERT.	
About it	<ul> <li>It is an autonomous organization set up in 1961 by the Government of India.</li> <li>The main work of NCERT is to assist and advise the Central and State Governments on qualitative improvement in school education.</li> </ul>
Objective	<ul> <li>Undertake, aid, promote and coordinate research in areas related to school education.</li> <li>Prepare and publish model textbooks, supplementary material, newsletters, journals and other related literature.</li> <li>Organize pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Develop and disseminate innovative educational techniques and practices.</li> <li>Collaborate and network with state educational departments, universities, NGOs and other educational institutions.</li> <li>Act as a clearing house for ideas and information in matters related to school education.</li> <li>Act as a nodal agency for achieving goals of universalisation of elementary education.</li> </ul>
President	Union Education Minister

#### **Convention 182 of International Labour Organization (ILO)**

#### **Context**

• Recently, Kingdom of Tonga has ratified Convention 182 of International Labor Organisation.





#### **About Convention 182**

- The two ILO Conventions on child labour are Convention No.138 on Minimum Age and Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
- ILO Convention No. 182 is the first ILO Convention to achieve universal ratification.
- It was adopted in 1999.
- It **prohibits the sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, deployment in armed conflict** and other conditions that compromise their overall well-being.
- The Convention complements the ILO's efforts under the 1973 Minimum Age Convention to prevent the employment of children below a lower age threshold.
- India is signatory to both the conventions.

#### **About International Labour Organization (ILO)**

- The only tripartite U.N. agency, since 1919 the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States.
- It sets labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- The ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946.

#### **National Digital Health Mission**

#### **Context**

 National Digital Health Mission has been rolled out through a pilot launch are Chandigarh, Ladakh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep

#### **About the Mission**

- Every Indian will get the Health ID that will ease access to medical services.
- The National Health Authority (NHA), the apex agency responsible for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat
  Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), has been given the mandate by the government to design,
  build, roll-out and implement the NDHM in the country.
- Health ID will help in storing of the every medical records of individuals.
- The health ID will contain information about medical data, prescriptions and diagnostic reports and summaries of previous discharge from hospitals for ailments.
- The mission is expected to bring efficiency and transparency in healthcare services in the country.

#### **Objective**

- Liberate citizens from the challenges of finding the right doctors
- Seeking appointment with them
- Payment of consultation fee
- Making several rounds of hospitals for prescription sheets
- Empowerment of all Indians with the correct information and sources enabling them to take an informed decision to avail the best possible healthcare

#### **Building blocks of NDHM**

- HealthID,
- DigiDoctor,
- Health Facility Registry,
- · Personal Health Records,
- e-Pharmacy
- Telemedicine

#### **About National Health Authority**

- NHA has been set-up to implement PM-JAY.
- An attached office of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with full functional autonomy, NHA is governed by a Governing Board chaired by the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare.
- It is headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), an officer of the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, who manages its affairs.
- To implement the scheme at the State level, State Health Agencies (SHAs) in the form of a society/trust have been set up by respective States.





### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### **NRI Unified Portal**

#### Why in news?

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister launches Non- Resident Indians (NRI) unified portal

#### **About**

• **Database of NRI**: The State Government will prepare a database of the migrant workers of the state working in different countries of the world.

#### • Significance:

- o It will help in **providing them assistance** during any emergency.
- o This portal would help in **bringing investment** in the state.
- Will provide an **opportunity** for those who want to go abroad.
- Will be helpful to overseas Indians and NRIs to get their problems with the local administration or the State Government resolved.

#### Soft Power Diplomacy:

- o The website <u>nri.up.gov.in</u> will also provide a platform for NRIs keen to know about their roots or those seeking help from the UP Government related to their homes or families in the state.
- The NRI department of state will use festivals to connect with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in other countries. There will be live streaming the Deepotsav festival in Ayodhya during Diwali, Holi celebrations in Vrindavan and cultural events will also be a part of this initiative.

#### Who are NRI?

Overseas Indians, officially known as Non-Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, are people of **Indian birth**, **descent or origin** who live outside the Republic of India.

According to a Ministry of External Affairs report, there are 32 million NRIs and PIOs residing outside India. An Non Resident Indian (NRI) is an Indian Citizen who resides in India for less than one hundred & eighty two days during the course of the preceding financial year, or

who has gone out of India or who stays outside India for the purpose of employment, or

who has gone out of India or who stays outside India for carrying on business or vocation outside India, or

who has gone out of India or who stays outside India for any other purpose indicating his intention to stay outside India for an uncertain period.

#### **Clean Plates Campaign**

Note: We can use this as an international example or best practices in essay and GS Paper II to prevent hunger related death and management of food resources.

#### Why in news?

• China's launched a new initiative called the 'Clean Plates Campaign' to encourage its citizens to drastically cut down on food waste.

#### **About**

- **Driving force**: The <u>Covid-19 pandemic</u>, <u>devastating floods and worsening relations with major international partners and also with the US and Australia two major sources of food imports have added to food security concerns for China.</u>
- Extent of Food wastage: United States, the global leader in food waste, throws away approximately 40 million tonnes of food a year. China produces around 17-18 million tonnes of food waste annually.

#### Measures to be taken:

- State-run media will "exposes" restaurants wasting food.
- Naming and shaming of people wasting food on China's popular social media platforms with people.
- The "N-1" system the number of dishes served to a group of customers in a restaurant must be at least one less than the number of people in the group.
- Introduction of "waste prevention supervisors" –staff members who would help customers order just enough food to
  ensure there's no wasting.
- The military will introduce new high-tech, high-efficiency equipment and processes including **robot cooks** to streamline cooking and cut down on wastage of food and other resources.





#### **ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT)**

#### Why in news?

• Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of **Thailand** organized the <u>6th Round Table of</u> ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT)

#### About

• Theme: The theme of the two day Round Table was 'ASEAN-India: Strengthening Partnership in the Post COVID Era'.

#### Focus areas:

- o Changing Landscape of Global Order and ASEAN-India relations in the post Covid-19 Era;
- Emerging Value Chains: Opportunities for ASEAN and India in the post Covid-19 Era;
- New Normal and Significance of 4IR on ASEAN-India Partnership and Future Collaborations;
- ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI): Complementarities and Cooperation;
   and Way Forward.

#### • Highlights of the event:

- In order to deal with the new global challenges, nation-states were rediscovering the merits of ideas like "strategic autonomy".
- o "The irony, however, is that just when **multilateralism** was most in demand, it did not rise to the occasion.
- The current pandemic appeared as an unprecedented challenge and "individual behaviour of many states" should be blamed for the failure of the multilateral organisations to come to the rescue of the pandemic-hit world.
- The impact of COVID-19 on the world economy still not clear and the contraction of the world economy would be the largest since the Great Depression of 1929.

#### Call to ASEAN

- Greater cooperation is required among nations to counter challenges such as the pandemic and for "collective solutions".
- The pandemic calls for a strong response and look beyond "orthodoxies" in trade, politics and security to find solution to the challenges.
- Idea of "strategic autonomy" should be adopted; which will create space for states to take the decision in their best interest.

#### Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP)

#### **Context**

Lok Sabha Speaker attended the inaugural ceremony of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP).

#### **About**

- Organised by: The two day Conference is being organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Geneva and the Parliament of Austria with the support of the United Nations (UN).
- Theme of the Conference: "Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet".

#### About IPU:

- o The Inter-Parliamentary Union is an international organization of national parliaments.
- Its primary purpose is to promote democratic governance, accountability, and cooperation among its members;
- Other initiatives include advancing gender parity among legislatures, empowering youth participation in politics, and sustainable development.
- The IPU has played a leading role in the development of international law and institutions, including the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the League of Nations, and the United Nations.
- It has permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.

#### Loya Jirga

#### **Context**

Afghan 'loya jirga' approves prisoner release

#### **About**

- The **Afghan government and the Taliban** are "on the verge of peace talks" after thousands of prominent Afghans approved the release of about 400 contentious militant prisoners.
- The prisoners' fate has been a crucial hurdle in launching peace talks between the two warring sides, which had committed to completing a prisoner exchange before negotiations can start.





#### Outcome of three-day meeting

- **Outcome:** The resolution was passed at the end of a three-day "loya jirga" a traditional Afghan meeting of tribal elders and other stakeholders sometimes held to decide on controversial issues.
- **Need:**"In order to remove the hurdles for the start of peace talks, stopping bloodshed, and for the good of the public, the jirga approves the release of 400 prisoners as demanded by the Taliban,"
- Who all got new chance? Many of the inmates are accused of serious offences, including many involved in attacks that killed scores of Afghans and foreigners, with more than 150 of them on death row.
- **Further assurance**: The jirga urged the government to give assurances to the population that the released prisoners would be monitored and would not be allowed to return to the battlefield, and the foreign fighters should be sent back to their respective countries.
- It also demanded a "serious, immediate and lasting ceasefire" in the country.
- "The decision of the loya jirga has removed the last excuse and obstacles on the way to peace talks.

#### Loya jirga

- It is a special type of legal assembly, the traditional code of laws of the Pashtun people.
- It is mainly organized for choosing a new head of state in case of sudden death, adopting a new constitution, or to settle national or regional issue such as war.
- In Afghanistan, still maintained and favored, mostly by tribal leaders to solve internal or external disputes with other tribes. In some cases, it functions like a town hall meeting.
- The members of the jirgas were mostly members of the Royal Family, religious leaders and tribal leaders of the Afghans.

#### **COVAX Platform**

#### **Context**

WHO renews call for countries to join COVAX.

#### What is COVAX facility?

- COVAX facility, an international alliance aimed at accelerating the development and manufacture of novel Coronavirus vaccines, and ensuring equitable access to all.
- The COVAX facility, is **stitching together agreements with developers and manufacturers of vaccine candidates** it thinks are most likely to succeed.
- The facility is trying to raise funds to support the rapid development of promising candidates, and the quick expansion of manufacturing capacities, so that the vaccines once approved, could be produced on mass scale.
- The facility aims to procure at least two billion doses of a novel Coronavirus vaccine by the end of next year, for deployment and distribution mainly in the low and middle-income countries.
- The COVAX Facility is **open to all countries to ensure that no country is left without access** to a future COVID-19 vaccine.
- COVAX facility, by backing multiple vaccine candidates, would ensure that it would have access to whichever vaccine candidate is finally approved for use.
- The COVAX Global Vaccines Facility is the vaccine pillar of the ACT-Accelerator, an initiative launched to speed up development of medicines to treat COVID-19 and make them available to people everywhere.
  - The Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is a groundbreaking global collaboration to accelerate development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines.
- It is operated by the World Health Organization (WHO), Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), alongside multinational and developing country vaccine manufacturers.

#### **India and COVAX**

- An agreement between the Pune-based **Serum Institute of India and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for production of 100 million doses** of the vaccine for low and middle-income countries was part of the COVAX mechanism.
- **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, along with **GAVI** (previously called Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, now just GAVI), and **CEPI** (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) are working together with WHO in executing the COVAX mechanism.

#### **GAVI**

• GAVI, officially Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a **public-private** global health partnership with the goal of increasing access to immunization in poor countries.





- GAVI brings together developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry in both industrialized and developing countries, research and technical agencies, civil society, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other private philanthropists.
- GAVI has observer status at the World Health Assembly.

#### **CEPI**

- The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is a foundation that takes donations from public, private, philanthropic, and civil society organisations, to finance independent research projects to develop vaccines against emerging infectious diseases (EID).
- CEPI is focused on the World Health Organisation's (WHO) "blueprint priority diseases", which include: the Middle East respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus (MERS-CoV), the Severe acute respiratory syndrome **coronavirus 2** (SARS-CoV-2), the Nipah virus, the Lassa fever virus, and the Rift Valley fever virus, as well as the Chikungunya virus and the hypothetical, unknown pathogen "Disease X".
- CEPI investment also requires "equitable access" to the vaccines during outbreaks.
- CEPI was conceived in 2015 and formally launched in 2017 at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos,
   Switzerland.
- It was co-founded and co-funded with US\$460 million from the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Wellcome**Trust, and a consortium of nations.

#### The Montreal Convention 1999 (MC99)

#### Context

The crash of the Air India Express plane at Kozhikode on August 7 that killed 18 people including both pilots could make the
airline liable to pay compensation of Rs 1.19 crores per passenger in case of death or bodily injury, according to the
Montreal Convention protocols and its specific adoption by India i.e. charter of passenger rights notified by the
Central government in February last year.

#### How does India's adoption of the Montreal Convention pan out?

- For domestic carriage within India, the government applied a modified version of the Montreal Convention with regard to compensation.
- As per a January 17, 2014 notification in the official gazette by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, for death or bodily injury during domestic flights, airlines are liable to pay up to Rs 20 lakh per passenger. In case of death inside an aircraft due to natural cases, airlines are **not liable** to pay any compensation on both international and domestic flights.

#### **Montreal Convention**

The Montreal Convention or the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air is a multilateral treaty adopted by a diplomatic meeting of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) member states in 1999.

It amended important provisions of the Warsaw Convention's regime concerning compensation for the victims of air disasters.

The Convention attempts to re-establish uniformity and predictability of rules relating to the international carriage of passengers, baggage and cargo.

India has signed and ratified it.

#### 19th AMENDMENT (Sri Lanka)

#### Context

 Sri Lankan government has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment.

#### What is 19th AMENDMENT?

- This amendment was brought by previous government to put a two-term limit on Presidency, curtailed the executive powers of President, and transferred it to parliament and independent commissions.
- The amendment envisages the dilution of many powers of Executive Presidency, which had been in force since 1978.
- It is the most revolutionary reform ever applied to the Constitution of Sri Lanka
- The Rajapaksa family had alleged that the amendment was brought specifically to target the family.
- Mahinda Rajapaksa could not contest the last November Presidential elections because of term limit and his younger brother Gotabaya became the candidate.
- The Rajapaksas secured a two-third majority in parliament during general elections held this month, thus paving way for constitutional amendments.





#### **Anti-Drug Working Group BRICS**

#### **Context**

4th Meeting of the BRICS Anti-Drug Working Group held

#### **About**

- Fruitful exchange of opinions concerning the drug situation in the BRICS states, the **international and regional trends of** illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, as well as the impact of various internal and external factors on the situation took place during the summit.
- The common points emerged during the discussions include <u>need for real time information sharing among the member states and need to curb increased drug trafficking through maritime routes.</u>
- Communiqué adopted reaffirming commitment of the five member states to the International Anti-drug conventions
- India called for nodal points to enable real-time information sharing among BRICS nations
- Meeting focused on misuse of darknet and other advanced technologies for drug trafficking.

#### 1947 Tripartite Agreement on Gurkha soldiers

Note: Please refer July 2020 IASGAZETTE for Indo-Nepal bilateral relations.

#### **Context**

• The 1947 agreement among India, Nepal and the United Kingdom that deals with the military service of Gorkha soldiers has become "redundant,"-Nepal.

#### **Contentious issues in present times**

#### Kalapani dispute

- India-Nepal ties are going through a rough phase as Nepal is urging India to convene formal diplomatic dialogue on this issue. India is not responding to Nepal's request for talks on the Kalapani dispute to prevent the issue from impacting people-to-people relations.
- The objection from Nepal regarding the Gorkhas serving in the Indian military has been heard more prominently in the recent months in the backdrop of **Nepal-India territorial dispute over the Kalapani region of Pithoragarh district** that Nepal claims as its own.
- Nepal's strongly protested against Indian road construction amid the pandemic in the Limpiyadhura-Kalapani-Lipulekh area was at the behest of a third party (China).

#### Outlawed political group in Nepal seeks to ban Gorkhas for Indian Army

- Redundant: Nepal government consider that "Gorkha recruitment is a legacy of the past. It helped create a lot of jobs for
  the society in the past. In the changed context some of those provisions have become questionable and the tripartite
  agreement of 1947 has become redundant.
- Need new arrangement: Nepal is seeing a possible "bilateral" arrangement with India regarding the Gorkha soldiers.
- **Discrimination alleged:** The 1947 agreement divided the Gorkha regiments of the British empire between India and the United Kingdom. It also assured that the <u>Gorkha soldiers of Nepal while serving in the British military will draw perks and privileges equivalent to their counterparts. However, Gorkha veterans have been alleging that the U.K. has been discriminating against them.</u>
- Nepal urged the United Kingdom to turn the employment of the soldiers into a bilateral understanding with the U.K., hinting
  at the termination of the agreement.

#### **Britain-India-Nepal Tripartite Agreement**

• The Tripartite Agreement between the United Kingdom, India and Nepal was a treaty signed in 1947 concerning the rights of Gurkhas in military service.

#### **Gurkhas regiment**

- Presently, a large number of Nepalese Gorkhas serve in the Indian military, They are **pillar of India's security for decades**.
- The Gurkhas or Gorkhas are soldiers **native to the Indian subcontinent of Nepalese nationality** and ethnic Nepalis of Indian nationality recruited for the British Army, Nepalese Army, Indian Army, Gurkha Contingent Singapore, Gurkha Reserve Unit Brunei, UN peacekeeping force and war zones around the world.
- Historically, the terms "Gurkha" and "Gorkhali" were synonymous with "Nepali", which originates from the hill principality Gorkha Kingdom.
- The name may be traced to the medieval Hindu warrior-saint **Guru Gorakhnath**.





#### Quadrilateral Dialogue: China, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan

#### Context

• China convened a rare quadrilateral dialogue with the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan, pledging to strengthen cooperation among the four nations in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic as well as boosting their economic recoveries, including through regional connectivity projects.

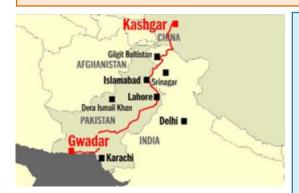
#### **Highlights of the meet**

- BRI: China's outlined four proposals at the meet, including for the four countries to cooperate under China's Belt and
  Road Initiative (BRI). It proposed extending the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to Afghanistan, as well
  as taking forward an economic corridor plan with Nepal, called the Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional
  Connectivity Network.
- **Four-way ties:** China instated that four countries were **"connected by mountains and rivers"**, and offered four proposals to strengthen four-way ties.
- The four countries pledged their support to the ongoing peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan.
- Fighting Pandemic:
  - o China share consensus in fighting the pandemic as "good neighbours".
  - o It hit out at countries that had "politicised" the pandemic and "undermined cooperation for their own political needs".
  - o It embraced the **China and Pakistan's joint prevention and control model**, and suggested the four countries could look at opening up **"green channels"** as soon as possible.
  - China offered its expertise in fighting COVID-19 and said vaccines that are being developed would be shared with the three countries and asked the group to continue cooperating under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

#### BRI

- The Belt and Road Initiative formerly known as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations.
- It is considered a center piece of Chinese Communist Party general secretary Xi Jinping's foreign policy
- Belt" refers to the overland routes for road and rail transportation, called "the Silk Road Economic Belt"; whereas "road" refers to the sea routes, or the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. It was incorporated into the Constitution of the People's Republic of China in 2017.





#### CPEC

- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a collection of infrastructure projects that are under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013.
- CPEC is intended to rapidly upgrade Pakistan's required infrastructure and strengthen its economy by the construction of modern transportation networks, numerous energy projects, and special economic zones.
- CPEC is seen as the main plank of China's paramount leader Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative. And part of China's Debt-trap diplomacy.



### **ECONOMY**

#### **Fiscal Deficit**

#### Context

- As per official data, the Centre's fiscal deficit for the first three months of fiscal 2020-21 is □6.62 lakh crore (83% of the budgeted target for the year).
- Budget Targeted: 3.5% of GDP
- The Union Government has received □1.53 lakh crore (in terms of tax, non-tax revenue and loan recoveries) from April to June 2020. This is less than 7% of budget estimates for the full year.

#### **About Fiscal Deficit**

- Difference between the government's expenditure requirements and its receipts.
- occurs when the government's expenditure exceeds its income.
- The government describes fiscal deficit of India as "the excess of total disbursements from the Consolidated Fund of India, excluding repayment of the debt, over total receipts into the Fund (excluding the debt receipts) during a financial year".
- This difference is calculated both in absolute terms and also as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country.
- Fiscal Deficit = Total expenditure of the government (capital and revenue expenditure) Total income of the government (Revenue receipts + recovery of loans + other receipts)

Government Revenue Receipts	<b>Government Capital Receipts</b>	Government Expenditure
Corporation Tax	Interest Receipts	Revenue Expenditure
Income Tax	Dividends and Profits	Capital Expenditure
Custom Duties	• External Grants	Interest Payments
Union Excise Duties	Other non-tax revenues	Grants-in-aid for creation of capital assets
GST and taxes of Union territories	Receipts of union territories	

#### **Future Challenges**

- Revenue Shortfall due to Pandemic
- plans for additional borrowing that amounts to about 5.7% of GDP
- Failure to meet the disinvestment target envisaged in the budget
- More Stimulus may be needed in later part of the year

#### **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme**

#### **Context**

• Total of 22 companies, have filed applications under the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme that aims to boost local manufacturing of mobile phones and components.

#### **About PLI**

- Part of the National Policy on Electronics.
- Would give incentives of 4-6 per cent to electronics companies which manufacture mobile phones and other electronic components such as transistors, diodes, thyristors, resistors, capacitors.

#### **Features**

- Incentive of up to 6 per cent on incremental sales of mobile phones of Rs 15000 or more and made in India.
- Separate fund of Rs 200 crore for companies owned by Indians.
- Active for five years.

First Year Budget	5,334 crore	
Second Year Budget	8,064 crore	
Third Year Budget	8,425 crore	
Fourth Year Budget	11,488 crore	
Fifth Year Budget	7,640 crore	
Total Outlay	40,951 crore	





#### Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana

#### Context:

• Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (National Mission for Financial Inclusion, completes six years of successful implementation.

#### **Basic tenets of the scheme**

- **Banking the unbanked** Opening of basic savings bank deposit (BSBD) account with minimal paperwork, relaxed KYC, e-KYC, account opening in camp mode, zero balance & zero charges
- **Securing the unsecured** Issuance of Indigenous Debit cards for cash withdrawals & payments at merchant locations, with free accident insurance coverage of Rs. 2 lakh
- Funding the unfunded Other financial products like micro-insurance, overdraft for consumption, micro-pension & micro-credit

#### **Initial Features**

The scheme was launched based upon the following 6 pillars:

- Universal access to banking services Branch and BC
- Basic savings bank accounts with overdraft facility of Rs. 10,000/- to every household
- **Financial Literacy Program** Promoting savings, use of ATMs, getting ready for credit, availing insurance and pensions, using basic mobile phones for banking
- Creation of Credit Guarantee Fund To provide banks some guarantee against defaults
- **Insurance** Accident cover up to Rs. 1,00,000 and life cover of Rs. 30,000 on account opened between 15 Aug 2014 to 31 January 2015
- Pension scheme for Unorganized sector

#### **Extension of PMJDY with New features**

- The Government decided to extend the comprehensive PMJDY program beyond 28.8.2018 with some modifications
- Focus shift from 'Every Household' to Every Unbanked Adult'
- **RuPay Card Insurance** Free accidental insurance cover on RuPay cards increased from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh for PMJDY accounts opened after 28.8.2018.
- Enhancement in overdraft facilities OD limit doubled from Rs 5,000/- to Rs 10,000/-; ODup to Rs 2,000/- (without conditions).
- Increase in upper age limit for OD from 60 to 65 years

#### **Achievements:**

Bank Name / Type	at rural/semiurban	urban metro centre bank	Number of Total Beneficiaries	Deposits in Accounts (In Crore)
Public Sector Banks	18.54	13.06	31.60	101916.67
Regional Rural Banks	6.08	0.89	6.96	25640.91
Private Sector Banks	0.69	0.57	1.26	4018.50
Grand Total	25.31	14.52	39.82	131576.08

- More than 40.35 crore beneficiaries banked under PMJDY since inception, amounting to Rs. 1.31 lakh crore.
- 63.6% Rural PMJDY accounts; 55.2%Women PMJDY account.
- Under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, a total of Rs. 30,705 crore have been credited in accounts of women PMJDY account holders during April-June, 2020.
- About 8 crore PMJDY accountholders receive Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) from the Government under various schemes.

#### Krishi Megh

#### Context

 Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare launched the Krishi Megh (National Agricultural Research & Education System -Cloud Infrastructure and Services)



#### **About Krishi Megh**

- Data Recovery Centre of ICAR (Indian Council of Agriculture Research)
- Set up under National Agriculture Higher Education Project (NAHEP).

#### **Features**

• Equipped with the latest artificial intelligence and deep learning software.

#### **Envisaged Benefits**

- Enhance the quality, availability and accessibility of e-governance, research, extension and education in the field of agriculture in India.
- Deployment of deep learning-based applications through image analysis, disease identification in livestock, etc.
- Update farmers, researchers, students and policymakers with latest information regarding agriculture and research.

#### **About National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)**

- Launched by ICAR.
- Aims to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in India.
- Funded by World Bank and Government of India on 50:50 basis.

#### **Objective**

- Support participating agricultural universities (AU) and ICAR.
- A four-year degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries and Forestry has been declared a professional degree.

#### **Components**

- Institutional Development Plans (IDPs): provide Institutional Development Grants to selected participating AUs.
- **Centre of Advanced Agricultural science & Technology (CAAST):** CAAST Grants will be provided to selected participating AUs to establish multidisciplinary centers for teaching, research and extension
- Innovation Grants to selected participating AUs to make AUs reform ready.
- **Continuous Monitoring**: ICAR would establish a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Cell to oversee the progress of activities across all NAHEP components.

#### **About Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR)**

- Established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- Autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- President: Union Agriculture Minister
- Largest network of agricultural research and education institutes in the world.

#### **Functions**

- **Provides accreditation to agriculture universities**, colleges and programmes, through its accreditation unit, National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board (NAEAB).
- **Published an Integrated Mobile App called KISAAN** (Krishi Integrated Solution for Agri Apps Navigation) for Farmers in 2019.

#### Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission

#### Context

• Make India Aatmanirbhar in Agarbatti production.

#### **Objective**

- · creating employment for unemployed migrant workers in different parts of the country
- increasing domestic Agarbatti production substantially
- · Help private Agarbatti manufacturers to scale up Agarbatti production without any capital investment
- Support Make in India Initiative

#### Ministry

- Ministry for MSME
- Proposed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)





#### **Features**

- On Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode
- KVIC will provide Automatic Agarbatti making machines and powder mixing machines to the artisans.
- Procure only locally made machines by Indian manufacturers
- will provide 25% subsidy on the cost of the machines and will recover the remaining 75% of the cost from the artisans in easy installments every month.
- Private Player will provide the raw material to the artisans for making Agarbatti and will pay them wages on job work basis.
- Cost of artisans' training will be shared between KVIC and the private business partner.
- The wages to the artisans will be provided by the business partners on weekly basis directly in their accounts through DBT only.

#### **Current Status of Agarbatti Production in India**

Consumption: 1490 MT Per DayProduction: 760 MT per day

Huge gap between Demand and Supply

#### **About Khadi and Village Industries (KVIC)**

- Statutory body established under Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956.
- Organisation under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

#### **Functions**

- plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged.
- Provide employment in rural areas
- Provide salable articles.
- Create self-reliance amongst people and building up a strong rural community spirit.

### **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

#### **AstroSat**

- India's AstroSat telescope has detected light from a galaxy, called AUDFs01, in the extreme-ultraviolet (UV) light.
- The galaxy is 9.3 billion light years away from Earth.
- Astrosat is India's first dedicated multiwavelength space telescope. It was launched on a PSLV-XL on 28 September 2015.
- ASTROSAT observes universe in the optical, Ultraviolet, low and high energy X-ray regions of the electromagnetic spectrum, whereas most other scientific satellites are capable of observing a narrow range of wavelength band.

#### **Primary Science Objectives of AstroSat**

Understand high energy processes in binary systems
Search for black hole sources in the Galaxy
Measure magnetic fields of neutron stars
Study high energy processes in extragalactic systems
Detect new transient X-ray sources
Limited high-angular resolution deep field survey in UV

#### **SN5 Starship**

- SpaceX (a private company) successfully flew a prototype of its next-generation, deep-space rocket called SN5 Starship.
- Starship is a spacecraft and super-heavy booster rocket.
- It can act as a reusable transportation system for crew and cargo to the Earth's orbit, Moon and Mars.
- A majority of the launch cost is attributed to the expense of building a rocket which is ultimately designed to burn up during re-entry.
- A rapidly reusable space launch vehicle could reduce the cost of traveling to space by a hundredfold.





- Starship can deliver satellites further and at lower marginal costs than SpaceX's Falcon vehicles and it can ferry both cargo and crew to the International Space Station (ISS).
- Once developed, Starship is also expected to help carry large amounts of cargo to the Moon, for human spaceflight development and research.

#### Sputnik V

- Gam-COVID-Vac, trade name Sputnik V (V for vaccine) is a COVID-19 vaccine candidate.
- It was developed by Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology in Russia.
- Gam-COVID-Vac is a viral two-vector vaccine based on the human adenovirus a common cold virus fused with the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 to stimulate an immune response.

#### Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge

- Recently, the Govt. launched a 'Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge', as part of the government's vision to become a self-reliant country.
- The aim is to give impetus to the start-up ecosystem, innovation and research in the country.
- Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge- Innovate Solutions for #Aatmanirbhar Bharat seeks to invite innovators, startups and students to use these microprocessors to develop various technology products.
- This initiative is aimed
  - ✓ at meeting India's future requirements of strategic and industrial sectors
  - ✓ to mitigate the issues of security, licensing, technology obsolescence and most crucially cutting dependency on imports.
- Microprocessor is a type of miniature electronic device that contains the arithmetic, logic, and control circuitry necessary to perform the functions of a digital computer's central processing unit.
- In effect, this kind of integrated circuit can interpret and execute program instructions as well as handle arithmetic operations.

#### **Gaofen-9 Earth**

- China launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite.
- Gaofen (GF) is a series of Chinese civilian remote sensing satellites for the state-sponsored program China High-definition Earth Observation System (CHEOS).
- Gaofen-9 the new optical remote-sensing satellite will help China in land surveying, road networking, and disaster prevention.

#### **Submarine Cable Project**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the first ever undersea cable project for Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It will provide high speed broadband connections in the union territory at par with services in the mainland.
- A submarine communications cable is a cable laid on the sea bed between land-based stations to carry telecommunication signals across stretches of ocean and sea.
- Modern cables use optical fiber technology to carry digital data, which includes telephone, Internet and private data traffic.
- Fiber-optic communication is a method of transmitting information from one place to another by sending pulses of infrared light through an optical fiber.
- The light is a form of carrier wave that is modulated to carry information.
- Fiber is preferred over electrical cabling when high bandwidth, long distance, or immunity to electromagnetic interference is required.
- This type of communication can transmit voice, video, and telemetry through local area networks or across long distances.

#### Magnetic hyperthermia-mediated cancer therapy (MHCT)

- It is a non-invasive cancer treatment.
- It involves the delivery and localisation of magnetic materials within the targeted tumour site followed by subsequent application of an alternating magnetic field(AMF) thereby generating heat at the tumour site.
- It can efficiently act against deep-seated inaccessible solid tumours and is highly thermo-sensitive towards normal cells with minimal toxicity against healthy cells.
- But Scientists are always on the lookout for new materials which can make this treatment more efficient.
- Institute of Nano Science & Technology an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology (DST), has synthesised different magnetic nano-transducers like Stevioside-coated magnetite nanoparticles; Citric acid-coated Magnetic nanoclusters and Manganese and Zinc doped magnetite nano particles for successful application as magnetic hyperthermia agents for cancer therapy with minimum side-effects to the normal cells.





#### **Flavonoids**

- Indian Scientists have come up with the first synthetic route for producing flavonoids molecules related to the treatment of tuberculosis and chikungunya.
- Flavonoid molecules, like rugosaflavonoids, podocarflavone, and isoflavone inhibit tuberculosis and chikungunya. But Flavonoids have so far been isolated from plants.
- For the first time, scientists have unearthed the route to synthesize the molecules in the lab, paving the path for ensuring their availability at all seasons without overexploiting the medicinal plants that contain them.
- Flavonoids are a diverse group of phytonutrients (plant chemicals) found in almost all fruits and vegetables.
- Along with carotenoids, they are responsible for the vivid colors in fruits and vegetables.

#### Wolbachia method

- According to scientists "Wolbachia method" could be used to significantly reduce the incidence of dengue fever.
- **Wolbachia pipientis** bacteria naturally occur in 60 per cent of insect species but not in the **Aedes aegypti** mosquitoes, which are carriers of diseases like dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.
- Scientists have claimed that infecting mosquitoes with a naturally-occurring bacterium can help curb the spread of dengue by 77 per cent.
- One theory is that the bacterium prevents dengue viruses from replicating in mosquito cells.

#### **Pyrolisis**

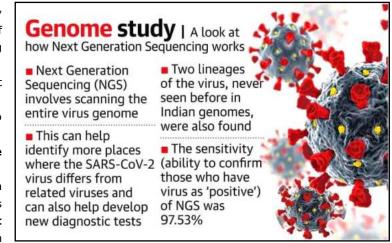
- According to a new study, plastic from used personal protective equipment (PPE) can be transformed into renewable liquid fuels using chemical a process called pyrolysis.
- The word pyrolysis is coined from the Greek words "pyro" which means fire and "lysis" which means separating.
- Pyrolysis is a process of chemically decomposing organic materials at elevated temperatures in the absence of oxygen.
- The process typically occurs at temperatures above 430 °C (800 °F) and under pressure.
- It simultaneously involves the change of physical phase and chemical composition and is an irreversible process.
- In this PPE case, Pyrolysis breaks down plastic at high temperature between 300-400°C for an hour without oxygen.

#### Raman

- Skyroot Aerospace, a Hyderabad- based startup has successfully test-fired its upper stage rocket engine named 'Raman',
   which can place multiple satellites into orbit.
- The engine Raman, named after Nobel laureate CV Raman has fewer parts and weighs lesser than a conventional rocket engine.
- It is India's first 100 per cent 3D-printed Bi-Propellant Liquid Rocket Engine injector.
- Compared to traditional manufacturing this reduced the overall mass by 50 per cent.
- The engine is capable of multiple restarts enabling them to insert various satellites into multiple orbits in a single mission.

#### Megalabs

- To speed up testing as well as improve the accuracy of testing for COVID-19 positive cases, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is working on developing "mega labs".
- In these megalabs large machines, called Next Generation Sequencing machines (NGS) will be kept.
- NGS can sequence 1,500-3,000 viral genomes at a go for detecting the SARS-CoV-2 novel coronavirus.
- It can also trace the evolutionary history of the virus and track mutations more reliably.
- Unlike the RT-PCR that needs primers and probes a
  key hurdle in operationalising such tests on a mass
  scale early on in the pandemic the NGS does not
  need primers and probes, and only needs custom
  reagents.



- NGS can substantially detect the possible presence of the virus even in several instances where the traditional RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) tests miss out on them.
- This is primarily because the RT-PCR test identifies the SARS-CoV-2 virus by exploring only specific sections of the virus whereas the genome method can read a bigger chunk of virus genome and thereby provide more certainty that the virus in question is indeed the particular coronavirus of interest.



**Note:** A primer is a short, single-stranded DNA sequence used in the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technique. In the PCR method, a pair of primers is used to hybridize with the sample DNA and define the region of the DNA that will be amplified. Primers are also referred to as oligonucleotides.

#### **Cobotics**

- The Department of Science of Technology (DST) is set to develop a technology innovation hub on Collaborative Robotics (Cobotics).
- A collaborative robot, or cobot, is a type of robot intended to physically interact with humans in a shared workspace.
- Collaborative robots are experiencing rapid market growth in this sector of the robotics industry. The primary driving force behind this growth is a consistently decreasing price.

#### Ceres

- NASA researchers have discovered that the Ceres has an ocean world. Also, Ceres has a brine reservoir that is located 40 km deep and is 100s of miles wide. This makes the dwarf planet water rich.
- Ceres is a dwarf planet found between Mars and Jupiter.
- A Dwarf planet is a celestial body resembling a small planet but lacking certain technical criteria that are required for it to be classed as such.
- These four criteria are that the body orbits around the Sun, it is not a moon, has not cleared the neighborhood around its orbit (which means it is not the dominant body in its orbit around the Sun and this is what differentiates a planet from a dwarf planet) and has enough mass for its gravity to pull it into a roughly spherical shape.
- As of 2014, the IAU recognizes five named dwarf planets: Ceres, Pluto, Eris, Haumea, and Makemake.

#### SalivaDirect

- SalivaDirect is a new method for testing people suspected of SARS-CoV-2 infection.
- While it still relies on a similar molecular process as earlier tests (called RT-qPCR), SalivaDirect is unique in many ways.
- Testing from Saliva, not NP swabs. This protects healthcare workers from potential exposure to sick patients and works around worldwide swab shortages.
- It doesn't require extracting the nucleic acid from samples before testing. Nucleic acid extraction is time-consuming and expensive.

#### OXY2

- OXY2 is a newly designed AI based device can easily monitor health parameters of an individual such as heart rate, temperature, oxygen saturation and respiration rate clinically accurate.
- The device is completely self-contained, portable, wireless, and can be clipped on to the patient's finger and data is streamed to a mobile phone (via Bluetooth) or central monitoring system(from phone to system via the internet). This is of much significance amid COVID-19.

#### **Space Bricks**

- Indian Researchers have developed a process to make bricks on the moon for habitation.
- The process involves extracting lunar soil and using bacteria and guar beans to harden it (soil) into brick-like structures for habitation on the moon in the future.
- The making of space bricks brings biology and mechanical engineering together and using them to assemble structure for habitation on the moon's surface.
- As guar gum is used instead of cement for structures, space bricks will also lower carbon footprint in the lunar atmosphere.
- With the earth's resources dwindling, scientists have intensified efforts to inhabit the moon and other planets.

#### **Space-X Crew Dragon**

- The SpaceX Dragon Capsule carrying Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken came down in the Gulf of Mexico.
- SpaceX is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company.
- SpaceX has developed several launch vehicles, the Starlink satellite constellation, the Dragon cargo spacecraft, and flown humans to the International Space Station on the Crew Dragon Demo-2.
- SpaceX's achievements include
  - ✓ the first privately funded liquid-propellant rocket to reach orbit (Falcon 1 in 2008),
  - $\checkmark$  the first private company to successfully launch, orbit, and recover a spacecraft (Dragon in 2010),
  - $\checkmark$  the first private company to send a spacecraft to the International Space Station (Dragon in 2012),
  - √ the first propulsive landing for an orbital rocket (Falcon 9 in 2015),
  - ✓ the first to reuse of an orbital rocket (Falcon 9 in 2017),





- √ the first private company to launch an object into orbit around the Sun (Falcon Heavy's payload of a Tesla Roadster in 2018),
- ✓ and the first private company to send astronauts to orbit and to the International Space Station (SpaceX Crew Dragon Demo-2 Mission in 2020).
- ✓ SpaceX has flown cargo resupply missions to the International Space Station (ISS) under a partnership with NASA, as well as an uncrewed demonstration flight of the human-rated Dragon 2 spacecraft (Crew Demo-1) on March 2, 2019 and the first crewed Dragon 2 flight on May 30, 2020.

#### **Swachh Bharat Mission Academy**

- Recently, Jal Shakti Ministery launched Swachh Bharat Mission Academy as part of campaign Gandagi Mukt Bharat.
- It is a phone-based academy will provide free of charge, access to on-demand, anytime, anywhere training course with high quality and standardized content.
- This Interactive Voice Response (IVR) based training course contains a 60 minutes module spanning various topics under ODF-S as well as SLWM.
- The Academy will significantly boost the capacity building efforts in training of Swachhagrahis as well as PRIs members, community-based organizations, NGOs, SHGs and others who are associated with phase 2 of SBM(G).

#### **Glanders**

- · Recently cases of Glanders among equine population have been reported in Delhi State.
- · Glanders is a contagious zoonotic infectious disease that occurs primarily in horses, mules, and donkeys.
- It can be contracted by other animals, such as dogs, cats, goats, and humans.
- It is caused by infection with the bacterium <u>Burkholderia mallei</u> usually by ingestion of contaminated food or water.
- Transmission occurs by direct contact with infected animal's body fluid and tissues and entry is through skin abrasions, nasal and oral mucosal surfaces, or inhalation.
- Signs of glanders include the formation of nodular lesions in the lungs and ulceration of the mucous membranes in the upper respiratory tract.
- The acute form results in coughing, fever, and the release of an infectious nasal discharge, followed by septicaemia and death within days.
- Glanders is endemic in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Central and South America.
- It has been eradicated from North America, Australia, and most of Europe through surveillance and destruction of affected animals, and import restrictions.

#### 2018 VP1

- 2018 VP1 is an Apollo near-Earth asteroid roughly 2 meters (7 feet) in diameter.
- It has a 0.41% chance (1 in 240) of impacting Earth on 2 November 2020 1:12 UT.
- Asteroids, sometimes called minor planets, are rocky, airless remnants left over from the early formation of our solar system about 4.6 billion years ago.
- Most of this ancient space rubble can be found orbiting the Sun between Mars and Jupiter within the main asteroid belt.
- Asteroids range in size from Vesta the largest at about 329 miles (530 kilometers) in diameter to bodies that are less than 33 feet (10 meters) across.

#### **Polio**

- Recently, Africa has been declared free from wild polio by the independent body, the Africa Regional Certification Commission. Nigeria is the last African country to be declared free from wild polio.
- Polio usually affects children under five, sometimes leading to irreversible paralysis. Death can occur when breathing
  muscles are affected.
- Polio is a virus which spreads from person to person, usually through contaminated water.
- WHO has declared that two of the three strains of wild poliovirus have been eradicated worldwide.
- The disease is only prevalent in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan now.
- In 2014, India was officially declared polio-free.

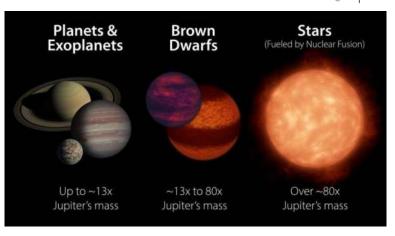
#### **Brown Dwarfs**

• A brown dwarf is a type of substellar object that has a mass between those of the heaviest gas giant planets and the least massive stars.





- Unlike the stars, brown dwarfs are not massive enough to sustain nuclear fusion of ordinary hydrogen (1H) to helium in their cores.
- Given that range of masses, the object is unable to sustain the fusion of hydrogen like a regular star; thus, many scientists have dubbed brown dwarfs as "failed stars".
- Because of their low temperatures and small sizes, brown dwarfs have extremely low luminosities.
- What we now call brown dwarfs were first proposed to exist in the 1960s by astronomer Shiv S. Kumar, who originally called these objects black dwarfs.



### **ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Barn Owls**

#### **Context**

 The Lakshadweep Administration had embarked on the 'Pilot project on Biological Control of Rodents (Rats) by Using Barn Owls (Tyto alba) in Kavaratti Island'.

#### More about news

 The Lakshadweep Administration had embarked on the 'Pilot project on Biological Control of Rodents (Rats) by Using Barn Owls (Tyto alba) in Kavaratti Island' after studies revealed the shocking extent of damage caused by rats to the island's coconut yield and economy.

#### Why the "winged assassins"?

- The islands have **no other natural predators of rodents.**
- Using chemical agents to control rats is impossible since Lakshadweep practises organic agriculture.
- Coconut trees on the islands are so closely planted that their fronds overlap, allowing rats to practically live atop the trees, which is the primary reason why the administration hit upon the idea of barn owls.



#### About the stealthy barn owl

- Habitat: Barn Owls (Tyto Alba) are one of the most widespread owls in the Indian Subcontinent. They can be found in every continent except for Antarctica.
  - o These owls prefer the open countryside and barns, but have adapted rather well to urban biodiversity.
  - They prefer palm trees to roost and are perhaps the only known owls to nest on ledges in buildings around human settlements.
  - o This, however, might not be due to lack of trees, but due to their dependence on rodents thriving near human habitation (as a result of inefficient waste disposal), thus **controlling rodent Population**.
- Nature: Barn owls are predominantly nocturnal by nature and are more often heard than seen.
- Uniqueness:
  - Owls exhibit unique stealth when they hunt at night. They have a delicate sense of hearing and their eyes are very sensitive to movement, even in low light, making them one of the most prolific hunters in the animal world.
  - They have **unique wing and feather features** that help them fly almost **soundlessly** through trees. Their sound-dampening structures help them fly inaudibly so that their prey can't hear them coming. This quality may also help owls in hearing their prey more intently.
- Prey: The Barn Owl mostly hunts small mammals, especially rodents (hence it's called the 'farmer's friend').



#### **Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens**

#### Context

Cheetahs from South Africa arrive at Mysuru zoo

#### More about News

- A male and two female African cheetahs brought under exchange programme and placed in 30-day quarantine; display for public later.
- The century-old Mysuru zoo has become the second Indian zoo to house the African cheetah, the fastest land animal, as it
  managed to get a male and two females from a cheetah conservation centre in South Africa under an animal exchange
  programme.

#### **About Sri Chamarajendra zoological gardens**

- Mysore Zoo (Now Mysuru Zoo) (officially the Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens) is located near the palace in Mysore,
   India.
- Mysore Zoo was created from the private menagerie of **Maharaja Sri Chamaraja Wodeyar** in 1892, on 10 acres of the summer palace
- It is one of the oldest and most popular zoos in India, and is home to a wide range of species (168). Mysore Zoo is one of the city's most popular attractions.
- The **Karanji Lake** is located on the eastern side of the zoo.

#### **About Cheetah**

- The cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus) is a large cat native to Africa and central Iran.
- It is the fastest land animal, capable of running at 80 to 128 km/h,
- The cheetah occurs in a variety of habitats such as **savannahs** in the Serengeti, **arid mountain ranges** in the Sahara and **hilly desert** terrain in Iran.
- The cheetah is threatened by several factors such as habitat loss, conflict with humans, poaching and high susceptibility to diseases.
- It is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.
- Re-introduction: Cheetah was declared extinct from India in 1952 and is considered the only large mammal that has gone extinct since the country's independence. If the cheetah is reintroduced, India would become probably the only country in Asia to have all the major big cats in the wild (lions, tigers and leopards included).

#### **Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Genetic Resources (MAPGRS)**

#### **Context**

 National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) under Ministry of AYUSH and ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) under Department of Agricultural Research and Education have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

#### **Purpose of this MoU**

• To conserve the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Genetic Resources (MAPGRs) at designated space of ICAR-NBPGR in long-term storage module (as per availability) in the National Gene bank and or at Regional Station for medium term storage module and acquire hands-on training on plant germplasm conservation techniques to the working group of NMPB.

#### More about news

- Both NMPB and ICAR-NBPGR are committed to serve the National interests through conservation of germplasm on long-term basis, safely and cost-effectively for present and future generations to ensure the social and economic security.
- Medicinal Plants are regarded as rich resources of traditional medicines and are being used for thousands of years in the health care system.
- The natural resources are gradually **getting depleted due to various developmental activities in its habitat.** There is a need to conserve these natural resources and make sustainable utilization of them.
- The purpose of conservation is to make sustainable development by protecting and using natural resources in ways that do not diminish the variety of genes and species or destroy important habitats and ecosystems.

#### **World Solar Technology Summit: ISA**

#### **Context**

• The Indian Solar Alliance which India initiated with France in 2015 will hold the World Solar Technology Summit for the first time on September 8.





#### **About**

- International Solar Alliance (ISA) is preparing a detailed project report (DPR) on the creation of World Solar Bank with authorized capital of USD 15 billion to fund projects.
- The DPR for the World Solar Bank is likely to be placed at annual ISA Assembly in October this year.
- This assumes significance in view of India'sambitious target of having 100GW of solar energy by 2022. India's
  installed solar power generation capacity stood at over 35 GW by July this year, according to the Central Electricity Authority
  data.

#### **ISA**

- ♣ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an alliance of 121 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- The primary objective of the alliance is to work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- # The alliance is also called International Agency for Solar Policy and Application (IASPA).
- 4 This initiative was first proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The alliance is a treaty-based inter-governmental organization. Countries that do not fall within the Tropics can join the alliance and enjoy all benefits as other members, with the exception of voting rights. After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states world-wide.
- It is headquartered in India.

#### **Dhole**

#### **Context**

 Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh rank high in the conservation of the endangered dhole in India, according to a new study.

#### **About**

- Scientists from the Wildlife Conservation Society-India, the University of Florida, the Wildlife Conservation Trust, and the
  National Centre for Biological Sciences found that these three States were adequately equipped to maintain their high ranks
  in consolidating forest habitats and recover dhole populations by increasing prey density and reducing the
  pressure on forests.
- On the other hand, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana and Goa will need to increase financial
  investments in the forest and wildlife sectors, and reduce the ease of granting forest clearances for
  infrastructure projects.

#### **Improving habitats**

• It also found that improving habitat conditions and prey densities in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh,
Telangana and Odisha would "strengthen the link" between dhole populations in the Western Ghats and central India.

#### **Important role**

- "Dholes play an important role as apex predators in forest ecosystems. Besides the tiger, the dhole is the only large carnivore in India that is under the International Union for Conservation of Nature's 'endangered' category.
- As a country that perhaps supports the highest number of dholes in the world, we still do not have targeted management plans for scientific monitoring of the species.

#### **About Dhole**

- The dhole is a canidnative to Central, South, East Asia, and Southeast Asia.
- Other English names for the species include Asian wild dog, Asiatic wild dog, Indian wild dog, whistling dog, red dog, and mountain wolf.
- It is a highly social animal, living in large clans without rigid dominance hierarchies and containing multiple breeding females
- In tropical forests, the dhole competes with tiger and leopard, targeting somewhat different prey species, but still with substantial dietary overlap.
- It is **listed as Endangered** by the IUCN as populations are decreasing and are estimated at fewer than 2,500 adults.
- Factors contributing to this decline include habitat loss, loss of prey, competition with other species, persecution due to livestock predation and disease transfer from domestic dogs.





#### **Ganga Rejuvenation Monitoring**

#### **Context**

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed Chief Secretaries Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West **Bengal** to periodically monitor the of the rejuvenation Ganga, while observing that it was a "pity" that pollutants were still being discharged into the river despite several directions of various courts.

# Stored flood flow for duiliting waste in flow Radial gate fully opened during floods Radial gate partially opened to facilitate continious flow during non-rainy season Ganga max flood level Ganga stored flood water

FREE FLOW

60 km-100 km

GANGA REJUVENATION

#### **About**

- A holistic approach for rejuvenation of the river was required.
- It is a pity that even after constant monitoring by the Supreme Court for 34

Flow is continuous as there is no body wall obstruction at barrages

3-5 M DEPTH GANGA

Purity is achieved through dilution by releasing stored water upstream of each barrage to downstream one.

Stength of the barrage will be more than the width of the river to compensate for pier obstruction

years and by National Green Tribunal for six years, 46 years after enactment of the Water Act – making discharge of pollutants in water bodies a criminal offence – pollutants continue to be discharged in the most holy river.

- "Pollution-free environment is the constitutional right of every citizen and constitutional obligation of States. States are certainly failing in discharging their constitutional obligation.
- This unsatisfactory state of affairs calls for **rigorous planning action at the highest level monitoring for meaning enforcement of the rule of law** for protection of environment and public health and also rejuvenation of Ganga River.
- Earlier, the green panel had constituted a **Central Monitoring Committee** to prepare and enforce a national plan to make over 350 river stretches in the country pollution-free.

#### **About NGT**

- The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 is an **Act of the Parliament of India which enables creation of a special** tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.
- It draws inspiration from the India's constitutional provision of (Constitution of India/Part III) Article 21

  Protection of life and personal liberty, which assures the citizens of India the right to a healthy environment. Powers
- **Power:** The NGT has the power to hear **all civil cases** relating to environmental issues and questions that are linked to the implementation of laws listed in Schedule I of the NGT Act. These include the following:
  - o The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;
  - The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977;
  - The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;
  - The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
  - The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;
  - The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991;
  - o The Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- Importantly, the NGT has not been vested with powers to hear any matter relating to the Wildlife (Protection) Act,
   1972, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and various laws enacted by States relating to forests, tree preservation etc.
   Therefore, specific and substantial issues related to these laws cannot be raised before the NGT.
- Principles of Justice adopted by NGT: The NGT is not bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil
  Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice. Further, NGT is also not bound by the rules of
  evidence as enshrined in the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.
- The Chairperson of the NGT is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, Head Quartered in Delhi. Other Judicial members are retired Judges of High Courts. Each bench of the NGT will comprise of at least one Judicial Member and one Expert Member.



#### **Landslide near Eravikulam National Park**

#### **Context**

 At least 18 persons were killed and 52 others are missing after a series of landslips at the Nayamakkad tea estate at Pettimudy, near Rajamala in Idukki district

#### **About Eravikulam National Park**

- This national park located along the Western Ghats in the Idukki district of Kerala in India. It is the first national park
  in Kerala.
- It is home and sanctuary of the Nilgiri Tahr
- It also house the special Neelakurinji flowers that bloom once every 12 years.

#### **Agatti Island of Lakshadweep**

#### **Context**

• The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal has granted an interim stay on felling of coconut trees on Agatti Island in Lakshadweep for the purpose of forming a beach road.

#### **About**

- The Tribunal has constituted a committee to find out whether there has been any **violation of the Integrated Island Management Plan (IIMP)** approved by the Lakshadweep Administration.
  - The IIMP for Lakshadweep was formulated on the basis of a report submitted by the Supreme Court-appointed Expert Committee, headed by Justice **R.V. Raveendran**, former judge of the SC.
- Due to the large scale cutting of the coconut trees, <u>local residents were not only affected by losing income but also face</u> environmental disaster as the trees on the coastline act as a green belt to protect the rest of the island during cyclones and other natural calamities.

#### **About Agatti Island**

- It is situated on a coral atoll called Agatti atoll in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, India.
- One of the most popular islands of Lakshadweep, Agatti Island is a 6 km long land terrain blessed with aquatic diversity.
- · With coral growths, multi coloured fishes and sea turtles, this island is a hub for marine life.
- Home to the archipelago's only airstrip, Agatti Island connects Lakshadweep to the rest of India (direct flights only to Kochi).
- Fishing is the primary occupation of the island's residents and there's a variety of seafood on offer.

#### Seed Bombs: Solution to Man-Animal Conflict

#### **Context**

 Encouraged by germination and subsequent growth in bamboo plantations, Odisha's Athagarh Forest Division has begun casting seed balls inside different reserve forest areas to enrich food stock for wild elephants.

#### **About**

- The growth in bamboo plantation is expected to meet the needs of the elephants, which often stray out of the forests and raid human habitations.
- Villagers who bear the brunt of the elephant attacks have come forward to prepare the bamboo seed balls and scatter them in 38 reserve forests.
- "Bamboo shoots are relished by elephants. It will help to meet the food requirement of wild elephants in their own habitats.
- Athagarh Forest Division is one of the worst-hit areas as far as man-elephant conflict is concerned.





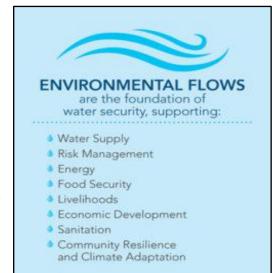
#### E-Flow

#### Context

 The Uttar Pradesh government has told the Centre that it has planned to fix the minimum environment flow for the polluted stretches of at least six rivers.

#### **About**

- E-flow is the minimum limit of flow required to maintain a river in the desired environmental state.
- The state government has planned to regulate the E-flow for polluted stretches of Saryu, Hindon, Ramganga, Betwa, Ghaghara and Rapti rivers.
- So far, Ganga is the only river in the country for which E-flow has been fixed by the Centre. In October 2018, Ministry of Jal Shakti — had issued a notification, fixing the E-flow for Ganga.
- The state has reported the status of 12 rivers Hindon, Kali (East), Varuna, Yamuna, Gomti, Ganga, Ramganga, Betwa, Ghaghara, Rapti, Sai and Saryu.



#### Wind Energy

#### Context

• Union Power Minister dedicated Sembcorp's state of the art SECI 1, 2 and 3 wind projects to the nation.

#### **About**

- Sembcorp Energy India Limited (SEIL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sembcorp Industries, announced completion of its latest 800 MW wind power projects, bringing its India renewable energy capacity to 1,730 MW.
- With the full commissioning of its 300MW SECI 3 wind project, Sembcorp becomes the first independent power producer to fully commission its projects awarded in the first three wind auctions held by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
  - Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. is a company of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government
    of India, established to facilitate the implementation of the National Solar Mission.
  - It is the only Central Public Sector Undertaking dedicated to the solar energy sector.

#### Wind energy of India:

- India targeted to achieve 60 GW of power from wind by 2022.
- In 2017, "A year of transition" for India's wind energy market with industry moving from tax-credit driven investment to the bidding process by mainstream Independent Power Producers (IPPs).
- In December 2017, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and India's Yes Bank has jointly initiated financing of \$400 million for Solar and Wind Energy projects in India.
- India has the 4th largest installed capacity in wind power after China, U.S and Germany. A recent study by National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) has shown wind energy potential of 302 GW at 100 m hub-height in India.

#### **State Focus**

- Wind Energy has spread across the South, West and North regions of India.
- The potential of wind energy is concentrated in the states of –
   Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh,
   Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- Tamil Nadu has the highest installed capacity in the country with around 7.5 GW and its state regulations are very much favourable to wind power development.
- Maharashtra has the 2nd highest installed capacity of about 5 GW followed by Gujarat with 3rd highest installed
  capacity of around 4 GW in the country.





#### **Supply Chain**

- The main thrust areas include:
  - Improving design and engineering aspects
  - Promoting performance monitoring systems and asset management services,
  - Conducting both macro- and micro level feasibility studies and
  - o Focused research and development.

#### **Matheran**

#### Context

• After a long gap of 125 years, scientists have found 140 rare species of butterflies, including 77 new ones, in Matheran. The last time butterflies were codified in this eco-sensitive zone was in 1894, when a researcher identified 78 species.

#### **About**

- <u>'Finding the forgotten gems: Revisiting the butterflies of Matheran after 125 years'</u>, a research paper by scientists from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and Somaiya Vidya Vihar University published in the Biodiversity Data Journal, provides a glimpse of the rare butterflies in the hill station.
- The maximum diversity (125) of butterflies was recorded during winter, while the least (80) during monsoon. A high similarity of butterfly species composition was observed between the pairs of sites studied, tending towards perfect nestedness.
- It is the **first dedicated checklist for the butterflies of Matheran** after J.A. Betham (1894). Scientists find 77 new butterfly species in Matheran.

#### **Matheran**

- It is a hill station and a municipal council in Karjat Tahsil in the Raigad district in the Indian state of Maharashtra.
- It is located **on the Western Ghats range** at an elevation of around 800 m above sea level.
- Matheran, which means "forest on the forehead" (of the mountains) is an eco-sensitive region, declared by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.
- It is Asia's only automobile-free hill station

#### **Butterflies**

• They are not just beautiful creatures but also indicators of a healthy environment and ecosystem.

#### **Harit Path**

#### **Context**

• The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), a <u>public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</u>, has developed a mobile App called 'Harit Path' to monitor location, growth, species details, maintenance activities, targets and achievements of each of its field units for each and every plant under all plantation projects.

#### About

- According to an NHAI release, to commemorate 25 years of its service to the nation, it has recently undertaken 'Harit
  Bharat Sankalp', a nation-wide plantation drive, which is in line with its commitment to promote environment
  protection and sustainability.
- Under this initiative, NHAI planted over 25 lakh plants in 25 days along the stretches of the National Highways between 21st July to 15th August 2020.
- The nation-wide plantation drive has been actively taken up by NHAI's regional offices to achieve the collective target of making greener national highways.
- Maximum number of over 5.0 lakh plants have been planted in Uttar Pradesh, followed by over 3.0 lakh in Rajasthan and 2.67 Lakh in Madhya Pradesh along the national highways.
- In order to ensure 100% survival of the plants, avenue plantation of minimum height of 1.5-meter have been emphasized along the national highway.
- In order to track the growth and health of the plants, photographs along with data of the plants captured using Harit Path shall be uploaded every 3 months on NHAI's AI powered Big Data Analytics platform Data Lake.
- Highway contractors shall be accountable for proper upkeep and maintenance of the plantation and liable to replace the missing/dead plants. Performance and growth of the plants shall be linked to the payment to the contractors for this work.
- After launch of the app, NHAI has immediately started work to create user ids of over 150 ROs/ PDs/ Horticulture experts. Apart from this, around **7800 plants have also been geo-tagged.**





- NHAI plans to undertake a sustained plantation drive. The vision is to plant 72 Lakh plants along NH stretches collectively
  with concessionaire, State Government agencies and private plantation agencies.
- NHAI has identified the NH stretches and is creating a **data base of all the plantations** already done and to be done on these stretches. The launch of 'Harit Path', mobile app will further facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.

#### Thumbimahotsavam 2020

#### **Context**

• World Wide Fund (WWF)-India State unit has joined hands with the Society for Odonate Studies (SOS) and Thumbipuranam for the first-ever State Dragonfly Festival in Kerala, christened Thumbimahotsavam 2020.

#### **About**

- This is part of a national dragonfly festival being organised by the WWF India, Bombay Natural History Society & Indian Dragonfly Society in association with the National Biodiversity Board, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme and IUCN Centre for Environment Conservation.
  - o A dragonfly is an **insect** belonging to the order Odonata.
  - o Dragonflies are predators, both in their aquatic larval stage, when they are known as nymphs or naiads, and as adults.
- 'Pantalu' is the official mascot of the festival.
- As part of the festival, various programmes will be rolled out in the coming months to reach out to various sections of society.

#### **WWF**

- The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1961 that works in the field of wilderness preservation and the reduction of human impact on the environment.
- WWF aims to "stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.
- The Living Planet Report has been published every two years by WWF since 1998; it is based on a Living Planet Index and ecological footprint calculation.
- In addition, WWF has launched several notable worldwide campaigns, including **Earth Hour and Debt-for-Nature Swap**, and its current work is organized around these six areas: food, climate, freshwater, wildlife, forests, and oceans

#### **Bombay Natural History Society**

• It is one of the largest non-governmental organisations in India engaged in conservation and biodiversity research.

#### **National Biodiversity Authority**

• It is a **statutory autonomous body** under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and climate change, Government of India established in 2003 **to implement the provisions under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, after India signed Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992.** 

### **SECURITY**

#### Chhavni Covid: Yodha Sanrakshan Yojana

#### **Context**

Rajnath Singh Launches Life Insurance Scheme for Over 10,000 Cantonment Employees.

#### **About**

- It is a group life insurance scheme through Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), which will cover more than 10,000 employees in all 62 Cantonment Boards in event of any unfortunate fatal calamity with an insurance cover of Rs five lakhs each.
- The Scheme will benefit permanent and contractual employees including doctors, paramedics and sanitation staff.

#### **Bureau of Police Research and Development**

#### **Context**

• The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) celebrated its Golden Jubilee Anniversary on 28th August, 2020.





#### **About BPRD**

- The Bureau of Police Research and Development was raised on 28th August, 1970, through a resolution of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, with a mandate **to promote excellence in policing, promote speedy and systematic study of police problems**, and apply science and technology in the method and techniques by the Police.
- In 1973, the Training Division was added, on the recommendation of the Gore Committee on Police training.
- The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), was set up in furtherance of the objective of the Government of
  India for the modernization of police forces. It has evolved as a multifaceted, consultancy organization. At present it has
  4 divisions Research, Development, Training and Correctional Administration

#### V. Ramagopal Rao Committee

#### Context

• The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) sets up 5-member committee to overhaul its labs to meet future defence needs.

#### **About**

- The committee has been aimed at streamlining DRDO labs and bringing about a change in how it works.
- This is the second attempt being made in recent years to overhaul the DRDO, which has often been criticized for its slow pace of work.
- In 2008, a committee was formed under **P. Rama Rao**, former secretary, Department of Science and Technology. The committee had then recommended **far-reaching changes**, **which involved the DRDO focusing on core technology** areas rather than non-core areas like making mosquito repellent and even juices.
- Based on the recommendations, the DRDO's management was made leaner and its 52 labs were brought to form seven clusters like electronic warfare, armaments, aeronautical systems and life science, among others.

#### Mission Based Deployments (MBD)

#### **Context**

• Full confidence in Navy's preparedness: Defense Minister Rajnath Singh

#### **About**

Due to high operational alert due to ongoing tensions along the border with China, the Indian Navy has simultaneously
carried out Mission Based Deployment (MBD) to protect maritime interests by deploying naval ships and aircraft
at major and sensitive locations.

#### **Mission Based Deployment**

- The Mission Based Deployments concept, introduced in June 2017, transformed the operational philosophy to deploying mission-ready ships and aircraft along critical sea-lanes of communications and choke points.
- These deployed ships are always ready to meet any eventuality across the spectrum of operations ranging from acts of maritime terrorism and piracy to Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR).
- The Mission Based Deployments enabled Indian Naval units to be the first responder in crisis-situations and showcased Indian Navy as the main instrument in India becoming a Net Security Provider in the Indian Ocean Region.
- As per the vision of **SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)**, since the commencement of MBD in June 2017, these deployments have facilitated enhanced Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), provided swift Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) to the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) littorals and security to the international maritime community.

#### **Need or Significance of MBD**

- In the recent years, the Indian Ocean Region has gained significance due to the presence of key global maritime trade routes and the Chinese maritime vessels undertake patrols in the region, including under the pretext of anti-piracy missions.
- And after the Galwan Valley clash on June 15, the Navy has increased its maritime exercises, even as the Chinese enhanced their presence in the Indian Ocean.

#### **Srijan Portal**

#### **Context**

• Ministry of Defense (MoD) launched Department of Defence Production, MoD's portal SRIJAN, which is a 'one stop shop online portal that provides access to the vendors to take up items that can be taken up for indigenization.





#### **About SRIJAN**

- It will help industry partners to play active role in the goal of self-reliance in defence sector.
- Department of Defence Production, MoD has developed this indigenization portal, srijandefence.gov.in, as an
  "opportunities for Make in India in Defence", which will give information on items that can be taken up for
  indigenization by the private sector.
- On this portal, DPSUs/ Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)/Service Headquarters (SHQs) can display their items which they have been importing or are going to import which the Indian Industry can design, develop and manufacture as per their capability or through joint venture with OEMs.
- The Indian Industry will be able to show their interest. The concerned DPSUs/OFB/SHQs, based on their requirement of the items and their guidelines & procedures will interact with the Indian industry for indigenization.
- The portal displays information in a structured way, which includes the item name, image and specification, values of imports, NATO Classification (indicative), etc. It also has a search facility.
- In the first stage, DPSUs/OFB/SHQs have displayed those items, which they have imported in 2019-20 and going to import in 2020-21, for the annual value of the items as Rs 1 million and above.

#### **National Cadet Corps (NCC)**

#### **Context**

NCC all set for a major expansion to cover 173 border and coastal districts.

#### More about news

- Defence Minister has approved a proposal of the National Cadet Corps for a major expansion scheme to meet the aspirations of youth in all the border and coastal districts.
- The proposals of the scheme were announced by the Prime Minister in his Independence Day address on 15 Aug.
- A total of one-lakh cadets from 173 border and coastal districts will be inducted in the NCC. One-third of the Cadets would
  be girl Cadets. More than 1000 schools and colleges have been identified in border and coastal districts where NCC will be
  introduced.
- As part of the expansion plan, a total of 83 NCC units will be upgraded (Army 53, Navy 20, Air Force 10), to impart NCC training to the cadets in the border and coastal areas.
- Army will provide training and administrative support to the NCC units located in the border areas, Navy shall provide support to NCC units in the coastal areas and similarly Air Force will provide support to the NCC units located close to the Air Force stations.
- This will not only provide exposure to the youth of the border and coastal areas to military training and disciplined way of life but will also motivate them to join the armed forces.
- The NCC expansion plan will be implemented in partnership with the States.

#### **About NCC**

- The National Cadet Corps is the youth wing of Armed Forces with its Headquarters at New Delhi, Delhi, India.
- It is open to school and college students on voluntary basis.
- National Cadet Corps is a Tri-Services Organisation, comprising the Army, Navy and Air Wing, engaged in grooming the youth of the country into disciplined and patriotic citizens.
- The National Cadet Corps in India is a voluntary organization, which recruits cadets from high schools, higher secondary, colleges and universities all over India. The Cadets are given basic military training in small arms and parades. The officers and cadets have **no liability for active military service once they complete their course.**

#### Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)

#### Context

Defence Minister launched the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) through an online webinar.

#### **About NIIO**

- The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards **fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence** in keeping with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The NIIO is a three-tiered organisation.
- Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC) will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation
  and provide apex level directives. A working group under the N-TAC will implement the projects. A Technology Development
  Acceleration Cell (TDAC) has also been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.
- The **Draft Defence Acquisition Policy 2020 (DAP 20)** envisages Service Headquarters establishing an Innovation & Indigenisation Organisation within existing resources.





• A compendium of Indian Navy's Indigenisation perspective plans titled **'SWAVLAMBAN'** was also released on the occasion.

#### Sarthak

#### **Context**

 An Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard was launched and re-christened as Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sarthak'.

#### **About SARTHAK**

- OPV Sarthak is the 4<sup>th</sup> in the series of five OPVs.
- It has been designed & built indigenously by M/s Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) in line with the Prime Minister vision of 'Make
  in India'.
- The Ship is fitted with state-of-the-art Navigation and Communication equipment, sensor and machinery. The 105 Metre ship displaces approximately 2350 tons and is propelled by two 9100 KW diesel engines designed to attain a maximum speed of 26 knots, with an endurance of 6000 Nautical Miles.
- The sustenance and reach, coupled with the latest equipment and system, provides her the capability to perform the role of a command platform and undertake tasks to fulfill the Coast Guard charter.
- The ship is designed to embark and carry a twin-engine helicopter, four high speed boats and one inflatable boat for swift boarding and Search & Rescue operations.
- The ship is also capable of carrying limited pollution response equipment to undertake oil spill pollution response at sea.
- It will give boost to presence of Indian Coast Guard unit at sea serves dual objectives of "Deterrence" and "Reassurance".
- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has been a pioneer in inducting indigenous assets, which has enabled it to remain operationally available throughout the year.
- The ship has about 70% indigenous content, thus providing the necessary fillip to the Indian shipbuilding industry and a giant leap towards achieving 'Atmanirbar Bharat'.
- The ship will be deployed extensively for EEZ surveillance, Coastal Security and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard charter of duties, to safeguard the maritime interests of the Nation.

#### **About ICG**

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is an Armed **Force, Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement agency** that protects India's maritime interests and enforces its maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone.
- The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence.
- The Coast Guard works in close cooperation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces.
- The deterrence created by the Indian Coast Guard is not limited to the Indian waters, but collaboration with friendly littoral states as per provisions of bilateral cooperation agreements resulted in successful apprehension and seizure of drugs in Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The real time information sharing, close coordination and understanding between ICG and other International agencies has been the key success of these operations.
- Indian Coast Guard remains committed to ensure 'Safe, Secure and Clean seas' around the Indian subcontinent.

#### **Basic Trainer Aircraft (HTT-40)**

#### Context

 Defence Ministry clears purchase of indigenous basic trainer aircraft.

#### **About HTT-40**

- HTT-40 (Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40) is a new basic training aircraft being developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The new aircraft will replace the ageing fleet of HAL HPT-32 Deepak trainers that are in service with the IAF.
- The aircraft will be primarily used for basic flight training, aerobatics, instrument flying and





#### close-formation flights, whereas its secondary roles will include navigation and night-flying.

• The HTT-40 trainer made its first flight in May 2016.

#### Poseidon-8i Aircraft

#### **Context**

Four sub-killer P-8I craft coming to India next year, then talks for six more.

#### **About**

• India's long-range anti-submarine, reconnaissance, surveillance and electronic jamming capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region are going to get a further boost with the induction of four more P-8I multi-mission aircraft from the US next year. India has the option of buying another six from Boeing to be negotiated later in 2021.

#### P-8A Poseidon - P-8I

- The Indian Navy variant of the P-8A Poseidon P-8I where I stands for India is essentially designed for **maritime patrol**. Integrated with the Harpoon Block II air launched missiles and lightweight torpedoes, the reconnaissance craft it can carry 129 sonobuoys to locate subs turns into a deadly submarine killer that can also launch anti-ship missiles.
- The P-8I aircraft is designed for long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.
- It has a range of about 2,200 km and flies at a maximum speed of 490 knots, or 789 km per hour.

#### Strategic importance

- The proposed acquisitions come against the backdrop of **China's efforts to militarise the South China Sea and expand** its sea footprint.
- The military had relied on the reconnaissance aircraft for surveillance during the ongoing Ladakh standoff with China as well as the 2017 Doklam standoff.
- Beijing had already acquired a string of ports in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Iran and east Africa to not only contain the
   Indian Navy but also challenge the presence of US Central Command forces as well as French and British Navy.

#### **Hammer Missiles**

#### **Context**

India to Equip Rafale Jets with HAMMER Missiles under Emergency Order

#### **About**

- Rafale fighter jets that joined the Indian Air Force recently can integrate a variety of armaments and have been cleared to operate many weapons such as Hammer, Meteor and Mica missiles.
- The order for HAMMER missiles, which can destroy targets 60-70 km away, is reportedly being processed under emergency acquisition powers given to the Indian military by the Indian government.
- The METEOR missile combined with the Rafale weapon system is a paradigm shift in air-to-air affairs.
- The Rafale fighter jets can integrate a variety of armaments and have been cleared to operate many weapons.

#### **HAMMER**

- The HAMMER (Highly Agile and Manoeuvrable Munition Extended Range) modular, rocket-boosted **air-to-ground precision-guided weapon series** are fitted with INS/GPS or INS/GPS/IIR (imaging infra-red) guidance kits, or with the upcoming INS/GPS/laser guidance.
- The Indian Air Force has already ordered HAMMER missiles from France to make Rafale jets more lethal.
- The HAMMERs would give India the capability to take out any bunkers or hardened shelters in any type of terrain including the mountainous locations such as Eastern Ladakh

#### **METEOR**

• The METEOR **very long-range rocket and ram-jet powered air-to-air EM** (active radar homing) missile combined with the Rafale weapon system is a paradigm shift in air-to-air affairs.

#### MTCA

• The MICA air-to-air "Beyond Visual Range" (BVR) interception, combat and self-defence missiles can be used within visual range and beyond visual range in their (heat-seeking) and EM (active radar homing).





#### SCALP

· These are long-range stand-off missiles.

#### **AM39 EXOCET**

· These are anti-ship missiles.

#### **Project Cheetah**

#### **Context**

• Amid border tensions with China, Indian Armed Forces have decided to revive 'Project Cheetah' after being pending for a long time. The estimated cost of the project is over 3,500 crores.

#### **About the Project Cheetah**

- Project Cheetah is to upgrade the drones to carry out offensive operations against the enemy.
- Under this project, 90 Heron drones of the three services would be upgraded to be armed with laser-guided bombs, air
  to ground and air-launched anti-tank guided missiles.

#### How will the project benefit the IAF?

• The newly equipped drones will help the Indian Air Force (IAF) in keeping an eye on enemy locations from far distances and will also help them in controlling them through the satellite communication system.

#### Who will head the Committee?

 The proposal of reviving the project has been sent to the newly formed high-level defence ministry committee and will be headed by Ajay Kumar.

#### Why the revival of Project Cheetah has been proposed?

• The decision to revive Project Cheetah comes at a time when the country is facing border tensions with China. Recently, a stand-off between India and China took place along the Actual Line of Control in eastern Ladakh.

#### **Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicle**

- The **Made in Israel, Heron Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is a medium-altitude UAV** and can carry up to 250 kg of weight including thermographic camera, airborne ground surveillance visible light, radar systems, etc.
- The Heron UAV is capable of returning to base autonomously in case of lost communication.
- Both the Indian Air Forces and the Indian Army use Israeli equipment including Herons. The Herons UAVs are currently
  deployed in Ladakh and China borders to keep an eye on the disengagement by Chinese troops and their build-up along the
  Actual Line of Control in the future.





- 1. Consider the following statements with regard to the Biodiversity act 2002:
- It mandates preparation of People biodiversity registers at the local body.
- Headquarter of National biodiversity authority is located in Delhi.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 2. Consider the following statements with regard to the Clean Growth Equity Fund:
- It is managed by the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund of India (NIIF).
- 2. India and the USA are partners in this fund.
- It channelises private investment into renewable energy.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 & 3 only

b) 2 & 3 only

c) 1 & 2 only d) 1, 2

d) 1, 2 & 3 only

- 3. Consider the following statements with regard to the Advisory Board for Banking Frauds:
- It has been established by RBI.
- 2. It Covers only public sector banks.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 4. Consider the following statements with regard to the Implications of negative rate policy:
- 1. Banks charge you interest to keep cash with them.
- It is seen during deflationary periods.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 5. Consider the following statements with regard to the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2019:
- No Industry is exempted from requiring authorization under the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016.
- 2. Solid plastic waste has been prohibited from import into the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following statements with regard to the National Biofuel Policy 2018:
- 1. Wheat, broken rice, and sugarcane juice is allowed as raw material for biofuel production.
- It allows use of surplus food grains for production of ethanol.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 7. Consider the following statements with regard to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank:
- India has been the highest recipient of the loans from AIIB.
- Membership of the banks is limited to Asian countries..

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

- 8. Consider the following statements with regard to the AIM-iCREST:
- 1. It has been launched by Jal jeevan Mission.
- 2. It will upscale the incubators set up under Atal Innovation Mission.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

- 9. Consider the following statements with regard to the International Finance Corporation (IFC):
- 1. It exclusively invests directly in the private sector.
- Lending of the private sector is undertaken without the government guarantee.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

- 10. Consider the following statements with regard to the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS):
- Funds are directly allocated to the states for intervention under it.
- 2. Procurement is undertaken by NAFED.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

- Consider the following statements with regard to the Generalised System of Preference (GSP):
- It is a trade program under WTO to give preferential duty-free entry inside a developed country.
- 2. GSP and Most Favored Nation are the same concept of development.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following statements with regard to the National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA):
- 1. It is a body constituted under executive resolution.
- 2. The main function of NAA is to ensure that traders do not realize unfair profit by charging high prices from consumers in the name of GST.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

- 13. Consider the following statements with regard to the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme:
- It covers MSME, self -employed person people and professionals who have taken loans for business purposes and large firms.
- 2. It provides fully guaranteed additional funding of up to  $\Box 3$  lakh crore.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

14. Consider the following statements with regard to the Dhole:



- Besides the tiger, the dhole is the only large carnivore in India that is under the International Union for Conservation of Nature's 'endangered' category.
- 2. Last few numbers of dhole are only present in India. Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 15. Consider the following statements with regard to the Agarbatti Production in India:

- Production of Agarbatti in India is lesser than the demand.
- Agarbatti is placed under free trade item for global trade.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 16. Consider the following statements with regard to the Procedure of renaming the state:

- The procedure of renaming of the state can be initiated by either the Parliament or the State Legislator.
- A bill for renaming a state may be introduced in the Parliament on the recommendation of the President.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 17. Consider the following statements with regard to delegation of functions:

- 1. The President may, with the consent of the state government, entrust to that government any of the executive functions of the Centre. .
- 2. Parliament can entrust the executive functions of the Centre to a state without the consent of that state.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 18. Consider the following statements with regard to Speaker of LokSabha:

- Speaker holds office even after the dissolution of the LokSabha.
- Speaker decides the forms in which amendments may be moved to the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 19. Consider the following statements with regard to Ist Law Commission:

- It was established under the Chairmanship of Lord Macaulay in 1834. .
- Indian Penal code (IPC) was drafted on the recommendation of first law commission.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 20. Consider the following statements with regard to the 69th constitutional amendment:

 It provided for a legislative assembly and council of ministers for the National Capital Territory of Delhi.  In respect of Public Order, Police & Land – Lieutenant Governor would not need aid and advice from the Council of Ministers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 21. Which of the following craters are present on the Mars:

- 1. Gale Crater
- 2. Jerezo Crater
- Crater Mitra

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 & 2 only b) 2 & 3 only c) 1 & 3 only d) 1, 2 & 3 only

### 22. Consider the following statements with regard to the Coal Production in India:

- 1. India is the largest producer of coal in the world.
- Coal import in India has steadily declined in the last 5 years.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 23. Consider the following statements with regard to the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN):

- It digitizes vaccine stocks and monitors the temperature of the cold chain.
- It is being implemented by The Vaccine alliance and government of India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 24. Consider the following statements with regard to the India Cooling Action Plan:

- 1. India is the second country after European Union to develop such a plan.
- It has recognized "cooling and related areas" as a thrust area of research under the national S&T Programme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 25. Consider the following statements with regard to the Blue poppy (Meconopis acculette):

- 1. It is considered the Queen of Himalayan Flowers.
- 2. It is found from Kanyakumari to Kashmir at elevations of 3,000 to 5,000 meters.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 26. Consider the following statements with regard to the Indian Star Tortoise:

- 1. It is categorised as endangered by IUCN.
- Recently, they have been upgraded to Appendix I of CITES.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 27. Consider the following statements with regard to the Tso Moriri:



- It is a pearl shaped 'mountain lake' that lies on the Ladakhi part of the Changthang plateau.
- $2. \qquad \hbox{Nomadic Community Lepchas inhabit this mountain} \ .$

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 28. Arrange these plain of Jammu and Kashmir from West to East:

- 1. Deosai Plains
- 2. Depsang Plains
- 3. Soda Plains

Choose the Correct answer:

a) 2-1-3 b) 1-2-3

c) 3-2-1 d) 3-1-2

### 29. With regard to Khelo India Youth Games, consider the following statements:

- Government will set up 20 universities as hubs for sports.
- Funding in it qualifies as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

b) 2 only

### 30. With regard to Union Public Service Commission, consider the following statements:

- All the members of UPSC including chairman are appointed by the President.
- 2. Tenure of the UPSC member is 5 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 31. Consider the following statements with regard to the Institute of Eminence:

- All Higher institutions can apply for the Institute of Eminence tag.
- There has been no approval for any greenfield project so far.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 32. Consider the following statements with regard to the Samgra Shiksha:

- The Program covers schooling from Pre Primary to 12th class.
- It has subsumed the three Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE)..

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 33. Consider the following statements with regard to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act:

- The Ministry of Home Affairs oversees the implementation of this act.
- The Act provides for the establishment of Special Courts for trial of offences under the Act.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 34. Consider the following statements with regard to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:

- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is given the status of a statutory body under this act.
- The National Commission for Human rights oversees monitoring of the act.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 35. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana:

- The pattern of funding is 100 percent Central Government Grant.
- The eligibility of a state for the RKVY is contingent upon the state maintaining or increasing the State Plan expenditure for Agricultural and Allied sectors.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 36. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Tsunami Ready:

- The Program has been initiated by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- It is a community performance-based programme to enhance preparedness of the coastal communities.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 37. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India:

- 1. It is a constitutional body.
- 2. It frames rules for Individual and corporate liquidation.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 38. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the India-WRIS:

- It is managed by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.
- 2. It was launched in 2019.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 39. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC):

- 1. Members are not eligible for re-appointment.
- 2. Tenure of the member is five years.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 40. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the fundamental right:

- There have only been additions in the scope of these rights.
- 2. They are not qualified but absolute.



Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 41. Which of the following aspects of the 'Rule of Law', is applicable to the Indian System?

- 1. Supremacy of the law
- 2. Equality before the law
- 3. The Constitution is the product of the ordinary judgements of court.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

a) 1 & 3 only b) 2 & 3 only c) 1 & 2 only d) 1, 2 & 3 only

#### 42. Consider the following statements.

- Article 16 prohibits discrimination by state against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth or residence.
- Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen for any employment or office under the State on grounds of only religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 43. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India:

- The salary, service conditions, leaves of absence, pension and age of retirement are determined by the Parliament of India.
- 2. CAG is eligible for reappointment.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 44. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund:

- It will provide loans of the tune Rs 1 Lakh crore in next five years.
- 2. It will lead to creation of post-harvest management infrastructure.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 45. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Schedule Tribe (ST) population in India:

- ST population is more than 10 percent as per the census -2011.
- Chhattisgarh has the highest number of Schedule Tribe Populations.

Select the correct answer using the code below :

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 46. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Food Security Act in India:

- 1. The Midday meal scheme is part of this act .
- 2. It provides for differential allotment of the foodgrains based on poverty.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 47. Consider the following statements:

- President can change the applicability of fundamental rights to armed forces.
- Constitutional validity of State laws can not be considered in proceedings under article 32.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 48. Consider the following statements:

- Parliament can empower any local court to have jurisdiction under Article 32.
- Article 32 does not mention any specific writs in the constitution.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 49. With regard to GeM portal , consider the following statements:

- It offers both goods and services for procurement by the government.
- 2 It is run by the Ministry of Corporate affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 50. With regard to Bombay Natural History Society, consider the following statements:

- It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.
- 2 It publishes a quarterly magazine : Hornbill.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 51. With regard to Negative list of Defense sector, consider the following statements:

- Defense service can procure items mentioned in the negative list only from domestic manufacturers.
- 2 The list is progressive and doesn't put embargo on import on all items immediately.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 52. With reference to the Gram Sabha, consider the following statements:

- 1. The power to annul a decision of the Gram Sabha rests with the Gram Sabha only.
- It performs functions determined by the Governor of the State.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 53. Consider the following statements:

- As per the recent amendment to the India Forest Act, 1927, forest dwellers have the right to fell the bamboos grown on the forest areas.
- 2. As per the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, bamboo is a minor forest produce.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

a) 1 only b) 2 only



c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 54. With regard to UMANG app , consider the following statements:

- It aims to provide access to over 1,200 services of various government organisations in states and at the Centre.
- 2. It allows citizens to settle their PF dues online.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 55. With regard to Melghat Tiger Reserve, consider the following statements:

- 1. Narmada river flows through the reserve.
- 2 Korku Tribe dominates the inhabitants in this reserve.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 56. With regard to Coronal Multi-channel Polarimeter (CoMP), consider the following statements:

- It Monitors the magnetic field in the corona by recording the strength and polarization of light received from the corona..
- 2 It is an instrument operated by the High Altitude Observatory, of the U.S.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 57. With regard to Eravikulam National Park, consider the following statements:

- Mass flowering of Neelakurinji flowers takes place inside this park.
- 2. It is a habitat for vulnerable nilgiri Tahr.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 58. Consider the following statements:

- Starred Questions are those for which an oral answer is expected.
- The Zero Hour isn't mentioned in the Rules of Procedure of the Rajya Sabha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 59. With regard to National Emergency, consider the following statements:

- Since Independence, The President can proclaim a national emergency only after receiving a written recommendation from the cabinet.
- 2. The 38th Amendment Act of 1975 made the declaration of a National Emergency immune from the judicial review.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 60. Consider the following statements with regard to Special Mention accounts:

 They have been non performing assets for a long time. 2. They are identified to detect early signs of stress among bank borrowers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### **61.** Consider the following statements with regard to Defense Acquisition Council:

- It is chaired by the Prime Minister.
- It was formed in 1991 to smoothen the process of purchase of defense equipment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 62. Consider the following statements with regard to Pokkali rice recently seen in the news:

- 1. It is Saltwater resistant variety.
- It has a Geographical Indication (GI) tag and hails from Kerala.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 63. Which of the following Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are issued by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT):

- 1. Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout Design
- 2. Geographical Indication of Goods
- Trade Marks

Choose the Correct Code:

a) 1 & 3 only b) 2 & 3 only c) 1 & 2 only d) 1, 2 & 3

### 64. Consider the following statements with regard to Magadha Empire:

- Rajgaha was its capital at the beginning of the empire.
- 2. Ashoka was the first ruler to inscribe the messages on stone surfaces .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 65. Consider the following statements:

- Parliament in consultation with the Chief Justice can change the seat of the Supreme Court.
- 2. The Constitutional cases or references made by the President under Article 143 are decided by a Bench consisting of at least five judges.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 66. Consider the following statements:

- The Parliament is not authorised to curtail the jurisdiction and powers of the Supreme Court.
- In the disputes between the Centre and States, the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 67. With reference to the "State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)", consider the following statements:



- SDRF can be used for development of disaster resilient infrastructure.
- 2. The Central Government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category States/UTs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 68. With reference to the "Mount Sinabung an active Volcano in Indonesia", consider the following statements:

- 1. Volcano is situated in Java Island.
- Thick and dense magma lead to violent explosions in the volcano.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 69. With reference to the "Govt holding in NSE listed companies", consider the following statements:

- 1. In the last 10 years, it has declined substantially.
- Limited new listings by the government is one of the causes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 70. With reference to the "Payment of Gratuity", consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a statutory obligation on firms to pay it.
- A person is eligible to receive gratuity only if he has completed minimum five years of service with an organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 71. Consider the following statements:

- 1. There is a minimum age of appointment for Supreme Court Judge.
- Parliament decides the salaries and allowances of the Supreme Court Judge.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 72. Consider the following statements with regard to ancient India:

- Dharamsutra were Prakrit texts composed by Brahamanas.
- They provided for the social norms to be followed by rulers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 73. Consider the following statements:

- Nagarjunsagar-Srisailam Tiger Reserve is the largest tiger reserve in India.
- Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary harbours the world's highest density of Great Indian One-Horned Rhinoceroses.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 74. Consider the following statements with regard to Agricultural exports from India:

- Buffalo meat is the highest exported agricultural commodity.
- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) plays a strong role in marketing of exports.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 75. Consider the following statements:

- The Supreme Court does not have exclusive jurisdiction on matters related to the finance commission.
- The writ jurisdiction of the high court is narrower than that of the Supreme Court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 76. Consider the following statements:

- Chanhudaro in Indus Valley Civilisation was the centre of craft production.
- Gold was used in making jewellery in Indus Valley Civilisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 77. Consider the following statements:

- The Parliament is not authorised to curtail the jurisdiction and powers of the Supreme Court.
- 2. In the disputes between the Centre and States, the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 78. Consider the following statements with regard to National Digital Health Mission:

- The National Health Authority is the implementing agency.
- It is a mandatory healthcare program for every citizen.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 79. Consider the following statements with regard to National Cadet Corps (NCC):

- 1. It was formed through an executive resolution.
- 2. Duty, Unity and Discipline is the motto of NCC.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 80. Consider the following statements with regard to National Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP):

- It has been launched by the Ministry of health and Family Welfare.
- 2. Government of India along with the World Bank provides funds for it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2



#### 81. Consider the following statements:

- The Supreme court has no power to punish for the contempt of tribunal orders.
- 2. Supreme court is not bound by its previous decision . Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 82. Consider the following statements:

- Governor is immune from any criminal proceedings for his personal acts.
- 2. Oath of the governor is governed by the President .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 83. Consider the following statements with regard to SRIJAN Portal:

- It is for indigenisation of those items that are being imported currently.
- 2. It has been launched by the Ministry of Defense.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 84. Consider the following statements with regard to African Continental Free Trade Agreement:

- 1. It is the world's biggest free-trade pact.
- 2. All African countries are signatory to it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 85. Consider the following statements with regard to Space brics recently seen in the news:

- It has been developed by NASA in collaboration with MIT.
- 2. Guar beans instead of cement are used in construction of these bricks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 86. Consider the following statements regarding Land grants in Ancient India:

- 1. It was made to extend agriculture in newer areas .
- It implied weakening of Political Power.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 87. Consider the following statements:

- Retired judges of Supreme Court cannot practice in any court within India.
- A person sentenced to death by the high court has the right to appeal in Supreme court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 88. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Appeal by Special leave is the right of the individual.
- 2. For any pre constitution treaty, the supreme court may or may not tender the advice to the president.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 89. Consider the following statements with regard to RBI transfer of Surplus to government:

- Bimal jalan Panel has provided the framework for transfer of surplus.
- 2. Historically, RBI has followed the March-April financial year

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 90. Consider the following statements with regard to Abraham Accords:

- It is a peace framework agreement between Israel and Palestine.
- Israel currently has a formal relationship only with Jordan and Egypt in the Middle East.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 91. Consider the following statements with regard to Monetary Policy Committee:

- Members appointed by the government are not eligible for reappointment.
- Government members are appointed by the Cabinet Secretary.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 92. Consider the following statements:

- The first coins to bear the names and images of rulers were issued by the Kushanas.
- The first gold coins were issued c. first century CE by the Indo Greeks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 93. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Chairman of the state public service commission can be removed by governor.
- 2. Governors make rules for more convenient transactions of the business of a state government .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 94. Consider the following statements:

- Little More than 2% of Indian Population pays Income Tax.
- Transparent Taxation will also have provision of Faceless appeal.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 95. Consider the following statements regarding translocation of Lions:

- Not a single lion has been translocated in Kuno Wildlife sanctuary of MP.
- IUCN has upgraded the status for Asiatic lions from Endangered to Vulnerable.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only



c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 96. Consider the following statements With Regard to National Overseas Scholarship Scheme:

- Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans category are also eligible to apply in the Scheme.
- 30% of the awards for each year is earmarked for women candidates.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 97. Which agency has recently launched Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS):

- NASA
- 2. China National Space Administration (CNSA)
- 3. European Space Agency (ESA)
- 4. Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)

a) 1 only b) 2 only c) 3 only d) 4 only

#### 98. Consider the following statements:

- The Constitution does not contain any specific procedure for the selection and appointment of the Chief Minister.
- A person must prove his majority in the legislative assembly before he is appointed as the Chief Minister.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 99. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Chandalas had to live outside the bounds of the city.
- 2. Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa are buddhist texts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 100. Consider the following statements with regard to National Clean Air Programme:

- 1. It seeks to reduce the concentration of Pm 2.5 by 20% by the year 2024 considering 2017 as base year.
- 2. It is being implemented in 102 cities across India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 101. Consider the following statements with regard to Ninja Unmanned Aerial Vehicles:

- It has been procured by Indian Army to keep surveillance on illegal infiltration.
- 2. Drone also acts as force multiplier.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 102. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Highest burden of Cancer lies in North eastern India.
- 2. Cancers of the breast and cervix uteri are the most common among women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 103. Consider the following statements:

- No bill has to be mandatorily reserved by the governor for the consideration of the president.
- Governor cannot withdraw the once promulgated ordinance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 104. Consider the following statements:

- Ibn Batuta visited India during Mohammad Bin Tuqlaq.
- MarcoPolo and Ibn batuta both had visited India and China.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 105. Consider the following statements with regard to regulating act 1773:

- It made the governors of Bombay and Madras presidencies subordinate to the governor-general of Bengal.
- It distinguished between the commercial and political functions of the Company.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 106. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The Harit Path app monitors location and growth of each plant on a highway.
- Government is targeting 100% plantation along the highway by 2024.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 107. Consider the following statements with regard to Participatory Notes:

- 1. Investors using Participatory notes do not need to be registered directly with SEBI.
- 2. They are offshore derivative instruments with Indian shares as underlying assets.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 108. Consider the following statements with regard to One Sun, One World, One Grid" (OSOWOG):

- India lacks regulations for Inter-country energy trade.
- 2. The plan is divided into 5 phases.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 109. Which of the following are the necessary conditions for the formation of a delta?

- 1. Presence of lake in the Path of river
- Presence of deep sea at the end

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 110. Consider the following pairs:

Branch Related to



Red Biotechnology: Environment
 Green Biotechnology: Agriculture
 Blue Biotechnology: Marine

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

a) 1 only b) 2 & 3 only c) 1 & 2 only d) 1 & 3 only

### 111. Consider the following statements with regard to One Nation One Card:

- 1. Ration card needs to be issued in bilingual format.
- 2. Each ration card will be a 12 digit number.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 112. Consider the following statements with regard to Tribal Advisory Council:

- They are established only in states mentioned in the fifth schedule of the constitution.
- Number of members in the tribal advisory council is decided by the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b)

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 113. Consider the following statements with regard to Swachh Survekshan 2020:

- 1. It was the 5th edition of survekshan.
- According to it, less than 50% of solid waste is being processed in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 114. Consider the following statements with regard to Eat Right Challenge:

- It has been launched by The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- 2. It aims at strengthening food safety in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 115. Consider the following statements with regard to Inter Parliamentary Union:

- 1. It was established in 1889.
- The World Conference of Speakers is organised by the Inter Parliamentary Union.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 116. Consider the following statements with regard to Labour Bureau:

- It is an autonomous body in the Ministry of Labor and Employment.
- Consumer Price Index( Agriculture Labor) is published by it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 117. Consider the following statements regarding the Tiger Triumph exercise:

- 1. It is the first U.S.-India military exercise to include all three of India's military services.
- 2. India has never held such tri-service with any nation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 118. Which of the Following articles were inserted by 42nd amendment act:

- To secure opportunities for the healthy development of children
- 2. To take steps to secure the participation of workers in the management of industries
- 3. The State shall, in particular, strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities.

a) 1 & 2 only b) 2 & 3 only

c) 1 & 3 only d) 1, 2 & 3 only

#### 119. Consider the Following statements:

- Ports of Call are collection centres where the goods are brought from different countries for Export.
- Entrepot Ports are the ports which originally developed as calling points on main sea routes where ships used to anchor for refuelling, watering and taking food items.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 120. Consider the following statements with regard to State Chief Information Commissioner:

- 1. They are not eligible for reappointment.
- Authority of removal of the person lies with the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 121. Which of the following countries share the border with Black Sea:

Belarus

2. Russia

Turkey

4. Ukraine

Select the Correct Code:

a) 1, 2 & 3 only b) 2, 3 & 4 only

c) 3 only d) 1, 2 & 4 only

### 122. Consider the following statements with regard to Rules of Origin:

- It prescribes for the minimal processing that should happen in the FTA country.
- 2. No internationally agreed-upon rules of origin exist.. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

### 123. Consider the following statements with regard to Bonda Tribe:

- They are a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG).
- 2. It is a matriarchal society in the Bonda tribe.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only b) 2 only

c) Both 1 & 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

# 124. Consider the following statements with regard to Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA):



- It extended provisions of Part IX of the Constitution with certain modifications and exceptions to the Schedule VI areas.
- 2. All posts of Chairpersons of PRIs in the areas covered under PESA are reserved for tribal communities .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### 125. Consider the following statements:

- Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan is a voluntary contribution pension scheme in which contribution is made by the subscriber and matched by the Centre.
- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana is completely funded by the Centre.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 & 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

#### **ANSWERS**

1. a	26. b	<b>51.</b> c	76. c	101. b
2. a	27. a	52. a	77. c	102. c
3. b	28. b	53. b	78. a	103. d
4. c	29. c	54. c	79. a	104. c
5. b	30. a	55. b	80. d	105. a
6. c	31. d	56. c	81. b	106. a
7. a	32. c	57. a	82. a	107. c
8. b	33. b	58. c	83. c	108. d
9. c	34. a	59. b	84. c	109. d
10. b	35. c	60. b	85. b	110. b
11. a	36. b	61. d	86. c	111. a
12. b	37. b	62. c	87. c	112. a
13. c	38. b	63. c	88. d	113. a
14. a	39. d	64. c	89. a	114. c
15. a	40. b	65. b	90. b	115. c
16. a	<b>41.</b> c	66. c	91. a	116.b
17. c	42. c	67. b	92. d	117.a
18. c	43. a	68. b	93. b	118.a
19. c	44. b	69. c	94. b	119.d
<b>20</b> . c	45. d	<b>70</b> . c	95. a	120.c
21. a	46. c	71. b	96. c	121.b
22. d	47. d	72. b	97. a	122.c
23. a	48. a	73. c	98. a	123.c
24. b	49. a	74. b	99. a	124.c
25. a	50. d	75. a	<b>100.</b> c	125 . a

