



CivilsTap Himachal

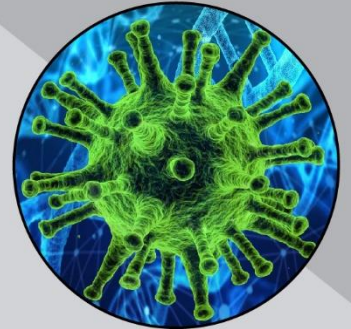


Current Affairs MONTHLY

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By CivilsTap Himachal

For HPAS & Other
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in Himachal Pradesh



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National news

1.1 AUGUST 1: MUSLIM WOMEN RIGHTS DAY

WHY IN NEWS?

Muslim Women Rights Day was observed on August 1 in 2021 marks second anniversary of triple talaq bill which is officially called as Muslim Women Act (Protection of Rights on Marriage) passed in the Rajya Sabha.

About:

- Muslim Women Rights Day is observed on August 1 in the backdrop of Triple talaq bill that was approved in Parliament on August 1, 2019.
- Triple talaq bill was a great milestone in liberating Muslim women from shackles of social evil that came in form of divorce terms.
- Cases like 'Shah Bano Begum & Ors vs Mohd. Ahmad Khan', 'ShayaraBano vs Union of India and Ors' laid the foundation stones for the move.
- ShayaraBano in her writ petition asked Supreme Court to consider the three practices- talaq-e-biddat, polygamy, nikah-halala- as unconstitutional.
- Cases were filing citing the violation of Articles 14, 15, 21, 25 of the Constitution.

Why this date is regarded as 'Muslim Women Rights Day'?

- The Triple Talaq law made 'triple talaq' a criminal offence. This law is considered as a crucial step because it ensured protection of Muslim women against gender inequality and empowerment by lawfully criminalising practice of instantaneous 'talaq'. Hence this day is observed as Muslim Women Rights Day. This law seeks to promote women's self-reliance, self-respect, and boost self-esteem because it strengthens fundamental and democratic rights of Muslim women.

About Triple Talaq Law

- As per the Triple Talaq Act, declaration of talaq would be treated as a cognizable offence. Law provides for imprisonment of 3 years imprisonment along with a fine.

1.2 MP GOVERNMENT MADE 'DEVARANYA' SCHEME TO PROMOTE AYURVEDA

WHY IN NEWS?

- In order to promote AYUSH in Madhya Pradesh and to link it with employment, the government has made the 'Devaranya' scheme.
- The scheme has been made to provide employment to the people living in the tribal areas of the state.
- A complete value chain for the production of AYUSH medicines will be developed in the state through Devarnya Yojana. Self-help groups will also play an important role in this work.

- For this, medicinal plants should be cultivated in the beautiful plains of the villages. AYUSH and tourism will be brought together.

1.3 PURI BECOMES INDIA'S FIRST CITY TO PROVIDE QUALITY DRINKING TAP WATER

WHY IN NEWS?

- Puri has become the first city in India where people can avail high-quality drinking water directly from the tap on a 24-hour basis.
- It has enabled the people of Puri to collect quality drinking water directly from the tap. Henceforth, people need not have to store or filter drinking water.
- The project would benefit 2.5 lakh citizens of Puri and 2 crore tourists who visit the tourist place every year. They need not have to move around with water bottles.
- Puri would no more be burdened with 400 metric tonnes of plastic waste. Water fountains have been developed at 400 locations in Puri.

1.4 GOI TO SET UP GARIMA GRIHAS FOR TRANSGENDER PERSONS TO PROVIDE SAFE SHELTER

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Centre is setting up the Garima Grihas for transgender persons are with the help of community-based organizations.
- Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment A. Narayanaswamy informed Lok Sabha, 12 pilot shelter homes have been initiated with the aim of providing safe and secure shelter to transgender persons.
- The Garima Grihas for transgender persons is being set up with the help of community-based organizations. Such shelter homes have been set up in the states of Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

1.5 INDORE BECOMES ONLY INDIAN CITY TO MAKE IT TO INTERNATIONAL CLEAN AIR CATALYST PROGRAMME

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, or the cleanest city of India, has become the only city from the country to be selected for International Clean Air Catalyst Programme.
- The project will be operated for a period of five years to purify the air in the city with the cooperation of Indore Municipal Corporation and Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board.
- Under the project, USAID and partners will work with local communities to better understand local pollution sources and identify, test, accelerate, and scale solutions for cleaner, healthier air.
- Clean Air Catalyst is a new flagship programme launched by The US Agency for International Development (USAID) and a global consortium of organisations, led by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) to combat air pollution in low and middle-income countries by accelerating clean air solutions.

1.6 KARNATAKA BECOMES THE 1ST STATE TO RESERVE JOBS FOR TRANSGENDER PERSONS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Karnataka has become the first state in the country to provide one per cent reservation for the 'transgender community in all the government services.
- The government submitted a report to the High Court in this regard informing that a notification had already been issued after amending the Karnataka Civil Service (General Recruitment) Rule, 1977.
- The specifies one per cent reservation in all general as well as reserve categories for the third gender. Whenever a notification is published inviting applications for government jobs, the 'others' column must be added along with male and female columns.
- The notification also underlines that there should not be any discrimination against transgenders in the process of selection. In case of non-availability of transgender candidates, the job could be given to male or female from the same category, the notification notes.

1.7 KERALA POLICE LAUNCHED 'PINK PROTECTION' PROJECT FOR WOMEN SAFETY

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Kerala Police launched a new initiative called the Pink Protection project for the protection of women in public, private and digital spaces.
- The Pink Protection project aims to prevent dowry-related issues, cyber-bullying & humiliation in public places. It has 10 components, one of which is activating the existing Pink Police Patrol system, named Pink Janamaithri Beat.
- They will collect information from panchayat members, neighbours and other locals and hand it over to the Station House Officers for further action.
- The Pink Beat system, in which specially trained women police officers have been deployed, will be present at Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and private buses and in front of schools, colleges and other public places including bus stops.
- Pink control rooms have been set up in all 14 districts to coordinate the activities.
- The Pink Shadow Patrol team will also be deployed to detect the presence of anti-socials in crowded areas and to take action.
- A bullet patrol team of woman police officers called "Pink Romeo" was also launched as part of the project.

1.8 DEPWD ORGANISES SAMAJIKADHIKARITASHIVIR FOR DISTRIBUTION OF AIDS & ASSISTIVE DEVICES TO DIVYANGJAN UNDER THE ADIP SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities(DEPwD) has organized SamajikAdhikaritaShivir'. In this shivir, aids and assistive devices will be distributed

among 'Divyangjan' under the ADIP Scheme and among Senior Citizens under the 'RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana'.

About ADIP Scheme:

- Launched by: Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities(DEPwD) under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- Aim: To assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable and scientifically manufactured appliances. It will promote their physical, social, and psychological rehabilitation by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhancing their economic potential.
- Implemented by: NGOs, National Institutes under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, and ALIMCO (a PSU that manufactures artificial limbs).

Eligibility:

- Indian citizen of any age
- Has 40% disability or more
- Monthly income not more than Rs.20,000.
- In the case of dependents, the income of parents/guardians should not exceed Rs. 20,000/- per month
- Must not have received assistance during the last 3 years, and for children, it's the last 1 year.

About RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana:

- RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana is the scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It was launched in 2017.
- Type: It is a central sector scheme funded by the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund.
- Aim: to provide aids and assistive living devices to senior citizens belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) category who suffer from age-related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth, and locomotor disabilities.
- The aids and assistive devices include walking sticks, elbow crutches, hearing aids, wheelchairs, and spectacles, etc.
- **Implemented by:** Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), which is a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

1.9 OPERATION BLUE FREEDOM: TEAM OF SPECIAL FORCES VETERANS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO SCALE SIACHEN GLACIER

WHY IN NEWS?

The government of India has accorded sanction to Team CLAW to lead a team of people with disabilities to scale Siachen Glacier. It will be a new world record for the largest team of people with disabilities. This expedition is being undertaken as part of 'Operation Blue Freedom'.

About Operation Blue Freedom:

- Operation Blue Freedom was launched in 2019 by CLAW Global, a team of former Special Forces Operatives of the Indian Army and the Indian Navy.

- The Operation is a social impact venture aimed at rehabilitating people with disabilities through adaptive adventure sports.
- It aims to shatter the common perception of pity, charity, and inability associated with people with disabilities and recreate it to one of dignity, freedom, and ability.
- Moreover, their focus is also to 'design and implement sustainable large-scale employment solutions' for people with disabilities, especially in the 'Environment conservation and Sustainability' space.

1.10 PANDIT DEENDAYAL UPADHYAY UNNAT KRISHI SHIKSHA YOJANA(PDDUUKSY)

WHY IN NEWS?

Government has organized 108 training programmes for the awareness of the farmers across 24 states/UTs under the Pandit DeenDayal Upadhyay Unnat Krishi Shiksha Yojana (PDDUUKSY).

About Pandit DeenDayal Upadhyay Unnat Krishi Shiksha Yojana (PDDUUKSY):

- The scheme was launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- Aim: To develop the human resource in organic farming, natural farming and cow based economy for environmental sustenance and soil health.

Objectives:

- To build skilled Human Resource at village level who are relevant for development organic farming and sustainable agriculture.
- Provide rural India with technical support in the field of Organic Farming or Natural Farming or Rural Economy or Sustainable Agriculture.
- To extend other activities of this Yojana at village level through their established centres.
- Implementation: Education wing of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research(ICAR)

1.11 TRIBAL AFFAIRS MINISTER INAUGURATES 'VIRTUAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROGRAMME ON FOREST RIGHTS ACT, 2006'

WHY IN NEWS?

The Minister of Tribal Affairs has inaugurated a 'Three day National level Virtual Training of Trainers Programme on Forest Rights Act, 2006,' as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav/Parv.

About National level Virtual Training of Trainers Programme

This Programme on Forest Rights Act will help in enhancing the knowledge base of the Forest Rights Act and ensuring the development of the tribal community.

The themes designed in the program will help in understanding Community Rights, Community Forest Resources, empowering the right holders for forest governance.

- About Forest Rights Act, 2006:
- The Forest Rights Act is also known as Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.
- The act recognizes the rights of the Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes(FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers(OTFD), on the forest resources.

Objectives of the Act:

- To undo the historical injustice that occurred to the forest-dwelling communities
- To ensure land tenure, livelihood, and food security of the forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers
- To strengthen the conservation regime of the forests by including the responsibilities and authority of Forest Rights holders for sustainable use, conservation of biodiversity, and maintenance of ecological balance.

1.12 PM LAUNCHES SAFAL FOR CBSE STUDENTS, VIDYA PRAVESH FOR PRESCHOOLERS

WHY IN NEWS?

The Prime Minister has launched the SAFAL assessment framework and Vidya Pravesh Scheme on the first anniversary of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

About SAFAL:

- SAFAL stands for Structured Assessment for Analysing Learning.
- Purpose: It is a competency-based assessment for grades 3, 5 and 8 introduced by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).
- SAFAL will be used to assess the progress of foundational skills and basic learning outcomes among students

1.13 SCHOOL EDUCATION SCHEME EXTENDED FOR 5 YEARS

WHY IN NEWS?

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the continuation of ‘Samagra Shiksha Scheme’ for school education for further five years.

About:

- As per the education minister, Dharmendra Pradhan, scheme would continue from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026.
- This would be called as ‘Samagra Shiksha Scheme 2’
- To implement the scheme, financial outlay of Rs 2,94,283.04 cr have been made out of which, central share stands at Rs 1,85,398.32 cr.

Samagra Shiksha Scheme

Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme for school education. It extends from pre-school to class XII and ensures inclusive & equitable quality education at all the levels of school education. This

scheme was launched by subsuming three schemes 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', 'Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). This scheme provides holistic treatment to school education from Pre-school to Class 12.

Aim of the scheme

This scheme emphasises on improving the quality of school education by focussing on two T's – Teacher and Technology. Primary aim of the scheme is to support States in implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in accordance with the **Article 21A** of the constitution of India.

Vision of the scheme

This scheme was launched with the vision of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education from pre-school to senior secondary stage in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)- SDG 4.1 & SDG 4.5- for Education.

Who funds the scheme?

This scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. Thus, the funds are shared between Centre and State in the ratio of 90:10 for the North-Eastern States & Himalayan States and 60:40 for other States & Union Territories with Legislature. Centre provides 100% of the fund in Union Territories without Legislature

1.14 ARYAN VALLEY (KARGIL DISTRICT) CONNECTED TO THE NATIONAL GRID

WHY IN NEWS?

Power Grid Corporation of India has commissioned a 40-kilometre transmission line successfully in Aryan Valley (Kargil district) of Ladakh.

About:

- Under the Development Programme of Prime Minister, Power Grid connected Lalung, Darchik, Silmoo, Batalik, Sinikcey, Hurdass, Garkon and other adjoining villages between Lalung to Darchik.
- With this connection, all villages in Aryan Valley of Kargil district are now connected to National Grid through 220 KV Srinagar-Leh transmission lines.
- Further, the Power Grid Corporation also completed electrification of twenty other villages such as Largiab, in Nubra valley of Leh district.
- Different 11 KV lines distancing about 150 kilometres have also connected Wanla to Fotoksar, Lamayuru to Atishe&Fotorse and Saspol.
- Power Grid has set up state of art 220/66 KV gas-insulated Sub-Stations at Drass, Kargil, Khaltsi and Leh. It has connected Ladakh region to National Grid by 341 kilometres of 220kV Transmission line starting from Srinagar.

Significance of the connection

Rural electrification in difficult terrain will help in bring carbon neutrality by setting diesel generator sets aside across these villages. Reliable power connectivity from grid also will help in economic development in remote villages in Ladakh region.

National Grid in India

National Grid in India is the high-voltage electricity transmission network that connect power stations and major substations. It ensures that electricity generated anywhere across India can be used to meet demand elsewhere. National Grid in India is owned and maintained by state-owned Power Grid Corporation of India. It is operated by state-owned Power System Operation Corporation. With the power generation capacity of 371.054 GW (as of 2020), it is the largest operational synchronous grids worldwide. India's grid is nominally running at 50 Hz. Permissible range of frequency band is 49.95-50.05 Hz. Grid is also having synchronous interconnections with Bhutan and asynchronous links with Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Nepal.

1.15 BHUBANESWAR BECOMES FIRST INDIAN CITY TO VACCINATE 100% AGAINST COVID-19

WHY IN NEWS?

- Bhubaneswar has become the first Indian city to achieve 100 per cent COVID-19 vaccination. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had launched a massive vaccination drive against Covid-19. This milestone is credited to the BMC running 55 centres at all times for vaccines.
- BMC has a record of around nine lakh people who are above 18 years of age in the city. Which includes around 31 thousand healthcare workers, 33 thousand front-line workers. 5 lakh 17 thousand people are in the age group of 18 to 44 years. Three lakh twenty-five thousand people are above 45 years of age.

1.16 ASSAM-MIZORAM TO RESOLVE BOUNDARY DISPUTE

WHY IN NEWS?

Senior ministers from governments of Assam and Mizoram held a detailed discussion on August 5, 2021 regarding the boundary dispute between Assam & Mizoram.

About:

- Following the meeting, a joint statement was released stating that boundary disputes would be resolved amicably.
- Assam Government also issued an order to revoke and withdraw a travel advisory for state residents and asked them to think before visiting Mizoram.
- Governments of Assam and Mizoram later agree to take forward initiatives taken by Union Ministry of Home Affairs. Chief Ministers of both the states were asked to remove tension

prevailing around interstate borders. They were also asked to find lasting solutions of the disputes through discussion.

How peace will be maintained?

To maintain peace in inter-state border areas and deployment of central forces, both the government highlighted that, Assam and Mizoram would not send their respective forest and police forces for the purpose of patrolling, domination, enforcement or for fresh deployment in any area where confrontation had taken place between police forces of both the states. It includes the areas along Assam-Mizoram border in the districts of Karimganj, Hailakandi&Cachar in Assam, and Mamit&Kolasib districts of Mizoram.

Assam-Mizoram Boundary Dispute

Boundary dispute between Assam and Mizoram dates back to colonial era when inner lines were demarcated in accordance with administrative needs of British Raj. This dispute started from two notifications passed under British era.

1. Notification of 1875- It differentiated Lushai Hills from the plains of Cachar. It was derived from Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act, 1873.
2. Notification of 1933- It demarcated a boundary between Lushai Hills and Manipur. Mizoram is of the view that, boundary should be demarcated on the basis of the 1875 notification and is opposing the 1933 notification citing that Mizo society was not consulted. While, Assam government follows notification of 1933. Thus, dispute is there because of differing perception of the border.

1.17 SABKIYOJNASABKA VIKAS CAMPAIGN FOR INCLUSIVE AND HOLISTIC PREPARATION OF GRAM PANCHAYAT DEVELOPMENT PLAN(GPDP)

WHY IN NEWS?

The government of India has launched the People's Plan Campaign titled 'SabkiYojnaSabka Vikas' campaign for inclusive and holistic preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).

About SabkiYojnaSabka Vikas Campaign:

- SabkiYojnaSabka Vikas campaign has been launched by the Ministry of Panchayats Raj from 2nd October 2020 to 31st January 2021. It was also launched during 2018 and 2019.
- Aim: To help Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the preparation of a convergent and holistic Gram Panchayat Development Plan(GPDP) through the identification of sectoral infrastructural gaps in respective areas.

Objectives of the SabkiYojnaSabka Vikas Campaign: The objectives of the campaign includes:

- Strengthening of elected representatives and Self Help Groups
- Evidence-based assessment of progress made in 2020-21 and proposals for 2021-22 in all 29 subjects of XI Schedule

- Public disclosure on Schemes, finances and
- Preparation of inclusive, participatory and evidence based GPDP for 2021-22.

Significance of the campaign:

- Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas is an effective strategy for ensuring the preparation of GPDP in a campaign mode. It also converges all resources available at the Panchayat level related to 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.

About Gram Panchayat Development Plan(GPDP):

- Under Article 243 G of the Constitution, Gram Panchayats have been mandated for the preparation of GPDP for economic development and social justice utilizing the resources available to them.
- The GPDP planning process should be comprehensive and participatory by involving full convergence with the schemes of all related Central Ministries / Line Departments.

1.18 WORLD'S HIGHEST MOTORABLE ROAD AT UMLING LA

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed and completed black topping the world's highest motorable road at Umling La pass in Eastern Ladakh, located at an altitude of 19,300 ft.

About the Road:

- By constructing this road, BRO has created a record in high-altitude road construction.
- It bettered the previous record of a road in Bolivia connecting to its volcano Uturuncu at 18,953 ft.
- The strategic road built under 'Project Himank' passes through the Umling La Top and connects Chisumle and Demchok villages.
- It will enhance the socio-economic condition and promote tourism in Ladakh.
- The road is close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and will allow quick movement of troops and equipment.

Project Himank:

- Project Himank, is a project of the BRO being implemented in the Ladakh region of Jammu & Kashmir.
- This project started in 1985.
- Under this project, BRO is responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads and related infrastructure including the world's highest motorable roads.

1.19 UNION CABINET APPROVES CONTINUATION OF 1,023 FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of 1,023 fast track special courts, including 389 exclusive POCSO courts, as a centrally sponsored scheme for another two years.
- Union minister Anurag Thakur said out of 31 states and union territories, 28 have started the scheme. West Bengal is one of the states which has not started the scheme.
- The scheme would continue from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2023, with an outlay of Rs 1572.86 crore — Rs 971.70 crore as central share and Rs 601.16 crore as state share. The central share is to be funded from the 'Nirbhaya' Fund. The scheme was launched on October 2, 2019.

1.20 GOVERNORS CAN PARDON PRISONERS: SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- Supreme Court of India on August 3, 2021, held that the Governor of state can pardon prisoners, including in the death sentence cases. Governor can pardon the prisoners even before they have completed a minimum of 14 years of prison sentence.
- Court also said that the Governor's power to pardon overrides a provision given under Section 433A of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
- Section 433A mandates that the sentence of the prisoner can be remitted only after 14 years of jail. The court observed that Section 433-A of the Code cannot and does not affect the constitutional power of the President or Governor to grant pardon under Articles 72 or 161 of the Constitution.
- Such power is in the exercise of the power of the sovereign. However, Governor will have to act on the aid and advice of the State Government.

1.21 LADAKH REMOVES NEED FOR INNER LINE PERMIT FOR INDIAN NATIONALS

WHY IN NEWS?

Ladakh Administration has removed the need of an Inner Line Permit (ILP) for all Indian nationals who seeks to visit protected areas of union territory.

About:

- Ladakh administration issued notification regarding the Inner Line Permit on August 6, 2021.
- According to notification, requirement of an Inner Line Permit for Indian nationals, including domestic tourists and local residents has been completely removed in order to visit the protected areas.
- Restriction on stay of foreign tourists has also been relaxed from seven days to 15 days in tour circuits of bordering areas like Nyoma, Nubra and places in Leh and Kargil districts.
- This move will help Indian nationals to move to Ladakh and extension of foreigners will boost rural tourism in the Union Territory.

Inner Line Permit (ILP)

ILP is a document required by non- natives to visit or stay in states which are protected under ILP system. Presently, four North-eastern states Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland are covered under this system. Duration of stay and areas allowed to be accessed for any non-native

are decided by ILP. It is issued by concerned state government and can be availed by applying online or in person.

Background of ILP

ILP is an extension of Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act 1873 under which Britishers framed regulations to restrict entry in certain designated areas. This was done to protect interest of the Crown in some states by preventing Indians (British Subjects) from trading within these regions.

1.22 GRAMIN DIGITAL SAKSHARTA ABHIYAN SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

Government announced on August 7, 2021 that approximately five crore beneficiaries have been enrolled and four crores have been trained under Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan Scheme.

About:

- According to Union Minister for women and Child Development, Smriti Irani, over two crore women beneficiaries are registered under the scheme.
- Out of them, one crore women beneficiaries are certified under scheme which accounts for 54 percent of the total certified beneficiaries under it.
- Government had the target of reaching six crore households by March 2022.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan

This scheme was launched to make six crore persons residing in rural areas, across States and UTs, digitally literate. It was launched with the aim of bridging digital divide and specifically targeting rural population. It also includes marginalised sections of society such as Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Minorities, Below Poverty Line (BPL), women, differently-abled persons and minorities. This scheme is being initiated under Digital India Programme and would cover 6 crore households in rural areas in order to make them digitally literate. The implementation of the Scheme would be carried out under the overall supervision of Ministry of Electronics and IT in active collaboration with States/UTs through their designated State Implementing Agencies, District e-Governance Society (DeGS), etc.

Who are eligible for the scheme?

This Scheme is applicable only in rural areas of India. All the households where not a single family member is digitally literate will be eligible under the Scheme. The beneficiary must be Digitally Illiterate. Only one person per eligible household would be provided with training in the age group of 14 – 60 years

1.23 'PM-DAKSH' PORTAL AND 'PM-DAKSH MOBILE APP' TO BE LAUNCHED

WHY IN NEWS?

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar, is to launch 'PM-DAKSH' Portal and 'PM-DAKSH' Mobile App on August 7, 2021 in Nalanda Auditorium at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Delhi.

About:

- PM-DAKSH portal and Mobile App was developed in by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with National e-governance division (NeGD).
- Portal and app have been developed to make skill development schemes accessible to target groups of Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and SafaiKaramcharis.
- With the help of this initiative, youth of the target groups will be able to avail benefits of skill development training programmes in an easier manner.

About PM-DAKSH

PM-DAKSH stands for Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur KushaltaSampannHitgrahi Yojana. This scheme is being implemented by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from the year 2020-21. Under this scheme, eligible target group will be provided skill development training programmes on:

- Up-skilling or Re-skilling Programmes
- Short Term Training Programme
- Long Term Training Programme and
- Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP).

About National e-Governance Division (NeGD)

NeGD was created in 2009 by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. It was created as an Independent Business Division under Digital India Corporation. NeGD has been playing a significant role in supporting Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology in management & implementation of Programme since 2009. It has been implementing several e-Governance Projects and initiatives at the Central as well as State levels.

1.24 BRO STARTS CELEBRATIONS TO MARK 75 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

WHY IN NEWS?

Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has started its celebrations of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' to commemorate 75 years of Independence of India.

About:

- To mark this momentous occasion, BRO will organise nationwide welfare and patriotic activities and events.
- Event also comprises of 75 medical camps, plantation drives across 75 locations and 75 School Samvad in order to motivate children through interactions & lectures.

- Main event will be unfurling of National Flag on August 15 (Independence Day) at 75 Highest Passes of India.

Award presented by BRO

BRO recently facilitated the Gallantry Award Winners and War Heroes on August 07, 2021 at Pipalkoti & Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand and Chandmari in Sikkim. The ceremony was organised by **Project Hirak** of BRO at Pithoragarh. On the occasion, tokens of appreciation were awarded to next of kin of Shaurya Chakra awardees namely, EEM Prem Singh, Naik Chandra Singh, Driver Ram Singh and DME Damar Bahadur. At a separate ceremony at Pipalkoti, Project Shivalik by BRO felicitated next of kin of Major Preetam Singh Kunwar.

Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav

It is a series of events, organised by Government of India to commemorate 75th Anniversary of India's Independence. Mahotsav will be celebrated as a Jan-Utsav in the spirit of Jan-Bhagidari. 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' was launched 75 weeks before August 15, 2020. The event will continue till August 15, 2023.

Border Roads Organisation (BRO)

BRO is a road construction executive force of India, providing support to Indian Armed Forces. BRO is a part of Indian Armed Forces that develops and maintains road networks across border areas and friendly neighbours of India. It carries infrastructure operations across 19 states and three union territories as well as neighboring countries like Bhutan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka.

1.25 INDIA TO CALL BIDS FOR BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEM IN LADAKH

WHY IN NEWS?

India will be calling for bids for the largest global tender for a 13 gigawatt-hours (GWh) grid-scale battery storage system in Ladakh Region.

What are Battery Storage Systems?

- Battery storage systems are devices that enable energy from renewables like solar and wind to be stored and then released when customers need power most.
- Lithium-ion batteries which are used in mobile phones and electric cars are currently the dominant storage technology.

What is the need for a large scale Battery Storage Project in Ladakh?

- The Government of India has planned to build 10GW of large green energy capacity projects in the Ladakh region, comprising both solar and wind projects.
- These large battery storage projects will be used to store the electricity generated to supply to the rest of the country through a transmission link.

Importance of Battery Energy Storage Systems for India:

- According to the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), India's power requirement would be 817GW by 2030. More than half of this would be clean energy.
- This huge injection of electricity in the grid from sources such as solar and wind requires a storage mechanism that can help balance the national electricity grid.
- Hence, it is estimated that there will be a need for a 27GW grid-scale battery energy storage system by 2030 with four hours of storage.
 - One GWh (1,000-MWh) of battery capacity is sufficient to power 1 million homes for an hour and around 30,000 electric cars.

1.26 PM TO LAUNCH UJJWALA-2 SCHEME FROM UP

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to launch the second edition of the government's free LPG connection scheme called Ujjwala.

About:

Second edition of the scheme would be launched from poll-bound Uttar Pradesh on August 10.

- First version of the scheme was launched in 2016 from Uttar Pradesh ahead of 2017 Assembly elections.
- Launch of Ujjwala-2 scheme will be marked by handing over of one crore additional LPG connection by Prime Minister through video conferencing at Mahoba district in Uttar Pradesh.

How Ujjwala-2 is different than Ujjwala-1?

Ujjwala-2 is the updated version of Ujjwala-1 that provided free LPG connections to 8 crore women beneficiaries. Apart from a deposit-free LPG connection, Ujjwala-2 will provide the first refill and a hotplate free of cost to beneficiaries. Further, the enrolment procedure under second edition of the scheme has been eased. Minimum paperwork will be required for enrolment.

About Ujjwala-2 scheme

Under the Ujjwala-2 scheme, migrants will not be required to submit ration cards or address proof to get the LPG cylinders. A self-declaration would be used as "family declaration" and as "proof of address."

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

PMUY scheme was launched in 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The scheme was originally launched to distribute 50 million LPG connections to women below poverty line. Later it was expanded to provide LPG connections to eight crore women by March 2020. This target of providing LPG connections to eight crore women was achieved in September 2019, seven months prior to the target date. Recently in Union Budget 2021, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced to extend the benefits under the scheme to additional one crore beneficiaries.

1.27 DELHI: FIRST ANIMAL DNA LAB SET UP IN ROHINI

WHY IN NEWS?

Delhi's first "Animal DNA Laboratory" was set up at Forensic Science Laboratory in Rohini. Wildlife forensics is a new field of criminal investigation.

About:

Earlier, animal samples used to be sent to other States with animal DNA testing facilities to test results. Sometimes, this process delayed investigations. The animal DNA lab also procured two machines namely, automate DNA extraction instrument and Real-Time PCR instrument which is based on mitochondrial DNA technology.

How this DNA lab will help police?

The animal DNA laboratory will be used by Delhi Police for timely disposal of cases of cow slaughter, illegal trade of animals and other such animal-related cases. Forensic lab analyses evidence from any part of the animal, such as blood and tissue samples, hair, teeth, carcasses and bones contents. Laboratory will be used to examine and identify the animal species of meat products, frozen meat packing, slaughter cases etc.

How DNA samples are used?

Experts analyse DNA to provide information regarding the identity of sample. DNA tests will be used for identification and characterisation of relationships between animals. It will also evaluate two different samples in order to determine if the animals are originated from same individual.

Challenge before forensic scientist

Primary challenge that any forensic scientist witness is identification of a particular species from crime scene evidence. It gets difficult for scientist to distinguish if piece of flesh is found at crime scene is from a protected animal or if it from non-protected animal. New DNA lab will address this challenge.

1.28 ICMR STUDY: MIXED COVISHIELD&COVAXIN DOSES PRODUCE BETTER IMMUNITY

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in a study found that, mixed Covid immunisation routine, with a dose of Covishield followed by one of Covaxin, is safe and produces a better immune response as compared to the uniform two doses of any of the two vaccines.

About:

- Study titled 'Serendipitous Covid-19 Vaccine-Mix in Uttar Pradesh, India: Safety and Immunogenicity Assessment of a Heterologous Regime' was led by ICMR scientist Rajni Kant.
- These findings had an important implication for Covid-19 vaccination programme wherein heterologous immunisation would open way for induction of improved and better protection against variant strains of SARS-CoV-2.
- These mixed regimens of the vaccine will also help in overcoming the challenges of shortfall of particular vaccines and remove hesitancy associated with vaccines in people's mind.
- However, to prove these findings, a multicentre random clinical trial is needed to be carried out.
- Study also found that, no major systemic adverse events were reported. Furthermore, reactogenicity profile of participants of heterologous group (mixed vaccine) was comparable to homologous groups.

How study was conducted?

ICMR Study followed 18 Uttar Pradesh residents who inadvertently received mixed doses, when vaccination plan was expanded. It also followed 40 recipients each of Covishield and Covaxin. However, the sample size of 18 participants was small. Therefore, a larger trial was needed to corroborate findings of the study.

WHO on mixed doses

Chief scientists of World Health Organization had recently advised individuals against mixing and matching COVID-19 vaccines from different manufacturers and said that, such decisions should be left to public health authorities. In June 2021, WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on vaccines however noted that, Pfizer Inc vaccine could be used as second dose following the initial dose of AstraZeneca, if the latter is not available. But final words on mixed doses is yet to come from WHO.

1.29 KARNATAKA BECOMES FIRST STATE TO ISSUE ORDER IMPLEMENTING NEP-2020

WHY IN NEWS?

- Karnataka has become the first state in the country to issue the order with regard to the implementation of the National Education Policy-2020.
- The state government has issued an order on the implementation of NEP-2020 with effect from the current academic year 2021-2022.
- This policy seeks to entirely overhaul the system through various reforms: A single regulator to oversee higher education; no more MPhil courses before PhD; fixed fees for public and private institutions; students can choose between three and four-year undergraduate courses; multiple entries and exit points in degree courses.

1.30 FIRST INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM OF INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

According to Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, India's first Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) will be held for three days starting from October 20, 2021.

About:

- Launch of the Internet Governance forum was announced by Anil Kumar Jain, CEO of National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, and Chairman of Coordination Committee.
- Pre-IIGF engagement events will also start from August 2021 across colleges and universities.
- Pre-events will be organised with the aim of engaging students and youth to participate in main event in October.
- IIGF 2021 will be held under the theme- “Inclusive Internet for Digital India”.

About IIGF?

IIGF, stands for India Internet Governance Forum, is an Internet Governance policy discussion platform. IIGF is an Indian version of Internet Governance Forum under the United Nations. It is organised with the aim of taking into account the aspirations of Indians at their International policy formation and stakeholder discussion. It also seeks to ensure the growth of broadband that adheres to lifestyle and requirements of Indian community. Indian version of IGF also adopt multi-stakeholder concept to organize this event.

Coordination committee

Coordination committee of the IIGF composed of representation from Government, industrial association, civil society, industry, trust, and other stakeholders.

About IGF

IGF stands for Internet Governance Forum. It is a United Nations forum incorporating multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on issues related to Internet Governance. Announcement for establishment of IGF was made in July 2006 by United Nations Secretary General. After that, the first meeting was held in October-November 2006 at Athens in Greece. Since then, annual meetings are held

1.31 KAKORI TRAIN CONSPIRACY RENAMED TO KAKORI TRAIN ACTION

WHY IN NEWS?

Uttar Pradesh government has renamed a landmark freedom movement called “Kakori Train Conspiracy” as “Kakori Train Action” and paid tributes to the revolutionaries who were hanged for robbing a train at Kakori in Uttar Pradesh.

About:

- Revolutionaries had robbed the train in order to buy weapons in 1925.
- Family members of the freedom fighters were also honoured on this occasion.
- Those revolutionaries were some passionate people who were having a single goal of independence of India from British rule. So, name was changed considering that, they did not commit any conspiracy as they were fighting for freedom.

- Freedom fighters Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan and Roshan Singh were hanged to death on December 19, 1927 for their involvement in Kakori robbery.

Kakori Train Action

It was a train robbery that took place on August 9, 1925 in a village called Kakori near Lucknow during Indian Independence Movement against British Raj. Robbery was organised by Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). It was conceived by Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah Khan. HRA was established to carry out revolutionary activities against British Empire with the objective of achieving independence.

1.32 INDIA'S FIRST WATER PLUS CITY

WHY IN NEWS?

India's cleanest city, Indore, has now been declared as India's first water plus city under the Swachh Survekshan 2021.

About:

- Indore has become example for whole nation for its determination and dedication towards cleanliness.
- Indore City received this certification from central government on August 11, 2021.
- This certification is provided for maintaining cleanliness in rivers and drains.

How this certification is provided?

To get the certification, following criteria has been set:

1. Dirty water should not go into any river or drain.
2. Further, 30 percent of the city's sewer water needs to be recycled and reused.
3. Public toilets must be connected to sewer lines and it must be cleaned.

About Swachh Survekshan

It is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation across cities and towns in India. It was launched under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. This abhiyan was started with the aim of making India clean and free of open defecation by October 2, 2019. The first survey was done in 2016 and covered 73 cities. By 2020, survey grown to cover 4242 cities. It was tagged as the largest cleanliness survey across the world.

Sixth edition of survey

To scale up the coverage of ranking exercise and encourage towns and cities to actively implement mission initiatives, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) conducted sixth edition of the survey to rank all cities under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban in association with the Quality Council of India.

Objective of the survey

This survey is conducted with the objective of encouraging large scale citizen participation and ensure sustainability of initiatives towards garbage free and open defecation free cities. Survey also seeks to instil the spirit of healthy competition amongst towns and cities in order to improve their service delivery to citizens.

1.33 CHHATTISGARH BECOMES 1ST STATE TO RECOGNISE FOREST RESOURCE RIGHTS IN URBAN REGION

WHY IN NEWS?

- Chhattisgarh became the first state to recognise Community Forest Resource Rights in an urban area, with the state government recognising the rights of residents of Dhamtari district over 4,127 hectares of forests.
- Community resource rights over 5,544 hectares of forest within the core area of the tiger reserve area were also recognised.
- Under Forest Rights Act, 2006, Community Forest Resource Right gives gram sabhas the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any forest resources used by the entire community, or village.

1.34 NEW MUSEUMS ON J&K, BUDDHA, FREEDOM STRUGGLE

WHY IN NEWS?

The Ministry of Culture has planned to inaugurate new museums on Jammu and Kashmir, Gautam Buddha, Indian armour and the freedom struggle by the end of 2021.

Museum on Jammu and Kashmir(J&K):

- The museum on Jammu and Kashmir will capture the essence and spirit of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh as an integral part of the nation since ages.
- The museum elaborates this by tracing the roots of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh since prehistoric times to the present day and telling unheard stories of the region and people which have been lost in the centuries of time.

Museum on Gautam Buddha:

- The museum on Gautama Buddha focuses on the religious and traditional aspects of Buddhist heritage in India.
- The museum would have over 200 objects from the 1st Century CE to 19th Century CE, including stone and bronze sculptures, terracotta heads and costumes.

Museum on Freedom Struggle:

- The museum will narrate the story of the country's freedom struggle in an interactive manner. Further, the museum will provide more emphasis on the unheard stories of people's participation in India's freedom movement representing contribution of all regions.
- Another museum will be developed which would showcase arms and armour of India through the ages.

- Moreover, the Ministry is also in the process of setting up a museum dedicated to freedom fighters at the Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkata, called 'Biplobi Bharat'

1.35 PRADHAN MANTRI GATISHAKTI NATIONAL MASTER PLAN

WHY

IN

NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an Rs 100 lakh crore Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti initiative

About:

- This initiative will create employment opportunities for youth in India. It will also lead to growth and development of infrastructure.
- In his address, Prime Minister highlighted that; Gatishakti-National Master Plan will be announced soon.
- Prime Minister also noted that, India needs to increase both manufacturing and exports. Each of the products that are sold globally from India is attached to India. Thus, every product of yours is a brand ambassador for India.

Focus areas of the initiative

- Gati Shakti plan will help in raising global profile of local manufacturers.
- It will also help manufacturers to compete with their counterparts cross the world.
- It also increases the possibilities of new future economic zones.

1.36 SAINIK SCHOOLS OPEN FOR GIRLS

WHY

IN

NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his address on 75th Independence Day celebration, announced that Sainik Schools across India will now be open for female students as well.

About:

- This decision was taken following the messages from lakhs of female students that they also want to study in Sainik School.
- Girls were first allowed in Sainik schools of Mizoram about 2.5 years ago.

Sainik Schools

Sainik Schools are system of schools that was established and managed by Sainik Schools Society. It comes under Ministry of Defence (MoD). Establishment of sainik schools was led by V. K. Krishna Menon in 1961, who was the then Defence Minister of India.

Why Sainik Schools were established?

Sainik Schools were established in order to rectify regional and class imbalance amongst Officer cadre of Indian Military. Schools were opened to prepare students mentally and physically to enter into the National Defence Academy (NDA) and Indian Naval Academy (INA).

How many such schools are there?

As of now, there were 33 Sainik Schools. Now, MoD is set to establish 100 more boarding Sainik Schools in public–private partnership (PPP) mode.

Who run Sainik Schools?

MoD run Sainik Schools in association with the respective state governments. MoD provides funding and serving officers for the post of Principal while, State governments provide land, infrastructure and teaching & administrative employees.

Curriculum of Sainik Schools

Sainik Schools follow “CBSE Plus” curriculum by using CBSE curriculum with the additional aim of preparing children for entry into NDA and INA.

1.37 AUGUST 14: PARTITION HORRORS REMEMBRANCE DAY

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on August 14, 2021 that, August 14 would now be observed as “Partition Horrors Remembrance Day”

About:

- The day would be observed every year to commemorate the “struggles and sacrifices” of millions of people who were displaced and lost their lives during Partition.
- On August 14, Pakistan emerged as a political entity after Partition and is observed as Independence Day of Pakistan.

Significance

This move by Prime Minister becomes significant in the backdrop of situation in Afghanistan and advance of the Taliban raising old spectres in the region.

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day

This day is a national Memorial Day in India, that was announced to be observed on August 14. The day commemorates the victims and sufferings of people during Partition of India. It remembers the sufferings of Indians during partition. The day was announced with the aim of reminding Indians the need of removing social divisions and disharmony. It seeks to further strengthen the spirit of oneness, social harmony and human empowerment

1.38 MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE LAUNCHES AN E-STUDY PLATFORM “TAPAS”

WHY IN NEWS?

- Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has launched an online portal named TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services) to provide filmed lectures/courses and e-study material in the field of social defence.
- TAPAS is the initiative of the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The course can be taken up by anyone and is free of cost.
- TAPAS seeks to provide access to lectures by subject experts, study material and more, but in a manner that it supplements the physical classroom without compromising on the quality of teaching.
- The main objective of introducing the course modules, is to impart training and enhance the knowledge and skills for the capacity building of the participants. It can be taken up by anyone who wishes to enhance his or her knowledge on the topics and there is no fee for joining

1.39 MEITY-NASSCOM START-UP WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS 2020-21

WHY IN NEWS?

Government of India announced MeitY-NASSCOM Start-up Women Entrepreneur Awards 2020-2021.

About:

- MeitY-NASSCOM Women Startup Entrepreneurs Awards is the first step that recognizes and cultivates the entrepreneurial spirit in women.
- Awards inspire next generation of women to lead Indian digital era in order to serve as guiding role models.
- It also encourages promising entrepreneurs who contribute to the nation's economy as well as social community.
- It also provides leadership and serves as guiding examples for emerging and young future entrepreneurs.
- Awards were open to participation from tech start-up women entrepreneurs in which about 159 applications were received.
- Leaders from MeitY, UN Women, Industry and Academia together, decided 12 women entrepreneurs as winners.
- While 2 women entrepreneurs were declared as the Jury Choice.

Government's focus

Government has set a new benchmark for inclusive development by setting the basic values around 'antyodaya'. It works on the philosophy of SabkaSaath, SabkaVikaas, Sabka Vishwas, SabkaPrayaas. Empowerment of women and promotion of entrepreneurship among them is also among key focus areas of the Government. Government has been taking several transformative steps such as:

1. MUDRA scheme to provide interest free loans to the poor.
2. Ujjwala scheme under which women are given free gas connections to save them from smoke-filled cooking
3. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme to educate the girl child,
4. Abolition of triple talaq for the dignity of women.
5. National Policy on Software Products, 2019- under which government is placing special emphasis on promoting and recognising women led entrepreneurship as leaders for tomorrow.

Startups and Entrepreneurs

Encouraging Startups and Entrepreneurs is also among thrust areas of Government with the help of StartUp India and Invest India programs.

Gender equality

This award is significant in bringing the gender equality. Women are leading by example including from winning medals in Olympics to building tech based Innovative solutions. Indian IT sector has also played a key role in gender equality. As per the NASSCOM, 35 % of the total IT workforces are women

1.40 SANSKRIT WEEK: BEING CELEBRATED FROM AUGUST 19 TO 25

WHY IN NEWS?

Sanskrit Week is being celebrated from August 19 to August 25, 2021.

ABOUT:

- Sanskrit Week is celebrated to promote and popularise this ancient language.
- On the beginning of this event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged everyone to learn and promote Sanskrit language.
- People were asked to take a pledge and generate a new enthusiasm for Indian cultural traditions & languages and to make Sanskrit Language accessible to people easily.

World Sanskrit Day

This day is also known as Vishva-samskrita-dinam. It is an annual event that focuses around the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit. Event incorporates lectures about the language. The day is celebrated with the aim of promoting its revival and maintenance. Every year, the day is celebrated on Shraavana Purnima, the full moon day of the Shraavana month in Hindu calendar. In the year 2021, the day will be marked on August 22. Sanskrit organisation Samskrita Bharati has been tasked with promoting the day.

Shravani Purnima

Shravani Purnima, also called as Raksha Bandhan, is the festival of remembrance and worship of sages as well as worship for their dedication. On the day, a sacred thread is worn before the study of Vedas in Gurukulas, Yajnopavita. The ceremony of wearing sacred thread is called as Upanayana or Upakarma Sanskar. On the occasion, Priests also tie raksha-sutras to hosts.

Background

Ministry of Education of Government issued notifications to celebrate Sanskrit Day in 1969. Since then, the day is celebrated across India.

Sanskrit week

Week in which Sanskrit Day falls, is celebrated as Sanskrit week. As Sanskrit is the official language in Uttarakhand, different programs and competitions are organised in Sanskrit language every day in the Sanskrit week.

1.41 RELIGIOUS TOURISM: PM MODI INAUGURATES MULTIPLE PROJECTS IN SOMNATH

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated and laid foundation stone of multiple projects in Somnath on August 20.

About:

- Inaugurated projects include the Somnath Promenade, reconstructed temple precinct of Old (Juna) Somnath and Somnath Exhibition Centre.
- While inaugurating the projects, PM highlighted that, India needs to strengthen religious tourism. It will provide employment to youth and enable them to get knowledge about our past.

Shiv Parvati Temple

- Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for Shree Parvati Temple on the occasion.
- This temple is proposed to be constructed with a total outlay of Rupees 30 crore.
- It comprises of construction of temple in Sompura Salats Style, development of GarbhaGriha and a Nritya Mandap.

About Somnath temple

Somnath temple is situated in Veraval (Somnath City), Saurashtra on the western coast of Gujarat. This temple is believed to be the first of twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva. The temple is an important pilgrimage and tourist spot of Gujarat. It has been reconstructed multiple times in the past following repeated destruction by Muslim invaders and rulers. Temple in its present form was reconstructed in Chalukya style of Hindu temple architecture. Its construction was completed in May 1951. Its construction was started on the orders of Home Minister of India Vallabhbhai Patel. Current chairman of Somnath Mandir trust is Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

About Veraval

Name of the Veraval city was changed to Somnath city on March 30, 2021. It is a municipality and headquarters of Gir Somnath district in Gujarat. This city is the hub of fishing industries in India.

1.42 AN ANCIENT DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGE LINK WITH THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION

WHY IN NEWS?

A new research paper published in the journal 'Nature' has provided some interesting new insight into the linguistic culture of the Indus Valley Civilization.

About Indus Valley Civilization:

- Indus Valley civilization is the oldest urban civilization discovered to date. It flourished in the basins of the Indus River spreading across large parts of modern Pakistan, northwest and western India, and Afghanistan.
- The civilisation is noted for its urban planning, baked brick houses, elaborate drainage systems, water supply systems, large and new techniques in handicraft.
- Moreover, the archaeological sites of the civilization have always been a topic of interest for the scholar since its discovery in 1926.
- However, the language that the people spoke is yet to be deciphered.

What does the research paper have found?

- The research paper has taken clues from the few words shared between the Indus Valley people and the cultures they came in contact with, such as the Persian Gulf as well as Mesopotamia,
- Based on this evidence found, it has been said that Ancestral Dravidian languages were possibly spoken by a significant population in the Indus Valley civilization.

What is the evidence the researchers have found?

- The researchers have analyzed linguistic, and historical evidence to learn how some words in ancient Persian records match with proto-Dravidian language.
- For example, words used for elephant -pri, pru -and for ivory -pirus in the ancient Persian records were originally derived from 'plu', a proto-Dravidian term for the mammal.
- Similarly, several Indic words refer to the 'Salvadora persica' as pilu.
 - Salvadora Persica is better known as the toothbrush tree in the western world and as 'Miswak' in Arabic-speaking countries, since its branches are used as natural toothbrushes).
 - This suggests that just like the elephant word- pilu, the name used for the tree too is rooted in the proto-Dravidian word for tooth.

1.43 UPHEAVAL IN MEGHALAYA

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, a former militant of the Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC), was killed in a police encounter that has led to a crisis in Meghalaya.

Background:

- Meghalaya shares a border with Bangladesh and has seen decades of migration from the neighbouring country as well as from other parts of India - Bengal, Punjab and Bihar.
- This has sparked anxieties of indigenous communities who feared becoming a "minority in their own homeland" because of the influx of "outsiders".
- It was a culmination of these "anti-outsider sentiments" that led to the formation of Meghalaya's first militant group, the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALP), in 1992.

- Hynniewtrep represented the Khasi and Jaintia communities and Achik represented the Garo community.
- HALC was later divided and HNLC came into being that represented the Khasi and Jaintia communities and the AchikMatgrik Liberation Army that represented the Garo community.
- The AchikMatgrik Liberation Army was later replaced by the Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC).
- HNLC claimed to represent only the interest of Khasi Communities, whereas, the AchikMatgrik Liberation Army demanded a separate state for the Garo community.

Present Status of militancy in Meghalaya:

- The ANVC since 2004 has been under an extended ceasefire agreement with the government while the HNLC has been trying to talk peace with the government but on a conditional basis.
- Over the last several years, militancy in Meghalaya was seen as declining.
 - In 2018, the Centre withdrew the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from Meghalaya after almost 27 years of witnessing a decline by 80% in insurgency-related incidents.

1.44 INDIA'S HIGHEST HERBAL PARK INAUGURATED NEAR INDO-CHINA BORDER

WHY IN NEWS?

India's highest herbal park, at a height of 11,000 feet, was inaugurated near Indo-China border at Mana village in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand.

Aim of the high-altitude herbal park

This high-altitude herbal park was inaugurated with the aim of conserving various medicinally and culturally important alpine species and to conduct research on propagation and habitat ecology of these species.

Where it was developed?

The Park has been developed on the area of three acres in Mana Village. The land was given by Mana Van Panchayat. It was developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department.

How it was developed?

This Park was developed in three years under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) scheme of the central government.

About the Herbal Park

Herbal Park comprises of 40 species which are found in high altitude alpine areas in Indian Himalayan region. Many of these species are categorized as endangered and threatened in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list as well as by the State Biodiversity Board. Park comprises of several important medicinal herbs also. Park was inaugurated by the Sarpanch of Mana Van Panchayat.

Four sections of park

Park has been divided into four sections:

- **First section**– It comprises of species associated with Badrinath (lord Vishnu) including Badri Tulsi, Badri Tree, Badri Ber, and sacred tree of Bhojpatra.
- **Second section**– It is dedicated to Ashtavarga species. This species is a group of eight herbs that are found in the Himalayan region.
- **Third section**– It comprises of Saussurea species and includes Brahmakamal which is the state flower of Uttarakhand.
- **Fourth section**– It comprises of assorted alpine species such as Ateesh, Meethavish, Choru and Vankakdi

1.45 PM-KUSUM AND ROOFTOP SOLAR PROGRAMME PHASE-II

WHY IN NEWS?

The Ministry of New and Renewable (MNRE) has conducted a review of implementation of Prime Minister's Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam UtthanMahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) scheme and Rooftop Solar Programme Phase-II and suggested measures for expansion of the schemes.

About PM-KUSUM:

- The PM-KUSUM scheme was launched by the MNRE in 2019, to support installation of off-grid solar pumps in rural areas and reduce dependence on grid, in grid-connected areas.
- The objective of the scheme is to enable farmers to set up solar power generation capacity on their barren lands and to sell it to the grid.
- The government's Budget for 2020-21 expanded the scope for the scheme with 20 lakh farmers to be provided assistance to install standalone solar pumps; another 15 lakh farmers to be given help to solarise their grid-connected pump sets.

Intended Benefits of the PM- KUSUM Scheme:

Helping Farmers:

- It ensures water-security to farmers by providing a day-time reliable source of power for irrigation activities.
- It also incentivises the farmers to sell surplus solar energy to the states, which in turn will augment their income.

Helping Environment:

- If farmers are able to sell surplus power, they will be incentivised to save power and, in turn, it will mean the reasonable and efficient use of groundwater.
- Also, expansion of the irrigation cover by providing decentralized solar-based irrigation and moving away from polluting diesel.

Helping Discoms:

- As farmers will be less dependent on subsidized electricity, the PM KUSUM scheme will support the financial health of electricity distribution companies (discoms) by reducing the burden of subsidy to the agriculture sector.
- Help them meet the RPO (Renewable Purchase Obligation) targets.

Helping States:

- Promotes decentralised solar power production, and reduces transmission losses.
- A potential way to reduce their subsidy outlay towards irrigation.

About Rooftop Solar Programme Phase II:

- The aim is to achieve a cumulative capacity of 40,000 MW from Rooftop Solar Projects by the year 2022.
- In a grid-connected rooftop or small Solar Voltaic Panel system, the DC power generated from the Solar Voltaic panel is converted to AC power using the power conditioning unit and is fed to the grid.
- This scheme is being implemented in the states by distribution companies (DISCOMs).
- The MNRE is providing a 40% subsidy for the first 3 kW and 20% subsidy beyond 3 kW and upto 10 kW of solar panel capacity.

Objectives of the Rooftop Solar Programme:

- To promote the grid-connected SPV rooftop and small SPV power generating plants among the residential, community, institutional, industrial and commercial establishments.
- To mitigate the dependence on fossil fuel based electricity generation and encourage environment-friendly Solar electricity generation.
- To create an enabling environment for investment in the solar energy sector by the private sector, state government and the individuals.
- To create an enabling environment for the supply of solar power from rooftop and small plants to the grid.
- Therefore, the installation of rooftop solar will bring down the electricity consumption of the households and save electricity expenditure.

1.46 UTTARAKHAND’S NARAYANKOTI TEMPLE: ADOPT A HERITAGE PROJECT

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, the Narayankoti temple (Uttarakhand) has been included under the Centre's Adopt a Heritage project.

Adopt a Heritage Project:

About:

- Launched on 27th September, 2017 (World Tourism Day), it is a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State/UTs Governments.

Aim:

- To develop tourism amenities at heritage/ natural/ tourist sites spread across India to make them tourist friendly, in a planned and phased manner.

Narayankoti Temple:

- The temple is a group of ancient temples, about 2 km from Guptkashi on the Rudraprayag-Gaurikund highway.
- This is the only place in the country which has nine planetary temples in a group that are a “symbol of nine planets”.

- It is devoted to Lakshmi Narayana who is associated with Pandavas.
- It is believed that these temples were constructed in the 9th century.

1.47 TUNGABHADRA DAM

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, the Vice President visited the Tungabhadra dam in Karnataka.

About:

- Tungabhadra dam also known as Pampa Sagar is a multipurpose dam built across Tungabhadra River in Hosapete, Ballari district of Karnataka. It was built by Dr. Thirumalai Iyengar in 1953.
- Tungabhadra reservoir has a storage capacity of 101 TMC (Thousand Million Cubic feet) with catchment area spreading to 28000 square kms. It is about 49.5 meters in height.

Importance:

- It is the life-line of 6 chronically drought prone districts of Bellary, Koppal and Raichur in Karnataka (popularly known as the rice bowl of Karnataka) and Anantapur, Cuddapah and Kurnool in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.
- Besides irrigating vast patches of land in the two states, it also generates hydel power and helps prevent floods.

1.48 FARIDABAD SMART CITY 'ROPES IN' COMIC BOOK ICON CHACHA CHAUDHARY TO AID MISSION

WHY IN NEWS?

- Faridabad Smart City Limited has roped in an unlikely collaborator to help promote its initiatives on social media – comic hero Chacha Chaudhary. The social media campaign's objective will be to promote the steps taken by the agency.
- The initiative will involve excerpts of Talking Comics. Each social media post will depict Chacha Chaudhary and Sabu, his loyal sidekick, guiding and teaching people on effectively using the infrastructure put in place.
- The objective of the social media campaign would be to promote the steps the agency had taken, including the installation of CCTVs for surveillance, traffic rules, road safety, and waste management.

1.49 YUKTDHARA: NEW PORTAL LAUNCHED UNDER GEOPORTAL BHUVAN

WHY IN NEWS?

The government launched a new geospatial planning portal called 'Yuktdhara' under Bhuvan. It was launched by Giriraj Singh, Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

About Yuktdhara

- This new portal will help in facilitating new MGNREGA assets with the help of remote sensing as well as geographic information system-based data.
- Portal will also serve as a repository of geotags that have been created under several national rural development programmes such as MGNREGA, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Integrated Watershed Management Programme, Per Drop More Crop etc along with field photographs.
- It integrates several thematic layers and multi-temporal high resolution earth observation data with the analysis tools. Using these tools, planners will be able to analyse previous assets under schemes and would facilitate in identifying new works using online tools.
- Yuktdhara-based plans would be prepared by grassroot functionaries. Plans would later be verified by appropriate authorities for the purpose of relevance and resource allocation.

How this portal was named?

The name Yuktdhara is very apt. Word 'Yukt' has been derived from Yojanam, the planning while 'Dhara' indicates the flow.

Who planned for this portal?

Launch of the portal is culmination of joint efforts of ISRO and Ministry of Rural development towards realising the requirement of G2G service for rural planning in order to support the decentralized decision making.

Geoportal Bhuvan

Geoportal Bhuvan is a rich information base of ISRO. It provides satellite images and analytical capabilities. It has thus become a de-facto geospatial platform for several developmental planning activities across India

1.50 HINDUSTAN-228 CIVIL AIRCRAFT

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) carried out a successful ground run and low speed taxi trials of a commercial aircraft "Hindustan-228" (Do-228).

About Hindustan-228 (Do-228):

- The 19-seater Do-228 is the first major attempt in India to develop a small civil transport aircraft after the 14-seater Saras Aircraft development program at the National Aeronautics Laboratory (NAL) was shelved in 2009 on account of multiple problems in its development.
- However, the NAL has been pitching SARAS Mk-2 (19-seater aircraft) for the government's UDAN, since it has the capacity to operate in "ill-equipped", "semi-prepared" and "unpaved airstrips".
- It is built on the existing frame of the German Dornier 228 defence transport aircraft used by the defence forces.
- Two civil Do-228 produced by HAL for launch under UDAN scheme have a maximum take-off weight of 6200 kgs.
- It is equipped with a digital cockpit which will ensure more accurate readings, precise information and required data displays with feedback loops and capability for self-check to alert pilots in emergencies.

- It is conceived to be a multirole utility aircraft capable of being used for VIP transport, passenger transport, air ambulance, flight inspection roles, cloud seeding, and recreational activities like para jumping, aerial surveillance, photography, remote sensing and cargo transport.
- With a maximum cruise speed of 428 kmph and a range of 700 kmph the aircraft is capable of night flying.
- HAL is looking forward to exporting the aircraft as well to countries like Nepal.

UDAN Scheme:

- UdeDesh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) was launched as a regional connectivity scheme under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2016. It is an innovative scheme to develop the regional Aviation market.
- Small civilian aircrafts are considered to be an essential element of the UDAN.
- The objective of the scheme is to create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.
- The scheme envisages providing connectivity to un-served and underserved airports of the country through the revival of existing air-strips and airports. The scheme is operational for a period of 10 years.
- Under-served airports are those which do not have more than one flight a day, while unserved airports are those where there are no operations.
- Financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and under-served airports, and keep airfares affordable.
- About 325 routes and 56 airports including 5 heliports and 2 water aerodromes have been operationalised under the scheme.
- On the commencement of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (India@75)', the Ministry of Civil Aviation proposed about 392 routes under UDAN 4.1 bidding process.
- The UDAN 4.1 focuses on connecting smaller airports, along with special helicopter and seaplane routes. Some new routes have been proposed under the Sagarmala Seaplane services.
- Sagarmala Seaplane Services is an ambitious project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways with potential airline operators.

1.51 ASSAM CELEBRATES WANCHUWA FESTIVAL 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

- Tiwa tribesmen perform their traditional dance as they take part in Wanchuwa Festival in Assam. This festival is celebrated by Tiwa tribesmen to mark their good harvest. It comes with songs, dances, a bunch of rituals and people clad in their native attires.
- Tiwa is also known as Lalung is an indigenous community inhabiting the states of Assam and Meghalaya and are also found in some parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. They are recognized as a Scheduled tribe within the state of Assam. They practice Jhum or shifting cultivation.

1.52 UNION MINISTER ANURAG THAKUR TO KICK-OFF 'ICONIC WEEK' CELEBRATIONS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Union minister for information and broadcasting Anurag Thakur has kicked off a series of activities to celebrate the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' starting August 23. The series of events will go on till August 29.
- The activities organised by the ministry will aim to 'showcase the convergence of the values and glories of the freedom struggle of the past with the aspirations and dreams of a young, new and iconic India'.
- Thakur kicks off the 'Iconic Week' which attract participation from across the country under the overall spirit of 'Jan Bhagidari and Jan Andolan'. During the Iconic Week, the ministry showcases the journey of new India and celebrate the contribution of freedom fighters, including the 'Unsung Heroes of the freedom struggle, through massive outreach activities.

1.53 INDIA'S EVACUATION MISSION FROM AFGHANISTAN NAMED AS 'OPERATION DEVI SHAKTI'

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has given a name to India's complex mission of evacuating its citizens from war-torn Afghanistan, as 'Operation Devi Shakti'.
- The name of the operation was known when External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar mentioned it in a tweet on August 24 while referring to the arrival of a fresh batch of 78 evacuees in Delhi.
- India began the complex evacuation mission by airlifting 40 Indians from Kabul to Delhi on August 16, a day after the Taliban seized control of the Afghan capital city. So far, India has evacuated over 800 people amid a deteriorating security situation in Kabul and scramble by various nations to rescue their citizens.

1.54 MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI LAUNCHES 'SUJALAM' CAMPAIGN

WHY IN NEWS?

- Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched a '100 days campaign' named SUJALAM to create more and more Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus villages by undertaking wastewater management at the village level.
- The Campaign would help in the management of the wastewater and in turn, would help to revive the water bodies through the creation of 1 million Soak-pits and also other Greywater management activities. The campaign started on August 25, 2021, is part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.

The three focus areas of the SUJALAM campaign are:

- Construction of 1 million soak pits;
- Retrofitting of toilets and
- Access to toilets for new households.

1.55 BHARAT SERIES (BH-SERIES): NEW REGISTRATION MARK

Government of India has introduced a new registration mark under the Bharat Series (BH-Series) for new vehicles.

About:

- New registration mark was launched in order to facilitate seamless transfer of vehicles.
- This citizen-centric, IT-based solution for vehicle registration was launched for facilitating mobility.
- Background

Government as well as private sector employees undergo station relocation. Such movements create unease for the employees with respect to the transfer of registration from parent state to another state. This is so because, section 47 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 provides that a person cannot keep the vehicle for more than 12 months in any state other than the state where vehicle is registered. Instead, a new registration can be made with the new state- registering authority within 12 months. Considering this difficulty, new BH-series were launched.

About BH-series

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways launched the BH-series to facilitate seamless transfer of vehicles.
- Vehicle with this registration mark will not require assignment of any new registration mark when owner of the vehicle shifts from one state to other.
- Vehicle registration facility under this series will be available on voluntary basis to Defense personnel, employees of Central or State Government, Central or State Public Sector Undertakings and private sector companies or organizations, having their offices across four or more States or Union territories.
- Motor vehicle tax will be levied for two years or in multiple of two. After completing fourteenth year, this tax will be levied annually and it will be half the amount that was charged earlier for that vehicle.

1.56 UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER LAUNCHES NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION CAMPAIGN FOR FARMERS

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Minister for Agriculture has launched the National Food and Nutrition Campaign for the farmers.

About National Food and Nutrition Campaign for the farmers:

- Organized by: Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- Objectives of the campaign:
 - To make agriculture and farmers connected with new technology
 - To expertise in production and also ensure products are of better quality and meet global standards.

- To attract farmers towards cultivating costly crops.

1.57 THEMATIC POSHAN MAAH TO BE CELEBRATED IN SEPTEMBER

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development have planned to organise and celebrate Thematic POSHAN Maah in September 2021.

About POSHAN Abhiyaan

POSHAN Abhiyaan is the flagship programme of government of India to improve nutritional outcomes for pregnant women, lactating mother, children and adolescent Girls. This mission was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of International Women's Day on March 8, 2018. POSHAN stands for "Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition" Abhiyaan. This mission was announced in Budget 2021-2022.

Aim of the Mission

POSHAN Abhiyaan divert the attention of country towards the problem of malnutrition and address it in a mission-mode. This mission focuses on the aims of POSHAN Abhiyaan, Mission Poshan 2.0. it seeks to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes in order to develop practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity on disease as well as malnutrition.

Jan Andolan

POSHAN Abhiyaan is a Jan Andolan or People's Movement. It incorporates inclusive participation of public representatives of local bodies, government department from States or UTs, Public & Private sector and social organizations.

POSHAN Maah

POSHAN Maan is celebrated in the month of September to ensure community mobilization and bolster people's participation. In the year 2021, as India celebrates Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, this month has been subdivided into weekly themes with a focused and assimilated approach to improve holistic nutrition. It will broadly focus on Plantation Drive for POSHAN VATIKA at Gram Panchayats, Anganwadis, School Premises etc. Saplings of nutritious fruit trees, local vegetables and medicinal plants & herbs will be planted as a part of celebration

1.58 Y-BREAK APP LAUNCHED BY AYUSH MINISTRY

WHY IN NEWS?

Union AYUSH Ministry launched a Y-Break App from Vigyan Bhawan

About:

- It was launched by Union AYUSH minister, SarbanandaSonowal.
- On the occasion, several bouquets of activities and campaigns was launched by Ministry of Ayush to commemorate Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Apart from Y-Break App, a year-long campaigns like cultivation of medicinal plants in farmland, distribution of medicinal plants to households and sensitisation of School & College going students on Ayush systems were launched.
- This week-long activities & campaigns will start from August 30 to September 5.
- These activities will be launched with the aim of reaching to remote areas in India and address all categories of our population viz., children, old people, farmers and corporate.
- **Activities and Campaigns**

Activities launched by AYUSH Ministry comprises of:

- Cultivation of medicinal plants on 75,000 hectares of land to benefit farmers.
- Launch of the Y-Break App.
- Five-minute Yoga protocol for office goers.
- Distribution of Ayush prophylactic medicines, focusing specially on people aged above 60 years age group.
- AyushAapkDwarProgramme to take taking medicinal plants to the doorstep of 75 lakh families in the year 2021.
- Series of sensitisation lectures & distribution of IEC material to school and college students
- Webinar on Y-break application.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav is a series of events being organised to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence. Events are being organised by government of India and it will be celebrated as a Jan-Utsav in the spirit of Jan-Bhagidari.

1.59 TOY-TRAIN SAFARI LAUNCHED ON DARJEELING HIMALAYAN RAILWAY ROUTE

WHY IN NEWS?

The Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR) has launched a regular Jungle Tea Toy Train Safari on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Route.

About:

- Toy-train safari will run from Siliguri junction to Rongtong station in West Bengal.
- This is the NRF's second attempt to attract tourists and improve tourism business in Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR).
- Existing direct DHR Toy train service was discontinued for one and a half years due to covid-19 pandemic

Existing toy train services

- The heritage toy train services, launched earlier, started again in between New Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling in West Bengal. The service was halted for 17-month amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Currently, one train is running between New Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling, each day to cover a distance of 88kilometres.
- The train climbs from New Jalpaiguri (100 metres above sea level) to Darjeeling (2,200 metres above sea level).
- Steepness of the route was the most challenging part for the train. To tackle this challenge, oops and zig-zags were incorporated along the train route.
- In order to gain altitude while going up the hill, this train moves forward, reverses and moves forward again.
- DHR toy train is a UNESCO World Heritage site as it was declared by the UN body on December 5, 1999.

Tea Toy Train by NFR

Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR) launches tea toy train from Siliguri West Bengal to Rongtong, regularly. Such trains feature a heritage steam engine and view dome dining car. Tourists take in the spectacular views of Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary and surrounding hills from trains.

Significance of the Train

The toy trains are expected to boost the tourism sector in the region. Locals will be having the opportunity to participate in weekend tours regularly.

1.60 CJI RAMANA TO ADMINISTER OATH OF OFFICE TO 9 NEW SC JUDGES

WHY IN NEWS?

The Chief Justice of India (CJI), NV Ramana, will administer oath of office to Nine new judges, including three women on August 31, 2021.

About:

- Three out of these nine new judges namely, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice PS Narasimha, are in line to become the CJI.
- With the addition of 9 judges, total strength of the Supreme Court would increase to 33 out of the sanctioned strength of 34, including the CJI.
- This will happen for the first time in the history of Supreme Court when nine judges will take oath of office in one go.
- Swearing-in ceremony would be held in auditorium of the Supreme Court's additional building complex as opposed to oath in CJI's courtroom.

Background

A collegium of Supreme Court recommended the names of these nine judges on August 17, 2021 for appointment as judges of the Apex court. President Ram Nath Kovind then signed the warrants of their appointment.

Women Judges

The apex court has appointed very few women judges since its inception. In over 71 years, only eight women judges have been appointed till date. First women judge was **M Fathima Beevi**, appointed in 1989. Justice Indira Banerjee is the lone serving woman judge in the supreme court after her elevation on August 7, 2018.

Appointment of SC Judges

The President of India appoints the Judges of the Supreme Court. The CJI is appointed by the President following a consultation with judges of the Supreme Court as well as high courts (HCs). Other judges of the SC are appointed by the President following a consultation with the CJI and such other judges of the SC and the HCs. The consultation with CJI is obligatory for appointment of judges other than Chief justice.

1.61 PM DEDICATES RENOVATED COMPLEX OF JALLIANWALA BAGH SMARAK TO THE NATION

WHY IN NEWS?

To pay homage to Jallianwala Bagh brave hearts, PM dedicated renovated complex of Jallianwala Bagh Smarak to the nation. PM also inaugurated Museum Galleries at the Smarak.

What is Jallianwala Bagh massacre?

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre also known as the Amritsar Massacre took place on 13th April 1919 under the command of General Dyer who ordered firing against the protestors who were gathered at Jallianwala Bagh to condemn the arrest of two national leaders Satya Pal and Saifuddin Kitchlew.

Why April 13 is special?

- It is the celebration of Baisakhi, a spring harvest festival.
- It marks the establishment of "Khalsa Panth" by the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, which had the objective of "Sarbat da Bhala" (blessings for everyone).

NATIONAL PRACTICE MCQS:

QUESTION1: Muslim Women Rights Day was observed in India on -

- A. July 25
- B. July 28
- C. July 31
- D. August 1

QUESTION2: 'Devaranya' scheme to promote Ayurveda has been launched by which state?

- A. Rajasthan
- B. Bihar
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Madhya Pradesh

QUESTION3: Which city has become India's first city to provide quality drinking tap water?

- A. Ahmedabad
- B. Puri
- C. Gandhinagar
- D. Varanasi

QUESTION4: 'Garima Grihas' are proposed to be set up by the government of India to assist-

- A. transgender persons
- B. destitute women
- C. old aged persons
- D. orphaned children

QUESTION5: Which city in India has become the only city from the country to be selected for International Clean Air Catalyst Programme?

- A. Puri
- B. Bhopal
- C. Indore
- D. Jaipur

QUESTION6: Which state has become the first state in the country to provide one per cent reservation for the transgender community in all the government services?

- A. Kerala
- B. Goa
- C. Manipur
- D. Karnataka

QUESTION7: The Pink Protection project for the protection of women in public, private and digital spaces has been launched by-

- A. Karnataka
- B. Madhya Pradesh
- C. Manipur
- D. Kerala

QUESTION8: 'RashtriyaVayoshri Yojana' comes under the ambit of which ministry?

- A. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare
- B. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- C. Ministry of Finance
- D. Ministry of Labour and Employment

QUESTION9: Operation Blue Freedom is associated with-

- A. saving critical marine species
- B. promoting hydrogen fuel
- C. rehabilitating people with disabilities
- D. providing technical support to aquaculture farmers

QUESTION10: Pandit DeenDayal Upadhyay Unnat Krishi Shiksha Yojana (PDDUUKSY) comes under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Education
- B. Ministry of Labour and Employment
- C. Ministry of Skill Development
- D. Ministry of Agriculture and FarmersWelfare

QUESTION11: Forest Rights Act, also known as Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act was passed in-

- A. 2004
- B. 2005
- C. 2006
- D. 2003

QUESTION12: With respect to education, SAFAL stands for-

- A. Study Attendance, Fair and Actualised Learning
- B. Structured Assessment for Analysing Learning
- C. Simple and Functional Aspects of Learning
- D. none of the above

QUESTION13: Article 21A is associated with which of the following?

- A. Right to equality
- B. Right to religious freedom
- C. Right against exploitation
- D. Right to education

QUESTIO14: Aryan Valley is located in-

- A. Jammu and Kashmir
- B. Sikkim
- C. Arunachal Pradesh
- D. Himachal Pradesh

QUESTION15: Which city has become the first Indian city to achieve 100 per cent COVID-19 vaccination?

- A. Jaipur
- B. Panaji
- C. Bhubaneswar
- D. Chandigarh

QUESTION16: The Lushai Hills are spread across which states in India?

- A. Manipur and Mizoram
- B. Manipur and Nagaland
- C. Manipur and Assam
- D. Nagaland and Assam

QUESTION17: SabkiYojnaSabka Vikas campaign comes under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Rural Development

B. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

C. Ministry of Agriculture

D. Ministry of Panchayati Raj

QUESTION18: 'Project Himank' is a project of the Border Road Organisation being implemented in-

A. Ladakh

B. Sikkim

C. Himachal Pradesh

D. Arunachal Pradesh

QUESTION19: Of the total 1,023 fast track special courts, approved by cabinet, how many are exclusive POCSO courts?

A. 765

B. 489

C. 534

D. 389

QUESTION20: Section 433A of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) seen recently in news, is associated with-

A. remission of sentence of prisoners

B. abetment to suicide

C. murder

D. none of the above

QUESTION21: Which one of the following states do not come under Inner Line Permit system?

A. Arunachal Pradesh

B. Manipur

C. Tripura

D. Mizoram

QUESTION22: Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan Scheme is implemented under supervision of-

A. Ministry of Rural Development

B. Ministry of Panchayati Raj

C. Ministry of Home Affairs

D. Ministry of Electronics and IT

QUESTION23: Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur KushaltaSampannHitgrahiYojana(PM-DAKSH) is being implemented by which ministry?

A. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

B. Ministry of Skill Development

C. Ministry of Education

D. Ministry of Home Affairs

QUESTION24: Project Hirak, seen often in news, is run by-

A. Indian Army

B. Border Roads Organisation

C. Defence Research and Development Organisation

D. Ministry of Skill Development

QUESTION25: Bids have been called for the largest global tender for a 13 gigawatt-hours (GWh) grid-scale battery storage system, to be set up in-

A. Chambal valley

- B. Andaman Islands
- C. Rann of Kutch
- D. Ladakh

QUESTION26: The second phase of Ujjwala scheme will be launched from which of the following districts of Uttar Pradesh?

- A. Varanasi
- B. Mahoba
- C. Lucknow
- D. Agra

QUESTION27: Which union territory has recently got its first Animal DNA Laboratory?

- A. Puducherry
- B. Delhi
- C. Chandigarh
- D. Lakshdweep

QUESTION28: A study 'Serendipitous Covid-19 Vaccine-Mix in Uttar Pradesh, India: Safety and Immunogenicity Assessment of a Heterologous Regime' was conducted by-

- A. Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)
- B. World Health Organisation
- C. Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)
- D. none of the above

QUESTION29: Which state has become the first state in the country to issue the order of implementation of the National Education Policy-2020?

- A. Kerala

- B. Karnataka
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Rajasthan

QUESTION30: National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) comes under which ministry?

- A. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- B. Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- C. Ministry of Science and Technology
- D. Ministry of Education

QUESTION31: Kakori Train incident took place in which year?

- A. 1924
- B. 1925
- C. 1922
- D. 1928

QUESTION32: Under the Swachh Survekshan 2021, which city has now been declared as India's first water plus city?

- A. Indore
- B. Bhopal
- C. Bhubaneswar
- D. Panaji

QUESTION33: Which state has become the first one to recognise forest resource rights in Urban Region?

- A. Chhattisgarh
- B. Jharkhand

- C. Maharashtra
- D. Karnataka

QUESTION34: “Biplobi Bharat”, seen recently in news, is-

- A. an upcoming museum
- B. all-India running train
- C. all India sports event
- D. none of the above

QUESTION35: Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti initiative is touted to be worth-

- A. Rs 20 lakh crore
- B. Rs 50 lakh crore
- C. Rs 100 lakh crore
- D. none of the above

QUESTION36: Girls were first allowed in Sainik schools in which state?

- A. Punjab
- B. Haryana
- C. Tamil Nadu
- D. Mizoram

QUESTION37: Which day would now be observed as “Partition Horrors Remembrance Day”?

- A. August 12
- B. August 13
- C. August 14
- D. August 15

QUESTION38: An online portal named TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services) to provide filmed lectures/courses

and e-study material for social defence, has been launched by-

- A. Ministry of Education
- B. Ministry of Home Affairs
- C. Ministry of Youth Affairs and sports
- D. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

QUESTION40: Ujjwala scheme is associated with-

- A. providing free gas connection
- B. providing led lights to poor
- C. providing free ration during pandemic
- D. none of the above

QUESTION41: World Sanskrit Day in 2021 was celebrated on-

- A. August 22
- B. August 23
- C. July 24
- D. July 25

QUESTION42: What is the old name of the city of Somnath?

- A. Veraval
- B. Palghat
- C. Saket
- D. Belgaum

QUESTION43: The first site at which Indus Valley civilisation was discovered was-

- A. Mohenjodaro
- B. Lothal
- C. Harappa

D. Rakhigarhi

QUESTION44: Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council is a militant organisation active in-

- A. Manipur
- B. Meghalaya
- C. Mizoram
- D. Tripura

QUESTION45: India's highest herbal park was inaugurated near Indo-China border in which state/UT?

- A. Ladakh
- B. Uttarakhand
- C. Arunachal Pradesh
- D. Sikkim

QUESTION46: PM-KUSUM scheme is associated with-

- A. soil health quality
- B. gas cylinder provision to poor
- C. toilet construction
- D. solar energy use in agriculture

QUESTION47: The Narayankoti temple, recently included under the Centre's Adopt a Heritage project is situated in-

- A. Himachal Pradesh
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Haryana
- D. Uttarakhand

QUESTION48: Tungabhadra dam also known as Pampa Sagar is a multipurpose dam situated in-

- A. Maharashtra
- B. Karnataka
- C. Telangana
- D. Andhra Pradesh

QUESTION49: Which smart city has roped in comic hero Chacha Chaudhary to help promote its initiatives?

- A. Delhi
- B. Indore
- C. Faridabad
- D. Amritsar

QUESTION50: 'Yuktdhara' launched recently by government, is a

- A. trilateral defence exercise
- B. geospatial planning portal
- C. exhibition remembering the defence martyrs
- D. none of the above

QUESTION51: Hindustan-228 Civil Aircraft has been recently developed by-

- A. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- B. Defence Research and Development Organisation
- C. Bharat Dynamics Ltd.
- D. none of the above

QUESTION52: Wanchuwa Festival is celebrated by _____ tribe found mainly in Assam.

- A. Tiwa
- B. Karbi
- C. Deori
- D. Dimasa

QUESTION53: The 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' event is started from August 23 and will continue till-

- A. August 26
- B. August 27
- C. August 28
- D. August 29

QUESTION54: India's Evacuation Mission from Afghanistan is named as-

- A. Operation Rahat
- B. Operation Maitri
- C. Operation Devi Shakti
- D. none of the above

QUESTION55: A '100 days campaign' named SUJALAM to create more and more Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus villages has been launched by-

- A. Ministry of Jal Shakti
- B. Ministry of Rural Development
- C. Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- D. Ministry of Health and Family welfare

QUESTION56: Government of India has introduced a new registration mark under which series for new vehicles?

- A. Bharat
- B. Hindustan

- C. Prakrit
- D. none of the above

QUESTION57: National Food and Nutrition Campaign for the farmers was organised by-

- A. Food and Agriculture Organization
- B. Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- C. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- D. none of the above

QUESTION58: PoshanMaah is celebrated every year since 2018 in the month of-

- A. July
- B. August
- C. September
- D. March

QUESTION59: Y-break App launched recently is associated with-

- A. Yoga
- B. Year-long education planner for students
- C. ease traffic at choke points
- D. none of the above

QUESTION60: A regular Jungle Tea Toy Train Safari on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Route has been recently launched by-

- A. Northeast Frontier Railways
- B. Eastern Railway
- C. East Central Railway
- D. none of the above

QUESTION61: The first woman judge appointed to Supreme Court of India was-

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| A. Ruma Pal | 22. D |
| B. Sujata Manohar | 23. A |
| C. M Fathima Beevi | 24. B |
| D. Gyan Sudha Misra | 25. D |
| | 26. B |
| | 27. B |
| | 28. C |

QUESTION62: Protestors had gathered at Jallianwala Bagh to condemn the arrest of -

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| A. Bhagat Singh | 29. B |
| B. Mahatma Gandhi | 30. A |
| C. Satya Pal and Saifuddin Kitchlew | 31. B |
| D. Rabindra Nath Tagore | 32. A |
| | 33. A |
| | 34. A |
| | 35. C |
| | 36. D |
| | 37. C |
| | 38. D |

ANSWER KEY:

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 39. A |
| 2. D | 40. A |
| 3. B | 41. A |
| 4. A | 42. C |
| 5. C | 43. B |
| 6. D | 44. B |
| 7. D | 45. D |
| 8. B | 46. D |
| 9. C | 47. B |
| 10. D | 48. C |
| 11. C | 49. B |
| 12. B | 50. A |
| 13. D | 51. A |
| 14. A | 52. D |
| 15. C | 53. C |
| 16. A | 54. A |
| 17. D | 55. A |
| 18. A | 56. B |
| 19. D | 57. C |
| 20. A | 58. A |
| 21. C | 59. A |
| | 60. C |
| | 61. C |

CivilsTap Himachal

1.62 INDIA TO TAKE OVER AS PRESIDENT OF UNSC FOR AUGUST

WHY IN NEWS?

From August India will be the president of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the month and then the nation will host various events in the three major areas of fight against terrorism, maritime security and peacekeeping.

About:

- S. Tirumurti India's permanent representative to the UN will hold a press conference on the Security Council's work plan for the month.
- He will also provide a briefing to UN member states which are currently not permanent members of the Council on its work for the month.
- On January 1, 2021 India's two-year term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council began. The August presidential term will be India's first chairmanship during its non-permanent membership of the Security Council in 2021-22.
- India will again chair the Council in December next year, which is the last month of its two-year term.
- During India's presidency, the nation will be hosting various high-level events in the three main areas of counter-terrorism, maritime security and peacekeeping.
- Maritime security is India's top priority, and it is important for the Security Council to take a holistic approach to this issue.
- India is particularly focused on using better technology to ensure the safety of peacekeepers and how to bring perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers to justice.
- As a leading country in the fight against terrorism, India will continue to focus on the fight against terrorism.

About UNSC

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six main organs of the United Nations (UN). It is responsible for ensuring international peace and security, approving any changes to the UN Charter and recommending the admission of new UN members to the General Assembly. Its powers include establishing enacting international sanctions, peacekeeping operations and authorizing military operations. The UN Security Council is the only UN agency that has the authority to issue binding resolutions for member states. António Guterres is the current Secretary-general of UNSC

1.63 WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2021: 01 – 07 AUGUST

WHY IN NEWS?

- The World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is marked every year in the first week of August, between 1 to 7 August, to raise awareness on the importance of breastfeeding for mothers and infants.

- The **theme** of the World Breastfeeding Week 2021 is “Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility”. The annual week is organized by WABA, WHO and UNICEF since 1991.
- Breastfeeding provides every child with the best possible start in life. It delivers health, nutritional and emotional benefits to both children and mothers.
- And it forms part of a sustainable food system. But while breastfeeding is a natural process, it is not always easy. Mothers need support – both to get started and to sustain breastfeeding.

1.64 INDIA NOT INVITED TO ‘EXTENDED TROIKA’ MEET

WHY IN NEWS?

India has not been invited Russia led ‘extended Troika meet.

About:

- Extended Troika meet will be held on the fast-evolving situation in Afghanistan.
- Meeting is expected to be attended by Pakistan, China and the US.
- India also sought to downplay its absence stating that it engages with Russia on the issue of Afghanistan regularly.
- Extended Troika meeting is scheduled to be held on August 11 in Qatar.
- Before this meeting, talks earlier took place on March 18 and April 30.

Why this meeting will take place?

Russia led meeting will be held because Taliban is still continuing its major offensive in Afghanistan. So, Russia has stepped up its efforts in order to reach out to all key stakeholders in war-torn country so that violence can be stopped. Meeting will also give a push to Afghan peace process.

Other steps by Russia

Russia has also been holding ‘**Moscow Format**’ of talks in order to bring peace and create conditions for process of national reconciliation in Afghanistan. Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov also highlighted in Tashkent that, Russia will continue to work with India and other countries to find solution for Afghanistan.

India’ stands on Afghanistan peace process

At the last Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet in Dushanbe, India urged Taliban to abide by Moscow format, Doha process (talks in Qatar), as well as Istanbul processes (an initiative of Turkey and Afghanistan) in order to instil peace in Afghanistan. India also asked Taliban to ensure that neighbours like Iran & Central Asia are not threatened by terrorism, separatism and extremism.

In Moscow, India maintained that, basis for the India-Russia-Iran partnership followed in mid-1990s still remain valid because India asserted that, legitimacy of who ruled Afghanistan cannot be ignored.

1.65 MANGDECHHU HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN BHUTAN GETS BRUNEL MEDA

WHY IN NEWS?

- Bhutan's India-assisted Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project was conferred with the Brunel Medal awarded by the London-based Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).
- The award was given as a mark of excellence in civil engineering within the industry and was handed over by the Indian envoy to Bhutan Ruchira Kamboj to the Chairman of Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project Authority, Lyonpo Loknath Sharma.
- One of the reasons the Mangdechhu project was awarded was because of its social and environmental credentials.
- The project will reduce 2.4 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year.
- Bhutan and India in the past have collectively resolved to increase the hydropower energy capacity of Bhutan to 12000 MW.
- The Brunel Medal is historically given to major projects and organisations across the world.

1.66 11TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FORUM OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES OF SOUTH ASIA

WHY IN NEWS?

11th Annual meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) for the year 2021 was inaugurated by Chief Election Commissioner of India & Chairman of FEMBoSA, Sushil Chandra

About:

- He was accompanied by Election Commissioners Rajeev Kumar and A.C. Pandey.
- This virtual meeting was hosted by the Election Commission of Bhutan.
- Meeting was participated by delegations from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka along with India.
- During the meeting, Sushil Chandra noted that, FEMBoSA represents a very large part of democratic world. it is an active regional cooperation association of Election Management Bodies.
- He shared India's experience of conducting Assembly elections in Bihar Assam, Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry amid the COVID 19 pandemic.
- He also highlighted the importance of technological advancements and its impact on election management. Technology is extensively used to make elections more participative, accessible and transparent.
- According to him, ECI looks forward to strengthen its interaction with FEMBoSA member EMBs in order to promote activities of Forum in accordance with its objectives.

Logo of FEMBoSA

Logo of the FEMBoSA with golden pearls stands for eternal values of democracy, transparency, impartiality and cooperation.

Theme of the meeting

FEMBoSA meeting was held under the theme of 'Use of Technology in Elections'

1.67 BRICS PARTNERSHIP FOR STRENGTHENING AGRO BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

WHY IN NEWS?

Ministers of Agriculture of the BRICS countries held virtual talks on the theme “BRICS Partnership for Strengthening Agro Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition Security”.

About:

- Implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlighted that BRICS countries are well positioned to help in achieving the objectives of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of eradication of hunger and poverty.
- BRICS countries have set up a strong agricultural research base.
- It also acknowledged the sharing knowledge, transferring technologies from lab to land in order to enhance productivity, especially in the backdrop of climate change, maintaining agro biodiversity and ensuring sustainable use of natural resources.
- During the meeting, member countries discussed the Joint declaration of eleventh meeting of BRICS and Action Plan for 2021-24 for agricultural cooperation of BRICS countries and BRICS Agriculture Research Platform.
- Action Plan of 2021-24 will be endorsed by BRICS Working Group meeting for adoption in BRICS meeting.

About BRICS Agriculture Research Platform

This platform has been developed by India in order to promote cooperation in the areas of agricultural research, technology transfer, extension, training and capacity building. This platform was made functional with the objective of improving the use and application of agricultural technologies to meet the needs of producers and processors.

About BRICS

BRICS is expanded to five major emerging economies namely, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Members of the BRICS are known for their significant influence on regional affairs. Governments of the BRICS states have been meeting annually at formal summits, since 2009. Most recent BRICS Summit (12th edition) was hosted by Russia on November 17, 2020 virtually amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.68 QUAD INCLUDES TAIWAN STRAIT IN TALKS

WHY IN NEWS?

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) included Taiwan, after G7, straight in talks on August 13, 2021.

About:

- Taiwan further irritated China by publicly thanking the members of the Quad for including peace and stability in Taiwan Strait during virtual discussions on August 12.

- Biden administration is focusing and putting efforts towards developing the Taiwan Strait as a friction point with China after decades.
- US has also successfully mentioned Taiwan Strait in its joint statements with Japan and South Korea.
- Taiwan strait also found mention in the recent G-7 summit that was also attended by PM Narendra Modi.

Why inclusion of Taiwan in Quad irritated China?

Quad is considered as countermeasure against China in the Indo-Pacific region. With the inclusion of Taiwan, the grouping has strengthened its power in Indo-pacific region. China has been acting aggressively in South China Sea, East China Sea, Mekong, Himalayas and Taiwan Straits while Quad seeks to bring peace into the region.

China's aerial incursion in Taiwan

China recently conducted the largest ever aerial incursions in Taiwan in which 28 military aircraft flew into air defence identification zone of Taiwan.

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)

QUAD is a strategic dialogue between United States, Japan, Australia and India. It is maintained by talks between the member countries. This dialogue was initiated in 2007 by former Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe in collaborations with the Vice President of USA Dick Cheney, former Prime Minister of Australia John Howard and former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh. The dialogue is paralleled by joint military exercises, called Exercise Malabar, of an unprecedented scale

1.69 AFGHANISTAN PREZ ASHRAF GHANI STEPS DOWN, AS TALIBAN FORCES TAKES POWER

WHY IN NEWS?

- Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani will shortly tender his resignation, as the government has surrendered to the Taliban forces, which entered Kabul and sought the unconditional surrender of the central government.
- Following this, a new interim government has been announced, which is likely to be headed by Ali AhmadJalali, a US-based academic.
- President Ashraf Ghani fled the country as the Islamist terrorists entered the city, he wanted to avoid bloodshed, while hundreds of Afghans desperate to leave flooded Kabul airport.

1.70 INDIA-BANGLADESH: CABINET APPROVES MOU ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

WHY IN NEWS?

Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Disaster Management between India and Bangladesh that was signed in March, 2021.

- MoU was signed between National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Home Affairs of India and Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief of Bangladesh.
- MoU involves Cooperation in the field of Disaster Management, Resilience and Mitigation.

Benefits of the MoU

MoU was signed to put in place a system where both India and Bangladesh will be benefited from Disaster Management mechanisms of each other. MoU will help in strengthening preparedness, response and capacity building in the area of Disaster Management.

Features of the MoU

- It extends mutual support at the time of large-scale disaster (Natural or human induced) that will occur within their respective territories. They will help each other in the area of relief, response, reconstruction and recovery.
- It provides for exchange of relevant information, remote sensing data and scientific data. It also provided for sharing experience or best practices of disaster response, recovery, mitigation, capacity building in order to ensure resilience.
- It also extends cooperation on advanced information technology, early warning systems, response & mitigation, remote sensing & navigation services, disaster preparedness and real time data sharing.
- MoU seeks to conduct Joint Disaster Management Exercises bilaterally.
- It set up mechanism for sharing standards, latest technologies and tools in order to create Disaster Resilient Communities.
- It also exchanges publications & materials as textbooks and guidelines on Disaster Management. Countries may conduct joint research activities on Disaster management, Risk Reduction and Recovery

1.71 EAM ANNOUNCES ROLLOUT OF 'UNITE AWARE' TECH

WHY IN NEWS?

External Affairs Minister (EAM), S Jaishankar, announced the rollout of "UNITE Aware" tech to help protect UN peacekeepers.

About:

- He made this announcement at the UN headquarters in New York while he was chairing UN security council open debate on "Technology and Peacekeeping". He noted that, UN peacekeeping missions continue to operate in challenging situations involving terrorists, armed groups and non-state actors.
- Because of nature of peacekeeping has become more complex, it is significant that our capabilities are in pace to secure the peace keepers
- He highlighted that, 21st-century peacekeeping must be anchored in a strong ecosystem comprising of technology and innovation in order to facilitate UN peacekeeping operations.
- He announced India's support to UN in roll out of UNITE AWARE.

India's view

India believes in holding talks when it comes to the safety and security of UN peacekeepers. For India, peacekeeping continues to play a crucial role of ensuring international peace and security. External Affairs minister noted that, currently 5 thousand Indian personnel are deployed for nine

missions and to protect the protectors, India provides 2 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccine to vaccinate UN Peacekeeping personnel across the globe.

4-point framework

Minister proposed a 4-point framework in order to lay out a possible architecture of securing UN peacekeepers in order to meet contemporary threats. UNSC has adopted a Resolution on Accountability of Crimes against the UN Peacekeepers and Presidential Statement on Technology for Peacekeeping.

India-UN MoU

India and the United Nations signed a MoU to support the Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping initiative and to UN C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations

1.72 IAEA: IRAN HAS ACCELERATED URANIUM ENRICHMENT

WHY IN NEWS?

According to UN atomic watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran has accelerated its uranium enrichment to near weapons-grade.

About:

- IAEA notes that, this move is raising tensions with the West because both the sides want to resume talks on reviving Tehran's nuclear deal.
- Iran has increased the purity of refining Uranium from 20 percent to 60 percent in the response to the explosion and power cut at its Natanz site.
- Power cut and explosion have damaged output at the main underground enrichment plant. Iran blamed on Israel for this attack.
- As per IAEA, weapons-grade is having the purity of 90 per cent.

Background

In May, IAEA reported that Iran was using one cascade of advanced centrifuges in order to enrich up to 60 per cent at its Natanz plant. Now, IAEA notes that, Iran is now using a second cascade for that purpose.

What are the concerns?

Iran breached the restrictions that was imposed under 2015 nuclear deal. 2015 deal had capped the purity to 3.67 percent.

Iran nuclear deal 2015

Iran nuclear deal framework was signed in 2015 between the Islamic Republic of Iran and world powers including the P5+1 and the European Union. On the basis of the deal, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and P5+1 & EU was announced in Vienna on July 14, 2015.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

Formal negotiations toward JCPOA started with the adoption of Joint Plan of Action, which was an interim agreement signed in 2013 between Iran and P5+1 countries.

P5+1 countries

It refers to five permanent members of United Nations security council namely China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States; plus Germany. It is also referred as E3+3 by European countries.

1.73 WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY: 19 AUGUST

WHY IN NEWS?

- World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed every year on 19 August to pay tribute to humanitarian personnel and those workers who lost or risked their lives while doing humanitarian service. In 2021 we are celebrating the 12th WHD.
- The theme for 2021 WHD is #TheHumanRace: a global challenge for climate action in solidarity with
- people who need it the most

1.74 APPLE TOPS HURUN GLOBAL 500 MOST VALUABLE COMPANIES LIST 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

- Apple is the world's most valuable company (USD 2,443 billion) according to the Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies list 2021.
- The world's top six valuable companies remained unchanged as Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Facebook and Tencent.
- Globally, the US-led with 243 companies, up by one; followed by China 47, down by four, Japan was third with 30 and the UK was fourth with 24.
- While India is ranked 9th with 12 companies. Reliance Industries (USD 188 billion) ranked at 57 is the top Indian company in the list. As many as 12 Indian companies found a place among the Hurun Global 500 for 2021 as Wipro Ltd, Asian Paints Ltd and HCL Technologies Ltd made it to the list of 500 most valuable firms in the world, while ITC Ltd dropped out.

1.75 UAE ANNOUNCES THE WORLD'S TALLEST OBSERVATION WHEEL 'AIN DUBAI

WHY IN NEWS?

- The world's largest and tallest observation wheel is set to be unveiled in Dubai, UAE on October 21, 2021. The observation wheel called as 'Ain Dubai', is 250 m (820 ft) in height, located at Bluewaters Island.
- The record-breaking wheel is 42.5 m (139 ft) taller than the current world's tallest observation wheel, High Roller, in Las Vegas, measuring 167.6 m (550 ft).

1.76 INDIA-MALDIVES PACT ON GREATER MALE CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

WHY IN NEWS?

India and Maldives have signed pact with Maldives on one of the major connectivity initiatives called “Greater Male Connectivity Project”.

About:

- Under the agreement, India will start the largest-ever infrastructure project called Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) in the Maldives.
- For the project, India will grant \$100 million and a line of credit worth Rs 400 million.
- GMCP is the flagship project of President Solih’s presidency and will be an enduring symbol of India-Maldives partnership.
- This project will be started to connect business, people and industry.
- GMCP will comprise of the construction of a 6.74 km long bridge and causeway link. Both will connect the capital city Male with adjoining islands of Thilagushi, Villingli and Gulhifalhu.

Background

This project was planned during the visit of external affairs minister of India to Male in September 2019.

Significance of the project

Agreement over the GMCP project proves that, India is a robust development partner of the Maldives and is also the First Responder in times of any emergency in the Maldives. It is not only the biggest project by India in the Maldives but also the biggest infrastructure project overall in the Island nation. It will provide a major boost to Maldivian economy as well as the connectivity between four islands that accounts for about half of the Maldivian population.

Largest connectivity project

So far, the largest connectivity project in Maldives is the Sinamale Bridge of 1.4 km, which was completed in 2018. It was built under Chinese assistance and connects Male with Hulhule and Hulhumale.

1.77 FIRST G20 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Minister of Women & Child Development, Smriti Irani addressed the First ever G20 Ministerial Conference on Women’s Empowerment.

About:

- Conference was held at Santa Margherita Ligure, Italy in a hybrid format.
- During the conference, union minister highlighted India’s commitment of addressing gender and women centric issues by means of mutual cooperation.
- She also noted several initiatives undertaken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government in India towards bringing gender equality, strengthening women’s safety & security and ensuring better healthcare.

- He also conveyed India's solidarity with the G20 grouping in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment within the partner countries.
- She also joined the Gender Equality Ministers of the G20 for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women through cooperation and coordination at all the relevant fora.

About G20

G20 is an informal group comprising of 19 countries and the European Union besides the representatives from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Membership to G20 is a mix of world's largest advanced and emerging economies. It represents about two-thirds of world's population, 85% of world's gross domestic product, 80% of world's investment and 75% of world's trade

1.78 AUGUST 29: INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST NUCLEAR TESTS

WHY IN NEWS?

Event of International Day against Nuclear Tests is held on August 29 each year.

About:

- This event is organised with the aim of bringing about awareness regarding the harmful effects of testing nuclear weapons and calls to end such tests.
- Year 2021 marked the 12th anniversary of the event.

Background

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) established and adopted the International Day against Nuclear Tests in December 2, 2009 in its 64th session. This resolution was initiated by Kazakhstan to mark the 18th anniversary of the closing of USSR-controlled Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site in 1991 at Kazakhstan.

First nuclear test

United States Army had conducted the first nuclear test, called Trinity, in a desert site of New Mexico on July 16, 1945. This test empowered United States to drop atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. This event resulted into an estimated 200,000 casualties while the survivors suffered from cancers due to radiation. Nuclear tests by USA and USSR led to the Cold War, that continued till 1991. About 2000 nuclear test explosions were conducted in between 1945 and 1996.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

CTBT was established by UNGA in 1996. It was signed and ratified by 170 nations. 15 nations signed the treaty but did not ratify. It was not signed by 11 nations.

Significance of the Day

This day highlights the urgency of ban on all forms of nuclear weapons tests and its use by any country. The signatories of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty pledged to secure peace and security from the threat of nuclear weapons.

1.79 U.S. ENDS 20-YEAR WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

WHY IN NEWS?

The United States announced the end of its 20-year-old war in Afghanistan before the deadline of August 31, 2021

About:

- This announcement was made after the last American military flight flew out of the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul before the August 31 deadline.
- America announced the formal end of America's longest war, just before the 20th anniversary of the September 9/11, in which Al Qaeda terrorists hit the twin towers in New York.
- The 9/11 terrorist strike had forced the US to enter Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban rule who had provided safe havens to the Al Qaeda leadership.
- The Taliban rule was overthrown and replaced by US-backed Afghans. They then ruled the country for 20 years. In last 20 years several during general elections were held.
- US-backed Afghan rule was overthrown by the Taliban again on August 15 when the president Ashraf Ghani fled the country and 3,00,000 Afghan armed forces troops, who were trained by United States, gave up without any fight.
- The Taliban is now ruling Afghanistan and it welcomed the departure of the US troops from the country.

War in Afghanistan

It was a conflict, took place from 2001 to 2021, in Afghanistan. The war started with the invasion that led to the United States and its allies to topple the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan so that they could deny al-Qaeda a safe base of operations in Afghanistan. War was officially fought by allied NATO & Afghan Armed Forces against Taliban insurgents. The Taliban defeated the Afghanistan Army after majority of NATO forces left the country. This was the longest war in the history of United States.

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International news practice mcqs:

QUESTION 1: Who is the current Secretary-general of UNSC?

- A. Volker Turk
- B. Ana Maria Menendez
- C. Antonio Guterres
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 2: World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is marked every year in the first week of-

- A. May
- B. June
- C. July
- D. August

QUESTION 3: Russia's initiative 'Moscow Format' of talks is aimed to ensure peace and stability in-

- A. Afghanistan
- B. Ukraine
- C. Azerbaijan
- D. Armenia

QUESTION 4: Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project is situated in-

- A. Myanmar
- B. Tibet
- C. Bhutan
- D. Nepal

QUESTION 5: 11th Annual meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) was held with theme-

- A. Ensuring Fairness in Elections
- B. Elections-promoting Democracy
- C. Use of Technology in Elections
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 6: The last country to join BRICS grouping was-

- A. Brazil
- B. China
- C. India
- D. South Africa

QUESTION 7: Which of the following is not a member of Quad strategic dialogue?

- A. Japan
- B. India
- C. New Zealand
- D. Australia

QUESTION 8: Which Afghanistan president stepped down to pave way for rule of Taliban in the country?

- A. Hamid Karzai
- B. Abdullah Abdullah

C. Rula Ghani

D. Ashraf Ghani

QUESTION 9: India has recently approved a memorandum of understanding on disaster management with-

A. Myanmar

B. Bangladesh

C. Korea

D. Japan

QUESTION 10: UNITE Aware has been launched by-

A. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

B. Ministry of Commerce

C. Ministry of Home Affairs

D. Ministry of External Affairs

QUESTION 11: Natanz nuclear site has been recently in news. It is located in-

A. North Korea

B. Japan

C. Iran

D. Kazakhstan

QUESTION 12: World Humanitarian Day is observed every year on-

A. August 17

B. August 18

C. August 19

D. August 20

QUESTION 13: Which company is most valuable according to the Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies list 2021?

A. Apple

B. Amazon

C. Alphabet

D. Tencent

QUESTION 14: The world's largest and tallest observation wheel will be unveiled in-

A. Dubai

B. Abu Dhabi

C. Kuwait

D. Sharjah

QUESTION 15: The Islands of Thilagushi, Villingli and Gulhifalhu are part of which archipelago?

A. Maldives

B. Madagascar

C. Indonesia

D. Seychelles

QUESTION 16: First ever G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment was held in-

A. France

B. Algeria

C. Bosnia

D. Italy

QUESTION 17: International Day against Nuclear Tests is held every year on-

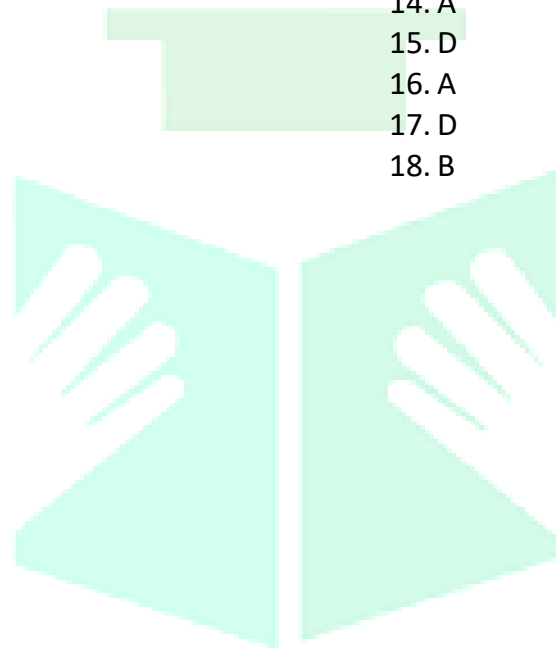
- A. August 26
- B. August 27
- C. August 28
- D. August 29

ANSWER KEY:

- 1. C
- 2. D
- 3. A
- 4. C
- 5. C
- 6. D
- 7. C
- 8. D
- 9. B
- 10. D
- 11. C
- 12. C
- 13. A
- 14. A
- 15. D
- 16. A
- 17. D
- 18. B

QUESTION 18: The US war in Afghanistan started in which year?

- A. 2000
- B. 2001
- C. 2002
- D. 2003



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1.80 PM MODI LAUNCHES ACADEMIC BANK OF CREDIT AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMME

WHY IN NEWS?

- PM Modi has launched multiple educational initiatives including the Academic Bank of Credit that will provide multiple entries and exit options for students in Higher education.
- Academic Bank of Credit is envisaged as a digital bank that holds the credit earned by a student in any course.
- Academic Bank of Credit is a major instrument for facilitating multidisciplinary and holistic education and multiple entry and exit in higher education.
- Academic Bank of Credit and the Artificial Intelligence programme to make the youth future-oriented and open the way for an AI-driven economy.

1.81 UNION MINISTER RELEASES “BIOTECH-PRIDE (PROMOTION OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION THROUGH DATA EXCHANGE) GUIDELINES

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Ministry for Science & Technology has released “Biotech-PRIDE (Promotion of Research and Innovation through Data Exchange) Guidelines”.

About Biotech-PRIDE Guidelines:

- The Biotech-PRIDE Guidelines have been developed by the Department of Biotechnology(DBT).
- Aim: The guidelines are aimed at providing a well-defined framework and guiding principle to facilitate and enable sharing and exchange of biological knowledge, information and data.
- Implementation: The guidelines will be implemented through the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC).
- Significance: The exchange of information will help in promoting research and innovation in different research groups across the country.

About BioGrid:

- Bio-Grid will be a national repository for biological knowledge, information and data and will be responsible for enabling its exchange, developing measures for safety, standards and quality for datasets and establishing detailed modalities for accessing data.

About Indian Biological Data Center(IBDC):

- The Indian Biological Data Centre(IBDC) is the first national repository for life science data in India.
- Purpose: IBDC is mandated to archive all life science data generated from publicly funded research in India.

- Supported by: The data center is supported by the Government of India (GOI) through the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).
- Location: It is being established at Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad

1.82 ATAL INNOVATION MISSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES 'ATL TINKERPRENEUR BOOTCAMP'

WHY IN NEWS?

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has successfully completed two month long and a first of its kind, digital skills and an exclusive entrepreneurship ATL Tinkerpreneur summer boot camp held across the country.

About ATL Tinkerpreneur:

- 'Tinkerpreneur' is the name derived from the phrase 'enabling students to *tinker* from the comfort of their homes and become an *entrepreneur* this summer'.
- Hence, ATL Tinkerpreneur was a bootcamp focussed on cultivating a hands-on innovative mindset among students. It was designed for high school students across the nation,
- The Bootcamp enabled the participants to develop a business idea and create an end-to-end strategy for setting up a new venture.
- Over the course of the bootcamp, the participants learnt the required digital skills, created and developed a business model around a digital product, generated a marketing plan, developed/established online store, learnt business finance and culminated it by presenting their pitch deck in front of Industry experts.

About Atal innovation mission(AIM)

- AIM was set up by NITI Aayog in 2016 to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by creating institutions and programs that enhance innovation in schools, colleges, and entrepreneurs in general.

1.83 IIT ROORKEE LAUNCHES EARTHQUAKE EARLY WARNING MOBILE APP

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian Institute of Technology in Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) launched an earthquake early warning (EEW) Mobile App for Uttarakhand.

About:

Earthquake early warning system will alert people regarding the onset of calamity on mobile application.

- It can detect onset of the Earthquake and issue warnings before significant tremors take place in state.
- This mobile app project was sponsored by Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority (USDMA).

Where it will be set up?

With the support of Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, this initiative was earlier started as a pilot project for Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. Later, it was extended by the Uttarakhand government. Under the project, sensors had been installed in high terrains of Garhwal and Kumaon regions of Uttarakhand.

How EEW provides warning?

Early warning system works on the basis of speed of the seismic waves, that propagate after release of stress from faults movement. Strong ground shaking is caused by shear waves. Shear waves travel at half speed as compared to primary waves and much slower than the electromagnetic signals. EEW system uses these waves to generate warning.

Central Server

Seismic data stream in the central server that has been established in EEW System laboratory. For data streaming, a high-speed telecommunication is used and high-performance computers compute scenario projections. Central server processes receive data continuously on 24 × 7 basis. It issues warning to public as and when detects that an earthquake of magnitude greater than 5 has occurred in earthquake prone areas. Warning time differs with the distance of any location from epicenter of the earthquake.

1.84 ESA LAUNCHED 'EUTELSAT QUANTUM' REVOLUTIONARY REPROGRAMMABLE SATELLITE

WHY IN NEWS?

- European Space Agency (ESA) launched 'Eutelsat Quantum', the world's 1st commercial reprogrammable satellite into space aboard Ariane 5 rocket from French Guiana. It is a fully flexible software-defined satellite.
- The satellite has been developed under a European Space Agency partnership project with satellite operator Eutelsat, Airbus & Surrey Satellite Technology.
- Eutelsat Quantum is a UK flagship project with most of the satellites developed and manufactured by British industry.
- Airbus is the prime contractor and was responsible for building the satellite's innovative payload, while Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd manufactured the new platform. The innovative phase array antenna was developed by Airbus in Spain.

1.85 INDIA'S FIRST BIO-BANK FOR HEART FAILURE RESEARCH INAUGURATED AT SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

WHY IN NEWS?

The first National Heart Failure Biobank (NHFB) in India was inaugurated at the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Thiruvananthapuram.

About Biobank:

- A biobank is a collection of biological samples (such as blood) and health information.
- It can be used to understand molecular pathways and to improve the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of diseases.

About National Heart Failure Biobank (NHFB):

- National Heart Failure Biobank(NHFB) is the first heart failure Biobank in the country that would collect blood, biopsies, and clinical data as a guide for future diagnosis and treatment of Heart Failure Patients.
- The biosamples collected by the biobank will include the blood, serum, tissue samples obtained during open-heart surgery and peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs) and genomic DNA collected from heart failure patients.
- The samples will be collected after informed consent from patients who are willing to donate specimens.
- Moreover, the biobank activity will be supervised by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with a member from the Indian Council of Medical Research(ICMR).

What was the need for National Heart Failure Biobank (NHFB)?

- Heart failure (HF) is emerging as a major health problem in India, with a reported mortality of nearly 60% at five years, which is higher than many common cancers.
 - Hence, there was a need for more research in the field of Heart Failure(HF) and it was in this background that the heart failure biobank was inaugurated.
- This Biobank will help in providing insights into heart diseases and heart failure among Indian children and adults, which are very different from that seen in the West.
- The facility will also be useful for the research and treatment of post-covid heart failure.

1.86 ZYDUS CADILA'S NEEDLE-FREE COVID-19 VACCINE TO GET APPROVAL

WHY IN NEWS?

India is to get its sixth Covid-19 vaccine soon as drug firm Zydus Cadila's needle-free Covid-19 vaccine called 'ZyCoV-D' is all set to get emergency use authorisation (EUA) approval.

About:

- Presently, Indian government has authorised five vaccines for Covid-19 namely, Covaxin, Covishield, Sputnik V, Moderna's vaccine, and J&J's single-dose vaccine.
- Zydus Cadila applied for emergency use authorisation (EUA) with Indian drug regulator for its three-dose COVID-19 vaccine and has planned to manufacture 10-12 crore doses annually.
- Company conducted largest clinical trial for its COVID-19 vaccine in India at over 50 centres.
- For the first time, this vaccine was tested in the adolescent population aged 12-18 years age group in India.
- Around 1,000 subjects were enrolled under this age group.
- Vaccine was found to be safe and very well tolerated.

Who will authorise the vaccine in India?

Company applied for emergency use authorisation (EUA) with office of the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for plasmid DNA vaccine called ZyCoV-D..

New Facility for manufacturing

A new facility to manufacture ZyCov-D was set up at July end to produce vaccine at scale. Zydus Cadila has invested Rs 400 crore to Rs 500 crore to develop this vaccine.

Efficacy of the vaccine

In the interim analysis, Zydus Cadila is found to be 66.6 percent efficient for symptomatic RT-PCR positive cases. No moderate case of COVID-19 disease was observed after administering third dose. It suggests, 100 percent efficacy against moderate disease. Further, no severe cases or deaths due to occurred after second dose of this vaccine

1.87 ISRO: COUNTDOWN FOR LAUNCH OF EOS-03 SATELLITE STARTS

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) informed that, countdown for launch of Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F10 EOS-03 mission has started.

Union minister of state (MoS), Jitendra Singh, recently confirmed in Lok Sabha that the Earth Observation Satellite-03 is scheduled to be launched on August 12.

About GSLV-F10 EOS-03 mission

- Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F10 (GSLV-F10) will launch Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-03) on August 12 from second launch pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota.
- EOS-03 is a state-of-the-art agile Earth observation satellite. It will be placed in the Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit by GSLV-F10.
- Satellite will reach to the geostationary orbit using its onboard propulsion system.
- Satellite will also carry a 4-metre diameter Ogive-shaped payload for the first time in this GSLV flight.
- This will be the fourteenth flight of GSLV.

1.88 GSLV-F10 FAILURE: ISRO'S EOS-03 SATELLITE MISSION

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) suffered the loss of an important earth observation satellite (EOS-03) during launch when the GSLV rocket carrying it malfunctioned about five minutes from the lift-off.

About the EOS-03:

- It was capable of imaging the entire country four to five times every day.
- It was riding on a GSLV rocket (GSLV-F10), which has a new payload carrier designed to significantly reduce aerodynamic drag and thus carry larger payloads.
- The rocket was supposed to deposit the satellite in the geostationary transfer orbit, from where the satellite's onboard propulsion system will guide it to a geostationary orbit, 36,000 km from earth's surface.
- Geostationary transfer orbit is a circular orbit positioned approximately 35,900 km above Earth's equator and having a period of the same duration and direction as the rotation of the Earth.

- An object in this orbit will appear stationary relative to the rotating Earth

1.89 UNION MINISTER RELEASES 'INDIGAU' SNP BASED CHIP FOR CONSERVATION OF CATTLE BREEDS

WHY IN NEWS?

Union Minister of Science & Technology has launched "IndiGau".

About:

- IndiGau is India's first Cattle Genomic Chip for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.
- Developed by: National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), Hyderabad, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology.

Significance of IndiGau Chip:

- Firstly, IndiGau is purely indigenous and the largest cattle chip in the world. It has 11,496 markers (SNPs) more than that placed on 777K Illumina chips of US & UK breeds.
- Secondly, the chip will have practical utility in the Government's schemes to achieve the goal of conservation of our own breeds with better characteristics and help towards doubling farmers income by 2022.

About SNP Chip:

SNP stands for Single Nucleotide Polymorphism. It is a type of DNA microarray which is used to detect polymorphisms within a population.

SNP chips are DNA microarrays that test genetic variation at many hundreds of thousands of specific locations across the genome. SNP chips have proven to be excellent for studying common genetic variation, which can be used to assess ancestry as well as predisposition to many complex multifactorial diseases.

1.90 SCIENTISTS DEVELOP NON-INVASIVE BIO-NANOCARRIER VISCERAL LEISHMANIASIS THERAPY

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian researchers have developed a non-invasive, easy to administer, cost-effective, and patient compliant potential therapeutic strategy against Visceral Leishmaniasis.

About Leishmaniasis:

1. The leishmaniasis are a group of diseases caused by protozoan parasites. These parasites are transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected female phlebotomine sandfly, a tiny – 2–3 mm long – insect vector.
2. Types: There are three main forms of this disease:
 - Cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL)
 - Visceral leishmaniasis (VL), also known as kala-azar, and
 - Mucocutaneous leishmaniasis (MCL)

3. CL is the most common form, VL is the most severe form and MCL is the most disabling form of the disease.

About Visceral Leishmaniasis(VL):

1. Visceral Leishmaniasis(VL) is also known as kala-azar. The disease is characterized by irregular bouts of fever, substantial weight loss, swelling of the spleen and liver, and anaemia.
2. It is a neglected tropical disease that affects millions annually, making it the second most common parasitic killer after malaria.
3. If the disease is not treated, the fatality rate in developing countries can be as high as 100% within 2 years.

Treatment of VL:

1. The conventional treatment therapy of VL mainly involves painful intravenous administration. This imposes many treatment complications, including prolonged hospitalization, high cost, and high risk of infection.
2. On the other hand, Oral drug delivery brings forth massive advantages that can help overcome these barriers. But with oral routes have potential high renal toxic side effects.
 - To overcome this, scientists have developed a method based on nano carrier-based oral drugs coated with Vitamin B12. This method can mitigate challenges and drug-associated toxicity.

1.91 UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER INAUGURATED THE WORLD'S SECOND-LARGEST REFURBISHED GENE BANK

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has inaugurated the world's second-largest refurbished state-of-the-art National Gene Bank at the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), Pusa, New Delhi.

About National Gene Bank:

1. National Gene Bank was established in 1996. It aims to preserve the seeds of Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) for future generations in the form of seeds, genomic resources, pollen etc.
2. Hosted By: National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi.
3. Capacity: Presently, the Gene Bank is protecting 4.52 lakh accessions, of which 2.7 lakh are Indian germplasm and the rest have been imported from other countries.
 - Germplasm is a live information source for all the genes present in the respective plant. It can be conserved for long periods and regenerated whenever it is required in the future.

About National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources(NBPGR):

1. The National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources(NBPGR) was established in 1977 by renaming the National Bureau of Plant Introduction as NBPGR.
2. Parent Institute: It is one of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institutes.
3. Mandate: To act as the nodal institute at the national level for acquisition, management and genomics-based profiling of indigenous and exotic plant genetic resources (PGR). The PGR is collected for food and agriculture and to carry out related research and human resources development for sustainable growth of agriculture.
4. Headquarters: New Delhi.
5. Significance: NBPGR is meeting the need of in-situ and ex-situ germplasm conservation through Delhi Headquarters and 10 regional stations in the country.

1.92 WHO FORMS ADVISORY GROUP NAMED “SAGO”

WHY IN NEWS?

- World Health Organization (WHO) has created a new advisory group named, The International Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens, or SAGO.
- The function of SAGO will be to systematically study the emergence of future emerging pathogens with pandemic potential, and advise the development in this regard to WHO.
- WHO has made an open call for nominations to SAGO from the member countries, thus providing a transparent foundation for the new scientific advisory group. The group will also work towards finding the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

1.93 INDIA’S FIRST DRONE FORENSIC LAB COMES UP IN KERALA

WHY IN NEWS?

- India’s first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center has come up in Kerala. The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan was inaugurating the State police department’s ‘Drone Forensic Laboratory’ at the Kerala State Police CyberDome.
- Cyberdome is a technological research and development centre of the Kerala Police Department.
- The centre will help in keeping a watch over unauthorized drones and also for the production of drones for the use of the police force. This lab-cum-research centre will look into both utility and threat aspects of a drone.

1.94 DCGI APPROVES ZYCOV-D VACCINE FOR EMERGENCY USE AUTHORIZATION

WHY IN NEWS?

The Drug Controller General of India (DGCI) has approved ZyCoV-D vaccine by Zydus Cadila for Emergency Use Authorization.

About:

- According to Ministry of Science and Technology, ZyCoV-D vaccine is the world’s first and India’s indigenously developed DNA-based vaccine for COVID-19.
- It will be administered to humans including children and adults aged 12 years and more.

Who developed ZyCoV-D?

Zydus Cadila developed this vaccine in partnership with the Department of Biotechnology under Mission COVID Suraksha. It will be implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

About ZyCoV-D

It is a **three-dose, DNA plasmid-based** COVID-19 vaccine. When it is injected into body, it produces spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and evokes an immune response. It thus, plays a key role in protection from disease and viral clearance.

Can the vaccine deal with mutations?

Plasmid DNA platform of the vaccine is based on plug-and-play technology. It can be easily adapted to deal with mutations among virus.

Efficacy of the vaccine

The Phase-3 Clinical Trials for the vaccine was conducted in over 28 thousand volunteers. Result showed primary efficacy of 66.6 per cent in symptomatic RT-PCR positive cases. This was the largest vaccine trial in India for COVID-19, as of now. Vaccine had already exhibited robust immunogenicity, tolerability and safety profile in adaptive Phase I and 2 clinical trials. Phase 1, 2 and 3 clinical trials were monitored by an independent Data Safety Monitoring Board.

About Zydus Cadila

Zydus Cadila is also known as Cadila Healthcare Limited. It is an Indian multinational pharmaceutical company with its headquarter in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. This company is primarily engaged in manufacturing generic drugs. Ramanbhai Patel founded this company in 1952.

1.95 DIKSHA SHINDE-14-YR-OLD PANELLIST ON NASA'S MSI FELLOWSHIP

WHY IN NEWS?

Diksha Shinde, who is a 14-year-old girl in Aurangabad, was selected as a panellist on Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Fellowships Virtual Panel of American Space Agency, NASA.

About:

- She wrote a theory on black holes. It was liked and accepted at NASA.
- Her research paper on 'We Live in Black Hole?' was accepted by International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research in May 2021.
- She won the research competition that was organised by International Astronomical Search Collaboration.
- She has been selected as a panellist for 2021 MSI Fellowships Virtual Panel in June.
- She will get training at NASA when she will turn 18. She will also attend a conference which will be held in October 2021. NASA will bear all her expenses.

Background

Initially, she suffered two major setbacks. She had submitted an essay on the title 'Questioning the existence of God' in September 2020. But this essay was rejected. She submitted the same research paper in October again which NASA rejected again. Her paper was accepted in third attempt.

What will be her job?

Her job include:

- Reviewing proposals submitted by researchers and
- Describing a collaborative approach to research with NASA and
- Understanding connection between proposed research area student's academic discipline pursuit.

Minority Serving Institute (MSI)

MSI is a descriptive term used for universities and colleges that enroll significant percentage of students coming from minority groups in the higher education system of United States.

1.96 BPCL LAUNCHES AI-ENABLED CHATBOT 'URJA'

WHY IN NEWS?

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) launched (after pilot test) an AI-enabled chatbot, named Urja to provide its customers with a platform for seamless self-service experience and faster resolution of queries/issues.
- URJA is the first such chatbot in the oil and gas industry in India. URJA has been launched under the Project Anubhav of BPCL and it currently supports 13 languages.
- With the objective of making BPCL's customer interface comprehensive and integrated digitally, Urja, the chatbot is now available on the company website for any queries for both B2B & B2C.
- Under Project Anubhav, Urja represents an integrated communication platform that connects all BPCL communication to any channel, unifying all customer touchpoints with a single and cohesive voice.

1.97 IIT MADRAS DEVELOPS INDIA'S FIRST INDIGENOUS MOTORISED WHEELCHAIR NEOBOLT

WHY IN NEWS?

- IIT Madras has developed India's first indigenous motorized wheelchair vehicle named 'NeoBolt', which can be used not only on roads but even on uneven terrains. It has a maximum speed of 25 kmph.
- The researchers collaborated extensively with organisations and hospitals working for people with locomotor disabilities and built the products after factoring in their experiences and making constant design adjustments.
- IIT Madras said the wheelchair will be available to users at an approximate price of ₹55,000.
- It is powered by a Lithium-Ion Battery and can travel up to 25 km per charge. It empowers wheelchair users with a convenient, safe and low-cost mode of outdoor mobility when compared to cars, auto-rickshaws or modified scooters.

1.98 QSIM- INDIA'S FIRST QUANTUM COMPUTER SIMULATOR TOOLKIT

WHY IN NEWS?

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has launched the India's first 'Quantum Computer Simulator (QSim) Toolkit'

About:

- QSim is the first-of-its-kind toolkit, indigenously developed in India.
- It meant to be a vital tool of learning and understanding the practical aspects of programming with the help of Quantum Computers. It will thus bring about a new era of Quantum Computing research in India.
- This toolkit has been developed jointly by scientists of IIT Roorkee, C-DAC and IISc Bangalore.
- It was developed with the support and funding of MeitY.

About the toolkit

- This toolkit was launched in order to enable researchers and students to do research in Quantum Computing in a cost-effective manner.
- It allows researchers and students to write and debug Quantum Code which is essential to develop Quantum Algorithms.
- It can serve as the essential educational and research tool to provide an excellent way to attract students and researchers towards the Quantum Technology.
- QSim creates a platform which will help students and users to acquire skills of programming and designing real Quantum Hardware.

Key features of the QSim

Most unique feature of QSim is its Intuitive User Interface. This interface offers a robust Quantum Computer Simulator along with a Graphical User Interface based Workbench in an integrated manner in order to create Quantum programs and visualize instant circuit generation simulated outputs.

1.99 NEW AY.12 SUB-LINEAGE OF DELTA VARIANT

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian states have reported new cases of sub-lineage AY.12 of SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant, in recent months. According to experts, this new sub-lineage could be a reason behind the recent surge in COVID cases in Israel.

About:

- According to India Sars Cov2 Genome Consortium (INSACOG's) update, even though 60 percent of the population are fully vaccinated in Israel, Delta variant cases have increased.
- The number of Delta Family has expanded from four to 13 variants.
- In India, most widely prevalent variant of concern is being dubbed as sub-lineage AY.12.

What is AY.12 mutation?

Delta variant (B.1.617.2) has given rise to several sub-lineages and are dubbed as 'Delta Plus' variants. Delta plus variant bear most of its characteristic mutations but in different ways. Out of all, sub-lineages AY.12 has all the characteristic Delta mutations. However, according to INSACOG, it is not yet clinically tested whether AY.12 is different from Delta or B.1.617.2. AY.12 has lost some of the mutations as it happens in Delta lineage.

First case of AY.12

In India, first case of AY.12 lineage was reported on September 7, 2020. Till August 26, 2021, 44,083 sequences of the same lineage have been reported worldwide. In India, out of total 78865 samples; 67699 samples have been sequenced and 50869 of them have been analysed. Although, in India, only 0.002 of the samples available have been sequenced

AY.12 in Israel

AY.12 is a dominant strain in Israel, currently. Around 51 percent of the samples were tested with this variant.

About Delta Variant

Delta variant is also known as lineage B.1.617.2 and Indian variant. This was first detected in 2020 in India. The variant was named as its current form by World Health Organization (WHO) on May 31, 2021.

1.100 SPACEX LAUNCHED ANTS, AVOCADOS, ROBOTIC ARM TO SPACE STATION

WHY IN NEWS?

SpaceX launched shipments of ants, avocados, human-sized robotic arm toward the International Space Station on August 29, 2021.

About:

- The delivery of shipments is due to arrive on August 30, 2021.
- It will be SpaceX's 23rd mission for NASA in a decade.
- The Dragon is carrying more than 2,170 kilograms of supplies and experiments as well fresh food like avocados, lemons and ice cream for seven astronauts of the space station.
- The Girl Scouts have sent ants, brine shrimp and plants as test subjects.
- University of Wisconsin-Madison scientists sent seeds from mouse-ear cress which is a small flowering weed used in genetic research.
- Samples of concrete, solar cells and other materials will be subjected to weightlessness.

Falcon Rocket

Recycled Falcon rocket was blasted into predawn sky from Kennedy Space Center of NASA. The first-stage booster was landed on newest ocean platform called "A Shortfall of Gravitas" of SpaceX, after hoisting the Dragon capsule. The booster-recovery vessel was named so, in tribute to the late science fiction writer Iain Banks and his Culture series.

Robotic arm

Dragon is also carrying a robotic arm by a Japanese start-up company. It will attempt to screw items together in its orbital debut as well as perform other mundane chores that are normally done by astronauts. The first tests will be conducted inside the space station. According to the company, a squad of these arms could help in building lunar bases and mine the moon for precious resources as early as 2025.

1.101 WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

WHY IN NEWS?

Russia issued a warning about the possibility of rise in cases of West Nile Virus infections this autumn because mild temperatures and heavy precipitation are the favourable circumstances for mosquitos carrying the virus.

About:

- More than 80% of West Nile fever cases are registered in the southwest Russia.
- According to the reports, human cases of the mosquito-borne West Nile virus were increasing in North Dakota region of Russia.
- So far, five people have confirmed cases.

What is West Nile virus?

It is a single-stranded RNA virus causing West Nile fever. Virus is the member of family Flaviviridae, which also comprises the Zika virus, dengue virus, as well as yellow fever virus. This virus is primarily transmitted through mosquitoes and mostly by species of Culex. Primary hosts of the virus are birds. Genetically, the virus is related to the Japanese encephalitis family. Humans and horses both exhibit disease symptoms from this virus. First human case of the disease was reported in 1937 in Uganda and now it is the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in continental United States.

Origin of the virus

West Nile virus was originated in Africa. It has now spread to Europe, Asia, and North America. Virus is mostly transmitted by mosquito bites, causing a deadly neurological condition in humans.

When does this disease mostly occur?

Most of the West Nile virus cases occur during mosquito season, starts in the summer and lasts until the fall.

Symptoms of the disease

Majority of people (8 out of 10) infected with West Nile virus do not exhibit any symptoms. Some infected people develop fever along with symptoms like headache, body aches, joint pains, rash, vomiting or diarrhoea.

CivilsTap Hlmachal

Science and technology practice mcqs:

QUESTION 1: The Academic Bank of Credit for higher education will store-

- A. credits earned by students
- B. information on students' loan
- C. doctorate thesis
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 2: Indian Biological Data Centre is being established at Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB), which is located at-

- A. Gurugram
- B. Mumbai
- C. Faridabad
- D. Hyderabad

QUESTION 3: Atal innovation Mission (AIM) comes under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Education
- B. NITI Ayog
- C. Department of Science and Technology
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 4: An earthquake early warning (EEW) Mobile App for Uttarakhand has been recently launched by which institution?

- A. IIT Roorkee
- B. IIT Ropar
- C. IIT Madras
- D. IIT Bombay

QUESTION 5: The world's 1st commercial reprogrammable satellite, 'Eutelsat Quantum' has been launched by-

- A. NASA
- B. European Space Agency
- C. JAXA
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 6: The first National Heart Failure Biobank (NHFB) in India was inaugurated at-

- A. Mumbai
- B. Chennai
- C. Thiruvananthapuram
- D. Kochi

QUESTION 7: Which drug firm has applied for emergency use approval of needle-free Covid-19 vaccine?

- A. Moderna
- B. Pfizer
- C. Sun Pharma
- D. Zydus Cadila

QUESTION 8: Satish Dhawan Space Centre is located at-

- A. Thiruvananthapuram
- B. Bangalore
- C. Sriharikota
- D. Chennai

QUESTION 9: Geostationary transfer orbit is a circular orbit positioned approximately _____ above Earth's equator.

- A. 360 km
- B. 3,590 km
- C. 35,900 km
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 10: National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology is based out of-

- A. Delhi
- B. Bangalore
- C. Mumbai
- D. Hyderabad

QUESTION 11: Leishmaniasis group of diseases, are caused by-

- A. viruses
- B. bacteria
- C. fungi
- D. protozoan

QUESTION 12: National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) has its headquarters at-

- A. Hyderabad
- B. New Delhi
- C. Mumbai
- D. Bangalore

QUESTION 13: The International Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens, or SAGO has been created by-

- A. World Health Organization
- B. United Nations Environment Programme
- C. Indian Council for Medical Research
- D. Doctors Without Borders

QUESTION 14: India's first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center has come up in-

- A. Kerala
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Karnataka
- D. Tamil Nadu

QUESTION 15: Which of the following is the world's first DNA-based vaccine for COVID-19?

- A. Sputnik
- B. ZyCoV-D
- C. Covaxin
- D. Covishield

QUESTION 16: Who has been selected as a panellist on Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Fellowships Virtual Panel of American Space Agency, NASA?

- A. Subhadra Kumari Chauhan
- B. G C Murmu
- C. Diksha Shinde
- D. Radhakishan Damani

QUESTION 17: Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) has recently launched Urja, which is a -

- A. chatbot
- B. fuel purity standard
- C. a portable cylinder
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 18: India's first indigenous motorized wheelchair vehicle named 'NeoBolt' has been developed by-

- A. IIT Delhi
- B. IIT Ropar
- C. IIT Roorkee
- D. IIT Madras

QUESTION 19: India's first 'Quantum Computer Simulator (QSim) Toolkit' has been developed jointly by scientists of _____, C-DAC and IISc Bangalore.

- A. IIT Madras
- B. IIT Roorkee
- C. IIT Bombay
- D. IIT Delhi

QUESTION 20: Delta variant of CoVID-19, also known as lineage B.1.617.2 was first detected in-

- A. Brazil
- B. Israel
- C. India
- D. UK

QUESTION 21: Falcon rocket system is launch vehicle of which private space company?

- A. Blue Origin
- B. SpaceX
- C. Arca
- D. Virgin Galactic

QUESTION 22: West Nile virus is mainly transmitted by-

- A. sandflies
- B. culex mosquitoes
- C. bats
- D. rodents

ANSWER KEY:

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. C
7. D
8. C
9. C
10. D
11. D
12. B
13. A
14. A
15. B
16. C
17. A
18. D
19. B
20. C
21. B
22. B

1.102 VICE ADMIRAL SN GHORMADE: NEW VICE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF

WHY IN NEWS?

Vice Admiral S.N. Ghormade took over as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff from Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar on Saturday, who retired after 39 years of service.

About:

- Vice-Admiral Ghormade was appointed to the Navy on January 1, 1984 and is an expert in navigation and direction specialist.
- He was awarded the AtiVishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) by the President in 2017 and the Nausena Medal in 2007 by commendation of then chief of the Naval Staff.
- During Vice Admiral Kumar's tenure, the Navy had seen an increase in budget allocations with 100% utilization of the allocated budget with a capital acquisition boost.

Other news

The Navy's INS Airavat rescued a fishing boat floating near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. According to the Navy, as part of Ops Samudra Setu II, INS Airavat passed through the area on its way back from Jakarta when it received a distress signal from SalethMatha II near the Carnicobar Islands, Andaman and Nicobar at 2300 on Friday. INS Airavat is towing the ship to the nearest port.

1.103 DEEPAK DAS TAKES CHARGE AS NEW CONTROLLER GENERAL OF ACCOUNT

WHY IN NEWS?

- Deepak Das has taken over as the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on August 01, 2021. Prior to assuming charge of CGA, Mr Das served as the Principal Chief Controller of Accounts in the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).
- Deepak Das, a 1986-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS) officer, is the 25th officer to hold the position of CGA. CGA is the account keeper of the government and derives its mandate from Article 150 of the Constitution.
- It reconciles the cash balance of the centre with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) apart from consolidating monthly accounts; preparing trends of revenue realization and expenditures as well as annual accounts of the central government.

1.104 WORLD MASTERS GOLD MEDAL WINNER MAN KAUR PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- Multiple World Masters Championship gold medallist and multiple Asian Masters Championship medallist athlete 105-year-old, Man Kaur passed away.

- She started running and won her first medal in Chandigarh Masters Athletics meet in 2007 before she won the gold in 100 m as well 200 m race in the National Masters Athletics meet in 2011.
- Kaur would become the 100 m and 200 m champion in the World Masters Athletics Championships in the USA and was also adjudged the best athlete.
- But it was her feat of becoming the champion in the 100 m in the 100+ category in the World Masters Athletics Championships in Auckland in 2017, which got her into the limelight.

1.105 PADMA SHRI AWARDEE PADMA SACHDEV PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- Padma Shri awardee and noted author Padma Sachdev, the first modern woman poet of Dogri language, passed away. She received the Padma Shri, the country's fourth-highest civilian award, in 2001 and was awarded the Kabir Samman for poetry for 2007-08 by the Madhya Pradesh government.
- She authored many books in Dogri and Hindi, and her poetry collections, including 'Meri Kavita Mere Geet', won her the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1971.

1.106 DHRITI BANERJEE: 1ST WOMAN DIRECTOR OF ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (ZSI)

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian government approved the appointment of Dr. Dhriti Banerjee as new director of ZSI.

About:

- Dhriti Banerjee is a prolific scientist. She had been conducting research in zoogeography, taxonomy, morphology and molecular systematics.
- She will take charge of Zoological Survey of India in a week.
- She has worked as the co-ordinator of ZSI's Digital Sequence Information Project, since 2012.
- While sharing her experience and achievement, she mentioned that women scientists in ZSI had been conducting regular surveys by examining faunal diversity from Himalayas to deep sea. About 60% of the new species have been discovered by women scientists.

About Zoological Survey of India

Zoological Survey of India was founded in July 1916. It is headquartered in Kolkata. It comprises of 16 regional centres and works under the ministry of environment, forests and climate change. It was set up as premier Indian organisation in zoological research. It studies and promote survey, explore & research of fauna in India.

Background

History of ZSI starts from the days of Asiatic Society of Bengal which was founded by Sir William Jones on January 15, 1784. Asiatic Society of Bengal was the mother institution to Indian Museum (1875), Zoological Survey of India as well as Geological Survey of India. Establishment of ZSI was a

fulfilment of dream of Sir William Jones. Asiatic Society had started to collect zoological and geological specimens since 1796.

When ZSI started hiring women?

ZSI started hiring women scientists in 1949. Mira Mansukhani was the first women employee of ZSI.

1.107 EBRAHIM RAISI SWORN IN AS NEW PRESIDENT OF IRAN

WHY IN NEWS?

- Ebrahim Raisi was officially sworn in as the new president of Iran on August 05, 2021. He won the 2021 Iranian presidential election in June, with 62 per cent of the vote. The 60-year-old Raisi succeeds Hassan Rouhani to begin his four-year term. He is also been the Chief Justice of Iran since March 2019.
- Raisi's inauguration comes at a pivotal time, with Iran currently in indirect negotiations with the United States over how to revive the 2015 nuclear agreement.
- Raisi will also face the task of reviving his country's economy, which has been battered in recent years by the previous US administration's "maximum pressure" campaign of sanctions. Tensions in the region are also high following a string of maritime provocations blamed by the West on Tehran.

1.108 VETERAN ACTOR ANUPAM SHYAM PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- Veteran actor Anupam Shyam has passed away. The actor was best known for his work on the TV show Mann Kee Awaaz: Pratigya and appearances in films like Slumdog Millionaire and Bandit Queen.
- In his nearly three-decade-long career, Shyam featured in films like Satya, Dil Se, Lagaan, HazaaronKhwaishainAisi and received critical acclaim for his role as Thakur Sajjan Singh on Mann Kee Awaaz: Pratigya which aired in 2009 on Star Plus.

1.109 KAMLESH KUMAR PANT APPOINTED NEW NPPA CHAIRMAN

WHY IN NEWS?

- Kamlesh Kumar Pant, a 1993-batch IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the new chairman of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) by the Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet.
- The pharmaceutical pricing agency was currently headed by IAS officer Shubhra Singh, who was appointed to the post in 2018. Singh has been repatriated to her cadre state Rajasthan, according to an order of the personnel ministry.
- Pant, formerly the Principal Secretary (Revenue) in the government of Himachal Pradesh and also the Financial Commissioner (Appeals) at Himachal Pradesh and the head of the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board, has taken charge of NPPA with immediate effect.

1.110 GODFATHER OF SUDOKU PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

The Godfather of Sudoku, Maki Kaji, passed away at the age of 69, due to bile duct cancer.

About:

- He was the creator of popular numbers puzzle Sudoku.
- His work was spreading the joy of puzzles.
- He created the puzzle to be easy for children and others.

Who was Maki Kaji?

Maki Kaji was the president of Nikoli Co. Ltd. It is a Japanese puzzle manufacturer. He was popularly called as “the father of Sudoku” as he played a key role in popularizing this number game. He also invented other puzzle games including Masyu. He recently (July 2021) resigned as head of Nikoli, before his death.

Background

He was born in Sapporo, Hokkaido on October 8, 1951. His father was an engineer at a telecom company while his mother was an employer of a kimono shop. He did his schooling from Shakujii High School in Sapporo. Later he studied literature at Keio University, but dropped out in his first year. After several jobs such as being a roadie, a waiter and a construction worker, he lastly started a publishing business.

About Nikoli

Nikoli was a quarterly puzzle magazine by Kaji. Magazine was named after a race horse that had won Guineas Stakes race in Ireland. Later he founded the company with same name. Nikoli magazine was the company’s main product.

About Sudoku

Sudoku is a logic-based, combinatorial, number-placement puzzle. Puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid for which a well-posed puzzle has a single solution

1.111 N. K. SINGH: NEW PRESIDENT OF INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH SOCIETY

WHY IN NEWS?

Chairman of 15th Finance Commission, NK Singh, has been elected as the new president of Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) Society.

About:

- He succeeded former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh who was the President of IEG since 1992.
- His name was recommended by Dr Manmohan Singh for the consideration of the IEG’s general assembly.
- Dr Manmohan Singh stepped down from this position for health concerns.

About Institute of Economic Growth

It is an autonomous, multidisciplinary centre that is used for advanced research and training. It was founded by VKRV Rao in 1952, but became operational in 1958. It is located at University Enclave of University of Delhi, New Delhi.

IEG's research

Research in the Institute of Economic Growth are categorized in nine broad themes—

- Agriculture and rural development,
- Environment and resource economics
- Globalisation and trade
- Industry, labour and welfare
- Macro-economic policy and modelling
- Population and development
- Health policy
- Social change and
- Social structure.

Training Programme by IEG

IEG organises regular training programmes for the trainee officers from Indian Economic Service as well as some occasional courses for officers from Indian Statistical Service, NABARD, and university teachers.

Nand Kishore Singh (N.K. Singh)

He is an economist, Indian politician, and former Indian Administrative Service officer. Since 2014, He is a senior member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He also served as Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha during 2008-2014 from Bihar for Janata Dal (United). He has been a member of Planning Commission. He was appointed as chairman of the 15th Finance Commission in 2017.

1.112 NAKUL CHOPRA APPOINTED AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BARC INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- Television monitoring agency Broadcast Audience Research Council (Barc) has announced the appointment of Nakul Chopra as its chief executive officer (CEO) effective 25 August 2021.
- Former CEO Sunil Lulla has resigned to pursue his ambition as an entrepreneur. This announcement comes as Sunil Lulla has decided to resign from the position of CEO to pursue his entrepreneurial ambitions.
- Chopra had joined the BARC India Board in 2016 and had been elected as the Chairman during 2018-19. In January 2020, he was appointed as a member of BARC's Oversight Committee. The media and advertising industry veteran had earlier served as the CEO, India and South Asia of Publicis Worldwide for over a decade.

1.113 ABHAY KUMAR SINGH APPOINTED AS JOINT SECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF COOPERATION

WHY IN NEWS?

- Abhay Kumar Singh has been appointed as joint secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation. This ministry was recently formed with an aim to strengthen the cooperative movement in the country.
- The appointment of Abhay Kumar Singh has been cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by PM Modi.
- Singh, a 2004-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Bihar cadre, has been appointed as joint secretary in the ministry for a combined tenure of seven years against the newly created post

1.114 FORMER INDIA FOOTBALLER AND OLYMPIAN O CHANDRASEKHAR PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- Former India footballer O Chandrasekharan, popularly known as Olympian Chandrasekharan in his home state Kerala, passed away.
- Chandrasekharan, who played as a defender, was a member of the Indian team in the 1960 Rome Olympics the last time the country participated in football at the Games.

CivilsTap Hlmachal

SPORTS PRACTICE MCQS:

QUESTION 1: Who has been appointed as New Vice Chief of the Naval Staff?

- A. S N Gormade
- B. G Ashok Kumar
- C. Ravneet Singh
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 2: Who has recently taken over as the Controller General of Accounts (CGA)?

- A. Rakesh Asthana
- B. Ajai Puri
- C. Deepak Das
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 3: Who was the Multiple World Masters Championship gold medallist and multiple Asian Masters Championship medallist athlete, that passed away recently?

- A. Nandu Natekar
- B. Man Kaur
- C. Bhageerathi Amma
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 4: Noted author Padma Sachdev, who passed away recently was the first modern woman poet of which language?

- A. Punjabi
- B. Dogri
- C. Assamese
- D. Gujarati

QUESTION 5: Who has been appointed as new director of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)?

- A. Dhriti Banerjee
- B. Mini Ipe
- C. Rakesh Asthana
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 6: Who has been officially sworn in as the new president of Iran?

- A. Yusuff Ali
- B. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
- C. Ebrahim Raisi
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 7: Anupam Shyam, who passed away recently, was a famous-

- A. musician
- B. footballer
- C. cricketer
- D. actor

QUESTION 8: Who has been appointed as the new chairman of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)?

- A. Neeraj Chopra
- B. Rekha Sharma
- C. Kamlesh Kumar Pant
- D. Alok Verma

QUESTION 9: The Godfather of Sudoku, Maki Kaji, who passed away recently, belonged to which country?

- A. China
- B. North Korea
- C. Japan
- D. South Korea

QUESTION 10: Who has been elected as the new president of Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) Society?

- A. Manmohan Singh
- B. N K Singh
- C. Jagdish Bhagwati
- D. Surjit Bhalla

QUESTION 11: Who has been appointed as the chief executive officer (CEO) of Broadcast Audience Research Council?

- A. Abhay Kumar Singh
- B. Nakul Chopra
- C. T M Bhasin
- D. Kamlesh Kumar Kant

QUESTION 12: Who has been appointed as joint secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation?

- A. Rakesh Asthana
- B. Abhay Kumar Singh
- C. Sandeep Bakshi
- D. Nakul Chopra

QUESTION 13: O Chandrasekharan, who passed away recently, was a famous-

- A. cricketer
- B. athlete

- C. footballer
- D. musician

ANSWER KEY:

- 1. A
- 2. C
- 3. B
- 4. B
- 5. A
- 6. C
- 7. D
- 8. C
- 9. C
- 10. B
- 11. B
- 12. B
- 13. C



1.115 NEW FROG SPECIES DISCOVERED IN WESTERN GHATS, NAMED AFTER FORMER DU VICE-CHANCELLOR

WHY IN NEWS?

A team of Delhi University researchers has discovered a new frog species in the Western Ghats and has named it “MinervaryaPentali”.

About MinervaryaPentali:

- MinervaryaPentali is a new frog species from the genus Minervarya. It is also among the smallest known Minervarya frogs.
- The species was discovered from the Western Ghats. The species is endemic to the southern Western Ghats.
- The species has been named after former DU Vice-Chancellor and plant geneticist Deepak Pental.

About Minervarya:

- Minervarya is a genus of frogs in the family Dicroglossidae. The identity and taxonomic status of all known members of this genus are from Peninsular India

1.116 NEW POLYHOUSE TECHNOLOGY FOR HORTICULTURE CROPS

WHY IN NEWS?

CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute, Durgapur has inaugurated a “Naturally Ventilated Polyhouse Facility” and laid the foundation stone of “Retractable Roof Polyhouse” at Ludhiana in Punjab

Background:

- Farmers face a number of problems such as excessive or insufficient cold, heat, rain, wind, and other factors associated with insufficient transpiration.
- Transpiration is the biological process by which water is lost in the form of water vapour from the aerial parts of the plants.
- Crop loss, in the country due to insects and pests, is about 15% at present, and it may increase as climate change lowers the plant defence system against insects and pests.
- To some extent, these problems can be overcome by a conventional polyhouse.

About Conventional Polyhouse:

- A conventional polyhouse has a stationary roof to reduce the effect of weather anomalies and pests.
- However, roof covering leads to excessive heat and insufficient light (early morning) to the crops.

- Besides, they are also prone to insufficient levels of CO₂, transpiration, and water stress.
- Hence, a combination of open-field conditions and conventional polyhouse conditions is a more effective.

About Retractable Roof Polyhouse Technology:

- Retractable Roof Polyhouse Technology is an all-weather structure.
- It has an automatic retractable roof that will be operated based on weather conditions and crop requirements from the conditional database using a PLC software

1.117 ERUPTING ALASKA VOLCANOES

WHY IN NEWS?

Three remote Alaska volcanoes are in different states of eruption. One of the volcanos is producing lava while other two is blowing steam and ash.

About:

- None of the small communities surrounding the volcanoes have been affected, till now.
- Webcams on August 6 showed episodic low-level ash emissions from Pavlof Volcano.
- Following the emissions, observatory has raised volcano's threat level from yellow to orange that indicates an eruption is underway with minor volcanic ash emissions.
- Ash clouds were rising just above volcano's 2,518-metre summit and were drifting about 9.7 kilometres to the south before dissipating.
- The Pavlof Volcano was last erupted in 2016 and dropped some ash on Nelson Lagoon community of Alaska.
- The observatory also received reports from Adak community regarding a lava fountain at the summit of Great Sitkin volcano.
- Semisopchnoi Volcano also erupted at Aleutian Island.

Pavlof Volcano

It is a stratovolcano of Aleutian Range on the Alaska Peninsula. It is one of the most active in United States since 1980. It has erupted in 1980, 1981, 1983, 1986–1988, 1996–1997, 2007, 2013. It erupted two times in 2014. Its last eruption was recorded in March 2016. This volcano mostly erupts Basaltic andesite lava with 53 % SiO₂. This volcano is monitored by Alaska Volcano Observatory which is a joint program of United States Geological Survey, Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska Fairbanks and State of Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys.

Great Sitkin Volcano

It is a stratovolcano comprising of caldera and dome. It is located about 1,851 kilometres southwest of Anchorage.

Semisopchnoi Volcano

This volcano is located about 241 kilometres away on an uninhabited island at western end of Aleutian Islands. It has been erupting intermittently. On August 4, 2021 it spitted an ash cloud that went to about 3,048 metres into the air.

1.118 INDIA'S PUSH FOR SUGAR-FUELLED CARS

WHY IN NEWS?

India is pushing for cars to run on ethanol made from sugar. This move of Indian government is increasing the risks of higher cost of sweetener worldwide.

About:

- Indian government will fast-track an ethanol program. This programme will divert about 6 million tons of sugar toward fuel production annually by 2025.
- This amount to almost entire sugar that India currently exports to international market. India is the world's second-biggest producer of sugar after Brazil.

Background

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had advanced the target for blending 20% ethanol in gasoline to 2025 which is five years earlier than it was planned.

How this target will be achieved?

In order to meet the 2025 target, India is required to almost triple ethanol production by about 10 billion litres in a year. It will require \$7 billion of investment.

Challenges that India will face

- Major challenge associated with the target would be to create the kind of capacity needed in about three to four years.
- Prices of ethanol is increasing since 2017 amid a supply crunch. Prices have increased partly due to wild weather in Brazil. Further surge will increase the food inflation risks.

Advantages of ethanol blending

1. Ethanol blending will reduce air pollution.
2. It will cut India's oil import bills.
3. It will also help in soaking up domestic sugar glut and increase investment across rural areas.

How government is supporting the process?

Government is offering financial support to sugar mills in order to set up or expand distilleries. For instance, BalrampurChini Mills Ltd. will stop producing sugar at some of its mills and start processing cane juice to make ethanol.

India's strategy

India is following the Brazilian model that has promoted sugarcane-based ethanol for more than 40 years in order to increase energy security, ease its sugar glut and cut dependency on oil imports. Presently, Brazil has the largest fleet of flex-fuel cars running on any blend of ethanol and gasoline. India will also allow production of ethanol-based flex engines.

1.119 SWINHOE'S SOFTSHELL TURTLE

WHY IN NEWS?

In recent years, a lot of efforts have been put by the conservationists to save the world's most endangered turtle, Swinhoe's softshell turtle from the brink of extinction.

- The animal is also known as the Hoan Kiem turtle or Yangtze giant softshell turtle.
- In Vietnam, these animals have great cultural significance as people in Hanoi revere this creature as a living god.

About:

Scientific Name: *Rafetus swinhoei*

- These turtles are gray with light gray or yellow spots.

Significance:

- Some researchers have highlighted their importance to the seafloor biosystem, where they contribute by enriching soil nutrients and facilitating seed dispersion.

Habitat:

- The natural habitat for these turtles are wetlands and large lakes.
- Native to China and Vietnam.

Protection Status:

- IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered
- CITES: Appendix II

Threats:

- They have been driven to the brink by hunting for its meat and eggs, as well as by destruction of its habitat.

1.120 THAILAND BANS CORAL-DAMAGING SUNSCREENS

WHY IN NEWS?

Thailand has banned sunscreens comprising of chemicals that damage coral from all of its marine national parks.

About:

- Sun protection used by tourists are harming slow-growing corals in the Island nation.
- According to Thai Department of Conservation, four ingredients found in sun creams were destroying coral larvae, obstruct coral reproduction and cause reef bleaching.
- A fine of 100,000 baht will be put on people violating the rule.
- Banned lotions comprises of oxybenzone, octinoxate, 4-methylbenzylidene camphor or butylparaben.
- Similar bans have been put by Pacific Island of Palau and the US state of Hawaii.

Coral Reef

It is an underwater ecosystem, characterized by reef-building corals. Reefs are formed by colonies of coral polyps that are held together by calcium carbonate. Most of the reefs are built from stony corals. Coral belongs to the Anthozoa class in animal phylum Cnidaria. It comprises of sea anemones and jellyfish. Corals secrete hard carbonate exoskeletons. Such exoskeletons support and protect coral. Reefs are mostly grown in warm, shallow, clear, sunny and agitated water. First ever coral reefs were appeared some 485 million years ago. Corals are also called as rainforests of the sea. Corals comprises of less than 0.1% of world's ocean area. They are commonly found at shallow depths in tropical waters. In deep water and cold water, coral reefs exist on smaller scales. Great Barrier reefs of Australia is the largest reef of World.

Location of coral reefs

Coral reefs cover an area of 284,300 km² under 0.1% of oceans' surface area. Indo-Pacific region including Red Sea, Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia and Pacific makes 91.9% of 0.1% area

1.121 HOW THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED ANIMALAI FLYING FROG GOT A NEW HOME

WHY IN NEWS?

Frog enthusiast in Kerala has constructed two ponds at Windermere Estate to restore the habitat for the Anaimalai flying frog.

About Anaimalai flying frog:

- Anaimalai flying frog (*Racophorus pseudomalabaricus*) is also known as the False Malabar Gliding Frog.
- The frog is endemic to the southern part of the Western Ghats.
- Characteristics of the Anaimalai flying frog.

The frog is usually larger than bush frogs.

- Bush Frog is a species of Frog belonging to the family Rhacophoridae.
- The female can grow up to three inches. Mating takes place usually between June and October during the rainy season.
- The female creates foam nests on leaves, into which the eggs are laid and the male fertilises them.
- The outer layer of foam protects the eggs from bacteria, predators and weather changes.
- When the eggs hatch, the nest disintegrates and tadpoles drop into the water body below.

Conservation Status:

- IUCN Status: Critically Endangered

Threats:

- This species is known from at least two protected areas, Indra Gandhi National Park and Parambikulam Tiger Reserve.
- Outside the protected areas, it is threatened habitat loss caused by the conversion of forests to other uses as well as by timber extraction.

1.122 NATIONAL INNOVATIONS IN CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRICULTURE (NICRA)

WHY IN NEWS?

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare have informed Rajya Sabha about National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA).

About NICRA:

- National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) is a network project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched in February 2011.
- Aim: The project aims to enhance the resilience of Indian agriculture to climate change and climate vulnerability through strategic research and technology demonstration.
- The research on adaptation and mitigation covers crops, livestock, fisheries and natural resource management.

Objectives of NICRA:

- To enhance the resilience of Indian agriculture covering crops, livestock and fisheries to climatic variability and climate change through the development and application of improved production and risk management technologies.
- To demonstrate site specific technology packages on farmers' fields for adapting to current climate risks
- To enhance the capacity building of scientists and other stakeholders in climate resilient agricultural research and its application.

Components: The Project is composed of Four Components:

- Strategic research on adaptation and mitigation
- Technology demonstration on farmers fields to cope with current climate variability
- Sponsored and competitive research grants to fill critical research gaps
- Capacity building of different stakeholders

1.123 GERMANY BECOMES 5TH COUNTRY TO SIGN ISA FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

WHY IN NEWS?

- Germany became the 5th country to sign the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement after amendments to it entered into force on 8th January 2021, opening its Membership to all Member States of the United Nations.
- Ambassador of Germany to India Walter J. Lindner deposited signed copies of the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement with the Ministry of External Affairs, the depositary of the Agreement.
- Membership to the ISA was earlier limited to 121 countries, which were partially or entirely located within the tropics. This didn't allow major solar energy economies such as Germany to join the alliance that is being increasingly seen as a foreign policy tool.
- The initiative was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the India Africa Summit and a meeting of member countries ahead of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in

Paris in November 2015. The framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance opened for signatures in Marrakech, Morocco in November 2016.

1.124 CHINA'S PLAN TO BECOME CARBON-NEUTRAL BY 2060

WHY IN NEWS?

Industrialization in China occurred at breath-taking pace which lifted people out of poverty and transformed China into the world's factory. However, this also made China the biggest emitter of carbon dioxide. As a result, China has set the goal of becoming carbon-neutral by 2060.

What is carbon neutral?

Carbon neutral means cutting carbon dioxide emissions as large as possible and offsetting what cannot be eliminated. This can be done by switching to renewable energy sources like using solar power instead of coal.

China's goal

Despite being world's second-largest economy, China is considered as developing nation. Accordingly, it has not reached its emissions peak. By 2030, China will be committing to bring down carbon neutrality by 2060. If China gets success in it, it will be the fastest decline from peak emissions.

How China can achieve the goal?

- China requires finding replacements for fossil fuels powering its economy and rapid urbanization.
- Recently in July, China opened world's largest carbon trading market that created a framework for how emissions are priced and regulated in the nation.
- China is also expanding the use of electric vehicles and automation besides investments in nuclear power. Nuclear power doesn't emit greenhouse gases.
- It is also spending on research into technologies like storage batteries and has been using hydrogen fuel to complement low-emissions energy sources.
- Government has also directed local authorities to develop regional plans in order to lower emissions and curb wasteful uses of electricity like in Bitcoin mining.

1.125 COP-26 HEAD TO VISIT INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

President of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-26) and climate chief of United Kingdom government, Alok Sharma is to visit India in August to meet the leaders of country that has become the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases following US and China.

About:

- This visit will happen in the aftermath of India putting pressure of declaring a net zero emission goal.
- Instead, India called out countries on their carbon neutral intent announcements and termed it meaningless.
- UK is committed to work closely with partners in India to ensure successful outcome at COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.
- Earlier in 2021, COP26 President Designate, Alok Sharma, also visited India and met PM Modi.

About COP-26

COP-26 is extended as “The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference”. It is the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference, which is scheduled to be held in city of Glasgow, Scotland. It will be held from 31 October to 12 November 2021. United Kingdom holds presidency of the conference. Conference will also incorporate the 26th Conference of Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), third meeting of parties to Paris Agreement (CMA3) and 16th meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP16). During this conference, Parties are expected to commit to enhanced ambition for first time since COP21.

Venue of COP 26

Venue for the conference is SEC Centre in Glasgow. Originally it was to be held at same place in November 2020. But the event was postponed for twelve months because of COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland.

1.126 WILDFIRES IN ALGERIA

WHY IN NEWS?

Wildfires in Algeria have killed 42 people including 25 soldiers.

About:

- President of Algeria, AbdelmadjidTebboune, expressed condolences for 25 soldiers. They lost their life while rescuing people at the epicentre of the blazes.
- Areas of Bejaiea and TiziOuzou are epicentre of the blazes. Dozens of fires started in Kabyle region also.
- The Kabyle region is located 100 kilometres east of capital city Algiers. Area comprises of difficult-to-access villages and limited water.
- Algeria joins the string of countries like Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and western United States that were hit by major blazes recently.

Wildlife Fires

Forest fires are also called as bush or vegetation fire or forest fire. It can be defined as uncontrolled and non-prescribed combustion or burning of plants in natural setting like forest, brush land or tundra, grassland. It consumes natural fuels and spreads in accordance with environmental conditions such as wind or topography. Such fires can be incited by human actions like land clearing or extreme drought or by lightning.

Forest Fires in India in 2021

- In January 2021, Uttarakhand, Kullu Valley in Himachal Pradesh and Dzukou Valley at Nagaland-Manipur border witnessed prolonged wildlife fires.
- In February-March 2021, Simlipal National Park in Odisha saw a major fire.
- Bandhavgarh Forest Reserve in Madhya Pradesh and sanctuaries for Asiatic lion & great Indian bustard in Gujarat also reported wildfires in 2021.

Impact of Forest Fire

Forest fires have several adverse effects on forest cover, tree growth, soil, vegetation, flora and fauna. Fires turns hectares of forest useless and leave behind ash, which in turn make the forest unfit for any vegetation growth. Heat generated during fires damages animal habitats. It also decreases soil quality, soil moisture and fertility.

1.127 FOUR MORE INDIAN WETLANDS ADDED TO RAMSAR LIST

WHY IN NEWS?

Four more wetlands from India have been added to the Ramsar list and have been recognized as wetlands of global importance in accordance with the Ramsar Convention.

About:

- India is home to more than a dozen of threatened and near threatened bird species.
- Four sites that have been included are:
 1. Thol from Gujarat
 2. Wadhvana from Gujarat,
 3. Sultanpur from Haryana and
 4. Bhindawas from Haryana.
- These sites are home to endangered Egyptian Vulture, Sociable Lapwing, Saker Falcon, and near threatened Dalmatian Pelican.

Number of Ramsar Sites in India

With the latest addition, the number of Ramsar sites in India have reached to 46. These 46 sites cover a surface area of 1,083,322 hectares.

Why Ramsar list was created?

Ramsar list was created with the aim of developing and maintaining an international network of wetlands which are important to conserve global biological diversity and to sustaining human life by maintaining their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.

Significance of the wetlands

Wetlands play a significant role in conservation of biodiversity. They purify and replenish the ground water. They also act as a natural sponge against flooding & drought and protect our coastlines. They also play role in fighting the climate change. They act as critical carbon sinks in Urban areas and play a significant role in preventing urban flooding.

Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary

It is the largest wetland in Haryana. This human-made freshwater wetland comprises of more than 250 bird species. The bird species use the sanctuary throughout the year for resting and roosting. It also supports more than ten globally threatened species such as Steppe Eagle, endangered Egyptian Vulture, Black-bellied Tern and Pallas's Fish Eagle.

Sultanpur National Park

This Park from Haryana provides support to more than 220 species of resident, winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds.

Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

It lies on Central Asian Flyway in Gujarat. It supports more than 320 bird species and more than 30 threatened waterbird species like critically endangered white-rumped vulture, Sociable Lapwing, Common Pochard etc.

Wadhvana Wetland

It is an internationally important wetland situated in Gujarat. It is famous for its birdlife because it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, migrating on Central Asian Flyway. Some of the species include endangered Pallas's fish-Eagle, vulnerable Common Pochard, and near-threatened Dalmatian Pelican.

1.128 OLYMPIAN BAT

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, a bat amazed the scientists by flying a distance of more than 2,000 km from London to the Pskov region in northwestern Russia. The bat is dubbed as the "Olympian bat" and has generated keen interest in climate scientists.

About:

- The bat belongs to the Nathusius' pipistrelle species of bats.
- The journey is significant because it is the longest one undertaken by a bat from Britain across Europe.
- Bats belonging to the Nathusius' pipistrelle species typically weigh less than 10 grams.
- They are known to migrate from summer breeding grounds in northeastern Europe to warmer areas of the continent where they hibernate in trees in buildings.
- The 'Olympian' bat's record is topped by another bat from the same species that flew from Latvia to Spain in 2019 covering a distance of 2,224 km.
- For climate scientists, the journey is a window into studying bat migration and its connection with climate change.
- Increased variation in climatic extremes raises the possibility of bats emerging from hibernation early or at a greater frequency.
- That would not only put hibernating bats at risk from depleted energy stores, but could also affect the birth and survival of pups.
- Thus, Nathusius' pipistrelle's range expansion is linked to climate change and future changes in climate will further impact this species.

- The Bat Conservation Trust launched a project called the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project in 2014.
- The project aims to improve understanding of the ecology, current status and conservation threats for Nathusius' pipistrelles in Great Britain.
- One of the goals of this project is to determine the migratory origins of this species of bats since they might help in understanding its links to climate change.
- There is already some evidence of birds migrating early because of a warming planet.
- IUCN status of Nathusius' pipistrelle species of bats: Least concern.

1.129 ARUNACHAL'S HORNBILL IS INSPIRING — FROM FOREST GUARDS TO TRIBES, PEOPLE PROTECT NATURE

WHY IN NEWS?

- The great hornbill (*Bucerosbicornis*) is also known as the concave-casqued hornbill, great Indian hornbill or great pied hornbill.
- It is one of the larger members of the hornbill family. It is found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.
- The most prominent feature of the Great Hornbill is the bright yellow and black casque (hard structure on the head of some birds) on top of its massive bill.
- Festival: The Hornbill Festival celebrated in Nagaland is named after the bird – Hornbill, which is the most revered and admired bird for the Nagas.
- Cultural Symbol: They are the cultural symbols of some ethnic communities in the northeast, specifically the Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh.
- State Bird: Great Hornbill is the state bird of Arunachal Pradesh and Kerala.
- IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I

1.130 CANDY STICKS TO EARBUDS: GOVT BANS SINGLE-USE PLASTIC FROM 2022

WHY IN NEWS?

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021.

Main Purpose of the Rules:

- The rules aim to prohibit the use of specific single-use plastic items which have “low utility and high littering potential” by 2022.

Key Provisions of the Rules:

Range of Plastics Banned:

- The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of the following single-use plastic commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022:
- Earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene [Thermocol] for decoration;

- Plates, cups, glasses, cutlery, wrapping or packaging films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers.

The thickness of Plastic bags:

- The permitted thickness of the plastic bags, currently 50 microns, will be increased to 75 microns from 30th September 2021, and to 120 microns from 31st December 2022.
- This is because plastic bags with higher thickness are more easily handled as waste and have higher recyclability.

Plastic Wastes not banned:

- **Compostable Plastics:** The ban will not apply to commodities made of compostable plastic.
- Instead of using plastic made from petrochemicals and fossil fuels, compostable plastics are derived from renewable materials like corn, potato, and tapioca starches, cellulose, etc. These plastics are non-toxic and decompose back into carbon dioxide, water, and biomass when composted.

Plastic Packaging waste which is not covered under the phase-out of identified single-use plastic items should be collected and managed in an environmentally sustainable way through the Extended Producer Responsibility as per Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

- **Extended Producer Responsibility** is a policy approach in which producers take responsibility for the management of the disposal of products they produce once those products are designated as no longer useful by consumers

1.131 NATIONAL HYDROGEN MISSION LAUNCHED

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched National Hydrogen Mission on August 15, 2021 from Lal Quila on the occasion of celebration of 75th Independence Day. This mission was launched to push for energy security of India.

About:

- This mission was announced in the backdrop of India spending Rs 12 trillion annually to meet its energy needs.
- The mission seeks to make India a global hub for green hydrogen production and exports.
- India currently imports 85% of its oil and 53% of its gas demand.
- On the occasion, pm stressed that, for India to progress and become self-reliant, it becomes important to become energy independent.
- In the line, India is considering to make it mandatory for fertilizer plants and oil refineries to buy green hydrogen under its plans to cut dependence on fossil fuels.

How Green Hydrogen is produced?

Green hydrogen is produced by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen with the help of electrolyzer which is powered by electricity from renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

Green Hydrogen Consumption Obligation (GHCO)

Government of India has also planned to implement Green Hydrogen Consumption Obligation (GHCO) in fertilizer production and petroleum refining. It is similar to renewable purchase obligations (RPO) that require electricity distribution companies to buy a fixed amount of renewable energy. It helps to cut reliance on fossil fuels.

Hydrogen Demand in India

Total hydrogen demand in India is 6.7 million tonnes currently. It is expected to increase to 11.7 million tonnes (mt) by 2029-30.

About Hydrogen

It is a colourless, odourless gas found in Earth's atmosphere. It is used for industrial uses like petroleum refining, manufacturing of chemicals, steel, & ammonia fertilisers and aerospace applications.

How it is extracted?

Hydrogen is extracted through two methods for Industrial purposes, namely, gasification of coal or through steam methane reformation (SMR). In SMR, methane from natural gas is heated with steam to produce carbon monoxide and hydrogen, which is used as fuel. However, these methods aren't carbon-friendly and cause vast emissions of greenhouse gasses. Hydrogen produced from this method is called as brown hydrogen. While the Green hydrogen is extracted without releasing any emissions at all.

1.132 INDIA TARGET TO BECOME 'ENERGY INDEPENDENT' BY 2047

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing the nation on August 15, highlighted India's target to become 'energy independent' by 2047, when India will be celebrating 100th year of Independence.

About:

- India targets to become energy independent through a mix of electric mobility, gas-based economy and mixing ethanol in petrol.
- Prime Minister highlighted his target of making India a hub for hydrogen production.
- Currently, India spends more Rs 12 lakh crore on energy imports per year.

Roadmap to become energy independent

Roadmap for India to become energy independent include:

- Increasing usage of natural gas in the economy
- Setting up a network of CNG and piped natural gas network throughout India
- Blending 20 per cent ethanol in petrol and electric mobility.

India's current achievement

Presently, India has achieved the target of 100 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity much before the set the target.

Energy policy of India

Energy Policy of India is defined by expanding energy deficit and increased focus of India on developing alternative sources of energy like nuclear, solar and wind energy. As of 2017, India has attained 63% overall energy self-sufficiency.

Primary Energy Consumption in India

Primary energy consumption in India has increased by 2.3% in 2019. It has become the third biggest consumer after China and USA, with global share of 5.8%.

India's net import

As of 2018, India's net imports were about 205.3 million tons of crude oil and its products, 26.3 Mtoe of LNG and 141.7 Mtoe coal. They totalled to 46.13% of total primary energy consumption. India is largely dependent on fossil fuel imports to meet its domestic energy demands. As per reports, India's dependence on energy imports is expected to exceed 53% by 2030.

1.133 KAZIRANGA PARK: INDIA'S FIRST NATIONAL PARK TO GIVE SATELLITE PHONES TO FOREST GUARDS

WHY IN NEWS?

Kaziranga National Park of Assam has become the first national park of India to be equipped with satellite phones.

About:

- About 10 satellites phones were handed over to forest personnel of Kaziranga National Park by Assam Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua.
- This decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma May 27, 2021.

Significance of the move

According to an official of Kaziranga National Park, this move will boost anti-poaching measures in the park. These satellite phones will be used in the six ranges of park having no wireless or poor mobile connectivity. Thus, it will help in taking timely measures.

Who is the service provider?

Satellite Phones were procured for the park by Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) at an estimated cost of Rs 16 lakh. Service will be provided by BSNL while monthly expenses will be fulfilled by park authorities. BSNL also trained the forest personnel to operate satellite phones in the areas where satellite phones do not work like in in shadow areas and grooves.

Kaziranga National Park

This national park of India is spread to the district of Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon in state of Assam. It hosts two-thirds of world's great one-horned rhinoceroses. Park has also been listed as a World Heritage Site. According to the census of 2018, there are 2413 rhino population in Kaziranga National Park. It includes 1,641 adult rhinos, 387 sub-adults and 385 calves. Kaziranga was known for the highest density of tigers among protected areas in the world. It was declared a Tiger Reserve in 2006. Presently, highest tiger density is in Orang National Park of Assam. Birdlife international for conservation of avifaunal species also recognises Kaziranga park as an Important Bird Area

1.134 GHAZIABAD IS WORLD'S SECOND MOST POLLUTED CITY OF 2020

WHY IN NEWS?

- Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad was adjudged the second most polluted city out of the 50 'most polluted cities' in the world in 2020 by a report prepared by British company HouseFresh. Ghaziabad reported an average Air Quality Index (AQI) of 2.5 particulate matter (PM) in 106.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- Preceding Ghaziabad, the Chinese city of Hotan in Xinjiang province has been named the most polluted city with a PM_{2.5} of 110.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The report attributed the air pollution in Hotan to sandstorms resulting from its closeness to the Taklimakan Desert, which is the largest shifting sand desert in the world.
- According to the report, Bangladesh was the most polluted country across the world in 2020, followed by Pakistan, India and Mongolia.
- Meanwhile, Judbury in Australia bagged the top position in the list of cities with the cleanest air with a PM_{2.5} level of 2.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

1.135 RATIFICATION OF KIGALI AMENDMENT TO MONTREAL PROTOCOL

WHY IN NEWS?

India has approved the ratification of the Kigali Agreement to the Montreal Protocol in order to phase down Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

What it means for India?

India now requires reducing its HFCs usage by 80% by 2047. China and the US have to achieve the same in 2045 and 2034.

About:

- Experts note that, India has exemplified its climate leadership by approving the ratification process.
- Under the ratification, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) will be phased down early which in turn will make the Indian industry globally competitive across the climate-friendly cooling products.
- Ratification provided big opportunity to India to be on course of early phase down of HFCs by means of domestic innovation.

- Phase-down of HFCs is going to prevent emission of up to 105 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gases. Thus, it will help in avoiding up to 0.5 degrees Celsius of global temperature increase by 2100 and will also help in protecting the ozone layer.
- India is the first country that launched a cooling action plan in 2019.

Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol

It is an international agreement that seeks to gradually reduce consumption and production of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). This is a **legally binding agreement** that has been designed to create rights and obligations in international law.

Background

Montreal Protocol was originally created in order to preserve and restore the ozone layer. Protocol was an agreement in between participating countries in order to do away with ozone depleting gases. Under the agreement, HFCs were used to replace the banned substances as they have zero impact on the ozone. But HFCs are powerful greenhouse gases that contributes towards climate change. Thus, Kigali amendment added HFCs to the list of chemicals that countries are required to phase out.

Which countries have ratified this amendment?

121 states and the European Union have ratified the Kigali Amendment as of July 2021. India is the new entrant to the list. US has not ratified the amendment but pledged in April 2021 to do so.

1.136 NEW SPECIES OF CASCADE FROG: ARUNACHAL PRADESH

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, a team of researchers have discovered a new species of cascade frog in Arunachal Pradesh named Adi Cascade Frog.

About:

- It is a predominantly brown colour frog, with a size ranging roughly between 4 cm to 7 cm.
- It is formally described as *Amolopsadicolasp.nov.* which is morphologically distinguished from its congeners by a suite of characters that include adult size, body colouration and markings, skin texture, snout shape, foot webbing and digit tip morphology.

Naming:

- It has been named Adi Cascade Frog (*AmolopsAdicola*) after the indigenous Adi tribe living in the Adi hills of Arunachal Pradesh. The literal meaning of Adi is “hill” or “mountain top.”
 - Historically, this region was also known as Abor hills.

Cascade Frog

- Cascade frogs are named so because of their preference of small waterfalls or cascades in flowing hill streams.
- Cascade Frogs belong to the genus *Amolops*.

- The genus Amolops is one of the largest groups of ranid frogs (family Ranidae) with currently 73 known species that are widely distributed across Northeast and North India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, through Indochina, to the Malay Peninsula.

1.137 DELHI CM TO INAUGURATE INDIA'S FIRST SMOG TOWER

WHY IN NEWS?

Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, will inaugurate India's first smog tower at Baba Kharak Singh Marg in Connaught Place (CP), Delhi.

Smog tower at CP

- It is over 20-metre-tall structure and was set up to improve air quality in a radius of around 1 km.
- The tower will operate at full capacity after the monsoon season.
- This smog-tower was built at the cost of Rs 20 crores.
- Performance of the tower will be assessed by scientists of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee and they will present a monthly report.

Smog tower at Anand Vihar

Central government will build a 25-metre-tall smog tower at Anand Vihar. It is likely to become operational by August 31.

Who have designed the tower?

Kurin Systems is developing a 12-metre-tall smog tower in Delhi. The tower is dubbed as Kurin City Cleaner. Tower at CP as well as Anand Vihar will comprise of 1,200 air filters developed by experts at the University of Minnesota, United States. This university also helped in designing a 100-metre-high smog tower in Xian, China.

Background

This project was approved by Delhi cabinet in October 2020. It was approved after The Supreme Court directed the central government in January 2020 to construct a smog tower in order to reduce pollution at Anand Vihar and Delhi government to install it at Connaught Place in three months.

What is smog tower?

Smog towers are structures that are designed as large-scale air purifiers in order reduce air pollution particles. Prototype for such structure was built in 2017 in Beijing (China) by Dutch artist Daan Roosegaarde. A 100-metre tower was built in Xi'an, Shaanxi in 2018 in a bid to tackle pollution.

1.138 SURANGAM SYSTEM

The Karez System of Afghanistan is in threat whereas a similar system named Surangam in South India is thriving.

About Surangams:

- The surangam or suranga is usually found in northern Kerala and southern Karnataka.
- Surangam is basically a tunnel dug through a laterite hillock from the periphery of which water and moisture seeps out.
- Surangams are similar to Qanats which once existed in Mesopotamia and Babylon around 700 Before Common Era (BCE). By 714 BCE, this technology had spread to Egypt, Persia and India.
- Qanats are underground tunnel systems that bring infiltrated groundwater, surface water, or spring water to the earth's surface using only gravitational force.
- This system has been very effectively used for domestic and agriculture purposes in dry areas of northern Malabar.
- Some people believe the surangam is indigenous and a likely origin of the suranga system refers to 18 Karhada Brahmin families that had been moved to the Kasargod area from modern-day Maharashtra in the 17th century under duress.

Karez System:

- The karez system is a legacy of its Persian cultural moorings. It has suffered extensive damage in 43 years of war and stares at an uncertain future under the Taliban's second regime.
- Karez is water harnessing technology in which groundwater is brought to the surface by a tunnel.
- In this system, no mechanical pump or lift is used. Gravity alone brings the water from the underground source.
- The technology originated in Persia/Iran and was widely used during the medieval period

1.139 DELHI-CHANDIGARH HIGHWAY FIRST EV-FRIENDLY HIGHWAY IN INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- With a network of solar-based electric vehicle charging stations, the Delhi-Chandigarh Highway has become the country's first EV-friendly highway in the country.
- The network of stations was set up by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) under the FAME-1 (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) & Electric Vehicles) scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- Union Minister of Heavy Industries (MHI) Mahendra Nath Pandey remotely inaugurated the state-of-the-art charging station at Karna Lake Resort.
- The EV charging station at Karna resort is strategically located at the midpoint of the Delhi-Chandigarh highway. It is equipped to cater to all types of e-cars currently in the country.

1.140 INDIA'S LARGEST FLOATING SOLAR PV PROJECT COMMISSIONED IN ANDHRA PRADESH

WHY IN NEWS?

- NTPC has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project in India of 25MW power on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. This is also the first solar project to be set up under the Flexibilisation Scheme.
- This scheme was notified by the Government of India in 2018. NTPC is also planning to set up a hydrogen-based micro-grid system on a pilot basis at Simhadri.
- NTPC's floating solar installation covers 75 acres of the Simhadri reservoir's surface. It will produce power from more than a lakh of solar PV modules for lighting 7,000 households.
- The project will annually save 46,000 tonnes of CO2 emission and 1,364 million litres of water, which is adequate to meet the requirement of 6,700 households in a year.

1.141 WORLD'S FIRST FOSSIL-FREE STEEL MANUFACTURED IN SWEDEN

WHY IN NEWS?

- Swedish green steel venture HYBRIT, which had made the 'world's first' customer delivery of steel produced without using coal.
- The steel was made using Hydrogen Breakthrough Ironmaking Technology, which uses 100% fossil-free hydrogen instead of coal and coke. The venture has started delivering the fossil-free steel to the Volvo Group as part of its trial run.
- Development for the Hybrit project, which was set up in 2016 and is owned by SSAB, energy firm Vattenfall and LKAB, a mining and minerals group.
- Both Vattenfall and LKAB are owned by the Swedish state. The idea underpinning Hybrit is to use "100% fossil-free hydrogen" rather than coal and coke in steel production

1.142 NITI AAYOG AND WRI JOINTLY LAUNCH 'FORUM FOR DECARBONIZING TRANSPORT

WHY IN NEWS?

- NITI Aayog and World Resources Institute (WRI), India, jointly launched the 'Forum for Decarbonizing Transport' in India.
- NITI Aayog is the implementing partner for India. The aim of the project is to bring down the peak level of GHG emissions (transport sector) in Asia (in line with a well below 2-degree pathway), resulting in problems like congestion and air pollution.
- The Forum has been launched under the NDC-Transport Initiative for Asia (NDC-TIA) project. The NDC Transport Initiative for Asia (TIA 2020-2023) is a joint programme of seven organizations that will engage China, India, and Vietnam in promoting a comprehensive approach to decarbonizing transport in their respective countries.

1.143 OHMIUM LAUNCHES INDIA'S FIRST GREEN HYDROGEN ELECTROLYZER GIGAFACTORY

WHY IN NEWS?

- US-based Ohmium International has started India's first green hydrogen electrolyzer manufacturing unit at Bengaluru, Karnataka. The factory will manufacture India-

made Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) hydrogen electrolyzers. Green hydrogen is made from non-fossil sources as against blue hydrogen that is made from fossil sources.

- Making green hydrogen in India will give a cost advantage for manufacturers rather than going for imports. The gigafactory will manufacture India-made Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) hydrogen electrolyzers with an initial manufacturing capacity of about 500 MW per year and will scale it up to 2 GW per year.
- The PEM hydrogen electrolyzer is the main equipment for the production of green hydrogen as it uses power generated from renewable resources to break water into hydrogen and oxygen.

1.144 WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH HAWAII'S KILAUEA VOLCANO?

WHY IN NEWS?

Scientists are on alert for a possible eruption of Hawaii's Kilauea Volcano within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

About Kilauea Volcano:

- Kilauea, also called Mount Kilauea, is located in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on the southeastern part of the island of Hawaii, U.S.A.
- It is an active shield volcano. Historically, it is the most active of the five volcanoes that together form the Big Island of Hawaii.

What is Volcano?

- A Volcano is an opening on the surface of a planet or moon that allows material warmer than its surroundings to escape from its interior.
- When this material escapes, it causes an eruption. An eruption can be explosive, sending material high into the sky. Or it can be calmer, with gentle flows of material.

1.145 IIT ROORKEE-NDMA DEVELOP APP TO PREDICT NATURAL DISASTERS

WHY IN NEWS?

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and IIT Roorkee have developed an app, in a joint venture, that can predict natural disasters.

About:

- App will alert about possible natural calamities in advance.
- Uttarakhand cabinet has also formed an expert committee that will tell us about the quantum of rainfall in each area in order to make arrangements in advance.
- According to minister, Doppler Radar has started functioning at Mukteshwar. Radar will also be installed at Surkanda Devi within 1-1.5 months.
- Third Doppler radar will be installed in Lansdowne.

Background

The development of the app is in line with the proposal by the Central Government to simplify the disaster parameters of 2011.

Doppler radar

Doppler radar is specialized radar that makes use of Doppler Effect to produce velocity data about the distant objects.

Doppler Effect

When the source and signal are in relative motion to each other, observer witness a change in the frequency. If they move closer, frequency increases and vice versa. This effect is called as Doppler Effect.

What is Radar?

Radar, expanded as Radio Detection and ranging, is a device that uses electromagnetic waves in the microwaves region in order to detect location, range & direction; altitude; intensity and movement of moving & non-moving objects.

How does a Doppler radar work?

Radars emit a beam of energy, called radio waves, from an antenna. When the radio waves strike an object in the atmosphere, energy scatters in all directions. Some of the energy is reflected directly back to the radar. Larger the object deflects the beam as well as amount of energy that the radar receives in return. Weather forecasting department observes the time required for the beam to be transmitted & returned to the radar and see raindrops in the atmosphere & measure their distance from the radar.

1.146 HURRICANE IDA

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana, US. It is an extremely dangerous Category 4 storm and one of the most powerful storms ever to hit the US.

About:

Hurricanes are the biggest and most violent storms on the planet.

- Tropical cyclones or hurricanes use warm, moist air as fuel, and therefore form over warm Equatorial water.

Mechanism:

- When the warm, moist air rises upward from the surface of the ocean, it creates an area of low air pressure below.
- When this happens, the air from the surrounding areas rushes to fill this place, eventually rising when it becomes warm and moist too.

- An eye forms in the centre. It is the calmest part of the cyclone. Before the wind reaches the centre it gets warmed up and rises upwards.
- When the warm air rises and cools off, the moisture forms clouds. This system of clouds and winds continues to grow and spin.
- This disturbance is fuelled by the ocean's heat and the water that evaporates from its surface.
- Such storm systems rotate faster and faster.
- Storms that form towards the north of the equator rotate counterclockwise, while those that form to the south spin clockwise because of the rotation of the Earth.

Names in Different Regions of the World:

- Typhoons: Tropical cyclones are known as Typhoons in the China Sea and Pacific Ocean.
- Hurricanes: In the West Indian islands in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.
- Willy-willies: In north-western Australia and
- Tropical Cyclones: In the Indian Ocean Region.



CivilsTap Hlmachal

ENVIRONMENT PRACTICE MCQS:

QUESTION 1: A new _____ species has been discovered in the Western Ghats and has been named "Minervarya Pentali".

- A. frog
- B. spider
- C. snake
- D. butterfly

QUESTION 2: The biological process by which water is lost in the form of water vapour from the aerial parts of the plants is called-

- A. Evaporation
- B. Photosynthesis
- C. Transpiration
- D. Respiration

QUESTION 3: The Great Sitkin Volcano is located in which country?

- A. Indonesia
- B. Malaysia
- C. Japan
- D. USA

QUESTION 4: Which country is the largest producer of sugar in the world?

- A. Brazil
- B. India
- C. China
- D. Indonesia

QUESTION 5: IUCN categorises Swinhoe's softshell turtle as _____ species.

- A. least concern
- B. vulnerable
- C. endangered
- D. critically endangered

QUESTION 6: Which of the following countries recently banned sunscreens comprising of chemicals that damage coral?

- A. Myanmar
- B. Bhutan
- C. Brunei
- D. Thailand

QUESTION 7: An animalai flying frog, is categorised by IUCN as a/an _____ species.

- A. least concern
- B. vulnerable
- C. endangered
- D. critically endangered

QUESTION 8: National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) is a network project of-

- A. NITI Aayog
- B. Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- C. The Energy and Research Institute
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 9: International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement was launched by India in-

- A. 2014
- B. 2015
- C. 2016
- D. 2017

QUESTION 10: China plans to become carbon neutral by which year?

- A. 2030
- B. 2040
- C. 2050
- D. 2060

QUESTION 11: The 26th United Nations Climate Change conference COP-26 will be held in-

- A. Paris
- B. Beijing
- C. London
- D. Glasgow

QUESTION 12: TiziOuzou, the region seen recently in news, is located in-

- A. Australia
- B. USA
- C. Algeria
- D. Greece

QUESTION 13: Wadhwa Wetland, added recently to Ramsar list, is situated in which state?

- A. Haryana

B. Gujarat

C. Maharashtra

D. Punjab

QUESTION 14: IUCN status of Nathusius' pipistrelle species of bats, recently seen in news and known as 'Olympian Bat', is-

- A. Least concern
- B. vulnerable
- C. endangered
- D. critically endangered

QUESTION 15: The great hornbill (Buceros bicornis) is listed by IUCN as an/a _____ species.

- A. Least concern
- B. vulnerable
- C. endangered
- D. critically endangered

QUESTION 16: Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, banning single use plastic from-

- A. 2022
- B. 2023
- C. 2025
- D. 2030

QUESTION 17: Hydrogen produced by splitting of water molecule by electrolysis is called-

- A. Blue hydrogen
- B. Grey hydrogen

- C. Green hydrogen
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 18: India targets to become energy independent by-

- A. 2030
- B. 2040
- C. 2047
- D. 2057

QUESTION 19: Which National Park has become the first national park of India to be equipped with satellite phones?

- A. Kaziranga National Park
- B. Bandhavgarh National Park
- C. Rajiv Gandhi National Park
- D. Silent Valley National Park

QUESTION 20: In a recently published report of 50 'most polluted cities' in the world in 2020, which Indian city has been adjudged second most polluted city?

- A. Delhi
- B. Ghaziabad
- C. Kanpur
- D. Jammu

QUESTION 21: The Kigali Agreement to the Montreal Protocol is aimed at reducing-

- A. methane
- B. Hydrofluorocarbons
- C. carbon dioxide
- D. sulphur dioxide

QUESTION 22: A new species of cascade frog has been discovered recently in-

- A. Kerala
- B. Mizoram
- C. Odisha
- D. Arunachal Pradesh

QUESTION 23: India's first smog tower has been inaugurated at-

- A. Gurugram
- B. Delhi
- C. Noida
- D. Faridabad

QUESTION 24: Surangam system in South India is associated with-

- A. agricultural irrigation
- B. land revenue
- C. military organisation
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 25: Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) & Electric Vehicles scheme comes under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
- B. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- C. Ministry of Science and Technology
- D. Ministry of Heavy Industries

QUESTION 26: India's largest Floating Solar PV Project has been commissioned by NTPC in-

- A. Rajasthan

- B. Andhra Pradesh
- C. Odisha
- D. Tamil Nadu

QUESTION 27: World's First fossil-free steel has been manufactured in-

- A. Norway
- B. USA
- C. Denmark
- D. Sweden

QUESTION 28: The 'Forum for Decarbonizing Transport' in India has been jointly launched by NITI Aayog and-

- A. World Bank
- B. National Development Bank
- C. World Resources Institute
- D. International Monetary Fund

QUESTION 29: US-based Ohmium International has started India's first green hydrogen electrolyzer manufacturing unit at-

- A. Ahmedabad
- B. Bengaluru
- C. Chennai
- D. Delhi

QUESTION 30: Kilauea Volcano seen recently in news is located in-

- A. Hawaii
- B. Jawa
- C. Sumatra

D. Hokkaido

QUESTION 31: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and _____ have developed an app, in a joint venture, that can predict natural disasters.

- A. IIT Ropar
- B. IIT Delhi
- C. IIT Roorkee
- D. IIT Bombay

QUESTION 32: Tropical cyclones are known as _____ in the China Sea and Pacific Ocean.

- A. willy-willies
- B. hurricanes
- C. cyclones
- D. Typhoons

ANSWER KEY:

- 1: A
- 2: C
- 3: D
- 4: A
- 5: D
- 6: D
- 7: D
- 8: B
- 9: B
- 10: D
- 11: D

12: C

13: B

14: A

15: B

16: A

17: C

18: C

19: A

20: B

21: B

22: D

23: B

24: A

25: D

26: B

27: D

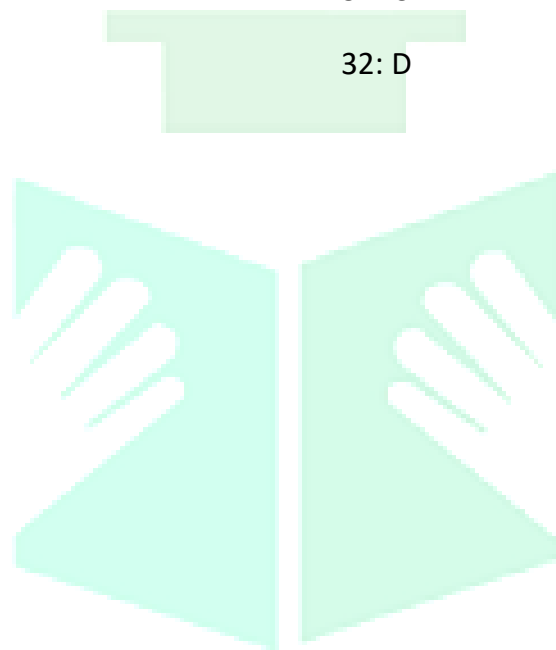
28: C

29: B

30: A

31: C

32: D



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1.147 E-RUPI DIGITAL PAYMENT SOLUTION

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to launch “e-RUPI Digital Payment Solution” on August 2, 2021. e-RUPI is an e-voucher-based payment solution.

- e-RUPI initiative will be launched to limit touch points between government and beneficiary.
- Platform will also ensure that benefits reach its intended beneficiaries in a targeted and leak-proof manner.
- e-RUPI is a one-time payment mechanism that will allow users to redeem voucher without using card, digital payments app or internet banking access.

What is e-RUPI Platform?

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) developed **e-RUPI platform** on its UPI platform. It has on boarded banks to act as issuing entities.
- It was launched in collaboration with Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.
- This platform was launched to ensure a leak-proof delivery of welfare services.
- Platform will be used to deliver services under schemes that are meant to provide drugs & nutritional support under Mother and Child welfare schemes, drugs & diagnostics under schemes such as Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, fertilizer subsidies and TB eradication programmes.
- Private sector can also leverage these digital vouchers under their employee welfare and corporate social responsibility programmes.

Working Mechanism of e-RUPI

e-RUPI will be delivered to mobile phones of beneficiaries through SMS-string or a QR code. It will be like a prepaid gift-voucher that can be redeemed at specific accepting centres without any credit or debit card, mobile app or internet banking. It will connect sponsors of the services with beneficiaries and service providers digitally without any physical interface.

1.148 GOVT. APPROVES TWO MORE NEW STRATEGIC OIL RESERVES

WHY IN NEWS?

In accordance with the second phase of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) programme, the government approved the establishment of two additional commercial and strategic underground storage facilities at Chandikhol (4 MMT) and Padur (2.5 MMT) with a total capacity storage of 6.5 MMT in PPP model.

About:

- In the first phase of the SPR programme, the government, through its special tool India Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL), established oil storage facilities with a total capacity of 5.33 million metric tons (MMT) in 3 locations. All the three storage facilities in Shakapatnam (1.33 MMT), Mangaluru (1.5 MMT) and Padur (2.5 MMT) are filled with crude oil.
- The petroleum reserves which were established in the first phase are of strategic importance, and the crude oil stored in these reserves will be used in the scenario of oil shortage.
- Second phase of the SPR programme, the government approved the establishment of two additional commercial and strategic underground storage facilities at Chandikhol (4 MMT) and Padur (2.5 MMT) with a total capacity storage of 6.5 MMT in PPP model.
- Proposals for the construction of these storage facilities are being finalized.
- Under Phase II for land acquisition an amount of Rs 210 crore was allocated in the budget, and ISPRL has received the amount.

Importance of the Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) programme

The 1990 Gulf War caused oil prices to skyrocket and imports from India increased significantly. During the Indian economic crisis after 1991, foreign exchange reserves could hardly finance three weeks of imports, and the government could hardly meet its financial obligations. India responded to the crisis through economic liberalization policies. However, the country continued to be affected by fluctuations in oil prices.

In the year 1998, the government of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee proposed the creation of oil reserves as a solution to manage the oil market. Three storage facilities were built at underground sites in Padur, Visakhapatnam and Mangalore. In the first phase, a total storage capacity of 5.33 million tons was created.

The current government approved two additional commercial and strategic facilities in July 2021, with a total storage capacity of 6.5 MMT. This will increase India's strategic reserve capacity to 11.83 MMT. In times of crisis, India can manage its oil demand period for a specific time.

1.149 CORE SECTORS OUTPUT

WHY IN NEWS?

Output at India's eight core sectors grew by 8.9% in June 2021 largely due to Base Effect but the pace remained below the production levels seen before the Covid-19 pandemic as well as its second wave.

About Eight Core Sectors:

- These comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- The eight core sector industries in decreasing order of their weightage: Refinery Products> Electricity> Steel> Coal> Crude Oil> Natural Gas> Cement> Fertilizers.

Base Effect:

- The base effect refers to the effect that the choice of a basis of comparison or reference can have on the result of the comparison between data points.

- For example, the base effect can lead to an apparent under- or overstatement of figures such as inflation rates or economic growth rates if the point chosen for comparison has an unusually high or low value relative to the current period or the overall data.
- Production of coal, natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity jumped by 7.4%, 20.6%, 2.4%, 25%, 4.3% and 7.2%, respectively, in June 2021, as against (-) 15.5%, (-) 12%, (-) 8.9%, (-) 23.2%, (-) 6.8% and (-) 10% in the same month last year.

Index of Industrial Production:

- IIP is an indicator that measures the changes in the volume of production of industrial products during a given period.
- It is compiled and published monthly by the National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- It is a composite indicator that measures the growth rate of industry groups classified under:
 - Broad sectors, namely, Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity.
 - Use-based sectors, namely Basic Goods, Capital Goods, and Intermediate Goods.
- Base Year for IIP is 2011-2012.

Significance of IIP:

- It is used by government agencies including the Ministry of Finance, the Reserve Bank of India, etc, for policy-making purposes.
- IIP remains extremely relevant for the calculation of the quarterly and advance GDP (Gross Domestic Product) estimates.

1.150 NITI AAYOG -RMI RELEASE A REPORT ON POWER DISTRIBUTION SECTOR

WHY IN NEWS?

NITI Aayog has released a report on Power Distribution Sector that presents reform pathways to transform India's power distribution sector.

About:

- Report was released providing steps to improve policy making in distribution sector.
- Report is titled as "Turning Around the Power Distribution Sector".
- It has been jointly authored by NITI Aayog, RMI and RMI India.

What was the need of report?

In India, Power distribution companies (DISCOMs) incur losses every year. In financial year 2021, total estimated losses are as high as Rs 90,000 crore. Because of these losses, DISCOMs are unable to pay power generators on time, make investments to ensure high-quality power, or to prepare for use of variable renewable energy. Thus, this report becomes significant as it presents review of reform efforts in Indian and global power distribution sector.

About the report

Report extracts learnings and best practices from wealth of policy experience existing in India. It examines several important reforms including role of private sector in distribution, regulatory oversight, power procurement, integration of renewable energy and upgradation of infrastructure.

Report is divided into chapters that focuses on structural reforms, operational reforms, regulatory reforms, managerial reforms, and renewable energy integration. It presents policymakers with several reform options in order to put distribution sector on the track of efficiency and profitability

1.151 GENERAL INSURANCE BUSINESS (NATIONALISATION) AMENDMENT BILL PASSED

WHY IN NEWS?

Lok Sabha passed the “General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill.

About:

- General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021 will allow government to lower down its stake in State-owned general insurance companies and generate required resources.
- It will also help public sector general insurers design innovative products.

Amendments to the bill

- Proposed amendments to the Bill meant for removing mandatory requirement of Central government holding not less than 51 percent of the equity capital in a specified insurer.
- As per the Bill, amendments had become necessary to attract larger private participation in public sector insurance companies, enhance penetration of insurance sector and to provide social protection by securing interests of policyholders.

Background

This bill was passed in line with government’s privatization drive. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced ambitious privatisation agenda, including two public sector banks and one general insurance company in her budget speech for 2021-2022. Accordingly, among four public sector general insurance companies namely, National Insurance Company Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited, New India Assurance Company Limited and United India Insurance Company Limited; government will dilute its shareholding in one company. Name of the company is yet to be finalised.

General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021

This bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on July 30, 2021. It seeks to amend General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972 that was enacted to nationalise all private companies undertaking general insurance business. Bill provides for a greater private sector participation in public sector insurance companies that are regulated under the Act of 1972. Bill has removed the government shareholding threshold of 51% in specified insurers. Bill has also changed the definition of general insurance business and transferred the power of appointing majority of directors of specified insurer & power over its management or policy decision from the government

1.152 NSO SURVEY: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ROSE TO 13.3% IN JULY-SEPT 2020

WHY IN NEWS?

National Statistical Office (NSO) has published the eighth periodic labour force survey recently. According to the survey, unemployment rate in India has increased to 13.3 per cent in the period of July-September 2020. Unemployment rate was 8.4 per cent in July-September 2019.

About:

- As per the survey, joblessness or unemployment rate (UR) was 20.9 percent in April-June 2020. UR is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons in labour force.
- In September 2020, labour force participation rate for all ages was 37 per cent. It has increased from 36.8 per cent in September 2019.
- Labour force participation rate was 35.9 per cent in April-June 2020.
- WPR has decreased to 32.1 per cent in July-September 2020 as compared to 33.7 per cent in the same period in 2019.

Labour Force

It refers to the part of population that supplies or offers to supply labour to pursue economic activities for production of goods and services. It includes both employed and unemployed persons.

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)

Periodic labour force survey was launched by NSO in April 2017. Based on PLFS, quarterly bulletin is provided by giving estimates of labour force indicators such as UR, Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), distribution of workers by broad status in employment & industry of work in Current Weekly Status (CWS).

Current Weekly Status (CWS)

CWS estimates on unemployed persons provides an average picture of unemployment in short period of 7 days during the survey period. In CWS approach, a person is considered unemployed if he/she did not work even for 1 hour on any day in a week.

1.153 RBI AUTHORISES INDUSIND BANK TO ACT AS AN 'AGENCY BANK'

WHY IN NEWS?

- The IndusInd Bank has been empanelled by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to act as an 'Agency Bank'. As an Agency Bank, IndusInd becomes eligible to carry out transactions related to all kinds of government-led businesses.
- This decision is based on the RBI guideline that authorises scheduled private sector banks as agency banks of the regulator for the conduct of government business.
- IndusInd Bank now joins few other private banks of the country listed as Agency Bank of RBI, to carry out general banking business on behalf of the central and state government, apart from offering its customers the convenience of undertaking routine financial transactions through its banking platform.

1.154 GOVT BURIES RETROSPECTIVE TAX

WHY IN NEWS?

Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, introduced a Bill in Parliament to nullify the provisions of Income Tax Act. This bill has put an end to contentious retrospective tax law which has hit the confidence of foreign investors like Vodafone and Cairn.

About:

- Government also proposed to refund amount paid in litigation by companies without any interest.
- According to Finance Secretary T V Somanathan, total amount involved in all cases is about Rs 8,100 crore. About Rs 7,900 crore is related to Cairn dispute.

About the Bill

Bill will withdraw the retrospective amendments in the Income Tax Act of 1961 that raised demands on Vodafone, Cairn and some others. This bill seeks to attract foreign investments. As per the bill, no tax demand would be raised in future based on the retrospective amendment for any indirect transfer of Indian assets, in case transaction was undertaken before May 28, 2012.

Vodafone case

Vodafone case dates back to telco acquiring Indian assets of Hutchison Essar in 2007. There was a demand of Rs 22,100 crore. Government had filed an appeal against verdict in Singapore. India had also lost a case against taxing Cairn Energy Plc and Cairn UK holdings Ltd in international arbitral tribunal at The Hague in 2020 on alleged capital gains that company made in 2006. Tribunal had asked India to pay Cairn an amount of \$1232.8 million plus interest as well as \$22.38 million towards arbitration and legal costs.

Retrospective Taxation

Retrospective Taxation allows any country to pass a rule on taxing certain products, items or services. It charges companies from time behind the date on which any law is passed. This route is used by countries to correct any anomalies in their taxation policies. Countries like USA, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, Italy and Australia and have retrospectively taxed companies.

1.155 INDIA NUCLEAR POWER CAPACITY IS EXPECTED TO REACH 22,480 MW BY 2031

WHY IN NEWS?

- India's nuclear power capacity is expected to reach 22,480 Mega Watts by 2031 from the current 6,780 MegaWatts. There are presently 22 reactors with a total capacity of 6780 MW in operation and one reactor, KAPP-3 (700 MW) has been connected to the grid on January 10, 2021.
- Ten (10) nuclear power reactors with 8000 MW capacity (including 500 MW PFBR being implemented by BharatiyaNabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited {BHAVINI}) are under construction.

- Additionally, the Government has accorded administrative approval and financial sanction of ten (10) indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) of 700 MW each to be set up in fleet mode.

1.156 PM MODI ANNOUNCES PALM OIL INITIATIVE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an Rs 11,000 crore National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) to make India self-sufficient in cooking oils, including palm oil.
- The government will ensure that farmers get all the facilities, from quality seeds to technology under the mission. While India has become self-sufficient in rice, wheat and sugar, it was not enough as the country is hugely dependent on imported edible oils.
- The Centre has already been running a National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm to boost oilseeds and palm oil production in India for the last few years with an aim to lower imports.

1.157 RBI TO PENALISE BANKS IF ATMS RUN OUT OF CASH FROM OCTOBER 1

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced the launch of the 'Scheme of Penalty for non-replenishment of ATMs', as per which it will impose monetary penalties on ATMs/WLAs that run out of cash.
- The Scheme shall be effective from October 01, 2021. Therefore, banks/ WLAOs should put in place a robust system for monitoring the availability of cash in ATMs and ensure timely replenishment to avoid cash-outs.
- Cash-out at any ATM of more than ten hours in a month will attract a flat penalty of ₹ 10,000/- per ATM. In the case of White Label ATMs (WLAs), the penalty would be charged to the bank which is meeting the cash requirement of that particular WLA. The bank, may, at its discretion, recover the penalty from the WLA operator.

1.158 GOVT. ALLOWS GM SOY MEAL IMPORT TO SUPPORT POULTRY INDUSTRY

WHY IN NEWS?

The Union Government of India has decided to allow the import of genetically modified (GM) soymeal.

Background:

- Soymeal is the protein-rich solid left after the oil is extracted from the bean. It is used as a raw material for poultry feed.
- Since the last few months, domestic prices of soymeal have risen from Rs 40/kg to Rs 110/kg.
- As a result, the production cost for poultry farmers has increased, which was already impacted by the Covid-19 and Avian Influenza.
- Hence, due to this, the poultry industry has been asking the government to import soy meal to overcome domestic shortages and high prices. But the import was not being allowed due to Government's regulation regarding genetically modified ingredients.

Why has the Government allowed the import of Soymeal?

- The import of genetically modified organisms and living modified organisms is restricted in India.
- However, soya de-oiled cake or meals do not fall under these categories. It falls under the non-living organism category.
- Hence, on this basis, the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change ruled that the import of Soymeal would not require permission from the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) and has allowed the import of Soymeal.

1.159 AT 100GW, INDIA NOW 4TH IN SOLAR, WIND ENERGY CAPACITY

WHY IN NEWS?

India's renewable energy capacity, excluding large hydroelectric projects, hit 100 GW (gigawatts) on 12th Aug 21, making it the world's fourth largest in terms of total installed green energy capacity.

The 100 GW renewable capacity accounts for 26% of India's total installed generation capacity of 383 GW.

- It should be noted that in 2015, India had announced its plan to build 175 GW renewable energy capacity by 2022. This target has been enhanced to install 450 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Significance

- The milestone is commendable for the world's third-largest polluter, as it has been achieved in a short span of five years.
- This milestone of reaching 100 GW, will help us to resist international pressure to declare a net-zero goal and India can call out the developed countries to increase their efforts to reduce carbon emission.
- It also shows India's commitment to decarbonize its economy and will meet its NDC (nationally determined contributions) targets for power generation from non-fossil fuel sources and emission reductions.

1.160 MOHUA LAUNCHES ONE BRAND - 'SONCHIRAIYA' – FOR URBAN SHG PRODUCTS

WHY IN NEWS?

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched 'SonChiraiya'.

About SonChiraiya:

- SonChiraiya is a brand and logo for the marketing of urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products.
- This will help in improving visibility and global access for the products made by urban SHG women.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) has focussed on equipping the urban poor women with adequate skills and opportunities and enabling them to promote sustainable micro-enterprises.

1.161 RICE UNDER ALL SCHEME TO BE FORTIFIED BY 2024

WHY IN NEWS?

While addressing the nation on 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced to provide fortified rice to poor under various schemes.

About:

- This decision was taken in order to address the problem of malnutrition in India.
- Providing nutrition to every poor person India is a priority of the government.
- This decision was taken in the view that, malnutrition and lack of essential nutrients among poor women and poor children is a major hurdle in their development. This, government will provide fortified rice with nutrition them.
- Child Malnutrition is a major threat to the growth and development of children.
- Micronutrient deficiencies or 'hidden hunger' also continue to pose significant public health problems in Indian populations.

Significance of the announcement

This announcement is significant because, government distributes more than 300 lakh tonnes of rice under schemes covered under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.

What is food fortification?

Food fortification is the simplest and sustainable public health strategies that address the challenge of micronutrient deficiencies. It is a cost-effective, scientifically proven, and globally recognised approach. It also helps in easily reaching to wider & vulnerable populations by means of existing food delivery systems.

Why Rice will be fortified?

Because, rice has highest uptake in government food safety net programmes like public distribution system, integrated child development services, mid-day meal schemes etc. Further, rice has potential to reach more than a million people, especially women and children.

NFHS 4 report

According to National Family Health Survey report, India has the largest burden of iron-deficiency and anaemia worldwide. About 59% of children and 50% of pregnant women are anaemic in India. Child and maternal malnutrition accounts for 15% of India's total disease burden.

1.162 INDIAN NAVY, IDFC FIRST BANK BRING 'HONOUR FIRST' BANKING SOLUTIONS

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Navy has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) First Bank to initiate 'Honour FIRST'.

- ‘Honour FIRST’ is a premium banking solution for serving personnel and veterans of the Indian Navy. Designed especially keeping in mind the needs of the Armed Forces and its veterans, the Honour FIRST Defence Account is supported by a dedicated team of defence veterans.
- The MoU for Honour FIRST was signed at the Naval Headquarters in New Delhi between Commodore Neeraj Malhotra, Commodore – Pay and Allowances, Indian Navy and IDFC FIRST Bank’s senior officials.

1.163 RBI CANCELS LICENSE OF RAIGAD BASED KARNALA NAGARI SAHAKARI BANK

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the license of Raigad based Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank Limited in Maharashtra.
- As informed by the Reserve Bank of India, the license of Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank was cancelled due to insufficient capital and earning prospects and its continuance would have adversely affected depositors.

1.164 CABINET APPROVES NATIONAL MISSION ON EDIBLE OILS

WHY IN NEWS?

Cabinet approved the ‘National Mission on Edible Oils — Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)’ with the financial outlay of Rs 11,040 crore.

About:

- This approval was given in order to promote the domestic cultivation of oil palm in next five years.
- It will help in reducing India’s dependence on imports.
- The decision was taken after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced this new Central scheme on August 15.

About National Mission on Edible Oils

The National Mission on Edible Oils is a centrally sponsored scheme. Out of the total outlay of Rs 11,040 crores, share of central government is Rs 8,844 crores. Rs 2,196 crores would be shared by states. This scheme will subsume the “National Food Security Mission-Oil Palm programme. It was launched in line with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat scheme.

Aim of the mission

The National Mission on Edible Oil was launched with the aim of covering oil palm in an additional area of 6.5 lakh hectare by 2025-26. It seeks to reach the target of 10 lakh hectares.

Why this scheme is significant?

Currently India is heavily dependent on imports of edible oils to meet the domestic need. Thus, it is necessary to make efforts towards increasing their domestic production. In order to increase the production, increasing area and productivity of oil palm becomes important. This target of increasing area can be achieved through the mission. Furthermore, Oil Palm can help making

farmers aatmanirbhar in accordance with Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. This scheme will also help the Centre in ensure that farmers are not affected with market fluctuations.

1.165 CRISIL UPGRADED CREDIT OUTLOOK OF INDIA INC TO POSITIVE

WHY IN NEWS?

Crisil Ratings have upgraded credit outlook of India Inc to positive. It is a broad-based recovery for India Inc currently.

About:

- Earlier India Inc's credit outlook was 'cautiously optimistic'.
- According to Crisil, credit ratio (number of upgrades to downgrades) increased to over 2.5 times in first four months of the fiscal 2021-2022 against 1.33 times in the second half of Financial Year 2021.
- Crisil also conducted a study of 43 sectors, excluding financial sector, that accounted for 75% of the overall Rs 36 lakh crore in outstanding debt. This points towards broad-based current recovery.

About CRISIL

CRISIL is formerly called as Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited. It is an Indian analytical company that provided ratings, research, and risk & policy advisory services. It is a subsidiary of American company S&P Global. It was the first credit rating agency of India. ICICI and UTI jointly introduced the agency in 1988. It was started with share capital from SBI, LIC and United India Insurance Company. US based S&P rating agency acquired majority shares of Crisil in 2005.

What is Credit Rating?

It is a quantified assessment of creditworthiness of the borrower in general terms. It also assesses the creditworthiness with respect to particular debt or financial obligation. This rating can be assigned to any entity which seeks to borrow money including an individual, a state, a corporation, any provincial authority, or sovereign government. Credit assessment and evaluation for companies and governments is usually conducted by a credit rating agency like Moody's, S&P Global, or Fitch Ratings. These rating agencies are paid by the entity who want credit rating for itself.

1.166 RBI TO INTRODUCE 'REGULATORY GAAR' FOR ROUND-TRIPPING

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come up with a draft rule with modifications in the existing regulation related to foreign investment to discourage round-tripping. The central bank is looking to tweak the existing regulations and has come up with draft rules around round-tripping.
- Some of the largest Indian companies, startups and multinationals with an India presence have put their outbound investment, fundraising and restructuring plans on hold as the RBI looks to introduce fresh regulations around "round-tripping."

- According to the draft rule, any investment made outside India is an entity, in turn, invests in India will be treated as round-tripping if the purpose is to escape tax. This is as the same definition and rationale used by the tax department under General Anti Avoidance Rule (GAAR) which companies have been complaining is quite broad in its scope.

1.167 RBI LAUNCHES THE FINANCIAL INCLUSION INDEX

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India has introduced the Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index), which is a measure of the extent of financial inclusion in India.
- FI-Index incorporates the inclusion details of banking, investments, insurance, postal and pension sector in India. This was among the announcements made in the first bimonthly monetary policy in April this year.
- The value of FI-Index will range between 0 to 100. Where 0 denotes complete financial exclusion while 100 denotes full financial inclusion.
- Parameters of FI-Index: The FI-Index comprises of three parameters, namely- Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%) with each of these consisting of various dimensions, which are computed based on a number of indicators. In total there are 97 indicators.
- The annual FI-Index for the period ending March 2021 is 53.9 while for the period ending March 2017 it is 43.4. RBI will release the FI-Index in the month of July every year. There is no base year for this Index

1.168 FACEBOOK INDIA LAUNCHED 'SMALL BUSINESS LOANS INITIATIVE'

WHY IN NEWS?

Facebook India has launched a new initiative called the "Small Business Loans Initiative" on August 20, 2021.

About:

- This initiative was launched in partnership with online lending platform, Indifi.
- It will extend help to small and medium businesses (SMBs) who advertise on Facebook in order to get quick access to credit with the help of independent lending partners.
- India is the first country where Facebook rolled out this initiative.
- This facility is open to businesses that are registered across 200 towns and cities in India.
- Indifi is the first lending partner with which Facebook has tied up. This initiative will bring more partners on board in future.
- The initiative was announced by Facebook India at a virtual event "Enabling MSME Growth through Financial Inclusion". It was hosted by Facebook India in partnership with FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry).

Aim of the initiative

Facebook launched this initiative with the aim of making business loans more easily accessible to small businesses. It also seeks to reduce the credit gap within India's MSME sector.

Why this initiative was launched?

As per “Future of Business” survey that was conducted by Facebook in association with OECD & World Bank in 2020, a third of operational SMBs on Facebook in 2020 found cash flow as one of their primary challenges. So, to provide them with loans, this initiative was launched.

Interest on Loan

Through the partnership between Facebook and Indifi, small businesses advertising with Facebook can be given loans at a predefined interest rate of 17-20 per cent per annum. This initiative will also enable small businesses to get loans without collateral by means of a quick online application.

1.169 INDIA RANKS SECOND IN TERMS OF CRYPTO ADOPTION IN THE WORLD

WHY IN NEWS?

- India has ranked second in terms of crypto adoption worldwide behind Vietnam, but ahead of countries such as the US, UK, and China, according to the 2021 Global Crypto Adoption Index by blockchain data platform Chainalysis.
- This comes even as worldwide crypto adoption grew by 880% between June 2020 and July 2021, according to the report.
- A report by US-based research platform Finder released this month corroborated that the top five countries in terms of crypto adoption were all from Asia.
- The company surveyed 47,000 users worldwide and 30% of those surveyed in India said they owned cryptocurrencies.
- Bitcoin is the most popular coin in India, followed by Ripple, Ethereum and Bitcoin Cash, according to the report.
- Crypto adoption in India has also been led by smaller towns in the country. The largest crypto exchange in the country by trading volume, WazirX, said last week that it had seen more than 2,648% growth in user sign-ups from tier II and tier III cities in India.

1.170 FM LAUNCHED ‘NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE’ SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, unveiled a four-year National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) scheme.

About NMP scheme

- Scheme was launched with a Rs 6 lakh crore unlock value in brownfield projects.
- It also engages the private sector. They will have the rights but not the ownership in projects.
- Scheme will be using the funds for infrastructure creation across India.
- Under the scheme, roads, railways and power sector assets would comprise of more than 66 per cent of the total estimated value of the assets to be monetised.
- Rest of the estimated value will come from sector like mining, telecom, ports, aviation, natural gas, warehouses & stadiums and petroleum product pipelines.
- Real estate investment trusts (REITs) and infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) are some of structures that will be used to monetise assets in roads and power sectors.

Significance of the monetisation

According to Finance Minister, monetisation will help in creating further value for infrastructure creation India and exploring innovative ways of private participation without transferring the government ownership.

Key challenges of the scheme

Major key challenges in the NMP roadmap include:

1. Lack of identifiable revenue streams across various assets,
2. Level of capacity utilisation across gas and petroleum pipeline networks,
3. Dispute resolution mechanism,
4. Regulated tariffs in power sector assets, and
5. Low interest among investors for national highways below four lanes.

1.171 N. S. VISHWANATHAN PANEL ON URBAN CO-OPERATIVE BANKS

WHY IN NEWS?

Reserve Bank of India had appointed committee headed by N. S. Vishwanathan to make suggestions on structure for the urban cooperative banks (UCBs)

About:

- Panel was set up to suggest structure on the basis of deposits, prescribed different capital adequacy as well as regulatory norms for them with respect to their sizes.
- RBI had constituted the Expert Committee on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks under the chairmanship of N S Vishwanathan in February 2021

Recommendations by panel

- As per committee, UCBs can be split into four categories
 1. Tier-1- with deposits up to Rs 100 crore;
 2. Tier-2 with deposits between Rs 100-Rs 1000 crore,
 3. Tier-3 with deposits between Rs 1000 crore to Rs 10000 and
 4. Tier-4 with deposits more than Rs 10000 crore.
- It suggests that, minimum Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) for these tiers can vary between 9 per cent to 15 per cent.
- While, for Tier-4 UCBs Basel III prescribed norms can be followed.
- It suggests separate ceilings for loan against gold ornaments, home loans and unsecured loans for different categories of UCBs.
- Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) should follow a twin-indicator approach. It can consider only asset quality and capital measured through NNPA and CRAR, rather than going with triple indicators approach at present.

Consolidation of UCBs

Panel reports on consolidation of UCBs highlights that, RBI should be largely neutral to voluntary consolidation except where supervisory action is required. RBI should use the route of mandatory merger in to resolve UCBs that are not meeting with prudential requirements. It also suggests that,

under Banking Regulation (BR) Act, RBI can come up with the scheme of compulsory amalgamation or reconstruction of UCBs.

1.172 UBHARTESITAARE ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT FUND

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, the Ministry of Finance has launched 'UbharteSitaare' Alternative Investment Fund to facilitate debt and equity funding to export-oriented MSMEs (Micro Small and medium Enterprises).

About:

- Under the scheme, an identified company is supported even if it is currently underperforming or may be unable to tap its latent potential to grow.
- The scheme diagnoses such challenges and provides support through a mix of structured support covering equity, debt and technical assistance. It will also have a Greenshoe Option of Rs 250 crore.
- A greenshoe option is an over-allotment option, which is a term that is commonly used to describe a special arrangement in a share offering for example an IPO (Initial Public Offering) that will enable the investment bank to support the share price after the offering without putting their own capital at risk.
- The fund has been set up jointly by Exim Bank and SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) which will invest in the fund by way of equity and equity-like products in export-oriented units, in both manufacturing and services sectors.

Criteria for Selecting Companies:

Unique value:

- Companies will be selected for support based on their unique value proposition in technology, products or processes that match global requirements;

Financial Strength:

- Fundamentally strong companies with acceptable financials, and outward orientation; small and mid-sized companies with ability to penetrate global markets, with an annual turnover of up to approx. Rs 500 crore.

Business Model:

- Companies with a good business model, strong management capabilities, and focus on product quality.

Support:

- Eligible companies can be supported by both financial and advisory services by way of equity/equity-like instruments, term loans for modernisation, technology or capacity upgradation; and technical assistance for product adaptation, market development activities and viability studies.

Objectives:

- To enhance India's competitiveness in select sectors through finance and extensive handholding support.

- Identify and nurture companies having differentiated technology, products or processes, and enhance their export business; assist units with export potential, which are unable to scale up their operations for want of finance.
- Identify and mitigate challenges faced by successful companies which hinder their exports.
- Assist existing exporters in widening their basket of products and target new markets through a strategic and structured export market development initiative.

1.173 WORLD BANK OPENS NEW CYBERSECURITY MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND

WHY IN NEWS?

- The World Bank has launched a new 'Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund', to better roll out cybersecurity development agenda in a systematic manner. The new fund has been developed as an associated trust fund under the broader Digital Development Partnership (DDP) umbrella program.
- World Bank has partnered with four countries, namely Estonia, Japan, Germany, and the Netherlands, to launch the fund.
- The main aim of this new fund is to enhance cyber and digital security capability and capacity in World Bank member countries, with the development of global knowledge, country assessments, technical assistance, capacity building and training, along with necessary investments in infrastructure and technology

1.174 INFOSYS HITS \$100 BILLION M-CAP, FOURTH INDIAN FIRM TO REACH MILESTONE

WHY IN NEWS?

- The shares of Information Technology major, Infosys hit a record high during intraday trading, which helped the company cross \$100 billion in market capitalisation. Infosys is the fourth Indian company to achieve this milestone.
- Reliance Industries (m-cap of \$140 billion), Tata Consultancy Services (m-cap \$115 billion) and HDFC Bank (m-cap \$100.1 billion) are the other Indian firms in the club with Infosys.
- Infosys has been one of the fastest-growing companies in India, providing business consulting, information technology and outsourcing services. In the quarter ending June 2021, Infosys reported a net consolidated profit of ₹5,195 crores, showing a growth of 2.3 per cent

1.175 BHARATPE LAUNCHES P2P LENDING APP '12% CLUB'

WHY IN NEWS?

- BharatPe has launched a "12% Club" app that will allow consumers to invest and earn up to 12 per cent annual interest or borrow at a similar rate. BharatPe has partnered with LenDenClub (RBI-approved NBFC) for this app and lending arrangement.
- Consumers can invest their savings anytime by choosing to lend money on the "12% Club" app. Apart from this, consumers can avail of collateral-free loans of up to Rs 10 lakh on the 12 per cent Club app for tenure of 3 months.

1.176 INDIA'S FIRST AGRI SECTORAL INDEX GUAREX LAUNCHED BY NCDEX

WHY IN NEWS?

- India's first sectoral index in the Agri commodities basket i.e. GUAREX was launched by the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX).
- GUAREX is a price based sectoral index that tracks the movement in the futures contracts of guar gum refined splits and guar seed on a real-time basis. This index product will offer a lot of opportunities to the value chain.
- The weightage of guarseed and guar gum refined splits in the index will be 63 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively. The index futures will be cash-settled. Initially, Guarex futures contracts expiring in September and October will be made available for trading.

1.177 FINANCE MINISTER LAUNCHES EASE 4.0

WHY IN NEWS?

Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, launched the fourth edition of Public Sector Bank (PSB) Reforms Agenda called 'EASE 4.0' for the financial year 2021-22.

About:

- It is a simplified, tech-enabled and collaborative banking.
- On the occasion, finance minister launched the annual report for PSB Reforms Agenda EASE 3.0 for the year 2020-21 and also witnessed the awards ceremony to felicitate the best performing banks on EASE 3.0 Banking Reforms Index.

Best performing banks on EASE 3.0

- SBI, Bank of Baroda (BoB), and Union Bank of India (UBI) won the awards for best performing banks on the basis of EASE index.
- Indian Bank won the award for best improvement from baseline performance.
- SBI, BoB, UBI, Punjab National Bank and Canara Bank also won the top awards across different themes of PSB Reforms Agenda EASE 3.0.

Reforms under EASE 4.0

EASE 4.0 reforms look after four key initiatives to be adopted by public sector banks:

1. Smart lending backed by analytics
2. 24x7 banking with resilient technology & cloud-based IT systems
3. data enabled agriculture financing and
4. Collaboration with the financial ecosystem.

1.178 IBBI PROPOSES AMENDS IN LIQUIDATION PROCESS

WHY IN NEWS?

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has proposed amendments in the liquidation process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in order to bring transparency.

About:

- According to IBBI, regulatory framework of liquidation process has been improvised on various occasions in last five years in a bid to address the difficulties faced by stakeholders, meet evolving requirements and to achieve the objectives of the Code.
- New amendments were proposed to further strengthen the regulatory framework of the liquidation process with respect to accountability of liquidator towards stakeholders.
- Discussion paper also proposed to provide that if the secured creditors with 60 per cent of the value in secured debt decide to realise the security interest, this decision will be binding on the other 'pari-passu' charge holders.

IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016

It provides that the liquidator should carry on the business of corporate debtor for its beneficial liquidation and exercise all the powers of its board of directors, managerial personnel as well as the partners. It also provides to comply with applicable laws in behalf of the firm.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)

IBBI is the regulator to look after the insolvency proceedings and entities such as Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Information Utilities in India and Insolvency Professionals (IP). It was established in October 2016. Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code provides IBBI statutory powers. The code was passed by Lok Sabha in May 2016. Present whole-time members of the IBBI include Dr. Navrang Saini, Dr. Ms. Mukulita Vijayawargiya and Sh. Sudhakar Shukla.

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Economy practice mcqs:

QUESTION 1: “e-RUPI Digital Payment Solution” launched recently, has been developed by-

- A. Reserve Bank of India
- B. National Payment Corporation of India
- C. Ministry of Social justice and Welfare
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 2: Which of the following places does not have crude oil storage facilities under Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) programme?

- A. Padur
- B. Mangalore
- C. Shakapatnam
- D. Udaipur

QUESTION 3: Which of the following is not one of the 8 core sectors included in Index of Industrial Production?

- A. Refinery Products
- B. Cement
- C. Fertilizer
- D. Ship building

QUESTION 4: A Report titled as “Turning Around the Power Distribution Sector” has been recently released by-

- A. Ministry of Power
- B. NITI Ayog
- C. Bureau of Energy Efficiency
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 5: The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill 2021, has removed the government shareholding threshold of _____ in specified insurers.

- A. 26%
- B. 33%
- C. 49%
- D. 51%

QUESTION 6: Periodic labour force survey, launched by National Statistical Office (NSO) is published-

- A. fortnightly
- B. monthly
- C. quarterly
- D. half yearly

QUESTION 7: Which of the following private banks has been recently empanelled by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to act as an ‘Agency Bank’?

- A. IndusInd Bank
- B. Karur Vysya Bank
- C. Dhanlaxmi Bank
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 8: Vodafone and Cairn cases are associated with-

- A. money laundering
- B. retrospective taxation
- C. financial fraud
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 9: PHWR in nuclear energy terms, stands for-

- A. Pre Heated Water Reactors
- B. Proto Hydrogen Welded Reactors
- C. Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 10: National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) to make India self-sufficient in cooking oils, including palm oil, has been announced worth-

- A. Rs 11 crore
- B. Rs 110 crore
- C. Rs 1100 crore
- D. Rs 11000 crore

QUESTION 11: The 'Scheme of Penalty for non-replenishment of ATMs' has been launched by-

- A. Reserve Bank of India
- B. National Payments Commission of India
- C. Ministry of Finance
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 12: The Union Government of India has recently decided to allow the import of genetically modified _____

- A. maize
- B. wheat
- C. soymeal
- D. rice

QUESTION 13: In terms of total installed green energy capacity, India's rank in the world now, is-

- A. first
- B. second
- C. third
- D. fourth

QUESTION 14: SonChiraiya, a brand and logo for the marketing of urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products, was launched by-

- A. Ministry of Commerce and Industries
- B. Ministry of Finance
- C. Ministry of Cooperation
- D. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

QUESTION 15: Micronutrient deficiency that continue to pose significant public health problems in Indian populations, is also known as-

- A. open hunger
- B. hidden hunger
- C. visible hunger
- D. stealth hunger

QUESTION 16: 'Honour FIRST' is a premium banking solution launched by IDFC Bank for serving personnel and veterans of-

- A. Indian Army
- B. Indian Air force
- C. Indian Navy
- D. Central Armed Police Forces

QUESTION 17: Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the license of Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank Limited. It is based out of-

- A. Haryana

- B. Andhra Pradesh
- C. Telangana
- D. Maharashtra

QUESTION 18: National Mission on Edible Oils is operationally handled by -

- A. centre only
- B. states only
- C. both centre and states
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 19: Crisil Ratings have upgraded credit outlook of India Inc to-

- A. positive
- B. cautiously optimistic
- C. negative
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 20: In economic terms, GAAR stands for-

- A. General Average Accounting Returns
- B. Green Agriculture and Aquaculture Reforms
- C. General Anti Avoidance Rule
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 21: Financial Inclusion Index has been introduced by-

- A. Ministry of Finance
- B. Ministry of Rural Development
- C. Ministry of Cooperation
- D. Reserve Bank of India

QUESTION 22: A new initiative called the "Small Business Loans Initiative" has been started by which tech. giant?

- A. Facebook
- B. Microsoft
- C. Google
- D. Yahoo

QUESTION 23: According to the 2021 Global Crypto Adoption Index by blockchain data platform Chainalysis, India's rank in crypto adoption is-

- A. 1st
- B. 2nd
- C. 3rd
- D. 4th

QUESTION 24: National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) scheme has been recently launched for 4 years by-

- A. Ministry of Railways
- B. Ministry of Finance
- C. Ministry of Heavy Industries
- D. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

QUESTION 25: Who is heading the RBI committee to make suggestions on structure for the urban cooperative banks?

- A. Urjit Patel
- B. T Rabi Sankar
- C. N S Vishwanathan
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 26: 'UbharteSitaare' Alternative Investment Fund is aimed to facilitate debt and equity funding to-

- A. space start ups
- B. college projects
- C. export-oriented MSMEs
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 27: A new 'Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund' has been recently launched by-

- A. International Telecommunication Union
- B. World Bank
- C. International Monetary Fund
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 28: Infosys is the fourth Indian company to cross \$100 billion in market capitalisation. Which of the following is not one of the other three?

- A. Reliance Industries
- B. Tata Consultancy Services
- C. HDFC Bank
- D. Wipro Technologies

QUESTION 29: A "12% Club" app that will allow consumers to invest and earn up to 12 per cent annual interest or borrow at a similar rate has been launched by-

- A. Dena Bank
- B. PayTM
- C. Google pay
- D. BharatPe

QUESTION 30: India's first sectoral index in the Agri commodities basket, launched by NCDEX tracks movement in future contracts of-

- A. guar
- B. Chilli
- C. Soy
- D. Pulses

QUESTION 31: EASE 4.0 norms seen recently in news are associated with-

- A. buildings and construction standards
- B. banking
- C. car emissions
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 32: Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India was established in-

- A. 2018
- B. 2017
- C. 2016
- D. 2015

ANSWER KEY:

- 1. B
- 2. D
- 3. D
- 4. B
- 5. D
- 6. C
- 7. A

8. B

9. C

10. D

11. C

12. A

13. D

14. D

15. B

16. C

17. D

18. C

19. A

20. C

21. D

22. A

23. B

24. B

25. C

26. C

27. B

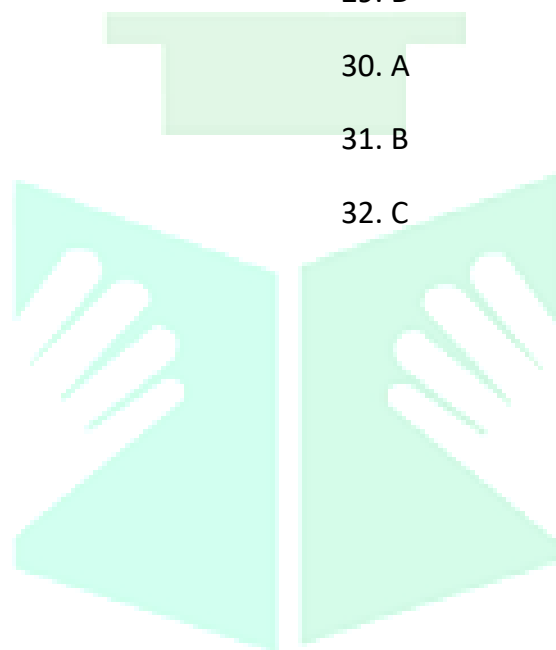
28. D

29. D

30. A

31. B

32. C



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1.179 36TH EDITION OF INDIA-INDONESIA COORDINATED PATROL(CORPAT)

WHY IN NEWS?

The 36th Edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol(CORPAT) is being conducted. Indian Naval Ship(INS) Saryu, an indigenously built Offshore Patrol Vessel, is participating in the 36th Edition of the CORPAT.

About India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol(CORPAT):

- India and Indonesia have been carrying out Coordinated Patrols (CORPAT) exercise along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) twice a year since 2002.
- Aim: To keep the vital part of the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure for commercial shipping, international trade, and the conduct of legitimate maritime activities.

1.180 FIRST INDIGENOUS AIRCRAFT CARRIER CONDUCTED SEA TRIALS

WHY IN NEWS?

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, conducted its maiden sea trials on August 4, 2021 encouraging making of military equipment within India.

About:

- Trials will be conducted for a long period under all conditions before the carrier is accepted as "proven at sea".
- It will be fully operational by 2022.
- Navy will accept this warship and then conduct aviation trials.
- Under the aviation trials, take-off and landing of Russian MiG 29K fighter jets would take place.
- In the maiden trail, Navy conducted the deck landing of Navy's Sea King helicopters.
- Carrier has been designed by Navy's Directorate of Naval Design.

About INS Vikrant

INS Vikrant is a 44000-tonne carrier, built at the cost of Rs 23,000 crore. It has been built at state-owned Cochin Shipyard in Kochi, Kerala. About 550 Indian firms including 100 MSMEs are providing services to construct this warship. It is the largest and most complex warship that has been designed and built in India for the first time. With this aircraft, India now joins a select group of nations having capability to indigenously design, build and integrate such aircraft carrier. Countries like US, UK, Russia, Japan, Italy and France have such capacities. South Korea is also pursuing a carrier programme.

Features of the aircraft carrier

Aircraft carrier has a top speed of 28 knots or 52 kmph while cruising speed of 18 knots. It has an endurance of about 7,500 nautical miles or 13,650 km. Warship comprises of 14 decks with 2300 compartments which can carry about 1700 crew.

Background

Keel for the warship was laid in 2009. It was scheduled to join the fleet in December 2018 but it got delayed due to complexity of making it. Warship was set out at sea in 2013. Cost of making also escalated beyond originally sanctioned amount of Rs 19,341 crore

1.181 AUSTRALIA KEEN THAT INDIA JOINS EXERCISE TALISMAN SABRE

WHY IN NEWS?

Australia is keen that India joins its biggest war games 'Exercise Talisman Sabre' in 2023. And a formal invite could be extended during Australian Defence Minister's visit to India, in next couple of months.

About Exercise Talisman Sabre

According to the Australian Defence Ministry,

- Talisman Sabre 2021 is the largest bilateral combined training activity between the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the U.S. military.
- It also saw the participation of approximately 17000 military personnel from seven nations on land, air and sea.
- The other countries include Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and U.K.

India's participation in other Exercises

Four frontline warships from the Navy's Eastern Fleet are scheduled to depart on an overseas deployment of over two months to South East Asia, the South China Sea and Western Pacific during which they will conduct a series of exercises and interactions.

- **SIMBEX** with Singapore
- **Samudra Shakti** with Indonesia
- **AUS – INDEX** with Australia
- **Malabar 21** Exercise (hosted by US) with Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force, Royal Australian Navy and the United States Navy

Significance

Such exercises and interactions are conducted to:

- Deepen interoperability and high technology cooperation between member countries
- Enhance synergy and coordination between the Indian Navy and friendly countries, based on common maritime interests and commitment towards Freedom of Navigation at sea

1.182 INS KHANJAR BECOMES THE FIRST INS TO CALL AT HERITAGE COASTAL PORT

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian Naval Ship Khanjar becomes the first Indian Navy ship to call at the heritage coastal port of Gopalpur in Odisha. The two-day visit was organised as part of Aazadi ka Amrit Mahotsav as well as Swarnim Vijay Varsh celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Independence and the 50th anniversary of the 1971 War.
- The visit of the ship was aimed at enhancing ties and spreading awareness with the local populace on aspects of coastal security and maritime operations. During the visit, ship's officers interacted with Port Officials and discussed aspects related to berthing facilities for OTR of Naval ships and security overview of port infrastructure.
- The ship's team also undertook a cleanup drive at Gopalpur beach and tree plantation in the port premises. In addition, books and dry provisions were distributed to Samarth Orthopedically Handicapped Welfare Association, at Chatrapur in Ganjam district

1.183 ITBP INDUCTS FIRST WOMEN OFFICERS ON COMBAT SERVICE

WHY IN NEWS?

Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) force which guards the Line of Actual Control (LAC) along the India-China border has commissioned its first two women officers in combat after they completed their training here.

Women in ITBP:

- The ITBP started recruiting women combat officers in its cadre from 2016 through an all-India examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- Before this, it had combat women only in the constabulary ranks.
- These women officers recruited will now be posted across ITBP formations in the country, including along the LAC with China and the anti-Naxal operations theatre in Chhattisgarh.

About ITBP:

- Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBPF) is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Origin: ITBP was initially raised in 1962 under the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Act, 1949 in the backdrop of 1962 during the India-China War
- However, in 1992, parliament enacted the ITBPF Act and the rules were framed in 1994.
- Mandate: ITBP is India's primary border patrol organization for its border with China's Tibet Autonomous Region. It is also deployed for Anti Naxal Operations and other internal security duties.
- Moreover, ITBP personnel have also been deployed abroad in UN peacekeeping missions.

1.184 2ND IEEE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RANGE TECHNOLOGY BY DRDO

WHY IN NEWS?

- The 2nd Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Conference on Range Technology (ICORT-2021) is being held virtually.

- The conference has been organised by Integrated Test Range (ITR) Chandipur, a laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- It was inaugurated by Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr G Satheesh Reddy. The event will host speakers from across the globe, who will present their technological achievements in multiple subjects related to Tests and Evaluation of defence systems.
- The conference will be a very effective platform for all the Range Technology enthusiasts to interact with each other and stay updated with recent developments in relevant fields.

1.185 INDIA-UAE NAVY UNDERTAKES BILATERAL EXERCISE ‘ZAYED TALWAR 2021’

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Navy and UAE Navy conducted the bilateral naval exercise ‘Zayed Talwar 2021’ on August 07, 2021, off the coast of Abu Dhabi.
- The main objective of the ‘Zayed Talwar 2021’ naval exercise was to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies. Indian Navy participated with INS Kochi, with two integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, deployed in the Persian Gulf.
- From UAE, UAES AL – Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS – 565B Panther helicopter took part in the exercise.

1.186 AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2021 EXERCISE BETWEEN INDIA & SAUDI ARABIA

WHY IN NEWS?

India and Saudi Arabia is all set to conduct their first ever naval exercise called “AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2021”.

About:

- To participate in the exercise, India’s guided-missile destroyer INS Kochi reached Saudi Arabia.
- The joint naval exercise will showcase the reflection of growing defence and military cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia.
- INS Kochi reached to Saudi Arabia after conducting a naval exercise with the UAE Navy off the coast of Abu Dhabi.

1.187 IAF BUILDS ONE OF THE WORLD’S HIGHEST MOBILE ATC TOWERS IN LADAKH

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has built one of the world’s highest mobile air traffic control (ATC) towers at the Advanced Landing Ground in Ladakh. The ATC controls operations of the fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters operating in the eastern Ladakh region.

- Meanwhile, India has been considering multiple options of developing airfields in eastern Ladakh including Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO), Fukche and Nyoma which are at a distance of few minutes from the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.

1.188 DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES NIRBHAY MISSILE

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test-fired medium-range subsonic cruise missile Nirbhay from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, off Odisha coast.
- Nirbhay is India's first Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM).
- ITCM Nirbhay was successfully test-launched with a Made-in-India Manik turbofan engine.
- This was the first successful test-firing of the missile with the indigenous booster engine. It can use both conventional and nuclear weapons of 200 to 300 kilograms.
- The missile can be launched from multiple platforms. ITCM Nirbhay can travel at a speed of 0.7 to 0.9 Mach, or 4 to 7 times faster than the speed of sound.

1.189 QUAD NAVIES TO UNDERTAKE EX-MALABAR 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Quad country navies including, India, the US, Japan and Australia, will be conducting the annual Malabar naval exercises, from August 21, off the coast of Guam, in the Indo-Pacific.
- The harbour phase of the Malabar naval exercises will take place from August 21 to 24, 2021. The sea phase of the exercise will be held on August 25 to 29, 2021.
- Indian Navy will be represented by two surface combatants led by Guided Missile Destroyer INS Ranvijay and Frigate INS Shivalik along with maritime reconnaissance aircraft P-8I, ASW helicopters and Special Forces (Marine Commandos-MARCOS).
- The objective of the Malabar series of Exercises is to increase the interoperability of naval powers of the four QUAD countries.

1.190 DEFENCE TESTING INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

In order to boost domestic defence and aerospace manufacturing, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has launched the Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS).

About Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS):

1. Launched by: Ministry of Defence in 2020.
2. Aim: To create a state-of-the-art testing infrastructure in partnership with the private industry.

Key Features of the Scheme:

1. Target: The scheme aims to set up 6-8 Greenfield Defence Testing Infrastructure facilities that are required for defence and aerospace-related production.

- A greenfield project is one that is not constrained by prior work. It is constructed on unused land where there is no need to remodel or demolish an existing structure.
2. Funding: The projects under the scheme will be provided with up to 75% Government funding in the form of 'Grant-in-Aid'.
 - The remaining 25% of the project cost will have to be borne by the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The SPV constituents will be the Indian private entities and state governments.
 3. Duration of the Scheme: Five Years.

1.191 PAKISTAN SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES NUCLEAR-CAPABLE BALLISTIC MISSILE GHAZNAVI

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Pakistan Army successfully test-fired a nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile Ghaznavi.
- The Ghaznavi missile can strike targets up to 290 kilometres and is capable of carrying both nuclear as well as conventional warheads.
- The training launch was aimed at ensuring the operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC) and re-validating technical parameters of the weapon system

1.192 JOINT GUIDANCE FOR THE AUSTRALIA – INDIA NAVY TO NAVY RELATIONSHIP

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy signed a 'Joint Guidance for the Australia- India Navy to Navy Relationship'.

About:

- Document signing ceremony was held virtually between Chief of the Naval Staff of Indian Navy, Adm Karambir Singh; and Chief of Navy of Australian Navy, Vice Admiral Michael J Noonan.
- Document is in line with the '2020 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership'.
- 2020 comprehensive strategic partnership was agreed by the Prime Ministers with the aim of ensuring shared approach to regional and global security challenges.

About the Joint Guidance Document

- Joint Guidance will serve as a guideline document in order to showcase the determination of both the Navies in order to work together bilaterally or multilaterally.
- The broad scope of the document focuses on developing mutual understanding, on cooperating for regional security, on collaborating in mutually beneficial activities and on developing interoperability.
- It primarily highlights on close cooperation in regional and multilateral fora such as Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), and Expert Working Groups that are subordinate to Meeting Plus framework of ASEAN Defence Ministers.

- It will help in consolidating the shared commitment to promote peace, security, stability as well as prosperity in the Indo – Pacific region.

Defence relations between India and Australia

Bilateral defence relations have strengthened over the years between both the countries. Significant milestones of the relationship include Comprehensive Strategic Partnership', conduct of trilateral Maritime Security Workshop, Mutual Logistics Support Agreement and RAN participation in Exercise MALABAR. These exercises highlight the role played by both Navies in strengthening their relationship in recent times

1.193 INDIA- VIETNAM: BILATERAL MARITIME DRILL CONDUCTED IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

WHY IN NEWS?

Indian Navy and Vietnam People's Navy conducted joint drills in the South China Sea as part of maritime cooperation between both the countries.

About:

- From Indian side, INS Ranvijay and INS Kora undertook bilateral maritime exercises.
- While from Vietnam, frigate VPNS Ly Thai To (HQ-012) took part.
- Indian Naval ships arrived at Cam Ranh, Vietnam for harbour phase.
- It also conducted professional interactions with VPN maintaining extant Covid-19 protocols.

Aim of the bilateral interaction

This bilateral military exercise was conducted with the aim of consolidating a strong bond shared by both the navies. It is a step towards strengthening India-Vietnam defence relations.

About the drill

Sea phase comprised of surface warfare exercises, helicopter operations, and weapon firing drills.

Defence relation between India and Vietnam

Regular bilateral interactions between both the navies have enhanced their interoperability and adaptability. Defence relationship between both the countries have been robust. They undertook a defence security dialogue in June 2021 and Indian Naval ships have been visiting Vietnamese ports frequently. Both the countries have also strengthened cooperation between the two navies over the years.

About INS Ranvijay

INS Ranvijay is a guided-missile destroyer. It is the latest INS of the Rajput class. It was commissioned on December 21, 1987. It has been equipped with several weapons and sensors comprising of a surface-to-surface missile, anti-air missiles and guns, anti-submarine rockets and heavy weight torpedoes. It is also capable of carrying anti-submarine helicopters called Kamov 28.

About INS Kora

INS Kora is the lead ship of Kora class missile corvette. It is fitted with surface-to-surface missiles as well as anti-air guns.

1.194 ARMY ORGANISES 400 KM “JAZBAA-E- TIRANGA” RELAY MARATHON IN J&K

WHY IN NEWS?

- In Jammu and Kashmir, the Army organised a 400 Km “JAZBAA-E- TIRANGA” Relay Marathon.
- The event was flagged off by Major General Rajeev Puri, General Officer Commanding, Ace of Spades Division, who led the relay, closely followed by other military personnel. More than 300 troops took part, carrying the Indian Tricolour all along the Line of Control (LoC).
- The run inculcated the spirit of brotherhood, as each soldier carried the symbolic National Flag of comradeship across the Area of Responsibility (AOR), handing it over to other units which stand shoulder to shoulder in war.

1.195 DEFENCE INDIA STARTUP CHALLENGE (DISC)

WHY IN NEWS?

Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh, launched the 5th edition of the Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC) on August 19, 2021.

About

DISC was launched under Innovations for Defence Excellence – Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO).

- This challenge is meant to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development across the defence and aerospace sectors.
- This challenge was launched by Ministry in partnership with **Atal Innovation Mission**.
- It was launched with the aim of providing support to Startups, MSMEs and Innovators to create prototypes or commercialize products and solutions in the fields of National Defence and Security.
- Thirty-five problem statements

Under the DISC, 35 problem statements were launched comprising of 13 from Services and 22 Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). 35 statements were launched from Armed Forces and OFB or DPSUs for the resolution by startups & innovators. These statements are areas like situational awareness, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, non-lethal devices, aircraft-trainer, 5G network, Drone SWARMS, underwater domain awareness, and data capturing.

iDEX4fauji

iDEX4fauji initiative is a similar initiative like DISC. It provided opportunity to Service personnel to showcase their talents in technological areas. iDEX initiative was launched in 2018, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Background

In the earlier editions of DISC, more than 80 start-ups, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and individual innovators joined as winners across 40 technological areas. DISC 5.0 was launched three years after the launch of DISC 1.0.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

AIM is a flagship initiative that seeks to create and promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in India. It was launched with the objective of developing new programmes and policies in order to foster innovation in different sectors of the economy.

1.196 DRDO DEVELOPS ADVANCED CHAFF TECHNOLOGY FOR INDIAN AIR FORCE

WHY IN NEWS?

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) against hostile radar threats.

What is Advanced Chaff Technology?

- Chaff is an electronic countermeasure technology. It is used by militaries worldwide to protect their assets like naval vessels and aircraft from radar and radio frequency(RF) guiding mechanisms of the enemy missile.
- A very little quantity of chaff material deployed in the air acts as a decoy.
- The chaff deployed in the air reflects multiple targets for the missile guidance systems, thus misleading the enemy radars or deflecting adversary missiles.

Who has developed this technology?

- The advanced chaff technology has been developed by DRDO units Defence Laboratory Jodhpur and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL).

Difference between Chaff and Flares:

- Chaff and Flares are both used as defensive countermeasures to confuse the radar from detecting a vessel or deflect the missiles from the target.
- But there is a major difference between the two. While flares, when fired, generate a strong infrared source to attract heat-seeking missiles, chaff is used to misguide radar-tracking weapons.
- Chaff is composed of many small aluminium or zinc coated fibres. It will be stored on-board the aircraft as cartridges.

1.197 EXERCISE KONKAN 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

On August 21, 2021; Exercise Konkan 2021 was held in English Channel in between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster.

About:

- Konkan exercise witnessed the participation of integral helicopters of two ships and Falcon Electronic Warfare aircraft.
- Exercises like co-ordinated anti-submarine procedures, combined maritime picture compilation, firing drills, replenishment at sea and combat formation maneuvering were conducted during the exercise.
- These exercises and diverse professional engagements enabled Exercise Konkan 2021 in consolidating interoperability which in turn have helped in establishing a strong bond of friendship between both the navies.

About Konkan exercise

The naval exercise Konkan 18 is held in between the navies of India and United Kingdom. It is based on the long-term strategic relationship between them. This exercise provides a platform for the Navies to periodically conduct exercise at sea and in harbour in order to build interoperability and share best practices.

Background

The bilateral Konkan exercise started in 2004 and has now grown in scale.

INS Tabar

INS Tabar is the third Talwar-class frigate in Indian Navy, which was commissioned on April 19, 2004 in Kaliningrad, Russia. Captain Mahesh Mangipudi is the current Commanding Officer (CO) of INS Tabar. It reached the home-port of Mumbai on July 31, 2004. INS Tabar is assigned to Western Naval Command of Indian Navy, which is headquartered in Mumbai. This warship can handle air or surface or subsurface missions and defend herself.

HMS Westminster

It is a Type 23 frigate of the Royal Navy, which was launched on February 4, 1992. It has been named after Dukedom of Westminster.

1.198 2ND INDO-QATARI JOINT NAVAL EXERCISE “ZAIR-AL-BAHR” IN PERSIAN GULF

WHY IN NEWS?

- The second edition of the joint naval exercise, Zair-Al-Bahr, between the Indian Navy and Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF) was conducted between August 9 and 14 in the Persian Gulf. This edition of the exercise included a three-day harbour phase followed by a two-day sea phase.
- The sea phase is comprised of tactical maritime exercises involving surface action, anti-piracy exercises, air defence, maritime surveillance, boarding operations and SAR exercises.
- In the sea phase of the exercise, the Indian Navy’s Stealth Frigate INS Trikand, QENF’s missile boats of Barzan and Damsah class, fast-attack crafts of MRTP 34 class and Rafale fighter aircraft participated.

1.199 5TH INDIA-KAZAKHSTAN JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE “KAZIND-21”

WHY IN NEWS?

- The 5th edition of Indo- Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise, “KAZIND-21” will be held from August 30 to September 11, 2021, at Training Node, Aisha Bibi, Kazakhstan. The joint training exercise will boost the bilateral relations between India and Kazakhstan Armies.
- The Exercise is also a platform for the Armed Forces of India & Kazakhstan to train for Counter Insurgency/ Counter-Terrorism operations in the mountainous, rural scenarios under UN mandate.
- The Indian Army contingent represented by a battalion of the Bihar Regiment consists of a total of 90 personnel led by a Contingent Commander. The Kazakhstan Army will be represented by a company group.
- The scope of Joint Exercise includes professional exchange, planning & execution of the operation in counterterrorism environment at sub-unit level and sharing expertise on skills at arms, combat shooting and experiences in Counter Insurgency/ Counter-Terrorism operations

1.200 INDIA-GERMANY CONDUCTS JOINT EXERCISE IN GULF OF ADEN

WHY IN NEWS?

Navies of India and Germany conducted a joint exercise in Gulf of Aden on August 26, 2021

About:

The joint exercise included helicopter landings as well as search & seizure operations.

- Frigate ‘Trikanth’ from Indian Navy exercised with German frigate called ‘Bayern’.
- INS Trikanth is deployed for anti-piracy patrol in Gulf of Aden region.
- Significance of the exercise

The exercise between both the navies in the Indian Ocean leg of Indo-Pacific Deployment 2021 enhanced the interoperability and facilitated exchange of best practices between them in the maritime domain.

India-Germany Defence ties

Navies of India and Germany conducted the first ever joint exercises in 2008 after both the nations signed an ‘anti-piracy co-operation agreement’ in 2006. Both the countries currently maintain an ongoing dialogue in the arena of commercial maritime security and cooperation in the area of anti-terrorism.

Military of Germany

Military of Germany has been principally structured to defend Eastern Europe and to support NATO operations in Western European theatre of operations. Germany does not have any sovereign territories in the Indo-Pacific region and is also incapable of power projection in the region, unlike UK or France.

1.201 ICGS VIGRAHA

WHY IN NEWS?

The Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Vighraha was commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

- It is the last vessel in the series of seven OPVs built by Larsen & Toubro (Private Company) under an Ministry of Defence contract signed in 2015

About:

- It is about 98 metres long, 15 metres wide, has 3.6 metres draught, with 2,140 tonnes displacement and a range of 5,000 nautical miles.
- It can attain a sustained speed of up to 26 knots.
- It is fitted with advanced technology radars, navigation & communication equipment, sensors and machinery capable of operating in tropical sea conditions.
- It is also equipped with an integrated bridge system, integrated platform management system, automated power management system and high-power external fire-fighting system.
- It is armed with a 40/60 Bofors gun and fitted with two 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Control Gun with fire control system.



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DEFENCE PRACTICE MCQS:

QUESTION 1: India and Indonesia have been carrying out Coordinated Patrols (CORPAT) exercise since-

- A. 2000
- B. 2002
- C. 2006
- D. 2010

QUESTION 2: India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant has been built at-

- A. Garden Reach Shipbuilders
- B. Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders
- C. Cochin Shipyard
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 3: Samudra Shakti defence exercise is a bilateral exercise between India and-

- A. Sri Lanka
- B. Indonesia
- C. Myanmar
- D. Bangladesh

QUESTION 4: Which ship has become the first Indian Navy ship to call at the heritage coastal port of Gopalpur in Odisha?

- A. INS Khanjar
- B. INS Khukri
- C. INS Kuthar
- D. INS Kirpan

QUESTION 5: Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBPF) functions under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Home Affairs
- B. Ministry of Defence
- C. Ministry of External Affairs
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 6: Who is the current Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)?

- A. G Satheesh Reddy
- B. Rekha Sharma
- C. Rajiv Gauba
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 7: The bilateral naval exercise 'Zayed Talwar 2021' was conducted between India and-

- A. Saudi Arabia
- B. UAE
- C. Oman
- D. Iran

QUESTION 8: AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2021 is the first ever naval exercise between-

- A. Saudi Arabia
- B. UAE
- C. Oman
- D. Ira

QUESTION 9: Indian Air Force (IAF) has built one of the world's highest mobile air traffic control (ATC) towers at-

- A. Sikkim
- B. Tawang
- C. Kargil
- D. Ladakh

QUESTION 10: What is the name of India's first Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile?

- A. Brahmos
- B. Nirbhay
- C. Agni
- D. Prithvi

QUESTION 11: Which of the following countries will not take part in the Malabar naval exercise?

- A. USA
- B. Japan
- C. Australia
- D. Philippines

QUESTION 12: Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) has been launched by which ministry?

- A. Ministry of Science and Technology
- B. Ministry of Home Affairs
- C. Ministry of Defence
- D. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

QUESTION 13: Which country has recently tested the nuclear-capable missile Ghaznavi?

- A. Iran
- B. Pakistan
- C. Iraq
- D. Saudi Arabia

QUESTION 14: India has recently signed Joint Guidance for Navy to Navy Relationship with?

- A. Australia
- B. Philippines
- C. Brunei
- D. Malaysia

QUESTION 15: INS Ranvijay which recently took part in Indo-Vietnam exercise, is a-

- A. patrol boat
- B. guided missile destroyer
- C. frigate
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 16: 'JAZBAA-E- TIRANGA' of the Indian Army is a-

- A. marathon
- B. defence exercise
- C. war memorial
- D. weapons exhibition

QUESTION 17: Atal Innovation Mission comes under the ambit of-

- A. Ministry of Education
- B. Department of Science and Technology
- C. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- D. NITI Aayog

QUESTION 18: DRDO has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard-

- A. submarines
- B. tanks
- C. ships
- D. fighter aircraft

QUESTION 19: The defence exercise Konkan, is conducted between navies of India and-

- A. USA
- B. UK
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Bangladesh

QUESTION 20: Zair-Al-Bahr is a joint naval exercise between India and-

- A. Saudi Arabia
- B. Iran
- C. Oman
- D. Qatar

QUESTION 21: 5th India-Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise "KAZIND-21" will be conducted in-

- A. Jaisalmer
- B. Barmer
- C. Aktau
- D. Aisha Bibi

QUESTION 22: The Indian and German Navies conducted a joint exercise recently in-

- A. Mediterranean Sea
- B. Bay of Bengal
- C. Red Sea
- D. Gulf of Aden

- B. Bay of Bengal
- C. Red Sea
- D. Gulf of Aden

QUESTION 23: ICGS Vigraha which was recently commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is a/an-

- A. offshore Patrol Vessel
- B. frigate
- C. dock landing ship
- D. guided missile cruiser

ANSWER KEY:

- 1. B
- 2. C
- 3. B
- 4. A
- 5. A
- 6. A
- 7. B
- 8. A
- 9. D
- 10. B
- 11. D
- 12. C
- 13. B
- 14. A
- 15. B
- 16. A

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18. D

19. B

20. D

21. D

22. D

23. A



1.202 GLOBAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2020

WHY IN NEWS?

India was ranked at 122nd position among 181 countries in Global Youth Development Index, 2020. Commonwealth Secretariat released this triennial ranking of youth development for 181 countries.

About:

- The index measures the status of young people among 181 countries across the world.
- Singapore was ranked at the top for the first time.
- It is followed by Slovenia, Norway, Malta and Denmark.
- Bottom countries in the index include- Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Afghanistan and Niger.
- Index highlights that, condition of young people has improved worldwide by 3.1 percent in between 2010 and 2018. However, the progress remained slow.
- In the index, 156 countries recorded at least slight improvements in their scores.
- Report also highlights the positive trajectory of youth development pre-pandemic time, which covid-19 virus could reverse if urgent action is not taken to secure the gain.
- Top five improvers include- India, Afghanistan, Russia, Ethiopia, and Burkina Faso. They advanced their score on an average by 15.74 per cent.
- Countries like Libya, Syria, Ukraine, Jordan and Lebanon witnessed greatest decline in youth development in between 2010 and 2018.

How this index ranks countries?

- The Global Youth Development index ranks countries between the score of 0.00 (lowest) and 1.00 (highest) on the basis of developments in youth with respect to education, health, employment, equality & inclusion, political & civic participation, peace and security.
- It provides score on the basis of 27 indicators, including literacy and voting, to showcase the state of 1.8 billion people across the world aged between 15 and 29.

1.203 UNICEF: CHILDREN IN INDIA AT HIGH RISK OF CLIMATE CRISIS IMPACTS

WHY IN NEWS?

According to a new report by UNICEF, Children in India are at extreme high risk of impacts of climate crisis

About:

- As per report, India is among four South Asian countries where children are most at risk.
- Climate change threatens their health, education, and protection.
- Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and India are the four South Asian countries where children are at extremely high risk.
- Pakistan was ranked at 14th position, Bangladesh at 15th, Afghanistan at 25th while India at 26th.
- Nepal is ranked at 51st, Sri Lanka 61st, while Bhutan is ranked 111th.

- About 1 billion children live in 33 countries that are classified as 'extremely high-risk'.
- More than 600 million Indians will face 'acute water shortages' in upcoming years.
- At the same time, flash flooding will increase significantly in India's urban areas once the global temperature increases to 2° Celsius.
- Further, twenty-one of world's 30 cities with the most polluted air were in India in 2020.

CCR-about Index

These findings were published in UNICEF's report titled: "The Climate Crisis Is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index" (CCRI). CCRI is the first focussed report on children by UNICEF. The index ranks countries on the basis of children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks like cyclones and heatwaves including the vulnerability to those shocks on the basis of their access to essential services.

High-risk in India

Index has placed India among one of the 33 extremely high-risk countries where flooding and air pollution are repeated environmental shocks. Such shocks lead to the socio-economic adverse consequences for women and children.

1.204 INDIA EMERGES AS SECOND IN GLOBAL MANUFACTURING RISK INDEX

WHY IN NEWS?

- India has emerged as a global manufacturing hub and effectively surpassed the United States to become the world's second most desired manufacturing destination.
- This indicates the growing interest in India by manufacturers as a preferred manufacturing hub over other countries including the United States and the manufacturing giant nation, China.
- India's ranking was reflected in Cushman & Wakefield's 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index. The index ranks 47 countries across Europe, the Americas, and the Asia Pacific.

1.205 COPENHAGEN TOPS EIU'S SAFE CITIES INDEX 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

- Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark, has been named as the world's safest city from among 60 global cities, in Safe Cities Index 2021, released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- Copenhagen scored 82.4 points out of 100, to top the fourth edition of the EIU's biennial index, which measures the level of urban safety. Yangon is at the bottom of the index, as least safe city, with a score of 39.5.
- From India, New Delhi and Mumbai have found a place in the index. New Delhi is placed at 48th position with a score of 56.1, while Mumbai is at 50th place with a score of 54.4.
- The EIU's Safe Cities Index is a global, policy benchmarking tool developed to measure global urban safety. The Index was first released in 2015.
- In 2021, cities are ranked based on 76 indicators of security across five broad pillars, which are digital, health, infrastructure, personal and environmental.

Reports practice mcqs:

QUESTION 1: Which country ranked first in Global Youth Development Index, 2020?

- A. Slovenia
- B. India
- C. Norway
- D. Singapore

QUESTION 2: Children's Climate Risk Index report has been recently released by-

- A. UNICEF
- B. Food and Agriculture Organisation
- C. World Bank
- D. IUCN

QUESTION 3: In Cushman & Wakefield's 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index, India has become the world's _____ most desired manufacturing destination.

- A. second
- B. third
- C. fifth
- D. seventh

QUESTION 4: Which city topped in Safe Cities Index 2021, released by the Economist Intelligence Unit?

- A. Paris
- B. New York
- C. Singapore
- D. Copenhagen

ANSWER KEY:

1. D
2. A
3. A
4. D

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1.206 PV SINDHU: FIRST INDIAN WOMAN TO WIN TWO OLYMPICS MEDALS

WHY IN NEWS?

PV Sindhu, a 26-year-old badminton player, has become first Indian woman to win two Olympic medals after defeating 'He Bingjiao' of China.

About:

- Sindhu defeated 'He Bingjiao' by 21-13, 21-15 in women's singles bronze medal match at Tokyo Olympics 2020.
- She is the first Indian woman to win Olympic silver and also the first Indian woman to finish on podium two times at Olympics.
- At Rio Olympics, Sindhu had won women's singles badminton silver in her Olympics debut.
- She has become 2nd Indian athlete to win 2 Olympic medals in individual events following Sushil Kumar.
- Sushil Kumar had won wrestling bronze in 2008 in Beijing and went one step further to win Silver at London Games in which India achieved its best-ever tally of 6 medals.

Where does Sindhu stand internationally?

- Sindhu has become the 4th athlete to win multiple medals in women's singles badminton category at Olympic Games.
- She has joined South Korea's Bang Soo-Hyun who won silver at Barcelona Games in 1992 as well as gold medal in women's singles badminton category at 1996 Atlanta Games.
- Apart from them, China's Zhang Ning had won gold medal at 2004 Athens Games and defended it in Beijing.
- Indonesia's Susi Susanti won 1992 Gold medal and won bronze at the 1996 Athens Games.

Who is PV Sindhu?

Sindhu is an Indian badminton player who came to limelight at international level after winning Asian Championships bronze medal in 2014. In the same year she also won bronze medals at Commonwealth Games and Asian Games. She also won her first of 5 World Championship medals in 2014 itself.

1.207 LOVLINABORGOHAIN WINS INDIA'S THIRD MEDAL AT THE GAMES

WHY IN NEWS?

Lovlina won the third Olympic medal for India. She won bronze medal after going down 0-5 against Busenaz Surmeneli from Turkey in 69kg welterweight semifinals.

About:

- LovlinaBorgohain has also become the second Indian female boxer, after MC Mary Kom, to win an Olympic bronze.
- Mary Kom had won the medal in 2012 London Olympics.
- Including the bronze medal of Lovlina, India has acquired three medals till date.

- Earlier, Mirabai Chanu won silver in weightlifting and PV Sindhu won bronze in badminton women's individual event.
- Lovlina has become first-ever Assamese woman to win the Olympic medal.
- Lovlina Borgohain is the third Indian boxer to win Olympic bronze following legendary boxers Mary Kom and Vijender Singh.
- Mary Kom and Vijender Singh had won bronze medal respectively in 2012 London Olympics and 2008 Beijing Olympics.
- She is currently ranked at world no. 3.

Who is Lovlina Borgohain?

Lovlina Borgohain belongs to Golaghat district of Assam. Her father is a small-scale businessman. She started her career as kickboxer and switched to boxing after getting opportunity from the field. She participated in trials at her high school conducted by Sports Authority of India. She was selected by renowned Coach Padum Boro. He started giving training Lovlina in 2012. She was selected to participate in 2018 Commonwealth Games in welterweight boxing category. However, she could not win medal and lost it in quarterfinals.

1.208 ITALY'S MARCELL JACOBS WINS MEN'S 100M GOLD AT TOKYO OLYMPICS 2020

WHY IN NEWS?

- Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs outshone a field of unusual suspects to claim a shock Olympic gold in the men's 100 metres, breaking retired Jamaican star Usain Bolt's 13-year hold on the blue-ribbon event.
- American Fred Kerley took silver in a personal best of 9.84 with Canada's Andre de Grasse repeating his bronze of 2016 in 9.89, also a new best.
- Elaine Thompson-Herah led a Jamaican sweep in the women's 100 meters at the Tokyo Summer Games, capturing gold in an Olympic-record time of 10.61 seconds. Thompson-Herah's time was also the second-fastest women's 100 of all time.
- Veteran teammate Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce took the silver in 10.74 seconds while Shericka Jackson, also of Jamaica, was third in 10.76. Teahna Daniels of the U.S. was seventh in 11.02.

1.209 INDIA WINS BRONZE IN MEN'S HOCKEY, BEAT GERMANY 5-4

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian men's hockey team defeated Germany to win their first-ever Olympic medal in 41 years. India wins the bronze medal in men's hockey after beating Germany 5-4 at Tokyo Olympics.
- Before this podium finish for bronze, India last climbed up the Olympic podium in 1980, when it won its 8th gold at the Games.
- Simranjeet Singh scored two goals for India at the Oi Hockey Stadium, along with Hardik Singh, Harmanpreet Singh and Rupinder Pal Singh also adding their names on the scoresheet.

1.210 RAVI KUMAR DAHIYA WINS SILVER MEDAL AT TOKYO OLYMPICS 2020

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya bagged the silver medal after losing in the final of men's 57kg freestyle category to Russian Olympic Committee's (ROC) Zaur Uguev.
- This is India's fifth medal at the Tokyo Olympics and the second silver of the campaign.
- Ravi Kumar is the fifth Indian wrestler after KD Jadhav, Sushil Kumar, Yogeshwar Dutt, and Sakshi Malik to finish on the Olympic podium.

1.211 SHEHROZE KASHIF BECOMES WORLD'S YOUNGEST MOUNTAINEER TO SCALE K2

WHY IN NEWS?

- A 19-year old Pakistani climber Shehroze Kashif became the youngest person in the world to reach the summit of K2, the second-highest peak in the world.
- Shehroze Kashif from Lahore achieved the feat of scaling the 8,611-metre high peak with the aid of bottled oxygen.
- Before Kashif, Sajid Sadpara, the son of the legendary climber Muhammad Ali Sadpara, was the youngest person to have climbed K2 at the age of 20.
- Kashif also scaled the world's 12th-highest mountain, the 8,047-meter Broad Peak, at the age of 17. In May this year, he became the youngest Pakistani to scale Mount Everest.
- Pakistan, Nepal, and China are home to the 14 highest peaks in the world, also known as the 8,000ers. Five 8,000-metre peaks, including K2 and Nanga Parbat, are in Pakistan.

1.212 TOKYO OLYMPICS: NEERAJ CHOPRA WINS GOLD MEDAL

WHY IN NEWS?

Neeraj Chopra, a 23-year-old javelin thrower, created history on August 7, 2021 by winning Gold Medal in men's javelin throw final at Tokyo Olympics 2020. This was the first time, he participated in the Games.

About:

- He became only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold after Abhinav Bindra. At his calmest best, he hurled the javelin 87.58m to script history for India.
- He ended India's 121-year wait for an athletics medal.
- No Indian had won a medal in athletics since 1920 when India started taking part in the Olympics in 1920 in Antwerp, Belgium.
- Neeraj dedicated his gold medal to Milkha Singh and PT Usha and other Indian athletes who came closer to winning Olympic medal.

How he won?

Neeraj Chopra threw the javelin at 87.03m in his first throw. He bettered the throw with 87.58m but couldn't go any further. He could manage four legitimate throws of 87.03m, 87.58m, 76.79m and 84.24. Though, Fourth and fifth throws were disqualified.

India's 1st medal at Olympics

International Olympic Committee credits Norman Pritchard's 200m and 200m hurdles silver medals in 1900 Paris Olympics to India. However, various researches and records of the IAAF (now World

Athletics) shows that, he had competed for Great Britain. Pritchard was not an Indian and India first participated in Olympic under a national Olympic body in 1920.

Who is Neeraj Chopra?

He is an Indian track and field athlete competing in javelin throw. He has become the first track and field athlete to win an Olympic gold medal for India and second Olympic athletics to win for India after Norman Pritchard, who won two silver medals at 1900 Summer Olympics for India. He was inducted as Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) in Rajputana Rifles of Indian Army in 2016. He made his debut at 2018 Commonwealth Games and 2018 Asian Games, where he was the opening flag-bearer. In both the games, he won gold medals.

1.213 TOKYO PASSED FLAME OF HOPE TO PARIS

WHY IN NEWS?

Amid the ongoing covid-19 pandemic and approaching typhoon, Tokyo Olympics 2020 was finally concluded on August 8, 2021. Japanese capital pulled the curtains down on one of the most unique Games in history and handed over the flame of hope to Paris.

About:

Flame of hope or the flag was passed to Paris with the message of moving forward. It also remembered those who lost their lives to Covid-19 pandemic.

What is Flame of Hope?

Flame of Hope is the symbol of Special Olympics Games. It is used much in same spirit as the Olympic Flame is used at the Olympic Games. The Flame of Hope is lit during traditional ceremony in Athens, Greece. After lighting, it is relayed on foot towards the organizing city by the members of law enforcement agencies comprising of mostly policemen and policewomen along with Special Olympics athletes. The relay, officially the Law Enforcement Torch Run, is the flagship of international fundraising effort.

2018 flame of hope

Flame of Hope was memorialized by Chicago Park District in 2018 that erected the 30 foot "Eternal Flame of Hope" to honor the Special Olympics.

Special Olympics

Special Olympics is world's largest sports organization for children and adults with disabilities. It provides them a year-round training and activities to 5 million participants and Unified Sports partners across 172 countries. Special Olympics competitions are held every day across the world including local, national and regional competitions. Special Olympics organization is also recognized by International Olympic Committee on the line of Paralympic Games. However, Special Olympics World Games are not held in the same year or in conjunction with the Olympic Games

1.214 OLYMPIAN FOOTBALLER S.S. 'BABU' NAYARAN PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- Two-times Olympian Shankar Subramaniam, alias "Babu" Nayaran passed away. He was India's goalkeeper during the 1956 and 1960 Olympics. Besides representing Maharashtra in football and basketball, Narayan emerged as one of the most reliable goalkeepers in India.
- His decade-long career for the national team also included the stellar effort of India finishing fourth in the 1956 Olympics and representing India in the 1964 Asian Games.
- Subramaniam was born in Palakkad district in Kerala, Narayan was a star in Mumbai's local circuit during his appearances for Matunga Students, Matunga Gymkhana, Caltex and Tata Sports Club. He was part of Maharashtra's Santosh Trophy-winning campaign in 1964.

1.215 LABHANSHU SHARMA WINS BHARAT KESARI WRESTLING DANGAL FOR UTTARAKHAND

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian Wrestler Labhanshu Sharma won the Bharat Kesari Wrestling Dangal 2021 organised in Tamil Nadu. 20 years since the formation of Uttarakhand, Labhanshu has broken the drought and won the title of Bharat Kesari for the state.
- With 15 gold medals at the state level and 10 medals at the national level and 2 gold medals and 1 silver medal in the International Wrestling competitions; Labhanshu is already set to bring glory to the nation.

1.216 WORLD ATHLETICS RANKINGS 2021: NEERAJ RANKED AT 2

WHY IN NEWS?

Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra has finished at number 2 rank in the World Athletics ranking after securing Gold Medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

About:

- Neeraj Chopra has been ranked second with his score of 1315.
- He is only behind German athlete Johannes Vetter who is having the score of 1396.

Chopra at Tokyo Olympics

- Neeraj Chopra created history on August 7, 2021 by winning Gold Medal.
- He has become India's first athlete to win gold in track and field at Olympics.
- He threw the javelin to a distance of 87.58m.
- World Athletics has listed his throw at the Olympics has now been listed as one among 10 magical moments of athletics (track and field) in the Tokyo Olympics.
- Following his win, Neeraj has also become the most followed track & field athlete in the world with number of followers on Instagram at 3.2 million.

Neeraj Chopra

He is an Indian track and field athlete, competing in the javelin throw. He is the Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) in the Indian Army. He has become the first track and field athlete to win a gold medal at the Olympics. He is also the first track and field athlete who won IAAF World

U20 Championships. In 2016, he achieved under-20 world record of 86.48 m. He is one among two Indians to have won an individual Olympic gold medal as of 2021. Other gold medalist being Abhinav Bindra. He has also become the youngest-ever Indian gold medalist in the individual event and the first to win gold in his Olympic debut.

1.217 130TH EDITION OF DURAND CUP TO BE HELD IN KOLKATA

WHY IN NEWS?

World's third oldest and Asia's oldest football tournament called Durand Cup, is all set to be held in Kolkata from September 5 to October 21, 2021.

About:

- Durand Cup will be held after a year due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- Tournament will be organised with the support of All India Football Federation (AIFF), IFA (West Bengal) and Government of West Bengal.
- Year 2021 will mark the 130th Edition of Durand Cup.

About Durand Cup

The Durand Cup is the prestigious football tournament. It was first held in 1888, at Dagshai in Himachal Pradesh. This tournament has been named after Mortimer Durand. He was the then Foreign Secretary in charge of India.

Background of the tournament

This tournament was a conscious way to maintain health and fitness amongst the British troops. However, it was later opened to civilians. Presently, it is one of the leading sports events globally.

Successful teams

Mohun Bagan and East Bengal are the most successful teams of the Durand Cup. Both the teams have won for sixteen times each.

About the Trophy

Winning team is provided with three trophies

1. President's Cup which was first presented by Dr Rajendra Prasad
2. Durand Cup- it is the original challenge prize and a rolling trophy and
3. Shimla Trophy which was first presented by citizens of Shimla in 1903. Since 1965, it has become a rolling trophy.

Where it will be held?

The football Tournament was shifted from Delhi to Kolkata in 2019. 2019 Gokulam Kerala won the 2019 tournament by beating Mohun Bagan with 2-1 in the finals. Thus, Kolkata will again host this four-week long tournament. Sixteen participating teams from India, including four teams from the Services, will bring out the competitive and sportsman spirit to fight for the trophies.

1.218 INDIA SENDS LARGEST EVER CONTINGENT FOR TOKYO PARALYMPIC GAMES

WHY IN NEWS?

- The upcoming Tokyo Paralympics will witness the largest ever Indian contingent being sent, with 54 para-sportspersons participating across 9 sports disciplines.
- The 54-member Indian contingents were given a formal and virtual send-off on August 12, 2021, by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur
- The 2020 Summer Paralympics Games are scheduled to be held in Tokyo, Japan from August 24 to September 05, 2021.

1.219 HARSHIT RAJA BECOMES INDIA'S 69TH CHESS GRANDMASTER

WHY IN NEWS?

- The 20-year-old Chess player Harshit Raja from Pune, Maharashtra has become the 69th Grandmaster of India in Chess.
- He achieved the feat of becoming the GM at Biel Masters Open 2021 where he drew his game against Dennis Wagner to get his final GM norm with one round to spare.
- Grandmaster (GM) title is awarded to chess players by the world chess organization FIDE and is the highest title a chess player can attain.

1.220 RENOWNED ATHLETICS COACH OM NAMBIAR PASSES AWAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- O.M. Nambiar, the man who transformed a village girl P.T. Usha into Asia's Golden Girl, passed away. One of India's most famous coaches, Nambiar spotted Usha at a very young age in 1976 and soon began coaching her at the Kannur Sports Division.
- Under his guidance, Usha began winning medals at the Asian level but his best move was making the sprinter switch to the 400m hurdles before the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

1.221 SHAILI SINGH BAGS LONG JUMP SILVER IN WAU20 CHAMPIONSHIPS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Shaili Singh claimed the women's Long Jump silver medal in the World Athletics U20 Championships. Her slight wind-aided effort of 6.59m was only 1cm short of the gold medal jump by Sweden's Maja Askag but her silver medal ensured that Indian athletics continues to showcase the progress it has been making.
- Shaili Singh's was India's third medal in the World Athletics U20 Championships, coming after the bronze won by the Mixed Team in the 4x400m Relay and the silver by Amit Khatri in the men's 10,000m Race Walk. India finished 21st on the medal table, aware that a gold would have lifted it to the top 15.

1.222 PRINCEPAL SINGH BECOMES FIRST INDIAN TO BE PART OF NBA CHAMPIONSHIP ROSTER

WHY IN NEWS?

- Princepal Singh became the first Indian to be part of an NBA title-winning team when his side Sacramento Kings clinched the 2021 NBA Summer League crown.
- The 6-foot-9 forward made history by being the first Indian to be part of a championship roster at any level of the NBA. The Kings dominated the championship game against the Boston Celtics, clinching the title with a 100-67 win.

1.223 2020 PARALYMPICS: AVANILEKHARA WINS GOLD MEDAL

WHY IN NEWS?

On August 30, 2021, Shooter AvaniLekhara has won India's first gold medal in 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

About:

- AvaniLekhara won medal in women's 10m Air Rifle Standing (SH1) event
- She is a 19-year-old Lekhara and created a record at Paralympics by equalling the world record of Ukraine's Iryna Shchetnik.
- Iryna Shchetnik had a record score of 249.6 in 2018.
- Avani became the first Indian woman to win first gold medal at Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.
- Cuiping Zhang of China won silver medal with a score of 248.9 while Iryna Shchetnik won the bronze medal with a score of 227.5.
- Avani finished 7th with a score of 621.7 and become the 5th Indian athlete to win a gold medal in the Paralympics Games.
- She is the fourth Indian athlete to win a Paralympics gold following swimmer **MurlikantPetkar** in 1972, javelin thrower **Devendra Jhajharia** in 2004 & 2016 and high jumper **ThangaveluMariyappan** in 2016.

India's Medal Tally

India has won 19 medals so far across all 11 editions of Tokyo Paralympics Games since 1960. It comprises of 5 gold, 8 silver, and 6 bronze.

About AvaniLekhara

AvaniLekhara is an Indian Paralympic athlete of the shooting event. She was born on November 8, 2001. She has been currently ranked at World No. 5 in Women's 10m Air Rifle standing (SH1). She competed in the 2018 Asian Para Games and has been getting support by GoSports Foundation through the Para Champions Programme. Avani sustained a spinal cord injury in a car accident in 2012. She started shooting after reading the autobiography of Olympic gold medallist shooter Abhinav Bindra. She tried hand in different sports with her father's support but ultimately, she got inclined towards shooting.

1.224 FIT INDIA MOBILE APPLICATION LAUNCHED

WHY IN NEWS?

Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur, launched the Fit India Mobile Application on the occasion of celebrating second anniversary of Fit India Movement.

About:

- Application was launched as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi on the occasion of **National Sports Day** on **August 29, 2021**.
- On the occasion, Ministers virtually interacted with Indian Hockey team captain Manpreet Singh, pilot Captain Anny Divya, wrestler Sangram Singh, journalist Ayaz Memon etc.

Fit India App

Fit India App is free and available in English & Hindi on the Android and the iOS platforms. It was developed in a way that it works even on basic smartphones. This app will bring ease of checking one's fitness levels. It comprises of unique features such as fitness score, activity trackers, animated videos, and my plan in accordance with the individual specific needs.

Fitness Protocol

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the age-appropriate fitness protocols in the year 2020. These protocols are certified by World Health Organisation (WHO). A fitness mantra "FITNESS KI DOSE, AADHA GHANTA ROZ" was also dedicated to nation.

Fit India Movement

This movement was launched by PM Modi on August 29, 2019 on the occasion of **National Sports Day**. It was launched with the aim of making fitness an integral part of lives of every Indian. Fit India was first established by Suparno Satpathy in 1993 and was incorporated as a company in the year 2000.

Fitness Pledge

Fitness Pledge of the campaign is "I promise to myself, I will devote time for physical activity and sports every day. I will encourage my family members & neighbours to be physically fit and make India a fit nation".

1.225 YOGESH KATHUNIYA CLINCH SILVER MEDAL IN PARALYMPICS

WHY IN NEWS?

Discus thrower, Yogesh Kathuniya, clinched a silver medal on August 30 in the men's F56 event in 2020 Paralympics.

About:

- On August 29, India picked up a silver in high jump and a bronze in discus throw, which is on hold because of a protest.
- Brazil's defending champion and world record holder, Claudiney Batista dos Santos, won the gold medal for best throw of 45.59m.
- Leonardo Diaz Aldana from Cuba won the bronze for throw of 43.36m.

Men's F56 event

In the F56 classification, athletes have full arm as well as trunk muscle power. Pelvic stability is provided to full ability in order to press the knees together.

Who is Yogesh Kathuniya?

He is a 24-year-old, B.Com graduate from Kirorimal College of Delhi. He is the son of an Army Man. He suffered a paralytic attack, when he was eight. Attack left him with coordination impairments in his limbs. During KMC, his potential was noticed by several coaches following which he came under tutelage of Satyapal Singh at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. After some years, coach naval Singh started guiding him.

His achievements

2018 Para-athletics Grand Prix Competition in Berlin was his first even international competition in which he created a world record in F36 category. He won a bronze medal in 2019 World Para Athletics Championships in Dubai with the throw of 42.51m. This win made ways for him to Tokyo. At Tokyo Paralympics, he sent the disc to a distance of 44.38m in his sixth which was the last attempt to clinch the silver medal.

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SPORTS practice mcqs:

QUESTION 1: Who has recently become first Indian woman to win two Olympic medals?

- A. PV Sindhu
- B. MirabaiChanu
- C. Kamalpreet Kaur
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 2: LovlinaBorgohain, who recently won Bronze medal in Tokyo Olympics 2020, belongs to which state?

- A. Manipur
- B. Jharkhand
- C. West Bengal
- D. Assam

QUESTION 3: Lamont Marcell Jacobs has won Men's 100m Gold at Tokyo Olympics 2020. He belongs to which country?

- A. USA
- B. Jamaica
- C. Italy
- D. Costa Rica

QUESTION 4: Indian men's hockey team defeated _____ to win their first-ever Olympic medal in 41 years.

- A. Argentina
- B. Australia
- C. Germany
- D. Netherlands

QUESTION 5: Ravi Kumar Dahiya bagged the silver medal in Tokyo Olympics in which weight category of freestyle wrestling?

- A. 57kg
- B. 65kg
- C. 74kg
- D. 86kg

QUESTION 6: Shehroze Kashif, who became the youngest person in the world to reach the summit of K2, the second-highest peak in the world, belongs to which country?

- A. India
- B. Bangladesh
- C. Nepal
- D. Pakistan

QUESTION 7: India started taking part in the Olympics in 1920 that were held in-

- A. Antwerp, Belgium
- B. Athens, Greece
- C. London, England
- D. Bonn, Germany

QUESTION 8: The next Olympics in 2024 will be held in-

- A. Mumbai
- B. Beijing
- C. Paris
- D. Qatar

QUESTION 9: Shankar

Subramaniam, alias "Babu" Nayaran who passed away recently, was a famous-

- A. footballer
- B. cricketer
- C. hockey player
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 10: The Bharat Kesari Wrestling Dangal 2021 was organised in-

- A. Kerala
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Uttarakhand
- D. Haryana

QUESTION 11: Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra has finished at which rank in the World Athletics ranking?

- A. 1st
- B. 2nd
- C. 3rd
- D. 9th

QUESTION 12: Durand cup is associated with which sport?

- A. cricket
- B. football
- C. hockey
- D. volleyball

QUESTION 13: The 2020 Summer Paralympics Games will be held in-

- A. Tokyo

B. Qatar

C. Beijing

D. Paris

QUESTION 14: Harshit Raja from Pune, Maharashtra has become the 69th Grandmaster of India in Chess. Grandmaster (GM) title is awarded to chess players by-

- A. All India Chess Federation
- B. International Chess Federation (FIDE)
- C. International Olympic Organisation
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 15: O.M. Nambiar who passed away recently was a renowned _____ coach.

- A. cricket
- B. hockey
- C. tennis
- D. athletics

QUESTION 16: Who won the women's Long Jump silver medal in the World Athletics U20 Championships?

- A. Roohani Malik
- B. Aditi Singh
- C. Shaili Singh
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 17: Princepal Singh became the first Indian to be part of an NBA title-winning team. Which team is he associated with?

- A. Sacramento Kings
- B. Toronto Raptors
- C. Los Angeles Lakers

D. New York Knicks

B. Discus throw

C. Javelin throw

QUESTION 18: AvaniLekhara has won India's first gold medal in 2020 Tokyo Paralympics in-

D. Hurdles

ANSWER KEY:

A. hurdles

1. B

B. table tennis

2. A

C. tennis

3. D

D. shooting

4. A

5. C

QUESTION 19: National Sports Day is celebrated every year on-

6. D

7. B

8. A

A. August 29

9. B

10. B

B. September 29

11. B

12. A

C. July 29

13. C

14. A

D. June 29

15. D

16. A

QUESTION 20: Yogesh Kathuniya has clinched Silver Medal in Paralympics in which event?

17. C

18. C

A. Shot put

19. D

20. A

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Awards

1.226 CYRUS POONAWALLA WINS LOKMANYA TILAK NATIONAL AWARD

WHY IN NEWS?

- Dr Cyrus Poonawalla, Chairman of the Pune-based vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII), has been selected for the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak National Award for 2021.
- He has been named for his work during the COVID-19 pandemic, by manufacturing the Covishield vaccine. He will receive the award on August 13. The award comprises a cash prize of Rs one lakh and a memento.
- The Lokmanya Tilak national award is given annually since 1983 on August 1, the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, by the Lokmanya Tilak Trust. However this year the date has been changed due to the coronavirus situation.

1.227 C.R. RAO GOLD MEDAL AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Indian Econometric Society (TIES) Trust has selected two renowned economic scholars for the Prof. C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award. Renowned economists Jagdish Bhagwati and C Rangarajan have been conferred with the inaugural Prof CR Rao Centenary Gold Medal (CGM).
- Bhagwati is a professor of economics, law and international relations at Columbia University while C Rangarajan is the former chairman of the Economic Advisory Council of the Prime Minister and former governor of the Reserve Bank of India.
- TIES Trust had constituted a jury to shortlist the awardees. Based on the jury's recommendations, it announced that inaugural award to two distinguished scholars. The medal is presented once in two years to an Indian or Indian-origin scholar for lifetime contributions to the fields of theoretical and applied aspects of quantitative economics and official statistics.

1.228 RAJIV GANDHI KHEL RATNA AWARD RENAMED AFTER MAJOR DHYAN CHAND

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award has been renamed as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.

About:

- Khel Ratna award is the highest sporting honour in India.
- This move of renaming award after sportsman was welcomed on social media.

About Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award has been renamed as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award in Sports and Games after Dhyan Chand who was an Indian field hockey player. This award was instituted in 1991-1992. Its first recipient was chess legend Viswanathan Anand. The award is given

annually by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Recipient(s) is/are selected by a committee constituted by Ministry. They are honoured for their “spectacular and most outstanding performance in sports over a period of four years. Award comprises of a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of ₹25 lakh. Some winners of the award are Leander Paes, Sachin Tendulkar, Dhanraj Pillay, Abhinav Bindra, Pullela Gopichand, Mary Kom, Anju Bobby George, and Rani Rampal in 2020.

About Dhyan Chand

Major Dhyan Chand, popularly known as The Wizard, was an Indian field hockey player. He is regarded as one of the greatest in the history of sport. He was well known for his extraordinary goal-scoring feat. He earned three Olympic gold medals, in 1928, 1932 and 1936. His influence extended beyond these victories because India won field hockey event in seven out of eight Olympics in between 1928 to 1964. August 29

(his birthday) is celebrated as National Sports Day in India every year.

1.229 WEST BENGAL RECEIVES FOUR SKOCH AWARDS

WHY IN NEWS?

- The government of West Bengal has received four SKOCH awards for its schemes under the Ease of Doing Business initiative. The State scheme ‘Silpasathi’-the online single window portal won the platinum award while the Auto-Renewal of Certificate of Enlistment through the online system for urban areas has received the gold award.
- Online issuance of trade licences in rural areas and the E-Nathikaran: the online system for registration, preparation and submission of deeds have won two silver awards.
- The state government will ensure that the ease of doing business in West Bengal continues to be one of the foremost in the country.

1.230 NAGALAND WINS 7 NATIONAL AWARDS UNDER VAN DHAN YOJANA SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

- Nagaland has been conferred with seven national awards on the first Van Dhan Annual Awards 2020-21, during the celebration of the 34th foundation day of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED).
- The awards were presented by Union tribal minister, Arjun Munda through a Zoom webinar.
- Meanwhile, the state has received seven national awards, such, as 1st positions in – ‘Best Survey State’, ‘Best Training’, and ‘Most number of VDVKC’s established’.
- It has attained 3rd position for ‘Best Sales Generated’, and ‘Best Innovation & Creativity.
- The state has also received Awards for Innovative & Creative Product Ideas for commodities like – Gooseberry Wine (Supplier: Toka Multipurpose Society Ltd.); Mushroom Cultivation (Supplier: NBHM).

1.231 DELHI AIRPORT AMONG WORLD’S TOP-50 BEST AIRPORTS IN 2021

WHY IN NEWS?

The Skytrax World Airport Award ranking 2021 was recently published in which Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi has emerged among world's top-50 best airports in the 2021.

About:

- Delhi Airport emerged as best airport in India for the third consecutive year.
- Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru have also found a rank among world's 100 best airports.

Airport ranking list

- According to Skytrax 2021 world airport's awards list, Delhi has been ranked at 45th position. Ranking has improved by five places as compared to number 50 in 2020. Delhi airport is first Indian airport to achieve this mark.
- Hyderabad has been ranked at 64th Its ranking has been improved by seven places against 71st in 2020.
- Mumbai is at 65th number, 13 places down from 52nd position in 2020. Bengaluru is at 71st number, 3 places down from 68th rank in 2020.

Ranking of airports globally

- World's top-5 airports include:
 1. Doha Hamad International Airport
 2. Tokyo Haneda airport
 3. Changi airport Singapore
 4. Seoul Incheon International Airport and
 5. Tokyo Narita

How airports are ranked?

United Kingdom based Skytrax provides the best airports awards on the basis of customer reviews. Ranking is considered as the quality benchmark for world airport industry. It assesses customer service and facilities across 550 airports.

About Skytrax

Skytrax is a United Kingdom-based consultancy, running an airline and airport review & ranking site.

Indira Gandhi International Airport

This international aviation hub of New Delhi is spread over an area of 5,106 acres. It is situated in Palam and has been named after former Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi. It is the busiest airport of India in terms of passenger traffic since 2009. Globally, it is the 17th busiest airport and 6th busiest airport in Asia by passenger traffic. It handles about 70 million passengers. It was operated by the Indian Air Force and transferred to the Airports Authority of India, later. In 2006, management of IGI was transferred to Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), led by the GMR Group.

1.232 MOHAMMAD AZAM HONOURED WITH NATIONAL YOUTH AWARD

WHY IN NEWS?

- Mohammad Azam from Karimnagar district in Telangana has been awarded the National Youth Award recently by the Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur in Delhi for displaying exemplary leadership qualities.
- He has conducted several awareness programmes related to blood donation, organ donation and plantation programmes under the Haritha Haram project. The award carries an appreciation certificate and Rs 50,000 cash.
- Apart from these, he has also worked on water conservation, construction of soaking pits, works related to the Swachh Bharat mission and government welfare schemes, for the benefit of the people in various villages.
- He received the 'Indira Gandhi NSS Award' from then President of India Pranab Mukherjee. He was also awarded the Pratibha Puraskar award by the State government in the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh and the Rashtriya Gaurav Samman Award.

1.233 SRI BASAVA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR SEER OF BHALKI HIREMATH

WHY IN NEWS?

- Karnataka government has selected Sri Basavalinga Pattaddevaru, senior seer of Bhalki Hiremath, for the prestigious Sri Basava International Award. Minister for Kannada and Culture V. Sunil Kumar will present the award at Ravindra Kalakshetra in Bengaluru.
- The septuagenarian seer has spent over five decades in the Lingayat religious institution in the Bidar district.
- The centre was set up in 2003 when an abandoned baby from Ujani village near Aurad in Bidar district was adopted. The seer moved the court to adopt the child. The Central and State governments later recognised the centre as an authorised Central adoption resource agency.

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Awards: practice Mcq

QUESTION 1: Who has been selected for the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak National Award for 2021?

- A. Sharad Pagare
- B. Cyrus Poonawalla
- C. Thomas Vijayan
- D. Shailesh Ganpule

QUESTION 2: C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award is given by which institution?

- A. Indian Space Research Organisation
- B. The Indian Econometric Society Trust
- C. The Energy and Research Institute
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 3: Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award has been recently renamed as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award. Who was the first recipient of this award?

- A. Sachin Tendulkar
- B. Leander Paes
- C. Viswanathan Anand
- D. Anju Bobby George

QUESTION 4: The online single window portal scheme 'Silpasathi' is initiative of which state?

- A. West Bengal
- B. Odisha
- C. Kerala
- D. Tamil Nadu

QUESTION 5: Which state has been judged 'Best Survey State' in the first Van Dhan Annual Awards 2020-21?

- A. Mizoram
- B. Nagaland
- C. Tripura
- D. Sikkim

QUESTION 6: According to The Skytrax World Airport Award ranking 2021 which was published recently, which airport ranked first in the world?

- A. Doha Hamad International Airport
- B. Tokyo Haneda Airport
- C. Changi Airport Singapore
- D. Seoul Incheon International Airport

QUESTION 7: Who has been awarded the National Youth Award this year?

- A. Diksha Shinde
- B. Sushil Kumar
- C. Mohammad Azam
- D. none of the above

QUESTION 8: Karnataka government has selected _____ for the prestigious Sri Basava International Award.

- A. Vinay Badhwar
- B. Sri BasavalingaPattaddevaru
- C. Kaushik Basu
- D. Vidya Balan

ANSWER KEY:

1. B

2. B

3. C

4. A

5. B

6. A

7. C

8. B



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