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3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue

- The **3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue** was held in New Delhi on 19 December 2021 under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar.
- The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan took part in the meeting.
- The 2nd meeting was organized by India in October 2020 in digital video-conference format.



Key Points

- A joint statement issued at the end of deliberations as part of the third India-Central Asia dialogue.
- The dialogue also decided to explore establishing joint working groups to address issues of free movements of goods and services between India and Central Asian countries.
- They focused on trade and connectivity, development partnership and regional developments, including the situation in Afghanistan.
- Emphasis on optimum usage of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as well as Ashgabat Agreement on International Transport and Transit Corridor to enhance connectivity between India and the Central Asian countries.

Note: India and the Central Asian countries will mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations next year.

Source: The Hindu

Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021

- The Lok Sabha has passed the **Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021**.



Key Points

- The bill provides linking of Aadhar number with electoral rolls besides giving four opportunities to enroll in a calendar year as voter upon attaining 18 years of age.
- The amendments are based on the recommendations made by the Election Commission of India and the Parliamentary Standing Committee as well.
- According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, it provides for amendment of section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RP Act, 1950), enabling for the linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem to curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places.
- It also seeks to amend clause (b) of section 14 of the RP Act, 1950 specifying the 1st day of January, 1st day of April, 1st day of July and 1st day of October in a calendar year as qualifying dates in relation to the preparation or revision of electoral rolls.

Source: Indian Express

India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre

- India's first **International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC)** was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad.



Key Points

- Life trustee of the centre, Justice R.V. Raveendran, Supreme Court judges L. Nageswara Rao, Hima Kohli and judges from the Telangana and Andhra Pradesh high courts attended the event.
- Till now, the complicated legal matters of all regional countries and common people including India used to be resolved in the arbitration centers of **Singapore and UK**, but with the start of this mediation center in Hyderabad, now the process of arbitration can be carried out here.
- The setting up of IAMC at Hyderabad is an important step towards enhancing the ADR (Alternate Dispute Resolution) landscape of the country.

Source: TOI

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates Good Governance Week (20-25 December 2021)

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the **Good Governance Week (20-25 December 2021)** to showcase and replicate the best governance practices at Grassroots level.
- The Minister also launched **'Prashasan Gaon ki Aur'**- A Nation-wide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery.





Key Points

- As a part of Azaadi ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations in the 75th Year of India's Independence, a Good Governance Week is being celebrated with the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** as the Nodal Department.
- Through "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" - a Nation-wide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery will be held in all Districts, States, and Union Territories of India.
- Over 700 District Collectors will be participating in "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" and during the weeklong event, will visit Tehsil/Panchayat Samiti Headquarters to provide timely grievance redressal and improve service delivery.

Note:

- During the event, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the Exhibition on Good Governance Practices – "**Shaasan Ki Badalti Tasveer**".
- He also launched the **Good Governance Week Portal** and released the booklet on 2 year achievements of DARPG.

Source: PIB

'Swadesh Darshan' scheme

- The **Ministry of Tourism** with an objective to create tourism infrastructure in the country, provides financial assistance to the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations/ Central Agencies under its schemes of '**Swadesh Darshan**' and '**Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive**' (PRASHAD).
- This information was given by Minister of Tourism Shri G. Kishan Reddy in Lok Sabha.



Ministry of Tourism
Government of India



Key Points

- The Ministry under 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme has sanctioned 5 projects under Buddhist circuit theme including 1 project in Uttar Pradesh.
- In addition, another project 'Development of Wayside Amenities in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar' for an amount of Rs. 17.93 Crore at Varanasi-Gaya; Lucknow-Ayodhya- Lucknow; Gorakhpur Kushinagar; Kushinagar - Gaya Kushinagar routes has also been sanctioned.
- In addition, an Action Plan has been formulated with a view to evolve a coordinated strategy for "Revival of India as a Global Centre of Buddhist Culture and Tourism with Special Focus on Bodhgaya".
- The Action Plan includes interventions under 4 verticals: i) Connectivity; ii) Infrastructure and Logistics; iii) Cultural Heritage, Research & Education; and iv) Public Awareness, Communication & Outreach and the Ministry of Tourism has been made the nodal Ministry for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan.

Source: PIB

“Sampoorna Sukanya Gram” under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana campaign

- The Government has taken many effective steps for successful implementation of 'Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana' to ensure maximum benefits to girls.
- This was stated by Union Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary in Lok Sabha.



Key Points

- Giving more details, the Minister stated that the campaign run by DoP is given below:

Sr. No.	Details of Campaign	Duration
1	Balika Shakti Campaign	09.12.2019 to 18.01.2020
2	Mahila Divas Campaign	24.02.2020 to 07.03.2020
3	National Girl Child Day Campaign	January, 2021
4	Sampoorna Sukanya Gram Campaign - To ensure the reach of Sukanya Samriddhi Account (SSA) till last mile, a "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram Campaign" was launched during June 2019. In this campaign at least 5 villages to be enmarking Sampoorna Sukanya Village (Gram). It covers opening of Sukanya Samriddhi Account for all eligible girl child in that village. Till 31.03.2021, a total of 19,535 villages declared as "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram".	

Source: PIB



Mormugao, Indian Navy's second ship of the Project 15B, sails for maiden sea trials

- **Mormugao**, Indian Navy's second indigenous stealth destroyer of the P15B class, planned to be commissioned in mid-2022, proceeded on her maiden sea sortie.



Key Points

- Mormugao is being built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDSL) as part of the Project 15B destroyers.
- The ship incorporates several niche indigenous technologies and is a shining example of Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

Note:

- With the recent commissioning in November 2021 of INS Visakhapatnam and the fourth P75 submarine INS Vela, commencement of sea trials of Mormugao is testimony to the cutting-edge capabilities of MDSL and the strong indigenous shipbuilding tradition of a modern and vibrant India.
- Recently, **Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE), Agra** conducted a flight demonstration of the **Controlled Aerial Delivery System** of 500 kg capacity (CADS-500).
- ADRDE, Agra is an R&D laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Source: PIB

Indian Desert Cat spotted in Panna Tiger Reserve

- An **Indian Desert Cat** has been spotted for the first time in **Madhya Pradesh's Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR)**.
- It is also known as the Asiatic Wildcat or the Asian Steppe Wildcat.



Key Points

- Its Scientific Name is *Felis silvestris ornate*.



- As the name suggests, this cat is found in deserts and can survive without water.
- The toes of the species have cushion like hair which help it balance the fluctuating desert temperatures.

Protection Status:

- Wildlife Protection Act: Schedule-I
- IUCN Red List: Least Concern
- CITES: Appendix-II

About Panna Tiger Reserve:

- It was established in 1981 and is situated in the Vindhya Mountain range in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh.
- Ken River (a tributary of the Yamuna River) flows through the reserve.
- Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will be located within the tiger reserve.
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated the Panna Tiger Reserve as a Biosphere Reserve on August 25, 2011.

Source: Indian Express

Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver medal in BWF World Championships 2021

- In Badminton, **Kidambi Srikanth** bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the Men's singles final of **BWF World Championships 2021** at Huelva in Spain.
- Lakshya Sen finished with the bronze medal.



Key Points

- Former World Number one, Srikanth etched his name in the history books after becoming the first Indian men's badminton player to reach the singles final of a World Championships.

Note: Before this, India got two bronze medals in the Men's singles at the Badminton world championships with Prakash Padukone in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth in 2019.

Source: newsonair