

Weekly Current Affairs

4th Week

February 2022



Weekly Current Affairs

4th Week Feb 2022

Important News: State

Union Govt. extends term of J&K Delimitation Commission for second time in a year

- As the Ministry of Law and Justice informed, the Centre extended the term by two months by amending the notification issued on March 6, 2020.
- The panel's term will end on May 6, 2022.
- The delimitation process is crucial for kick-starting the political process in Jammu and Kashmir.

Background

- In 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said elections would be held in J&K after the delimitation process in the UT was over.
- On March 6, 2020, the government had set up the Delimitation Commission, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, to wind up delimitation within a year.
- As per the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, the number of Assembly seats in J&K would increase from 107 to 114, which is expected to benefit the Jammu region.
- The panel was granted one-year extension last year.

What is Delimitation Commission?

- The Delimitation commission or Boundary commission of India is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Delimitation Commission Act.
- The main task of the commission is redrawing the boundaries of the various assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies based on a recent census.

Source: The Indian Express

Thane-Diva railway lines

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated (via video conferencing) the newly constructed two additional railway lines between Thane and Diva on Mumbai's busy suburban rail network.
- Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray also attended the inaugural ceremony virtually.

Key Highlights

- The additional lines have been built at the approximate cost of Rs. 620 crore and has the following components:
 - i. 1.4 km long rail flyover
 - ii. 170-meter-long tunnel
 - iii. 3 major bridges
 - iv. 21 minor bridges

Note: PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan for Multimodal Connectivity plays an important role in streamlining all processes from planning to execution of infrastructure projects necessary to build a modern 21st century India.

Source: AIR

Classical language Status to Marathi

- A delegation led by Marathi Language Minister Subhash Desai is going to Delhi to get the status of a classical language for Marathi. Union Culture Minister G. Kisan reddy and minister of state Arjun Meghwal are scheduled to meet.



- The question of granting elite status to the Marathi language has been pending with the Centre for several years, and the state government has now started pursuing with the Centre for the same. In line with this, a public campaign has been launched under the guidance of Marathi Language Minister Desai.
- Dignitaries from all walks of life have been singled out and participated in this mass campaign to ensure that Marathi gets 'elite' status. This question is now in its final stages.
- The delegation includes Principal Secretary Bhushan Gagrani and writer-director Shrirang Godbole.

Six Classical Status.

Six languages in the country have got 'classical' status.

- Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013) and Oriya (2014).

Criteria

- High antiquity of the early texts/ records in that language throughout one and a half to 2000 years.
- A part of the ancient texts in that language is considered a valuable heritage for generations.
- That language must have an original literary tradition; it should not be taken from other speaking communities.
- Since classical language and literature are different from modern languages, there may be differences between the classical language and its later form or branches.

Source: Loksatta

Medaram Jatara celebrated



- The biggest tribal fair “Medaram Jatara” celebrated with traditional fervour and zeal.

- The 4-day festival named after a village Medaram village in Mulugu district of Telangana.
- Shri G Kishan Reddy, the Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and Development of the NorthEastern Region (DoNER) attended the Sammakka-Saralamma Medaram Jatara.
- The minister, as per tradition, offered jaggery which is popularly also known as '**Bangaram**' (**Gold**), equal to his weight.

About the festival

- As per the age-old ritual, the tribal priests performed special pujas at Chilakalagutta forest and the Medaram village.
- The devotees huddled around the road worshipping the tribal deities and walked barefoot to offer jaggery to the goddesses.
- As a part of Swadesh Darshan scheme, the Ministry of Tourism undertook projects to develop the Tribal Circuit of Mulugu, Laknavaram, Medavaram, Tadvai, Damaravi, Mallur and Bogatha waterfalls and constructed a guest house in Medaram.
- The Government of India sanctioned approximately 80 crores for the Tribal Circuit in Telangana and this included the construction of tourist amenities centre, amphitheatre, public convenience facilities, cottages, tented accommodation, gazebos, seating Benches, solid waste management infrastructure, solar lights, landscaping and drinking water fountains in Medaram.

- As per the 2011 census, the tribal population of the country is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. 89.97% of them live in rural areas and 10.03% in urban areas.
- Note: 705 tribal communities constitute approximately 10% of our population.

What is Swadesh Darshan Scheme?

- Swadesh Darshan Scheme is a Central Sector scheme launched in 2014-15 by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.
- It aims to promote, develop, and harness the potential of tourism in India.
- Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance – CFA to State Governments, Union Territory Administrations for the infrastructure development of circuits.
- It is envisioned to synergise with other schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India etc. with the idea of positioning the tourism sector as a major engine for job creation, the driving force for economic growth, building synergy with various sectors to enable tourism to realize its potential.

Source: PIB

48th Khajuraho Dance Festival organized



- The 48th Khajuraho Dance Festival commenced from 21st Feb 2022 in Madhya Pradesh, the week-long festival will be held till February 26th.
- Governor of Madhya Pradesh Mangubhai Patel inaugurated the festival at Khajuraho.
- The festival is being organized on the theme of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Renowned artists from across the country and the world are performing at the festival, such as Kathak performance by the disciples of late Pandit Birju Maharaj etc.

About the festival

- This festival highlights the richness of the Indian classical dance styles such as Kathak, Bharathanatyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, and Kathakali with performances of some of the best exponents in the field.
- Modern Indian dance has been added recently.
- The dances are performed in an open-air auditorium, usually in front of the Chitragupta Temple dedicated to Surya (the Sun God) and the Vishvanatha Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, belonging to the western group.

Source: AIR

Important News: India

Empanelment rule removed for central deputation of DIG-level IPS officers



- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) issued an order on Feb 10th, 2022 that those IPS officers coming to the Centre at DIG-level would no longer be required to be empanelled at that level with the Union government.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs for dispensing with the empanelment at the level of DIG with immediate effect and carrying out the corresponding stipulated amendments, in the existing IPS Tenure Policy.
- It would allow to call any IAS, IPS or IFoS officer on central deputation with or without the state's consent, the Union government can order on DIG-level IPS officers that may not be palatable to the states.

According to previous rules, a DIG-ranked IPS officer with minimum experience of 14 years could be deputed to the Centre only if the Union Home Secretary-led Police Establishment Board empanelled them as DIGs at the Centre. The board chooses the panel on the basis of officers' career and vigilance records.

Source: The Indian Express

Bhasha Shahid Barkat memorial in Murshidabad

- West Bengal Government to build a memorial of Bhasha Shahid Barkat at his residence at Babla village in Salar, Murshidabad.



About Shahid Barkat

- In 1952, Abdul Barkat participated in the language movement demanding recognition of Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan.
- Abdul Barkat was injured during the procession that students mobilised on the premises of Dhaka Medical College hostel on 21st Feb, later he died.
- Posthumously he was awarded Ekushey Padak by the Bangladesh Government.

Source: AIR

National Digital University

Context: The concept was mentioned by the Prime Minister in a webinar on the positive impact of the Union Budget 2022-23. He urged all stakeholders to ensure that the digital university starts functioning at the earliest.



Key highlights

- Union Budget for 2022-23 aims to help implement the National Education Policy (NEP) effectively.
- The budget focuses on five aspects related to the education sector –
 - universalisation of quality education
 - skill development

- iii. urban planning and design
- iv. internationalisation and AVGC (Animation Visual Effects Gaming Comic)
- A move to empower students with better medical and technical education has begun in many states in local languages.

Note: Education in the mother tongue is related to the students' mental development.

- NEP 2020 unequivocally endorses and envisions a substantial increase in public investment in education by both the Central government and all State Governments.
- The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

NEP in higher education envisages to improve the quality of higher education and various schemes are in place to achieve the goal namely,

- Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)
- Scheme for promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)
- Global Initiative for Academics Network (GIAN)
- Impacting Research, Innovation & Technology (IMPRINT)
- Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP)
- Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)
- National Digital Library, campus connect programme
- Uchhatar Avishkar Abhiyan
- Unnat Bharat Abhiyan
- Impactful Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)
- Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)
- National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) are being implemented to.

Note: Several initiatives are also undertaken by UGC and AICTE for quality improvement in higher and technical education.

Source: AIR

Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy, 2022

Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) released a policy proposal titled as, "Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy, 2022".



Key Points

- The policy aims to, "radically transform India's ability to harness public sector data".

Why has the Draft Data Accessibility Policy been proposed?

- The generation of citizen data is slated to increase exponentially in the next decade and become a cornerstone of India's \$5 trillion-dollar digital economy.

Draft Data Accessibility Policy's main proposal:

- The policy will be applicable to all data and information created, generated, collected and/or archived by the Central Government.
- It would also allow State governments to adopt its provisions.
- Its operationalization will be achieved through the establishment of an India Data Office (IDO) under MEITY for overall management, with each government entity designating a Chief Data Officer.
- In addition to it, an India Data Council will be formed as a consultative body for tasks that include finalisation of standards.

Note: India does not have a data protection law that can provide accountability and remedy for privacy violations such as coercive and excessive data collection or data breaches.

Source: The Hindu

Ombudsperson App for Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

Context: Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh launched the Ombudsperson App for Mahatma Gandhi NREGA.



Key Points

- The Ombudsperson App is a step towards e-governance; this will be helpful in ensuring transparency and accountability.

About Mahatma Gandhi NREGA:

- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (or, NREGA, later renamed as the "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" or MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'.
- This act was passed on 23 August 2005.
- It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year.

Source: PIB

ICMR/ DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation & Entrepreneurship



Context: Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched the “ICMR/DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation & Entrepreneurship for Medical Professionals, Scientists and Technologists at Medical, Dental, Para-Medical Institutes/Colleges”.

Key Points

- The policy will ensure multi-disciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture and develop an innovation led ecosystem at the medical institutes across the country by promoting Make-in India, Start-Up-India and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives of the Government of India.
- As per the Policy, the medical professionals/ doctors will be encouraged to pursue entrepreneurial ventures by forming start-up companies, taking adjunct position in Company- Non-Executive Director or Scientific Advisor.
- DHR- ICMR (Department of Health Research- Indian Council of Medical Research) formulated this Policy in consultation with other Government Department/ Ministries/Organisations such as DPIIT, DST, WIPO, DSIR, AIIMS, IIT Delhi etc.

Source: PIB

SPARSH initiative

Context: Defence Accounts Department (DAD) of Ministry of Defence has signed an MoU with CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, to onboard pension services under the System for Pension Administration (Raksha) {SPARSH} initiative across more than four lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) all over the country.



Key Points

- The MoU will provide last mile connectivity to pensioners, especially those who reside in remote areas of the country and those who do not have the means or technical wherewithal to log on to SPARSH.

About System for Pension Administration (Raksha) {SPARSH}:

- SPARSH is an initiative of Ministry of Defence which aims at providing a comprehensive solution to the administration of pension to the defence pensioners in line with the Government's vision of 'Digital India', 'Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)' and 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'.

Source: PIB

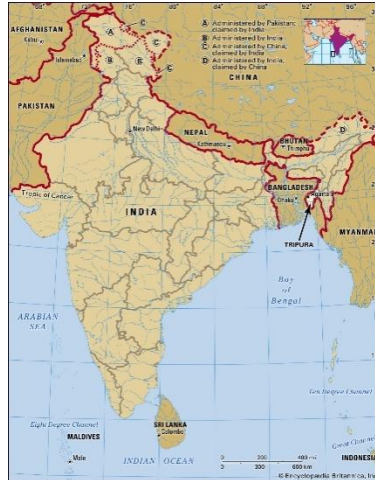
Important News: World

Second Bangladesh Film Festival in Agartala

Context: The Second Bangladesh Film Festival was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Tripura Biplab Kumar Deb in Agartala.

Key takeaways

- The three-day-long film festival at Agartala is part of the golden jubilee celebration of the liberation of Bangladesh.
- The festival is showcasing the best movies related to the liberation war of Bangladesh to commemorate the glorious history of 1971 and the role of India in the liberation of Bangladesh.

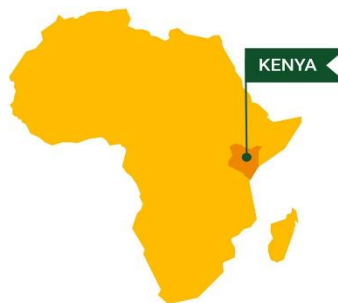


- Tripura and Bangladesh share many similarities in cultures and such programmes are a big step towards increasing harmony in the region through cultural exchange between the two countries.

Note: With the opening of new channels of communication including waterways and railways, Tripura is becoming the commercial corridor of Northeast and also providing huge potential for film-making.

Source: AIR

Kenya citizens stage online protest against Food inflation



VectorStock®

VectorStock.com/38196321

- Angry Kenyans have been taking to social media to protest about the high cost of living in the country driven by a spike in the cost of basic commodities including food, electricity, and fuel.

- Using the hashtag #lowerfoodprices, Kenyans have criticized the government for failing to stem the rise in the prices of everyday items which they say has made life unbearable.

Source: AIR

Russia has declared war against Ukraine

Context: Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Moscow will conduct a military operation in eastern Ukraine. In a televised address, Putin asked Ukrainian forces to surrender, and mentioned the action comes in response to threats coming from Ukraine.



Key takeaways

- Russian forces entered Ukrainian territory from Crimea and Ballistic missile attacks were also launched on a number of Ukrainian cities this morning.
- Big explosions were heard in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and other areas of Ukraine.
- Russian President Putin added that Russia doesn't have a goal to occupy Ukraine and the responsibility for bloodshed lies with the Ukrainian regime.
- Russia warned other countries that any attempt to interfere with the Russian action would lead to consequences they have never seen.
- Also accused the US and its allies of ignoring Russia's demands to stop Ukraine from joining NATO.

What is NATO?

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance of 30 member countries.
- It is an alliance between 27 European countries, 2 North American countries, and 1 Eurasian country.
- The organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.
- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium.

Source: AIR

Russia recognises Ukraine Rebel Regions as independent



- Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin recognised the Ukraine Rebel Regions in eastern Ukraine - Donetsk and Luhansk – as independent areas despite calls from the west to put an end to the tensions driven by fears that Russia may attack Ukraine.
- This paved the way to provide them military support – a direct challenge to the West that will fuel fears that Russia could imminently invade Ukraine.
- Mr. Putin justified his decision in a far-reaching, pre-recorded speech blaming NATO for the current crisis and calling the U.S.-led alliance an existential threat to Russia.
- Mr. Putin's announcement shatters a 2015 peace deal signed in Minsk requiring Ukrainian authorities to offer a broad self-rule to the rebel regions, which marked a major diplomatic coup for Moscow.
- The Donbass region, comprising the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine, has been at the centre of the conflict since March 2014 when Moscow (Russia) invaded and annexed the Crimean Peninsula.

MINSK I: Ukraine and the Russian-backed separatists agreed a 12-point ceasefire deal in the Belarusian capital in September 2014. The agreement quickly broke down, with violations by both sides.

MINSK II: Representatives of Russia, Ukraine, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the leaders of two pro-Russian separatist regions signed a 13-point agreement in February 2015.

Source: The Hindu

Attari-Wagah land border

Context: The first shipment of 10,000 tonnes of wheat from India for the people of Afghanistan will be dispatched via the Attari-Wagah land border crossing.



- The first shipment formally flagged off at Attari-Wagah in the presence of India and Pakistani officials and representatives of the World Food Programme (WFP), which is responsible for distributing the wheat in Afghanistan.
- The shipment is being sent after the Indian and Pakistan sides finalised modalities for transporting the wheat via Pakistan land routes after weeks of negotiations.
- The Indian government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with WFP on February 12 for the distribution of food grains within Afghanistan
- The Indian side is also exploring the option of sending more wheat to Afghanistan via Iran's Chabahar port.

Source: AIR, HT

UNSC to vote on resolution against Russia



Context: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) decided to vote on a draft resolution demanding Moscow to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its troops from Ukraine. It is expected to be taken up by the 193-member U.N. General Assembly.

What is UNSC?

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN). It is charged with
 - ensuring international peace and security
 - recommending the admission of new UN members to the General Assembly
 - approving any changes to the UN Charter
- Its powers include establishing peacekeeping operations, enacting international sanctions, and authorizing military action.
- The UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.
- Member countries: 15, each Member has one vote.
- India has been elected eight times to the UN Security Council, most recently from 2021 to 2022 after receiving 184 of 192 votes.

Note: Under the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

- India, one of the founding members of the world body has been elected as a non-permanent member of the Council seven times.
- The UNSC comprises 15 members, including 10 non-permanent and five permanent members.

Source: AIR

Ukraine's Parliament imposes 'state of emergency'



- Ukraine's parliament has imposed a national state of emergency aimed at helping to forge a response to the threat of a Russian invasion.
- The state of emergency allows Ukraine's regional governments to adopt heightened security measures that range from tighter ID and vehicle checks to more stringent policing.
- The measure was approved on the same day that Russia began to evacuate its Kyiv embassy and Washington stepped up its warnings about the chances of an all-out Russian attack.

Source: AIR

US imposes new sanctions on Russia

Context: US President Joe Biden unveiled new sanctions on Russia meant to punish the country for its invasion of Ukraine.

Key Takeaways

- The US President laid out a set of sanctions including export controls that will impose a severe cost on the Russian economy.
- All Russian assets in America will be frozen.
- The new sanctions also include four Russian banks and corrupt billionaires and their families who are close to the Kremlin.
- The President also announced a new deployment of ground and air forces to NATO's eastern flank, even as he reiterated US troops would not engage in direct conflict in Ukraine.
- US forces will not be going to Europe to fight in Ukraine but defend their NATO allies and reassure those allies in the east.

Source: AIR

Sustainable Cities India program



Context: The World Economic Forum (WEF) and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on a jointly designed 'Sustainable Cities India program'.

Key Takeaways

- This initiative is particularly noteworthy as it comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated India's commitment to turn net zero by 2070 as a climate mitigation response at COP26.
- The 'Sustainable Cities India program' intends to enable cities to decarbonize in a systematic and sustainable way that will reduce emissions and deliver resilient and equitable urban ecosystems.
- The WEF and NIUA will adapt the Forum's City Sprint process and Toolbox of Solutions for decarbonization in the context of five to seven Indian cities across two years.
- The City Sprint process is a series of multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder workshops involving business, government, and civil society leaders to enable decarbonization, especially through clean electrification and circularity.

Note:

- As per the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2022, densely populated countries that are highly dependent on agriculture, such as India, are especially vulnerable to climate insecurity.
- Decarbonization in cities is a real opportunity to keep global warming well below 2°C and cities in India can make an enormous contribution in reaching this goal.

Source: PIB

Important News: Economy

A significant number of women account holders in Maharashtra under the Mudra Loan Scheme



- The central government launched the Mudra Loan Scheme from April 2015 to provide loans to small and small scale industries. Through this, an uncollateralized loan of ten lakh rupees is made available through various banks.

- In Maharashtra, 90 lakh women entrepreneurs and organisations have lifted a whopping Rs 34,000 crore from the scheme in three years.
- According to information available on the Mudra portal loans worth Rs 17.32 lakh crore were sanctioned across the country from the inception of the scheme till December 31 2021. The share of women entrepreneurs in this is 44 per cent.
- In Maharashtra, a total of 43.85 lakh account holders were disbursed loans worth Rs 26,438 crore in 2018-19. Of this, the number of women account holders was 31.88 lakh and the amount of loans given to them was 10,823 crore. There was a further increase in the number of women account holders in 2019-20.
- Loans worth Rs 12,165 crore were disbursed to 34 lakh 78 thousand women account holders. In 2020-21, however, the figures show that there has been a decline in the number of borrowers during the corona period. Loans worth Rs 11,106 crore were disbursed to 29.57 lakh women account holders during these years. In these years, however, the number of account holders decreased.
- West Bengal ranks first in the country in disbursement of loans to women account holders through the Mudra scheme. It is followed by Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Source: Loksatta

RBI cautions against 'sRide'



- Reserve Bank of India has alerted citizens that a car-pooling application by the name 'sRide' is being run without the required permissions.
- Cautioning people using such apps, the RBI has urged citizens to verify the list of authorized payment system providers from the RBI's website before parting with their money.
- The Gurgaon-based sRide Tech Private Limited is operating a semi-closed wallet without obtaining the requisite authorisation under the provisions of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**.
- As such, any person dealing with sRide Tech Private Limited will be doing so at their own risk.

The Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 along with the Board for Regulation and Supervision of Payment and Settlement Systems Regulations, 2008 and the Payment and Settlement Systems Regulations, 2008 have come into effect from 12th August 2008.

Source: AIR

Meeting of Financial Stability and Development Council held in Mumbai



- The 25th meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held in Mumbai, under the Chairpersonship of Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman. The Finance Minister is on a two-day post-Budget outreach visit to the city, where she is meeting with representatives of industry, financial market functionaries and bankers.
- The Council discussed operational issues relating to currency management.
- The Financial Stability and Development Council has been set up by the government in consultation with financial market regulators, to strengthen and institutionalize the mechanism for maintaining financial stability, enhance inter-regulatory coordination and promote financial sector development.
- Without prejudice to the autonomy of regulators, the Council monitors macro-prudential supervision of the economy, including functioning of large financial conglomerates, and addresses inter-regulatory coordination and financial sector development issues. It also focuses on financial literacy and financial inclusion.
- **Source: PIB**

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and UAE



- (CEPA) between India and UAE will create a minimum 10 lakh jobs for youth of the country informed by the Commerce and Industry Minister, Piyush Goyal.
- the agreement aimed to help in making India self-reliant, and will also provide job opportunities to the youth of the country.
- through this agreement both the countries will do trade worth 7.5 lakh crore rupees for a period of next five years
- 90 per cent products exported from India will have zero duty in UAE.

- The products include readymade garments, pharmaceutical products, agriculture products, food processing products, footwear, leather, sports and engineering goods, gems and jewellery and all those products which come from labour-oriented sector etc.

Source AIR

Important News: Defense

Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022



- The latest edition of Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022 is scheduled to commence from 25 Feb 2022 in Visakhapatnam.

Key Points

- MILAN 22 is being conducted over a duration of 9 days in two phases with the harbour phase scheduled from 25 to 28 February and Sea Phase from 01 to 04 March.
- The theme of the MILAN 2022 is 'Camaraderie – Cohesion – Collaboration'.
- MILAN 22 will witness its largest ever participation, with more than 40 countries sending their warships/ high level delegations.
- The aim of the exercise is to hone operational skills, imbibe best practices and procedures, and enable doctrinal learning in the maritime domain, through professional interaction between friendly navies.

About MILAN:

- MILAN is a biennial multilateral naval exercise incepted by Indian Navy in 1995 at Andaman and Nicobar Command.
- Started with the participation of only four countries, viz Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand, in the 1995 edition.

Source: PIB

"Eastern Bridge – VI" joint Exercise between Indian and Omani air forces



- Indian, Omani air forces joint exercises being held in Jodhpur from 21st Feb- 25th Feb 2022.
- Oman is one of India's strongest defence partners in the Gulf region, and all three services have bilateral exchanges and exercises with Oman's services.

India Eyes Strategic Heft Through Duqm



- To strengthen the ties Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) began a bilateral joint exercise.
- It is the sixth edition of the exercise and is aimed to provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces.
- Oman also provides operational support to the Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea.
- India has access to the Duqm port, which has strengthened India's capability and maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean Region, especially against China's aggressive advance in the region.

Source: Indian Express

Indian Naval Fleet, the twelfth Fleet Review

- President Ram Nath Kovind to review the Naval Fleet comprising over 60 ships and submarines and 55 aircraft in Vishakhapatnam.
- President is also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.
- This is the twelfth Fleet Review and has a special significance that it is being conducted on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of India's Independence being celebrated as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav across the Nation.

Key Highlights

- The President would be reviewing the Indian Naval Air Arm in a display of spectacular fly-past by several helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. In the final stage of the review, a mobile column of warships and submarines will steam past the Presidential Yacht.

- This display would showcase the latest acquisitions of the Indian Navy.
- Several enthralling waterfront activities, including Parade of Sails, Search and Rescue Demonstration at Sea, Aerobatics by Hawk aircraft and Water Para Jumps by the elite Marine Commandos MARCOS to be conducted.

Key facts

- The President's Yacht is an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel, INS Sumitra, which will lead the Presidential Column.
- The yacht will be distinguished by the Ashoka Emblem on its side and will fly the President's Standard on the Mast.
- After a Ceremonial Guard of Honour and a 21 Gun Salute, the President embarked on the Presidential Yacht INS Sumitra would sail through 44 ships lined up at anchorage off Visakhapatnam.

Source: AIR

DRDO and IIT Delhi demonstrate Quantum Key Distribution between Prayagraj and Vindhyachal

Context: A joint team of scientists from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, for the first time in the country successfully demonstrated the Quantum Key Distribution link between Prayagraj and Vindhyachal in Uttar Pradesh, a distance of more than 100 kilometres.

Key Takeaways

- This technological breakthrough was achieved over a commercial grade optical fibre already available in the field.
- With this success, the country has demonstrated indigenous technology of secure key transfer for bootstrapping military grade communication security key hierarchy.
- The performance parameters have been measured and have been found to be repetitively within the reported international standards at sifted key rates of up to 10 KHz.



About Quantum Key Distribution (QKD):

- QKD, also called Quantum Cryptography, is a mechanism to develop secure communication.
- QKD provides a way of distributing and sharing secret keys that are necessary for cryptographic protocols.

Source: PIB

Science and Technology

Electric vehicle cell launched in Mumbai

- the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation will launch its electric vehicle (EV) cell to bring together government officials, e-mobility experts, and representatives from the electric vehicle industry.
- The EV cell will be placed under the environment department of the municipal corporation.
- Aaditya Thackeray, who is also the guardian minister of Mumbai suburbs launched the cell from Sahyadri Guest House.
- Policy makers will be assisted in the promotion of electric vehicles, build infrastructure for electric vehicle charging in the Mumbai Metropolitan area.
- The move is aimed to provide easy credit facilities for the purchase, implement state-of-the-art technology for in-vehicle batteries, and public transport.

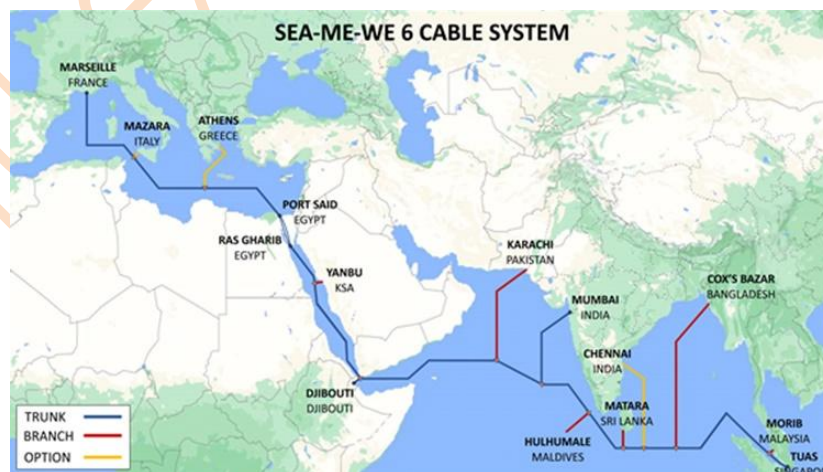
BMC last year launched its first electric vehicle station in the city at Dadar and aims to set up 1,000 EV charging stations in the city in the coming years.

Aditya Thackeray had also announced that the city's BEST bus fleet will convert into EV buses by 2028.

Source: AIR

Bharti Airtel joins SEA-ME-WE-6 undersea cable consortium

- **Bharti Airtel** has joined the '**SEA-ME-WE-6**' **undersea cable consortium** in a bid to scale up its high-speed global network capacity to serve India's fast-growing digital economy.
- Airtel is participating as a "major investor" in the SEA-ME-WE-6 and is anchoring 20 percent of the overall investment in the cable system, which will go live in 2025.
- Airtel has acquired one Fiber Pair on the main SEA-ME-WE-6 system and will co-build four Fiber Pairs between Singapore - Chennai - Mumbai as part of the cable system.
- Airtel will land the SEA-ME-WE-6 cable system in India at new landing stations in Mumbai and Chennai.



About SEA-ME-WE 6 undersea cable consortium:

- The SEA-ME-WE 6 (South East Asia-Middle East-West Europe 6, or SMW6) is a 19,200 km submarine cable system between Singapore and France (Marseille), crossing Egypt through terrestrial cables.

- The SMW6 cable system consists of 10 fiber pairs, with 12.6Tbps per fiber pair and 126Tbps system capacity.

Source: ET

“Corbevax”, COVID-19 vaccine for children between 12-18 years of age group



- Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has granted Emergency Use Authorisation to COVID-19 vaccine Corbevax for children between 12-18 years of age group.
- It is India's first indigenously developed Receptor Binding Domain protein sub-unit COVID-19 vaccine.
- It is developed by Biological E Ltd, the Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical company.
- Corbevax vaccine is administered through an intramuscular route.
- Two doses are scheduled 28 days apart and are stored at 2 to 8 degrees Celsius temperature.

Source: AIR

Vigyan Sarvatra Puujate

- A week-long commemoration titled Vigyan Sarvatra Puujate is being held from February 22 to 28 simultaneously in 75 locations across India.



Key Highlights

- The programmes have been grouped under four themes.
- First theme: **‘from the annals of the history of S&T’**.
This section traces the contributions of founders of modern science and institutions of national importance to nation-building. It will be done in the form of the screening of 75 films on 75 scientists, and 75 lectures by eminent scientists and technocrats across the 75 locations.
- Second theme, **‘Milestones of Modern S&T’**,
It will highlight critical discoveries, innovations, or inventions that made a mark in the global science or India's development story.

- Third theme, **‘Swadeshi Paramparik Inventions and Innovations’**
It will showcase 75 inventions or technologies that made India self-standing and helped in achieving the goal of self-reliance by drawing upon the reservoir of traditional knowledge systems, such as drugs from herbs.
 - Fourth theme, **‘transforming India’**
It will look at the road ahead for the next 25 years of Indian S&T. It would include talks by 75 eminent scientists & technocrats from within India and the diaspora on their ideas for Indian S&T as it marches towards the centenary year of India’s independence.
 - The programme will be held in various Indian languages, including Kashmiri, Dogri, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Odiya, Bengali, Assamese, Nepali, Maithili, and Manipuri and will include the screening of 75 films.
- National Science Day, celebrated on February 28 every year since 1987 in remembrance of Nobel Laureate Sir C.V. Raman’s path-breaking discovery of the Raman Effect in 1930.

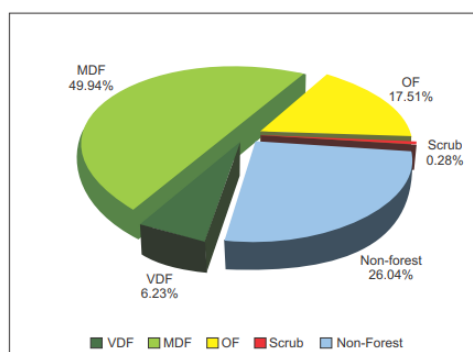
Source: PIB

Environment

Compensatory afforestation drive in Agartala

- Agartala Smart City Mission in Tripura has taken up a compensatory afforestation drive to compensate for the ecological loss.
- The ecological loss occurred due to the extraction of adult trees for the under progress smart road project funded by the Asian Development Project.
- To compensate the loss some adult trees have relocated alive under the technical guidance of the Tripura Forest Department.
- under the Asian Development Bank-funded project an initiative has been taken to plant ten trees for one tree extracted.
- The move is aimed to not harm the city's existing green cover in our endeavours to make the city smart.

FIGURE 11.27.1 Forest Cover of Tripura



Note: As per the Forest Survey of India 2019 report the forest cover in Tripura has State has decreased by 0.41 sq km as compared to the previous assessment reported in ISFR 2017.

Source: AIR

Schemes

SWAMITVA Yojana



Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized in the recent webinar Union Budget 202, “Digital connectivity of villages is no longer an aspiration but the need of the day”.



Why the need of broadband connectivity in rural areas?

- Broadband connectivity will not only provide facilities in the villages, but it will also help in creating a large pool of skilled youth in the villages.
- When the service sector expands with broadband connectivity in the village, the country's potential will increase further.
- optical fibre connectivity issues need to be resolved on pilot basis across the nation's rural areas.

What is SWAMITVA Yojana?

- SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) was launched by Prime Minister on April 24, 2020, as a Central Sector Scheme to promote a socio-economically empowered and self-reliant rural India.

Objective of the scheme:

- Creation of accurate land records for rural planning and reduce property related disputes.
- To bring financial stability to the citizens in rural India by enabling them to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits.
- Determination of property tax, which would accrue to the GPs directly in States where it is devolved or else, add to the State exchequer.
- Creation of survey infrastructure and GIS maps that can be leveraged by any department for their use.
- To support in preparation of better-quality Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) by making use of GIS maps

What all aspects are covered in the scheme?

The scheme covers multifarious aspects:

- facilitating monetization of properties and enabling bank loan
- reducing property related disputes
- comprehensive village level planning

Implementing authority:

- The Scheme is implemented with the collaborative efforts of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Revenue Department, State Panchayati Raj Department and Survey of India.**

How will help revolutionise rural India?

- Scheme is a reformative step towards establishment of clear ownership of property in rural inhabited (Abadi) areas, by mapping of land parcels using drone technology and providing 'Record of Rights' to village household owners with issuance of legal ownership cards (Property cards/Title deeds) to the property owners.

- The scheme is the stepping-stone towards achieving Gram Swaraj in true sense and making rural India Atmanirbhar.

Source: AIR

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme



Context: Third anniversary of the launch of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme is observed across India.

Key Takeaways

- The scheme was launched on 24th of February in 2019.
- It is aimed to provide income support to all landholding farmer's families across the country and enable them to meet expenses related to agriculture as well as domestic needs.
- Under the Scheme, an amount of six thousand rupees per year is transferred in three equal installments of two thousand rupees directly into the bank accounts of the farmers subject to certain exclusion criteria relating to higher-income status.
- The Scheme initially provided income support to all Small and Marginal Farmers' families having cultivable land up to two hectares, but later it was expanded to cover all farmer families irrespective of the size of their landholdings.

So far, over 1.80 lakh crore rupees have been transferred directly into the bank accounts of the farmer families under PM -KISAN Scheme.

Source: AIR

Capacity Development Scheme to extend until March 2022

- The Union Government has approved the continuation of the Capacity Development (CD) Scheme till 31st of March 2026.
- An outlay approved for continuation of the Scheme during 15th Finance Commission cycle is 3 thousand 179 crore rupees by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

What is capacity Development scheme?

- The Capacity Development Scheme is an Ongoing Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry with an overall objective to augment infrastructural, technical as well as manpower resources for enabling availability of credible and timely official statistics.
- The Scheme encompasses all statistical and data management activities of the Ministry and plays a crucial role in generation and maintenance of official statistical system of the country.
- The large-scale sample surveys undertaken by the Ministry cover important aspects of the economy and provide data inputs for policy framing of the Government.

Awards and Honours

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022



- Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 was held in Mumbai.

List of main winners:

- Film of the Year – Pushpa: The Rise
- Best Film – Shershaah
- Best Actor – Ranveer Singh
- Best Actress – Kriti Sanon
- Best Director – Ken Ghosh
- Outstanding Contribution To Film Industry – Asha Parekh
- Best International Feature Film – Another Round
- Best Web Series – Candy
- Best Actor in Web Series – Manoj Bajpayee
- Best Actress in Web Series – Raveena Tandon

About Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards:

- The film festival commemorates the notable contribution made by Dadasaheb Phalke.
- Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, popularly known as Dadasaheb Phalke, was an Indian producer-director-screenwriter, known as "the Father of Indian cinema".
- His debut film, Raja Harishchandra, was the first Indian movie released in 1913, and is now known as India's first full-length feature film.

Source: Indian Express

“Most Dependable Public Sector in India” award

- Coal India Limited (CIL) has been conferred with “Most Dependable Public Sector in India” award.
- The award was conferred by the Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Kolkatta in “Energy Meet & Excellence Awards function.”
- Shri Pralhad Joshi is the Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs.



About CIL

- Coal India Limited (CIL) the state-owned coal mining corporate came founded in in November 1975.
- CIL is an Indian government-owned coal mining and refining corporation.
- Headquarters: Kolkata, West Bengal
- Ownership: Ministry of Coal, Government of India

Important facts

- It is the single largest coal producer in the world and one of the largest corporate employers with manpower of 2,59,016 (as of 1st April 2021).
- It is a Maharatna public sector undertaking.
- It is also the fifth largest employer in India with nearly 272,000 employees.

What is Maharatna Status?

- “Maharatna” status is granted to a company which has recorded more than Rs. 5,000 crore of net profit for 3 consecutive years, an average annual turnover of Rs. 25,000 crore for 3 years or should have an average annual net worth of Rs. 15,000 crore for 3 years.
- And a PSU with Navratna Status must be listed on an Indian stock exchange.

Source: PIB

Important Days

International Mother Language Day: 21st Feb

- As part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in India, the International Mother Language Day is observed.
- To mark the day, the Ministry of Culture is organizing a two-day programme in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts IGNCA and UNESCO New Delhi Cluster Office in physical and virtual format.



Key highlights

- Vande Bharatam' soundtrack release by MoS Culture Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi.
- Inaugural Address by Shri Prasoon Joshi, Renowned Writer, Poet and Lyricist.
- Launch of book 'Tribal and Indigenous Languages of India' written by Prof. Ramesh C Gaur, Dean IGNCA.
- 'Grammy winner Ricky Kej and tabla maestro Bikram Ghosh Live concert.

About the day

- International Mother Language Day is observed worldwide on 21st February every year to promote
 - awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and
 - multilingualism
- The Day is part of a broader initiative to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by people of the world.
- The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day first came from Bangladesh.
- The general conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) decided to celebrate February 21 as International Mother Language Day in 2000.
- Every year a unique theme is chosen by UNESCO to celebrate this special day.
- The theme of 2022 is: **"Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities"**, it focuses on potential role of technology to advance multilingual education and support the development of quality teaching and learning for all.

Source: PIB

Sports

Second LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship 2022



- Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre, LSRC has lifted the Second LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship-2022.
- In finals played in NDS Ice Hockey rink in Leh, LSRC defeated arch-rivals ITBP by Three Nil to win a consecutively second title in the season.
- Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur presented the trophies to the finalists in both men's and women's categories of this edition of LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship.

Source: AIR

Women's cricket: New Zealand won in 4th ODI

- In women's cricket, New Zealand defeated India by 63 runs in a rain-curtailed fourth One Day International at the John Davies Oval, Queenstown.
- New Zealand innings was powered by Amelia Kerr's 68-run knock, which was followed by a dominant bowling performance.
- The hosts have taken 4-0 lead in the five-match series.
- Chasing 192, Indian openers went down in quick succession and India were reduced to 12 for 4 in the fifth over.

Source: AIR

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa won Airthings Masters



- In Chess, Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa defeated world champion, Magnus Carlsen in the eighth round of the Airthings Masters competition.
- Praggnanandhaa won with black pieces in 39 moves yesterday to halt Carlsen's run of three straight wins.
- Airthings Masters, is a 16-player online rapid chess tournament.
- Praggnanandhaa has become only the third Indian after Viswanathan Anand and P Harikrishna to beat Carlsen.

Source: AIR

Indian Ranked 1 in Men's ICC T20

- India have become the number one team in the Men's ICC T20 International team rankings for the first time in six years after its 3-0 series win over West Indies in Kolkata on 20th Feb 2022.
- India surpassed England which had 269 rating points to take the top spot.
- It previously held the reigns over the Format under Mahendra Singh Dhoni's leadership from 12th February to 3rd May in 2016.
- Rohit Sharma has become the second captain to take India to the number one position.

India to host 2023 IOC session in Mumbai



- India won the right to host the 2023 IOC session in Mumbai.
- This will be the second time India hosts an IOC session, having done so in 1983 in New Delhi.
- India won the bid unopposed at the 139th IOC session that was held in Beijing, China, on the sidelines of the Winter Olympics.
- Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra, IOC member Nita Ambani, IOA president Narinder Batra and sports minister Anurag Thakur presented India's proposal for the hosting rights at this year's IOC Session.

Source: AIR

Obituaries

Veteran Malayalam actress KPAC Lalitha passes away



- Veteran actress Maheshwari Amma, better known by her stage name of KPAC Lalitha who starred in over 500 films primarily in Malayalam cinema, passed away in Kochi. She was 73.
- KPAC Lalitha entered the film industry in the year 1969 through 'Koottukudumbam', a film by KS Sethu Madhavan.
- She began her career with the Left-oriented Kerala People's Arts Club (KPAC), a theatre collective in Alappuzha.

Source: The Indian Express

Mekapati Goutham Reddy passes away



- Andhra Pradesh Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy passed away in a private hospital in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- The 50 years old Minister returned to India from Dubai Expo a day before.
- Goutham Reddy is credited to have designed the best industrial policy for Andhra Pradesh which help attract good investments to the state in the last two years.

Source: AIR

Miscellaneous

500-year-old stolen Hanuman idol to be repatriated to India

Context: Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy informed that “Five hundred-year-old Lord Hanuman bronze idol stolen from Tamil Nadu temple, to be repatriated back to India. The stolen idol retrieved by US Homeland Security was handed over to @HCICanberra by US CDA.”



Key takeaways

- An idol of Lord Hanuman, which was stolen a decade ago from Tamil Nadu’s Ariyalur district and smuggled abroad scheduled to brought soon.
- Built between the 14th and 15th centuries, during the period of the Vijayanagara empire, the statue was recently found in possession of a private buyer in Australia.
- As per the Archaeological Survey of India, this Anjaneyar (Hanuman) idol was burgled along with Sri Devi idol and Boodevi idol from the Varadharaja Perumal temple in Vellur village, Ariyalur, on April 9, 2012.
- It will be restored to the temple from where it was stolen.

About Vijayanagara Empire

- The Vijayanagara Empire, also called Karnata Kingdom,[3] was based in the Deccan Plateau region in South India.
- It was established in 1336 by the brothers Harihara I and Bukka Raya I of the Sangama dynasty, members of a pastoralist cowherd community, possibly Kuruba, that claimed Yadava lineage.

- The empire rose to prominence as a culmination of attempts by the southern powers to ward off Islamic invasions by the end of the 13th century.
- At its peak, it subjugated almost all of South India's ruling families and pushed the sultans of the Deccan beyond the Tungabhadra-Krishna river doab region, in addition to annexing modern day Odisha (ancient Kalinga) from the Gajapati Kingdom thus becoming a notable power.

Source: Indian Express

Union Govt bars scholarships for studying Indian subjects abroad

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has issued fresh guidelines barring students from applying for the National Overseas Scholarship (NOS).
- The students are barred to study several humanities subjects, including Indian history, culture, and heritage, abroad.
- The final decision as to which topic can be covered under such category will rest with the election-cum-screening committee of NOS.

Source: AIR

Coke Oven Plant, KIOCL

- Foundation stone laid by Shri Ram Chandra Prasad, Union Minister of Steel for Coke Oven Plant Kudremuckh Iron Ore Co. Ltd (KIOCL), Panambur Mangalore.
- The proposed project is for Setting up of 2.0 LTPA Ductile Iron Spun Pipe Plant under forward & 1.80 LTPA Coke Oven Plant under backward integration projects at Blast Furnace Unit.
- It is in sync with the national steel policy and govt. set a target of producing 300 million tonnes of crude steel in India by the year 2030.



- A blast furnace is a type of metallurgical furnace used for smelting to produce industrial metals, generally pig iron, but also others such as lead or copper.
- Blast refers to the combustion air being "forced" or supplied above atmospheric pressure.

Highlights of National Steel Policy

- National Steel Policy enshrines the long-term vision of the government to give impetus to the steel sector.
- The policy envisages to create a technologically advanced and globally competitive steel industry that promotes self-sufficiency in steel production as well as economic growth.
- Steel being a de-regulated sector, government acts a facilitator, by creating enabling environment for development of steel sector.

Source: PIB

Aroma Mission or Purple Revolution



- 'Lavender Cultivation' under CSIR-IIIM's Aroma Mission to be started in Ramban as a part of Purple Revolution.
- The favorable climatic and geographic conditions exist in Doda and Ramban, Lavender cultivation can be started Ramban to increase income sources for the youth of the district.
- Lavender cultivation under Ministry of Science and Technology's AROMA mission will help in providing means of livelihood to budding farmers and agri-entrepreneurs and give a boost to Start-Up India campaign and promoting a spirit of entrepreneurship in the region.
- This decision is taken in order to develop difficult areas as development is essential for inclusive and regionally balanced development.

About Ramban

- Ramban is a district in the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, located in the lap of the Pir Panjal range.
- It is one the three districts of Chenab Valley, as it was carved out as a district from erstwhile Doda district in 2007.
- The town is located midway between Jammu and Srinagar along the Chenab River in Chenab Valley on National Highway-44, (originally National Highway 1A (India)) approximately 151 km from Jammu and Srinagar.

Aroma Mission, also popularly referred as "Lavender or Purple Revolution"

- It has started from J&K and transformed the lives of farmers who are able to grow lavender, make lucrative profit and improve their lives.

Objective

- To promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils that are in great demand by the aroma industry.
- To enable Indian farmers and the aroma industry to become global leaders in the production and export of some other essential oils on the pattern of menthol mint.
- Aromatic Plants include lavender, damask rose, mushk bala, etc.

Source: PIB

National War Memorial



Context: The National War Memorial (NWM) will celebrate its third anniversary on February 25, 2022.

About National War Memorial (NWM):

- The NWM was dedicated to the Nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 25, 2019.
- It stands testimony to the sacrifices made by the gallant soldiers since Independence.
- Since its inauguration, all homage ceremonies are conducted only at the NWM, including those on National Days.

Source: newsonair

Weekly Current Affairs 4th Week February 2022



byjusexamprep.com