

Weekly Current Affairs 2nd Week March 2022



Weekly Current Affairs

2nd Week March 2022

Important News: State

India gets first Virtual Smart Grid Knowledge Centre in Manesar



Why in News

- Union Minister for Power R.K. Singh launched the **Virtual Smart Grid Knowledge Center (SGKC)** and Innovation Park as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav Programme.

Key Points

- The new Virtual Smart Grid Knowledge Center located within the powergrid centre in Manesar (Haryana), is the first of its kind initiative by the Union government.
- The SGKC has been established by POWERGRID for demonstration and advancement of frontier smart grid technologies.
- It has been set up with technical assistance from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).
- SGKC aims to be one of the leading Centers of Excellence globally to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and research in smart grid technologies and create capacities in the power distribution sector.

Source: ET

India's first 100% women-owned FLO Industrial Park



Why in News

- India's first 100% women-owned FLO industrial park in Hyderabad, promoted by **FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO)** in partnership with the Government of Telangana, was inaugurated.

Key Points

- The 50-acres FLO Industrial Park was established with an investment of Rs. 250 Crores, is the Flagship project and the first of its kind at a national level with participation open to Chapter Members and the national members of FLO.
- The park became operational by 25 women-owned and operated units representing 16 Green Category Industries.

About FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO):

- FLO was established in 1983, as a division of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) which is the apex body of industry and commerce in India.

Source: India Today

Important News: India

MSME Innovative Scheme & MSME IDEA HACKATHON 2022



Why in News

- Union Minister for MSME Narayan Rane launched the **MSME Innovative Scheme (Incubation, Design and IPR)** along with the **MSME IDEA HACKATHON 2022**.

Key Points

- MSME Innovation Scheme will promote and support untapped creativity of the MSME sector.
- It will act as a hub for innovation activities facilitating and guiding development of ideas into viable business propositions which benefits society directly.
- MSME Innovative is a new concept for MSMEs with a combination of innovation in incubation, design intervention and by protecting IPR in a single mode approach to create awareness amongst MSMEs about India's innovation and motivate them to become MSME Champions.

Details of the sub-schemes are as under:-

- Incubation**

- Design
- IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)

Source: PIB

Indian Railways' 1st Gati Shakti Cargo Terminal



Why in News

- In pursuance to Prime Minister's vision "Gati Shakti" and Ministry of Railways' Policy regarding '**Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal**' (GCT), Asansol division of Indian Railways has successfully commissioned private siding of *Maithan* Power Limited at *Thaparnagar*.
- **This is the first such GCT commissioned in Indian Railways since publication of GCT policy in Dec.'2021.**

Key Points

- The *Maithan* Power Project was initiated in the year 2009 and subsequently the power generation was started in the year 2011.
- Till now the requirement of coal to the power project was being made through a road which is expected to convert into 120 inward coal rakes per month.
- Also 02 to 04 outward rakes of Fly Ash is projected to be handled from the siding.
- This will enhance Railways' earnings by approximately Rs. 11 crores per month.

Source: PIB

Sahityotsav



Why in News

- **Sahityotsav**, the Festival of Letters of Sahitya Akademi, India's most inclusive literature festival commenced in New Delhi.

Key Points

- Festival of Letters 2022 is being celebrated to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence.
- The Festival started with the inauguration of the Akademi Exhibition by Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State for Culture.
- The Exhibition showcases Akademi's achievements and seminal events held in the previous year.
- The prestigious **Sahitya Akademi Awards** will be presented to the 24 Award winners during Sahityotsav.

National Land Monetization Corporation



Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up **National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC)** as a wholly owned Government of India company with an initial authorized share capital of Rs 5000 crore and paid-up share capital of Rs 150 crore.

Key Points

- NLMC will undertake monetization of surplus land and building assets of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).
- The proposal is in pursuance of the Budget Announcement for 2021-22.
- With monetization of non-core assets, the Government would be able to generate substantial revenues by monetizing unused and under-used assets.
- For CPSEs undergoing strategic disinvestment or closure, monetization of these surplus land and non-core assets is important to unlock their value.

Source: ET

Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 Amendment



Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Mines for amendment of Second Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act') for specifying the rate of royalty in respect of Glauconite, Potash, Emerald, Platinum Group of Metals (PGM), Andalusite, Sillimanite and Molybdenum.

Key Points

- The approval would ensure auction of mineral blocks in respect of Glauconite, Potash, Emerald, Platinum Group of Metals, Andalusite and Molybdenum thereby reducing import of these minerals, generating empowerment opportunity in the mining sector as well as manufacturing sector which will help in ensuring inclusive growth of a large section of the society.
- The Ministry of Mines will also provide methodology for calculation of Average Sale Price (ASP) of these minerals required for enabling auction of these mineral blocks.
- With further impetus given by the reforms made in the year 2021, more than 146 blocks have been put up for auction in the financial year 2021-22. Of this, 34 blocks have been successfully auctioned in the financial year.

Source: Business Standard

National Medical Commission removes upper age limit for appearing in NEET-UG exam

Why in News

- The National Medical Commission has removed the upper age limit for appearing in the NEET-UG examination.



Key Points

- The process for official notification to suitably amend the regulations on Graduate Medical Education 1997 to this effect has been initiated.
- Earlier, the age limit was 25 years for general category candidates and 30 years in the case of reserved category candidates.
- The National Medical Commission is the top regulatory body of medical education in the country.

About The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET (UG):

- NEET (UG), formerly the All India Pre-Medical Test (AIPMT), is an all India pre-medical entrance test for students who wish to pursue undergraduate medical (MBBS), dental (BDS) and AYUSH (BAMS, BUMS, BHMS, etc.) courses.
- The exam is conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

Source: newsonair

Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela – 2022



Why in News

- Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Kailash Choudhary inaugurated Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela 2022 in New Delhi.
- On this occasion, Shri Choudhary dedicated “Pusa Agri Krishi Haat Complex” developed in two acres.

Key Points

- The three day Krishi Mela is being organized by the ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI).
- Farmers and Farmer Producer Organizations will be able to do direct marketing of their products in the 'Pusa Agri Krishi Haat Complex'.
- With this facility, consumers will be able to buy the products of farmers directly, which will free them from middlemen.

Source: PIB

Brahmaputra (NW2) gets connected with Ganga (NW1)



Why in News

- Recently, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and AYUSH, Sarbananda Sonowal received the maiden voyage of food-grains from Patna to Pandu via Bangladesh in Guwahati.

Key Points

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** is planning to run a fixed schedule sailing between **Ganga (NW1)** and **Brahmaputra (NW2)** heralding a new age of inland water transport for Assam & the Northeast India.
- The sustained effort to rejuvenate the historical trade routes via Bangladesh got a fillip under PM Gati Shakti.
- In line with the "Act East" policy of Prime Minister, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), has taken up several infrastructure projects on **National Waterways-1 (NW1)**, Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route, and NW2, through the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
- These steps will improve the connectivity with the North Eastern Region (NER) through waterways.
- The Government has undertaken the ambitious **Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP)** with an investment of about Rs. 4600 crore for the capacity augmentation of NW-1 (River Ganga) for safe and sustainable movement of vessels upto 2000 tonnes.

Source: PIB

Kanya Shiksha Pravesh Utsav



Why in News

- On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), in partnership with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, launched a landmark campaign '**Kanya Shiksha Pravesh Utsav**' to bring back out of school adolescent girls in India to the formal education and/or skilling system.

Key Points

- The campaign has been launched with the objective of enhancing enrolment and retention of girls between 11-14 years of age in school.
- The initiative intends to build on the existing schemes and programmes like Schemes for Adolescent Girls (SAG), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) and National Education Policy (NEP) to work on a comprehensive system for out of school girls.
- The campaign will be rolled out under the umbrella of MoWCD's BBBP initiative by targeting more than 400,000 out of school adolescent girls as primary beneficiaries.

About UNICEF:

- UNICEF, also known as the United Nations Children's Fund, is a United Nations agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.
- Headquarters: New York, United States
- Founded: 11 December 1946

Source: Indian Express

Modernisation Plan-IV for Central Armed Police Forces



Why in News

- The Centre has approved the scheme - Modernisation Plan-IV for Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in continuation of the scheme Modernisation Plan-III for CAPFs.
- The Modernisation Plan-IV will run from 01.02.2022 to 31.03.2026.

Key Points

- Modernisation Plan-IV for CAPFs with a total financial outlay of Rs.1,523 crore is to be implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- It will equip the CAPFs with modern state-of-the-art weapons and equipment as per their operational requirement, keeping in view their deployment pattern in different theatres.
- This would bolster the Government's ability to address the challenges being faced on the International Border/LoC/LAC as well as in the different theatres, such as areas affected by Left Wing Extremism, Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and insurgency affected North Eastern States.

Source: India Today

Important News: World

Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA)



Why in News

- India, Bangladesh and Nepal finalised an enabling memorandum of understanding (MoU) for implementing the long-gestating **Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA)** that is aimed at boosting regional trade and connectivity.

Key Points

- The BBIN connectivity project was conceived after the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) failed to agree on a regional motor vehicles agreement at a summit in Nepal in 2014.
- The BBIN project suffered a setback in 2017 when Bhutan temporarily opted out of it after being unable to get parliamentary approval for the MVA.
- The 3 other countries decided at the time to press ahead with the agreement.

Source: HT

WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the **WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (WHO GCTM)** in Jamnagar, Gujarat by signing a Host Country agreement between the Government of India and the World Health Organization (WHO).



Key Points

- The WHO GCTM will be established under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- This would be the first and only global outposted Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe.

- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, World Health Organization announced the establishment of WHO GCTM in India on the occasion of 5th Ayurveda Day on 13th November, 2020.
- A Joint Task Force (JTF) is constituted for coordination, execution and monitoring of activities for the establishment of this Centre.
- JTF comprises representatives from the Government of India, Permanent Mission of India, Geneva and the World Health Organization.

Facts about World Health Organization (WHO):

- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Founded:** 7 April 1948

Source: The Hindu

Democracy Report 2022



Why in News

- According to the latest report from the V-Dem Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg, the level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen in 2021 is down to 1989 levels, with the democratic gains of the post-Cold War period eroding rapidly in the last few years.
- The study is titled 'Democracy Report 2022: Autocratisation Changing Nature?'

Key Points

- The report classifies countries into four regime types based on their score in the Liberal Democratic Index (LDI): Liberal Democracy, Electoral Democracy, Electoral Autocracy, and Closed Autocracy.

Main findings of the report:

- **Sweden** topped the LDI index, other Scandinavian countries such as Denmark and Norway, along with Costa Rica and New Zealand make up the top five in liberal democracy rankings.

India's Performance:

- India is part of a broader global trend of an anti-plural political party driving a country's autocratisation.
- Ranked 93rd in the LDI, India figures in the "bottom 50%" of countries.
- It has slipped further down in the Electoral Democracy Index, to 100, and even lower in the Deliberative Component Index, at 102.

- In South Asia, India is ranked below Sri Lanka (88), Nepal (71), and Bhutan (65) and above Pakistan (117) in the LDI.

Source: The Hindu

Humanitarian Corridors



Why in News

- Recently, Russia declared a partial ceasefire in the Russia-Ukraine War to allow **humanitarian corridors** for civilians.

Humanitarian corridors:

- The United Nations considers humanitarian corridors to be one of several possible forms of a temporary pause of armed conflict.
- For example, through large-scale bombing of civilian targets — humanitarian corridors can provide crucial relief.
- They are demilitarized zones, in a specific area and for a specific time — and both sides of an armed conflict agree to them.
- Via these corridors, either food and medical aid can be brought to areas of conflict, or civilians can be evacuated.
- In most cases, humanitarian corridors are negotiated by the United Nations. Sometimes they're also set up by local groups.
- Humanitarian corridors were defined in resolution 45/100 of the UNs' general assembly in 1990.
- Access to humanitarian corridors is determined by the parties to the conflict. It's usually limited to neutral actors, the UN or aid organizations such as the Red Cross.

Source: Indian Express

PM Modi participates in virtual summit of Quad leaders



Why in News

- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated at a virtual **summit of Quad leaders**, along with US President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Key Points

- The meeting reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the September 2021 Quad Summit.
- The leaders agreed on accelerating cooperation, with an objective to achieve concrete outcomes by the summit in Japan later this year.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for concrete and practical forms of cooperation within the Quad, in areas like Humanitarian and Disaster Relief, debt sustainability, supply chains, clean energy, connectivity, and capacity-building.
- He reiterated the importance of adhering to the UN Charter, international law and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- The leaders also discussed other topical issues, including the situation in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean region and the Pacific Islands.

About Quad:

- The Quad, or the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, is an informal grouping of four countries – Australia, Japan, India and the United States.
- It is aimed at ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific, a strategically vital region that witnessed increasing Chinese military assertiveness in recent years.
- Quad's first in-person summit was held in Washington in September 2021.

Source: newsonair

Financial Action Task Force keeps Pakistan in Grey List



Why in News

- Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has once again retained Pakistan on the increased monitoring list, also known as the "Grey List" and called the country to work on "complex money laundering investigations and prosecutions."

Key Points

- Pakistan has been on the FATF's grey list for deficiencies in its counter-terror financing and anti-money laundering regimes since June 2018.
- This greylisting has adversely impacted its imports, exports, remittances, and limited access to international lending.

Facts about Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

- FATF is an intergovernmental organisation founded on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing.

- **Headquarters:** Paris, France
- **Founded:** 1989
- **Membership:** 39

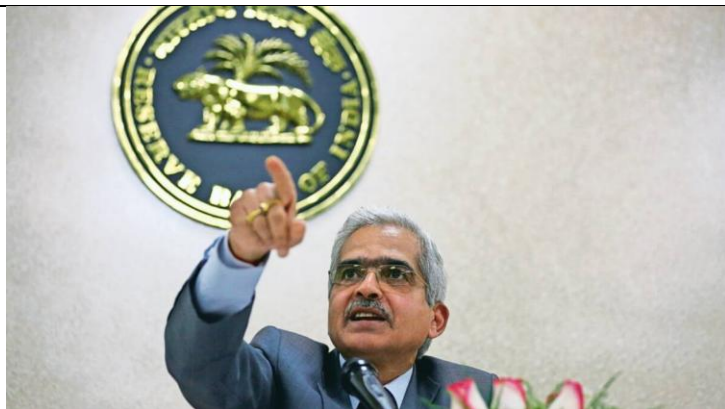
Two lists of FATF:

- **Grey List:** Those countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering. 'Increased monitoring list' is another name for the 'Grey List'.
- **Black List:** Those countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries are put in the Black List. These countries support money laundering and terror funding activities.

Source: HT

Important News: Economy

RBI launches UPI123Pay



Why in News

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das launched the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** service for feature phones.
- Termed as **UPI123Pay**, the service will allow 40 crore feature phone users across India to access the payment service.
- Additionally, the central bank also launched a 24×7 helpline for digital payments called DigiSaathi.

Key Points

- So far UPI was available only across all smartphones in India but with the latest move, feature phone users will also be allowed to send and receive payments.
- The UPI123Pay service is a three-step method to initiate and execute services for users, which will work on phones which do not have an option for internet connection.

About Unified Payments Interface (UPI):

- UPI is an instant real-time payment system developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) facilitating inter-bank peer-to-peer and person-to-merchant transactions. NPCI is an umbrella organisation for all digital payments.

Source: Indian Express

Important News: Defense

India - Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime Exercise 'SLINEX' 2022

Why in News



- The Ninth Edition of **India - Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime Exercise 'SLINEX' (Sri Lanka–India Naval Exercise)** is scheduled at Visakhapatnam from 07 Mar to 10 Mar 2022.



- The exercise is being conducted in two phases; the Harbour Phase at Visakhapatnam on 07-08 Mar 22 followed by the Sea Phase on 09-10 Mar 22 in the Bay of Bengal.

Key Points

- Sri Lanka Navy will be represented by SLNS Sayurala, an advanced offshore patrol vessel and the Indian Navy by INS Kirch, a guided missile corvette.
- The previous edition of SLINEX was conducted off Trincomalee in October 2020.
- SLINEX aims to enhance inter-operability, improve mutual understanding and exchange best practices and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations between both navies.
- SLINEX exemplifies the deep maritime engagement between India and Sri Lanka and has grown in scope over the years to strengthen mutual cooperation, in consonance with India's policy of 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)'.

Source: PIB

Indo-Pacific Military Health Exchange conference



Why in News

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated, on March 07, 2022, the four-day **Indo-Pacific Military Health Exchange (IPMHE) conference** co-hosted

by Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) and US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM).

Key Points

- The **theme** of the conference is 'Military Healthcare in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) World'.
- The conference, which will continue till March 10, 2022, aims to enhance cooperation and jointmanship in military medicine.
- It will cover many important topics including operational/combat medical care, tropical medicine, field surgery, field anaesthesia, aviation & marine medicine emergencies etc.

Source: PIB

HANSA-NG successfully completes sea level trials at Puducherry



Why in News

- Recently, India's first indigenous Flying Trainer HANSA-NG has successfully completed the sea level trials at Puducherry.

Key Points

- HANSA-NG is designed and developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bangalore under the aegis of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.
- HANSA-NG is one of the most advanced flying trainer powered by Rotax Digital Control Engine with unique features like Just-In-Time Prepreg (JIPREG) Composite light weight Airframe, Glass Cockpit, Bubble Canopy with wide panoramic view, electrically operated flaps etc.
- HANSA-NG is designed to meet the Indian flying club needs and it is an ideal aircraft for Commercial Pilot Licensing (CPL) due to its low cost and low fuel consumption.

Note: HANSA-NG (HANSA-New Generation) is an upgraded version of HANSA, which saw the first flight in 1993, and was certified in 2000.

Source: PIB

Brahmos land attack missile



Why in News

- The Indian Navy successfully demonstrated the accuracy of an extended-range land attack Brahmos supersonic cruise missile from the stealth destroyer INS Chennai.

Key Points

- Both Brahmos missile and INS Chennai are indigenously built and highlight the cutting-edge of Indian missile and ship-building prowess.
- They reinforce the Indian Navy's contribution towards the Atma Nirbhar Bharat and Make in India endeavours.
- **BrahMos Aerospace**, an India-Russian joint venture, produces the supersonic cruise missiles that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or land platforms.

Source: ET

Postponement of DefExpo 2022



Why in News

- Due to logistics problems being experienced by participants, the DefExpo 2022 (12th edition) proposed to be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from March 10th till March 14th is postponed.

Key Points

- Russia and Ukraine were among the 70 countries expected to participate in the DefExpo 2022.
- The 11th edition of DefExpo was held at Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) in 2020.
- DefExpo is a flagship biennial event of the Ministry of Defence, showcasing the land, naval, air as well as homeland security systems.
- DefExpo began in 1996.

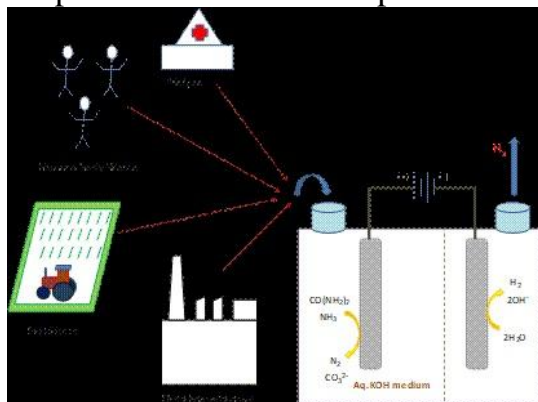
Source: Indian Express

Science and Technology

Hydrogen Production by Urea Electrolysis

Why in News

- Indian Scientists have designed an electrocatalyst system for energy-efficient hydrogen production with the help of electrolysis of urea.

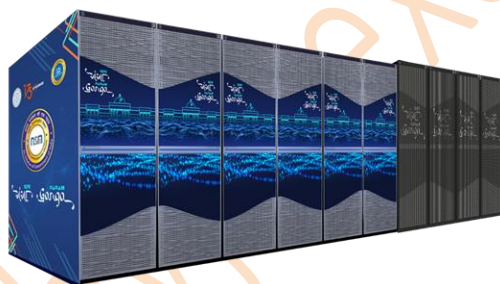


Key Points

- The urea electrolysis is helpful towards urea-based waste treatment with low-cost hydrogen production.
- India is one of the top countries by urea production, and it produced 244.55 LMT of urea during 2019-20.
- The nitrogenous fertilizer industries generate a high concentration of ammonia and urea as effluents.
- This can be utilized for energy production towards our country's benefits.
- The energy requirement for production of hydrogen through water electrolysis can be reduced by 70 % through urea electrolysis.

Source: PIB

Petascale Supercomputer "PARAM Ganga"



Why in News

- National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)** has now deployed "**PARAM Ganga**", a supercomputer at IIT Roorkee, with a supercomputing capacity of 1.66 Petaflops.
- The system is designed and commissioned by C-DAC under Phase 2 of the build approach of the NSM.

About National Supercomputing Mission (NSM):

- The National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) which is being steered jointly by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeiTY) and the Department of Science and

Technology (DST) and implemented by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, has progressed significantly.

- The four major pillars of the NSM, namely, Infrastructure, Applications, R&D, HRD, have been functioning efficiently to realize the goal of developing indigenous supercomputing ecosystem of the nation.
- C-DAC has been entrusted the responsibility to design, development, deployment and commission the supercomputing systems under the build approach of Mission.
- It has designed and developed a computer server “Rudra” and high-speed interconnect “Trinetra” which are the major sub-assemblies required for supercomputers.

Source: PIB

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inspects the trial of Kavach System



Why in News

- Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister of Railways, Communication and Electronics & Information Technology inspected the trial of ‘**Kavach**’ working system between Gullaguda-Chitgidda Railway stations on Lingampalli-Vikarabad section in Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway.
- As a part of Atmanirbhar Bharat, 2,000 km of network will be brought under Kavach for safety and capacity augmentation in 2022-23.

About Kavach:

- The Kavach is an indigenously developed ATP system by Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) in collaboration with Indian industry and trials facilitated by South Central Railway to achieve the corporate objective of safety in train operations across Indian Railways.
- It is a state of the art electronic system of Safety Integrity Level - 4 standards.
- Kavach is meant to provide protection by preventing trains to pass the signal at Danger (Red) and avoid collision.
- It activates the train braking system automatically if the driver fails to control the train as per the speed restrictions.

Source: Indian Express

India's first Start-up in latest Daylight Harvesting Technology



Why in News

- The Ministry of Science & Technology has decided to promote a unique Start-up in the latest **Daylight Harvesting Technology** in order to reduce carbon footprint and improve the building energy efficiency.

Key Points

- The only Start-up company in India for Daylight Harvesting Technologies “Skyshade Daylights Private Limited” Hyderabad signed an MoU with Technology Development Board, a statutory body of Department of Science & Technology.
- The company aims to create Green & Net zero buildings and to participate and contribute in national missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).

Note:

- The country has set an ambitious target to achieve a capacity of 175 GW of its energy requirement from renewable energy sources by the end of 2022, and committed to achieve 500 GW by 2030 as stated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the COP26 summit in Glasgow.

Source: PIB

Environment

New gin berry species discovered in southern Western Ghats

Why in News

- A team of scientists from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) has discovered a new gin berry species from the Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.



Key Points

- The species, named *Glycosmis albicarpa* with a distinct large white fruit, is endemic to the southern Western Ghats.
- The species belongs to the Orange family, Rutaceae.

- The findings have been published in the latest issue of Nordic Journal of Botany, published from Sweden.
- Many of the related plants of these taxonomic groups are being utilised for their medicinal values and food.

Source: The Hindu

Schemes & Programme

SVAMITVA Scheme



Government of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Why in News

- Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Giriraj Singh will launch the new functionality developed wherein SMS will be rolled out to MPs and MLAs informing about the commencement of drone flying in their respective Constituency scheduled for survey under the **SVAMITVA scheme**.

Key Points

- The Minister will launch the functionality on 11th March 2022 in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Department of Science & Technology (DST), Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Survey of India (SoI), National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- This new functionality will help in wider outreach and transparency of the scheme.

About SVAMITVA scheme:

- SVAMITVA, a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj was launched nationally by the Prime Minister on National Panchayati Raj Day, 24th April 2021.
- The scheme aims to provide the 'record of rights' to village household owners in rural Abadi areas and issuance of Property cards.
- The Scheme is being implemented across the country in a phased manner over a period of five years (2020-2025) and would eventually cover all villages across the country by 2025.

Source: PIB

Special Entrepreneurship Promotion Drive for Women – "SAMARTH"



Why in News

- On the occasion of International Women's Day 2022, Union Minister for MSME, Narayan Rane launched a Special Entrepreneurship Promotion Drive for Women - "**SAMARTH**".

Key Points

Under the Samarth initiative of the MSME Ministry, following benefits will be available to aspiring and existing women entrepreneurs:

- 20% Seats in free Skill Development Programs** organized under skill development schemes of the Ministry will be allocated for Women. More than **7500 women** will be benefitted.
- 20% of MSME Business Delegations** sent to domestic & international exhibitions under the schemes for Marketing Assistance implemented by the Ministry will be dedicated to women owned MSMEs.
- 20% Discount** on annual processing fee on **NSIC's Commercial Schemes**
- Special Drive for registration** of women-owned MSMEs under **Udyam Registration**

Note: In the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, India is one of the worst performers in South Asia, it is now ranked 140 among 156 countries in 2021.

Source: PIB

Village Entrepreneurship Programme



Why in News

- National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD)** — an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) to develop a sustainable model for promoting entrepreneurship at the grass roots by initiating the **Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)**.

Key Points

- SVEP is a sub-component of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- It aims to support entrepreneurs in rural areas to set-up enterprises at the village-level in non-agricultural sectors.
- Under the partnership rural entrepreneurs will be able to access banking systems for receiving financial support for starting their enterprises, including support from MUDRA bank.
- The beneficiaries of the project are from the Self-Help Group (SHG) ecosystem of DAY-NRLM and the scheme not only supports existing enterprises but new enterprises as well.

Source: ET

Donate-a-Pension programme



Why in News

- Minister for Labour and Employment, Bhupender Yadav launched **Donate-a-Pension programme**.
- It is an initiative under **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)** pension scheme where citizens of India can donate the premium contribution of their immediate support staff such as domestic workers, drivers, helpers, care givers, nurses, in their household or establishment.

Key Points

- Under the programme, workers in the unorganised sector with the age group of 18 to 40 years can register themselves and deposit a minimum of 660 to 2400 rupees every year depending on their age.
- After they attain 60 years they will receive the minimum assured pension of 3000 rupees per month.

About Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)pension scheme:

- The Government of India has introduced a pension scheme namely Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) to ensure old age protection for Unorganised Workers.
- PM-SYM is a Central Sector Scheme administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment

Source: newsonair

ECI hosts International Election Visitors Programme 2022



Why in News

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) hosted the virtual **International Election Visitors Programme (IEVP) 2022** for Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from nearly 32 Countries.
- An overview of the ongoing Elections for Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh was presented to more than 150 EMB Delegates participating online.

Key Points

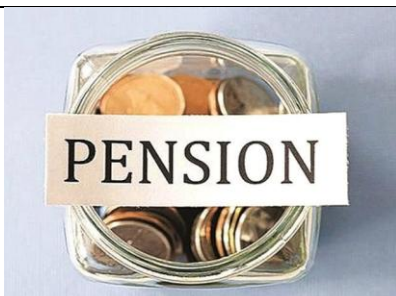
- India has been hosting the International Election Visitors Programme (IEVP) since 2012 elections where International delegates are invited to visit the Polling stations and see the electoral processes in practice for themselves in person.

About ECI (Election Commission of India):

- It is a permanent and independent body established by the Constitution of India directly to ensure free and fair elections in the country.
- **Formed:** 25 January 1950 (Later celebrated as National Voters Day)
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Commission executives:**
Sushil Chandra, Chief Election Commissioner of India
Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioner of India
Anup Chandra Pandey, Election Commissioner of India

Source: PIB

Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana (SSSY)



Why in News

- The Government has approved the continuation of the **Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana (SSSY)** and its components beyond 31.03.2021 for the Financial Years 2021-22 to 2025-26, with a total financial outlay of Rs.3,274.87 crore.

Key Points

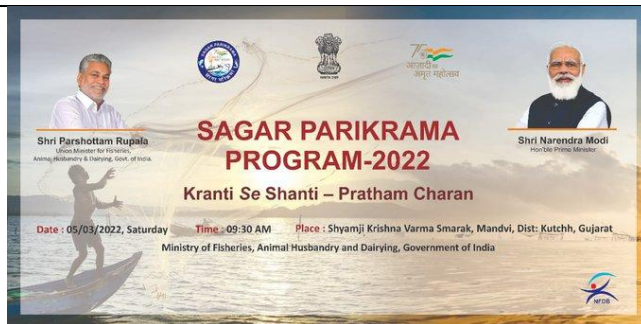
- The proposal for continuation of the SSSY was received from the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The decision shows the commitment of the Government to remember sacrifices of Freedom Fighters and taking inspiration from them during the year of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Background:

- Freedom Fighters and their eligible dependents have been sanctioned the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension and presently, there are 23,566 beneficiaries across the country covered under this scheme.

Source: Business Standard

'Sagar Parikrama' Programme



Why in News

- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Parshottam Rupala inaugurated the '**Sagar Parikrama**', organised by The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India and National Fisheries Development Board along with Department of Fisheries, Government of Gujarat, Indian Coast Guard, Fishery Survey of India, Gujarat Maritime Board and fishermen representatives.

Key Points

- The Parikrama, starting from Mandvi at Shyamiji Krishna Varma Memorial, Gujarat, as a part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava', is an endeavour to know the problems of Coastal Fisher folk.
- It will be organised in other districts of Gujarat and other State/UTs in subsequent phases.
- During the event, certificates /sanctions related to Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampadha scheme (PMMSY), Kisan Credit Card & State Scheme shall be awarded to the progressive fishermen, especially costal fishermen, fishers and fish farmers, young fishery entrepreneurs etc.

Fisheries Sector in India:

- India is the second major producer of fish through aquaculture in the world.
- India is the 4th largest exporter of fish in the world as it contributes 7.7% to the global fish production.

Source: PIB

Awards and Honours

Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar & National Safety Awards



Why in News

- Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister of Labour and Employment, Environment, Forest and Climate Change presented Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP), National Safety Awards (NSA) for the performance year 2018 and National Safety Awards (Mines) [NSA (Mines)] for the contest years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Key Points

- The Ministry of Labour & Employment has been operating the "Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP)" and "National Safety Awards (NSA)" since 1965 and National Safety Awards (Mines) [NSA (Mines)] since 1983.
- VRP and NSA are operated by the Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Mumbai and NSA (Mines) is operated by Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS), Dhanbad.
- **Source: PIB**

Atmanirbhar Sangathan Award



- Navprabha Mahila Prabhag Sangh, a village near Lohara taluka in Osmanabad district, has been awarded the 'Atmanirbhar Sangathan' award by the Union Ministry of Rural Development.

- The Union Ministry of Rural Development had invited nominations from all over the country for the 'Atmanirbhar Sangathan' award at the national level under the Dindayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Campaign (DAY-NRLM).
- Ward teams were nominated by various states in the country. The team from nearby, Taluka Lohara was nominated by 'Umed'. Out of these, three teams have been selected at the national level. Out of these three teams, Navprabha Mahila Prabhag Sangh, Jevali, Taluka Lohara ward team has been declared as self-reliant organization.
- The award will be presented at the hands of dignitaries on the occasion of International Women's Day on 08 March 2022 at Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi.
- The Navprabha Mahila Ward team selected for the award has been formed in October 2017.
- **Source: AIR**

Important Days

March 8, International Women's Day



Why in News

- International Women's Day is celebrated every year on March 8.

Key Points

- The **theme** for International Women's Day, 2022 is 'Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow'.
- The first International Women's Day celebration took place in the year 1911.

Note:

- On International Women's Day 2022, President of India Ram Nath Kovind will confer Prestigious **Nari Shakti Puraskars** to 29 outstanding Individuals for the years 2020 and 2021.
- '**Nari Shakti Puraskar**' is an initiative of the Ministry of Women and Child Development to acknowledge the exceptional contribution made by individuals and institutions, to celebrate women as game changers and catalyst of positive change in the society.

Source: un.org

Sports

S Sreesanth announces retirement from all forms of cricket



Why in News

- World Cup-winning India fast bowler S Sreesanth announced his retirement from all forms of Indian domestic cricket.

Key Points

- Sreesanth played 27 Tests and 53 ODIs for India, taking 87 and 75 wickets respectively. He has also taken seven wickets in 10 T20 Internationals.

Source: Indian Express

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2022



Why in News

- India has taken first place in the medal standing in **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2022** in Cairo.

Key Points

- The Indian team finished on the top of the medals tally with a total of seven medals comprising of four gold, two silver and one bronze.
- Norway finished second and France third in the competition.

Source: newsonair

Mithali Raj becomes first woman cricketer to play in six World Cups



Why in News

- India captain Mithali Raj became only the third cricketer and the first woman to appear in six World Cups, joining the iconic Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistani great Javed Miandad.

Key Points

- Raj, a 39-year-old veteran of many memorable matches, had made her maiden World Cup appearance in 2000, before playing the event in 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017 and now in 2022.

Source: Indian Express

Jamshedpur FC wins ISL Winner's Shield



Why in News

- Jamshedpur FC won their first Indian Super League (ISL) Winner's Shield after a gritty 1-0 win over ATK Mohun Bagan at the P.J.N Stadium, Goa.

Key Points

- Jamshedpur FC is an Indian professional football club based in Jamshedpur.

About Indian Super League (ISL):

- The Indian Super League is the men's professional top tier football league in Indian football system.
- It is organised by All India Football Federation and their commercial partners Football Sports Development Limited.
- For sponsorship ties with Hero MotoCorp, it is officially called as Hero Indian Super League.

Source: newsonair

Reports and Indexes

Report on Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)



Why in News

- The Ministry of Education released the report on **Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2020-21** on school education of India.
- The present publication relates to UDISE+ data for the reference year 2020-21.

Main Findings of the Report:

- In 2020-21 **total students enrolled** in school education from primary to higher secondary stood at 25.38 crore. There is an increase of 28.32 lakh enrolments as compared to the 25.10 crore enrolment in 2019-20.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** which measures the general level of participation has improved in 2020-21 at all levels of school education compared to 2019-20. Level wise GER in 2020-21 as compared to 2019-20 are: 92.2% from 89.7% in upper primary, 99.1 % from 97.8% in elementary, 79.8% from 77.9% in secondary and 53.8% from 51.4% in higher secondary respectively.
- 96.96 lakh teachers are engaged in school education during 2020-21. This is higher by about 8800 in comparison with the number of teacher in school education in 2019-20.
- In 2020-21 the **Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)** stood at 26 for primary, 19 for upper primary, 18 for secondary and 26 for higher secondary, showing an improvement since 2018-19. The PTR for primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary was 28, 20, 21, and 30-respectively during 2018-19.
- In 2020-21 over 12.2 crore girls are enrolled in primary to higher secondary showing an increase of 11.8 lakh girls compared to the enrolment of girls in 2019-20.

Source: PIB

New Appointments

Yoon Suk Yeol elected as new President of South Korea



Why in News

- In South Korea, opposition candidate Yoon Suk Yeol, a conservative former top prosecutor, has been elected as the country's new President.

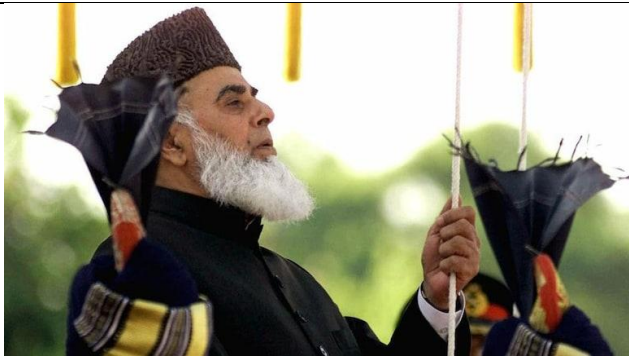
Key Points:

- Yoon Suk Yeol defeated his ruling liberal party opponent Lee Jae-myung.
- Yoon will take office in May and serve a single five-year term as leader of the world's 10th largest economy.

Source: TOI

Obituaries

Former Pakistani President Rafiq Tarar passes away



- Former Pakistani President Rafiq Tarar passed away at 92.
- Tarar had served as Pakistan President between 1997 and 2001 after being nominated by the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.
- Tarar had also served as a Supreme Court judge from 1991 to 1994.

Source: India Today

Former Army Chief Gen Sunith Francis Rodrigues passes away



- General (retd) Sunith Francis Rodrigues, who headed the Indian Army between 1990 and 1993 and served as the governor of Punjab between 2004 and 2010 passed away.
- In addition to his more than 40 years of illustrious service in the army, he served two terms on the National Security Advisory Board.

Source: ET

Australian cricketer Shane Warne passes away



- Former Australian cricketer and spin bowling legend Shane Warne passed away at the age of 52 years.
- Warne was named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Century for his unparalleled achievements in a 15-year career between 1992 and 2007.
- In 2013, the year he retired from the game completely, he was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame.

Source: Indian Express

Weekly Current Affairs 2nd Week March 2022

