

Daily Current Affairs 23/08/2021

1. Prime Minister inaugurates and lays foundation stone of multiple projects in Somnath



Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in Somnath, Gujarat.
- The projects inaugurated include the **Somnath Promenade, Somnath Exhibition Centre and reconstructed temple precinct of Old (Juna) Somnath.**
- He also laid the foundation stone of **Shree Parvati Temple** during the event.
- The project “**Development of Pilgrimage Amenities at Somnath, Gujarat under PRASHAD Scheme**” was approved by the Ministry of Tourism with the cost of Rs. 45.36 crores in March 2017.

Key Points

- Development of Somnath has been proposed as one of the iconic tourism destinations by the Ministry of Tourism under its **Integrated Destination Development Scheme (IDDS)** for development of components such as Prabhas Patan Museum, Tourist Amenities, Haat etc.

About PRASHAD scheme:

- The ‘**National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive**’ (PRASHAD) was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2014-15 with the objective of integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations.
- The scheme aimed at creation of pilgrimage / religious and heritage tourism infrastructure development at the destinations.
- Under PRASHAD Scheme, the Tourism Ministry is developing 40 major places of pilgrimage out of which, 15 are already completed.

Note: India has moved from 65th place in 2013 on Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index to 34th place in 2019.

Source: PIB

2. Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0



Why in News

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0.
- It was launched under Innovations for Defence Excellence - Defence Innovation Organisation

(iDEX-DIO).

Key Points

- Thirty five Problem Statements – 13 from the Services and 22 from Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) – were unveiled under DISC 5.0.
- These are in areas such as Situational awareness, Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Aircraft-trainer, Non-lethal devices, 5G network, Under-water domain awareness, Drone SWARMS and Data Capturing.

About Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC):

- Defence India Startup Challenge has been launched by the Ministry of Defence in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, aimed at supporting Startups/MSMEs/Innovators to create prototypes and/or commercialize products/solutions in the area of National Defence and Security.

Background:

- In the previous four editions of DISC, more than 80 startups, MSMEs and individual innovators have joined as winners in over 40 technological areas.
- The launch of DISC 5.0 by iDEX-DIO comes three years after the launch of DISC 1.0.

About iDEX:

- The iDEX initiative was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2018 to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation & technology development in defence and aerospace sectors.

Note: iDEX4fauji is a similar initiative that gives an opportunity to the service personnel to showcase their talent in these fields.

Indigenisation of Defence Sector

- Indigenisation is the capability of developing and producing defence equipment within the country.

Initiatives:

- First Negative Indigenisation
- Positive Indigenisation List
- New FDI Policy in Defence Sector
- Defence Industrial Corridors
- Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020

Source: PIB

3. PM-KUSUM and Rooftop Solar Programme Phase-II



Why in News

• Recently, the Union Minister for Power and New and Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh has reviewed the progress of implementation of PM-KUSUM and Rooftop Solar Programme Phase-II and discussed the

issues in the implementation of these Schemes.

Key Points

About Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) Yojana:

- It was launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in 2019 for setting up solar pumps and other new power plants across the country.
- It provides a day-time reliable source of power to farmers for irrigation activities and also increasing their income.
- Also, expansion of the irrigation cover by providing decentralized solar-based irrigation and moving away from polluting diesel.
- 20 lakh farmers will be provided subsidy for setting up stand-alone solar pumps. Another 15 lakh farmers to be helped to solarise their grid-connected pump sets.
- This scheme will enable farmers to set up solar power generation capacity on their barren lands and to sell it to the power grid.

About Rooftop Solar Programme Phase-II:

- The phase II of the rooftop solar programme was initiated in 2019, with an aim of achieving cumulative capacity of 40,000 MW through solar rooftop projects by 2022.

Schemes for Promoting Solar Energy:

- National Solar Mission
- Suryamitra Skill Development Programme
- Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects
- National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2018
- International Solar Alliance (ISA)
- One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG)
- Atal Jyoti Yojana

Source: PIB

4. Ministry of Tourism signs MoUs with MakeMyTrip (India) Private Limited and Ibibo Group Private Limited



Why in News

- The Ministry of Tourism has signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **MakeMyTrip (India) Private Limited** and **Ibibo Group Private Limited** to strengthen hospitality and tourism industry in the country especially in pandemic times.
- The Ministry of Tourism has already signed MoUs with Easy my Trip, Clear trip and Yatra.com.

Key Points

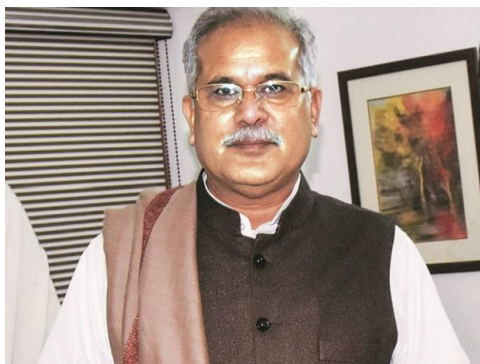
- The primary objective of this MoU is to provide an extensive visibility to accommodation units, which have self-certified themselves on **SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for the Hospitality Industry)** on the **OTA platform (Online travel agencies)**.
- The MoU also outlines both parties to encourage Units to register on **NIDHI (National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry)** and thereby on SAATHI and encourage local tourism Industry with appropriate safeguards for curbing spread of COVID-19.

Note

- **National Tourism Day: 25 January**
- **World Tourism Day: 27 September**

Source: PIB

5. Chhattisgarh CM announces 4 New Districts



Why in News

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced 4 new districts in the state and 18 new tehsils as well.

Key Points

- The 4 new districts are **Mohla Manpur, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Shakti, and Manendragarh.**

- At present, there are 28 districts in Chhattisgarh and after the announcement of 4 new districts, the number will increase to 32.
- Apart from this, in every district headquarters and Municipal Corporation, a park will be developed exclusively for women, which will be known as the 'Minimata Udyan'.

Source: Indian Express

6. New Frog Species 'Adi Cascade' discovered in Arunachal Pradesh



Why in News

- A team of biologists from Delhi University, Wildlife Institute of India and North Carolina Museum of Natural Science (USA) has discovered a new species of frog from the Adi hills of Arunachal Pradesh.

Pradesh.

- The new species of Cascade Frog has been named **Adi Cascade Frog (Amolops adicola)** after the Adi hills, which are home to Adi tribes, an indigenous group of people from the Himalayan regions in the state.

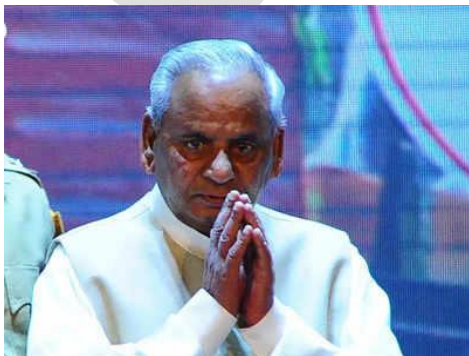
Key Points

- The literal meaning of Adi is "hill" or "mountain top". Historically, this region was also known as Abor Hills.
- According to the researchers, the "Cascade Frogs" are named so because of their preference for small waterfalls or cascades in flowing hill streams.
- The new species was identified based on multiple criteria, such as external morphology, DNA, and calling pattern.

Note: Recently, a team of Delhi University researchers has discovered a new frog species "**Minervarya Pentali**" in the Western Ghats.

Source: Indian Express

7. Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh passes away



- Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh passed away at 89.
- Kalyan Singh, a BJP leader, was the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh when the Babri mosque demolition in Ayodhya took place in 1992.

Source: TOI