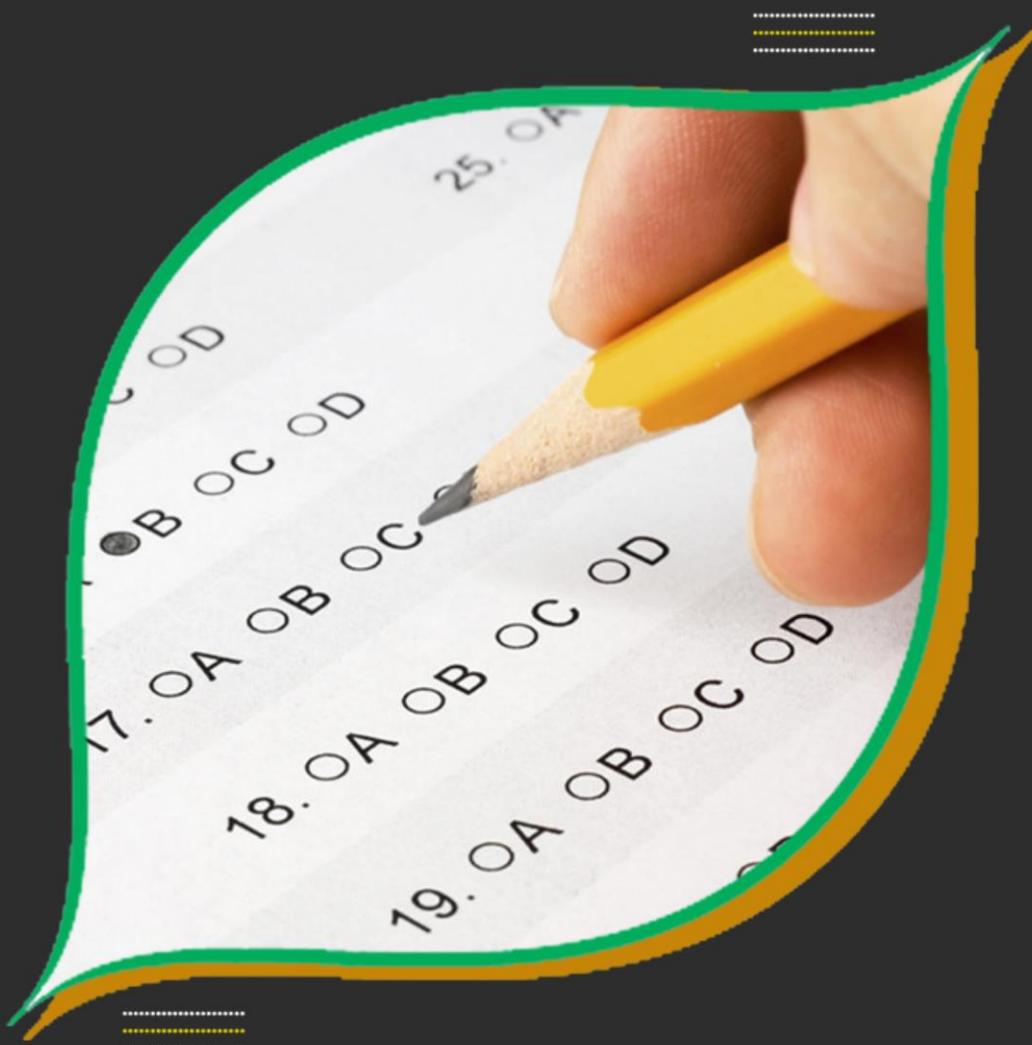


Monthly Current Affairs

June 2021

Practice Current Affairs MCQs



Monthly Current Affairs

June 2021

Important News: State

Assam Chief Minister appoints 'Guardian Ministers'

Why in the News?

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has appointed 'Guardian Ministers' for its various districts.

Key Points

- These guardians, each a minister of the Himanta Biswa Sarma Cabinet, have been given the responsibility of 2-3 districts to review implementation of all centrally-sponsored schemes & the state's own priority programmes.
- 13 ministers will be responsible for the implementation of the government's policy decision, administrative reforms and other welfare schemes for the public in the 34 districts.

Facts about Assam:

State Dance: Bihu Dance

State Bird: White-winged wood duck

State Animal: One-horned rhinoceros

State Flower: Foxtail orchids

State Tree: Hollong

Mekedatu Project

Why in the News?

- Recently, the Karnataka government has decided on legal action against the **National Green Tribunal**, setting up a committee to look into the alleged violations at Mekedatu, the proposed site for construction of a dam across the Kaveri (Cauvery) River.

Key Points

About Committee:

- The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** has formed a committee to submit a report on alleged violation of norms in the construction of a reservoir across the Cauvery River at Mekedatu in Karnataka.

Mekedatu Project

- It is a multipurpose (drinking and power) project, which involves building a balancing reservoir, near Kanakapura in Ramanagara district.
- The project once completed is aimed at ensuring drinking water to Bengaluru and neighboring areas (4.75 TMC) and also can generate 400 MW power, and the estimated cost of the project is Rs 9,000 crore.
- It was first approved by the Karnataka government in 2017.
- The approval from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is crucial because 63% of the forest area of the **Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary** will be submerged.

Note: In 2018, Tamil Nadu approached the Supreme Court against the project even if Karnataka had held that it would not affect the flow of water to Tamil Nadu

Reasons for opposition by Tamil Nadu:

- Tamil Nadu is opposed to any project being proposed in the upper riparian unless it was approved by the Supreme Court.
- Karnataka has no right to construct any reservoir on an inter-state river without the consent of the lower riparian state i.e. Tamil Nadu in this case.
- The project is against the final order of the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT)** in which the Supreme Court held that no state can claim exclusive ownership or assert rights to deprive other states of the waters of inter-state rivers.

Kaveri River

- **The Kaveri (also known as Cauvery)** is an Indian River flowing through the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- It is the third largest river – after Godavari and Krishna – in South India and the largest in the State of Tamil Nadu.

The Dispute:

- As the river originates in Karnataka, flows through Tamil Nadu with major tributaries coming from Kerala and drains into Bay of Bengal through Puducherry the dispute therefore involves 3 states and one Union Territory.

Recent Developments:

- The final verdict of the Supreme Court came in 2018 where it declared the Cauvery a national asset and largely upheld the water-sharing arrangements finalized by the CWDT and also reduced the allocation of water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu.
- As per the Supreme Court, Karnataka would get 284.75 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft), Tamil Nadu 404.25 tmcft, Kerala 30 tmcft and Puducherry 7 tmcft.
- It also directed the Centre to notify the **Cauvery Management Scheme**. The central government notified the '**Cauvery Water Management Scheme**' in June 2018, constituting the '**Cauvery Water Management Authority**' and the '**Cauvery Water Regulation Committee**'.

Madhya Pradesh government launches 'Ankur' scheme

Why in the News?

- Madhya Pradesh government launched 'Ankur' scheme to award people for planting trees during monsoon.
- People who take the initiative to plant saplings will be given the **Pranvayu Award** for their participation.

Key Points

About 'Ankur' scheme:

- The scheme will ensure public participation in the programme.
- People who wish to participate in the tree plantation drive can register themselves on the Vayudoott app.
- Participants need to upload a picture while planting the sapling and upload another photograph after taking care of the sapling for 30 days.
- After verification, the Chief Minister will give away the Pranvayu Award to winners selected from each district.

Indus Best Mega Food Park at Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Why in the News?

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurated the Indus Best Mega Food Park at Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Key Points



About Indus Best Mega Food Park:

- Mega Food Park is being implemented by M/s Indus Best Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd.
- M/s Indus Best Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd has been set up in 63.8 acres of land at a project cost of Rs. 145.5 crore.

Benefits:

- The Mega Food Park will ensure value addition, longer shelf life for farm produce, better price realization for farmers, excellent storage facility and will provide an alternate market for farmers in the region.
- The Park will also provide direct and indirect employment to about 5,000 persons and benefit about 25,000 farmers.

About Mega Food Park Scheme:

- Mega Food Park is a scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing, Government of India with the aim of establishing a "direct linkage from farm to processing and then to consumer markets" through a network of Collection Centres (CCs) and Primary Processing Centres (PPCs).
- The Mega Food Park project is implemented by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which is a Body Corporate registered under the Companies Act 2013.
- Under the Scheme, the Government of India provides financial assistance up to Rs. 50.00 Crore per Mega Food Park project.

Note:

- 42 Mega Food Parks have been sanctioned in six phases.
- Presently, 22 Mega Food Parks are operational.

Source: PIB

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Source: PIB

Madhya Pradesh to launch 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan'

Why in the News?

- In Madhya Pradesh, 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan' means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign will be launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic.

Key Points

About 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan':

- This campaign will be run by the Higher Education and Technical Education Department in collaboration with the Public Health and Family Welfare Department.
- In the Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan, college teachers and around 16 lakh students will be made aware of corona infection by learning Covid appropriate behavior and vaccination.

Facts about Madhya Pradesh:

- **Capital:** Bhopal
- **Governor:** Anandiben Patel
- **Chief Minister:** Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Bihar Chief Minister launches two new schemes to promote entrepreneurship among youth and women

Why in the News?

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched two new schemes- the '**Mukhya Mantri Yuva Udyaymi Yojna**' (**MYUY**) and the '**Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyaymi Yojna**' (**MMUY**) to promote entrepreneurship among youth and women of all sections under the state's '**Mukhaya Mantri Udyaymi Yojna**' scheme.

Key Points

'**Mukhya Mantri Udyaymi Yojna**' was started in 2018 and is limited to the members of SC, ST and the extremely backward classes (EBCs).

About 'Mukhya Mantri Yuva Udyaymi Yojna' (MYUY):

- Under the MYUY, an unemployed youth would be provided a sum of Rs 10 lakh to start a new enterprise or industry. Of the total Rs 10 lakh, Rs 5 lakh would be the subsidy amount which the youth need not to return, the rest Rs 5 lakh would be a loan on simple interest of 1%, to be returned in many installments.

About 'Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyaymi Yojna' (MMUY):

- Under the MMUY, an unemployed woman would be provided a sum of Rs 10 lakh to start a new business or small industry.
- Rs 10 lakh, Rs 5 lakh would be a subsidy amount which the woman doesn't need to return, while the rest Rs 5 lakh would be an interest-free loan, to be returned in many installments.

Source: TOI

Assam government signs MoU with Survey of India for implementing the SVAMITVA scheme

Why in the News?

- The Assam government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Survey of India** for implementing the **SVAMITVA scheme** in the state.

- It aims to provide an integrated property validation solution for rural areas.

Key Points

- The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and Assam Government's Department of Revenue and Disaster Management will implement the scheme with the support of the Panchayat and Rural Development.
- Survey of India, as the technology partner, will take steps for survey of inhabited rural land by drone as well as establishment of ground based control stations to enable a detailed spatial database of properties in rural areas.
- It is expected to reduce property related disputes in rural areas and legal cases.

About SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) Scheme:

- It is a Central Sector scheme launched by the Prime Minister of India on **National Panchayat Day i.e. 24th April 2020**.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is the Nodal Ministry for implementation of the scheme.
- **Survey of India** shall work as the technology partner for implementation.
- It aims to provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India.

About Survey of India:

- It is India's central engineering agency in charge of mapping and surveying. Set up in 1767, it is one of the oldest Engineering Departments of the Government of India.

Source: TOI

Delhi government's 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana'

Why in the News?

- The Delhi government's Social Welfare Department launched the 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana'.
- The scheme to provide financial assistance to families of those who died of COVID-19 was notified.

Key Points

- The scheme will offer a monthly financial assistance of ₹2,500 to the families of those who have lost their earning member and also a one-time compensation of ₹50,000 if a member has died due to COVID-19.

Note: Children who lost their both parents or single parent to COVID-19 will also be provided Rs 2,500 per month till they achieve 25 years of age. The government will also provide free education to them.

Source: TOI

Tamil Nadu constituted a 5-member economic advisory council

Why in the News?

- Tamil Nadu government constituted a **5-member economic advisory council** to the Chief Minister.

Five Members:

- **Esther Duflo**- Nobel Prize-winning economist
- **Raghuram Rajan**- Former RBI Governor
- **Arvind Subramanian**- Former Chief Economic Advisor to the GOI
- **S Narayan**- Former Union Finance Secretary
- **Jean Dreze**- Welfare economist and social scientist

Key Points

- The council will provide general guidance on economic and social policy, social justice and human development-related issues, and in matters related to equal opportunities for women and well-being of underprivileged groups.

Facts about Tamil Nadu:

- **Capital:** Chennai
- **Governor:** Banwarilal Purohit
- **Chief Minister:** M. K. Stalin

Source: The Hindu

NHRC forms 7-member panel to probe post-poll violence in West Bengal

- **Note:** Recently, TMC chief Mamata Banerjee was sworn-in as the Chief Minister of West Bengal for the third consecutive term.
- **About National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC):** NHRC is a statutory public body constituted on 12 October 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Ordinance of 28 September 1993. It was given a statutory basis by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

Source: TOI

Important News: India

Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Ayush launched the Ayush Clinical Case Repository (ACCR) Portal and the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App in a virtual event.

Key Points

About the Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal:

- It will serve as a platform to support both Ayush practitioners and the general public.
- This portal aims at aggregating information about clinical outcomes achieved by Ayush practitioners on a large scale.

About the third version of Ayush Sanjivani App:

- The third version of Ayush Sanjivani App will facilitate a significant study regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions, including **Ayush 64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines** in the management of asymptomatic and mild to moderate COVID 19 patients.
- First version was launched in May 2020.
- It is developed by the Ministry of Ayush and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Ayush 64** is a poly-herbal formulation developed by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences. Ayush 64 is useful in the treatment of asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID-19 infection. Initially the drug was developed for **Malaria** in the year 1980.
- **Kabasura Kudineer** is a traditional formulation used by Siddha practitioners. It is useful in the treatment of common respiratory health.

Related Initiatives:

- AYUSH Health and Wellness Centres
- **National Ayush Mission (NAM):** Government of India is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of NAM through States/UTs for development and promotion of AYUSH system of medicine.
- Recently, Government notification listed out specific surgical procedures by a postgraduate medical student of Ayurveda.

Traceability Provision in the new IT Rules 2021

Why in the News?

- Recently, Facebook-owned messaging platform WhatsApp has moved the Delhi High Court to challenge the traceability provision in the new IT Rules 2021.

Key Points

Traceability Provision:

- Traceability Provision is a part of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
- As per guidelines, significant social media intermediaries providing messaging services must identify the first originator of the information based on an order by the court or competent authority.
- **According to WhatsApp**, Requiring messaging apps to 'trace' chats is the equivalent of asking to keep a fingerprint of every single message sent on WhatsApp, which would **break end-to-end encryption and fundamentally undermines people's right to privacy**.



- WhatsApp has invoked the Puttaswamy Judgement 2017 to argue that the traceability provision is unconstitutional and against people's fundamental right to privacy.

End-to-end encryption ensures that no one can read the message, except for the sender and the receiver. This includes WhatsApp itself.

The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 is secondary or subordinate legislation that suppresses India's Intermediary Guidelines Rules 2011. The 2021 rules have stemmed from section 87 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 and are a combination of the draft Intermediaries Rules, 2018 and the OTT Regulation and Code of Ethics for Digital Media.

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare launched the Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (CDP) to ensure holistic growth of horticulture.

Key Points

About Cluster Development Programme (CDP):

- A central sector programme implemented by the **National Horticulture Board (NHB)** of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, CDP aims at growing and developing identified horticulture clusters to make them globally competitive.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has identified **53 horticulture clusters, of which 12 have been selected for the pilot launch of the programme.**
- CDP will benefit about 10 lakh farmers and related stakeholders of the value chain.
- CDP is expected to attract an estimated investment of INR 10,000 crore when implemented in all the 53 clusters.

Horticulture Sector in India:

- India is the second-largest producer of horticulture crops globally, accounting for approximately 12% of the world's production of vegetables and fruits.
- India is a leader in producing fruits like Banana, Mango, Pomegranate, Acid Lime, Aonla and Sapota.

Recent steps taken:

- The Ministry has provided an enhanced allocation of Rs. 2250 Crore for the year 2021-22 for '**MIDH-Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture**'.
- MIDH is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the holistic growth of the horticulture sector.

NCPCR launches Online Tracking Portal “Bal Swaraj (COVID-Care)”

Why in the News?

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)**, in furtherance to its function as a monitoring authority under section 109 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and in view of the growing problem related to children affected by COVID-19, has devised an online tracking portal "**Bal Swaraj (COVID-Care link)**" for child in need of care and protection.

Key Points

About “Bal Swaraj”:

- This portal of the Commission has been created with a purpose for **online tracking and digital real time monitoring mechanism of children** who are in need of care and protection.

- The Commission has extended the use of this portal for tracking children who have lost both their parents or either of the parents during COVID-19 and provided a link under the name of “**COVID-Care**” for uploading of data of such children by the concerned officer/department on the portal.

About NCPCR:

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** is an Indian statutory body established by an Act of Parliament, the **Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005**. The Commission works under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India. The Commission began operations on 5 March 2007.

NITI Aayog releases SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21

Why in the News?

- NITI Aayog has released the **third edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2020–21**.
- NITI Aayog launched the report titled, ‘**SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21: Partnerships in the Decade of Action**’.
- The index documents the progress made by India’s States and Union Territories towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets.
- The SDG India Index 2020–21, developed in collaboration with the United Nations in India, tracks progress of all States and UTs on 115 indicators that are aligned to MoSPI’s National Indicator Framework (NIF).
- The 115 indicators incorporate 16 out of 17 SDGs, with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17, and cover 70 SDG targets.

Key Points

Methodology

- The SDG India Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and Union Territory.
- Overall State and UT scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure aggregate performance of the sub-national unit based on its performance across the 16 SDGs.
- These scores range between 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the 2030 targets. The higher the score of a State/UT, the greater the distance to target achieved.
- States and Union Territories are classified as below based on their SDG India Index score:
 Aspirant: 0–49
 Performer: 50–64
 Front-Runner: 65–99
 Achiever: 100

Overall Results and Findings

- The country’s overall SDG score improved by 6 points—from 60 in 2019 to 66 in 2020–21.
- This positive stride towards achieving the targets is largely driven by exemplary country-wide performance in Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and Goal 7(Affordable and Clean Energy), where the composite Goal scores are 83 and 92, respectively.
- Kerala has the top rank with a score of 75** followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu with 74 points.

- **Bihar has emerged as the worst performer with the lowest score of 52** followed by Jharkhand with score of 56.
- In **Union Territories: Chandigarh has topped the list with the score of 79.**
- **Note:** Mizoram, Haryana, and Uttarakhand are the top gainers in 2020–21 in terms of improvement in score from 2019, with an increase of 12, 10 and 8 points, respectively.

Union Cabinet approves Agreement on Mass Media Cooperation SCO

Why in the News?

- The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for signing and ratification of an agreement on "Cooperation in the field of Mass Media" between all the member states of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- The agreement, which was signed in June 2019, would provide an opportunity to the member states to share best practices and new innovations in the field of mass media.

Key Points

Main areas of cooperation:

- Creation of favorable conditions for wide and mutual distribution of information through mass media in order to further deepen the knowledge about the lives of the peoples of their states.
- Cooperation among the editorial offices of the mass media of their states, as well as among relevant ministries, agencies.
- It will assist in broadcasting of television and radio programmes and those, distributed legally within the territory of the state of the other side.
- The agreement will encourage the exchange of experience and specialists in the field of mass media, provide mutual assistance in training media professionals and encourage cooperation among the educational and scientific research institutions.

Facts about SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.

- **Formed:** 15 June 2001
- **Members:** China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.
- **Headquarter:** Beijing, China

India became a full member of the SCO in 2017. Prior to that, India had an observer status, which was granted to it in 2005.

SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) initiative and SAGE portal

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment launched the SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) initiative and SAGE portal for elderly persons.
- An amount of **Rs 100 crore** has been assigned for the promotion of the **silver economy**.

About Silver economy

- It is the system of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services aimed at using the purchasing potential of older and ageing people and satisfying their consumption, living and health needs.

Key points

About SAGE portal

- The SAGE portal will be a “one-stop access” of elderly care products and services by credible start-ups.



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- SAGE programme and SAGE portal have been launched with a view to help such persons who are interested in entrepreneurship in the field of providing services for elderly care.
- The start-ups selected under SAGE will be those which will provide new innovative products and services to elderly persons in various areas like health, travel, finance, legal, housing, food among others.
- **An allocation of Rs 25 crores** has been made for the SAGE project in the **current financial year i.e 2021-22**.
- The SAGE project is shaped on the recommendations of the empowered expert committee (EEC) report on start-ups for elderly.

Need for the Initiative

- India's elderly population is on the rise, and as per surveys, the share of elders, as a percentage of the total population in the country, is expected to increase from around 7.5% in 2001 to almost 12.5% by 2026 and surpass 19.5% by 2050.

Other Government Initiatives for Elderly people

- Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP)
- Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)
- Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVYY)
- Vayoshreshtha Samman
- Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSC) Act, 2007
- Senior Citizen Welfare Fund

Source: PIB

India's first International Maritime Services Cluster to set up at GIFT City

Why in the News?

- **Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB)** will be setting up India's first international maritime services cluster at GIFT City in Gujarat.

Key Points

- The Maritime Cluster will be developed as a dedicated ecosystem comprising ports, shipping, logistics services providers and pertinent government regulators, all present in the same geographic vicinity.

About Maritime Services Cluster:

- This will be the first of its kind commercial maritime services cluster in India which has been conceptualized to enhance competitiveness and self-sufficiency of India in the maritime sector and provide a one-stop solution for the entire maritime fraternity.

About Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City):

- GIFT City is India's first operational smart city and International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
- GIFT City has state-of-the art infrastructure and world-class banking facilities and institutions that will be beneficial for fostering innovation, economic viability, collaboration, and business opportunities for the Cluster.

About Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB):

- The Gujarat Maritime Board - a Government of Gujarat undertaking, and the first maritime board of India was set up in 1982.
- It is responsible for the development, administration, operation and regulation of the 48 Non-Major Ports as well as for the development of other maritime / shipping activities in the state of Gujarat.

Source: TOI

CBSE to introduce Coding, Data Science in Curriculum

Why in the News?

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) collaborated with Microsoft to introduce Coding for class VI-VIII and Data Science curriculum for class VIII-XII as new skilling subjects in the 2021-2022 academic session.

Key Points

About Coding and Data Science Curriculum:

- In keeping with the NEP (National Education Policy) 2020, the introduction of these courses aims to build next-generation skills in students.
- Coding and Data Science Curriculum are focused on building critical thinking, computational skills, problem-solving skills, creativity and hands-on exposure to new technologies.

Source: The Hindu

'Awareness Campaign on Single Use plastics' and 'India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021'

Why in the News?

- The Union Environment Minister launched a two-month 'Awareness Campaign on Single Use plastics' and 'India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021'.
- The Government of India had set a target to phase out single use plastics by 2022.

Key Points

About Single Use Plastics:

- Plastics that are thrown away after their first use are known as single-use plastics.
- According to the United Nations, much of the plastics produced today are designed to be thrown away after first use.

About 'Awareness Campaign on Single Use plastics':

- GIZ (The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH), UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) along with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, are organizing the two-month long awareness campaign.
- It will comprise of four on-line regional events and a social media campaign to spread the message of mitigation of plastic pollution to a wider audience.

About 'India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021':

- The 'India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021' is a unique competition calling upon start-ups /entrepreneurs and students of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to develop innovative solutions to mitigate plastic pollution and develop alternatives to single use plastics.

Initiatives taken by India:

- The Government of India has already banned import of plastic waste in the country.

Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016:

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for the first time brought out **Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016**, for handling plastic waste in an environmentally sound manner.
- Under the rules, plastic carry bags below 50 microns have been banned.
- Further, the Ministry has issued a draft notification in March 2021 for amending the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, with respect to prohibiting identified 12 single use plastic items such as disposable plastic cutlery etc.

Source: PIB

Cabinet approves allotment of 5 MHz spectrum in 700 MHz band to Indian Railways

Why in the News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for allotment of 5 MHz Spectrum in 700 MHz frequency band to Indian Railways for public safety and security services at stations and in trains.

Note: In addition to this, Indian Railways has approved **TCAS (Train Collision Avoidance System)**.

Key Points

- The estimated investment in the project is more than Rs. 25,000 Crore. The project will be completed in the next 5 years.
- The Spectrum charges may be levied based on formula basis as prescribed by Department of Telecommunications for Royalty Charges and License Fee for Captive use as recommended by **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India**.
- With this spectrum, Indian Railways has envisaged to provide **LTE (Long Term Evolution)** based **Mobile Train Radio Communication** on its route.

About LTE (Long-Term Evolution):

- It is a 4G wireless standard that provides increased network capacity and speed for cellphones and other cellular devices compared with 3G technologies.

Purpose

- The purpose of the LTE for Indian Railways is to provide secure and reliable voice, video and data communication services for operational, safety and security applications.
- It will also enable **Internet of Things (IoT)** based remote asset monitoring especially of coaches, wagons & locos, and live video feed of CCTV cameras in the train coaches.

About TCAS (Train Collision Avoidance System):

- It, an indigenously developed ATP (Automatic Train Protection) System, which will help in avoiding train collisions thereby reducing accidents and ensuring passenger safety.

About Radio Spectrum:

- The radio spectrum is the part of the electromagnetic spectrum with frequencies from 30 Hz to 300 GHz.
- Electromagnetic waves in this frequency range, called radio waves, are widely used in modern technology, particularly in telecommunication.
- To prevent interference between different users, the generation and transmission of radio waves is strictly regulated by national laws, coordinated by an international body, the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**.

Source: PIB

‘Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan’ launched in 112 Aspirational Districts

Why in the News?

- NITI Aayog** and **Piramal Foundation** launched ‘Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan’ in 112 Aspirational Districts to assist district administrations in providing home-care support to COVID-19 patients who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.

Key Points



Objective

- The campaign is expected to play a key role in district preparedness for managing nearly 70% of COVID cases at home, reducing pressure on the health system, and stemming the spread of fear amongst the people.

About Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan:

- The Abhiyaan is being part of a special initiative, **Aspirational Districts Collaborative**, in which local leaders, civil societies and volunteers work with district administrations to address emerging problems across key focus areas of the **Aspirational Districts Programme**.
- Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan will be led by district magistrates in partnership with over 1000 local NGOs, which will enlist and train over 1 lakh volunteers to connect with patients through inbound/outbound calls.
- Volunteers will be trained to support 20 affected families each by educating caretakers to follow COVID protocols, provide psycho-social support and timely updates about patients to the administration.
- Piramal Foundation will work with district magistrates to support the training of NGOs and volunteers.

About Aspirational Districts Programme

- The Government of India has launched the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' initiative in January 2018 with a vision of a New India by 2022.
- The focus is to improve India's ranking under Human Development Index, raising living standards of its citizens and ensuring inclusive growth of all.
- Source: PIB**

Union Cabinet approves “Deep Ocean Mission”

Why in the News?

- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** has approved the proposal of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** on "Deep Ocean Mission".
- It explores the Deep Ocean for resources and develops deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.
- MoES will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.

Key Points

About "Deep Ocean Mission":

- Deep Ocean Mission will be a mission mode project to support the **Blue Economy Initiatives** of the Government of India.
- The estimated cost of the Mission will be Rs. 4077 crore for a period of 5 years to be implemented in a phase-wise manner.
- This mission will make India one among the handful of powerful nations that already have dedicated ocean studies and missions, including the **US, Japan, France, Russia and China**.

Major Components of the Deep Ocean Mission:

- Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible
- Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity
- Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration
- Energy and freshwater from the Ocean
- Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology

Significance of Mission:

- Oceans, which cover 70 percent of the globe, remain a key part of our life. About 95 percent of the Deep Ocean remains unexplored.
- For India, with its three sides surrounded by the oceans and around 30 percent of the country's population living in coastal areas, the ocean is a major economic factor supporting fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, livelihoods and blue trade.
- India's 7517 km long coastline is home to nine coastal states and 1382 islands.
- Considering the importance of the oceans on sustainability, the United Nations has declared the decade, 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

About Blue Economy:

- The blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

Other Blue Economy Initiatives:

- Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology (O-SMART) Scheme
- India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development
- Sagarmala Project
- National Fisheries Policy
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management

MoU for development of Sea Plane services in India

Why in the News?

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** and **Ministry of Civil Aviation** for development of Sea Plane services in India was signed.

Note: India's first sea plane service between Kevadia and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad started operation in October 2020, under Sagarmala Sea plane Services.

Key Points

- This MoU envisages **development of Non Scheduled/Scheduled operation of seaplane** services within territorial jurisdiction of India under **RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik scheme)** of government of India.
- As per MoU, a Co-ordination Committee with officials of Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is to be set up for timely completion of operationalisation of Seaplane services at various locations.
- MoCA, MoPSW, SDCL (Sagarmala Development Company Limited) will consider operationalising Seaplane operating routes as identified/suggested by all agencies.
- It will enhance seamless connectivity across the nation by promoting eco-friendly transportation through Sea planes and to boost the tourism industry.

About UDAN Scheme:

- **RCS-UDAN, "Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik"** is a Government of India's flagship program which aims to provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on regional routes.
- This **Regional Connectivity Scheme** offers a unique opportunity to a common man to fly at an affordable price.
- The UDAN Scheme is a key component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (India) on 15 June 2016.



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About UDAN 4.1:

- The UDAN 4.1 scheme focuses on connecting smaller airports, along with special helicopter and sea plane routes.

Sagarmala Sea plane Services:

- Sagarmala Seaplane Services is a project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- This project is being initiated under a Special Purpose Vehicle framework through airline operators.
- The project execution and implementation would be through **Sagarmala Development Company Ltd (SDCL)**.

Rs 40,700 crores allocated under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) towards SLWM support for over 2 lakh villages in 2021-22

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti under **Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G)** Phase 2 is set to support over 2 lakh villages achieve **Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)** arrangements through an investment of over Rs. 40,700 crores in the present FY 2021-22.
- The National Scheme Sanctioning Committee of SBM-G under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti approved the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) of States and UTs.

Key Points

- SBM (G) Phase 2 aims at achieving comprehensive cleanliness in villages also called ODF Plus status by focusing on ODF sustainability and ensuring SLWM arrangements in villages.
- Implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen Phase 2 in 2021-2022 will see construction of over 50 lakh Individual Household toilets (IHHLs), one Lakh Community toilets, Plastic Waste Management Units in over 2400 Blocks of India, Gobardhan projects in 386 Districts, Faecal sludge management arrangements in over 250 Districts apart from the targeted support for over 2 lakh villages in implementation of SLWM interventions.

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM):

- Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is a country-wide campaign initiated by the Government of India in 2014 to eliminate **open defecation** and improve **solid waste management**.
- Phase 1 of the Swachh Bharat mission lasted till October 2019. Phase 2 is being implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25.
- The mission was split into two: rural and urban.

Other Schemes as part of SBM:

- GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) Scheme
- Individual Household Latrines (IHHL)
- Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan

Source: PIB

14 Cross-Disability Early Intervention Centres for children

Why in the News?

- The Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot inaugurated 14 Cross-Disability Early Intervention Centres located at 7 National Institutes and 7



Composite Regional Centres under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan).

Key Points

About Disability Early Intervention Centres:

- The Centres will provide screening and identification, rehabilitation, counselling, therapeutic services among others for different disabilities under one roof and in a contiguous manner.
- These 14 Early Intervention Centers have been started in Mumbai, Dehradun, Delhi, Secunderabad, Kolkata, Cuttack, Lucknow, Chennai, Surendranagar, Bhopal, Rajnandgaon, Patna, Nellore and Kozhikode.
- The **Handbook on Early Intervention Centres for Children with Disabilities** was also released on the occasion.

Need:

- According to the 2011 Census, there are more than 20 lakh children with disabilities in the age group of 0-6 years, who belong to the categories of visually impaired, hearing impaired, locomotor disability etc.
- This means that around 7 percent of children in this age group suffer from some form of disability.
- These are expected to increase with the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016, as there are now 21 categories in the disability category instead of 7.

Other Initiatives:

- Right of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016
- Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Portal
- Accessible India Campaign
- DeenDayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme
- Schemes of the National Trust
- National Fellowship for Students with Disabilities

Source: PIB

'Customized Crash Course' Programme for COVID 19 Frontline workers

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the **six 'Customized Crash Course'** programme for COVID 19 Frontline workers under the **Skill India Scheme**.
- The training programme would be conducted in **111 training centres spread over 26 states**.
- About **one lakh** frontline workers will be trained in this initiative.

Key Points

About the course:

- The training will be imparted to COVID warriors in six customised job roles namely Home Care Support, Basic Care Support, Advanced Care Support, Emergency Care Support, Sample Collection Support, and Medical Equipment Support.
- The course programme is designed as a special programme under the Central Component of **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0**, with a financial outlay of ₹276 crore.
- The course programme will create skilled non-medical healthcare workers to fill the present and future needs of manpower in the health sector.

About Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana:

- The **1st version** of **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKSY)** was **launched in 2015** to encourage and promote skill development by providing free short duration skill training.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKSY) 2.0 (2016-20)** was launched by scaling up sectors, geographies and by greater alignment with other missions / programs of Government of India such as Digital India, Make in India and Swachh Bharat Mission.
- **PMKSY 3.0** shall be implemented in two phases: **1st phase** shall be implemented on pilot basis during the year 2020- 21 known as PMKSY 3.0 (2020-21).
- The scheme shall initiate the creation of an implementation framework for the **2nd phase** (2021-2026).

Source: PIB

Union Cabinet approves Inland Vessels Bill 2021

Why in the News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Inland Vessels Bill 2021 which looks at streamlining vessels running on inland waterways in the country.
- Inland Vessels Bill 2021 will replace the Inland Vessels Act, 1917.
- The Bill will regulate safety and registration of inland vessels.

Key Points

About Inland Vessel Bill 2021:

- The Inland Vessel Bill, 2021 will act as a unified law for the country in place of separate rules framed by the States.
- It will aid in providing a central database for keeping records of vessel registration, crew, and details of vessels.
- The bill will create pollution control measures for Inland Vessels.
- It expands the scope of 'inland water' by including national waterways.

Inland Water Transport (IWT) in India:

- As of now, 4,000 km of inland waterways are operational in the country.
- There are about 14,500 km of navigable waterways including rivers, backwaters, canals, creeks, etc, in the country.
- 111 waterways have been declared as National Waterways as per the National Waterways Act, 2016.
- The Inland Water Transport in the country is a fuel-efficient and environment-friendly mode of moving around 55 million tonnes of cargo.
- The **National Waterway 1 (NW-1)**: Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Prayagraj-Haldia) with length 1620 km is the longest National Waterway in India.

Inland Waterways Authority of India:

- **Formed:** 27 October 1986
- **Headquarters:** Noida, Uttar Pradesh
- **Chairman:** Amita Prasad
- **Parent department :** Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Source: The Hindu

Important News: World

India elected to UN Economic and Social Council

Why in the News?

- India has been elected to the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** for the term 2022-24 in the Asia-Pacific States Category along with Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, and Oman.

Key Points

About United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

- ECOSOC is one of the six principal organs of the UN, responsible for coordinating the economic and social fields of the organization.
- It was established on 26 June 1945.
- The Council consists of 54 Member States.

Note:

- India is currently serving the 2021-22 term as a **non-permanent member** of the **UN Security Council** and will assume the Presidency of the 15-nation UN organ in August 2021.

Source: Times of India

G7: Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate

Why in the News?

- The **Finance Ministers from the G7** nations reached a landmark accord setting a Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate on multinational companies.
- The decision regarding the Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate will now be discussed in detail at a meeting of G20 financial ministers and central bank governors in July 2021.

Key Points

About Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate:

- G7 would back a **minimum global corporation tax rate of at least 15%** and put in place measures to ensure taxes were paid in the countries where businesses operate.
- **Corporation tax** is a direct tax imposed on the net income or profit those enterprises make from their businesses.

Applicability:

- It would apply to companies' overseas profits. Therefore, if countries agree on a global minimum, governments could still set whatever local corporate tax rate they want.
- But if companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments could "top-up" their taxes to the agreed minimum rate, eliminating the advantage of shifting profits to a tax haven.

Need of Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate:

- Reduce Tax Loss
- To Bring Uniformity

Other International Effort:

- OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has been coordinating tax negotiations among 140 countries for years on rules for taxing cross-border digital services and curbing tax base erosion, including a global corporate minimum tax.

India's Stand:

- India is likely to benefit from the global minimum 15% corporate tax rate pact as the effective domestic tax rate is above the threshold, and the country would continue to attract investment.
- In September 2019, the government had reduced the corporate tax rate to 22% for companies that gave up all exemptions and incentives. Further, a 15% rate was offered to new manufacturing firms.
- For Indian domestic companies, the effective tax rate, inclusive of surcharge and cess, is around 25.17%.

Facts about G7:

- It is an intergovernmental organisation.
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Members:** United Kingdom, United States, Japan, France, Germany, Canada, Italy
- All the G7 countries and India are a part of G20.

Source: The Hindu

Global database “I-Familia” to identify missing persons launched

Why in the News?

- The **Interpol** has launched a new global database named “I-Familia” to identify missing persons through family **DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid)** and help the police solve cold cases in member countries.

Key Points

About “I-Familia”:

- The first of its kind, I-Familia is a global database for identifying missing persons based on international DNA kinship matching.
- Interpol’s I-Familia service provides the necessary international mechanism to allow missing persons DNA data to be compared globally.
- I-Familia is powered by Bonaparte, a forensic DNA matching software system developed by SMART Research.

About Interpol:

- The **International Criminal Police Organization**, commonly known as **Interpol**, is an international organization that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control.

Headquarters: Lyon, France

President: Kim Jong Yang

Founded: 7 September 1923

Source: The Hindu

5th edition of VivaTech

Why in the News?

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the 5th edition of VivaTech 2021.

Key Points

About VivaTech:

- VivaTech is one of the largest digital and startup events in Europe, held in Paris every year since 2016.
- It is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe – a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate and Les Echos – a leading French media group.

- It brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem and includes exhibitions, awards, panel discussions and startup contests.

Key Points of the speech:

- **Infosys** is providing tech support for the French Open tournament and collaboration involving French companies like Atos, Capgemini and India's **TCS and Wipro** as examples of IT talent of the two countries serving companies and citizens all over the world.
- India's universal and unique **bio-metric digital identity system - Aadhar** - helped to provide timely financial support to the poor.
- Two public digital education programmes- **Swayam and Diksha** - in quick time to help students.
- Indigenous IT platform, **Arogya-Setu** enabled effective contact tracing.
- The **COWIN digital platform** has already helped ensure vaccines to millions.
- The Prime Minister enumerated initiatives like **state-of-the-art public digital infrastructure, five hundred and twenty three thousand kilometres of fibre optic network linking One hundred and fifty six thousand village councils**, public wi-fi networks across the country.
- There are state-of-the-art innovation labs in Seven Thousand Five Hundred schools under the **Atal Innovation Mission**.

IIT Bombay hosts Conference of BRICS Network Universities as part of 13th BRICS Summit

Why in the News?

- A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the **theme of electric mobility** was hosted by IIT Bombay.
- This conference was part of the engagements that **India** is hosting under the education stream during its **Chairship of the 13th BRICS Summit this year**.

Key Points

- Eighteen experts from Brazil, Russia, India, China and S. Africa talked about various aspects of electric mobility like traffic management, hydrogen technology, hybrid vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and linkage between e-mobility and livelihoods.

About BRICS Network University:

- It is a union of higher education institutions of the five BRICS member countries, formed with the objective of enhancing educational cooperation in general, and especially in the realm of research and innovation.
- IIT Bombay is the lead institution of India for the BRICS Network University.

Note: The **13th BRICS Summit** will be held under India's Chairship in 2021, and it will be the third time India will host the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.

- The theme for India's Chairship for 2021 would be '**BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus**'.

Facts about BRICS:

- **Formation:** 2009
- **Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

SIPRI Report: China, India, Pakistan expanding nuclear arsenal

Why in the News?

- Swedish think tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) launched the findings of **SIPRI Yearbook 2021**, which assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security.

Key Points

- India has an estimated **156 nuclear warheads** at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year.
- Pakistan- 165 nuclear warheads
- China- 350 nuclear warheads
- Russia- 6255 nuclear warheads
- USA- 5550 nuclear warheads
- **The U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea** - together possessed an estimated **13,080 nuclear weapons** at the start of 2021.
- **The U.S. and Russia** together possessed over **90%** of global nuclear weapons.

Note:

- **India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China and Australia** were the five largest **importers** of major arms in the world between 2016 and 2020.
- Saudi Arabia had 11 percent share and **India 9.5 percent** in the global **imports** of the major arms in this time period.

Treaties Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Testing:

- Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

India's Nuclear Weapon Program:

- India tested its first nuclear device in May 1974.
- However, India has a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) allowing it to participate in global civilian nuclear technology commerce.
- India was admitted as a member into the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016 and Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017.

75th session of UNGA on prevention of HIV/AIDS

Why in the News?

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare addressed the 75th session of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
- The Union Health Minister spoke on **UNGA Resolution 75/260** which concerns the **Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS**.

Key Points

Main points of address:

- In India, the **HIV & AIDS Prevention and Control Act, 2017**, provides a legal and enabling framework to safeguard the human rights of infected and affected populations.
- India's unique HIV prevention model is centered around the concept of 'Social Contracting' through which the 'Targeted Interventions Program' is implemented with support from civil society.
- The program is aimed at behaviour change, communication, outreach, service delivery, counselling & testing and ensuring linkages to HIV care.
- India is providing free anti-retro-viral treatment to close to 1.4 million people.

- Indian drugs are also reaching millions of People living with HIV in Africa.

India's National AIDS Control Program:

- **NACO (National AIDS Control Organisation)**, established in 1992 is a division of India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that provides leadership to **HIV/AIDS control programme** in India through **35 HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Societies**.
- India's National AIDS Control Program has been **Revised, Revived and Revamped** to focus on hard-to-reach and at-risk populations.

SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) and HIV/AIDS: There are a number of SDGs related to the HIV response:

- SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.
- Target 3.3: **End AIDS as a public health threat by 2030**
- SDG 4: Quality education
- SDG 5: Gender equality
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions

Other Initiatives:

- The Red Ribbon
- Project Sunrise
- 90-90-90
- GFATM (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus):

- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is an infection that attacks the body's immune system, specifically the white blood cells called CD4 cells.
- HIV destroys these CD4 cells, weakening a person's immunity against infections such as tuberculosis and some cancers.

Source: PIB

47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021.
- The 47th G7 summit was held on 11–13 June 2021 in **Cornwall in the United Kingdom** while it held the presidency of the G7.
- Apart from India, South Korea, South Africa, and Australia were also invited to participate in the proceedings of the summit as "**Guest Countries**".
- **Note:** Earlier, the Finance Ministers from the G7 reached a landmark accord setting a **Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate**.

Key Points

Build Back Better World (B3W) Project:

- **B3W Project** will collectively catalyse hundreds of billions of infrastructure investment for low- and middle-income countries (in Asia and Africa) and offer a values-driven, high-standard and transparent partnership with G7.

Democracies 11:

- Signed off on a joint statement (Democracies 11) by G7 and Guest Countries on "open societies" that reaffirms and encourages the values of freedom of expression, both online and offline, as a freedom that safeguards democracy.
- The statement also refers to politically motivated internet shutdowns as one of the threats to freedom and democracy.

Carbis Bay Declaration:

- The G7 signed the Carbis Bay Declaration. It is aimed at preventing future pandemics.
- The G7 also pledged over 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses for poorer nations with half of that coming from the United States and 100 million from Britain.

Climate Change:

- Pledged to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

India's Stand:

- India is a natural ally for the G7 countries in defending the shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation, and economic coercion.
- It sought the support of the grouping to lift patent protections for COVID-19 vaccines.
- Planet's atmosphere, biodiversity and oceans cannot be protected by countries acting in silos, and called for collective action on climate change.
- India is the only G-20 country on track to meet its Paris commitments.

Facts about G7:

- It is an intergovernmental organisation.
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Members:** United Kingdom, United States, Japan, France, Germany, Canada and Italy

Source: Indian Express

El Salvador becomes first country to adopt bitcoin as legal tender

Why in the News?

- El Salvador has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender.
- Its use as legal tender will begin in 90 days, with the bitcoin-dollar exchange rate set by the market.

Key Points

- The use of bitcoin will be optional for individuals and would not bring risks to users.
- Bitcoin could boost the economy, help counter El Salvador's low banking penetration rate and facilitate faster transfers for \$6 billion of remittances a year.

About Bitcoin:

- 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.

Facts about El Salvador:

- **President:** Nayib Bukele
- **Capital:** San Salvador
- **Currency:** United States Dollar (USD)

Source: The Hindu

42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference

Why in the News?

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar addressed the 42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference.
- India is a founder member of the FAO and has played a significant role since inception as Chair and member of various statutory bodies and committees.

Key Points

India's efforts for Food Security during the COVID 19 pandemic:



- The Agriculture sector in India performed well during the severe COVID-19 pandemic and registered an all time high production of **305 million tons of food grains** as well as their exports contributing to the Global Food Security.
- Special parcel trains with refrigeration facilities “**KISAN RAIL**” were introduced by Indian Railways.
- The Government of India launched the “**Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package**”. Under this scheme, free food grains were provided to 810 million beneficiaries.
- More than **Rupees 137000 Crore** have been sent to the bank accounts of over 100 million farmers under the “**PM Kisan**” Scheme to provide income support to the farmers.

Climate change and Agriculture schemes:

- Green India Mission
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- Sub-mission on AgroForestry
- Soil Health Card
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region
- India has launched various projects under the **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture** to develop, demonstrate and disseminate the techniques to make agriculture resilient to adverse impacts of climate change.
- The Green Revolution, White Revolution, blue revolution along with the Public Distribution System and price support system for farmers.
- Facts about Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):**

Formation: 16 October 1945

Headquarters: Rome, Italy

Parent organization: United Nations Economic and Social Council

Director-General: Qu Dongyu

Note:

- To commemorate the long-standing relationship between India and the FAO, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi had released a special **75 rupees commemorative coin** to mark the **75th anniversary of the FAO** on 16th Oct 2020.

Source: PIB

8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus

Why in the News?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called for an open and inclusive order in Indo-Pacific based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations while addressing the **8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus** on June 16, 2021.
- Brunei is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum in 2021.

Key Points

About ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus:

- The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.

Facts about Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- The 10 member countries of ASEAN** are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia
- Founded:** 8 August 1967



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Key points of the meeting:

- India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as important platforms for implementation of shared vision for the Indo-Pacific.
- India's support to freedom of navigation, over-flight and unimpeded commerce for all in international waters in accordance with the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.
- The **Sea lanes of Communication** are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region.
- On the '**Act East Policy**', announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2014, the key elements of the policy aim to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in the Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.
- As a member of the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, India remains committed to combat financing of terrorism.
- Through the **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** operations, India remains one of the first to respond in times of distress in the immediate as well as extended neighbourhood.
- As a founding member of the **Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM)**, India seeks to enhance capacity building through collaboration in the areas of Maritime Search & Rescue.

Source: PIB

G20 Education Ministers' Meeting

Why in the News?

- The Minister of State for Education Sanjay Dhotre addressed the meeting of the G20 Education Ministers on 22nd June 2021.
- The meeting was hosted in blended mode by **Italy**.

Key Points

- G20 Education Ministers exchanged views on how to progress on the fight against educational poverty and inequalities, especially in context of the COVID-19.
- The Education Ministers also resolved to share innovative experiences implemented during the COVID-19 to ensure the continuity and quality of learning pathways through **blended education**.
- **Blended learning** is an approach that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods.

Education in India:

- **India's Efforts:** Increasing intake capacity of schools; tracking out-of-school children; monitoring the learning outcomes of vulnerable students; mid-day meals to ensure health of children; ensuring physical safety & zero tolerance to breach of child rights; enabling mechanisms for Children with Special Needs; promoting multiple pathways to learning and strengthening open and distance learning programmes.
- **Digital educational** content has been made available on various e-learning platforms like **SWAYAM**, **DIKSHA** and several others which can be accessed by Anyone, Anytime, and Anywhere free of cost.
- Permissible **online component** in conventional education has been increased from 20% to 40%.

- A **National Education Technology Forum** is being set up under **NEP 2020** to aid technology led education.
- The Government also took special care to address mental health issues of students through counseling programmes like **Manodarpan** and others.
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** aims that **by 2025, at least 50%** of learners in the school and higher education system would have exposure to **vocational education**.
- Vertical mobility for students from the vocational stream is being ensured through a **National Skills Qualifications Framework**.
- Standards under this framework will be aligned with the **International Standard Classification of Occupations** maintained by **the International Labour Organization (ILO)**.

Facts about G20:

Formation: 26 September 1999

Members:

(Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and European Union)

Source: PIB

20

G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting

Why in the News?

- **Union Minister for Labour and Employment Santosh Gangwar** delivered the Ministerial Address on **Declaration and Employment Working Group (EWG)** Priorities at G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting.
- India is making collective efforts to reduce gender gaps in **labour force participation**.

Key Points

Issues Discussed:

- The Employment Working Group (EWG) deliberated upon key issues, including women employment, social security and remote working.
- The subject for the meeting being Fostering an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient recovery of labour markets and societies.
- In 2014, G20 Leaders pledged in Brisbane to reduce the gap in **labour force participation rates** between men and women by **25% by 2025**.

Initiatives by India:

- The country is ensuring education, skilling, training, entrepreneurship development and equal pay for equal work.
- The **New Code on Wages, 2019** shall reduce gender-based discrimination in wages, recruitment and conditions of employment.
- The duration of paid **maternity leave** has been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks.
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)** provides financial support to women entrepreneurs to start small enterprises. There have been around 70% accounts of women in this Scheme. Collateral free loans worth Rupees 9 thousand billion have been disbursed under this scheme.
- The **New Code on Social Security** may now include even self-employed and all other classes of workforce into the folds of social security coverage.
- **The G20 Roadmap Towards and Beyond the Brisbane Target** has been developed for achieving equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men in our labour markets as well as societies in general.



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Labour Force Participation:

- The labor force participation rate indicates the percentage of all people of working age who are employed or are actively seeking work.
- According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, 2018-19, the female labour force participation rates (LFPR) among women aged above 15 years are as low as 26.4% in rural areas and 20.4% in urban areas in **India**.
- In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, female labor force participation in India was 23.5%, according to ILO estimates.

Note: G20 Leaders' Summit 2021 will convene in October 2021 in Rome Italy. For 2021, the G20, under the Italian Presidency, will focus on three broad, interconnected pillars of action: People, Planet, and Prosperity.

Source: PIB

Important News: Economy

World Bank: Indian Economy to grow at 8.3% in 2021

Why in the News?

- The World Bank slashed its 2021-22 GDP growth forecast for the Indian economy to 8.3 percent from 10.1 percent estimated in April 2021.

Key Points:

For India:

- The Washington-based global lender, in its latest issue of Global Economic Prospects June 2021 said India's economy is expected to grow at **8.3% for Fiscal Year 2021-22, 7.5% for 2022-23 and 6.5% for 2023-24.**

For World:

- The global economy is set to expand by 5.6 per cent in 2021 - its strongest post-recession pace in 80 years.

Steps Taken by India:

- The government announced that the health-related spending would more than double and set out a revised medium-term fiscal path intended to address the economic legacy of the pandemic.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced further measures to support liquidity provision to micro, small and medium firms, and loosened regulatory requirements on the provisioning for non-performing loans.

About World Bank:

- The World Bank was created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference.
- It comprises two institutions: the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**, and the **International Development Association (IDA)**.
- The World Bank is a component of the **World Bank Group**.

The World Bank Group's five international organizations

- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
- International Development Association (IDA)
- International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
- International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)

Membership

- 189 countries (IBRD)
- 173 countries (IDA)

Major Reports:

- World Development Report
- Ease of Doing Business
- Human Capital Index
- Global Economic Prospects
- Migration and Development Brief

Source: The Hindu

India 5th largest recipient of FDI inflows: UNCTAD Report

Why in the News?

- India received \$64 billion in **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in 2020, the 5th largest recipient of inflows in the world, according to the **World Investment Report 2021** released by the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**.

Key Points

- **Global FDI** flows have been severely hit by the pandemic and they plunged by 35 percent in 2020 to \$1 trillion from \$1.5 trillion in 2019.
- **FDI Inflows in 2020:**
Rank 1: US
Rank 2: China
Rank 5: India
- **FDI Outflows in 2020:**
Rank 1: China
Rank 2: Luxembourg
Rank 18: India

India's FDI:

- In India, FDI increased 27 percent to \$64 billion in 2020 from \$51 billion in 2019, pushed up by acquisitions in the **ICT (Information and Communication Technology)** industry.
- The pandemic boosted demand for digital infrastructure and services globally.
- India ranked 18 out of the world's top 20 economies for FDI outflows, with 12 billion dollars of outflows recorded from the country in 2020 as compared to 13 billion dollars in 2019.

About UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD):

- UNCTAD is a permanent intergovernmental body. It deals with trade, investment, and development issues.

Parent organization: United Nations General Assembly (UNGA); United Nations Secretariat

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Formation: 30 December 1964

Government Measures to promote FDI:

- Measures taken by the Government on the fronts of FDI policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business have resulted in increased FDI inflows into the country.
- Launch of schemes attracting investments, such as, National technical Textile Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana, Production Linked Incentive Scheme etc., and the initiatives under the Atmanirbhar Bharat to encourage investments in different sectors.

Source: The Hindu

Important News: Defense

Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Sajag' commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard

Why in the News?

- National Security Advisor Ajit Doval commissioned the **Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) 'Sajag'** into the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** and dedicated it to the nation for the protection of maritime interests.

Key Points

- Sajag is third out of five Offshore Patrol Vessels indigenously designed and built under the Make in India policy.
- OPV Sajag is constructed by M/s Goa Shipyard Limited.
- Other four OPVs are Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Saksham, ICGS Sachet, ICGS Sujeet, and ICGS Sarthak.

About Indian Coast Guard:

- The Indian Coast Guard is a maritime law enforcement and search and rescue agency of India with jurisdiction over its territorial waters including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone.
- The Indian Coast Guard was established by the **Coast Guard Act, 1978** of the Parliament of India.
- It operates under the Ministry of Defence.
- The blueprint for a multidimensional Coast Guard was conceived by the visionary **Rustumji Committee**.

Note: ICG ships are being built within the country in various shipyards, including private yards in line with the Government's vision of 'Make in India'.

The ICG has a total 160 ships and 62 aircraft in its fleet.

'Second Positive Indigenisation List'

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has notified the 'Second Positive Indigenisation List' of 108 items.

Key Points

About the Second Positive Indigenisation List:

- All the **108 items** will be procured from indigenous sources as per provisions given in **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020**.
- This second list is planned to be implemented progressively with effect from **December 2021 to December 2025**.
- This will give further boost to indigenisation with active participation of public and private sector for fulfilling the twin objectives of achieving self-reliance and promoting defence exports.

Note: In August 2020, the '**First Positive Indigenisation**' List comprising **101 items** was notified.

About Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP 2020):

- The Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP 2020), which supersedes the Defence Procurement Procedure 2016 (DPP 2016), is a sincere effort by the Ministry of Defence to improve the capital procurement procedure.

Other Initiatives to boost domestic production of Defence Equipment:

- Defence Industrial Corridors:** India has inaugurated two defence industrial corridors, one in Tamil Nadu and the other in Uttar Pradesh to boost the flagship "Make in India" programme.
- Increased Capital Acquisition Budget for Domestic Sector



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- The Central government has increased the Foreign Direct Investment limit in the defence sector from 49 to 74% under automatic route and beyond 74% through the government route.
- Defence India Startup Challenge
- Corporatization of the Ordnance Factory Boards

Note: The Ministry of Defence is also expected to put out the final version of the '**Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP) 2020**'.

Indo-Thai Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) 2021

Why in the News?

- The **31st edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)** between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted from 09 – 11 June 2021.

Key Points

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel and His Majesty's Thailand Ship (HTMS) Krabi, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies are participating in the CORPAT.

About CORPAT:

- The two navies have been undertaking CORPAT bi-annually along their International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) since 2005.
- CORPAT builds up understanding and interoperability between navies and facilitates institution of measures to prevent and suppress unlawful activities like Illegal Unreported Unregulated fishing, maritime terrorism, drug trafficking, armed robbery and piracy.

About SAGAR:

- As part of Government of India's vision of **SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)**, the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with the countries in the Indian Ocean Region towards enhancing regional maritime security.

This has been through bilateral and multilateral exercises, Coordinated Patrols, Joint EEZ Surveillance, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

Defence innovation through iDEX – DIO

Why in the News?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the budgetary support of Rs **498.8 crore** to **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) - Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO)** for the next five years.
- Earlier, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released an E-booklet titled '**20 Reforms in 2020**', highlighting the major reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in 2020.

Key Points

- The scheme, with budgetary support of Rs 498.8 crore for the next five years, is aimed at providing financial support to nearly 300 start-ups/MSMEs/individual innovators and 20 partner incubators under the DIO framework.
- The **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** was launched by the Prime Minister in April 2018.
- The creation of the **iDEX** framework and establishment of the **DIO** by the **Department of Defence Production (DDP)** is aimed at creating an ecosystem to foster innovation and technology development in defence and aerospace by engaging Industries including MSMEs, start-ups, individual innovators, Research & Development institutes & academia.

- **Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC)** is launched with Problem Statements (PS) from Armed Forces and OFB/DPSUs for resolution by innovators.

Other Channels for procuring innovative technologies:

- Technology Development Fund scheme
- Indigenous Development by Services

Other Related Initiatives:

- Defence Industrial Corridors
- Artificial Intelligence in Defence
- Strategic Partnership Model

Source: PIB

2021 NATO Summit

Why in the News?

- The 2021 Brussels summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the NATO, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 14 June 2021.

Note: US President Joe Biden took part in his first in-person NATO summit.

Key Points

- NATO Leaders discussed a wide range of issues at the 2021 Brussels Summit, including the main themes of the NATO 2030 initiative: how to reinforce the Alliance's unity, broaden its approach to security and contribute to safeguarding the rules-based international order.

Note: NATO leaders declared **China** a global security challenge.

About NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):

- NATO, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 European and North American countries. The organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.

Source: The Hindu

Indian Navy - European Union Naval Force (IN-EUNAVFOR) Exercise

Why in the News?

- Indian Naval Ship Trikand, a mission deployed for Anti-Piracy Operations, has participated in the maiden **IN-EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise** in the **Gulf of Aden** on 18th and 19th June 2021.

Key Points

- A total of five warships from four navies (**India, Italy, Spain and France**) have participated in the exercise.
- The aim of the exercise was to enhance and hone their war-fighting skills and their ability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain.

Significance:

- Indian Navy and EUNAVFOR converge on multiple issues including counter piracy operations and protection of vessels deployed under the charter of **World Food Programme (UN WFP)**.
- Indian Navy and EUNAVFOR also have regular interaction through **SHADE (Shared Awareness and De-confliction)** meetings held annually at Bahrain.
- Concurrently, a virtual “**Information sharing Exercise**” was also conducted between the Indian Navy Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region and Maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa.



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Major Indian Maritime Exercises:

- JIMEX: Japan
- SLINEX: Sri Lanka
- Bongosagar and IN-BN CORPAT: Bangladesh
- Naseem-Al-Bahr: Oman
- Indra: Russia
- Samudra Shakti: Indonesia
- Za’ir-Al-Bahr: Qatar
- Indo-Thai CORPAT : Thailand
- IMCOR: Malaysia
- AUSINDEX: Australia
- Malabar Exercise: Japan and the USA
- SIMBEX: Singapore

Source: PIB



Science and Technology

"AmbiTAG" India's first indigenous temperature data logger for the cold chain management

Why in the News?

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar (IIT Ropar) in Punjab** has developed a first-of-its-kind IoT device – AmbiTag that records real-time ambient temperature during the transportation of perishable products, vaccines and even body organs and blood.

Key Points

About "AmbiTAG"

- Shaped as a USB device, AmbiTag continuously records the temperature of its immediate surroundings “from -40 to +80 degrees in any time zone for a full 90 days on a single charge.
- The device has been developed under **Technology Innovation Hub – AWaDH (Agriculture and Water Technology Development Hub)** and its **Startup ScratchNest**.
- AWaDH is a Government of India project.
- The device is certified with ISO 13485:2016, EN 12830:2018, CE & ROHS.
- **Note:** Such devices are being imported by India in a massive quantity from other countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Ireland, and China.

IFFCO launches “World’s First Nano Urea Liquid”

Why in the News?

- **The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO)** launched the “World’s First Nano Urea Liquid”, a nutrient to provide nitrogen to plants as an alternative to the conventional urea.

Key Points

About Nano Urea:

- Urea that is produced from nanotechnology to improve the efficiency of the nutrients of the crops is called Nano Urea.
- Nano Urea Liquid is developed to replace conventional urea and it can curtail the requirement of the same by at least 50%.
- Conventional urea is effective 30-40 per cent in delivering nitrogen to plants, while the effectiveness of the Nano Urea Liquid is over 80 percent.

WHO names COVID-19 variants first found in India as 'Kappa' and 'Delta'

Why in the News?

- **The World Health Organisation (WHO)** announced the B.1.617.1 and B.1.617.2 variants of the COVID-19, first identified in India, have been named as 'Kappa' and 'Delta' respectively.

Key Points

- They will not replace existing scientific names but are aimed to help in public discussion of Variants of Concern (VOCs) & Variants of Interest (VOIs).

Other COVID-19 variants:

- The B.1.1.7 COVID-19 strain which was first detected in the UK will be known as 'Alpha'.
- The COVID-19 strains that were found in the US are 'Epsilon' and 'Iota'.
- The B.1.351 variant detected in South Africa is now called 'Beta'.

- P.1 variant which was first found in Brazil is 'Gamma' and the P.2 variant is 'Zeta'.

NASA announces 2 missions to Venus

Why in the News?

- NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) has selected 2 missions for the exploration of Venus.

Key Points

The selected missions:

- DAVINCI+ (Deep Atmosphere Venus Investigation of Noble gases, Chemistry, and Imaging):** It will measure the composition of Venus' atmosphere to understand how it formed and evolved, as well as determine whether the planet ever had an ocean.
- VERITAS (Venus Emissivity, Radio Science, InSAR, Topography, and Spectroscopy):** It will map Venus' surface to determine the planet's geologic history and understand why it developed so differently than Earth.
- Mission is expected to launch in the 2028-2030 timeframe.

About Venus:

- Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty.
- Venus is one of the four terrestrial planets in the Solar System, meaning that it is a rocky body like Earth. It is similar to Earth in size and mass, and is often described as Earth's "sister" or "twin".

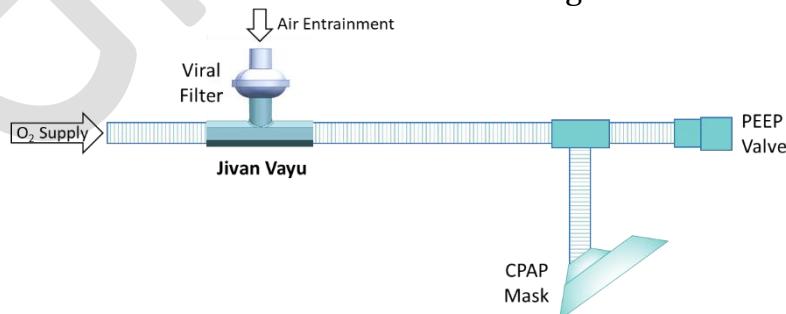
Note: India has planned to launch the **Shukrayaan Venus mission** in 2024.

Source: Indian Express

IIT Ropar develops nation's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'

Why in the News?

- Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a device 'Jivan Vayu' which can be used as a substitute of CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine.
- This is Nation's first such device which functions even without electricity and is adapted to both kinds of oxygen generation units like O₂ cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- These provisions are not available in otherwise existing CPAP machines.



Key Points

About 'Jivan Vayu':

- It has an inbuilt viral filter at the air entrainment end which has a viral efficacy of 99.99%.
- The viral filter ensures that the air does not bring in any pathogens from the environment.
- The device has been manufactured using 3D printing and has also been tested mechanically.

Need of 'Jivan Vayu':



- This was the need of the hour during the present COVID pandemic when power supply is the key concern for saving lives of those on medical equipments such as ventilators and oxygen concentrators.

Source: PIB

World's first wooden satellite to be launched from New Zealand

Why in the News?

- The **European Space Agency (ESA)** has planned to put the world's first wooden satellite, **WISA Woodsat**, on Earth's orbit.

Key Points

About WISA Woodsat:

- It will be launched to space by the end of 2021 with a Rocket Lab Electron rocket from the Mahia Peninsula launch complex in **New Zealand**.
- The mission of the satellite is to test the applicability of wooden materials like plywood in spacecraft structures.
- The satellite, designed and built in Finland, will orbit at around 500-600 km altitude in a roughly polar Sun-synchronous orbit.

About European Space Agency (ESA):

- It is an intergovernmental organization of 22 member states dedicated to the exploration of space.
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Founded:** 30 May 1975
- **CEO:** Johann-Dietrich Wörner

Source: The Hindu

China launches Shenzhou-12 spacecraft

Why in the News?

- China has successfully launched its spacecraft **Shenzhou-12** with three astronauts on board to its space station's core module Tianhe for a three-month mission.

Key Points

- The Shenzhou-12 spacecraft was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China's Gobi Desert.
- It is China's seventh crewed mission to space and the first during the construction of China's space station.
- It is also the first in nearly five years after the country's last manned mission in 2016.
- This is the first of two manned space missions planned in 2021.

China's Space Station:

- China is not a participant in the **International Space Station**.
- The **International Space Station (ISS)** is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit. It is a multinational collaborative project involving five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).

Note: China is the third country after the former Soviet Union and the United States to carry out a manned mission on its own.

Source: The Hindu

Biotech KISAN Programme for improving agriculture productivity in the NER

Why in the News?

- Under the Ministry of Science and Technology, the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** has issued a special call for **North East Region (NER)** as a part of its Mission Programme “**Biotech-Krishi Innovation Science Application Network (Biotech-KISAN)**”.
- Biotech KISAN Programme aims to understand the local problems of the **NER farmers** and provide scientific solutions to those problems.

Key Points

About Biotech-KISAN:

- It is a scientist-farmer partnership scheme launched in 2017 for agriculture innovation with an objective to connect science laboratories with the farmers to find out innovative solutions and technologies to be applied at farm level.
- Under this scheme, so far 146 Biotech-KISAN Hubs have been established covering all 15 agro climatic zones and 110 Aspirational Districts in the country.

About Department of Biotechnology (DBT):

- Under the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) enhances and improves the development of biotechnology in India, via its growth and application in agriculture, animal sciences, healthcare, environment, and industry.

About the Present Call:

- The present call specifically focuses on the Northeast Region as it is predominantly agrarian with 70% of its workforce engaged in agriculture and allied sector for livelihood.
- The region produces merely 1.5 percent of the country's food grain and continues to be a net importer of food grains even for its domestic consumption.

About Agricultural biotechnology:

- Agricultural biotechnology, also known as agri-tech, is an area of agricultural science involving the use of scientific tools and techniques, including genetic engineering, molecular diagnostics, molecular markers, vaccines, and tissue culture, to modify living organisms: plants, animals, and microorganisms.

Source: PIB

Environment

Jayanti: A new species of Spider Cricket

Why in the News?

- Recently, a team of zoologists headed by Dr Ranjana Jaiswara of the Zoology Department of Panjab University, Chandigarh, have discovered a new species of Spider Cricket in the **Kurra caves of Chhattisgarh**.
- The new subgenus was named **Jayanti after Professor Jayant Biswas**, one of the leading cave explorers in the country.

Key Points

About the New Spider Cricket:

- Jayanti has become the twelfth subgenus, or species, of cricket identified under the genus Arachnomimus Saussure, 1897.
- Males of the new Jayanti subgenus cannot produce sound and their females don't have ears.

- The newly discovered subgenus, Indimimus, is different from the two subgenera, Arachnomimus and Euarachnomimus, because of the male genitalia structure.
- Insects have a lock-and-key model genitalia structure which is unique to each subgenus.

Significance of the Discovery:

- The new species may be communicating by beating their abdomen or any other body part on the cave walls.
- Vibrational communication** is one of the softest but fastest modes of signal transmission.
- Further studies on their skills of **vibrational communication may help in designing hearing aids for humans** which can capture quietest signals and amplify to an audible hearing range.
- With the discovery of Jayanti from India, the genus Arachnomimus is now known from 12 species. Distribution of these species is very wide, ranging from Brazil to Malaysia.
- In India, the diversity of spider crickets is still unexplored. Given India is home to four **biodiversity hotspots**, and all the hotspots have unexplored caves, there is significant scope for many more discoveries.

Raimona becomes Assam's sixth national park

Why in the News?

- Raimona in Kokrajhar district has become Assam's sixth national park.
- The 422 sq ft wildlife habitat in Kokrajhar district adjoins western-most buffer to Manas Tiger Reserve.

Key Points

- The **Raimona reserve forest** in Kokrajhar district under the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), bordering Bhutan, has been upgraded as the sixth national park of the state.
- It is home to golden langur, Asian elephants, tigers, clouded leopards, Indian gaur, wild buffalo, spotted deer, hornbill, more than 150 species of butterflies, 170 species of birds and 380 varieties of plants and orchids.

Note:

- The other five national parks in the state are **Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri, Orang and Dibru-Saikhowa**.
- National parks in India** are IUCN category II protected areas.
- India's first national park** was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park, now known as Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand.
- In 1972, India enacted the Wildlife Protection Act and Project Tiger in 1973 to safeguard the habitats of conservation reliant species.

Source: The Hindu

Assam's 7th National Park 'Dihing Patkai'

Why in the News?

- Assam's Dehing Patkai wildlife sanctuary** has been announced as the 7th national park of the state.
- The announcement comes shortly after **Raimona reserve forest in western Assam's Kokrajhar district** was upgraded to a **national park on June 5, 2021**.

Key Points

About Dehing Patkai National Park:



- The 111.942-sqkm Dehing Patkai wildlife sanctuary (notified in 2004) is located inside the larger Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve, which spreads across Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Sivasagar districts of Upper Assam — rich in coal and oil.
- The area is home to hoolock gibbon, leopard, elephant, slow loris, tiger, clouded leopard, golden cat, fishing cat, sambar, hog deer, marble cat, sloth bear, and several bird species including the endangered state bird, the white-winged wood duck.

National Parks in Assam:

- The seven national parks of Assam are **Kaziranga, Nameri, Orang, Manas, Dibru-Saikhowa, Raimona and Dehing Patkai**.
- Assam** now is the **state with the second highest** number of national parks in the country, after **Madhya Pradesh's 11**.
- The **Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar** has **nine national parks**.

Note: Kaziranga national park and Manas national park are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Source: PIB

UN 'High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought'

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi** delivered a keynote address at the UN "High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought".
- He spoke at the Opening Segment in his capacity as the **President of the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.

Key Points

Steps taken by India to deal with the Land Degradation issue:

- India is on track to achieve its national commitment of Land degradation neutrality (Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3).
- Restoration of 26 million hectares of degraded land aimed by 2030 to achieve an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- In the last 10 years, around 3 million hectares of forest cover has been added in India, enhancing the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country's total area.
- The Prime Minister gave an example of the **Banni region in Rann of Kutch in Gujarat** to illustrate how restoration of land can start a virtuous cycle of good soil health, increased land productivity, food security and improved livelihoods.
- Centre of Excellence is being set up in India to promote a scientific approach towards land degradation issues.

About Land Degradation:

- Land degradation is a process in which the value of the biophysical environment is affected by a combination of human-induced processes acting upon the land.
- Land degradation is caused by multiple forces, including extreme weather conditions, particularly drought.

Consequences

There are four main ways of looking at land degradation and its impact on the environment around it:

- A temporary or permanent decline in the productive capacity of the land
- Action in the land's capacity to provide resources for human livelihoods
- Loss of biodiversity



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- Shifting ecological risk

Global Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Delhi Declaration of 2019, signed by 14th CoP of the UNCCD, called for better access and stewardship over land.
- The Bonn Challenge
- Great Green Wall Initiative
- Drought Initiative
- Land Degradation Neutrality programme

India's Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- The National Action Programme for combating desertification in 2001
- Integrated Watershed Management Programme (Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana)
- National Mission for Green India
- National Afforestation Programme
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
- Soil Health Card Scheme
- Soil Conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Project
- Command Area Development and Water Management programme

Source: PIB

Schemes

YUVA - Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education launched YUVA- Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors.

Key Points

About YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme:

- It is an Author Mentorship programme to train young and budding authors (**below 30 years of age**) in order to promote reading, writing and book culture in the country, and project India and Indian writings globally.
- **YUVA is a part of India@75 Project (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav)** to bring to the fore the perspectives of the young generation of writers on themes like Unsung Heroes, Freedom Fighters, Unknown and Forgotten Places and their role in National Movement, and other related themes in an innovative and creative manner.

Implementation and Execution:

- **The National Book Trust, India** under the Ministry of Education will be the **Implementing Agency** of the scheme.
- The books prepared under this scheme will be **published by National Book Trust, India**.
- A total of 75 authors will be selected through an All India Contest to be conducted from 1 June - 31 July 2021.
- The winners will be announced on 15 August 2021.
- The young authors will be trained by eminent authors/mentors.
- Under the mentorship, the manuscripts will be readied by 15 December 2021 for publication.
- The published books will be launched on **12 January 2022 on the occasion of National Youth Day (Yuva Diwas)**.
- A consolidated scholarship of Rs.50,000 per month for a period of six months per author will be paid under the Mentorship Scheme.

Monetary Assistance through DBT under MDM Scheme

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Education has approved the proposal to provide monetary assistance through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** of the cooking cost component of the **Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) Scheme**, to all eligible children, as a special welfare measure.

Key Points

- This decision will help safeguard the nutritional levels of children and aid in protecting their immunity during the challenging **pandemic times**.
- This is in addition to the Government of India's announcement of distribution of free-of-cost food grains @ 5 Kg per person per month to nearly 80 Crore beneficiaries under **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY)**.
- The Central Government will provide additional funds of about Rs 1200 crore to State Governments and UT Administrations for this purpose.
- This one-time special welfare measure of the Union Government will benefit about 11.8 crore children studying in class I to VIII in the 11.20 lakh Government and Government aided schools across the country.

About Midday Meal (MDM) Scheme:

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme which was **launched in 1995**.

- The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme in India designed to better the nutritional standing of school-age children nationwide.
- The programme supplies free lunches on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes in government, government aided, local body, Education Guarantee Scheme, and alternate innovative education centres, Madarsa and Maqtabs supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and National Child Labour Project schools run by the ministry of labour.

Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):

- Direct Benefit Transfer is an attempt to change the mechanism of transferring subsidies launched by the Government of India **on 1 January 2013**. This program aims to transfer subsidies directly to the people through their bank accounts.

Other Schemes involving DBT:

- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana, National Food Security Mission, PM KISAN (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana), Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin, National AYUSH Mission, Atal Pension Yojana.

'PM-CARES for Children' Scheme

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched '**PM-CARES for Children**' Scheme for children orphaned due to COVID 19.

Key Points

- All children who have lost both parents or surviving parents or legal guardian/adoptive parents due to COVID 19, will be supported through the 'PM-CARES for Children'.

About 'PM-CARES for Children' Scheme:

- Such children to get a monthly stipend once they turn 18 and a fund of Rs 10 lakh when they turn 23 from PM CARES
- Free education to be ensured for children who lost their parents to COVID 19
- The children will be assisted to get an education loan for higher education & PM CARES Fund will pay interest on the loan
- The children will get free health insurance of Rs 5 lakh under Ayushman Bharat Scheme (PM-JAY) till 18 years & premium will be paid by PM CARES Fund

About PM CARES Fund:

- Keeping in mind the need for having a dedicated national fund with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation, like posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide relief to the affected, a public charitable trust under the name of '**Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund**' (**PM CARES Fund**) has been set up.
- Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman of the PM CARES Fund and Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Finance, Government of India are ex-officio Trustees of the Fund.
- Donations to PM CARES Fund would qualify for 80G benefits for 100% exemption.
- Donations to PM CARES Fund will also qualify to be counted as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure under the Companies Act, 2013
- PM CARES Fund has also got exemption under the FCRA and a separate account for receiving foreign donations has been opened.

Kerala's Smart Kitchen Scheme

Why in the News?

- The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan has announced that the Secretary level committee is set to make the recommendations and guidelines for the implementation of the 'Smart Kitchen scheme' by July 10, 2021.

Key Points

About the Smart Kitchen Scheme:

- It aims to reduce the workload of women's domestic labour.
- The women will be provided a loan by the government to refurbish their kitchens with a low-interest rate in the installment schemes.

Digitized versions of flagship health schemes on NHA's IT platform

Why in the News?

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched the revamped **Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS)** and the **Umbrella schemes of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN) and Health Minister's Discretionary Grant (HMDG)** on National Health Authority (NHA)'s IT platform.

Key Points

- This will enable seamless delivery of healthcare services to eligible beneficiaries under these schemes by making the whole process paperless.
- Now all the schemes have become cashless, paperless and citizen centric.

About Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS):

- The CGHS, a comprehensive Health Scheme for Serving Employees, Pensioners, Members of Parliament, ex-MPs, etc., and their dependent family members, during the last 7 years has expanded to 72 Cities with more than 38 lakh beneficiaries covered under the scheme.

About Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN):

- The Scheme provides for financial assistance of Rs. 15 lakh to patients, living below poverty line and who are suffering from major life threatening diseases, to receive medical treatment at any of the super specialty Government hospitals / institutes.

About Health Minister's Discretionary Grant (HMDG):

- Under HMDG a maximum amount of Rs.1,25,000/- is provided to patients whose annual income does not exceed Rs.1,25,000/-, to defray a part of the expenditure on hospitalization/treatment in Government Hospitals.

Source: PIB

Proposals for construction of nearly 3.61 Lakh houses approved under PMAY-U

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has approved 708 proposals for construction of 3.61 lakh houses under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U)**.
- The decision was taken at the 54th Meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) under PMAY-U held in New Delhi.
- In addition, '**PMAY- U Awards 2021 - 100 Days Challenge**' was also launched by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

Key Points

About 'PMAY- U Awards 2021 - 100 Days Challenge':

- The awards are given to recognize and celebrate the outstanding contribution and performances by States, Union Territories (UTs), Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and



beneficiaries for successful implementation of the Mission and create a healthy competition.

- With this, as on date, the total number of sanctioned houses under PMAY-U is now 112.4 lakh and so far 82.5 lakh have been grounded for construction of which 48.31 lakh have been completed/delivered.
- Total investment under the Mission is Rs 7.35 Lakh Crore which has Central assistance of Rs 1.81. Lakh Crore of which Rs 96,067 Crore of funds have been released.

About Six Light House Projects (LHPs): The foundation stones of LHPs were laid by the Prime Minister in January 2021.

- The LHPs are being constructed at Agartala, Chennai, Lucknow, Ranchi, Rajkot and Indore.
- An **E-Module on Technograhi** comprising learning tools on innovative construction technologies shortlisted under Global Housing Technology Challenge – India and being used in six LHPs was also launched at the event.
- Secretary, MoHUA, also inaugurated a newly constructed **Demonstration Housing Project in Panchkula, Haryana** which will be used as a working women hostel on rental basis.
- Under the Technology sub mission of PMAY-U, 6 Demonstration Housing Projects (DHPs) have been completed so far and 7 are being constructed in different parts of the country.

About Demonstration Housing Projects (DHPs):

- DHPs are model housing projects built with new/alternate technology that not only showcase field level application of the technology but also used as platform to impart on-site orientation & training to practitioners & students in the housing sector on the application and use of such technology.

About Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY):

- It is an initiative by the Government of India in which affordable housing will be provided to the urban poor with a target of building 2 crore (20 million) affordable houses by 31 March 2022.
- It has two components: **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U)** for the urban poor and **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G)** for the rural poor.

Source: PIB

Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for "Mission Karmayogi"

Why in the News?

- **Former Infosys CEO (Chief Executive Officer) S D Shibu Lal** was appointed chairperson of a **3-member task force** formed.
- The task force will help the government in bringing major bureaucratic reforms through its ambitious "**Mission Karmayogi**".
- **Other members** are Govind Iyer and Pankaj Bansal.

Key Points

- The Centre has recently approved the '**National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building - Mission Karmayogi**' to effect a transformational shift from rule based training to role-based capacity development of all civil services in the country.
- To effectively roll out this mission, a **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)**, namely **Karmayogi Bharat**, would be set up as a not-for-profit company.
- It will be set up under **section 8 of Companies Act, 2013** as a 100% government-owned entity.

- The Special Purpose Vehicle will be responsible to deliver and manage design, implement, enhance and manage a digital platform and infrastructure, manage and deliver competency assessment services, and manage governance of telemetry data and ensure provision of monitoring and evaluation.
- The **task force** shall submit its recommendations on organisational structure for the SPV aligning its vision, mission and functions.

About 'Mission Karmayogi':

The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) – “Mission Karmayogi” has been launched with the objective of enhancing governance through Civil Service Capacity Building.

Mission Karmayogi will have the following **six pillars**:

- Policy Framework
- Competency Framework
- Institutional Framework
- Digital Learning Framework (**Integrated Government Online Training Karmayogi Platform (iGOT-Karmayogi)**)
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Awards and Honours

Nobel Laureate Amartya Kumar Sen conferred with Spain's Princess of Asturias Award 2021

Why in the News?

- Indian economist and Nobel Laureate** Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with Spain's top Princess of Asturias Award 2021 in the **social sciences category**.

Key Points

- Amartya Sen won the award for his research on famines and his theory of human development, welfare economics and the underlying mechanisms of poverty have contributed to the fight against injustice, inequality, disease and ignorance.
- The award comprises a Joan Miro sculpture representing and symbolising the Award, a diploma, an insignia and a cash prize of 50,000 Euros.

Note:

- Amartya Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998.
- He was awarded Bharat Ratna in 1999.

Launch of Gopal Ratna Awards and Integration of e- Gopala app with UMANG platform

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying announced the launch of the Gopal Ratna Awards and Integration of e- Gopala app with UMANG platform on the occasion of World Milk Day.
- Every year, the **first day of June is observed as World Milk Day**.

Key Points

About the Gopal Ratna Awards:

- The Gopal Ratna Awards are the National Awards **for the Cattle and Dairy sector**.
- The award has three categories - i) **Best Dairy farmer**, ii) **Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT)** and (iii) **Best Dairy Cooperative/ Milk producer Company/ FPO**.

About UMANG platform:

- Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG)** is a mobile app, a Digital India initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, by the Government of India for access to central and state government services.
- The app was developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology with the National e-Governance Division and launched in November 2017 by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

About e- Gopala app:

- e- Gopala app (Generation of wealth through Productive Livestock)**, a comprehensive breed improvement marketplace and information portal for direct use of farmers, was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2020.

Other Initiatives related to the Dairy sector:

- National Animal Disease Control Programme & National Artificial Insemination Programme
- National Action Plan on Dairy Development 2022
- Rashtriya Gokul Mission
- Pashu-Aadhar



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About Operation Flood (White Revolution):

- Operation Flood, launched on 13 January 1970, was the world's largest dairy development program and a landmark project of India's National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- Operation Flood is the program that led to the "White Revolution".
- **Verghese Kurien** is known as the "**Father of the White Revolution**" in India.

Note:

- India is a global leader amongst dairying nations and produced 198.4 million tonnes of milk during 2019-20.
- Currently, India is the world's largest milk producer, with 22% of global production.

WHO awards Harsh Vardhan with 'WHO Director-General Special Recognition Award'

Why in the News?

- On account of the World No Tobacco Day, World Health Organisation (WHO) has awarded Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan with 'WHO Director-General Special Recognition Award' for his accomplishments in the area of tobacco control.

Key Points:

- The award has been given to Mr Vardhan for **banning E-cigarettes and heated tobacco products**.
- His leadership was instrumental in the **2019 national legislation to ban e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products**.
- WHO has also awarded **Madhya Pradesh Voluntary Health Association and Uttar Pradesh Tobacco Control Cell** with the **World No Tobacco Day award in the South East region category**.

Note: World No Tobacco Day 2021 was celebrated on 31st May 2021.

Assam to confer Civilian Honours on lines of Bharat Ratna, Padma Awards

Why in the News?

- The Assam government announced state awards on the lines of Bharat Ratna and Padma annual awards for eminent personalities and achievers in the state, by providing cash rewards and a slew of other benefits.

Key Points

About newly announced awards:

- Assam announced conferring **one Asom Ratna, three Asom Bibhushan, five Asom Bhushan and ten Asom Shree awards** every year.
- The awards will carry ₹ 5 lakh, ₹ 3 lakh, ₹ 2 lakh and ₹ 1 lakh cash respectively.
- The awards will also include benefits like free medical treatment of critical illness, free stay at Asom Bhawans, free travel in ASTC buses etc.

Source: NDTV

International Booker Prize 2021: David Diop becomes first French winner

Why in the News?

- David Diop, a French novelist, won the International Booker Prize 2021 for '**At Night All Blood is Black**'.

Key Points

- The book was translated by **Anna Moschovakis**.
- The winning book was first published in 2018 with the French title '**Frere d' ame**'.
- It was **published by Pushkin Press**.

About International Booker Prize

- The International Booker Prize, formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize, has been awarded since 2005.

Source: Indian Express

2021 Pulitzer Prizes

Why in the News?

- The 2021 Pulitzer Prizes were awarded by the Pulitzer Prize Board for work during the 2020 calendar year on June 11, 2021.
- The 105th class of 2021 Pulitzer Prize winners in Journalism, Books, Drama and Music were announced.

Key Points

- The awards highlighted coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, and other major stories in the U.S. that year.
- Several publications, including The Atlantic and BuzzFeed News, received their first Pulitzers.
- **Indian-origin journalist Megha Rajagopalan** from BuzzFeed News won the Pulitzer Prize for exposing China's vast infrastructure for detaining Muslims.

Main 2021 Pulitzer Prize winners:

Category	Winner
Journalism	
Public Service	The New York Times
Breaking News Reporting	Staff of the Star Tribune, Minneapolis, Minn.
Investigative Reporting	Matt Rocheleau, Vernal Coleman, Laura Crimaldi, Evan Allen and Brendan McCarthy of The Boston Globe
Explanatory Reporting	Andrew Chung, Lawrence Hurley, Andrea Januta, Jaimi Dowdell and Jackie Botts of Reuters
Local Reporting	Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi of the Tampa Bay Times
National Reporting	Staffs of The Marshall Project; AL.com, Birmingham; IndyStar, Indianapolis; and the Invisible Institute, Chicago
International Reporting	Megha Rajagopalan , Alison Killing and Christo Buschek of BuzzFeed News

Criticism	Wesley Morris of The New York Times
Editorial writing	Robert Greene of the Los Angeles Times
Breaking News Photography	Photography Staff of Associated Press

Books, Drama and Music

Fiction	The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich
Drama	The Hot Wing King by Katori Hall
History	Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America by Marcia Chatelain
Poetry	Postcolonial Love Poem by Natalie Diaz
Special Citation	Darnella Frazier , The teenager who recorded the killing of George Floyd
Music	Stride, by Tania León

Source: Pulitzer.org

United Nations' Land for Life Award 2021

Why in the News?

- Rajasthan-based climate activist **Shyam Sundar Jyani's** environment conservation concept, **Familial Forestry** has won the United Nations' Land for Life Award 2021.

Key Points

- Shyam Sundar Jyani, an associate professor of Sociology, has been campaigning for Familial Forestry for over 15 years.

About the award:

- Launched at the UNCCD COP (Conference of Parties) 10 in 2011, the Award is considered as the world's highest reward regarding land conservation and restoration.
- It made a significant contribution towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15: "Life on Land", in particular Target 15.3 Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).

About Familial Forestry:

- Familial Forestry means transferring the care of trees and environment so that a tree becomes a part of the family's consciousness.

- More than a million families from more than 15,000 villages of desert-prone northwest Rajasthan in over 2.5 million saplings have been planted in the past 15 years.

About the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD):

- UNCCD was established in 1994. It is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management under the UN.
- UNCCD is one of the three **Rio Conventions**; the other two are the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Source: The Hindu

Former Kerala Health Minister KK Shailaja honoured with CEU Open Society Prize 2021

Why in the News?

- Former Health Minister KK Shailaja has been awarded the prestigious **Central European University (CEU) Open Society Prize 2021**.

Key Points

About the Award:

- Open Society Prize, the highest civilian recognition by the university, is annually awarded to persons of exceptional distinction who serve the ideals of an open society.

Note: Nobel Laureate Svetlana Alexeyevich received the Open Society Prize in 2020.

Source: Indian Express

Indian American Sumita Mitra wins European Inventor Award 2021

Why in the News?

- Indian American chemist Sumita Mitra has won the **European Inventor Award 2021 in the 'Non-EPO countries' category**.

Key Points

- Sumita Mitra was honoured with the European Inventor Award 2021 for her application of nanotechnology in dentistry.
- Mitra was the first to successfully integrate nanotechnology into dental materials to produce stronger and more aesthetically pleasing fillings, which are now used by dentists around the world.

About the Award:

- The Award, one of Europe's most prestigious innovation prizes, is presented annually by the **EPO (European Patent Office)** to distinguish outstanding inventors from Europe and beyond who have made an exceptional contribution to society, technological progress and economic growth.

Source: Economic Times

Jamsetji N Tata becomes world's top philanthropist of the last century

Why in the News?

- According to the list of 50 global philanthropists compiled by Hurun Research and EdelGive Foundation, India's pioneer **industrialist and Tata Group founder Jamsetji N Tata** is the world's biggest philanthropist of the last century.
- Total global donations** in the last century stood at \$832 billion.
- Hurun Research and EdelGive Foundation** released the **2021 EdelGive Hurun Philanthropists of the Century Report**, a ranking of the world's most generous individuals from the past century. This is the first year of the ranking.

Key Points

- **Rank 1:** Jamsetji N Tata (\$102.4 billion)
- **Rank 2:** Bill Gates & Melinda French Gates (\$74.6 billion)
- **Rank 3:** Henry Wellcome (\$56.7 billion)
- **Rank 12:** Azim Premji (\$22 billion)
- **Note:** The **US topped** the list with 38 billionaires, followed by UK with 5, China 3, India 2 and Portugal and Switzerland 1 each.

Source: The Hindu

Gradeup

Books and Authors

Cricket legend Ravi Shastri's book 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life'

Why in the News?

- Cricket legend, commentator and one of Team India's most successful coaches, Ravi Shastri has penned a book titled '**Stargazing: The Players in My Life**'.

Key Points

About the Book

- The 'Stargazing: The Players in My Life' is co-authored by Ravi Shastri and sports journalist Ayaz Memon and it is expected to be out in 2021.
- In the book, Shastri writes about some 60 extraordinary talents he has met from across the world who have inspired him.
- It will be published by HarperCollins India.

Salman Rushdie's book "Languages of Truth: Essays 2003-2020"

Why in the News?

- Salman Rushdie has penned a new book titled "Languages of Truth: Essays 2003-2020".

Key Points

About the Book:

- In his new book, "Languages of Truth: Essays 2003-2020," Rushdie attempts to perform a defensive castling move.
- He suggests his work has been misunderstood and mistreated because the literary culture has turned from brio-filled imaginative writing toward the humbler delights of "autofiction," as exemplified by the work of Elena Ferrante and Karl Ove Knausgaard.

About the Author:

- Salman Rushdie is a British Indian novelist and essayist. His second novel, 'Midnight's Children' (1981), won the Booker Prize in 1981. Much of his fiction is set on the Indian subcontinent.

'Home in the World': Amartya Sen's memoir

Why in the News?

- **Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen** has penned his memoir titled 'Home in the World'.
- The book will be published in July 2021 by **Penguin Random House**.

Key Points

- In 'Home in the World', Sen shares details from his life and explores the idea of 'home'.
- He was awarded the **Nobel Prize in Economics** in 1998 and **Bharat Ratna** in 1999.

Source: TOI

Amitav Ghosh's new book 'The Nutmeg's Curse'

Why in the News?

- Jnanpith awardee and renowned author Amitav Ghosh's new book '**The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis**' is all set to release soon.

Key Points

- In 'The Nutmeg's Curse', Ghosh discusses that the nutmeg's journey from its native Banda islands sheds light on a widespread colonial mindset of exploitation of human life and the environment, which is present even today.
- The book has been published by John Murray.

Source: TOI

Important Days

May 29, International Day of UN Peacekeepers

Why in the News?

- The International Day of UN Peacekeepers is observed annually on May 29 to pay tribute to the uniformed and civilian personnel for their invaluable contribution to the work of the world organisation and to honour the peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving under the UN flag.

Key Points

- The **theme** of 2021 is “**The road to a lasting peace: Leveraging the power of youth for peace and security.**”
- The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was established by the General Assembly in 2002.

Dag Hammarskjold Medal Award:

- The **three Indian peacekeepers (Corporal Yuvraj Singh, two civilian peacekeepers- Ivan Michael Picardo and Mulchand Yadav)** were awarded posthumously the Dag Hammarskjold Medal on the occasion of International Day of UN Peacekeepers.

Note: India is the fifth largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping with more than 5,500 military and police serving in peace operations.

May 31, World No Tobacco Day

Why in the News?

- World No Tobacco Day is observed on May 31 every year to highlight the risk associated with the use of tobacco.

Key Points

- The theme of World No Tobacco Day 2021 is “**Commit to quit.**”
- Celebrated around the world every year on May 31, World No Tobacco Day was created by the Member States of World Health Organization (WHO) in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes.

About National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP):

- **Government of India** launched the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) in the year 2007-08 during the 11th Five-Year-Plan.

June 05, World Environment Day

Why in the News?

- World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated on June 5, annually to encourage awareness and environmental protection.

Key Points

- The **theme** of World Environment Day 2021 is ‘**Ecosystem Restoration**’.

History:

- World Environment Day was established in 1972 by the United Nations (UN) at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (June 5-16, 1972). Two years later, in 1974 the first World Environment Day was held.
- **Pakistan** was the **global host** of World Environment Day 2021.

About Ecosystem:

- An ecosystem is a community of plants and animals interacting with each other in a given area, and also with their non-living environments. The non-living environments include weather, earth, sun, soil, climate and atmosphere.

About Ecosystem restoration:

- Ecosystem restoration means assisting in the recovery of ecosystems that have been degraded or destroyed, as well as conserving the ecosystems that are still intact.

India's Initiatives:

- On the World Environment Day 2021**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the ambitious **E-100 pilot project** in Pune for the production and distribution of **ethanol across the country**.
- The Government has resolved to meet the **target of 20 percent ethanol blending in petrol by 2025**. Earlier the resolve was to achieve the target by 2030 which is now preponed by 5 years.

Other Initiatives:

- National Biodiversity Action Plan
- National Afforestation Programme
- National Mission for a Green India

Source: Business Standard

June 07, World Food Safety Day

Why in the News?

- Celebrated on June 7 every year, World Food Safety Day aims to spread awareness, detect, and prevent foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, market access, tourism and sustainable development.

Key Points

- The **theme** of World Food Safety Day 2021 is '**Safe food today for a healthy tomorrow**'.

History

- In 2018, the **United Nations General Assembly** proclaimed that every year June 7 would be observed as **World Food Safety Day**.
- The observance is jointly facilitated by the **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)** and the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**.

Note:

- The World Health Assembly in 2020 further passed a resolution to strengthen efforts across the world for food safety and controlling foodborne diseases.
- By 2030, food borne diseases are expected to rise to 150 to 177 million annually.
- According to the UN, unsafe food kills an estimated 420,000 people every year.

Source: Indian Express

June 08, World Oceans Day 2021

Why in the News?

- World Oceans Day is observed on June 8. Oceans play a major role in everyday life of people globally.

Key Points

- The **theme** of World Oceans Day 2021 is '**The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods**'.

History

- In 2008, the United Nations General Assembly decided that 8 June would be designated by the United Nations as “World Oceans Day”.

Note:

- Over three billion people rely on the ocean for their livelihood.
- Only one per cent of the ocean is legally protected.
- About 70 percent of the oxygen we breathe is produced by the oceans.
- According to the World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS), there are currently at least 236,878 named marine species.
- 90 percent of all volcanic activity occurs in the oceans.

Source: NDTV

June 17, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

Why in the News?

- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on 17 June.
- Its purpose is to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.

Key Points

- The **theme** for 2021 is "**Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land**".

History:

- This day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution on January 30, 1995, after the day when the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was drafted.

Note: India is working towards restoring 2.6 crore hectares of degraded land by 2030 and assisting fellow developing countries to develop land-restoration strategies.

Source: Indian Express

June 21, International Day of Yoga

Why in the News?

- **International Day of Yoga (IDY)** is observed annually on June 21. The idea behind the day is to create awareness about yoga and its many benefits.

Key Points

- It is said that the word ‘Yoga’ was first mentioned in the sacred text of the Rig Veda.
- The **theme** for 2021 is '**Yoga for well-being**'.

History:

- The idea of an International Day of Yoga was proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Meeting.
- UNGA proclaimed 21st June as the International Day of Yoga in their resolution adopted on 11th December 2014. Since 2015, this Day has been observed all over the world in ever-growing numbers of participants.

Source: Indian Express

Sports

Asian Boxing Championships 2021

Why in the News?

- The 31st edition of the Asian Amateur Boxing Championships was held from 24 to 31 May 2021 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Key Points

- India ranked 4th with 2 gold, 5 silver and 8 bronze medals.

Medal table

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Kazakhstan	8	6	2	16
2	Uzbekistan	7	6	5	18
3	Mongolia	3	0	5	8
4	India	2	5	8	15

Note:

- India's **Mary Kom** settled for a silver medal at the 2021 Asian Boxing Championships.
- It is the second silver for Mary Kom at the Asian Championships who has previously won titles on five occasions --2003, 2005, 2010, 2012, and 2017 besides silver in 2008.

French Open 2021

- The French Open 2021 is a Grand Slam tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts.
- It was held at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France, from 30 May to 13 June 2021.

List of winners:

Men's singles	Women's singles	Men's doubles	Women's doubles	Mixed doubles
Winner- Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Winner- Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic)	Winner- Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France), Nicolas Mahut (France)	Winner- Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic), Katerina Siniáková (Czech Republic)	Winner- Desirae Krawczyk (America), Joe Salisbury (Britain)
Runner-up- Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece)	Runner-up- Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Russia)	Runner-up- Alexander Bublik (Kazakhstan), Andrey Golubev (Kazakhstan)	Runner-up- Bethanie Mattek-Sands (America), Iga Świątek (Poland)	Runner-up- Elena Vesnina (Russia), Aslan Karatsev (Russia)

- Note:** Novak Djokovic (Serbia) won his second French Open title and 19th Grand Slam title.

Source: Indian Express

F1 French Grand Prix 2021

- Max Verstappen (Red Bull)** won the **F1 French Grand Prix 2021** held at Paul Ricard Circuit, France.



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- **Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)** got second position and **Sergio Perez (Red Bull)** got third position.

Source: Indian Express

Reports and Indexes

State of Finance for Nature Report 2021: UN

Why in the News?

- The State of Finance for Nature Report by the United Nations analyzes the investment flow in nature-based solutions and identifies the future investment needed to meet the climate change, biodiversity and land degradation crises.
- The report was jointly produced by the **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)**, the **World Economic Forum (WEF)** and the **Economics of Land Degradation (ELD)**.

Key Points

About the 'Nature-based solutions':

- A nature-based solution refers to the sustainable management and use of nature for tackling socio-environmental challenges. The challenges include issues such as climate change, water security, water pollution, food security, human health, biodiversity loss and disaster risk management.

Key Findings of Report:

- A total investment in nature of USD 8.1 trillion is required between now and 2050 – while annual investment should reach USD 536 billion by 2050.
- The report finds that annual investments in nature-based solutions will have to triple by 2030 and increase four-fold by 2050 from the current investments into nature-based solutions of USD 133 billion (using 2020 as base year).

Top Spenders:

- Public sector spending for the same is dominated by the US and China, followed by Japan, Germany and Australia.
- Countries such as India, Brazil and Saudi Arabia are likely spending large amounts of money too, but they do not report internationally comparable data.

About the UN Environment Programme (UNEP):

- The United Nations Environment Programme is responsible for coordinating responses to environmental issues within the United Nations system.
- **Headquarters:** Nairobi, Kenya
- **Formation:** June 1972

About the World Economic Forum (WEF):

- The World Economic Forum is an international NGO.
- **Headquarters:** Cologny, Switzerland
- **Formation:** January 1971

About the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative:

- The ELD Initiative is a global initiative established in 2011 by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the European Commission. It is supported by a broad network of partners across diverse fields of knowledge.

Source: unep.org

Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2019-20

Why in the News?

- Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' released the Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2019-20 for States and Union Territories of India.
- The PGI: States/UTs for 2019-20 is the **third publication**.

Key Points

Implementing Agency

- The scheme is initiated by the **Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL)**.

About Performance Grading Index (PGI)

- The PGI helps the States/UTs to pinpoint the gaps and accordingly prioritise areas for intervention to ensure that the **school education system** is robust at every level.
- The Government has introduced the **Performance Grading Index with a set of 70 parameters** to catalyse transformational change in the **field of school education**.

Note: The PGI for States and Union Territories was **first published in 2019 with reference year 2017-18**.

Overall Results and Findings

- Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Kerala** recorded the highest score (Grade I++) for 2019-20.

Grade (Scores)	Names of States/ UTs
Level I (951 - 1000)	Nil
Level II (901 - 950), Grade I ++	Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Punjab, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
Level III (851 - 900), Grade I +	Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, NCT of Delhi, Puducherry, Rajasthan
Level IV (801-850), Grade I	Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Daman & Diu, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh
Level V (751 - 800), Grade II	Goa, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Sikkim, Telangana
Level VI (701 - 750), Grade III	Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram
Level VII (651 - 700), Grade IV	Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland
Level VIII (601 - 650), Grade V	Meghalaya
Level XI (551 - 600), Grade VI	Nil
Level X (0 - 550), Grade VII	Ladakh

- Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Punjab and Tamil Nadu have improved overall PGI score by 10%, i.e., 100 or more points.

Source: PIB

State of India's Environment Report 2021

Why in the News?

- According to the State of India's Environment Report 2021, India's position has slipped by two places from last year to **117 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- The report is released by the **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, India.**
- In 2020, India's rank was 115.

Key Points

- India's overall SDG **score is 61.9 out of 100.**
- India was ranked below four South Asian nations - Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal.
- SDG Goals were adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.

Reason for the drop in rank

- The reason is due to major challenges like ending hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2), achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation (SDG 9) in the country.

State-wise preparedness

- According to the State of India's Environment Report 2021, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh with the best overall score are the states and Union Territories on the path to achieving the SDGs.
- Bihar and Jharkhand are the least prepared to meet the SDGs by the target year 2030.

The Hindu

ILO: World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021

Why in the News?

- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has released the World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021 (WESO Trends).
- The report analyses the impact of the crisis on the labour market across the world.

Key Points

Findings:

- The World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021 projects the global crisis-induced 'jobs gap' will reach 75 million in 2021, before falling to 23 million in 2022.
- The global unemployment rate will be 5.7 % in 2022, 6.3 % in 2021.**
- Global unemployment is expected to stand at **205 million people in 2022.**
- The related gap in working-hours, which includes the jobs gap and those on reduced hours, amounts to the equivalent of 100 million full-time jobs in 2021 and 26 million full-time jobs in 2022.
- The crisis has also hit women disproportionately. Their employment declined by 5 percent in 2020 compared to 3.9 percent for men.

About International Labour Organization (ILO):

- It is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Director-General: Guy Ryder



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Formation: 11 April 1919

- The ILO has **187 state members**.

- **India** is a founder member of the International Labour Organization.

Note: India has assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of ILO in 2020.

Source: ILO

UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate

Why in the News?

- **NTPC Ltd** has become a signatory to the prestigious UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate.

Key Points

- NTPC is committed to proactively address water sustainability issues through implementing Water Policy, which will serve as a directive for establishing water management strategies, systems, processes, practices and research initiatives.
- NTPC will further imbibe the 3 R's (reduce, reuse, recycle) for water conservation and management while carrying out its core business activity of power generation.

About CEO Water Mandate:

- The CEO Water Mandate is a UN Global Compact initiative that mobilizes business leaders on water, sanitation, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Mandate's Six Commitment Areas:

- Direct Operations
- Supply Chain & Watershed Management
- Collective Action
- Public Policy
- Community Engagement
- Transparency

About UN Global Compact:

- The **United Nations Global Compact** is a non-binding United Nations pact to encourage businesses and firms worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation.
- India is also a part of the UN Global Compact.

About NTPC Limited:

- It, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian government electricity board engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities.
- NTPC was conferred Maharatna status by the Government of India in May 2010.

Other Initiatives for Environmental Conservation:

- Race to Zero Campaign
- Industrial Deep Decarbonization Initiative

Source: PIB

QS World University Rankings 2022

Why in the News?

- **Three Indian Universities** have achieved top-200 positions in **QS World University Rankings 2022**.
- **IISc Bengaluru** ranked **number 1 in the world for research**.

Key Points

Indian Institutions:

- Three Indian universities are ranked in the top-200 in QS World University Rankings 2022, with **IIT-Bombay securing 177th position, IIT-Delhi at 185th, and IISc-Bengaluru placed on 186th position.**
- The **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore** has got a perfect score of 100 out of 100 for the citations per faculty (CPF) metric in the analysis.

Global Rankings:

- The US-based **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** achieved a record-extending 10th consecutive year as **world number-one**.
- The **University of Oxford** has risen to **second** for the first time since 2006, while the **Stanford University and the University of Cambridge** share **third** spot.

About QS World University Rankings:

- London-based QS Quacquarelli Symonds, global higher education analysts, released the **18th edition** of the world's international university rankings.
- For the QS World University Rankings, institutions and universities were judged on **six indicators**-- academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, international faculty ratio and international student ratio.

Related Indian Initiatives for Education:

- National Education Policy (NEP), 2020:** NEP aims to introduce several changes in the Indian education system - from the school to college level and make India a global knowledge superpower.
- Institutions of Eminence (IoE) Scheme:** IoE is a scheme to provide the regulatory architecture for setting up or upgrading of 20 Institutions (10 from public sector and 10 from the private sector) as world-class teaching and research institutions called 'Institutions of Eminence'.
- Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY):** UAY was announced with a view to promote innovation of a higher order that directly impacts the needs of the Industry and thereby improves the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing.
- Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT):** It is a first-of-its-kind Pan-IIT and IISc joint initiative to develop a new education policy and a roadmap for research to solve major engineering and technology challenges.

Source: TOI

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 Report

Why in the News?

- Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Union Education Minister, approved the release of the report of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20.
- This Report provides key performance indicators on the current status of Higher education in the country.
- This report is the 10th in the series of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) annually released by the Department of Higher Education.

Key Points

Key features of AISHE 2019-20 Report:

- In the last five years from 2015-16 to 2019-20, there has been a growth of 11.4% in the student enrolment.

- **Total Enrolment** in Higher Education stands at 3.85 crore in 2019-20 as compared to 3.74 crore in 2018-19, registering a growth of 11.36 lakh (3.04 %). Total enrolment was 3.42 crore in 2014-15.
- **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 1.01 against 1.00 in 2018-19 indicating an improvement in the relative access to higher education for females of eligible age group compared to males.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)**, the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education, in 2019-20 is 27.1% against 26.3% in 2018-19 and 24.3% in 2014-2015.
- **Pupil Teacher Ratio** in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 26.
- In 2019-20: Universities: 1,043(2%); Colleges: 42,343(77%) and stand-alone institutions: 11,779(21%).
- 3.38 crore Students enrolled in programmes at under-graduate and post-graduate level. Out of these, nearly 85% of the students (2.85 crore) were enrolled in the six major disciplines such as **Humanities, Science, Commerce, Engineering & Technology, Medical Science and IT & Computer**.
- The **Total Number of Teachers** stands at 15,03,156 comprising of 57.5% male and 42.5% female.
- The rise in female enrolment in higher education during the period is 18.2%.

Recent Initiatives:

- Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)
- National Education Policy (NEP), 2020
- Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF)
- Rashtriya Ucchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)

Source: PIB

ILO, UNICEF Report: Child labour rises to 160 million – first increase in two decades

Why in the News?

- According to the '**Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward**' report by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and **UNICEF**, the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide, an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years.

Key Points

- **Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward** report warns that progress to end child labour has stalled for the first time in 20 years, reversing the previous downward trend that saw child labour fall by 94 million between 2000 and 2016.

Key findings of the report:

- The report points to a significant rise in the number of children aged 5 to 11 years in child labour, who now account for just over half of the total global figure.
- The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work has risen by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016.
- The report warns that globally, nine million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 as a result of the pandemic.

- The agriculture sector accounts for 70 percent of children in child labour (112 million) followed by 20 percent in services (31.4 million) and 10 percent in industry (16.5 million).**
- Nearly 28 percent of children aged 5 to 11 years and 35 percent of children aged 12 to 14 years in child labour are out of school.
- The prevalence of child labour in rural areas (14 percent) is close to three times higher than in urban areas (5 percent).

Measures to improve the situation:

- Adequate social protection for all, including universal child benefits.
- Increased spending on free and good-quality schooling and getting all children back into school - including children who were out of school before COVID-19.
- Promotion of decent work for adults, so families don't have to resort to children helping to generate family income.
- An end to harmful gender norms and discrimination that influence child labour.
- Investment in child protection systems, agricultural development, rural public services, infrastructure and livelihoods.

Initiatives by the Government of India:

- Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986
- National Policy on Child Labour (1987)
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015
- The Right to Education Act, 2009
- Initiatives like Operation Smile, Operation Muskaan

Note: Many NGOs like ChildFund, Bachpan Bachao Andolan, CARE India, Kailash Satyarthi Children Foundation etc. have been working to eradicate child labour in country.

Source: ilo.org

India can save logistics fuel worth ₹311 lakh crore between 2020 and 2050: NITI Aayog, RMI India Report

Why in the News?

- NITI Aayog, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India's new report 'Fast Tracking Freight in India: A Roadmap for Clean and Cost-Effective Goods Transport' presents key opportunities for India to reduce its logistics costs.**

Key Points

- Due to the rising demand for goods and services, freight transport demand is expected to grow rapidly in the future.
- While freight transport is essential to economic development, it is plagued by high logistics costs and contributes to rising CO₂ emissions and air pollution in cities.

According to the report, India has the potential to:

- Reduce its logistics cost by **4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**
- Achieve 10 gigatonnes of cumulative CO₂ emissions savings between 2020 and 2050
- Reduce nitrogen oxide (NOx) and particulate matter emissions by 35% and 28%, respectively, until 2050

Need to Make Freight Transportation Cost Effective:

- Freight transportation is a critical backbone of India's growing economy, it's important to make this transport system more cost-effective, efficient, and cleaner.
- Efficient freight transport will also play an essential role in realising the benefits of existing government initiatives such as Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, and Digital India.

- As India's freight activity grows five-fold by 2050 and about 400 million citizens move to cities, a whole system transformation can help uplift the freight sector.
- This transformation will be defined by tapping into opportunities such as efficient rail-based transport, the optimisation of logistics and supply chains, and shift to electric and other clean-fuel vehicles.

Recommendations:

- Increasing the rail network's capacity
- Improving warehousing and trucking practices
- Promoting intermodal transport
- Policy measures and pilot projects for clean technology adoption
- Stricter fuel economy standards

Recent Initiatives:

- Dedicated Freight Corridor
- Bharat Stage VI norms
- FAME Scheme
- Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency Regulations
- E-Way Bill Integration with FASTag

Source: PIB

EIU's Global Liveability Index 2021

Why in the News?

- Auckland in New Zealand has topped the EIU Global Liveability Index 2021.

Key Points

About Global Liveability Index:

- The Global Liveability Index is an annual assessment published by the London-based **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**, ranking 140 global cities for their urban quality of life.
- The **index** takes into account more than 30 qualitative and quantitative factors spanning five broad categories: stability (25%), healthcare (20%), culture and environment (25%), education (10%), and infrastructure (20%).

The 3 most liveable cities in 2021:

- Auckland, New Zealand
- Osaka, Japan
- Adelaide, Australia

The 3 least liveable cities in 2021:

- Damascus, Syria
- Lagos, Nigeria
- Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Note: Austria's Vienna, number one in both 2018 and 2019, has completely dropped out of the top 10 after being heavily affected by COVID, and now ranks 12.

Source: Indian Express

WGI 2021 ranks India as 14th Most Charitable Country in the World

Why in the News?

- India is now ranked as the 14th most charitable country in the world as per a report released by the **World Giving Index 2021 (WGI)**.
- In the index **Indonesia topped** the list followed by Kenya.

Key Points



- India has been recognised among the Top 20 most generous countries across the globe, an improvisation from its earlier 10-year global rank of 82.
- As per the report, around 61 percent of Indians helped strangers, 34 percent volunteered for a good cause while 36 percent donated money.

Note:

- The report suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the ‘giving’ trends worldwide.

About World Giving Index (WGI):

- WGI is a global survey that has interviewed more than 1.6 million people since 2009.
- It conducts surveys by asking three questions: have they helped a stranger, given money, or volunteered for a good cause in recent months.
- It releases an annual report published by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), using data gathered by Gallup and ranks countries in the world according to how charitable they are.
- The first report was produced in 2010 and this year marks the 10 year anniversary of WGI.

Source: Indian Express

India maintains 43rd rank on IMD's World Competitiveness Index 2021

Why in the News?

- India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index 2021 released by the IMD (Institute for Management Development).
- The IMD examined the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world in 2021.

Key Points

- Rank 1: Switzerland
- Rank 2: Sweden
- Rank 3: Denmark
- Rank 43: India

India's Performance:

- Among the **BRICS nations**, India is ranked second (43rd) after China (16th), followed by Russia (45th), Brazil (57th) and South Africa (62nd).
- India has maintained its position for the past three years but in 2021, it had significant improvements in **government efficiency**.
- India's improvements in the government efficiency factor are mostly due to relatively stable public finances and subsidies provided by the government to the private companies.

Recent Steps Taken by India to Increase its Competitiveness:

- The **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI)** Scheme in various sectors for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities and exports.
- The five pillars of '**Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**' are Economy, System, Infrastructure, Vibrant Demography and Demand.

About World Competitiveness Ranking:

- The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, first published in 1989, is a comprehensive annual report and worldwide reference point on the competitiveness of countries.
- The Yearbook provides extensive coverage of 64 economies.
- The ranking is based on 334 competitiveness criteria selected as a result of comprehensive research using economic literature, international, national and regional sources and feedback from the government agencies, business community and academics.

Factors:

The ranking measures the prosperity and competitiveness of 64 nations by examining four factors:

- Economic performance

- Government efficiency
- Business efficiency
- Infrastructure

Source: Business Standard

Global Peace Index 2021: India ranked 135

Why in the News?

- According to the 15th edition of Global Peace Index 2021, India has been ranked 135 out of 163 countries which specifies 'Low State of Peace'

Key Points

Findings:

Rank 1: Iceland

Rank 2: New Zealand

Rank 3: Denmark

Rank 135: India

- Out of the 10 most peaceful countries in the world, 8 are from Europe.
- Afghanistan is the world's least peaceful country for the 4th consecutive year.
- The report points out that the average level of global peacefulness declined by 0.07 percent marking the 9th deterioration in the last thirteen years.

About the Global Peace Index 2021:

- This is the 15th edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI), which ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness.
- Produced by the **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)**, the GPI is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness.
- The GPI covers 99.7 percent of the world's population, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, and measures the state of peace across **three domains**: the level of Societal Safety and Security, the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict, and the degree of Militarisation.

Source: economicsandpeace.org

NTPC among top 50 at 'Great Place to Work' in India

Why in News

- **NTPC, a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Power** has been recognised as a Great Place to Work for the 15th year in a row by the **Great Place to Work (GPTW) Institute**.
- NTPC is the only PSU to consistently feature in India's Top 50 Best Workplaces.
- This year NTPC ranked 38th, up from 47th position last year.

Key Points

About Great Place to Work Certification (GPWC):

- Great Place to Work Certification is the most definitive 'Employer-of-Choice' recognition.
- The Certification is recognized world over by employees and employers alike and is considered the 'Gold Standard' in identifying and recognizing Great Workplaces with High Trust and High-Performance Cultures.
- It also won its first-ever recognition of India's Best Employers among Nation-Builders 2021.

Note: NTPC also won the **CII HR Excellence Role model award** in the month of March 2021, the highest award in the field of People Management in the country.

Source: PIB



New Appointments

Aashritha V Olety becomes India's 1st woman flight test engineer

Why in the News?

- Aashritha V Olety, an officer of the Indian Air Force (IAF),** has become the country's first woman flight test engineer.

Key Points

- Aashritha V Olety, a native of Karnataka, has graduated as part of the 43rd Flight Test Course after completing a one-year course at the pilot school.
- Olety will be responsible for evaluating aircraft and airborne systems before their induction into the armed forces.

Note: Excluding the medical wing in which women have been serving for decades, the army accounts for 6,807 women officers, the IAF 1,607 and the navy has 704 women officers. In percentage terms, women still form a small part of the military- 0.56% of the army, 1.08% of the air force and 6.5% of the navy.

Justice (Retd) Arun Kumar Mishra takes charge as NHRC Chairman

Why in the News?

- Justice Arun Kumar Mishra (Retd) took charge as the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

Key Points

- Arun Kumar Mishra** retired from the Supreme Court in August 2020.
- About National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):** It is a statutory public body constituted on 12 October 1993 as per provisions of Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

Jagjit Pavadia elected as president of International Narcotics Control Board

Why in the News?

- Jagjit Pavadia, former Narcotics Commissioner of India, has been elected president of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB).
- She succeeds Cornelis P. De Johncheere.

Key Points

- Jagjit Pavadia** is the first Indian to be heading the Vienna-based organization and the second woman to hold this office.
- She has been a member of the INCB since 2015. She was elected first vice-president of the Board in 2016.

About International Narcotics Control Board (INCB):

- INCB is an independent, quasi-judicial expert body established by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 by merging two bodies: the Permanent Central Narcotics Board and the Drug Supervisory Body.
- Its headquarters is Vienna, Austria.

Isaac Herzog elected president of Israel

Why in the News?

- Isaac Herzog, Veteran politician has been elected Israel's 11th president.

Key Points

- Isaac Herzog, former Labor leader will be the first Israeli President who is the son of a former president.



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- Herzog is currently the head of the Jewish Agency – a nonprofit that works with the government to promote immigration to Israel.

Facts about Israel:

- **Prime Minister:** Benjamin Netanyahu
- **Capital:** Jerusalem
- **Currency:** Israeli Shekel

Source: Indian Express

Dr Patrick Amoth elected as Chairman of WHO Executive Board

Why in the News?

- Dr Patrick Amoth of Kenya has been elected as the Chairman of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Executive Board.

Key Points

- Dr Amoth is the acting Director-General (DG) for Health, Ministry of Health of Kenya.
- He replaced Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Health Minister as he completed his tenure as Chairman of WHO Executive Board on June 02.

Facts about WHO (World Health Organization)

- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Founded:** 7 April 1948
- **Director-General:** Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Source: The Economic Times

Maldives Foreign Minister elected President of UNGA

Why in the News?

- **Maldives Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid** was elected as President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

Key Points

- Abdulla Shahid will succeed Turkish diplomat Volkan Bozkir who was UNGA President for the 75th session.
- According to the established rules of regional rotation, the President of the 76th session of the General Assembly was to be elected from the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):

- It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), serving as the main deliberative, policy-making, and representative organ of the UN.
- The UNGA is responsible for the UN budget, appointing the non-permanent members to the Security Council, appointing the Secretary-General of the United Nations, receiving reports from other parts of the UN system, and making recommendations through resolutions.

Source: Indian Express

Ranjitsinh Disale appointed as World Bank Education Advisor

Why in the News?

- Ranjitsinh Disale, the first Indian teacher to receive the Global Teacher Prize 2020, has been appointed as the World Bank Education Advisor for the period June 2021 to June 2024.

- The World Bank has appointed 12 advisors from world over and Disale is one of them representing India.

Key Points

- Ranjitsinh Disale is a primary teacher from Maharashtra's Solapur.
- Disale was named the winner of the **Global Teacher Prize 2020** in recognition of his efforts to promote girls' education and trigger a quick-response (QR) coded textbook revolution in India.

Note:

- The World Bank has recently launched the Global Coach Program, a new initiative focused on accelerating learning by helping countries improve in-service teacher professional development (TPD) programs and systems.

Source: NDTV

Anup Chandra Pandey takes over as new Election Commissioner

Why in the News?

- Anup Chandra Pandey** joins the **Election Commission of India** as **second Election Commissioner** in a three-member body headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar.

Key Points

- Anup Chandra Pandey has been a 1984 batch Indian Administrative Service Officer.
- During the span of about 37 years of distinguished Government of India service, Shri Pandey has worked in various Ministries & Departments at the Centre and his state cadre of Uttar Pradesh.

Source: PIB

Microsoft names CEO Satya Nadella as chairman

Why in the News?

- Microsoft Corporation named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Satya Nadella as its new chairman.

Key Points

- Satya Nadella, succeeds John Thompson, who will return to the role of lead independent director.
- Nadella, the company's third CEO, will also be the third chairman in Microsoft's history, following Gates and Thompson.

Facts about Microsoft: Microsoft is an American multinational technology company.

- Founded:** April 4, 1975
- Founders:** Bill Gates, Paul Allen
- Headquarters:** United States
- CEO:** Satya Nadella

Justice Sanjay Yadav takes oath as Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court

Why in the News?

- Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office and secrecy to Justice Sanjay Yadav at Raj Bhavan in Lucknow.
- Earlier Justice Yadav was the acting Chief Justice of the Allahabad HC.
- Justice Yadav also served as the deputy advocate general of Madhya Pradesh.

- Justice Yadav was elevated as a judge of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh on March 2, 2007, and a permanent judge on January 15, 2010.

Source: Indian Express

Amul's R S Sodhi conferred with Asia Pacific Productivity Champion award

Why in the News?

- The MD (Managing Director) of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF or Amul), R.S. Sodhi, was conferred with the **regional award as Asia Pacific Productivity Champion from APO (Asian Productivity Organization), Tokyo, Japan.**

Key Points

- In the past 20 years, this is for the first time an Indian has received a prestigious award.

About Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF)

- It is an Indian dairy cooperative society, based at Anand in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is also known as Amul.

Source: The Hindu

Naftali Bennett as Israel's new Prime Minister

Why in the News?

- Naftali Bennett, leader of the right-wing Yamina party, was sworn in as Israel's new Prime Minister.

Key Points

- Naftali Bennett succeeds Benjamin Netanyahu, who was forced out of office after 12 years.
- Bennett will be Prime Minister until September 2023 as part of a power-sharing deal.
- He will then hand power over to Yair Lapid, head of the centrist Yesh Atid party, for a further two years.

Source: Indian Express

Antonio Guterres re-elected as UN Secretary-General

Why in the News?

- The UN General Assembly (UNGA) appointed Antonio Guterres as the UN Secretary-General for a second term beginning on January 1, 2022 and ending on December 31, 2026.

Key Points

Appointment:

- Under the United Nations Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the **Security Council**.
- Each Secretary-General has the option of a second term if they can garner enough support from Member States.

About Antonio Guterres:

- Antonio Guterres, the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations, took over on January 1, 2017, and his first term ends on December 31 this year.
- Former Prime Minister of Portugal, Mr. Guterres served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a decade from June 2005 to December 2015.

Facts about United Nations:

- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Headquarter:** New York, USA

- **Membership:** 193 member states

The United Nations has six principal organs:

- The General Assembly
- The Security Council
- The Economic and Social Council
- The International Court of Justice
- The UN Secretariat
- The Trusteeship Council

Funds and Programmes:

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Facts about UNSC (United Nations Security Council):

- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Membership:** 15 countries
- **Permanent members:** 5 (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States)
- **Non-permanent members:** 10 including India

Source: The Hindu

Iran's new President-elect Ebrahim Raisi

Why in the News?

- Ebrahim Raisi has been elected as the next president of Iran.

Key Points

- The 60-year-old, Ebrahim Raisi will take office in August, presenting himself as the best person to combat corruption and solve the economic problems Iran has experienced under the outgoing President, Hassan Rouhani.
- He is the head of the country's judiciary and has ultra-conservative political views.

Source: The Hindu

Obituaries

Former Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth passes away

Why in the News?

- The former Prime Minister of Mauritius, Anerood Jugnauth passed away at 91.
- As a mark of respect, the Government of India has announced a day's state mourning on 05 June 2021 throughout the country.

Key Points

- Anerood Jugnauth was the country's longest-serving Prime Minister with more than 18 years of tenure.
- He was considered the father of the Mauritian economic miracle of the 1980s.
- He also served as President of Mauritius from 2003-2012.

Note: Anerood Jugnauth was given India's second highest civilian honour **Padma Vibhushan**.

Source: Indian Express

Assamese litterateur Lakshmi Nandan Bora passes away

Why in the News?

- Padma Shri awardee and noted Assamese litterateur Lakshmi Nandan Bora passed away at 89.

Key Points

- Lakshmi Nandan Bora won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1988.
- In 2008, he won the Saraswati Samman from KK Birla Foundation.
- Lakshmi Nandan Bora was honoured by the Government of India in 2015 with Padma Shri, the fourth highest Indian civilian award.

Source: The Hindu

National Award-winning director Buddhadeb Dasgupta passes away

Why in the News?

- Bengali filmmaker and poet, Buddhadeb Dasgupta passed away at 77.
- Buddhadeb Dasgupta had won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film a total of five times.
- Some of his best-known works included projects like Bagh Bahadur, Lal Darja, Kaalpurush and Tahader Katha among more.

Source: The Hindu

Dingko Singh, Asian Games gold-winning boxer, passes away

Why in the News?

- Former Asian Games gold medalist boxer Dingko Singh passed at 47.
- Dingko won the gold medal in 1998 at the 13th Asian Games, Bangkok.
- He was also Manipur's first Asian Games gold medalist.
- For his outstanding contribution, the Manipuri pugilist was bestowed the Arjuna award in 1998 and conferred with Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award, in 2013.

Source: Indian Express

Environmentalist and organic farming proponent Radha Mohan passes away

Why in the News?

- Noted environmentalist and **Padma Shri** awardee Professor Radha Mohan, who helped popularise organic farming techniques, died at 78.
- Radha Mohan was awarded the Padma Shri along with his daughter Sabarmatee in 2020 for their contribution to the agriculture sector.
- Back in 1990, the father-daughter duo founded '**Sambhav**', a social organisation aimed at educating farmers on organic and natural farming.

Source: Indian Express

Padma Shri awardee Dr Ashok Panagariya passes away

- Prominent neurologist and Padma Shri recipient Dr Ashok Panagariya passed away at 71.
- One of India's leading neurologists, Ashok Panagariya was a recipient of the Padma Shri and the BC Roy Award.
- Note:** Ashok Panagariya's publisher announced that his memoir, "**Monk in a Merc**" will be released on June 28, 2021.

Source: Indian Express

Ramakrishna Math and Mission vice-president passes away

- Vice-President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission Swami Shivamayanandaji passed away.
- Shivamayananda was born in Bihar on December 20, 1934.
- He joined the order in Belur Math in 1959, received "Sanyas Diksha" from Swami Vireshwaranandaji Maharaj in 1969.

Source: The Hindu

Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay passes away

- National Award-winning actor Sanchari Vijay passed away.
- Vijay Kumar Basavarajaiah known by his stage name Sanchari Vijay, was an Indian actor known for his work in Kannada cinema.
- Vijay was awarded the National Film Award for Best Actor at the 62nd National Film Awards.
- He also received the Karnataka State Film Award for Best Actor and the Filmfare Critics Award for Best Actor – South for the performance.

Source: The Hindu

Milkha Singh, the legendary sprinter, passes away

- Milkha Singh also known as The Flying Sikh, was an Indian track and field sprinter who was introduced to the sport while serving in the Indian Army.
- He won **four gold medals** at the **Asian Games**. He also won **gold** at the **Commonwealth Games** in Cardiff.
- He was awarded the **Padma Shri**, in recognition of his sporting achievements.
- Source:** The Hindu

Miscellaneous

IBF renamed as Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation

Why in the News?

- In a bid to expand its purview to the OTT segment, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), the apex industry body of broadcasters, has been renamed as the **Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation (IBDF)**.

Key Points

- **IBDF** will form a Self-Regulatory Body (SRB), as per the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
- The name of the self-regulatory body is **Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC)** for digital OTT platforms.
- **DMCRC** is a second-tier mechanism at the appellate level and is similar to Broadcast Content Complaint Council (BCCC), which IBF had implemented for the linear broadcasting sector way back in 2011.

About Indian Broadcasting Foundation: It is also known as a unified representative body of the television broadcasters in India. The organisation was founded in the year 1999. Over 250 Indian television channels are associated with it. The organisation is credited as the spokesman of India Broadcasting Industry.

About OTT: An over-the-top (OTT) media service is a media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet. OTT bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms, the types of companies which traditionally act as controllers or distributors of such content.

DG NCC Mobile Training App 2.0

Why in the News?

- Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar launched **Directorate General (DG) National Cadet Corps (NCC) Mobile Training App Version 2.0**.

Key Points

About DG NCC Mobile Training App 2.0

- The app will assist in conducting countrywide online training to NCC cadets during the COVID-19 pandemic conditions.
- It is aimed at providing NCC-related basic information and entire training material on one platform.
- **Note: DG NCC Mobile App Version 1.0** for training was launched by Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh in 2020 in order to assist online cadet training.

RDSO becomes the first Institution to be declared SDO under "One Nation One Standard" mission on BIS

Why in the News?

- **RDSO (Research Design & Standards Organization)** of Indian Railways has become the first Institution to be declared **SDO (Standard Developing Organization)** under "**One Nation One Standard**" mission on **BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards)** which is Institution under Department of Consumer Affairs.
- RDSO took the initiative to seek recognition as a Standard Developing Organization (SDO) under the **BIS SDO Recognition Scheme**.

Key Points

- **RDSO**, Lucknow, which is the sole R&D Wing of the Ministry of Railways, is one of India's leading Standard formulating Body undertaking standardization work for the railway sector.
- The **recognition is valid for 3 years** and will require renewal after completion of the validity period.

About the BIS SDO Recognition Scheme:

- To attain “Nation One Standard” vision of Govt. of India, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Standards Body, has launched a scheme which provides for “Recognition of SDO”.
- Through this scheme, BIS aims at aggregating and integrating the existing capabilities and dedicated domain specific expertise available with various organizations in the country engaged in standards development in their specific sectors and enable convergence of all standard development activities in the country resulting in “One National Standard for One Subject”.

About BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards):

- The Bureau of Indian Standards is the national Standards Body of India working under the aegis of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Government of India. It was established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 which came into effect on 23 December 1986.

Other Initiatives of BIS:

- Portal for Consumer Engagement
- BIS-Care App
- COVID-19 Standards
- Quality Control Orders

Prime Minister launches M-Yoga App on 7th International Day of Yoga 2021

Why in the News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched ‘**WHO M-Yoga**’ App on the occasion of **7thInternational Day of Yoga**.
- The Prime Minister said the M-Yoga App will help in our 'One World, One Health' motto.

Key Points

About M-Yoga App:

- The App will provide videos of Yoga training and practice based on common Yoga protocol in many languages.
- This mobile app will be immensely helpful in the promotion of Yoga and wellness among people around the world, especially during the ongoing pandemic.

Background:

- The **Ministry of AYUSH** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** had jointly undertaken a project in mid-2019, focusing on **Mobile-Yoga**.
- It envisaged the concept of the ‘**Be Healthy, Be Mobile**’ under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to achieve Universal Health Coverage by 2030.
- **Be Healthy, Be Mobile (BHBM) initiative** is a global partnership led by WHO which supports the scale up of mobile health (m-Health) technology within the scope of the National Health system to combat non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Source: PIB

National Helpline 155260 and Reporting Platform for preventing financial loss due to cyber fraud

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has operationalised the National Helpline 155260 and Reporting Platform to prevent financial loss due to cyber fraud.
- The Helpline was soft launched on April 01, 2021.

Key Points

About the Helpline and Reporting Platform:

- The Helpline 155260 and Reporting Platform have been made operational by the **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The **Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System** has been developed in-house by I4C to integrate Law Enforcement Agencies and Banks and Financial Intermediaries.

Note: Since its soft launch, in a short span of two months, Helpline 155260 has been able to save more than Rs.1.85 crore.

Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) Scheme:

- The I4C scheme was approved in October 2018, to deal with all types of cybercrimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

Components of the I4C Scheme:

- National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit (TAU)
- National Cybercrime Reporting Portal
- Platform for Joint Cybercrime Investigation Team
- National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC)
- National Cybercrime Forensic Laboratory (NCFL) Ecosystem
- Cybercrime Ecosystem Management Unit
- National Cyber Crime Research and Innovation Centre

Other Initiatives to Tackle Cybercrime:

- Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN)
- Draft Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra

Related International Convention:

- The Convention on Cybercrime (**Budapest Convention**) is the first international treaty seeking to address Internet and computer crime by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and increasing cooperation among nations.

Signatories: 67

Signed: 23 November 2001

Effective: 1 July 2004

Source: PIB

National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, Gujarat

Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Culture signed a Memorandum of Understanding for '**Cooperation in Development of National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)**' at Lothal, Gujarat.

Key Points

- National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC), a world-class facility is to be developed in the vicinity of the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) site of Lothal**, located about 80 kms away from Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

- NMHC is to be developed as a **first of its kind in the country** dedicated to the legacy of Maritime Heritage of India.
- NMHC would be developed as an international tourist destination, where the maritime heritage of India from ancient to modern times would be showcased and an edutainment approach using the latest technology would be adopted to spread awareness about India's maritime heritage.



About Lothal:

- Lothal was a city of the ancient **Indus Valley Civilization**, located in the Bhal region of the modern state of Gujarat. Construction of the city began around 2400 BCE.
- The Lothal site has been nominated as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, and its application is pending on the **tentative list of UNESCO**.

Source: PIB

Monthly Current Affair Quiz



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1. Which of the following statements is/are correct?

- i. Recently, Indian economist Amartya Kumar Sen has been conferred with Spain's Princess of Asturias Award 2021 in the social sciences category.
- ii. Amartya Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

2. When is World No Tobacco Day observed?

- A. May 13
- B. May 3
- C. May 31
- D. May 24

3. Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), the apex industry body of broadcasters, was renamed as.....

- A. Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation
- B. Indian Board of Digital Foundation
- C. Indian Broadcasting and Digital Media
- D. Indian Broadcasting and Digital Council

4. Which state has appointed 'Guardian Ministers' to review implementation of central and state government policy?

- A. Kerala
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Rajasthan
- D. Assam

5. When is International Day of UN Peacekeepers observed?

- A. May 19
- B. May 29
- C. May 30
- D. May 23

6. The Ministry of Education recently launched YUVA- Prime Minister's Scheme For Mentoring Young Authors. Identify the points that are correctly related to the YUVA scheme.

- i. Full form of YUVA is Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors.
 - ii. It is an Author Mentorship programme to train young and budding authors (below 40 years of age).
 - iii. The National Book Trust, India under the Ministry of Education, is the Implementing Agency of the scheme.
- A. ii and iii only
 - B. i and iii only
 - C. i, ii, iii
 - D. i and ii only

7. Which of the following statements is/are correct?

- i. Recently, the Ministry of Education has approved the proposal to provide monetary assistance through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of the cooking cost component of the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme.
 - ii. Mid-Day-Meal Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme which was launched in 2001
- A. i only
 - B. ii only
 - C. Both i and ii
 - D. Neither i nor ii

8. AmbiTAG- India's first indigenous temperature data logger for cold chain management has been developed by.....

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

9.Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the recently launched Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (CDP)?

- i. It has been launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
 - ii. In a pilot phase, the programme will be implemented in 49 horticulture clusters.
 - iii. It is a central sector programme implemented by the National Horticulture Board (NHB).
- A. iii only
B. i and ii only
C. i and iii only
D. ii and iii only

10.Which of the following statements is not correct regarding 'PM-CARES for Children' Scheme?

- A. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'PM-CARES for Children' Scheme for Children orphaned due to COVID 19
- B. The children will be assisted to get a house, mobile and laptop when they turn 21
- C. Such children to get a monthly stipend once they turn 18 and a fund of Rs 10 lakh when they turn 23 from PM CARES.
- D. The children will get free health insurance of Rs 5 lakh under Ayushman Bharat Scheme (PM-JAY) till 18 years & premium will be paid by PM CARES.

11.**Proposed Mekedatu dam project will be built on which river?**

- A. Jhelum
- B. Yamuna
- C. Kaveri
- D. Sutlej

12.**Which organization has launched the Online Tracking Portal "Bal Swaraj (Covid-Care)"?**

- A. Central Social Welfare Board**
- B. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
- C. National Commission for Women**
- D. National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development**

13.Which state government has launched 'Ankur' scheme to award citizens for planting trees?

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

14. Who has become India's first woman flight test engineer?

- A. **Aashritha V Olety**
- B. Bhawana Kanth
- C. Shivangi
- D. Avani Chatuvedi

15. Who has been awarded with 'WHO Director-General Special Recognition Award' for his accomplishments in the area of tobacco control?

- A. **Piyush Goyal**
- B. Harsh Vardhan
- C. **Narendra Modi**
- D. **Ravi Shankar Prasad**

16. A new species of spider cricket "Jayanti" was recently discovered in which state?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Chhattisgarh
- C. Karnataka
- D. Odisha

17. Which of the following organisations has launched the World's First Nano Urea Liquid?

- A. Indo Gulf Fertilisers Ltd.
- B. Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd.
- C. Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd
- D. Gujarat State Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd.

18. Consider the following statements regarding the third edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index 2020–21

- i. NITI Aayog has released the third edition of the SDG India Index 2020–21
- ii. Himachal Pradesh has the top rank with a score of 75

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

19. Research Design & Standards Organization (RDSO) has become the first Institution to be declared SDO (Standard Developing Organization).

What are the points that are correctly related to the above statement?

- i. RDSO took the initiative to seek recognition as a SDO under the BIS SDO Recognition Scheme.
 - ii. The recognition is valid for 3 years and will require renewal after completion of the validity period.
 - iii. RDSO has become the first Institution to be declared SDO under the "One District One Product" mission on the Bureau of Indian Standards.
- A. i only
 - B. ii and iii only
 - C. i and ii only
 - D. i, ii and iii

20. What are the new names given by the WHO to COVID-19 variants first identified in India?

- A. Kappa and Delta
- B. Kappa and Alpha
- C. Beta and Delta
- D. Gamma and Zeta

21. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)?

- A. Deepak Mishra
- B. Arun Kumar Mishra
- C. Mohan Sharma
- D. Amitabh Kant

22. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the World Environment Day 2021?

- i. World Environment Day is celebrated annually on June 5

- ii. India was the global host of World Environment Day 2021
- iii. World Environment Day was established in 1972 by the United Nations (UN) at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.

- A. iii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. ii and iii only

23. Consider the following statements regarding the recently inaugurated Indus Best Mega Food Park.

- i. Union Minister for Food Processing Industries inaugurated the Indus Best Mega Food Park at Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- ii. Under the Scheme, the Government of India provides financial assistance up to Rs. 50.00 Crore per Mega Food Park project.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

24. **Recently, India retargeted its 20 % ethanol-blending with petrol to**

-
- A. 2025
- B. 2028
- C. 2024
- D. 2029

25. NASA has announced to send VERITAS and DAVINCI+ missions to which planet?

- A. Mars
- B. Jupiter
- C. Saturn
- D. Venus

26. Isaac Herzog has become the 11th President of which nation?

- A. Argentina
- B. Brazil
- C. Israel
- D. Finland

27. Consider the following statements regarding the recently launched SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) initiative.

- i. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution launched the SAGE initiative.
- ii. An allocation of Rs 25 crores has been made for the SAGE initiative in the current financial year i.e 2021-22

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

28. Which organisation released the State of Indian's Environment Report 2021?

- A. Centre for Science and Environment
- B. The Energy and Resources Institute
- C. World Wide Fund for Nature
- D. NITI Aayog

29. Who won the International Booker Prize 2021 for 'At Night All Blood is Black'?

- A. James Patterson
- B. Hamid Ismailov
- C. David Diop
- D. John Grisham

30. When is World Food Safety Day observed?

- A. May 06
- B. June 05
- C. May 07
- D. June 07

31. Consider the following statements.

- i. India has been elected to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2022-24 in the Asia-Pacific States Category.
- ii. India is currently serving the 2021-22 term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

32. Which among the following has been named Assam's sixth national park?

- A. Raimona
- B. Sonitpur
- C. Nagaon
- D. Jorhat

33. Who has been appointed as the World Bank Education Advisor from India?

- A. Shuvajit Payne
- B. Vinneta Garg
- C. Ranjitsinh Disale
- D. Anmol Singh

34. Who has been elected as the President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA)?

- A. Abdulla Shahid
- B. Patrick Amoth
- C. Martin Griffiths
- D. Zalmai Rassoul.

35. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the QS World University Rankings 2022?

- i. 9 Indian Universities have achieved top-200 positions in QS World University Rankings 2022
- ii. IIT-Bombay is India's top ranked institution.

iii. Oxford University has secured 2nd rank.

- A. iii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. ii and iii only
- D. i and iii only

36. Consider the following statements regarding the Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate.

- i. The Finance Ministers from the G20 have announced the Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate.
- ii. The minimum global tax rate would be at least 15 percent.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

37. In which state will India's first international maritime services cluster be set up?

- A. Kerala
- B. Gujarat
- C. Odisha
- D. Maharashtra

38. Global database named "I-Familia" has been launched by which organization?

- A. CBI
- B. IMF
- C. DRDO
- D. Interpol

39. CBSE has introduced coding and data science as a subject for students in collaboration with which company?

- A. HCL
- B. TCS
- C. Microsoft

D. Wipro

40. In June 2021, who assumed charge as the new Election Commissioner (EC) of India?

- A. Anup Chandra Pandey
- B. Sunil Mishra
- C. Vivek Tripathi
- D. Ramesh Chandra

41. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Assam's National Parks?

i. Assam's Dehing Patkai wildlife sanctuary has been announced as the 5th national park of the state.

ii. Assam now is the state with the second highest number of national parks in the country.

iii. Kaziranga national park and Manas national park are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

- A. ii only
- B. i only
- C. i and iii only
- D. ii and iii only

42. In June 2021, the World Bank projected India's economy to grow at _____ percent for 2021-22

- A. 6.3
- B. 8.3
- C. 7.5
- D. 9.2

43. National award winner, Buddhadeb Dasgupta passed away recently. He was a/an.....

- A. Musician
- B. Teacher
- C. Athlete
- D. Filmmaker

44.Which international agency has adopted a political declaration to end AIDS by the year 2030?

- A. WHO
- B. UNGA
- C. World Bank
- D. UNEP

45.Who took oath as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court?

- A. Sanjay Yadav
- B. V. K. Mishra
- C. Rajiv Mishra
- D. Arvind Mathur

46.Who was conferred with the regional award as 'Asia Pacific Productivity Champion' from Asian Productivity Organization?

- A. Anish Bansal
- B. R.S. Sodhi
- C. Acharya Vrat
- D. H. K Chandra

47.Dingko Singh, who passed away recently, was associated with which sport?

- A. Wrestling
- B. Hockey
- C. Badminton
- D. Boxing

48.Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the G7 Leaders' Summit 2021?

- i. It was the 47th G7 Leaders' Summit.
 - ii. It was held at Cornwall in the United Kingdom.
 - iii. China was invited to participate in the proceedings of the summit as "Guest Countries".
- A. iii only
 - B. ii only
 - C. ii and iii only

D. i and ii only

49. Which Indian-origin journalist won Pulitzer Prize 2021 for exposing China's vast infrastructure for detaining Muslims?

- A. Riya Winona
- B. **Megha Rajagopalan**
- C. Aiyana Kirtan
- D. Yogita Nimaya

50. Who has become the new Prime Minister of Israel?

- A. Reuven Rivlin
- B. Naftali Bennett
- C. Isaac Herzog
- D. Benjamin Netanyahu

51. Recently, the Defence Minister has approved the budgetary support of Rs 498.8 crore to iDEX for the next five years. What does iDEX stand for?

- A. Innovations for Defence Excellence
- B. Innovations for Defence Exercise
- C. Information for Defence Excellence
- D. Initiative for Defence Excellence

52. Which city has been ranked the best on Global Liveability Index 2021?

- A. Osaka
- B. Auckland
- C. Adelaide
- D. Lagos

53. Which has become the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender?

- A. Hungary
- B. Germany
- C. El Salvador
- D. Albania

54. Who has won French Open 2021 Men's Singles title?

- A. Rafael Nadal
- B. Nikola Mektic
- C. Stefanos Tsitsipas
- D. Novak Djokovic

55. Who has won French Open 2021 Women's Singles title?

- A. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova
- B. Barbora Krejcikova
- C. Katerina Siniakova
- D. Aryna Sabalenka

56. Which edition of ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus was held on June 16, 2021?

- A. 6
- B. 8
- C. 3
- D. 9

57. What is the rank of India in the World Giving Index 2021?

- A. 11
- B. 16
- C. 19
- D. 14

58. Where 31th NATO Summit was held in 2021?

- A. Ottawa
- B. Copenhagen
- C. Brussels
- D. Madrid

59. When is World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought observed?

- A. June 18
- B. June 17
- C. June 15
- D. June 21

60. Consider the following statements regarding the Sea Plane services in India.

i. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Civil Aviation for development of Sea Plane services in India was signed.

ii. India's first seaplane service between Kevadia and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad started operation in October 2020, under Sagarmala Seaplane Services.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

61. Which union ministry has proposed the "Deep Ocean Mission"?

- A. Ministry of Earth Sciences
- B. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- C. Ministry of Jal Shakti
- D. Ministry of Science and Technology

62. **Which institute has hosted Conference of BRICS Network Universities as part of 13th BRICS Summit?**

- A. **IIT Delhi**
- B. IIT Kanpur
- C. **IIT Bombay**
- D. **IIT Madras**

63. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the World Competitiveness Index 2021?

- i. World Competitiveness Index 2021 was released by the IMD (Institute for Management Development).
 - ii. India is at 43rd position.
 - iii. Denmark is at 1st position.
- A. i only
 - B. ii only
 - C. i and iii only
 - D. i and ii only

64. Where Indian Navy - European Union Naval Force (IN-EUNAVFOR) Exercise held?

- A. Gulf of Alaska
- B. Gulf of Bahrain
- C. Gulf of Venice
- D. Gulf of Aden

65. When is International Day of Yoga observed?

- A. June 21
- B. June 11
- C. June 19
- D. June 25

66. Which country has announced to launch the world's first wooden satellite 'WISA Woodsat'?

- A. Australia
- B. Spain
- C. New Zealand
- D. Germany

67. Recently Milkha Singh passed away. He was a/an.....

- A. Cricketer
- B. Boxer
- C. Sprinter
- D. Wrestler

68. Consider the following statements regarding the Global Peace Index 2021

- i. India has been placed at 135th position.
- ii. The Index was released by the World Economic Forum.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

69. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'WHO M-Yoga' App on the occasion of which edition of the International Day of Yoga?

- A. 7
- B. 6
- C. 9
- D. 5

70. Who has won Iran's presidential election held in June 2021?

- A. Ahmad Jannati
- B. Ebrahim Raisi
- C. Eshaq Jahangiri
- D. Isa Kalantari

71. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the World Investment Report 2021?

- i. India received \$64 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2020.
- ii. India is the 2nd largest recipient of FDI inflows in the world.
- iii. The report was released by the World Economic Forum.

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. ii and iii only
- D. i and ii only

72. Recently, China launched which spacecraft with 3 astronauts to its space station?

- A. Shenzhou-16
- B. Shenzhou-12
- C. Shenzhou-14
- D. Shenzhou-15

73. Which organisation won the United Nations' Land for Life Award 2021 organised by UNCCD?

- A. **Green Yatra**
- B. Nature Foundation
- C. Foundation for Ecological Security
- D. **Familial Forestry**

74. Who has won F1 French Grand Prix 2021?

- A. Max Verstappen
- B. Sergio Perez
- C. Lewis Hamilton
- D. Fernando Alonso

75. Consider the following statements regarding the SVAMITVA scheme.

- i. SVAMITVA scheme is a Central Sector scheme launched by the Prime Minister of India on National Panchayat Day i.e 24th April 2020.
- ii. The scheme aims to provide free housing for rural India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

76. Which state government recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Survey of India for implementing the SVAMITVA scheme in the state?

- A. Odisha
- B. Assam
- C. Kerala
- D. Tamil Nadu

77. Which State/UT launched the 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana'?

- A. **Uttar Pradesh**
- B. Puducherry
- C. Bihar
- D. **Delhi**

78. Mission Karmayogi, recently seen in the news, is related to.....

- A. Fiscal reforms
- B. Civil Services reforms
- C. Infrastructure reforms
- D. Agriculture reforms

79. Who was appointed as a chairperson to help the government in bringing major bureaucratic reforms through ambitious "Mission Karmayogi"?

- A. S D Shibu Lal
- B. Govind Iyer
- C. V K Mahapatra
- D. Pankaj Bansal

80. Which state has announced an economic advisory council comprising Nobel laureate Esther Duflo?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Tamil Nadu
- D. Madhya Pradesh

###ANSWERS###

1. Ans. C.	21. Ans. B.	41. Ans. D.	61. Ans. A.
2. Ans. C.	22. Ans. C.	42. Ans. B.	62. Ans. C.
3. Ans. A.	23. Ans. C.	43. Ans. D.	63. Ans. D.
4. Ans. D.	24. Ans. A.	44. Ans. B.	64. Ans. D.
5. Ans. B.	25. Ans. D.	45. Ans. A.	65. Ans. A.
6. Ans. B.	26. Ans. C.	46. Ans. B.	66. Ans. C.
7. Ans. A.	27. Ans. B.	47. Ans. D.	67. Ans. C.
8. Ans. B.	28. Ans. A.	48. Ans. D.	68. Ans. A.
9. Ans. C.	29. Ans. C.	49. Ans. B.	69. Ans. A.
10. Ans. B.	30. Ans. D.	50. Ans. B.	70. Ans. B.
11. Ans. C.	31. Ans. C.	51. Ans. A.	71. Ans. A.
12. Ans. B.	32. Ans. A.	52. Ans. B.	72. Ans. B.
13. Ans. D.	33. Ans. C.	53. Ans. C.	73. Ans. D.
14. Ans. A.	34. Ans. A.	54. Ans. D.	74. Ans. A.
15. Ans. B.	35. Ans. C.	55. Ans. B.	75. Ans. A.
16. Ans. B.	36. Ans. B.	56. Ans. B.	76. Ans. B.
17. Ans. C.	37. Ans. B.	57. Ans. D.	77. Ans. D.
18. Ans. A.	38. Ans. D.	58. Ans. C.	78. Ans. B.
19. Ans. C.	39. Ans. C.	59. Ans. B.	79. Ans. A.
20. Ans. A.	40. Ans. A.	60. Ans. C.	80. Ans. C.



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