

Daily Current Affairs 20/12/2021

1. New generation ballistic missile 'Agni P' successfully test-fired by DRDO



Why in News

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully tested the new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile '**Agni P (Prime)**' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

Key Points

- **Agni P** is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles.
- **Agni P** was developed under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program**.
- It is a canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 kms.
- This was the second test of the Agni Prime missile.

About Agni missile:

- The Agni missile is a family of medium to intercontinental range ballistic missiles developed by India.
- Agni missiles are long range, nuclear weapons capable of surface to surface ballistic missiles.

The family comprises the following:

- **Agni-I:** Range: 700–1,200 km (Operational)
- **Agni-II:** Range: 2,000–3,500 km (Operational)
- **Agni-III:** Range: 3,000–5,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-IV:** Range: 3,500–4,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-V:** Range: 5,000–8,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-VI:** Range: 11,000–12,000 km (Under development)

Missiles developed:

- Intermediate-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile: **Agni**
- Short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile: **Prithvi**
- Short-range low-level surface-to-air missile: **Trishul**
- Medium-range surface-to-air missile: **Akash**
- Third generation anti-tank missile: **Nag**

Source: PIB

2. Raising legal age of marriage for women



Why in News

- The Union Cabinet took the decision to **raise the legal age of marriage for women** from 18 to 21 years. The legal age of marriage for men is 21 years.
- With this decision, the government will be bringing the age of marriage for both men and women at par.

- The Cabinet's decision to **raise the legal age of marriage** for women is based on the recommendation of a **panel led by Jaya Jaitly**.

Key Points

- The law prescribes a minimum age of marriage to essentially outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors.
- For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid.
- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively.
- The recently released National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5 revealed that **child marriage has come down marginally** from 27 percent in 2015-16 to 23 percent in 2019-20 in the country, but the government has been pushing to bring this down further.

About Jaya Jaitly committee:

- In June 2020, the Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a task force to look into the correlation between the age of marriage with issues of women's nutrition, prevalence of anemia and other social indices.
- The committee, headed by former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly, also had on board NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul and secretaries of several ministries.
- The committee has recommended the age of marriage be increased to 21 years.

Source: Indian Express

3. Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021



Why in News

- The **Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, introduced in the Lok Sabha, exempts Ayush practitioners from the ambit of the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, and facilitates access to biological resources and traditional knowledge by the Indian traditional medicine sector.
- Legal experts have, however, expressed concerns that easing the norms for the sector could be detrimental to ecology and go against the principle of sharing commercial benefits with indigenous communities.

Key Points

- The **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** was enacted for the conservation of biological diversity and fair, equitable sharing of the monetary benefits from the commercial use of biological resources and traditional knowledge.
- The Bill looks to encourage farmers to increase cultivation of medicinal plants.
- It also seeks to give a fillip to “Indian system of medicine”, and facilitate fast-tracking of research, patent application process, transfer of research results while utilising the biological resources available in India — “without compromising the objectives of United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity and its **Nagoya Protocol**”.
- The Ministry said the “amendment is necessary because on 4th Oct 2012, India ratified **Nagoya Protocol** on access to generic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization.”

Source: HT

4. Central government: 'In-principle' nod for 6 nuclear reactors in Jaitapur



Why in News

- The Central government has given “In-principle” approval for setting up of six nuclear power reactors at Jaitapur in Maharashtra.

Key Points

- The six nuclear power reactors, which will have a capacity of 1,650 MW each, will be set up with technical cooperation from **France**.
- It will be the country’s largest nuclear power generating site with a total capacity of 9,900 MW.

Note:

- The present installed nuclear power capacity in the country is 6,780 MW and the share of nuclear power in the total electricity generation in 2020-21 is about 3.1%.
- The nuclear power plants have so far generated about 755 billion units of electricity, saving about 650 million Tons of CO₂ emission.
- In this context, the present nuclear power capacity of 6,780 MW is expected to be increased to 22,480 MW by 2031 on completion of projects.
- The government has also amended the Atomic Energy Act 1962 to enable joint ventures of public sector companies to set up nuclear power projects.

Nuclear Power plants in Operation:

- Rawatbhata (Rajasthan)
- Tarapur (Maharashtra)
- Kudankulam (Tamil Nadu)
- Kakrapar (Gujarat)
- Kalpakkam (Tamil Nadu)

- Narora (Uttar Pradesh)
- Kaiga (Karnataka)

Source: Indian Express

5. PM Modi lays the foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in



Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **Ganga Expressway** in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore.
- Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
- It passes through Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, RaeBareli, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj.
- Upon completion of work, it will become the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh, connecting the western and eastern regions of the state.
- A 3.5 Km long air strip for assisting emergency take off and landing of Air Force planes will also be constructed on the Expressway in Shahjahanpur.
- An industrial corridor is also proposed to be built along the Expressway.

Source: PIB

6. PM Modi honoured with Bhutan's highest civilian award



Why in News

- The King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, conferred its highest civilian award, the **Order of the Druk Gyalpo**, on **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- This was announced on the occasion of the 114th National Day of Bhutan.

Key Points

- PM Modi becomes the first foreigner to receive the coveted award.
- This is Mr. Modi's 10th international award given by various governments.

Note:

- Every year, on **December 17**, Bhutan marks the **national day** in memory of the birth of the Wangchuk dynasty in 1907.
- The **Order of the Dragon King (Druk Gyalpo)** is the highest award of the Kingdom of Bhutan, awarded in recognition of a lifetime of service to the people and Kingdom of Bhutan.

Source: The Hindu

7. Avani Lekhara wins 'Best Female Debut' honour at 2021 Paralympic Awards



Why in News

- **Indian shooter Avani Lekhara** won the "**Best Female Debut**" honour at the **2021 Paralympic Sport Awards** for her record-breaking gold medal at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

Key Points

- The Awards were announced by the **International Paralympic Committee**.
- **Avani Lekhara** became the 1st Indian woman to win 2 Paralympic medals in a single edition of the Paralympic Games.
- She was awarded Major Dhyana Chand Khel Ratna, India's highest sporting honour, for the achievement.

Source: The Hindu

8. SAIL receives prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021



Why in News

- The **Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL)**, under the Ministry of Steel has been awarded with the prestigious **Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2021** in the Steel Sector by the Institute of Directors.

Key Points

- SAIL has been the winner of this award for successive three years.

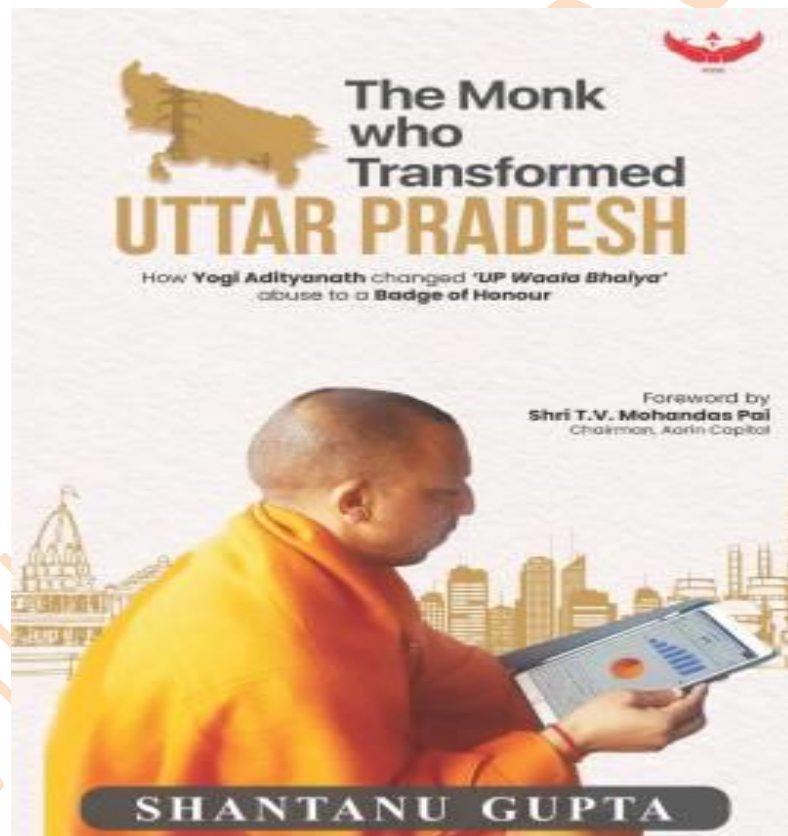
- SAIL is sensitive to global concern for climate change. Carbon footprint reduction has become an integral part of the company's corporate policies and operations.

Facts about Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL):

- **Founded:** 19 January 1954
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **CEO:** Soma Mondal

Source: PIB

9. 'The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh': Book on Yogi Adityanath's journey released



Why in News

- Written by author **Shantanu Gupta**, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour", is published by Garuda Prakashan.

Key Points

- This new book chronicles how Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath transformed the state in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, and overall growth.
- Shantanu Gupta's previously authored books include "BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY: Past, Present and Future: Story of the World's Largest Political Party" (2019) and "The Monk Who Became Chief Minister" (2017).

Source: zeenews

10. December 18, International Migrants Day



Why in News

- Every year on December 18, the **International Migrant Day** is observed to tackle the problem and challenges of global migration.

Key Points

- The **theme** for the year 2021 is 'Harnessing the potential of human mobility'.

History:

- The United Nations General Assembly in the year 1999 created the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.
- But on December 04, 2000, keeping an account of the large and increasing migrants across the globe, December 18 was decided as International Migrants Day.
- International Migrants Day (18 December) this year falls almost exactly 70 years after the Brussels conference that led to the establishment of the organization that, in 1989, was renamed the International Organization for Migration.

Note: Approximately 281 million people were international migrants in 2020, representing 3.6 percent of the global population.

Source: un.org

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