



# Monthly Current Affairs for UPSC & PCS Exams

October 2018

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## Daily Current Affairs for UPSC IAS Preparation

**01.10.2018**

### **1. Wage Compensation Scheme for Pregnant Women in Assam.**

- Assam Government will launch the scheme for tea Gardener.

#### **Related Information**

- The scheme will provide better health and nutrition supplements to the pregnant women.
- More than 60,000 women are likely to be benefited by the scheme.
- The compensation of wages to pregnant women of amount Rs. 12,000 will be given in 4 installments.
- The scheme is likely to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality in the tea areas.

### **Other scheme related to Pregnant Women**

#### **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**

- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana previously Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana is a maternity benefits program run by the government of India.
- It was introduced in 2010 and is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- It is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for the first live birth.

#### **Janani Suraksha Yojna**

- The Janani Suraksha Yojana is a centrally sponsored Scheme in 2005.
- Janani Suraksha Yojana is a safe motherhood intervention under the National Rural Health Mission.

#### **Topic- GS paper 2- Welfare Scheme**

#### **Source- AIR**

### **2. Russia –India agenda on S-400 Air Defence System**

- India has signed a defense deal worth nearly Rs 39,000 crore with Russia to purchase five states of art S-400 'Triumf' air defense systems.

#### **Related Information**

- The state-of-the-art S-400 Triumf is considered one of the most advanced long-range defense systems in the world also known as SA-21 Growler by NATO.
- The S-400 was developed as an upgrade of the S-300 series of surface-to-air missile systems.
- Its powerful radars can track hundreds of targets simultaneously and destroy a range of targets.
- S-400 capable to destroy all types of aerial targets including aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), and ballistic and cruise missiles
- It has a range of 400 km and can hit targets at a height of up to 30 km.

#### **Ka-226T helicopters**

- The Kamov-226T helicopters will replace the ageing Cheetah and Chetak fleets.
- The helicopters will be made by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with Russian cooperation under Make In India.
- Ka-226T is a powerful, light and multirole helicopter operated day and night in the difficult adverse condition like high mountains, hot climate, and marine areas.
- It has the speed of 205 Km/h having the range of 600km
- It is used for reconnaissance, monitoring, targeting, and transportation.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3- Defence**

#### **Source The Hindu**

### **3. MiG-21s to be gifted to Russia by India**

- India-Russia bilateral summit is likely to be the gifting of three MiG-21 fighter jets to Russia.

#### **Related Information**

- The Soviet Union was the first which produce MiG-21
- It made first flight in 1956 and entered service in 1959.
- However, Russia stopped producing the aircraft in 1985, while India continued operating the upgraded variants.

- India inducted the MiG-21s in 1963 and got full technology transfer and rights to license-build the aircraft in the country.
- It is the first supersonic fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force.
- The aircraft to be gifted are in flight-worthy condition and the cost of creating and transportation will be borne by the Russians.
- This will be the major symbolic gesture to showcase the all-weather friendship and deep strategic partnership between India and Russia.
- The aircraft will get new registration numbers and may be adopted for vintage flight.

### **GS paper 2 International Relation**

**Source The Hindu**

#### **4. 59 plant species in IUCN threat categories**

- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recently identified the threat status of 59 Indian plant species.

#### **Related Information**

- The study revealed 59 plant species that are at risk of "elimination" if the threat levels they face are not assessed soon.
- In the report, there are 10 species which are critically endangered, 18 endangered, six vulnerable, five near threatened and one species each are data deficient and least concern.

#### ***Palm Bentinckia Nicobarica***

- The palm is endemic to Great Nicobar Island which is listed in Critically endangered from the currently listed endangered based on its distributional attributes

#### **Responsible Factors declining the species:**

1. Habitat loss was a huge factor affecting many declining plant population in wild.
2. The seed show low viability also caused the decline in the natural environment.

#### **Impact of report**

- This would help the conservation efforts for the palm

- Also, help to provide the funding to sponsor research and conservation activities to save them.

### **Topic- GS paper 3 Environment**

**Source The Hindu**

#### **5. Competition Law Review Committee enacted to review the Competition Act**

- The objective of this to ensuring that Legislation is in sync with the needs of strong economic fundamentals.

#### **Related Information**

- Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs is the Chairperson of the Committee along with other members.
- The Competition Act was passed in the year 2002.
- The Commission started functioning in right earnest from 2009.
- The Commission from 2009 onwards plays an important role in creating competition and fair play practices in the Indian market.
- India is today amongst the top five Economies in the World and poised to forge ahead further.
- Competition Law is strengthened and re-calibrated to promote best practices which result in the citizens of this country achieving their aspirations and value for money.

#### **Committee focused areas are:**

- To review the Competition Act/ Rules/ Regulations in the volatile business environment.
- To look into international best practices in the competition fields eg. anti-trust laws, merger guidelines and handling cross-border competition issues.
- To study other regulatory regimes, institutional mechanisms, government policies which overlap with the Competition Act.

#### **Note**

- The Committee shall complete its work and submit its report within three months of the date of its first meeting.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2- Government policies**

**Source- Economics Times**

## **6. Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention**

- The Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention will be organized by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in New Delhi.
- It also coincides with the fourth anniversary of the launch of Swachh Bharat Mission and also the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

### **Related Information**

- It will provide a platform for Sanitation Ministers and other leaders in WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) from around the world.
- The UNO Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6.2), i.e. to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all.
- India is close to becoming open defecation free.
- Overall, 503 districts and 24 States have been declared open defecation-free.
- The rural sanitation coverage of India has increased significantly, from 39% in October 2014 to 94.44% as of 30 September 2018
- The Union government had informed Lok Sabha that 11 states, including Gujarat, have been declared as ODF under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).

### **Topic- GS Paper 2- Intervention in Development**

**Source The Hindu**

## **7. Madhya Pradesh to have cow ministry**

- The Govt. of MP announced to setup up " Cow Ministry which will replace the existing Madhya Pradesh Gaupalan Evam Pashudhan Samvardhan Board.

### **Objective**

- To conserve biodiversity in the aspect of extinction of indigenous cow breeds.
- Breed improvement, conservation of indigenous cow breeds & Value addition of cow products of Madhya Pradesh.

### **Topic-GS Paper 2- Governance**

**Source-PIB**

## **8. Kanyakumari's lighthouse set to beam anew**

- A lighthouse is a structure designed to help in navigate for maritime pilots at sea or on inland waterways.

### **Related Information :**

- This lighthouse was built in the 18th-century Muttom facility will become a tourist attraction.
- It is the **first lighthouse in the country** which will be constructed under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

### **Facilities in Lighthouse**

- It has laser show facility which will also develop under PPP model.
- It has also the restaurant-cum-food court, coffee shop and recreational center are among the facilities.

### **Topic- GS paper 1- Art and Culture**

**Source AIR**

## **9. PM inaugurated Mahatma Gandhi Museum at Rajkot**

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi Museum in Rajkot.
- The Museum has been set up at the Alfred High School, which was an important part of the formative years of Mahatma Gandhi.
- It will help spread awareness about Gandhian culture, values, and philosophy.

### **Topic- GS paper 1- Art and Culture**

**Source-PIB**

**03.10.2018**

## **1. SIDBI launches Udyam Abhilasha**

- Small Industries Development Bank of India had launched a National Level Entrepreneurship Awareness Campaign in 115 Aspirational Districts.

### **Related Information**

- It launches on the occasion of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi which is identified by NITI Aayog.
- SIDBI has partnered with CSC e-Governance Services India Limited under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt. of India CT

### **Objectives of the missionary campaign include**

- To inspire rural youth in aspirational districts to be entrepreneurs by assisting them to set up their own enterprise,
- To impart training through digital medium across the country
- To create business opportunities for CSC VLEs
- To focus on women aspirants in these aspirational districts to encourage women entrepreneurship and
- To assist participants to become bankable and avail credit facility from banks to set up their own enterprise.

### **About SIDBI**

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), is the Principal Financial Institution for the Promotion, Financing, Development and Coordination of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector.
- SIDBI meets the financial and developmental needs of the MSME sector with a Credit+ approach to make it strong, vibrant and globally competitive.

### **Topic-GS paper -2 – Governance**

#### **Source-PIB**

### **2. Butterfly species recorded in Arunachal Pradesh**

- Around 180 species of butterflies were recorded in Seijosa area of Arunachal Pradesh's East Kameng district.

#### **Related Information**

- Important species of butterflies, including the 'Creteus Cyrina', 'Arhopala Oenea' and 'Chersonesia Intermedia'.
- The event organized by the Butterflies of Northeast India Group was held at the Pakke Wildlife Sanctuary and Tiger Reserve.
- Pakke is an important biological hotspot and butterflies play a key role in maintaining the biological richness of the region.

### **Topic-Gs paper -3 -Environment**

#### **Source –TOI**

### **3. IBSAMAR-VI 6th edition**

- It is a joint Multi-National Maritime Exercise between the Indian, Brazilian and South African Navies.

#### **Related Information**

- It is being held at Simons Town, South Africa.
- The last edition of IBSAMAR (IBSAMAR V) was conducted off Goa
- The aim is to undertake collective training for participating navies, building interoperability and mutual understanding among them.

### **Topic- GS paper 2- Defence**

#### **Source-PIB**

### **4. Exercise Aviaindra-18 2nd edition**

- It is a biennial Air Force level exercise between the Indian and the Russian Federation.

#### **Related Information**

- The exercise which was conducted at Lipetsk, Russia.
- It also focused on the briefing on Aerospace safety and anti-terrorist air operations
- The aim of the exercise was to formulate and validate the use of airpower in the anti-terrorist operation in a bilateral scenario.

### **Topic- GS paper 2- Defence**

#### **Source-PIB**

### **5. Gita Gopinath appointed IMF chief economist**

- Indian origin women economist Gita Gopinath is the second Indian appointed as the Chief Economist of International Monetary Fund.

#### **Related Information**

- First was Raghuram Rajan former RBI governor to hold the prestigious post.
- Gopinath, 46, succeeds Maurice "Maury" Obstfeld.
- Gopinath currently serves as the John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and Economics at Harvard University.
- Gopinath is a US citizen and an overseas citizen of India.

#### **About IMF**

- The International Monetary Fund is an international organization.
- It's headquartered in Washington.

- The Managing Director and Chairman of the International Monetary Fund are noted French lawyer and former politician, Christine Lagarde.
- IMF working to foster global monetary cooperation secures financial stability.
- It also facilitates international trade, promotes high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.

**Topic- GS paper 1- Women Empowerment**

**Source-PIB**

**6. Farm policy will be in sync with global rules: India to WTO**

- India has informed the World Trade Organization that its proposed national agriculture export policy would be consistent with global trade rules.

**Related Information**

- The policy aims to do away with restrictions such as minimum export prices or outright bans.
- It seeks to double India's farm exports to more than \$60 billion by 2022.
- It will support the policy in which government promise to help the farmer in doubling their income by 2022
- India emphasis on the Green Box subsidies provided by WTO
- Green box subsidies are non-distorting subsidies, permitted by the WTO.
- India is ranked the ninth largest exporting nation, as per the latest WTO trade data for 2015.
- Its share in global exports of agriculture products increased to 2.2% in 2016 from 1% a few years earlier.

**Types of subsidies provided by WTO**

**Green box**

- Green box is a type of subsidy must not distort trade, or at most cause minimal distortion.

**Amber box**

- Agriculture's amber box is used for all domestic support measures considered to distort production and trade.

**Blue box**

- Those subsidies which are not subject to the amber box reduction agreement because they are direct payments under a production-limiting program.

**About WTO**

- The World Trade Organization is an intergovernmental organization that regulates international trade.
- The WTO's current Director-General is Roberto Azevêdo.
- Its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Topic- GS paper 3- Economic Development**

**Source- Economics Times**

**7. Nobel Prize 2018**

Nobel Prize 2018	To Whom	For
In Medicine	James Allison of the US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan	Cancer treatment inhibition of negative immune regulation.
In Physics	Arthur Ashkin (U.S.), Gerard Mourou (France) and Donna Strickland (Canada)	Optical lasers technique which is now used in corrective eye surgery.

**Topic- GS paper 3- Science and Technology**

**Source- The Hindu**

**8. Justice Ranjan Gogoi Sworn as a new Chief Justice of India**

- Justice Ranjan Gogoi has been sworn-in as the 46th Chief Justice of India.

**Related Information**

- President of India administered the oath of office at a function in Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- Justice Gogoi is the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court after Chief Justice Deepak Misra
- Justice Ranjan Gogoi has the tenure of a little over 13 months and will retire on November 17, 2019.

### **About Justice Gogoi**

- Justice Gogoi joined the Bar in 1978 and practiced mainly in the Gauhati High Court.
- He was appointed as Permanent Judge of Gauhati High Court in February 2001.
- He was transferred to Punjab and Haryana High Court in 2010 and later was appointed as Chief Justice.
- He was elevated as Judge of the Supreme Court in April 2012.

### **Topic- GS paper 2-Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

### **9. World Peace Monument Dome**

- World Peace Monument is the largest dome in the world.

#### **Related Information**

- It is inaugurated on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Situated at the Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT)'s World Peace University (MIT-WPU) campus at Loni Kalbhor.

### **About World Peace Monument**

- It is the brainchild of Dr. Vishwanath Karad founder-president of the MIT World Peace University.
- The rationale behind it is to symbolize the unity of the Indian identity through its religions, ideologies, and literature.
- The MIT-WPU has organized a four-day world parliament of science, religion, and philosophy at this campus.

### **Topic- GS paper 1-Art and Culture**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

**04.10.2018**

### **1. Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2018**

- National Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 commissioned by Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.

#### **Related Information**

- Prime Minister gave awards to top Ranked State, District, and State.
- Haryana was ranked as the best State while Satara District of Maharashtra was ranked as the best district.
- Uttar Pradesh was rewarded for maximum citizens' participation.

- This ranking was done based on a comprehensive set of parameters including surveys of public places like schools, Anganwadis, PHCs, Haat/Bazaars, Panchayat and citizen's perception of Swachhata.
- The top-ranked States and Districts which received awards are as below:  
Top 3 States: 1. Haryana, 2. Gujarat  
3. Maharashtra  
Top 3 Districts:  
1. Satara, Maharashtra  
2. Rewari, Haryana  
3. Pedapalli, Telangana
- States with maximum citizen participation: 1. Uttar Pradesh 2. Gujarat 3. Maharashtra  
Districts with maximum citizens' participation: 1. Nashik, Maharashtra  
2. Solapur, Maharashtra  
3. Chittorgarh, Rajasthan

### **Topic- GS paper 2- Governance**

#### **Source-PIB**

### **2. 88 million-year-old isle and crater to be geo-parks**

- An ancient circular lake created by a meteorite strike in Maharashtra and a hexagonal mosaic of basaltic rocks in an island off Udupi are poised to become global geoparks.
- Lonar Lake in Maharashtra and St. Mary's Island and Malpe beach in coastal Karnataka are the GSI's candidates for UNESCO Global Geopark Network status.
- The Geopark tag is akin to that of a 'World Heritage Site' for historical monuments that can bring India's famed geological features to the global stage.

#### **Related Information**

#### **Lonar Lake**

- Lonar crater became a geo-heritage site in 1979 is the only world famous known meteorite crater in basaltic rock.
- It is a relatively young geologically, at just 50,000 years old.
- A meteorite estimated to weigh two-million-tonnes slammed into the Earth, creating a 1.83-km diameter crater where the lake formed.

### **St. Mary's Island**

- Mary's Island declared a national geo-heritage site in 1975.
- It is estimated to be an 88-million-year-old formation that goes back to a time when Greater India broke away from Madagascar.

### **About GSI**

- Geological Survey of India (GSI), founded in 1851, is a Government of India Ministry of Mines Organization,
- Headquarter in Kolkata.

### **Topic- GS paper 1- Art and Culture**

#### **Source-PIB**

### **3. Fall Armyworm: Nipping a problem in the bud**

- India has to effectively deal with this new insect pest that can devastate maize and a host of other crops.
- This pest has been seen in the Americas for several decades.
- Fall Armyworm (FAW) scientifically known as *Spodoptera frugiperda* has been recently reported in Karnataka and also parts of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.
- It has been detected mainly in maize fields.

### **Related Information**

#### **About Fall Armyworm**

- The female moth lays eggs and the caterpillars hatching from these eat parts of the host crop plants, before pupating and turning into new moths.
- This highly-destructive and the invasive pest has been seen in the Americas for several decades, but its prevalence outside was noted for the first time in West Africa in early 2016.
- According to the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center at Mexico also known as CIMMYT damaged more than 1.5 million hectares of Africa's maize crop.

#### **Control measurement**

- An effective IPM strategy would need to incorporate host plant resistance (through breeding), biological and cultural control.
- The use of environmentally-safer chemical and biopesticides for crop protection.

- Spraying of chemicals should be avoided unless the pest load has crossed economic threshold levels.
- The eggs laid by the moths are discernible to the naked eye. Farmers can be trained to recognize and destroy the egg masses, so as to prevent the caterpillars from emerging.

### **Topic- GS paper 3- Science and Technology**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

### **4. World's first Hyperloop passenger capsule unveiled**

- World's first Hyperloop passenger capsule, having speed 1200 k/hr. was shown in Spain presented by Hyperloop Transportation Technologies.

#### **Related Information**

- Hyperloop is a technology that gained popularity after billionaire Elon Musk touted it in 2013.
- It is a first full-scale passenger capsule, offering the world a peek at the future of travel.
- It envisages moving passengers in capsules at speeds of more than 750 miles (1,200 kilometers) per hour through low-pressure tubes, in order to reduce friction.
- The technology will be able to propel trains faster than existing methods.

#### **Context to India**

- In February, Branson signed a preliminary agreement in Mumbai for a broad hyperloop framework
- It helps in mooted a Mumbai-Pune system that would shrink travel time to 25 minutes and save about three hours.

### **Topic- GS paper 3- Science and Technology**

#### **Source- Economics times**

### **5. The Goblin: Presumed to be the ninth planet of the Solar System**

- A newly discovered dwarf planet, nicknamed 'The Goblin' which is charting a lonely orbit far beyond Pluto.
- The Goblin estimated to be 10 times as massive as Earth and its provisional name.



## Related Information

### 2015 TG387

- The Goblin was 80 astronomical units (AU) from the Sun (1 AU is equal to the distance between the Earth and the Sun).
- At its closest, the Goblin is 65 AU from the Sun.
- It orbits the Sun once in 40,000 years.

### Topic- GS paper 3- Science and Technology

#### Source- Indian Express

### 6. Indians to be hit by U.K. immigration plan

- Under the new system, immigrants will be able to bring their immediate families only if they are sponsored by employers.

## Related Information

- Britain will end "freedom of movement once and for all" which is a fundamental principle of the European Union.
- It will be more difficult for EU citizens and for non-EU citizen immigration is clearly being treated as the most important issue in Brexit not trade or investment.
- The government introduced "swift system of e-gate visa checks for tourists and visitors coming to the country for short- stay business trips from all low-risk countries".

### Topic- GS paper 2- International relation

#### Source- Indian Express

### 7. Nobel Prize 2018 in Chemistry

- Frances H. Arnold, George P. Smith, and Sir Gregory P. Winter jointly won the Noble prize in Chemistry.

## Related Information

- They awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2018 with one half to Frances H. Arnold "for the directed evolution of enzymes"
- The other half jointly to George P. Smith and Sir Gregory P. Winter" for the phage display of peptides and antibodies.

### Topic- GS paper 3- Science and Technology

#### Source- The Hindu

### 8. Jewel of Roman Empire' faces danger

- UNESCO declared Sabratha to be at risk in 2016, mainly due to damage caused by armed groups.

## Related Information

- Perched on the edge of Libya's Mediterranean coast, the ancient city of Sabratha remains an awe-inspiring spectacle.
- World heritage site is classified as "endangered" by UNESCO, its majestic structures pockmarked by mortar and small arms fire.
- UNESCO declared Sabratha to be at risk, along with four other Libyan sites on its World Heritage list.

### Topic- GS paper 1- Art and Culture

#### Source-PIB

### 9. Lagoon villas to come to Lakshadweep's emeralds

- NITI Aayog plans 'eco-cottages' and a film city to boost tourism in the island territories

## Related Information

- The NITI Aayog, along with other stakeholders, including the Island Development Agency (IDA) which is chaired by the Home Minister is conducting a technical feasibility study for the project.
- Lakshadweep has so much lagoon area to develop island lagoons Villas.

### Topic- GS paper 3- Environment

#### Source- The Hindu

**05.10.2018**

### 1. 21 IORA countries adopt the Delhi Declaration on Renewable Energy

- These nations adopted the Delhi Declaration post the second IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting held in Greater Noida under the aegis of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- Delhi Declaration calls for collaboration among IORA member states in meeting the growing demand for renewable energy in the Indian Ocean littorals.
- It also calls for the development of a common renewable energy agenda for the Indian Ocean region and the promotion of regional capacity building.

## Related information

### Delhi Declaration

- It was the result of ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit held in New Delhi to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of sectoral dialogue between two sides under the theme of "Shared Values, Common Destiny".
- First time India and 10 ASEAN countries focusing on counter-terrorism, identity security, military cooperation, and bilateral financial support is

### Indian Ocean Rim Association

- It is formerly known as the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative and Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC).
- It is an international organization consisting of coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean.
- Headquarter is located at Ebene, Mauritius.

## Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

### Source-PIB

#### 2. Sahyog HOP TAC-2018

- Coast Guards of India and Vietnam hold the joint exercise on the off coast of Chennai.

### Related Information

- The highlight of the exercise was a scenario of hijacking an oil ship and subsequent rescue of its crew in the coordinated joint operation of both the countries.
- Coast Guard ships Shaurya, Arnvesh, and interceptor boat C-431 along with a Dornier aircraft and Chetak helicopter participated in the joint exercise.

## Topic- GS Paper 3– Defence

### Source- AIR

#### 3. India's first dolphin research center to come up soon in Patna

- National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC) will be the first of its kind in India's and Asia.

### Related Information

- The mammals are being killed at an alarming rate for their flesh, fat and oil.

- This Centre will play an important role in strengthening conservation efforts and research to save the endangered mammal.
- The Gangetic river dolphin is India's national aquatic animal but frequently falls prey to poachers and is sometimes killed inadvertently after being trapped in plastic fishing nets and hit by mechanized boats.

### About Gangetic Dolphin

- The Gangetic river dolphin is one of the four freshwater dolphin species in the world.
- They are also found in the Yangtze River, the Indus river in Pakistan and Amazon river basin.
- The Gangetic river species — found in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal — is almost completely blind.
- Gangetic dolphins prefer deep water with adjoining shallow water.
- They live in a zone where there is little or no current that helps them save energy.
- The dolphins swim from the no-current zone to the edges to hunt for fish and return.

## Topic- GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity

### Source- TOI

#### 4. First State water grid portal launched in Jaipur

- The first State water grid portal was along with the start of the fourth phase of the Jal Swavalamban Abhiyan.

### Related Information

- It is the Rajasthan government's flagship water conservation project.
- The Water Resources Department has developed the portal to monitor the availability and supply of water from different sources.
- It helps to restore most of the irrigation potential of the identified water bodies largely through community-managed ponds and tanks.
- Also, help to improved ranking to Rajasthan in water management index released by NITI Aayog.

## Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

### Source- The Hindu

### **5. 'Digi Yatra'- A New Digital Experience for Air Travellers**

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation is adding a Digital experience for Air Travelers through DigiYatra Platform.

#### **Related Information**

- The aim of this initiative is to bring together entire industry to develop a digital ecosystem that will deliver Indian customers a seamless, consistent and paperless service.
- The platform will be built on 4 key pillars, like Connected Passengers, Connected Airports, Connected Flying and Connected Systems.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – International Relation**

##### **Source- TOI**

### **6. India ranked 5th in pictorial warning on tobacco products**

- Canadian Cancer Society releases the international status report in the listing of countries that have the pictorial health warning on tobacco products.

#### **Related Information**

- Canadian Cancer Society has ranked 206 countries and territories on the size of their health warnings on cigarette packages
- East Timor is ranked first with 85% of the front and 100% of the back of the packaging being used for pictorial warnings.
- Nepal follows with 90% coverage on both sides. Indian packaging has the warning on 85% of both sides
- The government of India for the first time introduced a Quit-Line number to be printed on all tobacco products.
- India is the only SAARC country to have a Quit-Line number on tobacco products and the fourth in Asia after Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

#### **Quit-Line number**

- The pack warning will help to warn people, especially the illiterate and children, about the harms of tobacco consumption.
- The Quit-Line number will help those who want to quit.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important ranks**

##### **Source- AIR**

### **7. The first moon outside our solar system discovered**

- The newly discovered exomoon and the planet it orbits are both gaseous.

#### **Related Information**

- Astronomers have pinpointed the first moon detected outside our solar system.
- It is a large gaseous world the size of Neptune that is unlike any other known moon and orbits a gas planet much more massive than Jupiter.
- The exomoon and its planet orbit Kepler-1625, a star similar in temperature to our sun but about 70% larger.
- The exomoon orbits roughly 3 million km from its planet and its mass is about 1.5% that of its planet.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

### **8. India Gets \$150 Million Loan for First Skill Park in Madhya Pradesh**

- India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$150 million loan agreement to establish the country's first multi-skills park in Madhya Pradesh.

#### **Related Information**

- The Global Skills Park (GSP), to be set up in Bhopal, will help enhance the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system in the state.
- The campus will consist of core Advanced Training Institutes including the Center for Occupational Skills Acquisition and the Center for Advanced Agricultural Training.
- "The campus will have training facilities focusing on skills for manufacturing, service and advanced agricultural jobs, benefitting about 20,000 trainees and trainers.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source- Financial Express**

### **9. 4th India International Science Festival in Lucknow**

- It is organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences in association with Vijnana Bharati.

### Related information

- The 3rd series of IISF was held in Tamil Nadu.
- More than ten thousand scientists and experts, including science teachers and students, will participate in the event.
- The theme of this year's festival is "Science for transformation."

### About Vijnana Bharati

- Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA, previously known as Swadeshi Science Movement) is a non-profit organization.
- It will be working for science popularization & implementation of modern technology & ancient sciences in India.
- It was started in the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

**Topic- GS Paper 3-Science and Technology**  
**Source-PIB**

**06.10.2018**

1. **GI Tag for Alphonso from Konkan**
  - Alphonso from Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Palghar, Thane and Raigad districts of Maharashtra, is registered as a Geographical Indication.
  - The king of mangoes, Alphonso, better known as 'Hapus' in Maharashtra.
  - It is known in domestic and international markets not only for its taste but also for pleasant fragrance and vibrant color.

### Related Information

#### About GI tag

- A Geographical Indication or a GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas, by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers, and craftsmen.
- The first product to get a GI tag in India was the Darjeeling tea in 2004.

**GI Tag status given in 2017**

- The products which have received the GI tag this year include-
  - (1) Pochampally Ikat of Telangana
  - (2) Gobindobhog rice of West Bengal
  - (3) Durgi stone carvings of Andhra Pradesh
  - (4) Etikoppaka toys of Andhra Pradesh
  - (5) Chakshesang shawl of Nagaland
  - (6) Banaganapalle mangoes of Andhra Pradesh
  - (7) Tulaipanji rice of West Bengal
  - (8) Banglar Rasogolla of West Bengal

### GI Tag awarded in 2018

- (a) Araku coffee (Andhra Pradesh)
- (b) Kadaknath Chicken (Madhya Pradesh)
- (c) Adilabad Dokra (Telangana)
- (d) Warangal Durries (Telangana)
- (e) Alphonso from Konkan

**Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture**

**Source-PIB**

2. **Ministry of Petroleum launches a Task Force for Closing the Skills Gap in India**
  - Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in collaboration with the World Economic Forum launches this task force.

### Related Information

- The "Closing the Skills Gap" Task Force will be a significant step to accelerate the impact on skills development.
- Task Force is the second country-led public-private collaboration of the World Economic Forum's Closing the Skills Gap Project after South Africa.
- Ministry also released reports on 'Future of Work in India', an enterprise survey on the future of work in India and 'Young India and Work', and a survey of youth aspirations in India.
- The goal of the Task Force is to develop an action plan to address skills gaps in India and make the Indian workforce ready for jobs of the future.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

**Source- Economics Times**

### 3. **IBSAMAR**

- The sixth edition of IBSAMAR, a joint multinational maritime exercise between Indian, Brazilian and South African Navies was held in South Africa.

#### **Related Information**

- The aim of this maritime exercise is to undertake collective training for participating navies, building interoperability and mutual understanding as well as sharing of best practices.

#### **About IBSAMAR**

- It is considered the most visible manifestation of the convergence of democratic values, economic interests, and maritime cooperation.
- It was initiated in 2006.
- The last edition of IBSAMAR V was conducted off Goa, India in February 2016 and all previous exercises were held in South Africa.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

##### **Source-PIB**

4. **Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation**
- Cabinet in approved National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation in Sehore District instead of Bhopal.

#### **Related Information**

- NIMHR will be the first of its kind in the country in the area of mental health rehabilitation.
- It will serve as an institution of excellence for capacity building in human resource and research in the area of mental health rehabilitation.
- It is also recommending body suggesting models/protocols for effective rehabilitation of persons with mental illness.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2–Governance**

##### **Source-PIB**

5. **The launch of Methanol Cooking Fuel Program of India**
- Northeast and Assam Petrochemicals, a state-owned company for launching Asia's first canisters based and India's first "Methanol Cooking Fuel Program".

#### **Related Information**

- The project is a natural extension of our Prime Minister's vision of reducing import of crude.
- This is an effort to provide clean, import substitute, cost-effective and pollution free cooking medium.
- This provides for an excellent alternative as household fuel and commercial, institutional and fuel for restaurants.
- The gaseous form, Methanol - DME, can be blended in 20% ratio with LPG.
- LPG-DME blending program is expected to kick start in the country by next year.

#### **About Assam Petrochemicals**

- Assam Petrochemicals Limited has been manufacturing methanol for the last 30 years
- It is in the process of upgrading their 100 TPD methanol plant to 600 TPD by Dec 2019.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3- Energy**

##### **Source- Indian Express**

### 6. **Gujarat acts to save its pride**

- The deaths of 23 lions since September 12 in Gir Forest stunned the Gujarat Government.

#### **Related Information**

- The central government called international experts to help us control the situation.
- The Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has confirmed that the **Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)** was responsible.
- The scientists of ICMR-NIV (ICMR-National Institute of Virology) have recommended the existing CDV vaccine which should work as a protective intervention for Gir lions.
- Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) and tick-borne Babesiosis is killing the great cats famously known as Gujarat's pride.
- ICMR has also recommended that the animals should be placed in 2-3 different sanctuaries.

#### **About CDV**

- CDV causes a highly contagious and life-threatening disease in dogs.

- It also affects different wild carnivore's viz., wolves, foxes, raccoons, red pandas, ferrets, hyenas, tigers, and lions.

**Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology Source- The Hindu**

7. **Odisha food security scheme**
  - The state government of Odisha has launched its own food security scheme- State Food Security Scheme (SFSS).

**Related Information**

- The NFSA was implemented in 2014 however; many people were denied the benefit.
- The move was taken after the center repeatedly failed to respond to the state's plea of including the left out people in its national food security scheme.
- This will benefit the poor people who were left out of the National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- Under the scheme, the beneficiaries will get 5 kg of rice per person per month at the rate of Rs 1 per kg, the same as availed by people covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013.
- The distribution of rice to selected beneficiaries will be carried out through e-Point of sale (e-PoS) device at the designated fair price shops.

**About NFSA**

- The National Food Security Act, 2013(also Right to Food Act) is an Act of the Parliament of India.
- It aims to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two-thirds of India's 1.2 billion people.
- It includes the Midday Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services scheme and the Public Distribution System.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Welfare Schemes**

**Source- AIR**

8. **Crewed SpaceX mission soon**
  - NASA has announced the first crewed flight by a SpaceX rocket to the International Space Station (ISS) is expected to take place in June 2019.
  - It will be the first manned U.S. launch to the orbiting research laboratory since the space shuttle program was retired in 2011.

- In this mission, the two astronauts transported in each flight will spend two weeks aboard the orbiting ISS before returning to the earth.

**Related Information About ISS**

- The International Space Station is a space station in low Earth orbit.
- The ISS is the largest human-made body in low Earth orbit and can often be seen with the naked eye from Earth.
- The ISS serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory in which crew members conduct experiments in biology, physics, astronomy etc.
- The station is suited for the testing of spacecraft systems & equipment required for missions to the Moon and Mars.

**Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology Source-PIB**

9. **Nobel Prize 2018**

<u>Field</u>	<u>To Whom</u>	<u>For</u>
1. In Medicine	James Allison of the US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan	Cancer treatment inhibition of negative immune regulation.
2. In Physics	Arthur Ashkin (U.S.), Gerard Mourou (France) & Donna Strickland (Canada)	Optical lasers technique which is now used in corrective eye surgery.
3. In Chemistry	Frances H. Arnold, George P. Smith, and Sir Gregory P. Winter jointly win the Noble prize.	H. Arnold "for the directed evolution of enzymes" George P. Smith and Sir Gregory P. Winter - the phage display of peptides & antibodies.
4. In Peace	Gynecologist Dr. Denis Mukwege & Yazidi human rights activist ' Nadia Murad	Efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war & armed conflict.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

**Source- The Hindu**

**08.10.2018**

**1. Atal Innovation Mission & SIRIUS sign MoU for the promotion of innovative cooperation between students of India & Russia**

- Memorandum of Understanding was recently exchanged between India's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the Russian Federation's SIRIUS Educational Foundation to promote innovative cooperation between students of India and Russia.

**The MoU hopes to**

- Remove cultural and language barriers between students of Russia and India.
- Share the best practices in the promotion of educational, scientific, innovative achievements.
- Promote innovative cooperation.
- Search and develop the talented youth of both countries fostering a knowledge-driven innovation ecosystem in both the countries.

**Related Information**

**About AIM**

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

**The Atal Innovation Mission has two core functions**

- Innovation promotion: to provide a platform where innovative ideas are generated.
- Entrepreneurship promotion: Wherein innovators would be supported and mentored to become successful entrepreneurs at Incubation Centers.

**About SIRIUS Educational Foundation**

- It is a unitary, non-profit, non-standard educational organization.
- The activities of the Foundation are aimed to identify and support children and young people who have shown outstanding abilities.

- Providing assistance in obtaining general and additional education for such personalities, including education in the fields of arts, natural sciences, physical culture and sports.

**Topic – GS Paper–2 Government Policies**

**Source-PIB**

**2. JIMEX 18 Bilateral Maritime Exercise**

- Bilateral Maritime exercise between Japan and India to Commence at Visakhapatnam after the last edition was conducted in Dec 2013 off Chennai.
- The conduct of JIMEX-18 after five years is indicative of an upswing in the Indo-Japanese defense relations.

**Related Information**

- JIMEX-18 is aimed to enhance interoperability, improve understanding and imbibe the best practices of each other.

**Topic – GS Paper – 3 Defence**

**Source-PIB**

**3. The Eastern Ghats face the loss of forest cover, endemic plants**

- The Eastern Ghats spread across Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu have lost almost 16% of its forest area over a span of 100 years, a recently published study shows.
- Forest cover shrunk from 43.4% to 27.5% in 95 years.
- The forest cover, which was 43.4% of the total geographical area in 1920, has reduced drastically to 27.5% in 2015.
- Over the years, about 8% of forest area was converted into agricultural fields, while about 4% converted into scrub or grassland.
- The threat to species: the Eastern Ghats is home to more than 2,600 plant species and this habitat fragmentation and destruction can pose a serious threat to the endemic plants.
- Habitat reduction mainly occurred in the districts of Gajapati (Odisha), Mahbubnagar (Telangana), and also in Nallamalai and Kolli hill ranges.

## Related Information

### Western Ghats

- The Western Ghats are also known as Sahyadri in certain parts of India and continuous without any major break
- It is the home of hundreds of endemic flora and fauna.
- We observed the orographic rainfall due to whom the windward side of the mountains receives a lot of rainfall, however, the leeward side remains dry.
- The highest peak is the Ana Mudi
- The Western Ghats consist of evergreen forests too; however, the main crop grown there is the Coffee.

### Eastern Ghats

- The Eastern Ghats run parallel to the eastern coastal plains of India and discontinuous in nature.
- Also known for numbers of endemic flora and fauna species.
- The highest peak of Western Ghats is the Mahendragiri.

**Note:** The Western and the Eastern Ghats meet at the Nilgiri hills.

### Topic- GS Paper - 3 - Biodiversity

#### Source -The Hindu

#### 4. India launches 'Operation Samudra Maitri' to aid Indonesia

- India has launched a massive operation to provide assistance to the earthquake and tsunami victims in Indonesia.
- 'Operation Samudra Maitri' for humanitarian assistance was launched after the conversation between India PM and Indonesian President.

#### Related information

- The 7.5-magnitude quake struck just off the central island of Sulawesi setting off a tsunami that soon after engulfed Palu with waves of up to 6m.
- The most affected area is Sulawesi Provinces of Indonesia.
- The Red Cross estimates that more than 1.6 million people have been affected.

#### About tsunami

- A tsunami or tidal wave is also known as a seismic sea wave.

- It is a series of waves in a water body caused by the displacement of a large volume of water, generally in an ocean or a large lake.
- Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and other underwater explosions (including detonations of underwater nuclear devices), landslides, glacier calving, meteorite impacts and other disturbances above or below water all have the potential to generate a tsunami.

### Topic - GS Paper-3 Disaster Management

#### Source-PIB

#### 5. Pankaj Sharma appointed India's ambassador to UN Conference on Disarmament

- **Pankaj Sharma** has been appointed as ambassador and India's permanent representative to United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

#### Related Information

#### UN Conference on Disarmament

- The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is a multilateral disarmament forum established by the international community to negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements based at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.
- The Conference was first established in 1979 as the Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.
- It was renamed the Conference on Disarmament in 1984.

#### Membership

- The conference is currently composed of 65 formal members, representing all areas of the world, as well as all known nuclear-weapon states.

### Topic - GS Paper - 2 International agencies

#### Source -The Hindu

#### 6. PMFBY cover crop damages by wild animals under the trial basis

- Agricultural Ministry has decided to cover damages to crops in wild animal attacks under the Prada Mantra Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in select districts on an experimental basis.



- The government also brought under the Fasal Bima Yojana ambit certain horticultural crops on an experimental basis.

#### **Related Information**

- The amended provisions also stipulate fines in cases of delay in clearing the insurance claims for crop damages.

#### **About PMFBY**

- The PMFBY will replace the existing two schemes National Agricultural Insurance Scheme as well as the Modified NAIS.
- This new Crop Insurance Scheme is in line with One Nation – One Scheme theme.

#### **Objectives**

- To provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases.
- To stabilise the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming.
- To encourage farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices.
- To ensure the flow of credit to the agriculture sector.

#### **Topic – GS Paper – 2- Government Policies**

##### **Source-PIB**

#### **7. Country's biggest skill competition: India Skills 2018**

- India Skills 2018 was the second edition of the nationwide competition organized by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- It provides a platform to identify, recognize, promote and reward the best talents in various skills.

#### **Related Information**

- Awards were given in 46 trades to participants from across the country.
- A large number of Corporate (over 100) supported the Government's efforts in organizing the India Skills 2018.

#### **Topic – GS Paper – 2 Governance**

##### **Source –PIB**

#### **8. From energy to infrastructure**

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has said that climate change could have "irreversible" and "catastrophic" impacts if the global average temperatures were allowed to rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius.
- As of now, the world is striving to prevent the temperature rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius, in accordance with the stated objective of the Paris Agreement of 2015.
- To meet that target, the aim is to reduce greenhouse gases by only 20 per cent, from 2010 levels, by the year 2030 and achieve a net-zero emission level by the year 2075.

#### **Related Information**

- Reports say that it is possible to keep the increase in global average temperatures to within 1.5 degrees Celsius of pre-industrial times.
- The world would need to bring down its greenhouse gas to about half of its 2010 levels by 2030, and to net zero by about 2050
- Net-zero is achieved when the total emissions is balanced by the amount of absorption of carbon dioxide through natural sinks like forests, or removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through technological interventions.

#### **IPCC**

- The IPCC, a global body of scientists that makes periodic assessments of science related to climate change to make projections about the future.
- It has presented four pathways through which the 1.5 degree target can be achieved.
- In each of the pathways, the global average temperature is projected to overshoot the 1.5 degrees Celsius target by some amount before returning to that level before the end of this century.
- Each of these pathways is also dependent on some amount of Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR), a reference to the physical removal of the stock of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to reduce its concentrations.

- Technologies for CDR are still undeveloped and untested. Varying amounts between 100 to 1000 gig tons (billion tonnes) of carbon dioxide would need to be removed from the atmosphere in these four pathways.
- The world currently emits about 47 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.
- "CDR would be used to compensate for residual emissions and, in most cases, achieve net negative emissions to return global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

### Topic – GS Paper– 3- Environment

Source –TOI

**09.10.2018**

1. **India's first Manned Space Mission: Gaganyaan 2022**
  - Indian Space Research Organisation and Russia's Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities (ROSCOSMOS) have signed a MoU to work together for Gaganyaan.
  - ROSCOSMOS has offered the ride to Indian astronaut short visit to International Space Station (ISS) onboard Soyuz spacecraft for short training mission in 2022.

#### Related Information

##### About Gaganyaan:

- It is India's first manned space mission.
- Under it, India is planning to send three humans (Gaganyatris) into space i.e. in low earth orbit (LEO) by 2022 i.e. by 75th Independence Day for the period of five to seven days.
- India plans to build a crew vehicle that can accommodate 2 or 3 astronauts and human rate its GLSV Mk-III launcher.

##### About Pad Abort

- ISRO recently conducted its first 'pad abort' test that was successful.
- The 'pad abort' test or Crew Escape System is an emergency escape measure that helps pull the crew away from the launch vehicle when a mission has to be aborted.

- The test was conducted at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- The Pad Abort Test demonstrated the safe recovery of the crew module in case of any exigency at the launch pad

**Note:** - India will be the fourth nation to do so after the United States, Russia, and China if it launches the Gaganyaan mission.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

2. **Arunachal govt launches 2 agri programmes**
  - Arunachal Pradesh Agriculture Minister two schemes for farmers to increase production and their income.
  - The two schemes are the **Chief Minister's Sashakt Kisan Yojana (CMSKY) and the Chief Ministers Krishi Samuh Yojana (CMKSY).**

#### Related Information

- These two new initiatives aimed at fulfilling the vision of double farmer's income by 2022.
- The CMSKY would subsume three programmes - the CM's Employment Generation Scheme, the CM's Agri Mechanization Programme and the CM's Flagship Programme on Tea and Rubber.
- The CMKSY aims at empowering farmers through the cooperative approach, by providing them timely support and marketing intervention for better price realization and income.

### Topic- GS Paper 2- Government Scheme

Source- AIR

3. **Odisha launches 'Nirman Kusuma' scheme**
  - 'Nirman Kusuma' programmes help to provide financial assistance to the children of the construction workers for their technical education in the state.
  - It also provides education in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and polytechnics.

### Related Information

- Under the programme, an ITI student will be entitled to get financial assistance worth Rs 23,600 and a diploma student will get assistance worth Rs 26,300 per annum.
- In total, around 1878 students are expected to be benefited from the programme.
- The government has also decided to increase the financial assistance given to girl students by 20 percent.
- The girl students studying in class VI and above till post graduation level is currently being provided financial assistance by the state.
- The government has also doubled the compensation given in case of an accident of a construction worker.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Scheme

#### Source- The Hindu

4. **ESIC wins 'ISSA GOOD Practice Award, Asia & the Pacific 2018'**
  - The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has won the 'ISSA Good Practice Award' for Administrative Solution for Coverage Extension at the "Regional Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific.
  - It was held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

### Related Information

- The award recognizes the measures taken by ESIC for extension of coverage-SPREE (Scheme for Promoting Registration of Employers and Employees).
- It helps to reduced contribution rates for 24 months in newly implemented areas and raising the wage limit for coverage under the ESI Act etc.

### About ISSA

- The ISSA (International Social Security Association) is the principal international organization for Social Security Organizations, Govts. and Departments of Social Security.
- The ISSA, founded in 1927 under the auspices of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva.

- It helps to promotes excellence in social security administration through professional guidelines, expert knowledge, services to develop dynamic social security systems.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Economic Development

#### Source- Economics times

5. **Tiny spheres to trap water contaminants developed**
  - Scientists have created tiny spheres that can catch and destroy Bisphenol A (BPA)
  - It is a synthetic chemical used to make plastics that often contaminates water.

### Related Information

- BPA is commonly used to coat the insides of food cans, bottle tops, and water supply lines, and was once a component of baby bottles.
- BPA that seeps into food and drink is considered safe in low doses.
- The prolonged exposure is suspected of affecting the health of children and contributing to high blood pressure.

### How these tiny sphere used in trap BPA

- The micron-sized spheres developed resemble tiny flower-like collections of titanium dioxide petals.
- The supple petals provide plenty of surface area for researchers to anchor cyclodextrin — a benign sugar-based molecule often used in food and drugs.
- It has a two-faced structure, with a hydrophobic (water-avoiding) cavity and a hydrophilic (water-attracting) outer surface.
- BPA is hydrophobic and naturally attracted to the cavity. Once trapped, reactive oxygen species (ROS) produced by the spheres degrade BPA into harmless chemicals.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

#### Source- The Hindu

6. **Section 151A of the Representation of the People Act 1951 mandates ECI to fill casual vacancies.**

- Election Commission mandate to fill the casual vacancies in the Houses of Parliament and State Legislatures through bye-elections within six months from the date of occurrence of the vacancy.
- It provided that the remainder of the term of a member in relation to a vacancy is one year or more.

#### **Related information**

- Section 151A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 provides a time limit for filling vacancies referred to in sections 147, 149, 150 and 151.
- A bye-election for filling any vacancy referred to in any of section 147, section 149, section 150 and section 151 shall be held within a period of six months from the date of the occurrence of the vacancy.
- Provided that nothing contained in this section shall apply if—
- The remainder of the term of a member in relation to a vacancy is less than one year.
- The Election Commission in consultation with the Central Government certifies that it is difficult to hold the by-election within the said period.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source-PIB**

7. **Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2018 -19**
  - The government of India in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India issue Sovereign Gold Bonds-2018-19.
  - The Bonds will be sold through banks, Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices, and recognized stock exchanges viz., National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited. T

#### **Related Information**

##### **About Sovereign Gold Bond**

- To be issued by Reserve Bank India on behalf of the Government of India.

- **Eligibility:** The Bonds will be restricted for sale to resident entities including individuals, HUFs, Trusts, Universities & Charitable Institutions.
- **Denomination:** The Bonds will be denominated in multiples of the gram(s) of gold with a basic unit of 1 gram.
- **Tenor:** The tenor of the Bond will be for a period of 8 years with the exit option in 5th, 6th year and 7th year to be exercised on the interest payment dates.
- **Minimum size:** Minimum permissible investment will be 1 gram of gold.
- **Maximum limit:** The maximum limit of subscribed shall be 4 KG for the individual.
- 4 Kg for HUF and 20 Kg for trusts and similar entities per fiscal (April-March) notified by the Government from time to time.
- **Joint holder:** In case of joint holding, the investment limit of 4 KG will be applied to the first applicant only.
- **Issue price:** Price of Bond will be fixed in Indian Rupees on the basis of the simple average of closing price of gold of 999 purity.
- The issue price of the Gold Bonds will be `50 per gram less for those who subscribe online and pay through digital mode.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Scheme**

##### **Source- Economics Times**

8. **Government reconstitutes Strategic Policy Group under NSA to assist National Security Council**
  - The Strategic Policy Group (SPG) helps to assist the National Security Council, which advises the prime minister on matters of national security and strategic interests.
  - SPG will be chaired by National Security Advisor (NSA).
  - Members include the NITI Aayog vice chairman, the cabinet secretary, and the chiefs of the three defense services, the RBI governor, the foreign secretary, the home secretary, the finance secretary, and the defense secretary.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

9. **Nobel Prize 2018**

<b><u>Field</u></b>	<b><u>To Whom</u></b>	<b><u>For</u></b>
<b>1. In Medicine</b>	James Allison of the US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan	Cancer treatment inhibition of negative immune regulation.
<b>2. In Physics</b>	Arthur Ashkin (U.S.), Gerard Mourou (France) and Donna Strickland (Canada)	Optical lasers technique which is now used in corrective eye surgery.
<b>3. In Chemistry</b>	Frances H. Arnold, George P. Smith, and Sir Gregory P. Winter jointly win the Noble prize.	H. Arnold "for the directed evolution of enzymes" George P. Smith and Sir Gregory P. Winter - the phage display of peptides and antibodies.
<b>4. In Peace</b>	Gynecologist Dr. Denis Mukwege and Yazidi human rights activist' Nadia Murad	Efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict.
<b>5. In Economics</b>	William Nordhaus and Paul Romer of the United States	For their work on sustainable growth.

**10.10.2018**

**1. India ranks 147th in Oxfam world inequality index**

- Index' ranks India 147th among 157 countries by the UK-based charity Oxfam International's 'Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI)
- It is based on the commitment of different nations to reduce inequalities in their populations.
- The index is based on different indicators covering 157 countries, which measures government action on social spending, tax and labor rights
- **Denmark** is topped in the index based on its high and progressive taxation, high social spending and good protection of workers.

**Index with Respect to India**

- In India the tax structure looks reasonably progressive on paper, in practice, much of the progressive taxation, like that on the incomes of the richest, is not collected.
- India also fares poorly on labor rights and respect for women in the workplace.

- It also reflects the fact that the majority of the labor force is employed in the agricultural and informal sectors which lack union organization and enforcement of gender rights.

**Note-** SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Index Source-PIB**

**2. India ranked 81<sup>st</sup> in Henley Passport Index 2018**

- Japan's passport has been named the most powerful in the world, overtaking Singapore according to the Henley Passport Index 2018.
- Japanese citizens now have visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 190 destinations around the world.
- The Indian passport has secured the 81st rank with visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 60 destinations. Top 3 on Henley Passport Index Power Ranking 2018:  
1. Japan 2. Singapore 3. Germany, France, South Korea.

**Related Information**

- The Henley Passport Index (HPI) is a global ranking of countries according to the travel freedom for their citizens.

- The site provides a ranking of the 199 passports of the world according to the number of countries their holders can travel to visa-free.
- The number of countries that a specific passport can access becomes its visa-free 'score'.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Index Source-PIB**

**3. SC tags Tripura for NRC**

- The Supreme Court issued the notice to the government on a public interest litigation to update the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Tripura.
- As is being done in Assam, in order to detect and deport the “illegal immigrants” from Bangladesh.

**Related Information**

- The petition contended the “influx” of illegal immigrants into Tripura amounted to ‘external aggression’ under Article 355 of the Constitution.
- The presence of illegal immigrants violates the political rights of the citizens of Tripura.
- “Uncontrolled influx of illegal migrants from Bangladesh to Tripura has caused huge demographic changes in Tripura
- Tripura was a predominantly tribal State, but now it has become a non-tribal State.
- Indigenous people who were once the majority have now become a minority in their own land.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Development and management of the social sector Source- The Hindu**

**4. MedWatch - Mobile Health app Launched by IAF**

- The Indian Air Force has launched an innovative mobile health App named ‘MedWatch’.
- MedWatch is the first mobile health app in the three Armed Services.
- MedWatch will provide correct, Scientific and authentic health information to

air warriors and all citizens of India.

**Feature of Application**

- It provides information on basic First Aid, Health topics and Nutritional Facts.

- It also reminders for timely Medical Review,
- Vaccination and utility tools like Health Record Card.
- Body Mass Index calculator
- This application also provides helpline numbers and web links.

**Related Information**

- It is in the series of keeping with the Prime Minister’s vision of ‘Digital India, Ayushman Bharat and Mission Indradhanush.
- The app is conceived by the doctors of IAF and developed in-house by Directorate of Information Technology (DIT) with ZERO financial outlay.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Social development Source-PIB**

**5. Cyclone ‘Titli’ to intensify hit Odisha and A.P coast**

- The Indian Meteorological Department has forecast "heavy to very heavy rainfall" at several places in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh
- Cyclone ‘TITLI’ is expected to intensify further into a Severe Cyclonic Storm and cross east coast of India between Kalingapatnam (north Andhra Pradesh) and Gopalpur (south Odisha).
- ‘TITLI’ over the Bay of Bengal and another cyclonic storm ‘LUBAN’ over the Arabian sea hit coastal area.

**About the Indian Meteorological Department**

- The India Meteorological Department is under the aegis of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India.
- It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting, and seismology.
- IMD is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica. Regional offices are at Mumbai, Kolkata, Nagpur, and Pune.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment - Disaster Management Source-PIB**

## **6. '60% districts in India affected by forest fires each year'**

- A Joint report by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change and World Bank found that at least 60 percent of districts in India are affected by forest fires each year.
- The top 20 districts in terms of fire frequency are located mainly in the Northeast which accounts for 48 percent of the total fire-affected area

### **Related Information**

- Forest fires peak during the dry months of March or April before the arrival of the monsoon.
- The peak fire season is the most concentrated (shortest) in the Northeast & the Northern state of Bihar.
- Fires in other regions, particularly districts in Central and Southern India, are more expansive
- Frequent forest fires include areas of dry and moist deciduous forest in the borderlands of Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Telangana that are affected by the fire on a nearly annual basis.
- This report is significant in light of the recently released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- IPCC report explores possibilities of keeping the global temperature rise within 1.5 degree Celsius to prevent catastrophic impacts due to unchecked temperature rise.

### **Impact on India**

- It will affect India's own commitment to creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of Co<sub>2</sub>-equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.
- In the year 2014, fires burned about 8.6 percent of forest cover in protected areas.
- Forest fires contribute to climate change by releasing carbon stored in trees, undergrowth, and soil into the atmosphere.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

## **7. Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA)**

- The Centre has reconstituted Supreme Court-empowered Environment Pollution

(Prevention and Control) Authority or the EPCA.

### **About EPCA**

- EPCA was constituted with the objective of 'protecting and improving' the quality of the environment and 'controlling environmental pollution' in the National Capital Region.
- The EPCA also assists the apex court in various environment-related matters in the region.
- EPCA is Supreme Court mandated body tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region.
- It was notified in 1998 by Environment Ministry under Environment Protection Act, 1986.

### **Functions**

- To protect and improve the quality of the environment and prevent and control environmental pollution in the National Capital Region.
- To enforce Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in NCR as per the pollution levels.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source-PIB**

## **8. The first example of a bioelectronic medicine**

- Northwestern University and Washington University School of Medicine have developed the first example of a bioelectronic medicine.
- It is an implantable, biodegradable wireless device that speeds nerve regeneration and improves healing of a damaged nerve.

### **How it's works**

- This device delivered pulses of electricity to damaged nerves in rats after a surgical repair process, accelerating the regrowth of nerves and enhancing the recovery of muscle strength and control.
- The device is the size of a dime and the thickness of a sheet of paper. Researchers at an implantable, biodegradable wireless device that speeds nerve regeneration and improves the healing of a damaged nerve.
- The size of a dime and the thickness of a sheet of paper, the wireless device operates for about two weeks before naturally absorbed into the body.

- The research study also showed the device can work as a temporary pacemaker and as an interface to the spinal cord and other stimulation sites across the body.

**Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology  
Source-PIB**

**11.10.2018**

1. **External Affairs Minister launches 'India for Humanity'**

- Union Ministry of External Affairs has launched India for Humanity collaborated with renowned charitable organization Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS).
- It is an initiative to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and the honor of his service to humanity.
- It will feature the year-long series of artificial limb fitment camps in a number of countries spanning the globe.

**Objective**

- Its aim to provide physical, economic and social rehabilitation of differently-abled around the world helping them regains their mobility and dignity to become self-respecting and productive members of society.
- It focuses on Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of compassion, caring, and service to humanity.

**Related Information  
About BMVSS**

- It was founded in 1975 and better known by its trademark limb "Jaipur Foot.
- BMVSS is among the world's largest organization for the fitment of artificial limbs and till date has served over 1.73 million amputees.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Social justice  
Source- The Hindu**

2. **'2nd World Conference on Access to Medical Products: Achieving the SDGs 2030'**

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with the help of the World Health Organisation has organized the '2nd World Conference on Access to Medical Products.

- India is firmly committed to Universal health coverage which is a key to the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda.

**Objective**

- The objective of the 2nd World Conference 2018 is to take forward the recommendations from the 1st World Conference 2017
- It also builds on the work done for access to medical products in the context of SDGs including trade agreements.
- It will provide a proper environment to access effective, safe, quality-assured and affordable medical products which are keys to making progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the SDGs.

**Related Information**

- India is actively contributing and providing support for the South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN) to guarantee access to high-quality medical products.
- National Health Policy 2017 is dedicated to the highest possible standards of health for the country.
- The Government has launched Ayushman Bharat, a National Health Protection Scheme, which envisions health assurance of 5 lakh rupees per family per year, will benefit over 50 crore
- It is the world's biggest health assurance scheme.

**South-East Asia Regulatory Network**

- This is the website of Network National Regulatory Authorities responsible for regulation of medical products, including medicines, vaccines, biological and medical devices and diagnostics for human use in the eleven countries of the South East Asia Region.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Development and management of the social sector**

**Source-PIB**

3. **MoS for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare inaugurates the 32nd conference of WUWM**



- The 32nd world conference of World Union of Wholesale Markets, WUWM at Gurugram, Haryana, inaugurated by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- The conference is organized first time in India under the theme of 'The Wholesale Markets in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities.'

#### **Related Information**

#### **World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM)**

- The World Union of Wholesale Markets is a non-profit organization founded in the Netherlands.
- The aim of the Association is the international promotion of wholesale markets and retail stores.
- It helps develop international wholesale trade.
- They associate wholesale markets, retail markets, food suppliers, wholesale market operators & individuals.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **4. IWAI to launch new Ro-Ro service to Majuli Island**

- Inland Waterways Authority of India will be starting a new Roll on-Roll off (Ro-Ro) facility in collaboration with the Government of Assam to provide the much-needed connectivity for Majuli Island.
- This facility will cut down the circuitous road route of 423 KMs that trucks take from Neamati to Majuli Island via Tezpur Road Bridge only to 12.7 km.

#### **Related Information**

- Majuli is one of the biggest riverine islands in the world located on river Brahmaputra.
- This is the first island to be made a district in India
- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the statutory authority under the Government of India.
- It provides assistance for the development and regulation of Inland waterways for shipping and navigation.
- The head office is at Noida.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- AIR**

#### **5. Cabinet Approves Merger of NCVT and NSDA to Establish NCVET**

- Cabinet has approved the merger of the existing regulatory institutions in the skills space - National Council for Vocational Training and the National Skill Development Agency into the National Council for Vocational Education and Training.
- NCVET will regulate the functioning of entities engaged in vocational education and training.
- It included both long-term and short-term and establish minimum standards for the functioning of such entities.
- The primary functions of NCVET will include –
  - Recognition and regulation of awarding bodies, assessment bodies and skill related information providers.
  - Approval of qualifications developed by awarding bodies and Sector Skill Councils (SSCs).
  - Indirect regulation of vocational training institutes through awarding bodies and assessment agencies
  - Research & information dissemination.
  - Grievance redressal.

#### **Related Information**

- This reform will lead to improvement in quality and market relevance of skill development programs.
- It also helps in increasing skilled manpower which is the key to 'Make in India.'
- It promotes lending credibility to vocational education and training encouraging greater private investment and employer participation in the skills space.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Development and management of the social sector**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **6. Goa Maritime Symposium – 2018**

- The event will be held on 16th October 2018.
- It will help towards fostering friendly relations with our maritime neighbors attended by senior naval officers and representatives from 16 Indian Ocean littoral countries.

- The theme of the Symposium is "Building Stronger Maritime Partnerships in IOR."

### **Objective**

- The focus of the symposium is on capacity building among IOR Navies to tackle emerging maritime threats.
- It also provides a platform for discussing cooperative strategies for enhancing interoperability among partner maritime agencies.
- The symposium will play a constructive role in bringing together stakeholders that have a role in evolving strategies, policies and implementation mechanisms in the maritime domain.

### **About IORA**

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association is an international organization consisting of coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean.
- The Coordinating Secretariat of IORA is located at Ebene, Mauritius.

### **Topic-GS Paper 2– International relation Source- The Hindu**

#### **7. Centre sets 'minimum river flows' for the Ganga**

- Union government has mandated the minimum quantity of water or ecological flow that various stretches of the Ganga must necessarily have all through the year.
- The new norms would require hydropower projects located along the river to modify their operations so as to ensure they are in compliance.
- The upper stretches of the Ganga from its origins in the glaciers and until Haridwar would have to maintain 20% of the monthly average flow of the preceding 10-days between November and March which is the dry season.
- 25% of the average during the 'lean season' of October, April and May.
- 30% of the monthly average during the monsoon months of June-September.
- Power projects that don't meet these norms as yet would be given three years to comply and "mini and micro-projects" would be exempt from these requirements.

- The Central Water Commission would be the designated authority to collect relevant data and submit flow monitoring-cum-compliance reports on a quarterly basis to the Nation Mission On Clean Ganga.

### **Benefits**

- This will help the Ganga not dry ever anywhere during her course of the journey.
- Flow data isn't made public by the CWC because it can be used by neighboring countries to put pressure regarding hydro-electric projects.

### **About Ganga**

- The Ganges is a trans-boundary river of the Indian subcontinent which flows through the nations of India and Bangladesh.
- The 2,525 km (1,569 mi) river rises in the western Himalayas in the Indian state of Uttarakhand and flows south and east through the Gangetic Plain of North India.
- After entering West Bengal, it divides into two rivers: the Hooghly River and the Padma River.
- The Hooghly flows through several districts of West Bengal and into the Bay of Bengal near Sagar Island.
- The Padma also flows into and through Bangladesh and also empties into the Bay of Bengal.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **8. Country's first biofuel plant to set up in Odisha**

- **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL)** has commissioned a second generation (2G) Ethanol Bio-Refinery at Baulsingha village in Odisha's Bargarh district (by December 2020).
- It will be the first biofuel plant in the country at which ethanol will be produced from rice straw.
- The ethanol produced at the plant will be blended with petrol and used as fuel.

#### **9. Tushar Mehta appointed as the new Solicitor General of India**

- Senior Advocate Tushar Mehta has been appointed as the new Solicitor General of India till 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

### Related Information

- In addition to the Attorney General (AG), there are other law officers of the Government of India.
- They are the solicitor general of India and additional solicitor general of India.
- They assist the AG in the fulfillment of his official responsibilities.

### Note

- Only the office of the AG is created by the Constitution.

**12.10.2018**

#### 1. World Bank's Human Capital Index 2018

- Singapore has emerged top among 157 countries in the inaugural World Bank Human Capital Index.
- North-central African nation Chad is ranked the lowest among the countries at 157, with four countries from the continent among the bottom five: South Sudan (156), Niger (155), Mali (154), and Liberia (153).
- The theme of the World Development Report is "The Changing Nature of Work"

### Related Information

- The government of India rejected the findings of the World Bank's Human Capital Index which has placed the country at 115th position out of 157 countries.

### Human Capital Index

- The HCI has been constructed for 157 countries.
- It claims to seek to measure the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18.

### The HCI has three components

- Survival, as measured by under-5 mortality rates.
- Expected years of Quality-Adjusted School which combines information on the quantity and quality of education.
- Health environment using two proxies of (a) adult survival rates and (b) the rate of stunting for children under age 5.

**The key observations regarding HCI for India in the Report are as under**

- Human Capital Index: A child born in India today will be only 44 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.
- The HCI in India for females is marginally better than that for males.
- The probability of Survival to Age 5: 96 out of 100 children born in India survive to age 5.
- Expected Years of School: In India, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 10.2 years of school by her 18th birthday.
- Harmonized Test Scores: Students in India score 355 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.
- Learning-adjusted Years of School: Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 5.8 years.
- Gender Differences: In India, HCI for girls is marginally higher than for boys.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important index

#### Source-PIB

#### 2. Clear Sky 2018: Ukraine Launches Air Exercises With NATO Countries

- It is an air force exercises with the United States and other NATO countries.
- The "Clear Sky 2018" war games are being held in western Ukraine.
- The aim is to enhance regional capabilities to secure air sovereignty and promote peace and security through cooperation.

#### About NATO

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.
- NATO constitutes a system of collective defense whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defense in response to an attack by any external party.
- NATO Headquarters are located in Haren, Brussels, Belgium.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence

#### Source- The Hindu

3. **Cabinet approves India-Finland agreement on environmental cooperation**

- The Union Cabinet approved a Memorandum of Cooperation between India and Finland on environmental cooperation.
- This memorandum will bring in the latest technologies and best practices suited for bringing about better environmental protection
- It also helps in better conservation, and better management of climate change and wildlife protection/conservation in the country.

**Related Information**

- The areas of cooperation under this Memorandum of Cooperation shall include:
  - (a) Air and water pollution prevention and purification
  - (b) Remediation of contaminated soils
  - (c) Waste management including hazardous wastes and waste-to-energy technologies
- It helps to enhance sustainable management of natural resources including forests, climate change, environmental and forest monitoring
- It also helps in improving the Integrated water management of oceanic/sea island

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Environment**

**Source- Indian Express**

4. **21% of Indian children are under-weight: Global Hunger Index**

- India has been ranked at 103 out of 119 countries in the Index.
- The report released by Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute.

**Result in the Context of India**

- At least one in five Indian children under the age of five are wasted means they have the extremely low weight for their height, reflecting acute under-nutrition.
- The only country with a higher prevalence of child wasting is the war-torn nation of South Sudan
- India's ranking has dropped three places from last year.

**Related Information**

- Four main indicators are used to calculate hunger levels in the report
- The first indicator is undernourishment, which is the share of the population which is undernourished and reflects insufficient caloric intake.
- The next three indicators use data for children under five.
  - Child wasting (low weight for height),
  - Reflecting acute under-nutrition
  - Child stunting (low height for age)
  - Reflecting on chronic under-nutrition
  - Child mortality.
- Globally, the level of hunger still falls into the "serious" category, despite improvement over the last two decades.
- The Index projects that at the current rate of progress, 50 countries will fail to reach the "low" hunger category by 2030.
- This puts the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims to end hunger by 2030, in jeopardy.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Index**

**Source- The Hindu**

5. **Fourth Industrial Revolution, expansion of AI will lead to better healthcare**

- Fourth Industrial Revolution and the expansion of Artificial Intelligence will lead to better health care, and reduce expenditure on health said by PM.
- India launched the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF) in New Delhi.
- The WEF is setting up a Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Maharashtra.
- The other centers are in San Francisco, USA, Japan, and China. Artificial intelligence, blockchain and drones are the first three projects of the center in India.
- WEF will work in collaboration with the NITI Aayog, business leaders, academia and start-ups in these projects.

### Related Information

- The fourth Industrial revolution is driven by digital technology and India is on track to adopt digital technology in every aspect of governance.
- This will help the country to leapfrog into the global supply chain.
- Recently launched Digi yatra by the Ministry of Civil Aviation as an example of India's vision to transform the country into a digitally empowered society.

### Topic-GS Paper 2–Economics Development

#### Source- AIR

6. **32<sup>nd</sup> India - Indonesia coordinated patrol (CORPAT)**
  - 32nd edition of India – Indonesia coordinated patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) is beginning in Indonesia.

### Related Information

- This emphasizes India's peaceful presence and solidarity with friendly countries towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain, consolidate interoperability.
- It also helps in strengthen existing bonds of friendship between the two countries.
- It will help to ensure the PM vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region).

### Topic- GS Paper 3– Defence

#### Source- The Hindu

7. **Power Bat: Harnessing technology to enhance the fan experience**
  - Spektacom Technologies, the start-up by former India leg-spinner Anil Kumble, Microsoft Corp and broadcast partner Star India introduced the Power Bat.
  - This bat (tools) will provide players, coaches, commentators, fans, and viewers a completely new and unique way to engage with cricket and improve their game.

### Related Information

- The Power Bat is powered by the Microsoft Azure cloud platform using AI and Internet of Things (IoT) services.
- Power Bat is a unique concept whereby a lightweight, Azure Sphere-powered sticker is stuck on the shoulder of the bat.

- As soon as the batsman hits the ball, data on different parameters (speed, twist, and quality of the shot) are captured in a new unit of measurement titled Power Speks.
- Power Bat first used in the TNPL and Star India used it in a recent series to provide real-time statistics and insights straight off the ground.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

#### Source- Indian Express

8. **Amnesty scheme: Over 900 inmates released from jails**
  - Home Ministry announced the first phase of Amnesty scheme to release over 900 prisoners from jails across India under an amnesty scheme announced as part of the year-long celebration to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
  - In the second and third phase, prisoners will be released on April 6, 2019, and October 2, 2019.
  - The states and UTs have been advised to hold a week-long special function at all prison premises based on the teachings of the Mahatma before the dates specified for the release of prisoners.

### Related Information

- The special remission scheme is not available to prisoners who have been convicted for an offense for which the sentence awarded is death.
- It is also not available to the death sentence which has been commuted to life imprisonment.
- Cases of convicts involved in heinous crimes.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Social issue

#### Source-PIB

9. **New Horizons mission: NASA**
  - NASA's New Horizons probe is on course to fly by the Kuiper Belt object nicknamed Ultima Thule, which is at a distance of 6.6 billion kilometers from Earth.
  - This event will set the record for the most distant object ever visited by a spacecraft.

### **About New Horizons Mission:**

- This mission was launched on 19 January 2006 and has been traveling through space for the past nine years.
- Just over a year after launch, it passed Jupiter and used the giant world's gravity to boost its velocity, as well as making scientific observations.
- The mission will complete what NASA calls the reconnaissance of the classical solar system, and it makes the U.S. the first nation to send a space probe to every planet from Mercury to Pluto.
- New Horizon's core science mission is to map the surfaces of Pluto and Charon, to study Pluto's atmosphere and to take temperature readings.

### **About Kuiper Belt**

- The Kuiper belt sometimes called the Edgeworth–Kuiper belt is a region of the Solar System beyond the planets, extending from the orbit of Neptune from the Sun.
- It is similar to the asteroid belt, but it is far larger and massive than the asteroid.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

**Source- The Hindu**

**13.10.2018**

1. **Mission to sequence genes of Indians**
  - India is planning a major mission to sequence the genes of a "large" group of Indians.
  - The project has involved different countries along with India to sequence the genes of a "large" group of Indians akin to projects in the United Kingdom, China, Japan, and Australia.
  - This will be used to improve health as well as the buck a global trend of designing 'personalised medicine.'
  - The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Department of Biotechnology would be closely associated with the project.
  - India is now one of the six countries to achieve such a feat.

### **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research**

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is an autonomous body established by the Government of India.
- It is the largest research and development organization in India.
- It is mainly funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology and it operates as an autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in 2009 announced that it had sequenced the genome of an Indian.

### **About Gene**

- A gene is a region of DNA that encodes function.
- A chromosome consists of a long strand of DNA containing many genes.
- A human chromosome can have up to 500 million base pairs of DNA with thousands of genes.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

**Source- The Hindu**

2. **National Environment Survey**
  - India's first ever National Environment Survey will be kicked off from 55 districts across 24 states and three Union Territories in January 2019.
  - A National Environment Survey is proposed under the ongoing Environmental Information System Scheme of the Environment ministry.
  - It provides first-time primary data on all the green heads in the same way that the National Sample Survey (NSS) periodically collects various socioeconomic data.
  - The survey will be done through a grid-based approach, using grids measuring 9x9 km.
  - It also collects comprehensive data on various environmental parameters such as air, water, soil quality; emission inventory; solid, hazardous and e-waste; forest & wildlife; flora & fauna; wetlands, lakes, rivers, and other water bodies.

- It will also assess carbon sequestration potential of all the districts across the country.
- The NES will rank all the districts on their environmental performance and document their best green practices.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **3. ISRO to set up center at Jammu University**

- ISRO will set up a center, named Satish Dhawan Center for Space Science, at the Central University of Jammu (CUJ) to expand its presence in the northernmost state of India.
- The center will have facilities for geospatial data analysis that will help in for sustainable use of natural resources and planning land-use pattern.
- It will help in ground-based observations for atmospheric studies, the research lab for astrophysics.
- It also provides atmospheric sensing and glacier studies lab for better use of the large quantity of water is stored in the form of seasonal snow, ice and glaciers in the rivers of North India.
- This will help to enhance Jammu and Kashmir economy and human lives which are affected by vegetation cover, forest area, snow, landslides, avalanches, groundwater, cloud cover, which can be monitored from space through remote-sensing.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Science and Technology**

#### **Source- AIR**

#### **4. India elected to UNHRC securing maximum votes**

- India has been elected to the United Nations' Human Rights Council with the highest vote among all candidates.
- India got 188 votes followed by Fiji with 187 and Bangladesh 178 votes.
- India had previously been elected to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council for the 2011-2014 and 2014-2017.

#### **About UNHRC**

- The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly in 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights.

- UNHRC mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.
- The UNHRC has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis.
- The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### **Functions:**

- The UNHRC investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in UN member states.
- It also addresses important thematic human rights issues such as freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women's rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities.

### **Topic-GS Paper 2–Important Organisation**

#### **Source-PIB**

#### **5. Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2018**

- The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2018 was recently introduced in the Lok Sabha.
- The Bill amends the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- The Bill provides for the chairperson to be a person who has been Chief Justice of India, or a Judge of the Supreme Court.
- The Act provides for a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), State Human Rights Commissions (SHRC), as well as Human Rights Courts.

#### **Related Information**

- Composition - Now, the chairperson of NHRC is to be a person who has been a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- Similarly, for SHRC, a person who has been Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court can be the chairperson.
- The Act provides for two persons having knowledge of human rights to be appointed as members of the NHRC.
- The Bill amends this to allow three members to be appointed, of which at least one will be a woman.
- Also, the chairpersons of various commissions such as the National Commissions for Scheduled Castes, for Scheduled Tribes, and for Women are members of the NHRC.

- The Bill widens this to National Commissions for Backward Classes, for Protection of Child Rights, and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.
- The term of office - Now, the chairperson and members of the NHRC and SHRC are to hold office for 5 years or till the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.
- The Bill also allows for the reappointment of chairpersons of the NHRC and SHRCs.
- Powers - Now, the Secretary-General of the NHRC and a Secretary of SHRC exercise power as may be delegated to them.
- Union Territories - The Bill provides for the central government to confer on an SHRC the human rights functions being discharged by Union Territories.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

6. **National Policy on Electronics 2018**
  - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued draft 'National Policy on Electronics 2018' (NPE 2018) for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) Sector of India.
  - This policy helps to promote domestic manufacturing in entire value-chain of the ESDM sector for spur economic development in the country.
  - It also helps to double the target of mobile phone production from 500 million units in 2019 to 1 billion by 2025 to meet the objective.
  - Its target to create \$400 billion electronics manufacturing industry by 2025, with mobile phone devices segment accounting for three-fourths of production.
  - It replaces existing incentive schemes like Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS), with schemes that are easier to implement such as interest subsidy and credit default guarantee etc.

- It also takes into consideration interest subsidy and credit default guarantee in order to encourage new units and in the expansion of existing units in the electronics manufacturing sector.
- Tax benefits: It proposes suitable direct tax benefits, including inter-alia investment-linked deduction under Income Tax (IT), Act for electronics manufacturing sector, for setting up of new manufacturing unit or expansion of an existing unit.
- It also proposes cess on select electronic goods resources to promote certain critical sub-sectors of electronic manufacturing such as semiconductor wafer fabrication and display fabrication units.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

7. **India Lost \$79.5 Billion Due To Natural Disasters in 20 Years: UN Report**
  - UN has released a report titled 'Economic Losses, Poverty and Disasters 1998-2017'
  - It was compiled by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.
  - India suffered a whopping \$79.5 billion economic loss due to climate-related disasters in the last 20 years.
  - The report highlights the impact of extreme weather events on the global economy.
  - It states that the years between 1998 to 2017 have seen a dramatic rise of 151% in direct economic losses from climate-related disasters.
  - In terms of the impact of disasters on the global economy between 1998 and 2017, affected countries reported direct losses of \$2.908 trillion, more than twice of what was lost in the previous two decades.
  - Storms, floods, and earthquakes place three European countries in the top ten nations for economic losses.

#### **Related Information**

- The report concludes that climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events.



- The disasters will continue to be major impediments to sustainable development so long as the economic incentives to build and develop hazard-prone locations outweigh the perceived disaster risks.
- Measuring economic losses can also motivate Governments to do more to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which seeks a substantial reduction in disaster losses by 2030.
- Integrating disaster risk reduction into investment decisions is the most cost-effective way to reduce these risks.

#### **About UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction**

- It was established in 1999 as dedicated secretariat to facilitate implementation of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.
- It is an organizational unit of UN Secretariat and is led by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG).
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

##### **Source- Indian Express**

#### **8. First India-Israel Innovation Centre Opens in Bengaluru**

- The country's first India-Israel Innovation Centre (IIIC), an entrepreneurial technology hub, was launched in Bengaluru.
- The IIIC is a significant step towards facilitating penetration of Israeli companies in India.
- It aims to forge local partnerships and joint ventures between companies from the two countries.
- It will provide an ecosystem to support entrepreneurship, the partnership with vendors, mentoring and non-formal community development.
- The IIIC also helps to assist the growth of the companies in different verticals and covers business, technology, investors and customers.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – International Relation**

##### **Source- Business Standard**

**15.10.2018**

#### **1. International Day for Disaster Reduction 2018**

- International Day for Disaster Reduction was observed on October 13th.
- **'Reducing Disaster Economic Losses'** is the theme of the 2018 International Day for Disaster Reduction.
- The 2018 theme continues as part of the "Sendai Seven" campaign, centered on the seven targets of the Sendai Framework.
- This year focuses on Target C of the Sendai Framework, which is, 'reducing disaster economic losses in relation to global GDP by 2030'.

#### **Related Information**

- In 1989, the UN General Assembly through a resolution had designated the second Wednesday of October as International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction.
- The main objective of the observance is to raise awareness of how people are taking action to reduce their risk to disasters.

#### **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030)**

- It is an international document which was adopted by UN member states of March 2015 at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan
- It is the successor agreement to the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005–2015), which had been the most encompassing international accord to date on disaster risk reduction.
- It is a voluntary and non-binding agreement which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3– Disaster Management**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **2. Graded Response Action Plan comes into force in Delhi from to combat air pollution**

- An emergency action plan will be implemented in the national capital to combat air pollution that has begun to show a trend towards poor category.

- Under the emergency plan called Graded Response Action Plan, stringent actions will be implemented based on the air quality of the city.
- Burning of paddy straw every year during October and November and wheat straw during April in Punjab and Haryana are the major contributors of air pollution in Delhi-NCR.

#### **Related Information**

#### **Graded Response Action Plan on Pollution**

- This was notified by the Union Environment Ministry against air pollution for Delhi and the National Capital Region.
- A graded response lays down stratified actions that are required to be taken as and when the concentration of pollutants, in this case, particulate matter, reaches a certain level.
- The graded action plan will be implemented if PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels stay over 300 micrograms per cubic meter and PM<sub>10</sub> levels stay above 500 micrograms per cubic meter.
- Beijing and Paris have implemented graded action plans over the past few years.
- Paris recently implemented the odd-even road rationing scheme when PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels crossed 95 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- It also made public transport free to encourage people to leave their vehicles at home.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

**Source- The Hindu**

#### **3. Chandra X-Ray Observatory**

- NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory has entered protective "safe mode" mere days after the Hubble Space Telescope entered safe mode following a component failure.
- The Chandra X-Ray Observatory is a NASA spy that works on different objects that include black holes, galaxies, supernovas, high-temperature gases, and quasars.
- The x-ray portion of the electromagnetic spectrum to help us better understand the universe.

- It was previously known as the Advanced X-ray Astrophysics Facility (AXAF).
- The telescope is named after the Nobel Prize-winning Indian-American astrophysicist Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar.

#### **Related Information**

#### **NASA's Great Observatories**

##### **(a) Hubble Space Telescope**

- The first element of the program - and arguably the best known -- is the Hubble Space Telescope (HST).
- The Hubble telescope was deployed by a NASA Space Shuttle in 1990.

##### **(b) The Compton Gamma Ray Observatory (CGRO)**

- It was the second of NASA's Great Observatories.
- This mission collected data on some of the most violent physical processes in the Universe, characterized by their extremely high energies.

##### **(c) Chandra X-ray Observatory**

- The third member of the Great Observatory family.
- This observatory is observing such objects as black holes, quasars, and high-temperature gases throughout the x-ray portion of the EM spectrum.

##### **(d) Spitzer Space Telescope**

- The Spitzer Space Telescope represents the fourth and final element in NASA's Great Observatory program.
- Spitzer fills in an important gap in wavelength coverage not available from the ground-the thermal infrared.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

**Source- Gizmodo**

#### **4. EC launches: cVIGIL app**

- Election Commission launches cVIGIL unique app for voters to report poll code violations.
- The unique Internet-based beta version of the application is called 'cVIGIL', which stands for "citizens' vigil".
- It is an Android-based app, using which a person can secretly send to it geo-tagged videos and photos of illegal money being distributed or a hate speech being made during polls.

- It will be used in upcoming assembly polls.

#### **Related Information**

- The app will work only during the time the model code of conduct (MCC) is in place in a poll-bound state.
- The app will hide the complainant's phone number and identity so as to encourage information against high and mighty without any risk of subsequent possible backlash.
- This app also helps those who do not hide their identity will also get a response from the EC on the action taken after their complaint.
- The photos and videos will be automatically tagged by the geographical information system and hence the surveillance teams will be directed to the correct place of incident where the poll code is being violated.

#### **Requirement of the app**

- The app requires an Android Smartphone equipped with a camera, good Internet connection, and GPS access.
- The operating system should be Android Jellybean and above

#### **About Election Commission**

- The Election Commission operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324 and subsequently enacted Representation of the People Act.
- The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source- AIR**

#### **5. Sikkim: World's first totally organic agriculture state**

- UN Food & Agriculture Organisation awards Sikkim for becoming world's first totally organic agriculture state.
- Sikkim is considered for the award for its policies on Agroecology and Sustainable food systems.
- Sikkim won the gold by beating 51 nominated policies from 25 countries.
- Brazil, Denmark, and Equador won Silver for their policies.

#### **Related Information**

- The small Himalayan state of Sikkim was declared the fully organic state in 2016 after phasing out chemical fertilizers and pesticides and substituting them with sustainable alternatives.

#### **About UN- FAO**

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- Serving both developed and developing countries, FAO acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate arguments and debate policy
- The Headquarters of FAO Rome, Italy
- Currently headed by José Graziano da Silva (current)

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **6. Indian Navy acquires 1<sup>st</sup> Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel**

- The Indian Navy has inducted its first Deep submergence rescue vessel which helps in enhancing its operational capabilities.
- It has the capability to search, locate & provide rescue to distressed submarines.
- The vessel is deployed to rescue downed or disaster-struck submarines at high sea.
- 2nd rescue kit planned for induction at Visakhapatnam in 2019.

#### **Related Information**

- At present, the US, China, Russia, and a few other countries have the capabilities to deploy DSRVs.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

##### **Source-PIB**

#### **7. India, China launch their first joint programmed for Afghanistan to train its diplomats**

- Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Vinay Kumar hosted 10 Afghan Diplomats who will be traveling to India for the 1st India-China joint training programme for Afghan diplomats
- It worked under the aegis of the Trilateral Cooperation between India, China, and Afghanistan.

### Related Information

- An understanding to launch a joint programme was reached during an informal summit between Indian Prime Minister and Chinese President Xi Jinping held in April at China's Wuhan city.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – International Relation

#### Source- AIR

### 8. IRCTC launches AskDisha - a chatbot to improve customer service

- The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) launched 'AskDisha' (Digital Interaction to Seek Help Anytime).
- It is a Chabot powered by artificial intelligence (AI) for improving customer services of railway passengers.
- A Chabot is a special computer programmed designed to simulate the conversation with users, especially over the internet.

### Related Information

- "The IRCTC Chat Bot AskDisha will offer greatly improved and intuitive customer support by answering customer queries pertaining to all aspects of the services that IRCTC provides.
- It will support several regional languages and will be voice-enabled.
- The essential features of AskDisha include
  - (a) Ability to quickly answer customer queries
  - (b) Also to provide round-the-clock customer support
  - (c) It provides zero waiting time for the query to get answered

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

#### Source- The Hindu

### 9. India International Silk Fair -2018

- Union Minister of Textiles will inaugurate the 6th edition of India International Silk Fair (IISF) in New Delhi.
- It will be organized by the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council (ISEPC).
- India is the 2nd largest producer of silk in the world.

- The silk industry is agriculture based and labour intensive and provides gainful employment to around 8 million artisans and weavers in rural areas.
- It will help to promote the future vision of Indian Silk Industry.

### The Indian Silk Export Promotion Council

- The Indian Silk Export Promotion Council (ISEPC) was set up in 1983 as a company, not for profit under Companies Act duly sponsored by the Government of India in the Ministry of Textiles.
- The Council as on date has a membership of 853 regular exporters of Silk goods whereas more than 1800 exporters have registered with the Council.

### Topic- GS Paper 2– Important Sector

#### Source- The Hindu

**16.10.2018**

### 1. Museum on Prime Ministers of India

- A "Museum on Prime Ministers of India" is to be set up in Delhi by the Ministry of Housing and Urban.
- The museum is dedicated to all the Prime Ministers of India and is envisaged to give visitors a holistic understanding of the continued thread of leadership, initiatives, and sacrifice that have helped shape our nation since independence.

### Related Information

- The proposed Museum is to depict Modern India through collections relating to each of the Prime Ministers of India, their lives, works and significant contributions made towards nation building.
- It will bring India's democratic experience alive to the visitors.
- It will also encourage curiosity and research about the role of PM and his office.

### Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

#### Source-PIB

### 2. First Indo-US tri-services exercise 2019

- The first Indo-US tri-services exercise is likely to take place in 2019.

- This is the first time the three services of India and the US will participate in a drill together.
- The three forces of India and the US already take part in bilateral exercises separately.
- The armies participate in an annual drill called Yudh Abhyas.
- The air forces take part in a bilateral drill called Cope India.
- The navies participate in an exercise in Malabar, involving Japan.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

**Source- The Hindu**

**3. 6th RCEP inter-sessional ministerial meeting held in Singapore**

- Minister of State for Commerce & Industry representing India on 6th RCEP Inter-sessional Ministerial Meeting (IMM) which was held in Singapore.
- The objective of the RCEP to discuss a modern, comprehensive and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement among ASEAN and ASEAN's FTA partners.

**Related Information**

**About RCEP**

- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations( Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam )
- It also has the six Asia-Pacific states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand).
- RCEP negotiations were formally launched in November 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia.
- RCEP is as an alternative to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade agreement which includes several Asian and American nations but excludes China and India.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – International relation**

**Source- The Hindu**

**4. 46th edition world largest of IHGF-Delhi Fair**

- Minister of State for Textiles inaugurated the 46th edition of world's largest IHGF-Delhi Fair at India Expo Centre and Mart at Greater Noida.
- IHGF fair held biannually which is organized by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts.
- It provides a vast platform for the handicrafts industries in the world.

**About Export Promotion Council**

- It is the apex body of handicrafts exporters for the promotion of exports of Handicrafts from the country which was established under Companies Act in the year 1986-87.
- It is a non-profit organization, with an object to promote, support, protect, maintain and increase the export of handicrafts.
- The Council has created necessary infrastructure as well as marketing and information facilities, which are availed both by the member's exporters and importers

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

**Source- The Hindu**

**5. Government launches Youth Road Safety Learners Licence Programme**

- Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways and Chemical & Fertilizer launched the Youth Road Safety Learners Licence programme in New Delhi.
- It is a first-of-its-kind training programme in the country in which public-private partnership initiative taken to be run in collaboration with Diageo India and the Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE)

**About the Programme**

- Youth Road Safety Learners Licence programme is a step toward addressing this grave issue by improving road safety awareness amongst young adults by inculcating behavioural change and creating awareness about responsible driving habits.

- This programme adopts the means of creating awareness amongst youth so that they become defensive road users.
- It will help the Government achieve its target of reducing road accidents by 50 percent by 2020.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **6. MoU Signed Between ICFRE & Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan.**

- Memoranda of Understanding were signed by Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education with Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to promote environmental awareness among students.
- ICFRE is an autonomous Council under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change headquarter in Dehradun.
- The MoUs have been signed to launch the programme “PRAKRITI”.
- The objective of PRAKRITI to promote awareness about forests and the environment.
- It will help to stimulate interest among the students of NVS and KVS in maintaining a balanced environment and for acquiring skills that reflect care and protection towards forests, environment, and society.
- It also provides a platform for school children to learn practical skills towards the judicious use of our resources

#### **About ICFRE**

- It has nine Institutes and five centers located across the country, is guiding, promoting and coordinating forestry research, extension and education at the national level.
- Its headquarter is in Dehradun

#### **Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti**

- Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti was established with the primary objective to provide modern quality education to talented children, predominantly from the rural areas.

#### **Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan**

- Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was established in 1963 to provide uninterrupted education towards of the transferable Central Government employees.
- KVS established Kendriya Vidyalayas all over the country to impart quality education, promotion of national integration, adventure activities, physical education etc.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **7. Zika Virus**

- Rajasthan tested 55 positive cases of Zika virus.

#### **What is Zika?**

- The Zika virus is a mosquito-transmitted infection.
- It also affects newborn baby called microcephaly which is a condition defined by small heads and brain damage, along with other defects like blindness, deafness, seizures and other congenital defects.
- Zika virus can also lead to Guillain-Barré syndrome, a form of temporary paralysis in adults.

#### **Symptoms of Zika infection**

- The symptoms of Zika are similar to dengue and include fever, rarely higher than 102 degrees, skin rashes, bloodshot eyes, muscle and joint pain, malaise, and headache.
- These symptoms normally last for 2-7 days.

#### **Mode of Transmission**

- Zika virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected female mosquito, primarily the Aedes aegypti.
- This mosquito also spreads yellow fever, dengue, and chikungunya.
- Aedes mosquitoes usually bite during the day, peaking during early morning and late afternoon/evening.
- It can also be sexually transmitted. Zika virus can be transmitted by vaginal and anal sex, and possibly by oral sex.

#### **Treatment of Zika**

- There is neither any treatment nor any vaccine for Zika.

- The symptoms of Zika virus are mild – usually require common treatment like rest, drinking enough fluids, and treat pain and fever with common medicines.
- The patient should seek medical care and advice if the situation gets worse

**Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology**

**Source- Indian Express**

**8. Bees go silent during the total solar eclipse**

- Researchers at the University of Missouri organized a cadre of citizen scientists and elementary school classrooms study that solar eclipse's influence on bee behavior.
- The result published in the Annals of the Entomological Society of America
- Bees stopped flying during the period of total solar eclipse.

**Related Information**

- For the study of this research 16 monitoring stations were set up in Oregon, Idaho, and Missouri.
- The data showed that bees remained active during the partial-eclipse phases both before and after totality, but they essentially ceased flying during the period of totality.
- Just one buzz was recorded during totality in all of the 16 monitoring locations.
- Bees commonly fly more slowly at dusk and return to their colonies at night, and so the same behavior triggered by solar eclipse offers evidence about how they respond to environmental cues when those cues occur unexpectedly.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and technology**

**Source- Science Daily**

**17.10.2018**

**1. #Self4Society app: Help to rope in volunteers**

- #Self4Society, developed by MyGov will help working professionals to do volunteer work in their free time.
- This application will provide a platform which will help to create better synergies among companies run

volunteering initiatives and lead to a much better outcome of the efforts of professionals.

- The app will also have incentives, gamification and intra- and inter-company competitions, and social networking.

**Related Information**

- The volunteer time for the government's flagship programmes such as Swachh Bharat is expected to increase.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

**Source-PIB**

**2. POCSO Act: No time bar for report crimes**

- Ministry of Women and Child Development and Law ministry clarified that survivors of child sexual abuse can file a police complaint after they become adults.
- The Ministry of Law, after examining the provisions of POCSO Act vis-à-vis provisions of CrPC, has advised that there appears no period of limitation mentioned in Section 19 in regard to reporting of the offenses under the POCSO Act, 2012.

**Related Information**

**Section 19 of POCSO Act**

- Section 19 of the POCSO Act help to provide protection of children below 18 years of age from sexual abuse.
- This act lays down the procedure for reporting a crime but doesn't specify a time limit or statute of limitation for reporting it.

**About POCSO Act**

- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 was enacted to provide a robust legal framework for the protection of children from offenses of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography, while safeguarding the interest of the child at every stage of the judicial process.
- Protection of children by the state is guaranteed to Indian citizens by an expansive reading of Article 21 of the Indian constitution.

- Child sexual abuse laws in India have been enacted as part of the nation's child protection policies.
- India's status as the signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Social Issue**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **3. 12th ASEM summit in Brussels**

- 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) hosted by the European Union in Brussels, Belgium.
- The 51 nations' summit is seen as the highest platform for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe in the areas of trade, investment, security, and tourism.
- "ASEM Agenda for 2018 will priorities issues related to connectivity, trade, and investment, sustainable development, climate change, terrorism, migration, maritime security, and cyberspace,".
- The theme of ASEM summit is 'Global Partners for Global Challenges'.

#### **Related Information**

##### **About ASEM**

- The Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an Asian–European political dialogue forum to enhance relations and various forms of cooperation between its partners.
- It was officially established on 1 March 1996 at the first summit in Bangkok, Thailand.
- ASEM currently has 53 partners: 51 countries and 2 regional organizations.
- European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat are the two regional organizations.
- The main components of the ASEM process rest on the following 3 pillars:
  - (a) Political & Security Pillar
  - (b) Economic & Financial Pillar
  - (c) Social, Cultural & Educational Pillar

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – International Relation**

#### **Source- TOI**

#### **4. MoU signed between Lady Irwin College & MoRD for Roshni**

- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development and Lady Irwin College, have signed a MoU for establishing ROSHNI – Centre of Women Collectives led Social Action.
- Roshni aims to work with women collectives for social action on Food, Health, Nutrition and WASH (FHNW) interventions in alignment with DAY-NRLM Dashasutra strategy.
- Roshni will learn from Swabhimaan and extend support to DAY-NRLM for expanding the scope of FHNW interventions.
- The Centre will lead to knowledge creation, capacity building for scale-up of the convergent action plan, learning and re-learning in Swabhimaan sites and provide policy guidance to DAY-NRLM on POSHAN Abhiyaan initiatives.
- ROSHNI is technically and financially supported by UNICEF.

#### **Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana**

- Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011.
- The Mission aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- AIR**

#### **5. Ancient rocks in India give clues to early life**

- Researchers have found the oldest clue yet to the mystery of animal life in ancient rocks and oils, including those from India.
- These are dating back at least 100 million years before the famous Cambrian explosion of animal fossils.
- Researchers at the University of California, Riverside in the U.S. tracked molecular signs of animal life, called biomarkers.



- Biomarker which is as far back as 660-635 million years ago during the Neoproterozoic era.
- This biomarker is a steroid compound named 26-methylstigmastane (26-mes), has a unique structure that is currently only known.
- It is to be synthesized by certain species of modern sponges called demosponges.

#### **Related Information**

- The "Cambrian Explosion" refers to the sudden appearance in the fossil record of complex animals with mineralized skeletal remains 541 million years ago.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3-Science & Technology**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **6. Govt launched 'Swastha Bharat Yatra'**

- The government launched a national campaign 'Swastha Bharat Yatra' on the World Food Day (16 October).
- A pan-India cycle rally is being organized to sensitize people about eating safe food and be healthy under the campaign by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.
- The 'Swastha Bharat Yatra' was launched simultaneously at Leh (in Jammu & Kashmir), Panaji (Goa), Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), Puducherry, Ranchi (Jharkhand) and Agartala (Tripura).

#### **Swastha Bharat Yatra**

- The Swastha Bharat Yatra is a cyclathon initiative led by FSSAI which cover almost every state and UT over 100 days to propagate a powerful message 'Eat Right India'.
- It will create awareness about the demand for safe and healthy food.
- The cyclist volunteer's convoy including the 'Eat Right Mobile Unit' and 'Mobile Food Testing Unit' would travel across the country to build awareness around food safety, combating food adulteration and healthy diets.

#### **Related Information**

##### **World Food Day**

- World Food Day is celebrated on October 16 every year to raise awareness on the issues of poverty and hunger.

- World Food Day was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in November 1979
- Theme: "Change the future of migration. Invest in food security."
- World Food Day is a chance to show our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 - to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030.
- It's also a day for us to celebrate the progress we have already made towards reaching #Zero Hunger.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **7. The government wanted changes to sexual harassment law**

- The Centre recently announced its plan to set up a panel of judges to look into the legal and institutional framework to curb sexual harassment at workplaces following the #MeToo campaign on social media.

#### **About Justice Verma Committee**

- In 2013, the Justice J.S. Verma Committee, in its landmark report on gender laws, had recommended setting up of an employment tribunal instead of an internal complaints committee (ICC) in sweeping changes to the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Bill.
- The panel was formed in the aftermath of the December 16 Nirbhaya gangrape in 2012 and the ensuing nationwide protests and submitted its report on January 23, 2013.
- The panel proposed that an internal complaints committee as laid down under the then proposed law would be "counter-productive" "dealing with such complaints in-house could discourage women from filing complaints."
- The Verma panel also said that the time-limit of three months to file a complaint should be done away with and a complainant should not be transferred without her consent.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source- Indian express**

### **8. Man Booker Prize 2018**

- Anna Burns has won the Man Booker Prize for her novel 'Milkman'.
- She is the first author from Northern Ireland to win the most prestigious English-language literary award.
- Milkman is the story of brutality, sexual encroachment and resistance threaded with mordant humour.

#### **About Man Booker Prize**

- The Man Booker Prize for Fiction (formerly known as the Booker-McConnell Prize and commonly known simply as the Booker Prize) is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the UK.

#### **Topic-Important Prizes**

##### **Source- AIR**

**18.10.2018**

#### **1. Water Disinfection System "OneerTM"**

- It is developed by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (CSIR-IITR) Lucknow.
- "OneerTM" is the trademark of this innovative technology Drinking Water Disinfection System.
- It is useful for the continuous treatment of water and eliminates all disease-causing pathogens such as virus, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and cyst.
- It provides safe drinking water to domestic and communities settings as per National and International standards prescribed for potable water (BIS, WHO etc.).
- The device will go a long way in meeting the requirements of potable water in rural and urban areas.

#### **Related information**

- The technology will be helpful especially for rural people since it can be solar powered and this development is in line with the 'Make in India' Mission"

- According to the World Health Organization, "access to safe drinking water is essential to health, a basic human right and a component of effective policy for health protection".
- The smaller unit of Oneer is particularly suitable for homes, street food vendors, and small establishments.

#### **About CSIR**

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research was established by the Government of India.
- It is an autonomous body that has emerged as the largest research and development organization in India.
- It is funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology, registration under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- The research and development activities of CSIR include aerospace engineering, structural engineering, ocean sciences, life sciences, metallurgy, chemicals, mining, food, petroleum, leather, and environmental science.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

##### **Source-PIB**

#### **2. Global Competitiveness Index 2018**

- India has been ranked as the 58th most competitive economy on the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness index for 2018.
- The Index is topped by the US with a score of 85.6.
- India's rank rose by five places from 2017, the largest gain among G20 economies.
- India was ranked 58th with a score of 62.0 in the latest Global Competitiveness Report.
- Among the BRICS economies, China topped the list at 28th place with a score of 72.6, ahead of the Russian Federation, India, South Africa, and Brazil.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Global Competitiveness Index**

- The Global Competitiveness Report is a yearly report published by the World Economic Forum.
- Global Competitiveness Report ranks countries based on the Global Competitiveness Index
- The report "assesses the ability of countries to provide high levels of prosperity to their citizens.
- Global Competitiveness Index measures the set of institutions, policies, and factors that set the sustainable current and medium-term levels of economic prosperity.
- The index covers 140 nations and it measures national competitiveness.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important index**

#### **Source- TOI**

3. **Central Warehouse for PMBJP**
  - Central Warehouse of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana has been set up at Bilaspur, Gurugram.
  - It has been set up by the Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI).
  - The hi-tech Central Warehouse would facilitate seamless distribution of Jan Aushadhi generic medicines to all PMBJP Kendra functional across the country.

#### **Related Information**

- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana Kendra is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Govt. Of India.
- It provides quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special kendras known as Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra.
- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana Kendra (PMBJPK) has been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- BPPI (Bureau of Pharma Public Sector Undertakings of India) has been established under the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Govt. of India for supply and marketing of generic drugs through Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra.

- Digital Cash Management System for Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), to be implemented as a partnership between BPPI and Bank of Baroda.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source-PIB**

4. **Bathukamma blooms at NSW Parliament**
  - The New South Wales Parliament in Sydney, Australia for the first time ever celebrated Telangana culture and its identity.
  - The celebration was also a chance to promote Pochampally handloom weavers, who are fighting against all odds to save the handloom industry.

#### **Related Information**

- Bathukamma is floral festival celebrated predominantly by the Hindu women of Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh.
- Bathukamma represents the cultural spirit of Telangana.
- Bathukamma is a beautiful flower stack, arranged with different unique seasonal flowers most of them with medicinal values, in seven concentric layers in the shape of temple gopuram.

### **Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture**

#### **Source-PIB**

5. **Bepi Colombo gears up to unravel Mercury mysteries**
  - The European Space Agency (ESA) is gearing up to launch one of the world's most challenging interplanetary missions to Mercury in collaboration with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.
  - ESA's BepiColombo will be the first mission that will use two orbiters to explore the innermost planet of our solar system from a distance of 400km from the planet.
  - A UK-built spacecraft will determine if the nearest planet to the Sun contains water.
  - The mission will send two orbiters to explore the fiery world where the surface temperatures reach about 450°

- Nasa had earlier launched Mariner 10 in 1973 and Messenger in 2004 to explore Mercury.

### Related Information

- The spacecraft basically consists of four components
  - Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO), ESA-developed spacecraft tasked to study the planet's surface and internal composition.
  - Japan's Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO), which will provide data on Mercury's magnetosphere.
  - Mercury Transfer Module or bus that will provide solar-electric propulsion on the trajectory to Mercury; and the MMO sunshield.
- After reaching the Mercury orbit in 2025, the MIO and MPO orbiters will get separated and observe Mercury in collaboration for one year, with a possible one-year extension.

### About Mercury

- Mercury is the smallest and innermost planet in the Solar System.
- Its orbital period around the Sun of 87.97 days is the shortest of all the planets in the Solar System.
- It contains trace amounts of argon, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, water vapor, xenon, krypton, and neon.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

#### Source- The Hindu

6. **Shahi litchi of North Bihar gets GI tag**
  - The famous Shahi litchi of North Bihar has got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
  - It is the fourth product from the state after Jardalu mango, Katarni rice and Magahi paan to have got the GI tag.
  - Shahi Litchi is mainly cultivated in Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Vaishali, East Champaran, and Begusarai and some parts of adjoining areas in agro-climatic areas of the state.

### Related Information

- GI is a name or sign used on products to certify that they possess certain qualities for being made or produced as per traditional methods or enjoy a certain reputation due to its geographical origin.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

#### Source-PIB

7. **LPG set to make Kerala the first smoke-free State**
  - Kerala is now set to become the first smoke-free State in the country.
  - Kerala is one of the States with the highest penetration of LPG, which help in transforming their lifestyles.
  - Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana initiated by the Ministry of Petroleum aimed at providing 50 million free LPG connections to women in poor households.
  - It will reduce the Carbon footprint in the environment which is the biggest threat of global warming.

### Related Information

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### About LPG

- Liquefied petroleum gas or liquid petroleum gas are flammable mixtures of hydrocarbon gases.
- It is used as fuel in heating appliances, cooking equipment, and vehicles.
- LPG is prepared by refining petroleum or "wet" natural gas and is almost entirely derived from fossil fuel sources.
- It is being manufactured during the refining of petroleum (crude oil) or extracted from petroleum or natural gas streams as they emerge from the ground.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Social Issues

#### Source-PIB

8. **Bitcoin ATM: India's first bitcoin kiosk launched in Bangalore**

- Bitcoin, the most popular cryptocurrency, has got its first ATM in India amid the repetitive warnings from the Reserve Bank of India and Finance Minister with regard to its validity in the country.
- The first of its kind Kiosk Bitcoin ATM was provided by Unocoin, a blockchain solution provider.
- According to Unocoin, users can withdraw Indian rupee obtained on selling the cryptocurrencies on its platform.

**Related Information**

**Bitcoin**

- Bitcoin is not a legal tender in India and it will further caution investors who have been putting their money as it is not regulated by any governing body.
- Bitcoin is a cryptocurrency, a form of electronic cash.
- It is a decentralized digital currency without a central bank or single administrator that can be sent from user-to-user on the peer-to-peer Bitcoin network without the need for intermediaries.
- Transactions are verified by network nodes through cryptography and recorded in a public distributed ledger called a blockchain.
- Bitcoin was invented by an unknown person or group of people using the name Satoshi Nakamoto and released as open-source software in 2009.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Economics development**

**Source- Economics times**

**20.10.2018**

1. **Dharma Guardian- 2018 - Indo-Japan Joint Exercise**

- It is the first ever joint military exercise involving the Indian Army and Japan Ground Self Defence Force at Counter Insurgency Warfare School, Vairengte, India.
- It will help to promote Military cooperation between India and Japan.

- Exercise 'DHARMA GUARDIAN-2018 will contribute immensely in developing mutual understanding and respect for each other's militaries.
- It has also facilitated tracking the worldwide phenomenon of terrorism.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

**Source- PIB**

2. **Climate change kills 98% insects in Puerto Rico's rainforest: study**

- A recent study reveals that Climate change is massively affecting the tiny creatures in Luquillo rainforest on the island of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean region.
- The number of Yellow chinned Anole lizards, which are commonly found in the area has been a decreased by 25 per cent.
- The research has been published in the journal 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences'.
- The researchers landed at this number after noticing the number of insects in the sticky traps they put up under forest's canopy between 1976-77 and 2012-13.
- When scientists recovered samples from the forest floor they observed that insects had decreased by four to eight times within this period.
- They used a measurement of insect biomass in milligrams to estimate the change in number of these organisms.
- Earlier, studies had predicted a 20 per cent decrease in insects owing to climate change.
- The current study shows a parallel decrease in the number of animals that feed on insects like lizards, frogs and birds.
- The number of Yellow chinned Anole lizards, which are commonly found in the area, had decreased by 25 per cent and the green-coloured Emerald Anole lizard had reduced by 91 per cent.

**Related Information**

- The study also finds that the rainforest's temperature has increased by 2 degree Celsius in the past 30 years which is a consequence of global warming.

- This has negatively impacted the forest's food web, which results from a complex interaction of different species of plants and animals in an ecosystem to fulfill their nutritional requirements.
- The IPCC latest special report has also warned that tropical rainforests like the Amazon will lose a significant amount of biomass (trees, shrubs and grasses) if the planet warms by 1.5-2 degrees Celsius.
- Scientists have also predicted that increasing temperatures will decrease reproduction rates of insects and also increase the rate at which they digest their food.
- These impacts might have led to the catastrophic decrease in insect population in the Luquillo forest of Puerto Rico.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity**

#### **Source- Down to Earth**

3. **Stephen Hawking's Final Book "Brief Answers To The Big Questions" Launched**
- Stephen Hawking final book 'Brief Answers To The Big Questions' help to tackle big questions about the universe, delving into physics, cosmology, the existence of God and the future direction of humanity.

#### **Related Information**

- Stephen William Hawking was an English theoretical physicist, cosmologist, and author.
- He was the director of research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology at the University of Cambridge at the time of his death.
- Stephen Hawking scientific works included collaboration with Roger Penrose on gravitational singularity theorems in the framework of general relativity.
- Hawking was the first to set out a theory of cosmology explained by a union of the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics.
- He was suffering from Motor neurone disease which caused the death of Stephen William Hawking.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important personalities**

#### **Source- Science**

4. **North Central Railways Launches Apps: 'NCR RASTA' and 'Yatri RASTA'**
- The North Central Railways launched two mobile apps, 'NCR RASTA' and 'Yatri RASTA', for its employees and passengers.
- "NCR RASTA (Railway assets Summerised Tracking Application) and Yatri RASTA (Railway Approach to Station Tracking Application) helps employees and passenger for locating assets and stations.
- The 'NCR RASTA' app is for the use of railway officers and staff and has exact mapping of all railway assets.
- It will enable railway staff to reach desired asset using Google Navigation in case of any emergency.
- 'Yatri RASTA' app will allow general public to locate the railway stations easily.
- It is already available for smart phones running on Android.
- It can be downloaded free of cost from Google Play Store.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- PIB**

5. **4th annual Carnot Prize to Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal**
- The Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Design is awarding its fourth annual Carnot Prize.
- Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways & Coal and former Minister of Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines, Government of India got this prestigious prize.
- The Carnot Prize is the Kleinman Center's annual recognition of distinguished contributions to energy policy through scholarship or practice.
- This award is the most prestigious award in the energy sector.

### Related Information

- The 2018 Carnot Prize is recognition of India's efforts under Prime Minister for the mission of '24x7 Affordable, Environment Friendly Power for all.
- India promised of massive thrust to green energy is reflected in India's 175 GW target by 2022, being the world's largest renewable expansion programmed with 72 GW already achieved.
- Government's UJALA scheme the world's largest LED distribution programme, and along with private sector participation, 130 crore LED bulbs have been distributed help in making India brighter and cleaner.

### About Carnot Prize

- Carnot Prize is named after French physicist Nicolas Sadi Carnot who recognised that the power of the steam engine would "produce a great revolution" in human development.
- The Carnot Prize is intended to honour those leading revolutions in energy policy to further progress and prosperity.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important National Institution

#### Source- PIB

6. **NITI Aayog's New Proposal for Fasal Bima Yojana Scheme**
  - NITI Aayog has recently announced a cash back proposal for Fasal Bima Yojana scheme.
  - NITI Aayog has proposed that 75% of the premium paid by farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) will be returned to them if they don't file claims for crop damages for four-six consecutive agricultural seasons.
  - It would help to attract more farmers into the insurance fold.
  - Presently just 29% of the 12 crore farmers/cultivators in the country are covered under the crop insurance scheme.

### Related Information

- The government estimated Rs 10,000 crore lying with insurers over the last two kharif seasons as an undue benefit accruing to the insurers at the cost of the farmer.

- It is because the agriculture is a high-risk activity given so much of it rain-dependent.
- This risk will increasingly get worse with climate change impact worsening.
- Those farmers who are receiving the payments against their claim with a significant lag, and given agri-households' dependence on harvest incomes, such lags could actually be eroding farmers' trust in the scheme.
- The farmer pay only just a fifth of the premium and the center pay the rest but delay on the part of state in paying their share of the premium is the main problem.
- The Centre's steps to improve compliance by insurers and close-fisted state government's farmers need to be paid 12% interest by insurance companies for any delay in settlement of claims beyond two months of the prescribed cut-off date.
- States will have to pay 12% interest for the delay in release of their share of premium beyond three months

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Social Policy

#### Source- Times of India

7. **NCW Launches E-mail ID for Sexual Harassment at Workplace Cases**
  - The National Commission for Women has come out with a dedicated e-mail address.
  - It will help to report instances of sexual harassment at workplace after several such complaints were made to the body by women under the #Metoo movement on social media.
  - Those women who have come forward on social media and other platforms about their alleged harassers to send their formal written complaints to [metoo@gmail.com](mailto:metoo@gmail.com).
  - This e-mail id has been launched when NCW received numerous formal written complaints from various women about instances of sexual harassment at their workplace.

- The National Commission for Women follows a zero tolerance of sexual harassment of women at all workplaces and the Commission is committed to ensure safety and dignity of women including at all workplaces.

### Related information

#### About NCW

- The National Commission for Women is a statutory body of the Government of India.
- It is generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women.
- It was established in January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Women Empowerment

#### Source- The Hindu

8. **PM chaired the sixth meeting of National Disaster Management Authority**
  - Prime Minister chaired the sixth meeting of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in New Delhi.
  - The Prime Minister emphasized the need for better coordination between the various stakeholders and undertakes more joint exercises to bring about the effective response to save life and property.
  - Pm also reviewed the activities of the NDMA to effectively manage and respond to disasters affecting the country.

### Related Information

#### About NDMA

- National Disaster Management Authority is an agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- NDMA was established through the Disaster Management Act enacted by the Government of India in 2005.
- The Prime Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of the NDMA.

- NDMA primary purpose is to coordinate response to natural or man-made disasters and for capacity-building in disaster resiliency and crisis response.
- The agency is responsible for framing policies, laying down guidelines and best-practices and coordinating with the State Disaster Management Authorities to ensure a holistic and distributed approach to disaster management.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management

#### Source- AIR

**22.10.2018**

1. **India, Japan, and the U.S. plan joint air exercise: Cope India**
  - India, Japan, and the U.S. are set to elevate the bilateral 'Cope India' air exercise to a trilateral format.
  - The three countries already conduct naval war games under the expanded Malabar naval exercise.
  - Japan will send observers for the next round of Cope India exercises between India and U.S. to be hosted by the Indian Air Force.

### Related Information

- Cope India was first conducted in Gwalior 2004 and has grown in scope with the involvement of fighter aircraft and force multipliers such as the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS).
- The level of interoperability in the exercises has both bilateral and trilateral is expected to go up with India recently signing the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) with the U.S.
- This elevation of the air exercise is similar to the Malabar naval exercise.
- Malabar began in 1992 as a bilateral naval exercise between India and the U.S.

### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence

#### Source- The Hindu



2. **12th ADMM and the 5th ADMM-Plus- hosted by Singapore.**

- 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the 5th ADMM-Plus, which is being hosted by Singapore.
- Defence Ministers from ASEAN countries and that of Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and the US had participated in ADMM.

**Related Information**

- The ADMM and ADMM-Plus serve as key Ministerial-level platforms in the regional security architecture, promoting strategic dialogue and practical cooperation between ASEAN and its partners.
- It will help India and Singapore to extend their already comprehensive bilateral defence collaboration.
- In this summit, India and Singapore have signed a new agreement which will enhance the Army-to-Army collaboration as well as bilateral hosting of logistics and furthering supports for exchange visits by of naval vessels of the two countries.
- India and Singapore will also be celebrating 25 years of SINBEX which is an annual naval exercise programme in the Bay of Bengal in the coming weeks.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – International Relation**

**Source- Business Standard**

3. **China-Backed Hydro Dam in Indonesia Threatens World's Rarest Orangutan**

- Hydroelectric dam development in Indonesia which will supply peak-load electricity to North Sumatra province has threatened the habitat of the world's rarest great ape.
- The site of the dam in the Batang Toru rainforest on Sumatra Island is the only known habitat of the Tapanuli orangutan.

**Related Information  
Orangutan**

- The orangutans are three extant species of great apes native to Indonesia and Malaysia.
- Three Extant species are-  
(a) Bornean orangutan  
(b) Sumatran orangutan  
(c) Tapanuli orangutan
- Orangutans currently inhabit lowland forests on Borneo, an island shared by Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, and Indonesia's island of Sumatra.
- They are listed as Critically Endangered on The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity**

**Source- NDTV news**

4. **Saffron Marigold is the color of sacrifice**

- The ubiquitous marigold will be the symbol of India's sacrifices when the world marks the centenary of the end of the First World War on November 11.
- The marigold was chosen because it is easily and widely available and also because saffron is often seen as a colour of sacrifice.

**Related Information**

- The First World War ended with the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918.
- The marigold has also been used across the UK, along with the poppy, as part of community engagement projects that seek to highlight India's contribution in the First World War.
- In India, the India Gate was built as the focal point to the Remembrance with the names of over 72,000 soldiers inscribed over it.
- 'India Remembers' project initiated by the USI ( United Service Institution of India) proposed that the marigold flower join the poppy as a uniquely Indian symbol of remembrance.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Symbol**

**Source- The Hindu**

5. **C-FLOWS - NCCR develops a system to estimate, predict flooding within Chennai**

- The C-FLOWS system which stands for Chennai FLOOD Warning System has been developed by the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai, and IITs.
- It is a flood warning system customized for use in Chennai
- The system has a six-module ensemble which can predict flooding due to heavy rainfall, sea-level rise and increase in water levels of the three rivers, Cooum, Adyar and Kosasthalaiyar that traverse the city.

#### **Related Information**

- It is developed after the unprecedented and sudden floods in 2015 paralyzed Chennai with over 18 lakh people being displaced.
- This C-Flows system used data about ward boundaries, population details, and infrastructure available across Tamil Nadu.
- The topography data was obtained from the Indian Remote Sensing programmed.
- The system will provide the prediction for rain 10 days in advance by taking inputs from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on the forecast and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF).

#### **Convergence**

- Data from IMD, NCMRWF, INCOIS and Tamil Nadu State government are brought together in an online hub along with the field data and the remote sensing data to observe the situation in real time.
- C-FLOWS will be integrated with TN-SMART, a portal being developed by his department.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

6. **Climate fund approves 1Billion \$ for projects in poor countries**
  - More than 1 billion dollars for 19 new projects has approved by an UN-backed fund to help developing countries tackle climate change.
  - The funding was approved at the meeting in Manama includes projects linked to geothermal energy in Indonesia, greener cities in Europe

and West Asia, and protection for coastal communities in India.

- The fund considered a key vehicle for climate-related development programs, was originally meant to receive over 10 billion dollars from rich countries by 2018.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**

- It is a fund within the framework of UNFCCC.
- It was set up by the 194 countries who are parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2010.
- It is founded to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change.
- World Bank is chosen as a temporary trustee of the fund.
- It is headquartered in Incheon, South Korea.
- It is intended to be the centerpiece of efforts to raise Climate Finance of \$100 billion a year by 2020.

##### **GEF (Global Environment Facility)**

- The Global Environment Facility was established in October 1991 as a \$1 billion pilot program in the World Bank to assist in the protection of the global environment and to promote environmentally sustainable development.
- In 1992, at the Rio Earth Summit, the GEF was restructured and moved out of the World Bank system to become a permanent, separate institution.
- Since 1994, however, the World Bank has served as the Trustee of the GEF Trust Fund and provided administrative services.
- Currently, the GEF is the largest public funder of projects to improve the global environment.
- The GEF also serves as the financial mechanism for the following conventions:
  - (a) CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
  - (b) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
  - (c) UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

(d) Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)  
(e) Minamata Convention on Mercury

- **At its 51st meeting in October 2016, the GEF Council initiate discussions on the seventh replenishment of resources of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-7).**

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

**Source- AIR**

7. **India to Host 4th Edition of Global Partners' Forum 2018**

- India will play host to the largest-ever Partners' Forum in New Delhi.
- This unique forum aims to unite PMNCH's 1,000+ partners around common strategies so that every woman, child and adolescent health covers under it.
- The forum will be co-hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and PMNCH.
- The focus of the forum will be to share stories of how countries are successfully collaborating across sectors and stakeholders to fast-track improvements in health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents.

**Related Information**

- PMNCH (The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health) will bring together 1,200 partners from over 100 countries dedicated to the Every Woman Every Child (EWEC) movement.
- This prestigious global Partners' Forum will help to enhance country-level action on Sustainable Development Goals 2030.
- India's mission of Inrdadhanush chosen as the success story on this forum which is an unprecedented collaboration between India's Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and 11 other ministries to increase immunization coverage among children and pregnant women to 90% by 2020.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Health and Policies**

**Source- The Hindu**

8. **27th fusion energy conference 2018.**

- The 27th Fusion Energy Conference started in Gandhinagar Gujarat.
- It is organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and hosted by the Department of Atomic Energy and Gandhinagar-based Institute of Plasma Research.
- The FEC 2018 aims to provide a forum for the discussion of key physics and technology issues as well as innovative concepts of direct relevance to the use of nuclear fusion as a source of energy.

**Related Information**

**International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an international organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.
- It also helped to inhibit nuclear energy for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons.
- IAEA has established independently of the United Nations through its own international treaty, the IAEA Statute.
- The IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.
- The IAEA has its headquarters in Vienna, Austria.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence**

**Source- Business Standard**

9. **Four Himalayan peaks named after former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee**

- The four peaks are located near Sudarshan and Saifi peaks in Raktvan valley on the right flank of the Gangotri glacier of Uttarkashi district.
- It has been named Atal 1, Atal 2, Atal 3 and Atal 4.
- The peaks are located at 6,557m, 6,566m, 6,160m and 6,100m on the right flank of Gangotri glacier.
- The team, which returned after the climb, had hoisted the national tricolor on each of the peaks.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

**Source- TOI**

**23.10.2018**

1. **"Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali."**
  - Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign launched by Ministry of Environment.
  - In this campaign, the children were advised to celebrate Diwali in an environment-friendly manner by gifting plant sapling to their relatives and friends along with sweets.
  - The Ministry has initiated a similar campaign, but this year the campaign has been extended Pan-India.
  - The "Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali" campaign is now merged with "Green Good Deed" movement that has been initiated as a social mobilization for conservation and protection of the environment.

#### **Related Information**

- Air pollution is a serious health issue in the country especially in the northern parts during winter seasons.
- The air pollution in the northern region is attributed to dust, burning of crops in certain states, burning of garbage construction and prevailing climatic conditions.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

##### **Source-PIB**

2. **Insolvency Law Committee submits its 2nd Report on Cross-Border Insolvency**
  - The Insolvency Law Committee (ILC) constituted by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs to recommend amendments to Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India, 2016.
  - The committee has submitted its 2nd Report to the Government, which deals with cross-border insolvency.

#### **Recommendation of the report**

- The ILC has recommended the adoption of the UNCITRAL Model Law of Cross-Border Insolvency, 1997.
- It will provide a comprehensive framework to deal with cross-border insolvency issues.

#### **UNCITRAL Model Law**

- The UNCITRAL Model Law has been adopted in as many as 44 countries which is a part of international best practices in dealing with cross-border insolvency issues.

- The advantages of the model law are the precedence given to domestic proceedings and protection of public interest.
- The other advantages include greater confidence generation among foreign investors, adequate flexibility for seamless integration with the domestic Insolvency Law and a robust mechanism for international cooperation.

#### **The Model law has for major principles of cross-border insolvency**

- Direct access to foreign insolvency professionals and foreign creditors to participate in or commence domestic insolvency proceedings against a defaulting debtor;
- Recognition of foreign proceedings & provision of remedies;
- Cooperation between domestic and foreign courts & domestic and foreign insolvency practitioners; and
- Coordination between two or more concurrent insolvency proceedings in different countries.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–International Security**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

3. **Women of India Organic Festival to be held at New Delhi**
  - The Ministry of Women and Child Development is organizing the 5th edition of the Women of India Organic Festival at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts New Delhi.
  - It has aimed to boost organic culture and promote Women Organic Farmers and Entrepreneurs.
  - This type of festival will provide a platform to empower women farmers and entrepreneurs in a festive and fruitful manner for the past 4 years.
  - This festival will help to boost rural women's local communities and their economy by creating jobs and keeping farmers thriving in addition to spreading awareness about the benefits of organic products.

Note: Sikkim has become India's first organic state of India.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 2–Women Empowerment** **Source- AIR**

4. **Tea Board of India plan to launches app: Chai Sahay (tea help)**

- Tea Board of India is planning to launch an app called 'Chai Sahay'.
- This app will help to guide small grower which would increase the total production of tea.
- The main objective is to establish better two-way communication.

**About the app**

- The mobile platform would have user-interface facilities with the targeted user groups (the small tea grower) and the various officials.
- The existing database of the STGs (small tea grower) would be incorporated in the app which would also give information on their registration process.
- It would help in tackling real-time farm-issues such as pest identification by taking the picture of a new pest and post it for identification and tackling methods.

**Tea Board of India**

- The Tea Board of India is a state agency of the Government of India established to promote the cultivation, processing, and domestic trade as well as export of tea from India.
- It was established by the enactment of the Tea Act in 1953 with its headquarters in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta).
- The Tea Board India is responsible for the assignment of certification numbers to exports of certain tea merchants
- Tea Board of India's Head Office at Kolkata

**Topic- GS Paper 2-Important Institute**

**Source- Indian Express**

5. **India, Myanmar sign MoU on operationalisation of Sittwe Port**

- India and Myanmar signed the MoU for the appointment of a private Port Operator for the operation and maintenance of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal.

- These associated facilities are the part of the Kaladan Multi-Model Transit Transport Project.
- It will boost connectivity and help in creating local job opportunities and also help to develop a common interest, including developments in the strife-torn Rakhine state.
- The Sittwe port in Myanmar will connect India's landlocked north-east region to the Bay of Bengal through Mizoram.
- It will also provide an alternate route to Kolkata.

**Related Information**

- This MoU help India in the implementation of India's Act East Policy.
- Myanmar is one of India's strategic neighbors and shares a 1,640-km-long border with a number of northeastern states including militancy-hit Nagaland and Manipur.
- It will also help to enhance Myanmar's connectivity including with India and add to the development of the whole region, particularly in the Rakhine and Chin States of Myanmar.

**Kaladan Multi Transit Transport project**

- The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea.
- In Myanmar, it will then link Sittwe seaport to Paletwa, Chin State via the Kaladan river boat route, and then from Paletwa by road to Mizoram state in Northeast India.

**Topic-GS Paper 2-International relation**

**Source- Indian Express**

6. **Cockroaches of the ocean' are eating away California's underwater forests**

- The purple urchin is mowing down kelp forests that are crucial as a critical habitat and a source of food for a wide range of species.
- The underwater forests have huge, sprawling tangles of brown seaweed.
- These are in many ways just as important to the oceans as trees are to the land because they absorb carbon emissions.

- These forests also provide critical habitat and food for a wide range of species.
- The climate change helped trigger a 60-fold explosion of purple urchins off Northern California's coast which result the urchins went on a feeding frenzy and the kelp was devoured.

### **Related Information**

#### **About Kelp Forest**

- Kelp forests are underwater areas with a high density of kelp.
- They are recognized as one of the most productive and dynamic ecosystems on Earth.
- Kelp forests occur worldwide throughout temperate and polar coastal oceans.
- Kelp forests were also discovered in tropical waters near Ecuador.
- Kelp forests can influence coastal oceanographic patterns and provide many ecosystem services.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3- Biodiversity**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

7. **China: 'Artificial Moon'**
  - Chinese planned to launch an "artificial moon" over the city of Chengdu, in Sichuan province, by 2020.
  - The objective is to provide an alternative means of street lighting and save on electricity.
  - The artificial moon would be a mirror orbiting Chengdu at a height of 500 km.
  - It would reflect the sun's light at night, and supplement street lighting in Chengdu, which has a population of 1.6 million.
  - The artificial moon's brightness will be around eight times that of the moon.

#### **The challenges**

- At an altitude as low as 500 km, and considering a diameter small enough to be economically viable, accuracy is key.
- Missing the angle of reflection by even a few degrees would miss Chengdu by miles.

- It has the error of say 10 km, even if you miss by one 100th of a degree you'll have the light pointing at another place.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 - Science and Technology**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

**24.10.2018**

#### **1. PM Modi awarded 2018 Seoul Peace Prize.**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been awarded the Seoul Peace Prize 2018.
- According to The Seoul Peace Prize Committee, Prime Minister got this award for following contribution which will help to further democracy in India.
- PM Modi's contributions to the growth of the Indian and global economies, crediting 'Modinomics' for reducing the social and economic disparity between the rich and the poor.
- His initiatives to make the government cleaner through anti-corruption measures and demonetization.
- Prime Minister for his contribution towards regional and global peace through a proactive foreign policy with countries around the world under the 'Modi Doctrine' and the 'Act East Policy'.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Seoul Peace Prize**

- The Seoul Peace Prize was established in 1990 to commemorate the success of the 24th Olympic Games held in Seoul, Republic of Korea.
- The Seoul Peace Prize was established to crystallize the Korean people's yearning for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in the rest of the world.
- The prize has been awarded to those who have made their mark through contributions to the harmony of mankind, reconciliation between nations and to world peace.

**Note:**

- PM Modi had also received the United Nation's highest environmental honor, the 'Champions of the Earth Award' from United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.
- He got this awards for his "unprecedented pledge to eliminate all single-use plastic in India by 2022.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Institution**

**Source-PIB**

2. **57 years after liberation, Goa gets the English translation of Portuguese civil code, 1867**

- The English translation of the Portuguese civil code, 1867, followed in Goa, is now available at the Official Gazette.
- The official gazette has published online the translated version of the code, following the March 2017 order of the Bombay High Court.

**What was the concern?**

- Goa attained liberation from the Portuguese around 57 years ago but retained the Portuguese civil code, 1867.
- Due to its Portuguese civil code, 1867, Goa became the only state in the country to have a uniform civil code wherein laws on marriage, divorce, and succession of people of all religions in the state are practiced on the same benchmarks, ensuring social order.
- The lawyers who had practiced law before the Goan courts prior to Independence continued to cite the Portuguese civil code translated and interpreted by themselves which often created confusion in courts.
- The council and judges in court were not fluent in the language themselves and had to rely on the lawyers' versions of the code.

**Related Information**

- According to Article 348, "Language to be used in the Supreme Court and in the High Courts and for Acts, Bills, etc shall be in the English language."

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

**Source- Indian Express**

3. **Injectable gel may deliver islet cells for type 1 diabetes: study**

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati have developed an injectable gel using silk proteins to deliver insulin-producing cells needed to address type1 diabetes.
- Previous studies had suggested hydrogels have potential to deliver islets as they contain high water content and mimic hydrophilic content of extracellular matrix.
- It was not permissible because the use of harsh chemicals in making gels makes them unsuitable to deliver cells or bioactive molecules.
- To address this problem, researchers used a mixture of two silk proteins (mulberry Bombyxmori and non-mulberry Antheraeaassama) which leads to self-gelation. Insulin-producing islet cells were harvested from rats and encapsulated in the hydrogel.
- The hydrogel was loaded with immunosuppressive drugs to prevent immune rejection.
- It was then injected under the skin of rats.

**Related Information**

**Islets Cells**

- Islets in the pancreas are surrounded by the extracellular matrix which provides structural and biochemical support to cells.
- The components of this matrix bind to transmembrane proteins on the islet surface to facilitate cell to cell connection, proliferation and insulin secretion.

**Type1 diabetes**

- Diabetes mellitus type 1, also known as type 1 diabetes is a form of diabetes mellitus in which very little or no insulin is produced by the pancreas.
- The classic symptoms are frequent urination, increased thirst, increased hunger, and weight loss.

- It also shows other symptoms which may include blurry vision, feeling tired and poor healing.

### **Topic- GS Paper – Science and Technology**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

4. **3rd Decadal International year of Reefs-2018**
  - The International Conference on Status and Protection of Coral Reefs (STAPCOR – 2018) was inaugurated by the Ministry of Environment at Bangaram Island.
  - The Theme of this international conference is '**Reef for Life**'.
  - Lakshadweep will establish an International Atoll Research Centre, with world class infrastructures for scientific research on corals.

#### **Related Information**

#### **Status and Protection of Coral Reefs (STAPCOR)**

- STAPCOR has been formed to study the effect of climate change and global warming along with Elnino on the corals lead to heavy bleaching internationally during the year 1998.
- This international conference held in every 10 years to review the status and progress of coral reefs all over the world.

#### **Coral Reefs**

- A coral reef is an underwater ecosystem characterized by reef-building corals.
- Reefs are formed of colonies of coral polyps held together by calcium carbonate.
- Most coral reefs are built from stony corals, whose polyps cluster in groups.

#### **Types of Coral Reef Formations**

- **Fringing reefs**
  - (a) They grow near the coastline around islands and continents.
  - (b) They are separated from the shore by narrow, shallow lagoons.
  - (c) Fringing reefs are the most common type of reef.
- **Barrier reefs**
  - (a) These are parallel to the coastline but are separated by deeper, wider lagoons.

- (b) At their shallowest point, they can reach the water's surface forming a "barrier" to navigation.
- (c) The Great Barrier Reef in Australia is the largest and most famous barrier reef in the world.

- **Atolls**

- (a) These are rings of coral that create protected lagoons and are usually located in the middle of the sea.
- (b) Atolls usually form when islands surrounded by fringing reefs sink into the sea or the sea level rises around them (these islands are often the tops of underwater volcanoes).

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

5. **"Invest India" wins top UN award for promoting renewable energy investment**

- Invest India has received the top UN Investment Promotion Award in recognition of its efforts to boost investments in the renewable energy sector in India.
- The award was presented in Geneva at the inaugurations of the World Investment Forum organized by the UN Convention on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- The Invest India received this award for its "excellence in servicing and supporting a major global wind turbines company in the establishment of a blade manufacturing plant in India while committing to train local staff and produce 1 gigawatt of renewable energy.
- Implementation of the project is expected to reduce India's wind energy cost significantly"

#### **Related Information**

##### **Invest India**

- Invest India is set up as a non-profit venture under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.



- Invest India focuses on sector-specific investor targeting and development of new partnerships to enable sustainable investments in India

#### **About the Award**

- The awards recognize "the excellence in boosting investment into sectors that will have social and economic benefits and help countries meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### **UNCTAD**

- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established in 1964 as a permanent intergovernmental body.
- UNCTAD is the part of the United Nations Secretariat dealing with trade, investment, and development issues.
- The organization's goals are to: "maximize the trade, investment, and development opportunities of developing countries and assist them in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis.
- UNCTAD was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964 and it reports to the UN General Assembly and the United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- The permanent secretariat of UNCTAD is in Geneva.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Institution**

##### **Source- Economics times**

#### **6. Prison Reform**

- Supreme Court formed a committee on prison reforms headed by former Supreme Court judge, Justice Amitava Roy.
- The Committee looks into the entire gamut of reforms to the prison system which is more than a century-old system of prisons in India.
- The other committee being the Justice A.N. Mulla committee and the Justice Krishna Iyer committee on women prisoners (both in the 1980s).

#### **Topic-GS Paper 2 – Social Empowerment**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **7. Joint Military Exercise "Druzbha-III" start between Russia and Pakistan**

- It is the third edition of a joint bilateral military training exercise between Pakistan and Russia.
- The two armies will be holding joint military drills in the mountains of northwestern Pakistan.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–International Relation Source- Times of India**

#### **8. India's coastal communities to get USD 43 million to boost climate resilience**

- An UN-backed fund has approved USD 43.4 million for enhancing climate resilience for millions of people living in India's coastal communities in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha as part of its efforts to combat extreme impacts of climate change.
- The grant is a part of more than USD 1 billion approved by the Green Climate Fund for 19 new projects to help developing countries tackle climate change.
- The new project will be supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- This is an essential step for India in reaching its goals outlined in the Paris Agreement and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The 21st meeting of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Board in Bahrain's capital Manama, approved over one billion dollars of new projects and programmes to support climate action in developing countries.

#### **Related Information**

- The project is focused on providing tangible benefits for women, female-headed households, young people and the elderly, and members of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.
- It also contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals for gender equality and reduced inequalities.
- India's coastal areas are quite vulnerable to climate change and this project focuses on selected vulnerable areas of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha states.

- The Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea are both predicted to be subject to extreme climate variability, with the frequency and intensity of cyclones and extreme weather.
- The Government of India will finance an additional USD 86.8 million toward the new project to mainstream and accelerate the impacts of the Green Climate Fund grant.
- To protect life on land and below water as outlined in the 2030 Agenda.
- These project activities will focus on the restoration and conservation of over 15,000 hectares of mangroves, coral reefs, seagrasses, and saltmarshes.
- This multi-dimensional project will contribute to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - over 3.5 million tones of CO<sub>2</sub> will be absorbed through restored ecosystems.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **8. China unveiled the world's longest sea-crossing bridge linking Hong Kong - Macau -Zhuhai**

- The bridge connects Hong Kong to Macau and the mainland Chinese city of Zhuhai.
- About 30km of its total length crosses the sea of the Pearl River delta.
- The bridge, designed to withstand earthquakes and typhoons, was built using 400,000 tonnes of steel, enough to build 60 Eiffel Towers.

#### **Topic-Important Facts for Prelims**

##### **Source- AIR**

**25.10.2018**

1. **Scientists develop cell-sized robots to help detect diseases**
  - Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientists have developed a method to mass produce robots no bigger than a cell.
  - These small robots could be used to monitor conditions inside an oil or gas pipeline or to search out disease while floating through the bloodstream.

- The key to making such tiny devices which are also called "syncells" (short for synthetic cells) help in large quantities lies in controlling the natural fracturing process of atomically-thin and brittle materials.
- The process, called "auto perforation," directs the fracture lines so that they produce minuscule pockets of a predictable size and shape.

#### **Related Information**

- These robots are embedded inside minuscule pockets which are electronic circuits help to collect, record, and output data.
- This system uses a two-dimensional form of carbon called graphene, which forms the outer structure of the tiny syncells.
- They are ranging in size from that of a human red blood cell about 10 micrometers across.
- These tiny objects behave like a living biological cell.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology**

##### **Source- DD News**

2. **Adjudicating Authority and establishment of Appellate Tribunal under Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988**
  - The Union Cabinet has approved the appointment of Adjudicating Authority and establishment of Appellate Tribunal under Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act (PBPT), 1988.

#### **Salient Features:**

- Appointment of an Adjudicating Authority, along with the three additional Benches and to establish the Appellate Tribunal under the PBPT Act.
- To provide the officers and employees to Adjudicating Authority, Benches of the Adjudicating Authority and Appellate Tribunal by diverting the existing posts at the same level/rank from the Income Tax Deptt/Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).
- The Adjudicating Authority and Appellate Tribunal shall sit in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD).

- Benches of Adjudicating Authority may sit in Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai.

**Benefits:**

- It will result in effective and better administration of cases referred to the Adjudicating Authority and speedy disposal of appeals filed against the order of the Adjudicating Authority before the Appellate Tribunal.
- Appointment of the Adjudicating Authority would provide first stage review of administrative action under the PBPT Act.
- Establishment of the proposed Appellate Tribunal would provide an appellate mechanism for the order passed by the Adjudicating Authority under the PBPT Act.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Policies**

**Source- Indian Express**

3. **Cabinet approves Scheme for setting up of Indian Institute of Skills**

- The Union Cabinet has approved for setting up of Indian Institute of Skills at different locations across the country in **Public Private Partnership**.
- It will be explored for the promotion of IIS at selected locations based on demand and available infrastructure.

**Benefits**

- It will provide the opportunity to aspiring youth across the country to have access to highly skilled training.
- It will also enhance the scope of accountability through its linkage with industry and global competitiveness across sectors.

**Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

**Source- Economics times**

4. **PM Modi to launch 'Main Nahin Hum' portal for IT professionals**

- 'Main Nahin Hum' portal and mobile application launched by PM which will enable IT professionals and organizations to bring together their efforts towards social causes on one platform.
- The portal, which works on the theme 'Self4Society'.

- The portal is expected to help catalyze greater collaboration towards the service of the weaker sections of society, especially by leveraging the benefits of technology.
- It is also expected to generate wider participation of interested people who are motivated to work for the benefit of society.

**Topic- GS Paper 2- Governance**

**Source-PIB**

5. **Sexual harassment at the workplace: Govt constitutes GoM to improve frameworks**

- The Government constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) to examine the existing legal and institutional frameworks for dealing with matters of sexual harassment of women at the workplace.
- The GoM will have a three-month time frame to come up with recommendations for ensuring "effective implementation of the existing provisions, as well as for strengthening" the existing frameworks.
- The Group of Ministers will be chaired by the Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh. Its Members are:  
(a) Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways  
(b) Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister, Ministry of Defence  
(c) Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Minister, Ministry of Women & Child Development

**Related Information**

- The Ministry of Women & Child Development has also launched Electronic Complaints (SHe- Box) that enables women, irrespective of their work status, to raise their voice against sexual harassment at workplace.
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act is the key legislation for preventing and protecting women against sexual harassment in the workplace and to ensure effective redressal of complaints of sexual harassment.

## Topic-GS Paper 2 – Women Empowerment

### Source-PIB

#### 6. Kittur Utsav

- Kittur Utsav is an annual celebration is organized by the Department of Kannada and Culture in Karnataka.
- It is celebrated in the historic city of Kittur to commemorate the heroic battle of Queen Chennamma against the British in 1824.

### Related Information

- Kittur is a taluka in the Belgaum district of the South Indian state of Karnataka.
- It is a place of historical importance because of the armed rebellion of Kittur Chennamma (1778–1829).
- In this battle Raja of the State of Kittur fight against the British East India Company, during which a British Commissioner St John Thackeray was killed.

## Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

### Source- The Hindu

#### 7. SC bans sale and registration of BS-IV vehicles after 2020

- The Supreme Court on ruled that BS-IV vehicles will not be sold after March 31, 2020, when the BS-VI norm for cleaner fuel comes into force.

### Related Information

#### Bharat stage emission standards

- Bharat stage emission standards (BSES) are emission standards instituted by the Government of India to regulate the output of air pollutants from internal combustion engines and Spark-ignition engines equipment, including motor vehicles.
- The standards and the timeline for implementation are set by the Central Pollution Control Board under the Ministry of Environment & Forests and climate change.
- The standards, based on European regulations were first introduced in 2000.
- Bharat Stage IV emission norms have been enforced for entire country since April 2017.
- In 2016, the Indian government announced that the country would

skip the BS-V norms altogether and adopt BS-VI norms by 2020.

### Decreasing order of gases in terms of percentage in greenhouse gas emissions

- CO<sub>2</sub> > CH<sub>4</sub> > N<sub>2</sub>O

### Decreasing order of countries in terms of greenhouse gas emissions

- China > US > EU > India > Russia

### What is new in BS VI norms?

- The amount of Sulphur in both petrol and diesel in BS-VI fuel is limited to a maximum of 10 parts per million (PPM), similar to that of its Euro counterpart.
- BS-VI fuel will **bring down sulphur by 5 times from the current BS-IV levels**—a whopping 80 percent the reduction and would make fuel extremely clean.
- It will also reduce the emission of nitrogen oxides (NOX).

## Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

### Source- Indian Express

#### 8. India, Iran, Afghanistan hold first trilateral on Chabahar port project

- India, Afghanistan, and Iran held their first trilateral meeting on the Chabahar port project during which they reviewed its implementation.
- In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan had signed a pact which entailed the establishment of a transit and transport corridor among the three countries using Chabahar Port as one of the regional hubs.

### Related Information

#### Chabahar Port

- Chabahar Port is a seaport located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman.
- It serves as Iran's only oceanic port and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti.
- The Port can be easily accessed from India's west coast, bypassing Pakistan.

#### Gwadar Port

- It is a warm-water, deep-sea port situated on the Arabian Sea at Gwadar in Balochistan province of Pakistan.

- The port features prominently in the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plan, and is considered to be a crucial link between the ambitious One Belt, One Road and Maritime Silk Road projects.

#### **Other Projects by India**

- Assumption Island- in Seychelles
- Agalega Islands- in Mauritius
- Port Duqm in Oman

#### **Topic-GS Paper 2–International Relation Source- The Hindu**

##### **9. Global Agriculture Leadership Summit 2018**

- The Global Agriculture Leadership Summit 2018 opened in New Delhi
- The theme of the summit is **Connecting Farmers to Market.**

#### **Related Information**

- Global Agriculture Leadership Summit is an annual event organized by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture.
- It will provide a platform to discuss the broad scenario and trends in the agriculture sector, trade, technology, investments.
- The summit aims to discuss the broad issues in agriculture and agribusiness, and measures to empower farmers and unleash the potential of India's agriculture.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Agriculture**

#### **Source- AIR**

**26.10.2018**

##### **1. Union HRD Minister launches the web portal: SPARC**

- The Minister of Human Resource Development launched the web portal of the Scheme "Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration".
- Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur is the National Coordinating Institute to implement the SPARC programme.
- Under this Scheme, 600 joint research proposals will be awarded for 2 years to facilitate strong research collaboration between Indian research groups with the best in class faculty and renowned research groups in the leading universities of the world.

- The researchers worked in areas that are at the cutting edge of science or with direct social relevance to mankind, specifically India.

#### **Related Information**

#### **Salient Features of SPARC**

- This scheme will improve the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- SPARC proposes to enable productive academic cooperation by supporting the following critical components that can catalyze impact making research:
  - i) Visits and long-term stay of top international faculty/researchers in Indian institutions to pursue teaching and research
  - ii) Visits by Indian students for training and experimentation in premier laboratories worldwide
  - iii) Joint development of niche courses, world-class books and monographs, translatable patents, demonstrable technologies or action-oriented research outcomes and products,
  - iv) Publication, Dissemination and Visibility through a high profile annual international conference in India.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source-PIB**

##### **2. Cabinet approves MoU among BRICS Nations on Environmental Cooperation**

- The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for Memorandum of Understanding signed among the BRICS Nations on Environmental Cooperation.
- The MoU was signed during the 10th BRICS Summit in July 2018 in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- The MoU identifies the following stress of cooperation:
  - (a) Air quality
  - (b) Water
  - (c) Biodiversity
  - (d) Climate Change
  - (e) Waste Management

- (f) Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals.
- (g) Other areas of cooperation as mutually agreed upon by the Participants.

#### **Related Information**

- The MoU acknowledges the responsibility of the BRICS nations, an association of the five major economies of the world i.e. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- These countries comprise more than 40% of the population of the world, towards the protection, preservation and sustainability of the Environment.
- The MoU is expected to bring in the latest technologies and best practices suited for bringing about better environmental protection, better conservation and better management of climate change and wildlife protection/conservation.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Environment**

##### **Source-PIB**

3. **PM inaugurate farmers conclave "Krishi Kumbha" in Lucknow**
- Prime Minister inaugurated a farmers' conclave 'Krishi Kumbh 2018' in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
  - This conclave is being organized to promote modern technique and diversification in agriculture that could help in doubling farmer's income.
  - The Kumbh will witness two of the world's top economies, Israel and Japan as official partners while Haryana and Jharkhand as partner states.

#### **Related Information**

- The Uttar Pradesh government will also sign a MoU with Japan for investment in the agricultural and allied sectors.
- The summit would introduce farmers to the evolving dynamics of farming so that they could increase their earnings by tapping the vast potential in agriculture and post-harvest management of crops.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Welfare Scheme for Vulnerable Section**

#### **Source-PIB**

##### 4. **10th Nuclear Energy Conclave**

- The 10th Nuclear Conclave is being organized by International Energy Forum (IEF).
- The theme of the Nuclear Energy Conclave is "**Nuclear Power: Towards A Clean And Base Load Energy**"

#### **Related Information**

- Cabinet has given its approval for construction of 10 units of India's indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR).
- The Kaiga Atomic Power Station has set a new world record among pressurised heavy water reactors with one of its units operating uninterrupted for 895 days.
- Presently the share of nuclear energy in India is just 3%, as compared to the global average of about 10%.
- The Government has amended sections of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 through the Atomic Energy (Amendment) Bill, 2015.
- It would enable Nuclear Power Corporation of India to form joint venture companies with other Indian PSUs to meet the additional funding requirements for further expansion of the nuclear power programme.

#### **International Energy Forum**

- The International Energy Forum (IEF) is an inter-governmental, non-profit international organisation which aims to foster greater mutual understanding and awareness of common energy interests among its members.
- The 72 Member Countries of the Forum are signatories to the IEF Charter, which outlines the framework of the global energy dialogue through this inter-governmental arrangement.
- The IEF is promoted by a permanent Secretariat based in the Diplomatic Quarter of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important International Institution**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

5. **Haryana to introduce Pashu Sanjeevni Sewa**

- Haryana Government will introduce "Pashu Sanjeevni Sewa" in the state.
- It will provide free of cost quality veterinary services and health care facilities for the livestock and made available at the doorstep of livestock farmers through mobile veterinary clinics.
- This service would be started in all blocks of three districts namely Jind, Yamunanagar and Nuh.

**Related Information**

- The mobile veterinary services would be started in uncovered, staff deficient and remote areas of the State in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.
- The livestock farmers would be able to avail the service of mobile veterinary clinics 24x7.
- The scheme would not only help in providing prompt emergency veterinary services to the livestock but also keep a check on the activities of quacks.

**Topic- GS Paper 2- Governance**

**Source- AIR**

6. **Cabinet approves National Monitoring Framework on Sustainable Development Goals**

- The Union Cabinet has approved the constitution of a High-Level Steering Committee for periodically reviewing and refining the National Indicator Framework for monitoring of SDGs.
- The Committee will be chaired by Chief Statistician of India and Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

**Targets**

- Measures to mainstream SDGs into on-going national policies, programmes and strategic action plans to address the developmental challenges.
- Statistical indicators of NIF will be the backbone of monitoring of SDGs at the national and state level and will scientifically measure the outcomes of the policies to achieve the targets under different SDGs.

- The Report will facilitate the assessment of progress, identify challenges and give recommendations for follow up at the national level.

**Major Impact**

- It intends to eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world with the basic motto of 'SabkaSaathSabkaVikash'.
- SDGs are expected to bring change in the lives of people and the monitoring of progress of implementation of SDGs will benefit the entire nation.

**Millennium Development Goals**

- This is adopted in the Millennium Summit held in 2000 at the UN Headquarters in New York, eight development goals known as the 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs).
- It was formed the blueprint for countries to pursue their national development strategies from 2000 to 2015.
- The MDGs comprise eight Goals and addressed various development issues.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

- The UN General Assembly in its 70th Session considered and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the next 15 years
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a set of 17 "Global Goals" with 169 targets covering various sectors like health, education and climate change among others.
- They replaced UN's Millennium Development Goals.
- It is Spearheaded by the United Nations.
- SDGs are not legally binding on the nation.
- The SDGs have become de facto international obligations and have the potential to reorient the domestic spending priorities of the countries during the next fifteen years (2030).

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Policies

#### Source- Indian Express

#### 7. Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony

- The Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony for the years 2014, 2015 & 2016 is being conferred of the following.
  - Rajkumar Singhajit Singh (A doyen of Manipuri Dancer)
  - Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh)
  - Ram Vanji Sutar (India’s greatest sculptors)

#### Related Information

##### Tagore Award

- The annual award was instituted by the Government of India during the commemoration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.
- The first Tagore Award was conferred on Pt. Ravi Shankar; the Indian Sitar Maestro in 2012 and second was conferred on Shri Zubin Mehta in 2013.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Personalities

#### Source- The Hindu

#### 8. India wins CAPAM awards 2018

- India got this award under various categories.
  - (a) Unnayan Banka- Reinventing Education Using Technology of Banka District, State of Bihar has been awarded under the Category “Innovation Incubation”. Unnayan Banka” is an initiative which envisages “Quality education for all’ especially for those at the bottom of the Pyramid, using latest technologies.

(b) Another initiative entitled “Unified Agriculture Markets” of Co-operation Department of Government of Karnataka has also been selected under the Category ‘Innovation in Public Service Management’.

- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions are an institutional member of Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM).

#### Related Information

##### Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM)

- It is a non-profit association representing an international network of over 1100 senior public servants, Heads of Government, leading academics and researchers located in over 50 different countries across the Commonwealth.
- CAPAM has been announcing its International Innovations Awards (IIA) Programme bi-annually since 1998.
- The CAPAM Awards celebrate the spirit of innovation in the public service by recognizing organizations that have made significant contributions to improve governance and services in the public sector.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important awards

#### Source- Indian Express

**27.10.2018**

#### 1. M S Swaminathan awarded 1st World Agriculture Prize

- Eminent scientist and Prof. MS Swaminathan is known as the chief architect of India’s Green Revolution awarded the World Agriculture Prize.
- MS Swaminathan got this award at a special session on “Swaminathan Global Dialogue on Climate Change and Food Security” organised by the Indian Council of food and Agriculture (ICFA).

#### Related Information

##### World Agriculture Award



- World Agriculture Prize has been instituted by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture with the vision to recognize the individuals who played the seminal role in transforming agriculture globally and saving humanity from the curse of hunger.
- The World Agriculture Award to be presented annually to an individual or institution, importantly from Asian, African or Latin American countries.

#### **About Prof MS Swaminathan**

- Professor MS Swaminathan also was known **as the Father of Green Revolution in India** is the most influential agriculturist and environmentalist.
- He spearheaded the green revolution movement in India has been instrumental in leading India towards food security.
- He recognized worldwide for his basic and applied research in genetics, cytogenetic, radiation and chemical mutagenesis, food and biodiversity conservation.
- MS Swaminathan has been hailed by the United Nations Environment Program as **"The Father of Economic Ecology"** owing to his commitment towards the ever-green revolution movement in agriculture.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Agriculture**

##### **Source-PIB**

2. **World's smallest optical gyroscope developed**
  - Scientists have developed the world's smallest optical gyroscope device.
  - This device helps vehicles, drones, and wearable and handheld electronic devices know their orientation in three-dimensional space.
  - It is 500 times smaller than the current state-of-the-art device described in the journal Nature Photonics.
  - The new gyroscope achieves improved performance by using a new technique called "reciprocal sensitivity enhancement."
  - "In this case, "reciprocal" means that it affects both beams of the light inside the gyroscope in the same way.

##### **Related Information**

#### **Fibre optic gyroscope**

- A fibre optic gyroscope (FOG) senses changes in orientation using the Sagnac effect, thus performing the function of a mechanical gyroscope.
- Its principle of operation is instead based on the interference of light which has passed through a coil of optical fibre which can be as long as 5 km.

#### **Applications**

- FOGs are used in Fibre optic gyrocompasses.
- FOGs are used in the inertial navigation systems of some guided missiles.
- FOGs can be a navigation aid in remotely operated vehicles and autonomous underwater vehicles.
- FOGs are used in surveying.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

##### **Source- Science daily**

3. **Shoot for a citizen-science repository of Indian mammals**
  - Scientists and researchers from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bangalore have come up with a new citizen-science repository on Indian mammals called Mammals of India (MaOI).
  - MaOI is a part of the Biodiversity Atlas (India project).
  - It is an online peer-reviewed freely-accessible portal that was launched by NCB in which many images of mammals has been uploaded.
  - These photographic records will help us in having a distribution map of mammals in the country.
  - The website, mammalsofindia.org aims to develop individual species pages for all Indian mammals with information on identification, variation, distribution, breeding and non-breeding ecology and species conservation.

#### **Related Information**

- As per current estimates, 426 species of mammals are found in India.
- Out of them, 47 species are endemic to the Indian subcontinent.

- Along with well-known species, the mammals of 100 species of rats and 126 species of bats and 24 species of whales of dolphins.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

4. **India has most outward migrants in 2017: ADB report**
  - ADB's report titled 'Asian Economic Integration Report 2018 revealed that most of the international migrants in 2017 were from India, followed by China and Bangladesh.
  - The report says that about one in three international migrants is from Asia led by India and the PRC (People's Republic of China).
  - Asia continued as the largest source of international migrants globally although the number of Asian migrants headed to regional destinations declined slightly.
  - The global stock of international migrants from Asia rose 3.9 per cent from 83.6 million in 2015 to 86.9 million in 2017.
  - The report also said intraregional migrants to India largely come from neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh (3.1 million), Pakistan (1.1 million) and Nepal (0.5 million).

#### **Related Information**

- The United Nations recommendations on statistics of international migration define the 'stock of international migrants present in a country' as 'the set of persons who have ever changed their country of usual residence, that is to say, persons who have spent at least one year of their lives in a country other than the one in which they live at the time the data are gathered.:
- International migrant stock consists of persons crossing borders for various reasons, for example, employment, family reunification, study, and fleeing from conflicts and violence.

#### **Asian Development Bank**

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank.
- Its headquarter is located in the Philippines.

- The ADB was modelled closely on the World Bank and has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions.
- ADB is an official United Nations Observer.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–Economics & development Source-PIB**

#### **5. India and Bangladesh Sign Agreements for Enhancing Inland and Coastal Waterways Connectivity**

- India and Bangladesh signed several milestone agreements for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity between the two countries for trade and cruise movements.
- The two countries have signed an agreement to use Chattogram and Mongla Ports in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India.
- In this agreement, an addendum to 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade' (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh has been signed for the inclusion of Dhubri in India and Pangaon in Bangladesh as new Ports of Call.
- Both the countries also agreed to consider inclusion of Rupnarayan river (National Waterway-86) from Geonkhali to Kolaghat in the protocol route and to declare Kolaghat in West Bengal as new Port of Call.
- The new arrangement will facilitate the movement of fly ash, cement, construction materials etc from India to Bangladesh through IWT on Rupnarayan River.

#### **Benefits for North East State**

- The North Eastern states would get connected to directly to the ports of Kolkata and Haldia in India and Mongla in Bangladesh through waterways.
- It would facilitate movement EXIM cargo and would also reduce the logistic costs.
- These river cruise services are likely to commence between Kolkata – Dhaka - Guwahati – Jorhat and back.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 3–International relation Source-PIB**

#### 6. **What is the O-ring theory in Economics?**

- It is also known as the O-ring model of economic development.
- This refers to the theory that even the smallest components of a complex production process must be performed properly if the end product of the process is to have any useful value.
- In other words, a mistake that creeps into even the smallest of tasks can cause the final product to possess absolutely no value to users.
- The O-ring theory derives its name from a 1986 incident in which the Challenger space shuttle was completely destroyed as a result of the failure of a simple gasket, or O-ring, to work properly.
- It was first proposed by American development economist Michael Kremer in 1993.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Economics**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

#### **7. 2nd International Conference on Primary Health Care towards UHC & SDGs at Astana, Kazakhstan**

- UN's 192 member countries agree to strengthen primary health care on the 40th anniversary of the Alma Ata Declaration.
- Astana Declaration: Not just health, but affordable health for all.
- The theme of the conference is: The Future of Primary Health Care.
- This declaration is meant to take the earlier agreement forward, strengthen the primary health care (PHC) systems and realise the idea of universal healthcare (UHC).

#### **Related Information**

##### **India's role in Primary Health Care**

- The government has recently launched the Ayushman Bharat- an initiative that is ambitious in scale and scope.
- Ayushman Bharat has two components: establishing about 1, 50,000 Health and Wellness centres for the delivery of Comprehensive Primary Healthcare and the Pradhan Mantri Jan ArogyaYojana which will address the needs of secondary and tertiary health care for nearly 40% of our population.

- Community Health workers and ASHAs continue to be vital to the success of Primary Health Care.
- The Government also launches 3 applications which are used across the country at Health and Wellness Centers.
  1. An app for Reproductive Child Health (RCH)
  2. An app for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD)
  3. An app for Tuberculosis

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Health and policies** **Source-PIB**

#### **8. Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launched web portal of 'IMPRESS' scheme**

- The Union Minister for Human Resource Development launched the web portal of the Scheme "Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)" in New Delhi.
- Under the Scheme, 1500 research projects will be awarded for 2 years to support the social science research in the higher educational institutions and to enable research to guide policy-making.
- The research carried out under the IMPRESS scheme will be used to understand and solve problems facing society.

#### **Broad objectives of the scheme are:**

- To identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.
- To provide an opportunity for social science researchers in any institution in the country, including all Universities (Central and State), private institutions with 12(B) status conferred by UGC.
- ICSSR funded/recognised research institutes will also be eligible to submit research proposals on the given themes and sub-themes.

#### **Topic- GS-2- Government Schemes**

##### **Source-PIB**

**29.10.2018**

#### **1. Electoral Bond Scheme 2018**

- The State Bank of India in the sixth phase of sale has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorised Branches.

### **Electoral Bond Scheme**

- The scheme announced during the 2017 Budget which aims to account the donations made to all major political parties.
- It helps to cleanse the system of political funding in the country.
- An electoral bond is designed to be a bearer instrument like a Promissory Note and Interest-Free banking instrument.
- The electoral bonds will have a shelf-life of **15 days** and can be purchased only from specified branches of State Bank of India.
- Electoral bonds can be bought for any value, in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh or Rs 1 crore.
- Donors can donate the bonds to their party of choice which can then be cashed in via the party's verified account within 15 days.
- An Indian citizen or body incorporated in India will be eligible to purchase the bond.
- Electoral bonds can be used for making the donation only to the political parties registered under section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (43 of 1951) and which secured not less than one per cent of the votes polled in the last general election to the House of the People or a Legislative Assembly.
- **These bonds will not carry the name of the payee.**

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Scheme**

#### **Source-PIB**

2. **Scientists developed a web-based tool to monitor fake news on Facebook, Twitter**
  - Researchers at the University of Michigan in the US had developed a web-based tool to help monitor the prevalence of fake news on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.
  - This web-based tool use a Platform Health Metric called the Iffy Quotient.
  - It will draw data from two external entities: NewsWhip and Media Bias/Fact Checker.

### **NewsWhip**

- It is a social media engagement tracking firm.
- NewsWhip collects URLs on hundreds of thousands of sites every day and then gathers information on which of those sites have engagements on Facebook and Twitter.
- Iffy Quotient queries NewsWhip for the top 5,000 most popular URLs on the two social media platforms.

### **Media Bias/Fact**

- It will check an independent site that classifies various sources based on their reliability and bias.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology**

#### **Source- AIR**

#### 3. **Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)**

- The Cabinet has given its approval for creation of special Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, National Cooperatives Development Corporation and all scheduled Banks shall be the nodal Loaning Entities.

### **Benefits**

- It will help in the creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities both in marine and inland fisheries sectors.
- To augment fish production to achieve its target of 15 million tonnes by 2020 set under the Blue Revolution.
- The fund also helps to achieve a sustainable growth of 8% -9% thereafter to reach the fish production to the level of about 20 MMT by 2022-23.
- It will provide employment opportunities to lakh of fishers/fishermen/fisherfolk and other entrepreneurs in fishing and allied activities.
- To attract private investment in the creation and management of fisheries infrastructure facilities.
- The funds help these groups of people in the adoption of new technologies.

### Related Information

- FIDF would provide concessional finance to State Governments / UTs and State entities, cooperatives, individuals and entrepreneurs etc., for taking up the identified investment activities of fisheries development.
- The loan lending will be over a period of five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23 and maximum repayment will be over a period of 12 years.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

#### Source- Business Standard

4. **Odia Virtual Academy: Portal to promote Odia language, literature**
  - The Odisha government launched a new web portal to promote Odia language and literature called Odia Virtual Academy ([ova.gov.in](http://ova.gov.in))
  - Three MoU has been signed with the University of Chicago Library, C-DAC and Centre for Internet and Society, Bengaluru, respectively to expedite digitisation of Odia literature and development of software.

### Related Information

- The Odia Virtual Academy has taken the responsibility for promotion, preservation and digitisation of the Odia language and literature.
- The portal will be helpful for the promotion of Odia language at the international level, especially for the non-resident Odias.
- Around 170 books of Odia literature have been placed on the academy website.

### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

#### Source- Business Standard

5. **Poly-Oxime gel: Protect farmers from toxic pesticides**
  - Poly-Oxime gel has been prepared by researchers at the Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (InStem) Bengaluru from a nucleophilic polymer.

### Why this gel?

- Indian farmers usually do not wear any protective gear while spraying chemicals in fields.
- This exposes them to harmful toxics contained in pesticides, causing severe health impacts and even death in extreme cases.

### How it's work?

- The gel can be applied on the skin and can break down toxic chemicals in pesticides, insecticides and fungicides including the most hazardous and widely used organo phosphorous compounds.
- The gel deactivates these chemicals, preventing them from going deep into the skin and organs like the brain and the lungs.

### Related Information

- Exposure to chemicals contained in pesticides interferes with an enzyme called acetyl cholinesterase (AChE) which is present in the nervous system and is critical for neuromuscular functions.
- When its functioning is disrupted by chemical pesticides entering the body through the skin, it can cause neurotoxicity, cognitive dysfunction and even death in severe cases.
- When the gel was applied on rats and they were exposed to a lethal dose of pesticide MPT, it did not lead to any change in their AChE level, showing it could prevent penetration of the pesticide into the skin.

### Topic-GS Paper 3-Science & technology

#### Source- Down to Earth

6. **Governors' panel submits 21 recommendations to President for doubling farmers' income.**
  - A committee of governors set up by President submitted a report on the approach to agriculture for doubling the income of farmers in the country.
  - The panel is headed by Uttar Pradesh Governor Ram Naik.
  - The panel considering various challenges including climate change, degradation of natural resources, saline and water-logged soils, decreasing the size of land holdings and lack of adequate storage and processing facilities etc.

### Outcomes of the report

- The committee has recommended the development of climate-resilient and input-efficient varieties, incentive grant to set up special agricultural zones and regional hubs for region-specific crops.

- The committee has suggested slashing of premium rates of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana from 5 to 2.5 Percent where the sowing area is big.
- The committee has also suggested for encouraging women into agricultural activities since this male-dominated sector is adversely affected by migration.
- It also said that a KRISHAK SHIKAYAR NIVARAN CELL or farmer's grievances addressal system should be at the place in every district.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance**

#### **Source- AIR**

7. **Moths are key to pollination in Himalayan ecosystem**
  - Moths are widely considered as pests but a recent study by scientists of Zoological Survey of India revealed that these groups of insects are pollinators to a number of flowering plants in the Himalayan ecosystem.
  - The study was carried out in states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and West Bengal.
  - The proboscis of different moths belonging to families of moths, such as Erebididae and Sphingidae.
  - These species were found to contain pollen of several flowering plants, including Rhododendron.

#### **Related Information**

- About 90% of the world's flowering plants are pollinated by animals.
- Pollinators are essential for the genetic exchange among flowering plants and the biodiversity among plants.
- Researchers have pointed out that almost two-thirds of common large moth species have declined over the last 40 years in some parts of world.
- One of the main reasons for the decline is light pollution (an increase in artificial light in moth habitats).

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

8. **Migratory birds start arriving at Chilika, numbers are down**

- The wetland of Odisha's Chilika Lake is one of the largest wintering grounds in Asia for migratory birds.
- Migratory birds are awaited with the onset of winter every year but this year fewer winged visitors have descended on the mudflats of the lake.

#### **Related Information**

##### **lake Chilika**

- The lake has been a designated Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance) since 1981.
- These are the rain-induced flooding lake.
- The Nalabana Bird Sanctuary and Mangalajodi are the two major places where the birds congregate also have not received the usual numbers.
- One of the reasons behind the low turnout is the flooding after incessant rain triggered by cyclone Titli that hit the Odisha coast.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Biodiversity**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

9. **Indian Railways is building the world's highest railway line**
  - Indian railways plan to connect New Delhi with Ladakh region through the world's highest railway line that will run along the India-China border.
  - The national transporter plans to build a strategically-important Bilaspur-Manali- Leh line along the Indo-China border.
  - The rail line will have the highest road point of 5,360 metres above mean sea level that is comparable only to the Qinghai-Tibet Railway Line in China, which is at a height of around 2,000 metres.

#### **Related Information**

- This will give quick all-weather access to the armed forces,
- The railway line will also boost tourism in the scenic Ladakh region that is currently connected by road and air.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Development and Employment**

#### **Source- Economics Times**

**30.10.2018**

1. **CSIR developed Less Polluting Firecrackers named – SWAS, SAFAL and STAR**

- CSIR scientists have developed Less Polluting Firecrackers which are not only environment friendly but 15-20 % cheaper than the conventional ones.
- These crackers have been named as safe water releaser (SWAS), safe minimal aluminium (SAFAL) and safe thermite cracker (STAR).
- SWAS crackers eliminate usage of (KNO<sub>3</sub>) Potassium nitrate and Sulphur with the consequent reduction in particulate matter (30-35%) SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>.
- STAR eliminates usage of KNO<sub>3</sub> and Sulphur with the consequent reduction in particulate matter (35-40%), SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>.
- SAFAL has minimal usage of aluminium (only in flash powder for initiation) with the consequent significant reduction in particulate matter (35-40 %) compared to commercial crackers.
- Researchers decided to replace aluminium with magnesium on the understanding that it would reduce ignition temperature and subsequently minimise particulate matter coming from the cracker.

**Related Information**

- The new crackers have been developed by scientists of two national labs—Central Electrochemical Research Institute (CECRI) based in Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) in Nagpur.
- The researchers at CECRI have developed green crackers by modifying the chemical formulations for flower pots, 'jiljil' and so-called atom bombs.

**About CSIR-NEERI**

- The CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute is a research institute created and funded by Government of India under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

- NEERI is a pioneer laboratory in the field of environmental science and engineering and part of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.
- It was established in Nagpur in 1958 with a focus on water supply, sewage disposal, communicable diseases and to some extent on industrial pollution and occupational diseases found common in post-independent India.

**Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology Source- Down to Earth**

2. **Aarey's Chipko moment**

- Mumbai's citizens have been fighting BMC and MMRC tooth and nail to save Aarey, the city's last green zone, from the proverbial axe.
- More than thousands suggestions and objections were submitted by citizens and activists in mid-October against the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) proposal to cut 2,702 trees in the Aarey Milk Colony in Goregaon for the Metro-3 car shed project.

**Related Information**

- Aarey was once a part of the deciduous stretch of forests, now restricted to the adjacent Sanjay Gandhi National Park and hillocks.
- When the construction of the Aarey Dairy Co-operative take place the thickness of the forests was broken up to create open ecosystems of grasslands, scrubs, marshes and water bodies, giving refuge to an interesting assemblage of species.
- The large open para grass fields are feeding grounds of Munias, Drongos and Egrets, which have been proposed for the car shed.
- The drains that nurture these grass pastures are home to native fish species, crabs, shrimps and Checkered Keelback water snakes that are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 by virtue of being Schedule II species.

**Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment Source- Indian Express**

3. **Odisha launches disaster alert system for its coast**

- The Odisha government launched the much-awaited Early Warning Dissemination System.

- This is the first-of-its-kind technology in India which help in simultaneously warn coastal communities and fisher folk about impending cyclone and tsunami through siren towers.
- The EWDS is a collaborative effort of the Central and State governments and has been implemented under the assistance of World Bank.
- Sirens will go off from 122 towers installed along the 480-km-long coast of the State if a button is pressed in the State emergency centre in Bhubaneswar.

#### **Related Information**

- It comprises technologies such as satellite-based mobile data voice terminals, digital mobile radio, mass messaging system and a universal communication interface for interoperability.
- It's a part of the last-mile connectivity programme under the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project and aims to inform the last man living near the sea in case of an impending cyclone.
- Fishermen fishing in deep sea can also be reached via mass SMS on their mobile phones through EWDS.
- Six coastal districts named Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Puri and Ganjam have been covered under the EWDS.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management**

##### **Source- The Hindu**

4. **India's largest dry dock to come up at Cochin Shipyard**
  - It is India's largest dry dock for the construction, repair and maintenance of ships at the Cochin Shipyard.
  - The dry dock will give an impetus to 'Make in India' initiative under Sagarmala (Programme for building and modernizing ports) and raise India's share in global shipbuilding to 2%.
  - The dock will be able to build specialised and technologically advanced large vessels like LNG Carriers, drill ships, jack-up rigs, large dredgers, aircraft carriers for the Indian Navy and high-end research vessels.

#### **Related Information**

- India currently occupies 0.66% share in the global shipbuilding market.

#### **Topic-GS Paper 2–Infrastructure Development**

##### **Source-PIB**

#### 5. **Swachh Nyayalaya Project**

- Swachh Nyayalaya project aims at constructing and maintaining washrooms and take care of general cleanliness in courtrooms.
- It also deals with the mechanism needs to be devised with garbage and also to weed out old case files.
- It will also provide user-friendly toilets for male, female and differently abled users.
- The project which is ostensibly on the lines of the Centre's flagship scheme Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- The Project would be undertaken by NITI Aayog and the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation along with the Department of Justice.

#### **Related Information**

- The ambitious project would cover all the Supreme Court, all the high courts and 3,388 subordinate courts.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Government Scheme** **Source-PIB**

#### 6. **The I.N. F treaty**

- The U.S.A plans to withdraw from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty bring back cold-war era fears.
- The treaty was concluded in 1987 by Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev.
- The INF treaty was a bilateral agreement between Washington and Moscow.
- Under the INF treaty, the US and Soviet Union agreed not to develop, produce, possess or deploy any ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles that have a range between 500 and 5,500 km.
- It exempted the air-launched and sea-based missile systems in the same range.
- The agreement came in the wake of huge public outcry in Europe in the 1980s at the Russian deployment of the SS-20 ballistic missiles and the US response with Pershing-2 rockets.



- The INF treaty helped address the fears of an imminent nuclear war in Europe.
- It also built some trust between Washington and Moscow and contributed to the end of the Cold War.

### **Related Information**

#### **What was the problem?**

- According to American officials, nearly 90 per cent of China's vast missile armoury — estimated at around 2,000 rockets — is in the intermediate range and would be illegal if Beijing were to be a part of the INF treaty.
- The expansive Chinese land-based intermediate range missile forces threaten the American naval ships deployed in the Western Pacific and target US military bases in Japan.  
The vulnerability of American military presence in the Pacific to Chinese missiles, in turn, undermines the credibility of American security commitment to its Asian allies.
- The US military leadership has long sought to lift the limitations imposed by the INF treaty on US missile forces in Asia.

#### **Treaty context to India**

- India's problem is less with the arms control diplomacy than the nature of its missile programme.
- If the US deploys a new INF in Asia, to enhance its capacity to deter China, Beijing is bound to react.
- Moscow and Beijing have already invested in the development of hypersonic systems.
- India too has an effort underway on hypersonic missiles — part indigenous and part in collaboration with Russia to build on the supersonic Brahmos missiles that travel more than twice as fast as sound.
- Due to this problem, Moscow advanced military systems will come under increasing scrutiny and pressure.
- Resulted in the recent controversy over the acquisition of S-400 from Russia which is the requirement of India.

### **Topic-GS Paper 2–International Relation Source- New York Times**

#### **7. Centre approved Operation Green on the pilot basis**

- The scheme was devised to contain the annual price distress of tomatoes, onion and potatoes in regions with high production.
- The operation was announced by the Union Finance minister in the budget 2018 speech and claimed that the operation will provide support to horticulture crop growers.
- This scheme aims to transport the vegetables from a surplus region to deficit region of production and also create infrastructures to increase storage processing capacity to increase shelf life.
- The government also decided to create value chains and processing industries in the selected surplus region.

### **Related Information**

#### **What is Operation Green?**

- Operation Green has short term and long term components.
- The budget for short term component allocated Rs 50 crore. Under this budget, government will share 50 per cent cost with the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) for transportation and storage facility of TOP produces.
- The long term budget, Rs 450 crore, is meant to develop value chain, cold storage, packaging, sorting, grading and processing industries.
- The committee suggested extra funds can be pooled in from similar schemes like SAMPADA and also new schemes like Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages, Creation / Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities.
- SAMPADA is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes (Mega Food Parks, Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, etc)

## Topic- GS Paper 2 – Agriculture Scheme

### Source- Down to Earth

#### 8. Train 18: Country's first engine-less train rolled out

- India's first engine-less semi-high speed train - "Train 18" - was rolled out by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF).
- It will eventually replace the Shatabdi Express for inter-city travel.
- The 16-coach semi-high speed 'trainset' has been designed for a maximum operating speed of 160 kmph.
- This is the first long-distance train sans separate locomotive (engine).
- All the coaches are connected by fully sealed gangways with integrated bridge plates, where the passenger can walk across freely.
- The railways will now turn its focus on another project - Train 20 - the next generation aluminium-bodied sleeper class trains that will replace the Rajdhani Express trains on the network and is expected to be rolled out by 2020.

## Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

### Source- Economics times

**31.10.2018**

#### 1. India among nations that face grave danger to soil biodiversity: WWF

- India's soil biodiversity is in grave peril, according to the Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas prepared by the World Wide Fund for Nature.
- The findings were part of the bi-annual Living Planet Report 2018.
- A key aspect of this year's report is a threat to soil biodiversity and pollinators.
- Soil biodiversity encompasses the presence of micro-organisms, micro-fauna (nematodes and tardigrades for example), and macro-fauna (ants, termites and earthworms).
- The WWF's 'risk index' for the globe indicating threats from loss of above-ground diversity, pollution and nutrient over-loading, over-grazing,

intensive agriculture, fire, soil erosion, desertification and climate change.

#### Related Information

- The two key drivers of biodiversity loss were the over-exploitation of natural resources and agriculture.
- The populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles have dwindled by an average of 60% from 1970 to 2014 and fresh-water species have declined by 83%.
- Since 1960, the global ecological footprint has increased by more than 190%.
- Globally, the extent of wetlands was estimated to have declined by 87% since 1970.

#### How to combat these problems?

- WWF suggests three necessary steps:
  - Clearly specifying a goal for biodiversity recovery.
  - Developing a set of measurable and relevant indicators of progress.
  - Agreeing on a suite of actions that can collectively achieve the goal in the required time frame.

## Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

### Source- Down To Earth

#### 2. India, Japan Sign 75 Billion Dollar Currency Swap Agreement

- India, Japan Sign 75 Billion Dollar Currency Swap Agreement was made after the annual summit meeting between Indian PM and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in Tokyo.
- The currency swap pact would enable the two major Asian economies to swap their local currencies - either Indian rupee or the Japanese yen against the US\$ up to 75 billion.
- The deal would be of major help to India as it comes in the backdrop of a falling rupee triggered by a gradual increase in the interest rates in the US that has strengthened the US dollar.
- The currency swap agreement will have a positive impact on financing India's current account deficit

#### Related Information

- India had entered into currency swap pacts with Japan for lesser amounts in the past.

- In 2013, the two sides had approved the enhancing the bilateral currency swap arrangement between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bank of Japan from \$15 billion to \$50 billion.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – International relation**

**Source- The Hindu**

#### **3. Seychelles launches World's First Sovereign Blue Bond**

- The Republic of Seychelles has launched the world's first sovereign blue bond assisted by the World Bank.
- It is a pioneering financial instrument designed to support sustainable marine and fisheries projects.
- The Seychelles blue bond is partially guaranteed by a US \$5 million guarantees from the World Bank (IBRD) and further supported by a US\$5 million concessional loan from the GEF which will partially cover interest payments for the bond.
- The fisheries sector is the country's most important industry, contributing significantly to annual GDP and employing 17% of the population.

#### **Related Information**

##### **About Seychelles**

- Seychelles is an archipelagic nation consisting of 115 granite and coral islands.
- It has a land area of 455 km<sup>2</sup> spread across an Exclusive Economic Zone of approximately 1.4 million km<sup>2</sup>.
- As one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, Seychelles is balancing the need to both develop economically and protect its natural endowment.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – International Relation**

**Source- The Hindu**

#### **4. PM Unveils Sardar Patel's Statue Of Unity, World's Tallest.**

- Prime Minister of India unveiled the Statue of Unity, which at 182 metres is the tallest in the world, as a tribute to freedom icon Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on his 143rd birth anniversary.
- His birth anniversary known as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

- The statue depicts Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Home Minister, wearing a traditional dhoti and shawl, towering over river Narmada.
- Iron was collected from all over the country for the statue of Sardar Patel, also known as the Iron Man of India.
- The statue has been designed by Padma Bhushan-winning sculptor Ram V Sutar.
- It has been built by Larsen and Toubro and the state-run Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd.
- The Statue of Unity stands 177 feet higher than the current world's tallest, China's Spring Temple Buddha in the central Henan province.
- The statue has a viewing gallery offers a view of the Sardar Sarovar Dam, its reservoir, and the Satpura and Vindhya Mountain ranges.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Personalities**

**Source- The Hindu**

#### **5. Global Passport Index**

- The Indian passport was ranked 66th in the world in the latest ranking of the Global Passport Index.
- The ranking was based on the passports' visa-free score.
- The ranking of Indian passport, granting its holders visa-free access to 66 countries, improved nine notches since the previous year.
- Singapore has the world's "most powerful" passport with access to 165 countries followed by Germany, Denmark and Sweden.

#### **Related Information**

- The results are part of citizenship planning firm Henley and Partners' annual passport index.
- It has ranked passports based on the number of countries a holder can go to without a visa or the number of countries a holder can go to where they can obtain a visa, visitor's permit, or electronic travel authority upon arrival.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Index**

**Source- The Hindu**

## **6. Himachal bags award for 15.8 per cent dip in neonatal mortality rate**

- Himachal Pradesh has won an award for the highest annual decline in neonatal mortality rate with a dip of 15.8 per cent in the death of babies aged less than four weeks this year.
- Tamil Nadu and Delhi followed in the second and third spot respectively.

### **Related Information**

- The awards were given away at the 5th National Summit on "Good & Replicable Practices & Innovations in Public HealthCare Systems in India" being held in Kaziranga.
- The awards for the highest annual decline in infant mortality rate were given to Kerala (16.7%), Mizoram (15.6%) and Karnataka (14.3%).
- The award for the highest annual decline in under-five mortality was given to Himachal Pradesh (18.2%), Assam (16.1%), and Jharkhand, Gujarat and Kerela (15.4%).
- The awards for best performance in family planning were given to West Bengal, Chattisgarh and Rajasthan.
- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Arunachal Pradesh got the best award in TB control programme.

### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Awards**

#### **Source- Indian Express**

## **7. WTO sets up a dispute panel on India-U.S. case on export subsidies**

- The World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) dispute settlement body has set up a panel to examine the U.S. complaint against certain export-subsidy measures by India.
- This panel has formed when both the sides failed to resolve the issue at the consultation level.

### **Related Information**

- The U.S. dragged India to the global trade body's dispute settlement mechanism over export subsidies, saying that these incentives were harming the American companies.
- The U.S. has challenged India's export subsidy programmes such as Merchandise Exports from India Scheme in the WTO, asserting that these initiatives harm its companies by creating an uneven playing field.

## **About Dispute Settlement Body**

- The General Council convenes as the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to deal with disputes between WTO members.
- Such disputes may arise with respect to any agreement contained in the Final Act of the Uruguay Round that is subject to the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU).
- The DSB has authority to establish dispute settlement panels, refer matters to arbitration, adopt panel, Appellate Body and arbitration reports, maintain surveillance over the implementation of recommendations and rulings contained in such reports, and authorize suspension of concessions in the event of non-compliance with those recommendations and rulings.

## **Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS)**

- The Government of India has introduced Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) through the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20.
- It seeks to promote the export of notified goods manufactured/produced in India.
- MEIS is a major export promotion scheme of GOI implemented by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Note: India's exports to the U.S. stood at \$47.9 billion in 2017-18, while imports aggregated at \$26.7 billion during the same fiscal.

### **Topic- GS Paper 3 –Important Organisation**

#### **Source- The Hindu**

## **8. India has three of the world's 50 nitrogen emission hotspots**

- Greenpeace analysis based on satellite data identified 50 hotspots in which 10 are in China, eight in the Arab world, four in the EU and three each in India, the US and DR Congo.
- The three in India are Delhi-NCR, an area that falls in both Sonbhadra in UP and Singrauli in MP and another Talcher-Angul in Odisha.

- South Africa's Mpumalanga province emits the highest amounts of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in the air.

#### **Coal, oil main sources of emission**

- Power generation from coal and oil has been found to be the main source of emissions at 19 out of the 50 largest numbers of hotspots.
- It followed by manufacturing industries (14), most notably steel plants in China and transportation (10).
- These sources were identified via the global EDGAR gridded emissions inventory, a comprehensive peer-reviewed map of emissions sources.

#### **NO<sub>2</sub> emissions cost health**

- NO<sub>2</sub> is a dangerous pollutant that contributes to the formation of PM<sub>2.5</sub> and ozone, two of the most dangerous forms of air pollution.
- Breathing air with a high concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> can irritate airways in the human respiratory system.
- Such exposures over short periods can aggravate respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, leading to respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing).
- Longer exposures to elevated concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> may contribute to the development of asthma and potentially increase susceptibility to respiratory infections.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment**

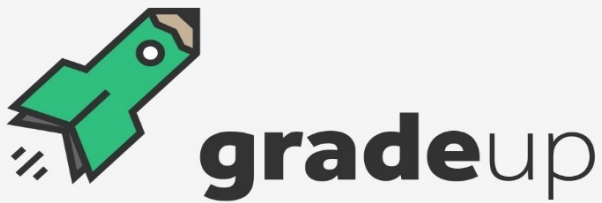
##### **Source- Down to Earth**

#### **9. 'Birthright citizenship has to end'**

- President Donald Trump is planning to sign an executive order ending the birthright citizenship provision.
- This provision has automatic conferral of U.S. citizenship on any individual born in the country.
- The concept of jus soli (right of the soil) derives from the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, enacted in 1868 after the Civil War, in order to grant legal rights to former slaves.
- It says: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside."
- Therefore, individuals born in the U.S., to parents on temporary visas or here without a valid visa, are also U.S. citizens.
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security put the number of foreigners without legal status in the U.S. at a little above 12 million in 2014.
- It will help to curb the problem of Illegal immigrants in the US.

#### **Topic- GS Paper 2 – International relation**

##### **Source- The Hindu**



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