

## Weekly Current Affairs 26<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 साप्ताहिक करंट अफेयर्स 26-31 जुलाई 2021

### Important News: State

#### UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscape' Project for Gwalior, Orchha launched Why in News

- In Madhya Pradesh, **Gwalior and Orchha** cities have been selected by UNESCO under its 'Historic Urban Landscape' Project.

#### Key Points

- **6 cities of South Asia**, including **Ajmer** and **Varanasi** in India are already involved in this project. **Gwalior and Orchha** have been included as the **7th and 8th cities**.
- The cities will be jointly developed by UNESCO, Government of India and Madhya Pradesh by focusing on their historical and cultural improvement.

#### Note:

- **Gwalior** was established in the 9th century and ruled by Gurjar Pratihara, Tomar, Baghel Kachvaha and Scindias. Gwalior is known for its temples and palaces.
- **Orchha** is popular for its palaces and temples and was the capital of the Bundela kingdom in the 16th century.

#### About Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Project:

- HUL Project was started in the year 2011, for the inclusive and well-planned development of fast-growing historical cities while preserving the culture and heritage.

Source: newsonair

#### Karnataka's new Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai

#### Why in News

- Lingayat leader Basavaraj Bommai took oath as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka.

#### Key Points

- In the ceremony at the Glass House of the Karnataka Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru, Governor Thawarchand Gehlot administered the oath of office and secrecy to Basavaraj Bommai.

#### About Basavaraj Bommai:

- Bommai is the son of former chief minister S R Bommai.
- He is a two-time MLC and three-time MLA from Shiggaon in Haveri district in North Karnataka.

**Note:** **BS Yediyurappa** resigned as the Chief Minister of Karnataka on 26 July, 2021.



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Source: Indian Express

## First Central University and first 'Integrated Multi-Purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation' for Ladakh

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the **first Central University** and the **first 'Integrated Multi-Purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation'** for **Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh**.

**Key Points**

**About Central University:**

- It will be set up with a total outlay of Rs 750 crore and will cater to all areas of the UT of Ladakh that include Leh and Kargil.

**Note:** The Bill in this regard will be introduced for amending the Central Universities Act, 2009.

**About Integrated Multi-Purpose Infrastructure Development Corporation:**

- The authorised share capital of the corporation will be Rs 25 crore.
- The establishment of the corporation will result in inclusive and integrated development of the UT of Ladakh.

**Note:** When the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act was enacted in 2019, there was a Jammu central university and a Kashmir central university, but there was no central university in Ladakh.

Source: newsonair

## Rudreswara Temple at Palampet, Warangal, Telangana inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List

Why in News

- **Rudreswara Temple**, (also known as the **Ramappa Temple**) at Palampet, Mulugu district, near Warangal in the state of Telangana has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.
- It is India's **39th World Heritage Site**.
- The decision was taken at the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO.

**Key Points**

- Rudreswara temple was proposed by the government as its only nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage site tag for the year 2019.

**About the Rudreswara (Ramappa) Temple**

- The Rudreswara temple was constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of the **Kakatiya Empire** by **Recharla Rudra**, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva.
- The presiding deity here is Ramalingeswara Swamy.
- The temple is also known as the Ramappa temple, after the sculptor who executed the work in the temple for 40 years.
- The temple stands on a 6 feet high star-shaped platform with walls, pillars and ceilings adorned with intricate carvings that attest to the unique skill of the Kakatiyan sculptors.

### World Heritage Site in India:

- The **first sites** to be inscribed were Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Agra Fort, and Taj Mahal, of which all were inscribed in the 1983 session of the World Heritage Committee.
- Presently, there are **39 World Heritage Sites located in India**. Out of these, **31 are cultural, 7 are natural, and 1 is mixed**.
- India has the 6<sup>th</sup> largest number of sites in the world.

### About World Heritage Site:

- A World Heritage Site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**.
- The World Heritage Sites list is maintained by the international **World Heritage Program** administered by the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee**.
- The programme began with the "**Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage**", which was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972.

### Types:

- Cultural heritage sites
- Natural heritage sites
- Mixed heritage sites (contain elements of both natural and cultural significance)

**Note:** Recently, the **England's city Liverpool** has been removed from UNESCO's list of world heritage sites.

**Source: PIB**

## Important News: India

### Capacity Building Initiative on 'Making Water Sensitive Cities in Ganga Basin' Launched

#### Why in News

- A new capacity building initiative on '**Making Water Sensitive Cities in Ganga Basin**' aimed at improving river health/flows was launched by **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** in association with **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)**.

#### Key Points

#### About Capacity Building Initiative:

- **Key focus areas of the programme:** Water Sensitive Urban Design and Planning, Decentralized Wastewater Treatment and Local Reuse, Urban Water Efficiency and Conservation, Urban Groundwater Management and Urban Water bodies / Lake Management.
- The program will engage all the **stakeholders** which includes, SPMGs (State Program Management Group, Namami Gange), Municipal corporations, Technical & research constants, international organizations and local grassroot communities.



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- This initiative is part of the series of ongoing efforts by NMCG aimed to ensuring convergence of the Namami Gange Mission with national flagship urban missions (AMRUT, Smart Cities, Swachh Bharat Mission, NULM, HRIDAY) and other missions (Atal Bhujal Yojana, Jal Shakti Abhiyan, Jal Jeevan Mission) at state /city level across Ganga basin states.

#### **Water Sensitive Urban Design and Planning:**

- It is an emerging urban development paradigm aimed to minimize hydrological impacts of urban development on the environment.
- It includes the method of planning and designing urban areas for optimum utilization of water.

#### **Other Related Initiatives:**

- ‘Catch the Rain’ initiative for rain water harvesting
- “River Cities Alliance” which will provide a unique platform for river cities to collaborate for collectively achieving river rejuvenation

**Source: PIB**

### **India gets its 40th UNESCO World Heritage Site- Dholavira: A Harappan City Why in News**

- India’s nomination of Dholavira, the Harappan City in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

#### **Key Points**

- Dholavira site was on UNESCO’s tentative list since 2014.
- India now enters the **Super-40** club for World Heritage Site inscriptions.
- With this successful nomination, India has **40 world heritage** properties overall, which includes **32 cultural, 7 natural and one mixed property**.

**Note:** This follows a few days after the **Rudreswara Temple**, (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Mulugu district, Telangana State becoming the **39th World Heritage Centre** in India.

#### **About the Harappan city of Dholavira:**

- Dholavira: a Harappan city is one of the very few well preserved urban settlements in South Asia dating from the 3rd to mid-2nd millennium BCE.
- Being the 6th largest of more than 1,000 Harappan sites discovered so far, and occupied for over 1,500 years, Dholavira not only witnesses the entire trajectory of the rise and fall of this early civilization of humankind, but also demonstrates its multifaceted achievements in terms of urban planning, water management, construction techniques, social governance and development, trading, art and manufacturing.
- Unlike other Harappan antecedent towns normally located near to rivers and perennial sources of water, the location of Dholavira in the island of Khadir was strategic to harness different mineral and raw material sources and to facilitate internal as well as external trade to the Magan (modern Oman peninsula) and Mesopotamian regions.
- Dholavira is an exceptional example of a proto-historic Bronze Age urban settlement pertaining to the Harappan Civilization.

#### **World Heritage Sites in Gujarat:**



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- Gujarat now has **four world heritage sites** — Dholavira, Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, Rani ki Vav in Patan and the Historic City of Ahmedabad.

**Source: PIB**

## **I-STEM Phase-II**

### **Why in News**

- **The Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map (I-STEM)** project has been accorded extension for five years, until 2026 and enters its **second phase** with added features.

### **Key Points**

#### **About I-STEM:**

- I-STEM, the national web portal for sharing Research and Development (R&D) facilities was formally launched in January 2020.
- It is an initiative of **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser** to the Government of India (GoI) under the aegis of **Prime Minister Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)** mission.

#### **Objective:**

- The objective of I-STEM is to strengthen the R&D ecosystem of the country by connecting researchers with resources, in part by promoting technologies and scientific equipment development indigenously.

#### **Phase-I:**

- In the first phase, the portal is listed with more than 20,000 pieces of equipment from 1050 institutions across the country and has more than 20,000 Indian researchers.
- I-STEM portal facilitates researchers to access slots for the use of equipment, as well as to share the details of the outcomes, such as, patents, publications and technologies.

#### **Phase-II:**

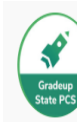
- Under Phase II, the portal will host indigenous technology products listed through a digital catalogue.
- The portal will also provide a platform for the various City Knowledge and Innovation Clusters supported by the Office of PSA to enhance effective use of R&D infrastructure through leveraging collaboration and partnership built on a shared STI ecosystem.
- It will be designed as a dynamic digital platform that will provide a boost to research and innovation especially for 2 tier and 3 tier cities and also for the emerging start-up ecosystem.

**Source: PIB**

## **Important News: World**

### **SCO Defence Ministers' meeting 2021 in Tajikistan**

#### **Why in News**



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- The **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting 2021** took place in **Dushanbe, Tajikistan**.
- **Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh** addressed the meeting.

#### Key Points

- Rajnath Singh said that India accords “high priority to the consolidation of trust in the security domain within SCO as well as strengthening ties with SCO partners bilaterally on the basis of equality, mutual respect and understanding”.
- India reiterates its resolve to work within the SCO framework for helping create and maintain a peaceful, secure and stable region.

#### India and SCO:

- **Regional Security:** security-related cooperation with the SCO and its **Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS)**
- SCO is also a platform to advance **India's Connect Central Asia policy**.
- SCO provides India with a forum where it can constructively engage both China and Pakistan in a regional context and project India's security interests.
- **Bringing Stability in Afghanistan:** So far India completed 500 projects in Afghanistan and is continuing with some more, with a total development aid of \$3 billion.
- Strategic Importance

**Note:** **Tajikistan** is chairing the SCO meeting this year and hosting a series of Ministerial and official-level meetings.

#### Facts about Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO):

- SCO 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.

**Source:** **Indian Express**

## Important News: Economy

### Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021

#### Why in News

- Parliament passed the **Marine Aids to Navigation Bill 2021**, which aims to replace the over **90-year-old Lighthouse Act 1927**.

#### Key Points

#### About the Bill:

- The Bill incorporates the global best practices, technological developments and India's International obligations in the field of Marine Aids to Navigation



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to make the legislative framework user-friendly and to promote ease of doing business.

- The bill aims to adopt state-of-the-art technologies of marine navigation which were not covered under the statutory provisions of the old Lighthouse Act 1927.

#### **Background:**

- The administration and management of Lighthouse and Lightships in India is governed by Lighthouse Act 1927 for safe navigation.
- **At the time of enactment of Lighthouse Act 1927, there were only 32 Lighthouses** in the then British India spread across six regions viz. Aden, Karachi, Madras, Bombay, Calcutta and Rangoon.
- **Presently**, there are **195 Lighthouses** and a number of advanced radio and digital aids to navigation administered under the said Act.
- As the technology evolved, systems were put in place where with the help of Radar and other sensors, vessels were advised from shore about the position and thus **Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)** came into existence and found wide acceptability.
- These modern, technologically improved aids to marine navigation systems have changed their profile from a **‘passive’ service** to that of **‘passive as well as interactive’ service**.

**Note:** Recently, Parliament has passed the **National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021**.

**Source:** PIB

#### **Kandla becomes first Green SEZ**

##### **Why in News**

- **Kandla SEZ (KASEZ)** was awarded **IGBC Platinum Rating**.
- **KASEZ** is the **first Green SEZ** to achieve the **IGBC Green Cities Platinum Rating** for Existing Cities.

##### **Key Points**

- The efforts of KASEZ were appreciable for water conservation and afforestation in Bhuj region of Gujarat.
- **IGBC Platinum rating** has been awarded for ‘Green master planning, policy initiatives and implementation of green infrastructure’ by **CII’s Indian Green Building Council (IGBC)**.

##### **About Kandla SEZ (KASEZ):**

- It was Asia’s first Export Processing Zone (EPZ).
- It was set up in Kandla, Gujarat in 1965.

##### **About Special Economic Zones (SEZs):**

- A Special Economic Zone is an area in which the trade and business laws are different from the rest of the country.
- SEZs are located within a country's national borders, and their aims include increasing trade balance, employment, increased investment, job creation and effective administration.

- The **Special Economic Zone (SEZ) policy in India** first came into inception on April 1, 2000. The prime objective was to enhance foreign investment and provide an internationally competitive and hassle free environment for exports.
- The **Special Economic Zones Act, 2005**, was passed by Parliament in May, 2005 which received Presidential assent on the 23rd of June, 2005.

**Source: PIB**

## **SMILE Scheme**

### **Why in News**

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has formulated a scheme “**SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**”.
- SMILE also includes a subscheme - ‘**Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging**’.

### **Key Points**

#### **About the scheme:**

- This scheme covers several comprehensive measures including welfare measures for persons who are engaged in the act of begging.
- It focuses extensively on rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages and so on.
- It provides for the use of the existing shelter homes for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of begging.

#### **Implementation:**

- The scheme would be implemented with the support of State/UT Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), institutions and others.
- The **Ministry initiated pilot projects** on Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons engaged in the act of Begging in **10 cities** namely Bangalore, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Indore, Mumbai, Nagpur, Ahmedabad and Patna.

#### **Fund Allocation:**

- Under this Scheme, funds allocated for the next 5 years are given: Rs. 50 Crore in 2021-22, Rs. 33 Crore in 2022-23, Rs. 33 Crore in 2023-24, Rs. 33 Crore in 2024-25, and Rs. 33 Crore in 2025-26.

#### **Beggars in India:**

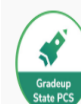
- According to Census 2011, the total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 (2,21,673 males and 1,91,997 females). State-wise, West Bengal leads by a considerable margin, followed by Uttar Pradesh.

#### **Note:**

- The Ministry had released an amount of Rs.70 Lakh in 2019-20 to **National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)** for skill development programmes for beggars.



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- The Ministry had also released an amount of Rs. 1 Crore in 2019-20 to **National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)** for beggars.

**Source: PIB**

## Special Economic Zones (SEZs)

### Why in News

- **Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** have touched new heights in terms of performance in Exports, Investment and Employment in the last 3 years.

### Key Points

#### Performance:

- **Exports** of Rs. 22,840 Crore in 2005-06 has increased to Rs. 7,59,524 Crore in 2020-21.
- **Investment** of Rs. 4,035.51 Crore in 2005-06 has increased to Rs. 6,17,499 Crore (cumulative basis) by 2020-21.
- **Employment** provided to 1,34,704 persons in 2005-06 has increased to 23,58,136 persons (cumulative basis) in 2020-21.

**Note:** In various Special Economic Zones (SEZs) across the country, 1096 Nos. of units have been registered during the last three years.

#### About Special Economic Zones (SEZs):

- A Special Economic Zone is an area in which the trade and business laws are different from the rest of the country.
- SEZs are located within a country's national borders, and their aims include increasing trade balance, employment, increased investment, job creation and effective administration.

#### Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in India:

- India was one of the first in Asia to recognize the effectiveness of the **Export Processing Zone (EPZ)** model in promoting exports, with **Asia's first EPZ set up in Kandla, Gujarat in 1965.**
- The **Special Economic Zones Act, 2005**, was passed by Parliament in May, 2005 which received Presidential assent on the 23rd of June, 2005.

#### The main objectives of the SEZ Act are:

- To generate additional economic activity
- To create employment opportunities
- To promote exports of goods and services
- To develop infrastructure facilities
- To promote investment from domestic and foreign sources

**Source: PIB**

## Laws for surveillance in India, and the concerns over privacy

### Why in News

- In response to the finding by a global collaborative investigative project that Israeli spyware Pegasus was used to target at least 300 individuals in India, the government has claimed that all interception in India takes place lawfully.

### Key Points



### About Pegasus:

- Pegasus is a spyware developed by the Israeli cyberarms firm NSO Group that can be covertly installed on mobile phones running most versions of iOS and Android.
- It is any malicious software designed to enter your computer device, gather your data, and forward it to a third-party without your consent.

### The laws covering surveillance in India:

- Communication surveillance in India takes place primarily under two laws — **the Telegraph Act, 1885** and the **Information Technology Act, 2000**.
- While the Telegraph Act deals with interception of calls, the IT Act was enacted to deal with surveillance of all electronic communication.
- A comprehensive data protection law to address the gaps in existing frameworks for surveillance is yet to be enacted.
- Under the IT Act, all electronic transmission of data can be intercepted.
- So, for a Pegasus-like spyware to be used lawfully, the government would have to invoke both the IT Act and the Telegraph Act.

### Associated Issues with the Surveillance:

- Affects Fundamental Rights
- Legal Loopholes
- Authoritarian Regime
- Threat to Freedom of Press

### Recent Steps Taken in India:

- Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative
- National Cyber security Coordination Centre
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Computer Emergency Response Team - India (CERT-IN)
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra

### International Mechanisms:

- Budapest Convention on Cybercrime
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Source: **Indian Express**

## India's first green hydrogen plant at Mathura refinery

### Why in News

- India's largest oil firm **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** will build the nation's **first 'green hydrogen' plant at its Mathura refinery**.
- It aims to prepare for a future catering to the growing demand for both oil and cleaner forms of energy.

### Key Points

- This will be the nation's first green hydrogen unit.
- Hydrogen, in itself, is a clean fuel but manufacturing it is energy-intensive and has carbon byproducts.
- **Green hydrogen** production - the ultimate clean hydrogen resource - uses renewable energy to create hydrogen fuel.



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**Note:**

- Forecasts state that Indian fuel demand climbing to 400-450 million tonnes by 2040 as against 250 million tonnes now.
- The demand growth makes it imperative to pursue refining expansion as well as expand in CNG, LNG, biodiesel and ethanol.

**Source: Business Standard**

## Important News: Defense

### Exercise INDRA-2021

#### Why in News

- The **12<sup>th</sup> Edition of Indo-Russia joint military Exercise INDRA-2021** will be held at **Volgograd, Russia** from 01 to 13 August 2021.

#### Key Points

##### About INDRA-21:

- The armies of the two countries will conduct anti-terrorist exercises in compliance with the **United Nations' decision** on joint action against international terrorist groups.
- 250 personnel from both the nations will form part of the exercise.
- Exercise will strengthen mutual confidence and interoperability between the Indian & Russian Armies.

#### Note:

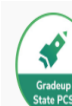
- The first Exercise INDRA was held in 2003.
- In 2020, the 11th edition of the Exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal.

#### Joint Military Exercises of India conducted with Foreign Countries:

Country	Exercise
Australia	AUSTRA HIND
Bangladesh	SAMPRITI
China	HAND IN HAND
France	SHAKTI
Indonesia	GARUDA SHAKTI
Kazakhstan	PRABAL DOSTYK
Kyrgyzstan	KHANJAR
Maldives	EKUVERIN
Myanmar	IMBEX
Nepal	SURYA KIRAN
Sri Lanka	MITRA SHAKTI
Thailand	MAITREE



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UK	AJEYA WARRIOR
USA	YUDHABHAYAS
	VAJRA PRAHAR
Vietnam	VINBAX

Source: PIB

### Exercise ‘Cutlass Express 2021’

#### Why in News

- **Indian Naval Ship Talwar** is participating in **Exercise Cutlass Express 2021**, being conducted from 26 July 2021 to 06 August 2021 along the **East Coast of Africa**.

#### Key Points

##### About Exercise Cutlass Express 2021:

- It is an annual maritime exercise conducted to **promote maritime security in East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean**.

##### Participants:

- The 2021 edition of the exercise involves participation of 12 Eastern African countries, UK, US, India and various international organisations like International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Interpol, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, European Union Naval Force, Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean and EUCAP Somalia.

##### Note:

- Indian Navy is participating in the exercise in a ‘trainer role’.
- **IFC-IOR (Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region)** is participating in the exercise.
- The participation of India is in accordance with its stated policy towards maritime cooperation and security in the Indian Ocean region and vision **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)**.

##### About Western Indian Ocean (WIO):

- The WIO connects North America, Europe and Asia, and as such is of global strategic importance.
- Its rich natural resource profile has pushed global players, including India, to view the region with increasing interest in recent years.

##### Inter-regional Cooperation in Western Indian Ocean region:

- Maritime Security regional programme
- Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct
- Indian Ocean Commission
- Indian Ocean Rim Association

Source: PIB

### India, UK conduct naval exercise in Bay of Bengal

#### Why in News



- **Indian Navy** participated in a **bilateral Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** with the **United Kingdom's Royal Navy** in the Bay of Bengal from 21 to 22 Jul, 2021.

### Key Points

- **The bilateral Maritime Exercise** was designed to hone the ability of the two navies to operate together in the maritime domain.
- The maiden exercise between Indian Navy and the Royal Navy's latest Aircraft Carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth included participation of Carrier Strike Group (CSG)-21 comprising Type 23 Frigates and an *Astute*-class submarine in addition to the other surface combatants.
- Indian Navy was represented by *IN Ships Satpura, Ranvir, Jyoti, Kavaratti, Kulish* and a submarine.

**Note: India Navy and US Navy** conducted a **Passage Exercise** from March 28-29, 2021 in the eastern Indian Ocean Region.

Source: PIB

## Environment

### Gross Environment Product (GEP) in Uttarakhand

#### Why in News

- The Uttarakhand government recently announced it will initiate valuation of its natural resources in the form of '**Gross Environment Product**' (GEP).
- It is along the lines of **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**.
- **Gross domestic product (GDP)**: GDP a monetary measure of the market value of all the final goods and services produced in a specific time period.

#### Key Points

#### About 'Gross Environment Product' (GEP):

- It is an **assessment system to measure the ecological status of a region and is one of the components of green GDP**.
- It is **considered as the product and service value** that the ecosystem provides for **human welfare, economic and socially sustainable development**.

**About Green GDP:** While calculating Green GDP, economic growth with environmental factors is taken into consideration along with the standard GDP of a country. It factors biodiversity losses and costs attributed to climate change.

- The term "**ecosystem services**" was coined in 1981 to attract academics towards this aspect.
- According to American ecological economist Robert Costanza, ecosystem services are the benefits human populations derive from ecosystem functions.
- The definition is still in the process of evolution.
- In 1997, a group of 13 economists and ecologists led by Costanza showed that at global level the value of ecosystem services is about twice as much as the global GDP.

#### Need for Gross Environment Product:



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- **Uttarakhand gives services to the tune of Rs. 95,112 crores per year to the nation through its biodiversity and has more than 71% area under forests.**
- It is **home to the Himalayas, wildlife reserves** such as Corbett National Park and Rajaji Tiger Reserves, **and the origin point of various rivers** such as Ganga, Yamuna and Sharada.
- **GEP will help in the conservation of the environment and climate change.**

Source: DownToEarth

## Reports

### India ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in global agricultural exporters in 2019: WTO Report

#### Why in News

- In 2019, **India ranked 9<sup>th</sup> with a share of 3.1% in global agricultural exports** as per a report by **World Trade Organization (WTO)** on the trends in world agricultural trade in the past 25 years (from 1995).

#### Key Points

- India has entered the top 10 list of the countries exporting agricultural produce in the year 2019 with a sizable share in the export of rice, cotton, soya beans and meat.
- The USA, which topped the list in 1995, was overtaken by the European Union (EU) in 2019.

Rank	Country	Share of Global Agriculture Exports in 2019
1	European Union (EU)	16.1 %
2	US	13.8 %
3	Brazil	7.8 %
9	India	3.1 %

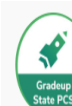
- The top exporting nations of **rice** in 1995 were Thailand (38%), India (26%), and the US (19%). In 2019, **India topped with 33%**.
- India is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest cotton exporter (7.6%) and the 4<sup>th</sup> largest importer (10%) in 2019.
- In the largest traded Agri product, soya beans, India (0.1%) has a meagre share, but was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the world.
- In the “meat and edible meat offal” category, India secured 8th rank in the world with a global share of 4%.
- India’s share of foreign value-added content in its Agri exports clocked 3.8% share primarily due to high tariffs on Agri imports to boost the domestic markets and local farmers.

#### Indian government schemes in agriculture sector:

- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture



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- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana
- e-National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)
- Soil Health Card
- Kisan Credit Card
- Micro Irrigation Fund scheme
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana
- PM-Kusum

Source: newsonair

### **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – Annual Report (July, 2019 – June, 2020)**

#### **Why in News**

- **The National Statistical Office (NSO)** released the 3rd annual report on **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** conducted during **July 2019-June 2020**.

#### **Key Points**

- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** UR fell to 4.8 % in 2019-20. In 2018-19, it stood at 5.8 % and 6.1 % in 2017-18.
- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** LFPR increased to 40.1% in 2019-20 (37.5%:2018-19 and 36.9%:2017-18).
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR):** WPR improved to 38.2% in 2019-20 (35.3%:2018-19 and 34.7%:2017-18).

#### **About Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS):**

- **The National Statistical Office (NSO)** launched the PLFS in April 2017.
- The first annual report (July 2017-June 2018) was released in May 2019 and the second (July 2018-June 2019) in June 2020.

#### **Objective:**

- To estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators such as WPR, LFPR, UR in the short time interval of 3 months for the urban areas only in the ‘Current Weekly Status’
- To estimate employment and unemployment indicators in both ‘Usual Status’ and ‘Current Weekly Status’ in both urban and rural areas annually

#### **Government Initiatives to Tackle Unemployment:**

- Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)
- In 2020, an additional fund of Rs 40,000 crore for MGNREGA
- Credit guarantees for MSMEs
- Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
- New Code on Wages, 2019

#### **Key Terms:**

- **Labour Force Participation Rate:** It is defined as the percentage of persons in the labour force (i.e. working or seeking or available for work) in the population.



- **Worker Population Ratio: It** is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.
- **Unemployment Rate: It** is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

**About National Statistical Office (NSO):**

- NSO is the central statistical agency of the Government mandated under the Statistical Services Act 1980 under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

**Source: PIB**

**United Nation's Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation 2021**

**Why in News**

- India has scored 90.32% in **United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) latest Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.**
- The Survey hailed this as a remarkable jump from 78.49% in 2019.
- India has achieved a **100% score for the Transparency index** and 66% in the "Women in trade" component.

**Key Points**

**Findings of the Survey:**

- **After evaluation of 143 economies, the Survey has highlighted India's significant improvement in the scores on all 5 key indicators, as follows:**
- **Transparency:** 100% in 2021 (from 93.33% in 2019)
- **Formalities:** 95.83% in 2021 (from 87.5% in 2019)
- **Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation:** 88.89% in 2021 (from 66.67% in 2019)
- **Cross-Border Paperless Trade:** 66.67% in 2021 (from 55.56% in 2019)
- **Paperless Trade:** 96.3% in 2021 (from 81.48% in 2019)
- India is the best performing country when compared to South and South West Asia region (63.12%) and Asia Pacific region (65.85%).

**Causes of Improvement:**

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), has been at forefront of path breaking reforms under the umbrella of 'Turant' Customs to usher in a Faceless, Paperless and Contactless Customs by way of a series of reforms.
- Further, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Customs formations have made all efforts to expedite COVID-19 related imports such as Oxygen related equipments, life-saving medicines, vaccines etc.

**About the Survey:**

- The Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation is conducted every two years by **UNESCAP.**
- The 2021 Survey includes an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

**About United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP):**



- It is a regional commission under the jurisdiction of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council**.
- It was established in order to increase economic activity in Asia and the Far East, as well as to foster economic relations between the region and other areas of the world.
- It is composed of 53 Member States and 9 Associate members, mostly from the Asia and Pacific regions.
- **Formation:** 1947
- **Headquarters:** Bangkok, Thailand

**Source: PIB**

## Awards and Honours

### **Shibaji Banerjee to be conferred with Mohun Bagan Ratna 2021 posthumously**

- Former goalkeeper of the Indian Football team, Late Shibaji Banerjee will be conferred with Mohun Bagan Ratna 2021 posthumously.
- During his 8 years long professional career, Banerjee won 4 Calcutta Football League, 5 Durand Cup, 5 IFA Shield, 4 Federation Cup and 2 Rovers Cup titles.

#### **About Mohun Bagan Ratna award:**

- It is an award presented each year on Mohun Bagan Day to outstanding former players, irrespective of sports played.
- Since 2001, on 29 July each year has been celebrated as Mohun Bagan Day.

**Source: The Hindu**

### **Kajal Chakraborty wins Norman Borlaug National Award 2020**

#### **Why in News**

- **Kajal Chakraborty, Principal Scientist** at the **Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)** has won the **Norman Borlaug National Award** for Excellence in Agricultural Research instituted by the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**.
- The award was presented during the **93rd Foundation Day of ICAR**.

#### **Key Points**

- The award is in recognition of Chakraborty's outstanding achievement in developing and commercialising nutraceutical products from selected seaweeds to combat rheumatoid arthritic pains, type-2 diabetes, dyslipidemia, hypertension and hypothyroidism.

#### **About Norman Borlaug National Award:**

- The award, which is announced every five years, carries a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.
- Besides, the scientist will be given a research grant of Rs 1.5 crore for carrying out a challenging research project for five years.

**Source: The Hindu**



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## Important Days

### July 29, International Tiger Day

#### Why in News

- **International Tiger Day** or **Global Tiger Day** is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July.

#### Key Points

- **International Tiger Day** was created at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia in 2010.

**Tiger Range Countries:** 13 tiger range countries are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, Nepal, Russia, Vietnam & Thailand.

#### Tiger Reserve in India:

- Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change approved the conversion of the Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan's Bundi district into the 4th tiger reserve in the state.
- It is the country's 52nd tiger reserve.

#### About National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):

- It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change constituted under enabling provisions of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, as amended in 2006.

#### About Project Tiger:

- It is a tiger conservation programme launched in **April 1973** by the Government of India.
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the conservation of the tiger in the country.

**Source: The Hindu**

### July 28, World Hepatitis Day 2021

#### Why in News

- World Hepatitis Day is observed each year on 28 July to raise awareness of viral hepatitis.

#### Key Points

- This year's **theme** is "**Hepatitis can't wait**", conveying the urgency of efforts needed to eliminate hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

**About Hepatitis:** Hepatitis, which causes inflammation in the liver, is a group of infectious diseases known as Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E.

#### Note:

- **World Hepatitis Day** is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- **Others** are World Health Day, World Chagas Disease Day, World Blood Donor Day, World Malaria Day, World Immunization Week, World Tuberculosis Day, World No Tobacco Day, World Patient Safety Day, World Antimicrobial Awareness Week and World AIDS Day.



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Source: who.int

## July 23, National Broadcasting Day

### Why in News

- In India, “National Broadcasting Day” is celebrated on 23rd July every year to make people aware of the importance of radio.

### Key Points

- On this day in the year 1927, the broadcast of radio started from Bombay station for the first time in the country under a private company called Indian Broadcasting Company of India (IBC).

### History of National Broadcasting Day

- Broadcasting service was started in 1927 with two privately owned transmitters in Mumbai and Kolkata.
- After that, in 1930, the government took these transmitters under its control.
- Till 1935, it was known as Indian Broadcasting Service. But in the year 1936 its name was changed to **All India Radio (AIR)** and in 1956 it came to be known as ‘**Aakashvani**’.
- **All India Radio** is owned by **Prasar Bharti**, which is a statutory autonomous body set up by an Act of parliament.

**Note:** Prasar Bharati has 470 broadcasting centers across the country, covering approximately 92% of the country’s area and 99.19% of the total population.

Source: newsonair

## Books and Authors

### Former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan’s book titled “The India Story”

- Former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan’s book “**The India Story: An Epic Journey of Democracy and Development**” focuses on India’s economic history and aims to provide lessons for the future of India’s political economy.
- The book is published by Rupa Publications India.

### About Bimal Jalan:

- Bimal Jalan is a former Governor of RBI and was a nominated member of the Upper House of India's Parliament, the Rajya Sabha during 2003–2009.
- He has held several government positions throughout his career, such as finance secretary and chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister.

Source: ThePrint

## Obituaries

### Veteran Actress Jayanthi passes away

- Veteran actress Abhinaya Sharade Jayanthi, was known for her work in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada movies, passed away.
- Jayanthi acted in more than 500 films in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi.
- She had received 7 Karnataka State Film Awards and 2 Filmfare Awards.
- She won the Padmabhushan Dr. B. Saroja Devi National Award, 2017.

**Source: The Hindu**

### **Legendary badminton player Nandu Natekar passes away**

- Legendary badminton player Nandu Natekar became the first Indian player to win an international event when he won the Sellanger International in Malaysia in 1956.
- Natekar won over 100 national and international titles.
- He was conferred with the prestigious Arjuna Award in 1961.
- He won 12 out of the 16 singles matches and 8 out of 16 in doubles as part of the Indian team at the Thomas Cup between 1951 and 1963.

**Source: The Hindu**

### **Kerala's oldest learner Bhageerathi Amma dies at 107**

- Kerala's oldest learner, Bhageerathi Amma who passed a state literacy mission examination at the age of 105, passed away.
- Bhageerathi was awarded the Centre's **Nari Shakti Puraskar** in 2020 for her contribution towards women empowerment.

**Source: Indian Express**

## **Sports**

### **Brisbane to host 2032 Olympics**

#### **Why in News**

- President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Thomas Bach announced **Brisbane, Australia as the 2032 Summer Olympics host city** during the 138th IOC Session in Tokyo, Japan.

#### **Key Points**

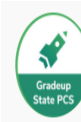
- Brisbane becomes the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian city to get the Olympics Games after Melbourne in 1956 and Sydney in 2000.

**Note:** Tokyo: 2020 Olympics (23 July 2021 - 8 August 2021), Paris: 2024, Los Angeles: 2028

**Source: The Hindu**



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