

Monthly Current Affair February 2022

मासिक समसामयिकी
फरवरी 2022



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Important News: World

Russia recognises Ukraine Rebel Regions as independent

Why in News

- 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.

Key Points

- 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.
- 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.
- 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

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

Why in News

- **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.

Key Points

- 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

Afghanistan's Humanitarian Crisis

Why in News

- Recently, the World Bank (WB) approved a plan to use some \$1 billion in frozen Afghanistan funds for education, agriculture, health, and family programs in an effort to ease the country's worsening humanitarian and economic crises.
- Earlier, the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan was held in India.

Key Points

Afghanistan's Current Situation:

- Afghanistan has been **unstable and insecure for decades**, but the Taliban's capture of power in August 2021 has had the entire region hanging by a thread.
- The war-ravaged country is facing an **unprecedented humanitarian crisis**, which, according to many experts, could turn into another violent conflict.
- The Taliban, seeking to gain international recognition and financial aid, are more inclined toward a "diplomatic" approach than employing violent tactics. But this superficial calm may not last for long.
- If the humanitarian crisis aggravates in Afghanistan, even the Taliban won't be able to manage the situation, as evidenced by violent "Islamic State" (IS) attacks.

Global consequences:

- The current situation in Afghanistan is disturbingly similar to the geopolitical scenario in the late 1990s.
- The Taliban seized power in 1996, but the international community did not fully grasp the potential consequences of the new paradigm.

Source: Indian Express

Nepal to become the first country to adopt India's UPI system

Why in News

- Nepal will be the first country to adopt **India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system.**

Key Points

- UPI will help modernize Nepal's digital payment infrastructure and bring the convenience of digital payments to citizens of Nepal.
- NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL), the international arm of NPCI, has joined hands with Gateway Payments Service (GPS) and Manam Infotech to provide the services in Nepal.

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 (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions.
- **NPCI** is an umbrella organisation for all digital payments. The interface is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and works by instantly transferring funds between two bank accounts on a mobile platform.

Source: India Today

India-UAE Virtual Summit

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE (United Arab Emirates) Armed Forces, H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan will hold a Virtual Summit on February 18, 2022.

Key Points

- Both Leaders are expected to lay out their vision of the historic and friendly relations between the two countries, at a time when India is celebrating 75 years of its Independence as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and UAE is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its foundation.
- The Prime Minister visited UAE in 2015, 2018 and 2019 while the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi visited India in 2016 and 2017.
- A major initiative in bilateral relations is the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).**
- Negotiations for CEPA were launched in September 2021 and have been completed.

Note:

- UAE is India's third largest trade partner.
- UAE hosts a large India community which numbers close to 3.5 million.

Source: PIB

WHO launches Quit Tobacco App

Why in News

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** launched '**Quit Tobacco App**' to help people kick the cigarette butt and give up use of tobacco in all forms - including smokeless and other newer products.
- The 'WHO Quit Tobacco App', launched during WHO's year-long 'Commit to quit' campaign, is the latest tobacco control initiative by the WHO South-East Asia Region.

Key Points

- Tobacco is the world's leading cause of preventable death, and kills nearly 8 million persons every year. It claims 1.6 million lives in the WHO South-East Asia Region which is amongst the largest producers and consumers of tobacco products.
- Tobacco use is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCD) including cancers, cardiovascular diseases, chronic lung diseases and diabetes.

Note:

- **World No Tobacco Day (WNTD)** is observed around the world every year on 31 May.
- The **Government of India** launched the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) in the year 2007-08 during the 11th Five-Year-Plan.
- India is the second largest producer and consumer of Tobacco products.

Source: Indian Express

Lassa fever

Why in News

- Recently, one of the three persons diagnosed with **Lassa fever** in the United Kingdom has died.

Key Points

About Lassa fever:

- The Lassa fever-causing virus is found in West Africa and was first discovered in 1969 in Lassa, Nigeria, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes.
- The fever is spread by rats and is primarily found in countries in West Africa including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and Nigeria where it is endemic.
- A person can become infected if they come in contact with household items of food that is contaminated with the urine or feces of an infected rat.
- Symptoms typically appear 1-3 weeks after exposure. Mild symptoms include slight fever, fatigue, weakness and headache and more serious symptoms include bleeding, difficulty breathing, vomiting, facial swelling, pain in the chest, back, and abdomen and shock.

Source: Indian Express

First-ever Global Summit on 'Reimagining Museums in India'

Why in News

- The Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and Development of the North- Eastern Region, G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the first of its kind, a 2- Day Global Summit in Hyderabad on '**Reimagining Museums in India**'.
- Participants from countries such as India, Australia, France, Italy, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States are participating in the summit being held virtually on 15th-16th February 2022.
- The Summit inauguration event was also attended and addressed by Alberto Garlindini, President of the International Council of Museums.

Key Points

- The Global Summit brings together leading luminaries, domain experts and practitioners in the field of museum development and management from India and around the world to discuss best practices and strategies.

Note:

- Today India's 1000+ museums are instrumental in not just showcasing and preserving the cultural heritage, but also educating future generations.
- The Government of India is also developing 10 museums on tribal freedom fighters to recognise their contribution in our freedom struggle and is continuing to support specialised museums such as Textiles and Crafts museums, Defence Museums and Railway Museums.
- Since 2014 the Ministry of Culture has funded 110 museums across the country and in order to promote scientific temper, 18 science museums are also being developed.
- Apart from this, the Archaeological Survey of India which functions under the Ministry runs 52 museums across the country.

Source: PIB

India signs MoU to hand over wheat to WFP in Kandahar**Why in News**

India signed an agreement with the **United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP)** for the distribution of 50,000 MT of wheat that it has committed to sending Afghanistan as part of a humanitarian assistance.

Key Points

The wheat will be taken through Pakistan to the Afghan border crossing and handed over to WFP officials in Kandahar beginning February 2022.

Iran has also offered to facilitate some of the wheat through Chabahar port and then on to Afghanistan's border via Zahedan.

Note:

Earlier, the **Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan** was held. The meeting called for "urgent humanitarian assistance" to the Afghan people.

About World Food Program (WFP):

WFP is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations.

Formation: 19 December 1961

Headquarters: Rome, Italy

The World Food Programme was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize in 2020**.

Major Report: Global Report on Food Crisis

India's Step in Ensuring Food Security:

National Food Security Mission

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi

The National Food Security Act, 2013

PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana

One Nation One Ration Card

Source: The Hindu

4th Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Foreign Ministers' Meeting**Why in News**

Recently, the **4th Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Foreign Ministers' Meeting** was held in Melbourne, Australia.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Australia's Marise Payn held the talks in Melbourne.

Key Points

The meeting was held amid escalating tension between Russia and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries over Ukraine, the Afghan crisis and increasing concerns over China's "coercion" in the Indo-Pacific region.

They announced plans for a Quad summit including PM Modi, U.S. President Biden and Australian PM Morrison to be hosted by Japan's PM Kishida in Tokyo in the "first half of 2022".

Note:

It was the third in-person meeting of Quad foreign ministers, following their meeting in Tokyo in October 2020 and the inaugural meeting in New York in September 2019.

The ministers last held talks virtually in February, 2021.

In March, 2021, US President Joe Biden hosted the first-ever summit of the Quad leaders in the virtual format that was followed by an in-person summit in Washington in September 2021.

The Quad has been focusing cooperation in areas such as producing vaccines, connectivity projects, facilitating the mobility of students, and looking at promoting startups and technology collaboration.

Source: Indian Express

India ranked 46th in EIU's Democracy Index 2021

Why in News

According to the **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**, India has ranked 46th position in the 2021 Democracy Index's global ranking.

With the highest score of 9.75, **Norway** topped the Democracy Index.

Key Points

India scored 6.91 to rank 46th on the Index.

Top 3 countries in the list: Norway, New Zealand, Finland

Afghanistan occupies the bottom place in the index.

Out of 167 countries included in the survey by EIU, only 21 countries have been put under the category of full democracy while 53 are included under the flawed democracy category. 34 countries are counted among hybrid democracies and 59 are authoritarian governments.

About the Index:

The Democracy Index is an index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), the research division of the Economist Group, a UK-based private company which publishes the weekly newspaper The Economist.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released its report on the state of democracy in 2021 across 165 independent countries and 2 territories.

The Democracy Index is based on 60 indicators, grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation and political culture.

The report has been further bifurcated into a full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime, and authoritarian.

Source: newsonair

US announces Indo-Pacific strategy to support India's continued rise and regional leadership

Why in News

US President Joe Biden's administration released its long-awaited **Indo-Pacific strategy**. The document focuses on building collective capacity to deal with challenges in the region - China's assertiveness, the pandemic and climate change, among others. The Indo-Pacific strategic report was released as part of the **Quad** Ministerial with foreign ministers of Australia, India, Japan and the US.

Key Points

The strategy document said, the US will continue to support India's rise and regional leadership, working with India bilaterally and through groups on a range of issues. It refers to India as a "like-minded partner" and "driving force" in the Quad. These include a focus on challenges from China, advancing the U.S. relationship, a 'Major Defense Partnership' with India and supporting its role as a net security provider in the region.

Source: ET

One Ocean Summit 2022

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the high-level segment of **One Ocean Summit** on 11 February, 2022.
- The high-level segment of the Summit will also be addressed by several Heads of States and Governments including Germany, United Kingdom, South Korea, Japan, Canada, among others.

Key Points

- **One Ocean Summit** is being organised by France from 9-11 February, 2022, in Brest, France, in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank.
- The objective of the Summit is to mobilise the international community to take tangible action towards preserving and supporting healthy and sustainable ocean ecosystems.
- Several important initiatives will be launched on this occasion in favour of marine ecosystem protection and sustainable fisheries, intended to fight pollution, in particular from plastics, respond to the impacts of climate change, as well as advocate for improved governance of the oceans.

Source: Business Today

India to provide grant to Sri Lanka to implement 'Unitary Digital Identity framework'

Why in News

- India has agreed to provide a grant to Sri Lanka to implement a '**Unitary Digital Identity framework**', apparently modelled on the Aadhaar card.

Key Points

- The government of Sri Lanka has decided to speed up the implementation of a Unitary Digital Identity framework in the country.
- This project comes amid substantive economic assistance from India, worth USD 1.4 billion to Sri Lanka, since the start of 2022 to help Sri Lanka cope with its dollar crunch, and import food, medicines and fuel due to shortages.

About Unitary Digital Identity framework:

- The personal identity verification program is a digital tool that can represent the identities of individuals in cyberspace, and the identification of individual identities

that can be accurately verified in digital and physical environments by combining the two devices.

Note: The government of India had previously agreed to provide a grant to implement the Unitary Digital Identity framework, after bilateral talks between the Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019.

Source: newsonair

Salesforce Global Digital Skills Index 2022: India leads in digital skills readiness:

Why in News

- Salesforce, a leading player in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), said that according to its **Global Digital Skills Index 2022**, India leads in digital skills readiness and has the highest readiness score amongst 19 countries it surveyed.

Key Points

- India had the highest digital readiness score of 63 out of 100.
- The average global readiness score was 33 out of 100.
- According to Salesforce, in India, 72 percent of respondents say they are very actively learning digital skills. 66 percent of respondents in India also said they feel very equipped with resources to learn digital skills.

About Global Digital Skills Index 2022:

- The Index is based on a survey of over 23,500 workers in 19 countries.
- The index measures global employee sentiments and readiness to acquire the key digital skills needed by businesses today and over the next five years.

Source: ET

Second phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Why in News

- Recently, Pakistan signed a new agreement with China to begin the second phase of the USD 60 billion **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**.

Key Points

About China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):

- The CPEC is a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan.
- CPEC is a part of the Belt and Road Initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative, launched in 2013, aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes.

India's Stand on CPEC: India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Source: Indian Express

ASEAN-India High Level Conference on Renewable Energy

Why in News

- The **ASEAN-India High Level Conference** on Renewable Energy, being organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the Ministry of External Affairs of Government of India on 7-8 February 2022 commenced.

Key Points

- The theme of the conference is “Experience and Innovations for Integrated Renewables Market”.
- The Ministerial session was addressed by Energy Ministers and their senior representatives from the ASEAN member countries.

About the Conference:

- The ASEAN-India High Level Conference will feature 5 technical sessions which would facilitate peer to peer discussions between experts from India and ASEAN on themes of mutual interest.

Facts about Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- **The 10 member countries of ASEAN** are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- **Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia
- **Founded:** 8 August 1967

Source: PIB

Dubai to launch world's first hydrogen-powered flying boat ‘The Jet’

Why in News

- **The Jet**, the world’s first clean-energy, hydrogen-powered flying boat, is set to be launched in Dubai.

Key Points

- Swiss startup THE JET ZeroEmission has signed an agreement with UAE-based Zenith Marine Services and US-based DWYN to manufacture and operate 'The Jet'.
- 'The Jet' features cutting-edge characteristics and technologies, making it capable of flying in silence over the waters at a cruising speed of 40 knots.
- The boat is equipped with two fuel cells and an air conditioner as well as other clean-tech, environmentally friendly technologies that help reduce carbon emissions.
- The boat’s technology will be delivered in Dubai for an inaugural flight, during the next COP28 UAE preparatory meetings, which will be held in November 2023.
- Dubai launched the *Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050* by virtue of which it aims to produce 75 percent of its energy requirements from clean sources by 2050.

Source: TOI

Saudi Arabia organizes first-ever yoga festival

Why in News

- Saudi Arabia has organized the first-ever yoga festival on Bay La Sun Beach near Jeddah, which drew over 1,000 yoga practitioners from throughout the kingdom.
- The event kicked off on 29th January and will continue till 1st February.

Key Points

- The event was organized by the Saudi Yoga Committee, which saw the participation of Saudi yoga teachers from across the Kingdom.
- The Saudi Yoga Committee is a government body that acts like a small federation established by the Saudi Arabia Olympic Committee, Ministry of Sports, to promote yoga in Saudi Arabia on 16th May last year.

Note: The **International Day of Yoga** has been celebrated annually on 21 June since 2015.

Source: newsonair

India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2022 approved at 2nd ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN) meeting

Why in News

- Recently, the 2nd ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN) meeting with India was held.
- Devusinh Chauhan, Minister of State for Communications (MoSC) and Admiral Tin Aung San, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Myanmar co-chaired the meeting.
- The Ministers meeting approved the India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2022.

Key Points

- The Work Plan includes system for combating the use of stolen and counterfeit mobile handsets, WiFi Access network interface for nationwide public internet, the capacity building and knowledge sharing in emerging areas in the field of Information and Communication Technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT), 5G, Advanced Satellite Communication, Cyber Forensics, etc.

ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN):

- The ADGMIN is an annual meeting of Telecom Ministers of 10 ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) countries -Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam and dialogue partner countries - Australia, Canada, China, EU, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia, UK and US.

Source: PIB

Important News: India

Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy, 2022

Why in News

- 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 operationalisation 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

Sustainable Cities India program

Why in News

- 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**'.
- 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.

Key Points

- 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

Union Minister Giriraj Singh launches Ombudsperson App for Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

Why in News

- 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

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme

Why in News

- 24thFebruary, 2022 is the third anniversary of the launch of **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme**.

Key Points

About Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme:

- PM-KISAN is a central sector scheme launched on 24thFebruary, 2019 to supplement financial needs of land holding farmers.
- Financial benefit of Rs 6000/- per year in three equal installments, every four month is transferred into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.
- The scheme was initially meant for small and marginal farmers (SMFs) having landholding upto 2 hectares but scope of the scheme was extended to cover all landholding farmers with effect from 01.06.2019.

Note:

- As on 22ndFebruary, 2022, benefits under PM-KISAN scheme have been provided to about 11.78 Crore farmers and funds amounting to Rs **82 lakh crore** in various installments have been released to the eligible beneficiaries of this scheme across India.

Source: newsonair

ICMR/ DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Why in News

- 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

India, France sign roadmap to enhance bilateral exchanges on blue economy and ocean governance

Why in News

- **India and France** have inked a roadmap to enhance their bilateral exchanges on the **blue economy** and ocean governance.
- The agreement was signed during External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's three-day visit to France which began on February 20 with bilateral talks with his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian.

Key Points

- The roadmap scope will encompass maritime trade, the naval industry, fisheries, marine technology and scientific research, ocean observation, marine biodiversity, marine ecosystem-based management and integrated coastal management, marine eco-tourism, inland waterways, cooperation between competent administrations on civil maritime issues, marine spatial planning as well as international law of the sea and related multilateral negotiations.
- This partnership marks a significant step-forward in India-France cooperation for maritime security.
- They will also enhance their coordination in view of the **fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in 2022** so as to support the initiation of negotiations for a global agreement on marine plastic waste and microplastic.
- **Blue Economy:** According to the World Bank, the blue economy is the "sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem."

Source: The Hindu

Union Minister Giriraj Singh launches Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G) Dashboard

Why in News

- Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh launched the **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G) Dashboard**.

Key Points

- The Dashboard provides End-to-End insights to cater to the analytical and strategic business intelligence needs to cater for the physical and financial progress of the PMAY-G scheme at a glance.

Background:

- To achieve the objective of providing “Housing to All” by the year 2024, the Government of India rolled out the rural housing scheme, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) with effect from 1st April 2016.
- The program envisages the completion of 2.95 crore PMAY-G houses with all basic amenities by the year 2024.
- As on 21st February 2022, a total of 1.73 crores PMAY-G houses have been completed against the allocated cumulative target of 2.62 crore houses.

Source: PIB

Ayush Start-up Challenge

Why in News

- The **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)** in association with **Startup India** has launched the ‘**Ayush Start-up Challenge**’.

Key Points

About ‘Ayush Start-up Challenge’:

- It will encourage start-ups and individuals working on innovations in the field of Ayurveda and alternative healing.
- The winners of ‘Ayush Start-up Challenge’ will receive both a cash prize and incubation support from the AIIA.
- There are three entry categories for participating start-ups – Ayush Food Innovations, Ayush Bio-instrumentation (Hardware solutions) and Ayush IT Solutions (Software solutions).

Note: The Ayush market is currently estimated to be around \$10 bn and it is projected to see a 50 percent increase over the course of the next five years.

Other Schemes Related to AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Sidha and Homeopathy):

- National Ayush Mission
- AYUSH Entrepreneurship Programme
- ACCR Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App
- Ayush Wellness Centers

Source: Indian Express

Union Minister Giriraj Singh releases Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain

Why in News

- Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh released **Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain**.

Key Points

- This includes GIS data for 800,000+ rural facilities as points, 1 Million+ habitations and 25,00,000+ km of rural roads which have been collected and digitised using the GIS platform developed for the PMGSY scheme.
- NRIDA, the nodal implementation agency of the PMGSY scheme signed MoU with 3 renowned GIS Firms ESRI India, MapmyIndia, DataMeet & collaborated with **Gati Shakti** for releasing the Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain.

About Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):

- PMGSY was launched in the year 2000, with an objective to provide all-weather road connectivity to eligible unconnected habitations throughout the nation.
- Since inception, 7.83 lakh Km roads have been sanctioned and 6.90 lakh Km have been constructed with an expenditure of Rs. 2.69 lakh crores.

Gati Shakti is a national master plan and digital platform to plan and execute infrastructure projects in India to reduce logistics costs and enhance infrastructure.

Source: PIB

PM CARES for Children Scheme extended up to 28th February, 2022

Why in News

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has extended the **PM CARES for Children Scheme** till 28thFebruary, 2022.
- Earlier the scheme was valid till 31stDecember, 2021.

Key Points

About PM CARES for Children Scheme:

- The scheme covers all children who have lost: i) Both parents or ii) Surviving parent or iii) legal guardian/adoptive parents/single adoptive parent due to COVID-19 pandemic, starting from 11.03.2020 the date on which WHO has declared and characterized COVID-19 as pandemic till 28.02.2022.
- To be entitled to benefits under this scheme Child should not have completed 18 years of age on the date of death of parents.
- The PM CARES for children scheme inter-alia provides support to these children through convergent approach, gap funding for ensuring education, health, monthly stipend from the age of 18 years, and lump sum amount of Rs. 10 lakhs on attaining 23 years of age.

Source: newsonair

Government approves the continuation of National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS) for a period of five years

Why in News

- Government has approved the continuation of Central Sector **National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS)** over the 15thFinance Commission cycle for a period of five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with financial outlay of Rs. 1827.00 crore with minor modifications in eligibility criteria such as increasing income ceiling from Rs.1.5 lakh per annum to Rs.3.5 lakh per annum and revising the renewal criteria under the scheme.

Key Points

About the scheme:

- The objective of the scheme is to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop-out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage.
- One lakh fresh scholarships of Rs.12,000/- per annum (Rs.1000/- per month) per student are awarded to selected students of class IX every year and their continuation/renewal in classes X to XII for study in State Government, Government-aided and Local body schools under the scheme.
- Scholarships are disbursed directly into the bank accounts of students by electronic transfer through the **Public Financial Management System (PFMS) following DBT mode.**
- This is a continuing scheme and since launch of the scheme in 2008-09, 22.06 lakh scholarships have been sanctioned till 2020-21 involving an expenditure of Rs. 1783.03 crore.

Source: PIB

Centre approves to continue the Umbrella scheme of Border Infrastructure & Management (BIM) from 2021-22 to 2025-26

Why in News

- The Centre has approved the continuation of the Central Sector Umbrella Scheme of **“Border Infrastructure and Management” (BIM)** over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle from 2021-22 to 2025-26, at a cost of Rs.13,020 crore.

Key Points

- The BIM scheme will help in the creation of infrastructure such as construction of border fence, border flood lights, technological solutions, border roads and Border Outposts (BOPs)/Company Operating Bases (COBs) to secure the Indo-Pakistan, Indo-Bangladesh, Indo-China, Indo-Nepal, Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Myanmar borders.

Note:

- India's border with Pakistan is 3,323 km long, including about 775 km of the Line of Control.
- The length of the border is 4,096 km with Bangladesh, 3,488 km with China, 1,751 km with Nepal, 699 km with Bhutan, 1,643 km with Myanmar.

Source: ET

Hurun India Wealth Report 2021

Why in News

- Recently, Hurun Report, the world's largest rich list compiler, released the **Hurun India Wealth Report 2021** (second edition).

Key Points

- According to the Hurun India Wealth Report 2021, the number of dollar-millionaire households in India has increased by 11% to 4,58,000 households compared to last year. These households have a net worth of at least INR 7 crore.
- The number of Indian dollar-millionaire households is estimated to increase by 30% over the next five years to reach 6,00,000 households by 2026.
- With 20,300 millionaires households, **Mumbai** is India's millionaire capital, followed by Delhi and Kolkata with 17,400 and 10,500 millionaire households respectively

About the Hurun Report:

- Hurun Report is a leading research, luxury publishing and events group established in London in 1998 with a presence in India, China, France, the UK, USA, Australia, Japan, Canada and Luxembourg.
- Hurun Report is the largest compiler of the rich list globally.

Source: hurunindia.net

'Meri Policy Mere Hath' - a doorstep distribution drive to be launched to deliver crop insurance policies to farmers

Why in News

- **'Meri Policy Mere Hath'** - a doorstep distribution drive will be launched to deliver crop insurance policies to farmers by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare under the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**.

Key Points

- The campaign aims to ensure all farmers are well aware and equipped with all information on their policies, land records, the process of claim and grievance redressal under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):

- PMFBY has successfully entered its 7th year of implementation with the upcoming Kharif 2022 season, completing 6 years of its implementation since its launch announcement on 18th February 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Sehore, Madhya Pradesh.
- A flagship scheme of the Government of India, PMFBY aims to provide financial support to farmers suffering crop loss/damage arising out of natural calamities.
- Over 36 crore farmer applications have been insured under PMFBY, with over INR 1,07,059 crores of claims have already been paid under the scheme as of 4th February, 2022.

Source: Business Standard

Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022

Why in News

- Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced the notification of the new **Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022**.
- It has been notified of the Guidelines on **Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR)** on plastic packaging under **Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016**.

Key Points

- The guidelines on extended producer responsibility coupled with prohibition of identified **single use plastic** items, which have low utility and high littering potential, with effect from 1st July 2022, are important steps for reducing pollution caused due to littered plastic waste in the country.
- The Guidelines provide a framework to strengthen the circular economy of plastic packaging waste, promote development of new alternatives to plastics and provide further next steps for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging by businesses.

Other Initiatives taken to curb Plastic Waste:

- India Plastics Pact
- Swachh Bharat Mission
- Project REPLAN
- GoLitter Partnerships Project
- Un-Plastic Collective

Note:

- India generates about 3.4 million tonnes of plastic waste annually.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) aims to almost triple its plastic waste management to 100 cities in India by 2024.

Source: The Hindu

Asia's biggest "Gobar-Dhan (Bio-CNG) Plant" in Madhya Pradesh' Indore

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Asia's biggest "**Gobar-Dhan (Bio-CNG) Plant**" in Madhya Pradesh' Indore.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister informed that in the coming two years, Gobar Dhan Bio CNG plants will be established in 75 big Municipal bodies.
- This campaign will go a long way in making Indian cities clean, pollution free and in the direction of clean energy.

Background:

- The municipal solid waste based Gobar-Dhan plant is in line with PM Modi's vision of creating "garbage-free cities" under the **Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0**.
- The Mission is being implemented under the overarching principles of "waste to wealth", and "circular economy" for maximising resource recovery – both of which are exemplified in the Indore Bio-CNG plant.

About GOBAR-DHAN Scheme:

- The Ministry for Drinking Water and Sanitation on April 30, 2018 launched the **GOBAR - DHAN (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Fund) Scheme**.
- Under this scheme, solid waste of dung and fields will be changed into compost and fuels such as biogas and bio-CNG.

Note: Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the Nation two additional railway lines connecting Thane and Diva.

Source: PIB

100 districts in the country become 'Har Ghar Jal' under Jal Jeevan Mission

Why in News

- After touching the milestone of providing tap water supply to more than 9 Crore homes on 16th February, 2022, Jal Jeevan Mission achieved another milestone of providing tap water to every home of 100 districts in the country.
- **Chamba**, an Aspirational District of Himachal Pradesh has become the 100th 'Har Ghar Jal' District.
- Chamba is the fifth aspirational district to become 'Har Ghar Jal'.

Key Points

About Jal Jeevan Mission:

- It was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15th August 2019, with the aim to provide an assured tap water supply to every rural home by 2024.
- At the announcement of the Mission on 15th August 2019, out of 19.27 Crore households only 3.23 Crore (17%) households in India had tap water connections.

Related Indian Government Initiatives:

- National Water Mission
- Jal Kranti Abhiyan
- National Rural Drinking Water Programme
- Jal Shakti Abhiyan
- Atal Bhujal Yojana
- NITI Aayog Composite Water Management Index

Source: PIB

Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)

Why in News

- The Centre has approved the implementation of the **Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) project** by the **Ministry of Home Affairs** at a total cost of Rs.3,375 crore during the period from 2022-23 to 2025-26.

Key Points

- National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) will be responsible for the implementation of the ICJS project in association with National Informatics Center (NIC).

About Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS):

- It is a national platform for enabling integration of the main IT system used for delivery of Criminal Justice in the country.
- In Phase-I of the ICJS project, individual IT systems have been implemented and stabilized; also search of records have been enabled on these systems.
- Under Phase-II, the system is being built on the principle of 'one data one entry' whereby data is entered only once in one pillar and the same is then available in all other pillars without the need to re-enter the data in each pillar.

About National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB):

- It is an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analysing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws.
- NCRB is headquartered in New Delhi and is part of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
- **Founded:** 11 March 1986

Note: NCRB brings out the annual comprehensive statistics of crime across the country ('Crime in India' report).

Source: Indian Express

Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) Scheme

Why in News

- The Government has approved the **scheme of Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)** for continuation till 31.03.2026 or till further review, whichever is earlier.
- The proposal entails an expenditure of Rs. 12929.16 crore out of which Central Share is Rs. 8120.97 crores and the State Share is of Rs. 4808.19 crores.

Key Points

About Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA):

- RUSA, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) is an overarching scheme, operating in mission mode for funding the state government universities and colleges to achieve the aims of equity, access and excellence.
- Launch year: 2013
- New phase of RUSA targets to reach out the unserved, underserved areas; remote/rural areas; difficult geographies; LWE areas; NER; aspirational districts, tier-2 cities, areas with low GER etc., and to benefit the most disadvantaged areas and SEDGs.
- Under the new phase of the scheme, State Governments will be supported for Gender inclusion, Equity Initiatives, ICT, Enhancing employability through vocationalisation & skill upgradation.

Source: PIB

"Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development" (REWARD) Project

Why in News

- The **Government of India, State Governments of Karnataka and Odisha, and the World Bank** have signed loan agreements of 115 million US dollars for the implementation of **"Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development" (REWARD) Project.**

Key Points

- It will help national and state institutions adopt improved watershed management practices to help increase farmers' resilience to climate change, promote higher productivity and better incomes.
- The Government of India has committed to restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 and doubling farmers' income by 2023.
- India has one of the largest watershed management programs in the world.

Source: PIB

Union Cabinet approves setting up of G20 Secretariat for India's Presidency

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the setting up of a G20 Secretariat and its reporting structures.
- It will be responsible for implementation of overall policy decisions and arrangements needed for steering India's forthcoming G20 Presidency.

Key Points

- India will hold the Presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023, culminating with the G20 Summit in India in 2023.

About the G20:

- The G20 is the international forum that brings together the world's major economies.
- Its members account for more than 80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade and 60% of the population of the planet.
- The G20 is made up of **19 countries and the European Union**.
- The **19 countries** are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the UK, and the US.

Source: TOI

India and Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Why in News

- Recently, **India lashed out at the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** for being "communal minded" and "hijacked by vested interests" after the grouping called on the UN Human Rights Council to take "necessary measures" on the issue of Muslim girl students being told not to wear the hijab in Karnataka schools.

Key Points

- The OIC also urged India to "ensure the safety, security and well being of the Muslim community while protecting their way of life".
- India's response to the OIC statement was that India is a democracy, and issues within the country are resolved "in accordance with our Constitutional framework and mechanism, as well as democratic ethos and polity.

About Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

- It is the world's second largest multilateral body after the UN.
- It counts 57 members, all of which are Islamic countries or Muslim majority members.
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

India & OIC:

- As a country with the world's second largest Muslim community, India had been invited to the founding conference at Rabat in 1969, but was humiliatingly ejected at Pakistan's behest.
- But India stayed away because of a multiplicity of reasons, not least of which was that as a secular country, it did not want to join an organisation founded on religion.
- In 2019, India made its maiden appearance at the OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting, as a "guest of honour".

Source: Indian Express

Capacity Development Scheme

Why in News

- The Cabinet has approved the continuation of the **Capacity Development (CD) Scheme** till 31.03.2026 or till further review, whichever is earlier, subject to the adherence to Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) recommendations and the financial ceilings etc.
- The outlay approved for the continuation of the Scheme during 15th Finance Commission cycle is ₹3179 crore.

Key Points

- The CD Scheme is an Ongoing Central Sector Scheme of the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)** with an overall objective to augment infrastructural, technical as well as manpower resources for enabling availability of credible and timely official statistics.
- The Scheme comprises Capacity Development (Main) Scheme and two sub schemes viz. Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS) and Economic Census (EC).
- **Some of the major statistical products of the Ministry** such as Gross Value Added (GVA), Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE), Gross Fixed Capital Formation, Change In Stock (CIS), Index of Industrial Production (IIP), Consumer Price Index (CPI), Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR), Formal Sector Employment Statistics, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Indicator Framework etc., form inevitable part of the economic and social indices utilized for monitoring the Indian economy.

Source: PIB

Ministry of Power notifies Green Hydrogen/ Green Ammonia Policy

Why in News

- The Ministry of Power notified Green Hydrogen/ Green Ammonia Policy.

Key Points

About National Hydrogen Mission:

- The Prime Minister launched the National Hydrogen Mission on India's 75th Independence Day (i.e. 15th August, 2021).
- The Mission aims to aid the government in meeting its climate targets and making India a green hydrogen hub.
- This will help in meeting the target of production of 5 million tonnes of Green hydrogen by 2030 and the related development of renewable energy capacity.
- **Hydrogen and Ammonia** are envisaged to be the future fuels to replace fossil fuels, production of these fuels by using power from renewable energy, termed as green hydrogen and green ammonia, is one of the major requirements towards environmentally sustainable energy security of the nation.
- This will reduce dependence on fossil fuel and also reduce crude oil imports.

Source: Business Standard

Govt's new rules for kids on two-wheelers

Why in News

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has amended **Rule 138 of Central Motor Vehicles Rules (CMVR), 1989** and has prescribed norms related to safety measures for children below four years of age, riding or being carried on a motor cycle.

Key Points

- This has been notified under Section 129 of the Motor Vehicles Act, which mandates that the Central Government may, by rules, provide for measures for the safety of children below four years of age, riding or being carried on a motor cycle.
- Further, it specifies use of a safety harness and crash helmet.
- It also restricts the speed of such motor cycles to 40 kmph.
- These rules will come into force after one year from the date of publication of the **Central Motor Vehicles (Second Amendment) Rules, 2022.**

Source: Business Standard

Government approves New India Literacy Programme, a new scheme of Adult Education for FYs 2022-27

Why in News

- Government approved a new scheme “**New India Literacy Programme** for the period FYs 2022-2027 to cover all the aspects of Adult Education to align with National Education Policy 2020 and Budget Announcements 2021-22.
- **Adult Education is now ‘Education for All’ in the country.**

Key Points

- The objective of the scheme is to impart not only foundational literacy and numeracy but also to cover other components which are necessary for a citizen of the 21st century such as critical life skills; vocational skills development; basic education; and continuing education.
- The scheme will cover non-literates of the age of 15 years and above in all state/UTs in the country.
- The target for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for FYs 2022-27 is 5 (five) crore learners @ 1.00 crore per year by using “Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS)” in collaboration with National Informatics Centre, NCERT and NIOS.
- The estimated total outlay of “New India Literacy Programme” is Rs.1037.90 crore which includes Central share of Rs.700 crore and State share of Rs.337.90 crore respectively for the FYs 2022 -27.

Adult Education is now ‘Education for All’ in the country:

- As a progressive step, it has also been decided that from now onwards that the term “**Education For All**” will be used in place of “**Adult Education**” by the Ministry in view of the fact that the terminology “Adult Education” is not incorporating appropriately all non-literates of 15 years and above age group.
- As per Census 2011, the absolute number of non-literates of the country in 15 years and above age group is 25.76 crore (Male 9.08 crore, Female 16.68 crore).
- In consideration of the progress of persons certified as literates being to the tune of 7.64 crore under the **Saakshar Bharat programme** implemented during 2009-10 to 2017-18, it is estimated that currently around 18.12 crore adults are still non-literate in India.

Source: PIB

Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)

Why in News

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar launches the **Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)** for the welfare of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Communities.

Key Points

About De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Communities:

- The De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes are the most neglected, marginalized and economically and socially deprived communities.
- Most of them have been living a life of destitution for generations and still continue to do so with an uncertain and gloomy future.
- De-notified, Nomadic and Semi- nomadic Tribes somehow escaped the attention of developmental framework and thus are deprived of the support unlike Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- Accordingly, the first commission was set up in October 2003 during the first NDA Government to look into the problems of these communities.
- The Renke Commission was set up in 2008.
- The National Commission was constituted in 2015 under the chairmanship of Bhiku Ramji Idate for De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes.
- Based on the recommendation of this commission, the Government of India set up the Development and Welfare Board for DNTs, SNTs & NTs (DWBDNCs) in 2019.

Source: PIB

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy organizes “New Frontiers: A Programme on Renewable Energy”

Why in News

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)’s programme **“New Frontiers: A programme on Renewable Energy”** to celebrate the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav commenced with the inaugural event “India’s Leadership in Energy Transition” at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Key Points

- The plenary address was delivered by Bhagwanth Khuba, Minister of State for New and Renewable Energy & Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- Shri Khuba talked about India’s energy transition commitments and achievements; the citizen-centric nature of the transition and Government of India’s energy compacts submitted to the UN for the High Level Dialogue on Energy 2021.
- In the past 7 years, India has increased its installed capacity of 395,000 MW whereas our peak demand is 200,000 MW.
- India now has an integrated national grid.
- Under the PLI scheme for high efficiency solar modules, the Finance Ministry will grant an additional Rs 19,500 crore.
- Diesel pumps will be replaced by solar pumps in the agricultural sector by 2024.

About Energy Compacts:

- Energy Compacts are voluntary commitments of action, with specific targets and timelines to drive the progress on the achievement of SDG7, to accelerate action for clean, affordable energy for all.

- Submission of energy compacts is open to all relevant stakeholders including member states and non-state actors, such as companies, regional/local governments, NGOs and others.

Source: PIB

PM Modi delivers inaugural address at TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit

Why in News

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address at **The Energy and Resources Institute's (TERI) World Sustainable Development Summit** 16th February, 2022.

Key Points

- World Sustainable Development Summit is TERI's annual flagship event.
- The **theme** for this year's Summit is 'Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring a Sustainable and Equitable Future'.
- The Summit will discuss a wide range of issues including climate change, sustainable production, energy transitions, global commons and resource security.
- The Prime Minister pointed out that very little has been done despite lot of talk over the last 50 years, since the 1972 Stockholm Conference.

Related India's Initiates:

- Ujjwala Yojana
- PM-KUSUM scheme
- LED bulbs distribution scheme
- National Hydrogen Mission
- "One Sun, One World, One Grid"

Note: With 2.4% of the world's land area, India accounts for nearly 8% of the world's species.

Source: PIB

Integration with Beneficiary Database under Different Schemes aimed at Enrichment of Database for Implementation of AB PM-JAY

Why in News

- **National Health Authority (NHA)** is mandated with the implementation of **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)**.

Key Points

- **AB PM-JAY** provides health assurance of up to Rs. 5 Lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care-related hospitalizations.
- The 10.74 Crore beneficiary families under AB PM-JAY have been identified from the **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) of 2011** basis 6 deprivation and 11 occupational criteria across rural and urban areas, respectively.
- **NHA** has collaborated with various ministries implementing welfare schemes to strengthen the different aspects of scheme implementation including inter alia beneficiary awareness campaigns, beneficiary database (SECC 2011) enrichment etc.
- The majority of AB PM-JAY beneficiaries from SECC 2011 are also eligible for benefits under the **National Food Security Portal (NFSA)**.

About National Health Authority (NHA):

- NHA is responsible for implementing India's flagship public health insurance/assurance scheme Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- NHA has been set-up to implement the PM-JAY at the national level.
- In the States, SHAs or State Health Agencies in the form of a society/trust have been set up with full operational autonomy over the implementation of this scheme including extending the coverage to non SECC beneficiaries.
- It has been constituted as an autonomous entity under the Society Registration Act, 1860.

Source: PIB

Centre reduces agri-cess for Crude Palm Oil (CPO)

Why in News

- The Government of India has reduced the agri-cess for Crude Palm Oil (CPO) from 7.5% to 5%.

Key Points

- After reduction of the agri-cess, the import tax gap between CPO and Refined Palm Oil has increased to 8.25%.
- Another pre-emptive measure taken by the Government to check the prices of edible oils is to extend the current basic rate of import duty of zero percent on Crude Palm Oil, Crude Soyabean oil and Crude Sunflower Oil upto 30th September, 2022.
- The above steps will augment the earlier measure taken by the Government viz. the stock limit order dated 3rd February, 2022 vide which the Government had specified the stock limit quantities on edible oils and oilseeds for a period upto 30th June, 2022 under the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955**.

Note: In August, 2021, the government has announced the **National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) scheme** for self-reliance in edible oil.

About Agri Cess:

- Cess is a kind of special-purpose tax which is levied over and above basic tax rates.
- The Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) is a tax that the government imposes on the commercial production of agricultural produce.

Source: PIB

India-Australia Interim Trade Agreement and FTA

Why in News

- India and Australia have announced that they are set to conclude an **Interim Trade Agreement** in March 2022 and a **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)** 12-18 months thereafter.

Key Points

- An interim or early harvest trade agreement is used to liberalise tariffs on the trade of certain goods between two countries or trading blocs before a comprehensive **FTA (Free Trade Agreement)** is concluded.
- Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at about \$12.5 billion in FY21 and has already surpassed \$17.7 billion in the first 10 months of FY22.
- India and Australia have also signed a MoU to boost tourism between the two countries.

How has the Quad impacted trade relation between India and Australia?

- India and Australia are both members of the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) along with the US and Japan.
- Australia noted that it already had FTAs with both the US and Japan and that all four countries could start building a framework for economic cooperation within the countries of the Quad after they announced a deal with India.

What other Free Trade Agreements is India currently negotiating?

- India is currently in the process of negotiating FTAs with the UAE, **the UK**, Canada, the EU and Israel, besides Australia.
- India is also looking to complete an early harvest agreement with the UAE and the UK in the first half of 2022.

Note: Earlier, India, Japan and Australia have formally launched the **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)**.

Source: Indian Express

Govt bans 54 Chinese apps over security threat concerns

Why in News

- The Government of India is set to issue a ban on 54 Chinese applications that pose a threat to India's security.

Key Points

- The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology said it had received a request from the ministry of home affairs (MHA) for blocking the 54 apps under the emergency provision envisaged in **Section 69(A) of the IT Act**.
- The Centre had blocked 59 apps on June 29, 2020, followed by a ban on 47 related/cloning apps on August 10, 2020. Thereafter, 118 apps were blocked on September 1, 2020, and another 43 apps on November 19, the same year.

Source: HT

Chairman of Supreme Court panel on Char Dham project Ravi Chopra resigns

Why in News

Environmentalist and Chairman of the Supreme Court-appointed High Powered Committee (HPC) to oversee the execution of the marquee Char Dham road-widening project Ravi Chopra has resigned from his post, stating the panel to protect the Himalayas "has been shattered."

Key Points

Mr. Chopra and some members of the HPC had previously argued against such widening on the grounds that it was detrimental to the Himalayan terrain and in violation of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways stated position on the appropriate road width. The appropriate road width for the two-lane highway has been a controversial aspect. The HPC itself saw a division, with one set of members saying it would only be 5.5 m wide and another plumping for a higher road width.

The SC ruled in September that a 5.5 m width be enforced as it was in conformity with a 2018 circular by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) for mountain roads.

Note:

The strategic 900-km-long Char Dham project worth ₹12,000 crore aims to provide all-weather connectivity to four holy towns – Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath – in Uttarakhand.

Source: The Hindu

Japanese Industrial Townships (JITs) in India

Why in News

A Joint Meeting was held between India (Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Japan (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) for annual review of progress under **Japanese Industrial Townships (JITs) in India**.

It is also worth noting that this year marks the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan.

The two countries had established diplomatic relations in April 1952.

Key Points

It may be noted that Japan Industrial Townships (JITs) were set up pursuant to the “Action Agenda for the India-Japan Investment and Trade Promotion and Asia-Pacific Economic Integration” signed between METI, Government of Japan and DPIIT, Government of India in April 2015 to take steps to develop “Japan Industrial Townships” in India especially in Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) and Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) regions in order to facilitate Japanese investment to India.

Japan is the only country that has dedicated country-focused industrial townships across India.

Currently there are 114 Japanese companies across the JITs.

As the 5th largest investor, Japan has contributed over USD 36.2 Billion in cumulative investments since 2000, especially in key sectors such as automobiles, Electronics System Design & Manufacturing (ESDM), Medical Devices, Consumer goods, Textiles, Food processing and Chemicals.

Facts about Japan:

Capital: Tokyo

Currency: Japanese yen

Prime Minister: Fumio Kishida

Source: PIB

ISRO successfully launches earth observation satellite EOS-04 along with two other satellites

Why in News

ISRO successfully launched **earth observation satellite EOS-04** along with two other satellites.

Key Points

India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C52 successfully injected Earth Observation Satellite EOS-04, into an intended sun synchronous polar orbit of 529 km altitude from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR, Sriharikota.

The satellite EOS-04 is a Radar Imaging Satellite designed to provide high-quality images under all weather conditions for applications such as Agriculture, Forestry & Plantations, Soil Moisture & Hydrology and Flood mapping.

PSLV C52 also placed two small satellites. One of them is a student satellite INSPIRESat-1 developed by Indian Institute of Space Science & Technology in association with Laboratory of Atmospheric & Space Physics at the University of Colorado. Another is a technology demonstrator satellite INS-2TD from ISRO, which is a precursor to India-Bhutan Joint Satellite INS-2B.

Note:

This was the first launch of PSLV since the failure of the EOS-03 mission launched last year. The first launch of 2022 has set in motion ISRO's plans to conduct 18 other missions this year, including the high profile launch of Chandrayaan-3 to the Moon and the much-awaited uncrewed launch of the country's Gaganyaan mission.

Source: Indian Express

"SMILE" scheme

Why in News

Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launched the Central Sector scheme "**SMILE: Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**".

Key Points

The two sub-schemes of SMILE - '*Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons*' and '**Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of engaged in the act of Begging**' - provide comprehensive welfare and rehabilitation measures to the Transgender community and the people engaged in the act of begging.

The Ministry has allocated Rs. 365 Crore for the scheme from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

About 'Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons':

The Sub-scheme - '*Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons*'- includes various components.

It provides **Scholarships for Transgender Students** studying in IX and till post-graduation to enable them to complete their education.

It has provisions for **Skill Development and Livelihood** under the PM-DAKSH scheme.

Through **Composite Medical Health** it provides a comprehensive package in convergence with PM-JAY supporting Gender-Reaffirmation surgeries through selected hospitals.

The **Housing facility in the form of 'Garima Greh'** ensures food, clothing, recreational facilities, skill development opportunities, recreational activities and medical support etc. to the Transgender community and the people engaged in the act of begging.

The **Provision of Transgender Protection Cell** in each state will monitor cases of offences and to ensure timely registration, investigation and prosecution of offences.

About 'Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of engaged in the act of Begging':

The sub-scheme - '*Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging*' - will focus on **Survey and identification, Mobilisation, Rescue/ Shelter Home and Comprehensive resettlement**.

Besides, pilot projects have been initiated on Comprehensive Rehabilitation in ten cities namely Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Indore, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna and Ahmedabad.

Source: PIB

AIM, NITI Aayog & UNDP India launch Community Innovator Fellowship

Why in News

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog in collaboration with **UNDP, India** launched the **Community Innovator Fellowship (CIF)**.

Key Points

About Community Innovator Fellowship (CIF):

The fellowship is developed as a pre-incubation model which will provide youth with an opportunity to establish their social enterprise focusing on **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)** based solutions for solving community issues.

This is going to be a one-year-long intensive fellowship program which has been designed for an aspiring community innovator irrespective of their socio-economic background.

During the course of this fellowship, each fellow will be hosted at one of the AIM's Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs) and shall acquire SDG awareness, entrepreneurial skills and life skills while they are working on their idea.

About Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs):

ACICs have been established with a focus to develop the start-up and innovation ecosystem in the underserved regions of the country.

Currently, there are 12 ACICs across 9 states in the country and the target is to establish 50 such centres in the country.

Source: PIB

Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF)

Why in News

The Central Government has approved 26,275 crore rupees central financial outlay from 2021-22 to 2025-26 for **Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF)**.

Key Points

The umbrella scheme of Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) comprises all relevant sub-schemes that contribute to modernization and improvement.

Provision has been made under the Scheme for internal security, law and order, adoption of modern technology by Police, assisting States for narcotics control and strengthening the criminal justice system by developing a robust forensic set-up in the country.

Salient Features of the scheme:

The Scheme for modernization of State police forces has a Central outlay of Rs.4,846 crore. A central Scheme for Modernisation of Forensic Capacities with outlay of Rs.2,080.50 crore has been approved.

Central outlay of Rs.18,839 crore has been earmarked for security related expenditure for the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir, insurgency affected North Eastern States and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas.

Central sector scheme of 'Assistance to States & Union Territories for Narcotics Control with outlay of Rs.50 crore has been continued.

Source: TOI

Coastal Vulnerability Index prepared by INCOIS

Why in News

- **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)** has carried out coastal vulnerability assessment for the entire Indian coast at state level to bring out an Atlas comprising 156 maps on 1:1,00,000 scales to prepare a **Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI)**.

Key Points

About Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI):

- The maps determine the coastal risks due to future sea-level rise based on the physical and geological parameters for the Indian coast, the CVI uses the relative risk that physical changes will occur as sea-level rises are quantified based on

parameters like: tidal range; wave height; coastal slope; coastal elevation; shoreline change rate; geomorphology; and historical rate of relative sea-level change.

- Coastal vulnerability assessments can be useful information for coastal disaster management and building resilient coastal communities.

About Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS):

- INCOIS, which is an autonomous body under Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), issues alerts on Potential Fishing Zone, Ocean State Forecast, Tsunami Early Warning, Storm Surge Early Warning, High Wave Alerts, etc., through dedicated ocean modeling, observations, computation facilities and the marine data center.

Note: India has a coastline of 7516.6 Km i.e. 6100 km of mainland coastline plus coastline of 1197 km Indian islands touching 13 States and Union Territories (UTs).

Source: The Hindu

'Accelerate Vigyan' Scheme

Why in News

- **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**, a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament, has invited applications under 'ABHYAAS', a program of 'Accelerate Vigyan' Scheme, for summer season.
- In a recent notification, the call for applications under components of "KAARYASHALA" and "VRITIKA" for the summer season (May 2022-July 2022) is extended till 28 February 2022.

Key Points

About "Accelerate Vigyan" (AV) Scheme:

- "Accelerate Vigyan" (AV) strives to provide a big push to high-end scientific research and prepare a scientific workforce, which can venture into research careers and a knowledge-based economy.
- AV aims to expand the research base in the country, with three broad goals — consolidation / aggregation of all scientific training programs, initiating high-end orientation workshops and creating opportunities for training and skill internships.

About 'ABHYAAS':

- 'ABHYAAS', a program of AV scheme, is an attempt to boost research and development in the country by enabling and grooming potential postgraduate / PhD students by developing dedicated research skills in selected areas / disciplines / fields through its two components — high-end workshops ("KAARYASHALA") and Training and Skill Internship ("VRITIKA").
- This is especially important for researchers with limited opportunities to access such learning capacities / facilities / infrastructure.

Source: DTE

Satellites launched by ISRO

Why in News

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh said in the Rajya Sabha, ISRO has launched a total of 129 satellites of Indian Origin and 342 foreign satellites belonging to 36 countries of which nearly 39 satellites are commercial satellites and rest are nano-satellites since 1975.

Key Points

- India has a total of 53 operational satellites in space. 21 of these are communication satellites, 8 are Navigation satellites, 21 are Earth Observation Satellites and 3 are Science Satellites.
- The satellite enabled data and services are being used for the benefit of various sectors of the country.
- These include Television broadcasting, Direct-to-Home, ATM, Mobile communication, tele-education, tele-medicine and advisories on weather, pest infestation, agro-meteorology and potential fishing zones.
- Satellite data is also used for crop production estimation, crop intensification, and agricultural drought assessment, wasteland inventory, identifying ground water prospect zones, inland aquaculture suitability and disaster risk reduction.

About ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation): It is the national space agency of India. It operates under the Department of Space.

- **Founded:** 15 August 1969
- **Headquarters:** Bengaluru
- **Chairman:** S. Somanath

Source: PIB

PMKSY scheme extended till March 2026 with Rs 4,600 crore outlay

Why in News

- The '**Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)**' has been extended for a period of 2021-22 to 2025-26 with an allocation of Rs 4,600 crore.

Key Points

About 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)':

- PMKSY is a comprehensive package which will lead to creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet.
- The scheme will boost the growth of the food processing sector but also help in providing better prices to farmers and creating huge employment opportunities.
- In May 2017, the Centre had launched SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) with an allocation of Rs 6,000 crore.
- The scheme was renamed as PMKSY in August 2017.
- PMKSY is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes of the ministry like Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation / Expansion of Food Process.

Source: ET

Nai Roshni Scheme

Why in News

- Recently, Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has informed the Rajya Sabha that the Government has sanctioned Rs 26 crore under the **Nai Roshni scheme** during the last three year i.e. 2018-19 to 2020-21 through which around one Lakh women have been trained.

Key Points

About Nai Roshni scheme:

- Nai Roshni scheme is a Central Sector Scheme for women belonging to minority community in the age group of 18 to 65 years.
- The scheme aims to empower and enhance confidence in women by providing knowledge, tools, and techniques for the Leadership Development of Women.
- It was started in 2012-13.
- The training programme covers areas related to programmes for women, health and hygiene, legal rights of women, financial literacy, digital literacy, Swachh Bharat, Life Skills, and advocacy for social and behavioural changes, etc.

Other schemes related to Minority Women:

- Begum Hazrat Mahal Girls scholarships
- Garib Nawaz Employment Scheme
- Seekho aur Kamao
- Usttad (Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development)
- Nai Manzil

Source: PIB

AIM, NITI Aayog, and USAID collaborates under SAMRIDH initiative

Why in News

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)** announced a new partnership under the **Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Healthcare (SAMRIDH) initiative.**

Key Points

- The partnership will improve access to affordable and quality healthcare for vulnerable populations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and rural and tribal regions.
- It will enhance SAMRIDH's efforts to reach vulnerable populations, leveraging AIM's expertise in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- In 2020, USAID, IPE Global, and stakeholders from the Indian government, academia, and the private sector developed the innovative SAMRIDH blended finance facility to combine public and philanthropic funds with commercial capital to create and rapidly scale market-based health solutions.

Source: newsonair

Centre's proposal for solar tariffs

Why in News

- The centre is set to come up with rules to pool solar tariffs and is also aiming to increase bundling of renewable energy in existing thermal Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to boost the procurement of renewable energy.
- The government is aiming to boost installed renewable energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030.

Key Points

- Solar tariffs have fallen consistently over the past decade to a low of under Rs 2 per unit (1 unit = 1 kWh) in December 2020 due to the falling price of solar panels and lower financing cost.
- The trend of lower solar tariffs has led to many players waiting on tariffs to fall further instead of entering into long term power procurement agreements.

- The Centre is encouraging bundling of renewable energy with thermal power under existing PPAs.
- The power ministry, in November 2021, permitted thermal generation companies to supply power to customers from their renewable energy projects under the existing PPAs for coal-based electricity, with gains from the bundling of renewable energy to be shared between generators and discoms on a 50:50 basis.
- The Centre is targeting bundling of 10,000 Megawatt of renewable energy with fossil fuel based power over the next 4-5 years.

Current state of India's Solar Sector:

- India has the 4th largest wind power capacity in the world.
- The country's installed Renewable Energy capacity stands at 150.54 GW as on 30th November, 2021 while its nuclear energy based installed electricity capacity stands at 6.78 GW.

Related Initiatives:

- International Solar Alliance
- Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)
- One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG)
- National Solar Mission
- National Offshore Wind Energy Policy
- Roof Top Solar programme Phase-II
- Hydrogen Based Fuel Cells Vehicles
- National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2018

Source: Indian Express

National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala”

Why in News

- Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23 announced **National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala”**.

Key Points

About “Parvatmala” scheme:

- The scheme will be taken up on PPP mode, which will be a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.
- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.
- This may also cover congested urban areas, where conventional mass transit system is not feasible.
- The Finance Minister announced that contracts for 8 ropeway projects for a length of 60 km would be awarded in 2022-23.
- The scheme is being presently started in regions like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states.

Note:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) has so far been responsible for development of Highways and regulating the road transport sector across the country.
- However, in February 2021, the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended, which enables the Ministry to also look after the development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions.

MoU with Uttarakhand:

- MORTH has initiated a study carried out by M/s McKinsey & Co. for Ropeway development in the country.
- The study suggested that MORTH may take National Ropeway Development Programme named “Parvatmala”, similar to the “Bharatmala” programme.
- An MoU has been signed with Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB), Govt. of Uttarakhand, for development of Ropeways in the State.

Source: PIB

Powerthon-2022

Why in News

- Union Minister for Power and MNRE R K Singh launched **Powerthon-2022**, a hackathon competition under RDSS to find technology driven solutions to solve the complex problems in power distribution and to ensure quality and reliable power supply.

Key Points

- Powerthon-2022 is being launched in line with the aim of **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)** introduced by the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- RDSS is a Reform-based and Result-linked Scheme introduced by the Ministry of Power and the key objectives of RDSS are Reducing AT&C losses to 12-15%, eliminating the ACOS-ARR gap by 2024-25 and improving the quality & reliability of the power supply to build a robust power sector which can amplify the development opportunities in the nation’s quest for a thriving economy.
- **Startup India**, the flagship initiative of the Government of India, intended to catalyse startup culture and build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in India is also supporting in wide publicity of **Powerthon-2022**.

Other Schemes related to the Power Sector:

- Integrated Power Development Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya)
- Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana
- GARV (Grameen Vidyutikaran) App
- Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY)

Source: PIB

“India Telecom 2022”

Why in News

- Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister of Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Railway, inaugurated **‘India Telecom 2022’** - an Exclusive International Business Expo.

Key Points

- The event is being organised by Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) from February 8th to 10th, 2022 under Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI) of Department of Commerce, Government of India and with support of Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of External Affairs and Indian missions in different countries.

- Qualified buyers from more than 45 countries are attending the event. Apart from the conference, 40+ Indian telecom companies are showcasing their products and capabilities at the exhibition.
- Event aims to provide opportunities to the Indian telecom stakeholders to meet qualified overseas buyers

Source: PIB

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launches Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0

Why in News

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched **Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0**.
- He also launched the IMI 4.0 portal and released the “Operational Guidelines for IMI 4.0”, “Strengthening Immunization in Urban Areas-A framework for Action” and a handbook for “Mahila Arogya Samiti on Urban Immunization” and awareness material/IEC package developed as part of the campaign.

Key Points

About Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0:

- IMI 4.0 will have three rounds and will be conducted in 416 districts (including 75 districts identified for Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav) across 33 States/UTs in the country.
- These districts have been identified based on vaccination coverage as per the latest **National Family Health Survey-5 report**, Health Management Information System (HMIS) data and burden of vaccine preventable diseases.
- The first round will start from 7th February 2022 onwards, the second will be from 7th March 2022, and the third round will be from 4th April 2022.

About Mission Indradhanush:

- With the aim to increase the Full Immunisation Coverage, Prime Minister launched Mission Indradhanush in December 2014 to cover the partially and unvaccinated pregnant women and children in pockets of low immunization coverage, high-risk and hard-to-reach areas and protect them from vaccine preventable diseases.
- Under Mission Indradhanush, all vaccines under Universal Immunization Program (UIP) are provided as per National Immunization Schedule.
- Mission Indradhanush was also identified as one of the flagship schemes under **Gram Swaraj Abhiyan** (16,850 villages across 541 districts) and **Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyan** (48,929 villages across 112 aspirational districts).
- Till date, ten phases of Mission Indradhanush have been completed covering 701 districts across the country.

Note: As of April 2021, during the various phases of Mission Indradhanush, a total of 3.86 crore children and 96.8 lakh pregnant women have been vaccinated.

Source: PIB

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw flags off NITI Aayog’s Fintech Open Summit

Why in News

- In an effort to showcase the importance of the fintech industry, NITI Aayog, in collaboration with PhonePe, AWS and EY, has organized a three-week-long virtual **summit, ‘Fintech Open’**, from 7–28 February.

- The summit was inaugurated by Union Minister for Railways, Communications, and Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw.

Key Points

- A first-of-its-kind initiative, Fintech Open will bring together regulators, fintech professionals and enthusiasts, industry leaders, the start-up community, and developers to collaborate, exchange ideas and innovate.
- An open platform is created using public investment, wherein numerous private entrepreneurs, start-ups and developers can join to create new solutions.
- A key highlight of the summit will be India's biggest fintech hackathon ever, which will provide an opportunity to individual developers and the start-up community to present breakthrough ideas with the potential to solve real-world problems.

Note: Currently, 270 banks are connected with the UPI and many entrepreneurs and start-ups have provided solutions that have helped increase the country's fintech adoption rate—which is the highest globally at 87%.'

Source: PIB

PM Modi dedicates to the nation 216-feet tall 'Statue of Equality' commemorating Sri Ramanujacharya

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the '**Statue of Equality**' in Hyderabad.

Key Points

- The 216-feet tall Statue of Equality commemorates the **11th century Bhakti Saint Sri Ramanujacharya**, who promoted the idea of equality in all aspects of living including faith, caste and creed.
- The Statue is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals: gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc and is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting position, in the world.
- It is mounted on a 54-ft high base building, named 'Bhadra Vedi', has floors devoted for a Vedic digital library and research centre, ancient Indian texts, a theatre, an educational gallery detailing many works of Sri Ramanujacharya.
- The inauguration of the Statue of Equality is a part of the 12-day Sri Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, the ongoing 1000th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramanujacharya.

Note:

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi also visited the **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)** campus in Patancheru, Hyderabad and kickstarted the 50th Anniversary celebrations of ICRISAT.
- The Prime Minister inaugurated ICRISAT's Climate Change Research Facility on Plant Protection and ICRISAT's Rapid Generation Advancement Facility.
- The Prime Minister also unveiled a specially designed logo of ICRISAT and launched a commemorative stamp issued on the occasion.

Source: PIB

Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) Scheme

Why in News

- The Government has decided to continue the Scheme of “**Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram**” (RYSK) over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26) at an outlay of Rs 2,710.65 Crore.

Key Points

About Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) Scheme:

- The RYSK Scheme is the flagship Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.
- The Scheme beneficiaries are the youth in the age-group of 15-29 years, in line with the definition of ‘youth’ in the National Youth Policy, 2014.
- In case of programme components specifically meant for the adolescents, the beneficiaries are in the age-group of 10-19 years.
- **The programmes of RYSK Scheme are implemented through seven sub-schemes: -**
 - (i) Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)
 - (ii) National Youth Corps (NYC)
 - (iii) National Programme for Youth & Adolescent Development (NPYAD)
 - (iv) International Cooperation
 - (v) Youth Hostels (YH)
 - (vi) Assistance to Scouting & Guiding Organizations
 - (vii) National Young Leaders Programme (NYLP)

Note:

- The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its “**Waste to Wealth**” Mission announced the “**Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship 2022**” to empower young innovators who are engaged in community work of waste management, waste awareness campaigns, waste surveys etc. as Swachhta Saarthis and implement actions to reduce waste for a greener planet.
- The Waste to Wealth Mission is one of the nine national missions of the **Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)**

Source: PIB

Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram declared as India’s first OECM site

Why in News

- The **Aravalli Biodiversity Park** in Gurugram, Haryana was declared India’s first “**Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures**” (OECM) site on the occasion of World Wetlands Day.

Key Points

- The proposal to declare Aravalli Biodiversity Park an OECM site was sent by the National Biodiversity Authority to the IUCN in December 2020.
- The OECM tag is given by the International Union for Conservation of Nature to areas that are not protected but support rich biodiversity.
- The OECM tag does not bring any legal, financial or management implications, but designates the area as a biodiversity hotspot on the international map.

About Aravalli Biodiversity Park:

- The Aravalli Biodiversity Park is spread across 390 acres and has semi-arid vegetation, with around 300 native plants, 101,000 trees, 43,000 shrubs, and several species of birds.
- In 2018, a study by the Centre for Environmental Research and Education covering biodiversity aspects, oxygen generation, value of trees and a host of other criteria,

showed that the Aravalli Biodiversity Park potentially supplies around 7.07% of the oxygen requirement for the Delhi-NCR.

Source: HT

Two more Ramsar sites announced in India on World Wetlands Day

Why in News

- Two new Ramsar sites — **Khijadiya wildlife sanctuary in Gujarat and Bakhira wildlife sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh** — were announced on the occasion of World Wetlands Day.

Key Points

- India now has a network of 49 Ramsar sites covering an area of 10,93,636 hectares, the highest in South Asia.
- Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance as per UNESCO's 1971 Convention on Wetlands held in Ramsar, Iran.

Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh:

- The Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary is the largest natural flood plain wetland in the district of Sant Kabir Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. Established in the year 1980, the sanctuary's lake is important for the migratory birds who fly down here in the winter season.
- Migratory birds from Tibet, China, Europe, and Siberia visit the place between November to January. Birds like Indian purple moorhen in addition to more than 30 fish species can be found here.

Khijadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Gujarat:

- Located 12 km away from Jamnagar District headquarters, Khijadia Wildlife Sanctuary is a freshwater wetland, heaven for birds. It supports marine and freshwater birds, has marshy lands, mangroves, prosopis areas, mudflats, salt pans, creeks, forest scrub, sandy beaches, and farmlands bordering the area. The sanctuary is home to 309 species of birds- resident and migratory birds.
- Endangered bird species such as Dalmatian Pelican, Asian Open Bill Stork, Black-Necked Stork, Darter, Black-headed Ibis, Eurasian spoonbill, and Indian Skimmer can be spotted here.

Source: Indian Express

Chandrayaan-3 scheduled for launch in August 2022

Why in News

- Recently, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh said in the Lok Sabha that **Chandrayaan-3** is scheduled for launch in August 2022.

Key Points

Chandrayaan 3 Mission:

- The Chandrayaan 3 mission is the third planned lunar exploration mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It follows ISRO's Chandrayaan 2 mission, which successfully deployed its orbiter around the Moon but failed to soft-land its lander.
- Similar to Chandrayaan 2 mission, Chandrayaan-3 will also include a modified lander and rover. The mission will not include an orbiter, due to the success of the Chandrayaan 2 orbiter. It will use the Chandrayaan 2 orbiter to communicate with the earth.

Note: The number of missions planned during 2022 (Jan to Dec'22) are 19 viz., 08 Launch Vehicle Missions, 07 Spacecraft Missions and 04 Technology Demonstrator Missions.

Source: TOI

Khelo India Scheme allocation increases by 48% in Budget 2022-23

Why in News

- The Government has decided to continue the Scheme of “Khelo India – National Programme for Development of Sports” over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26) at an outlay of Rs 3165.50 crore.

Key Points

- The allocation in Khelo India Scheme has increased by 48 percent in Budget 2022-23 and it has been included in the PM’s Awards Scheme.
- The Khelo India Scheme is the flagship Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Note:

- Recently, the Union Government has approved continuation of Scheme of Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) with an outlay of Rs. 1575 crore for XV Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).
- The Scheme of Assistance to NSFs is the flagship Central Sector Scheme and the main source of funding for preparation of national teams for all major national and international competitions, including the Olympic Games, Para-Olympics, Asian Games, Para Asian Games, Commonwealth Games (CWG) and other major international tournaments.

Source: PIB

Coal Gasification

Why in News

- The Centre’s announcement on coal gasification-pilot projects in the Union Budget 2022-23 is contrary to Delhi-based non-profit, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)’s assessment about the process not being attractive from a climate change point of view.
- “Four pilot projects for coal gasification and conversion of coal into chemicals required for the industry will be set up for technical and financial viability,” Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said while presenting the budget 2022 in the Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- **Coal gasification:** It is a process in which coal is partially oxidised with air, oxygen, steam or carbon dioxide to form a fuel gas. This gas is then used instead of piped natural gas, methane and others for deriving energy.
- However, coal gasification actually produces more carbon dioxide than a conventional coal-powered thermal power plant, according to CSE’s assessment.
- Also, coal gasification plants are costlier than conventional power plants.

- According to CSE estimates, one unit of electricity generated by burning gasified coal generates 2.5 times more carbon dioxide than what would result when burning the coal directly.

Note:

- Steel companies typically use coking coal in their manufacturing process.
- Most of the coking coal is imported and is expensive.
- To cut costs, plants can use syngas, which comes from coal gasification plants in the place of coking coal.
- Although they might be financially effective, these coal gasifiers using steel plants have higher greenhouse gas emissions than many of their counterparts.

Source: DTE

Hoysala Temples proposed to be listed under UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Why in News

- The Union Culture Ministry announced that the **Hoysala Temples of Belur, Halebid and Somnathapura** in Karnataka have been finalised as India's nomination for consideration as **UNESCO World Heritage site for the year 2022-2023**.

Key Points

- The 'Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala' are on **UNESCO's Tentative list** since 15th April, 2014 and represent one of the highest points of human creative genius and stand testimony to the rich historical and cultural heritage of our country.
- All these three Hoysala temples are protected monuments of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and therefore conservation and maintenance will be done by ASI.
- The sacred ensembles of the Hoysalas, built in the 12th-13th centuries and represented here by the three components of Belur, Halebid and Somnathapura, attest to the creativity and skill of the Hoysala artists and architects who built these masterpieces of a kind never seen before or since.
- The Hoysala temples have a basic Dravidian morphology but show strong influences of the Bhumija mode widely used in Central India, the Nagara traditions of northern and western India, and the Karnataka Dravida modes favoured by the Kalyani Chalukyas.

India's UNESCO World Heritage Sites:

- The first sites to be inscribed were Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Agra Fort, and Taj Mahal, of which all were inscribed in the 1983 session of the World Heritage Committee.
- The latest site to be inscribed is Dholavira, Gujarat in 2021.
- As of July 2021, 19 of the 36 States and union territories of India are home to the World Heritage Sites, with Maharashtra having the highest number of sites (5).
- At present, there are 40 World Heritage Sites located in India. Out of these, 32 are cultural, 7 are natural, and 1 is mixed (meeting both cultural and natural criteria), as determined by the organization's selection criteria.
- India has the sixth largest number of sites in the world.

World's UNESCO World Heritage Sites:

- As of July 2021, a total of 1,154 World Heritage Sites (897 cultural, 218 natural, and 39 mixed properties) exist across 167 countries.
- With 58 selected areas, Italy is the country with the most sites on the list.

Note: Earlier, the UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC) had agreed to publish Hindi descriptions of India's UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the WHC website.

Source: Indian Express

UGC releases draft National Higher Educational Qualification Framework

Why in News

- The **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has developed a draft **National Higher Educational Qualification Framework (NHEQF)**, which is part of a set of reforms that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages.

Key Points

- From job readiness to constitutional values, theoretical knowledge to technical skills, higher education institutes across the country will soon be brought under a new framework to assess students on a range of learning outcomes.
- In the draft, the UGC has clarified that the framework is not intended to promote a uniform curriculum or national common syllabus.
- The purpose is to bring up/elevate all HEIs to a common level of benchmarking to ensure that all institutions are providing quality education.

About University Grants Commission (UGC):

- UGC is a statutory body set up by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India in accordance with the UGC Act 1956.
- **Founded:** 1956
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

Source: Indian Express

Global Center of Excellence in Affordable and Clean Energy (GCoE-ACE) at IIT Dharwad

Why in News

- A virtual function was held to mark the launch of the **Global Center of Excellence in Affordable and Clean Energy (GCoE-ACE)** at the Indian Institute of Technology, Dharwad (IITDh), Karnataka in the presence of, Prof. K. VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India.

Key Points

- The center is supported by the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) donation from Honeywell Hometown Solutions India Foundation (HHSIF).
- The first phase of the CSR project with HHSIF is to establish equipment for the GCoE-ACE mainly as skill development, fabrication, and R&D equipment.
- The subsequent phases are envisaged to encourage innovation and to provide incubation support for the solutions to the grass-root problem statements in the affordable and clean-energy domain.
- This also dovetails with the Government's goal of meeting 50% of the country's energy requirement from renewables by 2030.
- The center will work towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goal - 7 on Affordable and Clean Energy.

Source: PIB

PM Modi addresses 30th National Commission for Women Foundation Day programme

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed **30th National Commission for Women Foundation Day** programme.

Key Points

- The **theme** of the programme 'She The Change Maker' is aimed at celebrating the achievements of women in different fields.

About National Commission for Women:

- It was established on 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution, as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.
- The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik.
- Rekha Sharma is the current chairperson.

Women Empowerment Schemes:

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme
- One Stop Centre Scheme
- Women Helpline Scheme
- Working Women Hostel
- SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
- Nari Shakti Puruskar
- Rajya Mahila Samman & Zila Mahila Samman
- Mahila police Volunteers
- Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK)
- NIRBHAYA

Source: PIB

India to convert 150 villages into 'Villages of Excellence' with technical help from Israel

Why in News

- The Centre has decided to convert as many as 150 villages into 'Villages of Excellence' in 12 states with technical assistance from the Israel government.

Key Points

- The 150 villages that are located around Centre of Excellence (CoEs) will be converted into 'Villages of Excellence.'
- Out of which, 75 villages are being taken up in the first year to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence, where India and Israel will work together.
- Already, the Israel government has established 29 Centre of Excellence in 12 states, which are producing more than 25 million vegetable plants, over 3,87,000 quality fruit plants and can train more than 1.2 lakh farmers per year.

Note:

- India is the third-largest trading partner of Israel, in Asia after China and Hong Kong.
- Recently, India and Israel also completed 30 years of diplomatic relations.

Source: ET

Services e-Health Assistance and Teleconsultation (SeHAT)

Why in News

- Home Delivery of medicines will begin under **Services e-Health Assistance and Teleconsultation (SeHAT)**.

- To start with, this project of Home Delivery will be started with Base Hospital Delhi Cantt w.e.f. 01 Feb 2022, and would be extended to more and more stations in coming times.

Key Points

About Services e-Health Assistance and Teleconsultation (SeHAT):

- SeHAT is the tri-services teleconsultation service of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) designed for all entitled personnel and their families.
- As part of the Government's commitment to Digital India and e-Governance, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched SeHAT on 27 May 2021.
- SeHAT stay home OPD is a patient-to-doctor system where the patient can consult a doctor remotely through the internet using his Smartphone, laptop, Desktop or Tablet.

Source: PIB

PM Modi launches Pandit Jasraj Cultural Foundation

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched **Pandit Jasraj Cultural Foundation** on the occasion of the birth anniversary of legendary classical vocalist late Pandit Jasraj.

Key Points

- Pandit Jasraj was an Indian classical vocalist, belonging to the Mewati gharana (musical apprenticeship lineage).
- He received several accolades including the prestigious Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.
- He passed away at the age of 90 on August 17, 2020.

Source: TOI

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya launches NIPER Research Portal

Why in News

- Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya launched **NIPER Research Portal**.

Key Points

- **National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) Research Portal** has been created with the aim to disseminate the information about all the NIPERs and their research activities, patents filed and Publication information at one place so that an industry and other stakeholders know about them.
- India is the **third-largest pharmaceutical manufacturing country**.

About National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs):

- NIPERs are a group of national level institutes of pharmaceutical sciences in India.
- The Government of India has declared the NIPERs as Institutes of National Importance.
- They operate as autonomous bodies under the aegis of Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Source: PIB

Lok Sabha secretariat launches Digital Sansad app

Why in News

- The Lok Sabha secretariat has launched a new app, **Digital Sansad**.

Key Points

- The App, planned by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, will help people get all Parliamentary updates.
- It becomes easier for citizens to access general information on MPs, on budget speeches since 1947, House discussions from 12th Lok Sabha to 17th Lok Sabha.
- The App will also contain the live telecast of Sansad proceedings, the major news of the day, etc.

Source: PIB

Beating Retreat Ceremony

Why in News

- The **Beating Retreat Ceremony** is performed every year on January 29 and marks the end of the Republic Day celebrations.

Key Points

- A host of new tunes were added to the ceremony to commemorate 75 years of the country's independence (being celebrated as Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav). These include 'Hind ki Sena' and 'Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon'.

Note:

- **India's startup 'Botlab'** funded by the Technology Development Board (TDB) under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology and led by IIT Delhi alumnus 'Beating Retreat' at the conclusion of nearly a week long Republic Day events 1,000 drones were flown as part of a light show at the ceremony.
- With this, **India became the fourth country** after China, Russia and the UK to demonstrate on such a large scale with 1,000 drones.

Source: HT

Important News: State

Insurgency in Manipur

Why in News

- Recently, the Central government has announced that it is **ready to hold dialogue with** insurgency groups operating in Manipur to bring lasting peace to the region.

Key Points

Rise of insurgency in Manipur:

- The emergence of insurgency in Manipur dates back to 1964 with the formation of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), which still remains one of the formidable militant outfits.
- The rise of separatist insurgency in Manipur mainly attributed to perceived discontent over alleged "forced" merger of Manipur with the Union of India and the subsequent delay in granting it full-fledged statehood.
- While the erstwhile Kingdom of Manipur was merged with India on October 15, 1949, it became a state only in 1972.
- The later years saw a slew of militant outfits being formed, including the People's Liberation Army (PLA), People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP), and Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), among others. These valley-based outfits have been demanding an independent Manipur.
- The Naga movement in neighbouring Nagaland spilled over into Manipur's hill districts with the NSCN-IM controlling most of it while pressing for "Nagalim"

(Greater Nagaland), which is perceived in the valley as a “threat” to Manipur’s “territorial integrity”.

Steps Taken by the Government:

- In 1980, the Centre declared the entire Manipur as a “disturbed area” and imposed the controversial **Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA)** to suppress the insurgency movement, which remains in force till date.
- The NSCN-IM entered a ceasefire agreement with the Government of India (GoI) in 1997, even as peace talks between them have still been continuing.

Source: Indian Express

‘Lavender Cultivation’ under CSIR-IIIM’s Aroma Mission to be started in Ramban

Why in News

- ‘Lavender Cultivation’ under CSIR-IIIM’s Aroma Mission will be started in Ramban District of Jammu and Kashmir as a part of **Purple Revolution**.

Key Points

Purple Revolution:

- The **Purple or Lavender Revolution** was launched in 2016 by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology through the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research’s (CSIR) Aroma Mission, which aimed at increasing lavender cultivation in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Lavender cultivation is practiced in almost all the 20 districts of Jammu & Kashmir.
- Under the mission, first-time farmers were given free lavender saplings, while those who had cultivated lavender before were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling.

Aroma Mission:

- The Aroma Mission is in line with PM Narendra Modi’s vision of improving farmers’ livelihood and doubling their income.
- Under the Mission, initially, CSIR introduced high-value essential oil-bearing lavender crops through its Jammu-based laboratory, Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines (IIIM) for cultivation in districts Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri.

Phases of Aroma Mission:

- During Phase-I CSIR helped cultivation on 6000 hectares of land and covered 46 Aspirational districts across the country. More than 44,000 persons have been trained and several crores of farmers’ revenue generated.
- In the second Phase of Aroma Mission, it is proposed to engage over 45,000 skilled human resources with the aim of benefitting more than 75,000 farming families across the country.
- The nodal laboratory is CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow.

Source: PIB

Water Taxi Service in Mumbai

Why in News

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways & AYUSH Sarbananda Sonowal flagged off **Water Taxi Service** for citizens of Mumbai, from Belapur Jetty.

Key Points

- The Water Taxi services will commence from the Domestic Cruise Terminal (DCT) and will also connect nearby locations at Nerul, Belapur, Elephanta Island and JNPT.
- The newly constructed Belapur jetty, built at a cost of Rs. 8.37 crore was funded in the 50-50 model under the **Sagarmala scheme** of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

About Sagarmala Programme:

- It is the flagship programme of the Ministry of Shipping to promote port-led development in the country by exploiting India's 7,517 km long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and its strategic location on key international maritime trade routes.
- It was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2015.

Source: PIB

Public order: A constitutional provision for curbing freedoms

Why in News

- The Karnataka High Court is hearing a challenge to the constitutionality of the state government's ban on students wearing a hijab in educational institutions.
- The judges heard an argument on whether the state can justify the ban on the ground that it violates '**public order**'.

About public order:

- Public order is one of the three grounds on which the state can restrict freedom of religion. Public order is also one of the grounds to restrict free speech and other fundamental rights.
- Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees to all persons the right to freedom and conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health.
- Public order is normally equated with public peace and safety.
- According to List 2 of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the power to legislate on aspects of public order rests with the states.

How does it relate to the hijab ban?

- According to the government order issued under the Karnataka Education Act, 1983, "public order" is one of the reasons for not allowing students to wear a headscarf in educational institutions along with "unity" and "integrity."

How has the state responded?

- Karnataka's Advocate General has argued that the government order makes no mention of "public order" and that the petitioners reading of the order could be an error in translation. The order, in Kannada, uses the words "sarvajjanika suvyavasthe".

Source: Indian Express

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar prorogues Assembly session

Why in News

- Recently, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar prorogued the state Legislative Assembly after exercising power vested with him under Article 174 of the Constitution.

Key Points

About Prorogation: Prorogation is discontinuing a session of the Parliament or a legislative assembly without dissolving it.

Article 174: The article provides powers to the governor to summon, prorogue and dissolve the legislative assembly. The governor can do so only based on conditions as mentioned in Article 163.

Article 163: The Governor should act based on the advice of the chief minister and the council of ministers.

Source: Indian Express

Medaram Jathara 2022

Why in News

The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sanctioned 2.26 crore rupees for various activities pertaining to the festival of **Medaram Jathara 2022**.

Key Points

The Medaram Jathara is the second-largest fair of India, after the Kumbh Mela, celebrated by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana- the Koya tribe for four days.

This Jathara has been declared as a State Festival during 1998.

This year the Jathara will be held from 16th February to 19th February 2022 (4-days).

This Jathara is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saralamma.

Under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Government has announced that tribal culture and heritage will be the cynosure of 2022.

Source: newsonair

Central Jail Indore gets own FM radio channel

Why in News

In Madhya Pradesh, Central Jail of Indore has started its own radio channel 'Jail Vaani-FM 18.77'.

Key Points

Through this radio channel, the jail inmates will get to know about the happening in the world.

The radio channel will also provide the jail inmates with information on health and social issues.

Source: TOI

India's first biomass-based hydrogen plant coming up in Madhya Pradesh

Why in News

- The country's first commercial-scale biomass-based hydrogen plant is coming up in the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- The plant will produce a tonne of hydrogen per day, from 30 tonnes of biomass feedstock.
- It will also produce biochar and methane.

- The plant is being put up by a joint venture of Watomo Energies Ltd and Biezel Green Energy with an investment of ₹24 crore.

Source: The Hindu

Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Bill, 2022

Why in News

- The Haryana Cabinet approved the draft of The Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Bill, 2022.

Key Points

- It aims at prohibiting religious conversions which are affected through misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means or by marriage or for marriage by making it an offense.

Provisions of the Draft Bill:

- The Bill provides for greater punishment for such conversions in respect of minor, women, Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
- Every individual converting from one religion to another shall submit to the prescribed authority a declaration that the conversion affected through was not misrepresentation, use of force, under threat, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means or by marriage or for marriage and such authority shall make an inquiry in such cases.
- Besides, it provides for declaring marriages null and void, which were solemnized by concealment of religion.

Anti-Conversion Laws in India:

- **Constitutional Provision:** The Indian Constitution under Article 25 guarantees the freedom to profess, propagate, and practise religion, and allows all religious sections to manage their own affairs in matters of religion; subject to public order, morality, and health.
- **Existing Laws:** There has been no central legislation restricting or regulating religious conversions.

Note: Other States like Gujarat, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh have also passed laws restricting religious conversion.

Source: The Hindu

J&K becomes the first Union Territory to be integrated with National Single Window System

Why in News

- Jammu & Kashmir became the first Union Territory to be integrated with the **National Single Window System (NSWS)**.
- Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched the J&K Single Window Clearance System integrated with NSWS.

Key Points

- NSWS is linked with India Industrial Land Bank (IILB) which hosts 45 industrial parks of J&K. This will help Investors to discover available land parcels in J&K.
- The NSWS, a 2020 budgetary announcement of the Government of India, is a digital platform that serves as a guide for investors to identify and to apply for approvals as per their business requirements.

- The platform was soft launched in September 2021 by the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal.
- NSWS will eliminate the need for investors to visit multiple platforms/offices to gather information and obtain clearances from different stakeholders.

Source: PIB

Akshay Kumar appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

Why in News

- Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand, the Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced ahead of Assembly Elections 2022.

Key Points

- In 2017, Akshay Kumar was appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador for 'Swachhata Abhiyan'.
- He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2009.

Previous Brand Ambassador: In 2021, cricketer Rishabh Pant, who hails from Roorkee, was appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador.

Source: ET

Interim Report of Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission

Why in News

- The **Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Delimitation Commission** has changed the complexion of most of the 90 Assembly seats, while reconfiguring and renaming 28 new Assembly constituencies and deleting 19 Assembly segments in its interim report.

Key Points

- Besides, it has proposed to redraw all the five Lok Sabha seats.
- The interim report suggested that the Kashmir division will get an additional seat in Kupwara, while the Jammu division will have one additional seat in Kathua district, one in Samba, one in Doda, one in Rajouri, one in Udhampur and one in Kishtwar.
- In December 2021, the Commission, comprising retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Desai, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and J&K Election Commissioner K K Sharma, proposed seven additional Assembly seats — six in Jammu division and one in Kashmir Valley.
- For the first time, the Commission proposed reserving nine seats for Scheduled Tribes (STs) on the basis of population. Seven seats were proposed for the Scheduled Castes (SCs).

About Delimitation:

- It is the act of fixing or redrawing the limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies (Assembly or Lok Sabha seat) in a country or a province having a legislative body, as per the Election Commission.
- The Delimitation Commission is appointed by the President of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India.

Composition:

- Retired Supreme Court judge
- Chief Election Commissioner
- Respective State Election Commissioners

Note:

- Under Article 82, the Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census.
- Under Article 170, States also get divided into territorial constituencies as per Delimitation Act after every Census.

Source: The Hindu

Jaipur to get world's 3rd largest cricket stadium**Why in News**

- Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly laid the foundation stone of world's third-largest cricket stadium which is going to be built in Jaipur.

Key Points

- The International Cricket Stadium in Jaipur will be the second-largest cricket stadium in India and the third-largest in the world.
- The stadium will have a seating capacity of 75,000 spectators.

Note:

- Currently, Narendra Modi Stadium (former Motera Stadium) in Ahmedabad is the world's largest stadium.
- The second-largest stadium is Australia's Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Source: India Today

West Bengal government launches open-air classroom 'Paray Shikshalaya'**Why in News**

- The West Bengal government launched an open-air classroom programme '**Paray Shikshalaya**' (Neighbourhood Schools) for students from class 1 to 7.

Key Points

- The aim of this initiative is to encourage students who dropped out of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For this, the government has selected clubs and parks to hold classes. Under this, the students would be studying in an open area.

Source: Indian Express

Centre clears renaming of Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad as Narmadapuram**Why in News**

- The Centre has approved the Madhya Pradesh government's proposal to rename Hoshangabad district as Narmadapuram and a Babai town as Makhan Nagar.

Key Points

- Hoshangabad, which is located on the southern banks of River Narmada, is 70 km from the state capital Bhopal.
- Earlier it used to be called Narmadapur and was later named Hoshangabad after Hoshang Shah Gori, the first ruler of the Malwa Sultanate.
- Babai, a town in Hoshangabad district, is the birthplace of Makhan Lal Chaturvedi, a famous Hindi poet, freedom fighter and journalist.

Source: TOI

Chhattisgarh becomes 35th State/UT to implement One Nation One Ration Card plan

Why in News

- **Chhattisgarh** has become the 35th State/UT to implement “**One Nation One Ration Card**” (ONORC) plan.

Key Points

- Recently Department of Food & Public Distribution had reviewed the progress of States/UTs towards the implementation of “One Nation One Ration Card” (ONORC) plan and after successful testing of portability transactions, the Department has approved the integration of Chhattisgarh with the existing cluster of portability States/UTs under ONORC.
- Accordingly, the ONORC plan for nation-wide portability of the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)** ration cards has been enabled in the Chhattisgarh State from **2nd February 2022**.
- With the integration of Chhattisgarh, the ONORC plan is now operational in **35 States/UTs** covering almost **96.8%** NFSA population (about **77 Crore** NFSA beneficiaries) in the country.
- Since inception of the ONORC plan in August 2019, so far more than 56 Crore portability transactions have been recorded in the States/UTs under ONORC, delivering nearly total 100 LMT foodgrains through both inter-State and intra-State portability transactions **equivalent to about Rs. 31,000 Crore in food subsidy**.

Source: PIB

India's first Geo Park to come up in Madhya Pradesh

Why in News

- The **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** has approved the setting up of the country's first Geo Park at Lamheta village on the banks of the Narmada River in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- The estimated cost of this project is ₹ 35 crore.
- A **Geo Park** is a unified area that advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable way and promotes the economic well-being of the people who live there.
- This site is already there in the UNESCO geo-heritage tentative list for the conservation of the natural heritage.
- William Henry Sleeman had discovered Dinosaur fossils from this area in 1928.

Source: TOI

Punjab Chief Electoral Officer unveils poll mascot 'Shera'

Why in News

- Ahead of Punjab Assembly elections 2022, the office of Punjab Chief Electoral Officer unveiled its poll mascot '**Shera**' depicting a lion.

Key Points

- The election mascot represents the rich cultural heritage of Punjab.
- Promoted under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) project, the mascot aims to increase voter awareness and participation in the elections to increase voter turnout and promote ethical voting.

Source: Indian Express

NITI Aayog in association with PhonePe launches the Fintech Open Hackathon

Why in News

- As a part of the Fintech Open Month, NITI Aayog in association with PhonePe will be hosting the first-ever open-to-all Hackathon event for ideating and coming up with the most creative solutions for the FinTech space.

Key Points

- The Hackathon will provide an opportunity for innovators, digital creators and developers from all over India to think, ideate and code.
- Participants at the hackathon need to use any open-data APIs like PhonePe Pulse along with frameworks such as Account Aggregator as a foundation to power.
- The **last date to register for the event is 23rd February, 2022** and the deadline to submit the **final entries is 25th February, 2022**.
- The winners of the Hackathon will be announced on 28th February, 2022.

Source: PIB

Reliance Jio partners with SES to announce satellite-based internet for India

Why in News

- Reliance Jio has partnered with SES, a Luxembourg-based satellite solutions provider to form a new initiative – Jio Space Technology Limited.
- The joint venture is aimed at delivering the next generation scalable and affordable broadband services in India by making use of satellite technology.

Key Points

- Jio and SES will own 51 percent and 49 percent each in the equity stake.
- The technology will use multi-orbit space networks – that is, a combination of geostationary (GEO) and medium earth orbit (MEO) satellite constellations capable of delivering multi-gigabit links and capacity to companies.
- Internet speeds could go up to 100 Gbps, according to claims from Jio.

Source: Indian Express

Dabur becomes first Indian 'Plastic Waste Neutral' FMCG Company in India

Why in News

- India's largest Science-based Ayurveda major Dabur India Ltd has now become a 100% 'Plastic Waste Neutral company' in India, having collected, processed and recycled around 27,000 MT of post-consumer plastic waste from all over India in the 2021-22 financial year.

Key Points

- With this, Dabur has become the first Indian consumer goods company to achieve this landmark.
- Dabur's Plastic Waste Management initiative was rolled out in the year 2017-18 as part of the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rule 2016, 2018 (amended).
- Dabur is a registered brand-owner with Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) since November 2018 and with all State Pollution Control Boards across the country.

Note: Dabur India Limited is the fourth largest FMCG Company in India.

Source: ET

Virtual Digital Assets

Why in News

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget 2022 speech, announced a 30 percent tax on income from virtual digital assets.
- Additionally, she also proposed a TDS on payment made in relation to the transfer of virtual digital assets at 1 percent above a monetary threshold.

Key Points

- There has been a phenomenal rise in such transactions and the magnitude and frequency of these transactions have made it imperative to provide for a specific tax regime.

Virtual digital assets:

- In the explanatory memorandum of the Finance Bill, the government stated, “To define the term “virtual digital asset”, a new clause (47A) is proposed to be inserted to section 2 of the Act.
- As per the proposed new clause, a virtual digital asset is proposed to mean any information or code or number or token (not being Indian currency or any foreign currency), generated through cryptographic means.
- Digital currency and assets like NFTs (non-fungible tokens) have gained traction globally over the last couple of years. Trading in these assets has increased manifold with cryptocurrency exchanges being launched. However, India did not have a clear policy on either regulating or taxing such asset classes.

Note: It has been clarified by the Finance Minister that RBI will issue digital currency in the next financial year. It will be called Digital Rupee.

Source: Indian Express

Union Budget 2022-23

Why in News

- The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Union Budget 2022-23 in Parliament on 1st February, 2022.

Key Points

- Entering Amrit Kaal, the 25 year long lead up to India @100, the budget provides impetus for growth along **four priorities**:
- PM GatiShakti
- Inclusive Development
- Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action
- Financing of investments

Highlights of Union Budget 2022-23:

- India’s economic growth is estimated at 9.2 percent, the highest among all large economies.
- Outlay for Capital expenditure in the Union Budget hiked by 35.4 percent.
- Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) extended up to March 2023. The guarantee cover will be expanded by 50,000 crore rupees.
- Additional credit of 2 lakh crore rupees for MSME to be provided under Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises.

- Productivity Linked Incentive in 14 sectors for achieving the vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat will be strengthened.
- Use of 'Kisan Drones' to be promoted for crop assessment, digitization of land records, spraying of insecticides and nutrients.
- Implementation of the Ken-Betwa Link Project at an estimated cost of 44,605 crore rupees to be taken up.
- Four hundred new-generation Vande Bharat Trains to be developed over the next three years.
- One Station-One product concept to be popularized to help local businesses and supply chains.
- One hundred PM GatiShakti Cargo Terminals for multimodal logistics facilities to be developed during the next three years.
- PM GatiShakti Master Plan for Expressways to be formulated in 2022-23 to facilitate faster movement of people and goods.
- National Highway network to be expanded by 25 thousand kilometres in 2022-23.
- Allocation of 60,000 crore rupees made for Har-Ghar, Nal-Se-Jal to cover 3.8 crore households in 2022-23.
- 80 lakh houses to be completed in 2022-23 under PM AwasYojana, both rural and urban.
- A new Vibrant Villages Programme to be launched to cover border villages with sparse population, limited connectivity and less infrastructure.
- Two lakh Aangawadis to be upgraded under the Saksham Anganwadi Mission.
- A new scheme-Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East, PM-DevINE to be implemented through North-Eastern Council.
- One class-one TV channel' programme of PM eVIDYA to be expanded from 12 to 200 TV channels.
- A Digital University to be established to provide access to students across the country for world-class quality universal education.
- Government to set up 75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs) in 75 districts of the country by Scheduled Commercial Banks.
- 100 percent of post offices to be brought under core-banking system.
- Digital Rupee, using blockchain and other technologies to be issued by RBI from 2022-23.
- E-Passports using embedded chips and futuristic technology to be rolled out in 2022-23.
- Auction of spectrum for rollout of 5G mobile services to be taken up in 2022.
- Additional 19,500 crore rupees allotted under PLI scheme to give a fillip to domestic manufacturing in solar power.
- Revised Fiscal Deficit during current year is estimated at 6.9 percent.
- Alternate Minimum Tax for cooperative societies reduced from 18.5 to 15 percent.
- Outlay for the 'Scheme for Financial Assistance to States for Capital Investment' is being enhanced from 10,000 crore in the Budget Estimates to 15,000 crore rupees.
- Virtual digital assets to be taxed at the rate of 30 percent.
- Surcharge on long term capital gains arising on transfer of any type of assets to be capped at 15 percent.

Source: PIB

Why in News

- The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2021-22 in Parliament, which states that the year ahead is well poised for a pick-up in private sector investment with the financial system in a good position to provide support to the revival of economy.
- **The central theme of this year's Economic Survey is the "Agile approach".**

Key Points

- India to witness GDP growth of 8.0-8.5 percent in 2022-23, supported by widespread vaccine coverage, gains from supply-side reforms and easing of regulations, robust export growth, and availability of fiscal space to ramp up capital spending.
- The growth projection for 2022-23 is based on the assumption that there will be no further debilitating pandemic related economic disruption, monsoon will be normal, withdrawal of global liquidity by major central banks will be broadly orderly, oil prices will be in the range of US\$70-\$75/bbl, and global supply chain disruptions will steadily ease over the course of the year.
- The Survey says, the above projection is comparable with the World Bank's and Asian Development Bank's latest forecasts of real GDP growth of 8.7 percent and 7.5 percent respectively for 2022-23.
- As per the IMF's latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) growth projections released on 25th January, 2022, India's real GDP is projected to grow at 9 percent in both 2021-22 and 2022-23 and at 7.1 percent in 2023-24.
- This projects India as the fastest growing major economy in the world in all these three years.
- In conclusion, the Survey is quite optimistic that overall macro-economic stability indicators suggest that the Indian Economy is well placed to take on the challenges of 2022-23 and one of the reasons that the Indian Economy is in good position is its unique response strategy.

Source: PIB

Forex Reserves decline by \$678 million

Why in News

- According to data released by the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI)**, India's Forex Reserves (Foreign Exchange Reserves) posted a decline of \$678 million during the week ended 21st January 2022 to reach \$634.287 billion.

Key Points

- **Foreign Currency Assets (FCA)** declined by \$1.155 billion to \$569.582 billion in the reporting week.
- Expressed in dollar terms, FCA includes the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.
- Meanwhile, gold reserves saw an increase of \$567 million to \$40.337 billion during the week ended January 21, as per the data.
- The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) fell \$68 million to \$19.152 billion.
- India's reserve position with the IMF also decreased by \$22 million to \$5.216 billion in the reporting week.

India's Forex Reserve includes:

- Foreign Currency Assets
- Gold reserves

- Special Drawing Rights
- Reserve position with the International Monetary Fund

Source: Indian Express

Important News: Defence

Ministry of Defence signs MoU to onboard pension services under SPARSH initiative

Why in News

- 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

National War Memorial

Why in News

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

Key Points

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

Army Chief presents President's Colours to Units of the Parachute Regiment

Why in News

- General MM Naravane, The Chief of the Army Staff presented the prestigious '**President's Colours**' to four battalions of the **Parachute Regiment**, namely 11 PARACHUTE (Special Forces), 21 PARACHUTE (Special Forces), 23 PARACHUTE and 29 PARACHUTE, during Colour Presentation Parade held at the Parachute Regiment Training Centre, Bangalore.

Key Points

- The **President's Colours** is the highest honour bestowed on a military unit in recognition of exceptional service.
- The **Parachute Regiment** is an elite regiment of Indian Army which holds an enviable record in pre and post-independence operations.
- Post-independence, battalions of the Regiment have earned an impressive tally of 32 Chief of the Army Staff unit citations and its personnel have been awarded with 08 Ashoka Chakra, 14 Maha Vir Chakra, 22 Kirti Chakra, 63 Vir Chakra, 116 Shaurya Chakra & 601 Sena Medals for gallantry and exceptional bravery.

Source: Indian Express

Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022

Why in News

- 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

IAF to participate in exercise 'Ex Cobra Warrior 22'

Why in News

- **Indian Air Force (IAF)** will participate in a multi nation air exercise named '**Ex Cobra Warrior 22**' at Waddington, United Kingdom from 06 to 27 March 2022.

Key Points

- **IAF Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas** will participate in the exercise along with fighter aircraft of the UK and other leading Air Forces.
- The exercise is aimed at providing operational exposure and sharing best practices amongst the participating Air Forces, thereby enhancing combat capability and forging bonds of friendship.

About Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas:

- The LCA Tejas, indigenously-designed by the Aircraft Development Agency (ADA) of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), is expected to be the backbone of the Indian Air Force in the future.

Source: India Today

Exercise Eastern Bridge-VI

Why in News

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) and Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) are scheduled to participate in a bilateral exercise named **Eastern Bridge-VI** from 21 to 25 February 2022 at Air Force Station Jodhpur.
- This would be the sixth edition of the exercise.

Key Points

- The exercise will provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces.
- Participation of IAF and RAFO in this exercise will promote professional interaction, exchange of experiences and enhancement of operational knowledge, besides strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

Note:

- 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.
- Oman also provides operational support to the Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea, and India has access to the Duqm port, which has strengthened India's capability and maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean Region.

Source: Indian Express

scien

CRNO visit to India

Why in News

Rear Admiral Saif Bin Nasser Bin Mohsin Al Rahbi, **Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (CRNO)** is on a goodwill visit (13 - 17 Feb 22) of to India.

Key Points

The visit aims to consolidate bilateral relations with the Indian Navy, as also to explore new avenues for defence cooperation with India.

The CRNO commenced his visit by paying homage at the National War Memorial on 14 Feb 22.

The first visit of the incumbent CRNO to India, reverberates the growing cooperation between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman, which include operational interactions, training and exchange of Subject Matter Experts.

Note:

Both Navies have been participating in the biennial maritime exercise '*Naseem Al Bahr*' since 1993.

This exercise was last conducted in 2020, off Goa and the next edition is scheduled later this year.

Facts about Oman:

Capital: Muscat

Currency: Omani rial

Source: PIB

IAF to show off 'Made in India' Tejas fighter jets at Singapore Air Show 2022

Why in News

A44 member contingent of the Indian Air Force (IAF) reached Changi International Airport in Singapore to participate in the Singapore Air Show-2022, slated for February 15 to 18.

The IAF will be pitching the indigenous Tejas MK-I ac alongside participants from across the world.

Key Points

The Singapore Air Show is a biennial event which provides a platform for the global aviation industry to showcase their products.

The participation of IAF in the Air Show provides India with the opportunity to showcase the Tejas aircraft and to interact with counterparts from RSAF (Royal Singapore Air Force) and other participating contingents.

Note:

In the past, the Indian Air Force had participated in similar air shows like LIMA-2019 in Malaysia and Dubai Air Show-2021 to exhibit indigenous aircraft and formation aerobatic teams.

About Tejas:

The Tejas is an Indian fighter jet developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy in collaboration with the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA).

Tejas was the result of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme that began in the 1980s to replace IAF's ageing MiG-21 fighters.

The Tejas is the second supersonic fighter developed by HAL.

Source: India Today

India successfully flight-tests marine version of Rafale for INS Vikrant

Why in News

- The **marine version of the French-made Rafale fighter jet** has been successfully flight-tested at a shore-based facility in Goa where conditions similar to that on the indigenously-developed aircraft carrier INS Vikrant were simulated.

Key Points

- The Rafale-Marine (Rafale-M) is pitted against the US-made Super Hornet -- both of which are being evaluated for a possible purchase by the Indian Navy for deployment on the 44,000-tonne INS Vikrant that is undergoing trials in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal for likely commissioning in August.

- The Rafale-M jet was tested for 12 days last month at Goa's INS Hansa facility using a 283 metre mock ski-jump facility.

Note:

- India had in 2016 placed the order for the Rafale with Dassault in a fly-away condition.
- India has already received 35 Rafales and the 36th will be sent before the deadline in April 2022.

Source: The Hindu

First sea sortie of fifth scorpene submarine 'Vagir'

Why in News

- The fifth submarine of Project 75, Yard 11879, Indian Navy's Kalvari class commenced her sea trials on 01 Feb 22.
- The submarine was launched in Nov 2020 from the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL).
- The submarine would be named **Vagir**, after commissioning.

Key Points

- The submarine will undergo intense trials of all its systems at sea, including propulsion systems, weapons and sensors.
- The submarine is scheduled for delivery to the Indian Navy in the year 2022 after completion of these trials.

Note:

- The six Kalvari-class submarines, designed by French company DCNS, are being built in India as part of the Indian Navy's Project-75.
- Two submarines of the ongoing Project-75 Scorpene programme at MDL - Kalvari and Khanderi - have been commissioned into the Indian Navy.
- The third submarine, Karanj, is in the last phase of sea trials.
- The fourth Scorpene, Vela, has started sea trials, while the sixth and last submarine, Vagsheer, is being readied.

Source: India Today

Tri-Service Andaman & Nicobar Command inducts Advanced Light Helicopter MK III

Why in News

- The indigenous **Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) MK III** aircraft was formally inducted at INS Utkrosh by Commander-in-Chief, Andaman and Nicobar Command (CINCAN) Lieutenant General Ajai Singh at Port Blair.

Key Points

- The ALH MK III aircraft is manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and represents a tremendous leap towards self-reliance in the field of military aircraft, in line with the government's push towards 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.
- Amongst its variants, the MK III variant is a maritime role variant encompassing state-of-the-art sensors and weapons that add punch to India's prowess at sea.

Source: PIB

Important News: Science

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

Why in News

- 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 kilometers.

Key Points

- 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

Government to hold week-long commemoration 'Vigyan Sarvatra Pujiyate' from 22nd Feb across the country

Why in News

- As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Government of India is holding a week-long commemoration titled '**Vigyan Sarvatra Pujiyate**'.

Key Points

- This event is being held from February 22 to 28 simultaneously in 75 locations across the length and breadth of the country from Leh and Srinagar to Port Blair and Kavaratti Islands in Lakshadweep from north to south and from Ahmedabad and Daman to Itanagar, Kohima, and Aizawl from west to east, apart from the national capital of Delhi.
- It is jointly organised by Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Indian Council of Medical Research, All India Council for Technical Education, and Defence Research Development Organisation, under the leadership of the office of the Principal Scientific Officer to the Government of India and the Ministry of Culture.
- Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organization of DST with a mandate to promote science communication in the country, is the coordinating agency.

Note:

- The programme will end with a grand valedictory function. It will coincide with the **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.
- National Science Communication Awards to this year's awardees and prizes to the winners of various contests held as part of the Mahotsav would be presented.

Source: newsonair

Atmospheric pressure on Pluto's surface 80,000 times less than that on Earth

Why in News

- A team of scientists, including Indian and International collaborators, have derived the accurate value of Pluto's atmospheric pressure at its surface.
- It is more than 80,000 times less than the atmospheric pressure at mean sea level on Earth.

Key Points

- The pressure was calculated from data obtained by observation of stellar occultation by Pluto on 6 June 2020 using 3.6-m Devasthal optical telescope (DOT) (India's largest optical telescope) and 1.3-m Devasthal Fast Optical Telescope (DFOT) telescopes located at Devasthal, Nainital.
- In astronomy, an occultation happens when a celestial object gets hidden from the view of the observer due to another celestial object passing in between them.
- A compilation of twelve stellar occultations by Pluto observed between 1988 and 2016 showed a three-fold monotonic increase of atmospheric pressure during this period.
- The study also confirms earlier findings that Pluto suffers intense seasonal episodes because of large depression on Pluto, known as **Sputnik Planitia**.
- Pluto's poles remain, for decades, in permanent sunlight or darkness over its 248-year long orbital period leading to strong effects on its Nitrogen atmosphere that is mainly controlled by vapour pressure equilibrium with the surface Nitrogen ice.

Source: Indian Express

India to have two National Centres of Excellence in Carbon Capture & Utilization at IIT Bombay & JNCASR, Bengaluru, supported by DST

Why in News

- Two National Centres of Excellence in **Carbon Capture and Utilization (CCU)** are being established in India.
- The two Centres, namely the **National Centre of Excellence in Carbon Capture and Utilization (NCoE-CCU)** at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, Mumbai and the **National Centre in Carbon Capture and Utilization (NCCCU)** at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru are being set up with support from the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India.

Key Points

- Carbon Capture and Utilization (CCU) is among one such key pathways to reduce emissions while continuing to develop sustainably at an unprecedented pace. CCU aligns with five of the seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs), namely,

climate action; clean energy, industry, innovation, and infrastructure; responsible consumption and production; and partnerships to achieve the goals.

About Carbon capture and utilization (CCU):

- CCU is the process of capturing carbon dioxide (CO₂) to be recycled for further usage.
- CCU may offer a response to the global challenge of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions from major stationary (industrial) emitters.

Source: PIB

India's newest mammal: White Cheeked Macaque

Why in News

- Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have found a new mammal species in the country — the White Cheeked Macaque.

Key Points

- Macaque was first discovered in China in 2015, its existence was not known in India before this.
- It is only now that Indian scientists have discovered its presence in the remote Anjaw district in central Arunachal Pradesh.
- The White Cheeked Macaque has distinct white cheeks, long and thick hair on the neck and a longer tail than other Macaque species.
- It is the last mammal to have been discovered in Southeast Asia.

Source: Indian Express

New genus of parasitic flowering plant discovered from Nicobar Islands

Why in News

- A new genus of a parasitic flowering plant has recently been discovered from the Nicobar group of islands.

Key Points

- The genus *Septemeranthus* grows on the plant species *Horsfieldia glabra* (Blume) Warb.
- The genus belongs to the family Loranthaceae, a hemi-parasite under the sandalwood order Santalales and is of widespread importance.
- The parasitic flowering plants have a modified root structure spread on the stem of the tree and are anchored inside the bark of the host tree.
- The plant was found on the periphery of the tropical forest in one of the biodiversity hotspots referred to as the Nicobar group of islands separated from the Andaman group of Islands by a wide gap of 160 km with heavy tidal flows.

Parasitic Plant: The plant that obtains all or part of its nutrition from another plant (the host) without contributing to the benefit of the host and, in some cases, causing extreme damage to the host.

Source: The Hindu

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

Professor Neena Gupta receives Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians 2021

Why in News

- The **Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians** was awarded to Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician of the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, in a virtual ceremony on 22nd February 2022.
- She received the award for the year 2021 for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

Key Points

About Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians:

- The prize is awarded annually to a researcher from a developing country funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Government of India in association with ICTP (International Centre for Theoretical Physics) and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).
- It is given to young mathematicians less than 45 years of age who have conducted outstanding research in a developing country.
- It is given in the memory of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a genius in pure mathematics.

Source: PIB

Atal Tunnel officially recognised as 'Longest Highway Tunnel above 10,000 feet' by World Book of Records

Why in News

- **Atal Tunnel** has officially been certified by World Book of Records as the 'World's Longest Highway Tunnel above 10,000 Feet', during a landmark ceremony on 09 February 2022, in New Delhi.

Key Points

- Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry, Director General of Border Roads Organisation (DGBR) received the award for the stupendous achievement of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in constructing this engineering marvel connecting Manali to the Lahaul - Spiti Valley.
- World Book of Records UK, is an organisation that catalogues and verifies extraordinary records across the world with authentic certification.

About Atal Tunnel:

- Atal Tunnel was dedicated to the Nation by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on October 03, 2020.
- The 9.02 km long Atal Tunnel, that runs under the 'Rohtang Pass' was constructed on the Manali - Leh Highway under the challenging conditions of freezing temperatures in extremely difficult terrain.
- Construction of this tunnel has reduced the distance on Manali - Sarchu road by 46 km and travel time by four to five hours, providing all-weather connectivity on the Manali - Leh axis.

Source: PIB

India's 'Writing With Fire' nominated for Best Documentary Feature at Oscars 2022

Why in News

- Indian documentary "Writing With Fire" has been nominated in the Best Documentary Feature category at the 94th edition of the Academy Awards.

Key Points

- This is the first time an Indian documentary has been nominated for an Academy Award.
- Directed by Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh, "Writing With Fire" chronicles the rise of Khabar Lahariya, India's only newspaper run by Dalit women.
- This film is about fearless Dalit women journalists who are redefining what being powerful means, quintessentially the story of the modern Indian woman.
- The awards ceremony is scheduled to be held on March 27, 2022.

About Academy Awards:

- The Academy Awards, popularly known as the Oscars, are awards for artistic and technical merit in the film industry.
- Given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the awards are an international recognition of excellence in cinematic achievements.
- The first Academy Awards presentation was held on May 16, 1929.

Source: The Hindu

Uttar Pradesh selected as best state tableau of Republic Day parade 2022; Maharashtra wins in popular choice category

- The **tableau of Uttar Pradesh** has been selected as the best tableau among the 12 States/UTs which participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26, 2022.
- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh was based on the theme 'One District One Product and Kashi Vishwanath Dham'.

- The tableaux of the **Ministry of Education and Ministry of Civil Aviation** have been declared as joint winners in the category of Central Ministries/Departments.
- The theme of the tableau of the Ministry of Education & Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship was 'National Education Policy', while the tableau of the Ministry of Civil Aviation was based on the theme 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik'.

Popular Choice Awards:

- In addition, for the first time, the general public was invited to vote for the best marching contingents and best tableaux in the popular choice category through the MyGov platform.
- As per popular choice, the marching contingent of the Indian Air Force has been picked as the best marching contingent among the three Services.
- **Maharashtra** was voted as the best Tableau among the States/UTs in the popular choice category. The tableau of Maharashtra was based on the theme 'Biodiversity and State Bio-symbols of Maharashtra'.

Source: PIB

Important Personality

Padma Shri awardee & Gandhian Shakuntala Chowdhary passes away

- Padma Shri awardee & Gandhian **Shakuntala Chowdhary passed** away at 102.
- Shakuntala Chowdhary, Gandhian from Assam, was honoured with the Padma Shri this year.
- Her life was devoted to selfless service, truth, simplicity and non-violence at Sarania Ashram, Guwahati where Mahatma Gandhi had stayed in 1946.

Source: TOI

Music composer and singer Bappi Lahiri passes away

- Legendary Bollywood music composer and singer Bappi Lahiri passed away at 69.
- Bappi Lahiri, whose real name was Alokesh, was known for delivering popular songs in several films of the late 1970s-80s like Chalte Chalte, Disco Dancer, and Sharaabi.

Source: newsonair

Karnataka's Samanvaya Kavi Nadoja Channaveera Kanavi passes away

- Popularly known as Samanvaya Kavi or the poet of reconciliation, Nadoja Channaveera Kanavi passed away at 93.
- The Central Sahitya Akademi has honoured him with the Akademi award for his collection of poems Jeevadhvani in 1982.
- He is also honoured with the Karnataka Sahitya Akademi Award, Karnataka Rajyotsava Award, Pampa Award and Nadoja honorary D.Litt by Hampi Kannada University.

Source: The Hindu

Rahul Bajaj, former chairman of Bajaj Group, passes away

Industrialist and former chairman of Bajaj Group, Rahul Bajaj passed away at 83. Rahul Bajaj acted as the chairman of the Bajaj Group for 50 years.

He was awarded with the third-highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2001.

Bajaj also served as a Rajya Sabha MP from 2006-10.

Source: Indian Express

The Great Khali joins BJP

Why in News

- World-renowned wrestler '**The Great Khali**', whose real name is **Dalip Singh Rana**, joined the **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)**.

Key Points

- Khali made his professional debut in wrestling in 2000 and was a prominent face in the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) along with other wrestlers such as The Undertaker, John Cena and Kane.
- Khali was inducted into the 2021 WWE hall of fame.
- Before his career in wrestling, he was an assistant sub-inspector in the Punjab Police.

Source: HT

Mahabharat's Bheem aka Praveen Kumar Sobti passes away

- Praveen Kumar Sobti who played the role of Bheem in BR Chopra's Mahabharat, passed away.
- Sobti was 20 when he joined the Border Security Force (BSF), and later represented the country across various athletic events in hammer and discus throw.
- The Arjuna Awardee was a two-time Olympian (1968 Mexico Games and 1972 Munich Games) and four-time Asian Games medallist (two gold, one silver and one bronze)

Source: TOI

Legendary Singer Lata Mangeshkar passes away

- Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar passed away on February 6, 2022.
- The veteran singer, popularly known as the Melody Queen, was 92.
- Government has announced a **two-day national mourning** in memory of Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar. As a mark of respect, the national flag will fly at half-mast for two days.
- Lata Mangeshkar was born on September 28, 1929, to a Marathi and Konkani musician Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar. Originally named Hema, she was the eldest of five siblings, including veteran singer Asha Bhosle.
- Lata Mangeshkar recorded her first playback song for a Marathi film, Kiti Hasaal, at the age of 13, and even acted in a Marathi film, Pahili Mangalagaur in the year 1942.
- In 1946, she recorded her first Hindi film playback song for Aap Ki Seva Mein, directed by Vasant Jogalekar.
- In 1972, Lata Mangeshkar won the first National Award for Best Female Playback Singer for the film Parichay.
- Over the years, the veteran singer won numerous national and international awards including the prestigious Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, the title of Officer of the French Legion of Honour, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, three National Film Awards,

four Filmfare Best Female Playback Awards, Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award and many more.

- In 1984, the State Government of Madhya Pradesh instituted the Lata Mangeshkar Award, while the Government of Maharashtra also instituted a Lata Mangeshkar Award in 1992 to promote singing talent.

Source: India Today

Additional Solicitor General Rupinder Singh Suri passes away

- Senior advocate and Additional Solicitor General (ASG) **Rupinder Singh Suri** passed away.
- Suri was appointed the ASG in June 2020.
- He was designated as senior advocate in 2009 and also served as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association.
- He served as standing counsel in the Supreme Court for Punjab for about 15 years.

Source: ET

Books and Authors

A book titled “A History of Sriniketan: Rabindranath Tagore’s Pioneering Work in Rural Construction” written by historian and Tagore biographer Uma Das Gupta

Why in News

- The book, “A History of Sriniketan: Rabindranath Tagore’s Pioneering Work in Rural Construction”, is written by historian and Tagore biographer Uma Das Gupta.

Key Points

- The book is published under Niyogi Book’s ‘Paper Missile’ imprint.
- It explores Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore’s work for rural reconstruction by setting up ‘Sriniketan’, a wing of his Visva Bharati International University at Santiniketan in 1922.

Note: Poet Rabindranath Tagore won the **Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913** for his collection Gitanjali published in London in 1912.

Source: Indian Express

A book titled “Atal Bihari Vajpayee” authored by Sagarika Ghose

Why in News

Recently, a book titled “Atal Bihari Vajpayee” authored by Sagarika Ghose has been launched.

Key Points

The book is a biography of the former Prime Minister of India “Atal Bihari Vajpayee”. Sagarika Ghose is a senior journalist. She is the author of the bestselling biography *Indira: India’s Most Powerful Prime Minister*.

A book ‘Golden Boy Neeraj Chopra’ penned by Navdeep Singh Gill released

Why in News

- A short biography 'Golden Boy Neeraj Chopra' penned by sports author Navdeep Singh Gill was released.

Key Points

- The biography on Tokyo Olympics-2021 gold medalist Neeraj Chopra was released by chairperson of Punjab Kala Parishad Surjit Patar and president of Punjabi Sahit Akademi Lakhwinder Singh Johal.
- The book has 72 pages and covers the life history and achievements of Neeraj Chopra right from his childhood to the Tokyo Olympics.

Source: HT

A book titled "Fearless Governance" written by Kiran Bedi

Why in News

- Dr. Kiran Bedi, former Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry and IPS, has released his self-written book 'Fearless Governance'.

Key Points

- This book is based on the ground realities of nearly five years of service of Dr. Bedi as Lt. Governor of Puducherry and her vast experience of 40 years in the Indian Police Service (IPS).
- She demonstrated the right practices of responsible governance.

Ruskin Bond's new book, "A Little Book of India: Celebrating 75 years of Independence"

Why in News

- **Ruskin Bond** authored a new book titled "A Little Book of India: Celebrating 75 years of Independence".

Key Points

- The book is an amalgamation of the "physical and spiritual" attributes of India.
- It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).
- **Ruskin Bond** is the recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award, Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar, Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan, among other prestigious awards.

Source: TOI

New Appointments

India to head International Rubber Study Group (IRSG); K.N. Raghavan new Chairman

Why in News

- **India** has been unanimously elected for the new Chairmanship of the **International Rubber Study Group (IRSG)**.
- Head of the Indian delegation to IRSG and Executive Director of Indian Rubber Board **KN Raghavan** will be the chairman for the next 2 years.

Key Points

About International Rubber Study Group (IRSG):

- IRSG is the inter-governmental organisation of natural rubber (NR) and synthetic rubber (SR) producing and consuming countries.
- Its main objective is to improve the transparency of the world rubber market and strengthen the international cooperation on rubber issues.
- **Formed: 1944**

- **Headquarters:** Singapore

Source: The Hindu

G Ashok Kumar appointed as India's first 'National Maritime Security Coordinator'

Why in News

- **Vice Admiral (retd) G Ashok Kumar** has been appointed as India's first '**National Maritime Security Coordinator**' (NMSC).

Key Points

- The decision to appoint Vice Admiral (retd) G Ashok Kumar as the first NMSC can be seen as the fulfillment of long-pending reform, as part of India's consistent efforts to boost its maritime security following the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack.
- Previously, he served as the Indian Navy Vice Chief.
- The portfolio of NMSC will include the coordination among the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), security agencies involved in coastal and maritime security, and 13 coastal states and Union Territories.

Note:

- India has a 7,516-km long coastline including island territories and a two million sq km exclusive economic zone.
- The Union Government has also launched the 'Deep Ocean Mission' for the blue water economy.

Source: newsonair

Vineet Joshi takes charge as new CBSE chairperson

Why in News

- Vineet Joshi, additional secretary in the Ministry of Education, has been assigned the charge of **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** chairperson.

Key Points

- Joshi's appointment comes after his predecessor Manoj Ahuja was appointed as the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the department of agriculture and farmers welfare.
- Currently, he is the Director General of the National Testing Agency (NTA) and also looks after the Institutes of Eminence (IoE), and Higher Education Funding Agency (HEFA), among other verticals of higher education.
- Joshi, a 1992-batch IAS officer had previously also served as the CBSE chairperson.

Source: HT

Former Turkish Airlines chairman Ilker Ayci to be Air India CEO & MD

Why in News

- Former Turkish Airlines chairman Ilker Ayci has been appointed as the CEO & MD of Air India.

Key Points

- The key appointment was finalised at the Air India board meeting, in which Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran was a special invitee.
- Ayci will assume his responsibilities by April 1, 2022.

Note:

- After a competitive bidding process, the government had on October 8 last year sold Air India to Talace Private Limited, a subsidiary of the Tata Group's holding company, for Rs 18,000 crore.
- Air India was started by the Tata Group in 1932. However, after the country got independence, it was nationalised in 1953.

Source: TOI

Munishwar Nath Bhandari new Chief Justice of Madras High Court

Why in News

Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari has been appointed Chief Justice of the Madras High Court.

Key Points

Justice M N Bhandari was transferred to the Madras High Court in November, 2021 and he assumed office as the Acting Chief Justice (ACJ).

Note:

The Madras High Court, officially renamed High Court of Tamil Nadu, is the second oldest High Court of India after the Calcutta High Court in Kolkata.

Chief Justice of India (48th): N V Ramana

Ravi Mital takes charge as Chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

Why in News

- Ravi Mital took charge as Chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI).

Key Points

- Ravi Mital is a 1986 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Bihar cadre.
- Prior to joining the IBBI as Chairperson, he superannuated from the position of Secretary, Department of Sports, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

About Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI):

- It is the regulator for overseeing insolvency proceedings and entities like Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Insolvency Professionals (IP) and Information Utilities (IU) in India.
- It was established on 1 October 2016 and given statutory powers through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, which was passed by Lok Sabha on 5 May 2016.

Source: PIB

Santishree Dhulipadi Pandit appointed first woman Vice-Chancellor of JNU

Why in News

- Santishree Dhulipadi Pandit has been appointed as the first woman Vice-Chancellor of New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) by the Ministry of Education (MoE).

Key Points

- Santishree Dhulipadi Pandit is currently a professor of political science at Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU).
- She has been appointed for five years from the date she assumes the charge as the 13th vice-chancellor of the JNU.

Note: Recently, Professor **Dinesh Prasad Saklani** from HNB Garhwal University has been appointed as the new director of the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**.

Source: TOI

JNU Vice-Chancellor Jagadesh Kumar appointed as Chairman of UGC

Why in News

- Vice-Chancellor of **Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)** **Jagadesh Kumar** has been appointed as the Chairman of **University Grants Commission (UGC)**.

Key Points

- Mr Kumar has been appointed for a period of five years from the date of his assumption of charge of the post or until he attains the age of 65.

About University Grants Commission (UGC):

- UGC is a statutory body set up by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India in accordance with the UGC Act 1956.
- **Founded:** 1956
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

Source: Indian Express

Dr. Madan Mohan Tripathi joins as Director General, NIELIT

Why in News

- Dr. Madan Mohan Tripathi has joined as Director General of National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT).

Key Points

- Before joining NIELIT, Dr. Madan Mohan Tripathi was working as Professor with Delhi Technological University (DTU), New Delhi.
- **National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT)** is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

Source: PIB

Lt Gen Manoj Pande takes over as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff

Why in News

- **Lt Gen Manoj Pande** took over as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff from Lt Gen CP Mohanty who superannuated on 31 January 2022.

Key Points

- An alumnus of National Defence Academy, Lt Gen Manoj Pande was commissioned in December 1982 to the Corps of Engineers (The Bombay Sappers).
- The General Officer commanded an Engineer Regiment during Operation Parakram in the sensitive Pallanwala Sector along the Line of Control of Jammu and Kashmir.
- For his illustrious service he has been conferred with the award of Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Vishisht Seva Medal, the Chief of Army Staff Commendation and GOC-in-C Commendation twice.

Source: HT

Appointment of Dr V Anantha Nageswaran as the Chief Economic Advisor

Why in News

- The Government has appointed **Dr V Anantha Nageswaran** as the **Chief Economic Advisor (CEA)**.
- He succeeds former CEA KV Subramanian who returned to academia at the end of his three-year tenure in December 2021.

Key Points

- Prior to this appointment, Dr. Nageswaran has worked as a writer, author, teacher and consultant.
- He was also a part-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister from 2019 to 2021.
- The CEA plays a key role in bringing out the Economic Survey, which presents the economic report card of the Government during the year and suggestions on possible reforms.

Source: Indian Express

Important Days

February 24, Central Excise Day

Why in News

- Central Excise Day is celebrated every year on February 24 across India to encourage the employees of the excise department to carry out the central excise duty in a better way.

Key Points

- The Central Excise Day is also celebrated to commemorate the Central Excise and Salt Act, which was enacted on February 24, 1944.
- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is responsible for administering Customs, Goods, and Service Tax (GST), Central Excise, Service Tax and Narcotics in India.

Source: India Today

21 February, International Mother Language Day

Why in News

- International Mother Language Day is observed on February 21 every year.

Key Points

- The **theme** of the 2022 International Mother Language Day is “Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities”.

History:

- International Mother Language Day was proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1999.
- The UN General Assembly welcomed the proclamation of the day in its resolution of 2002.

Related Constitutional and Legal Provisions in India:

- Article 29 of the Constitution (Protection of interests of minorities) gives all citizens right to conserve their language and prohibits discrimination on the basis of language.

- Article 120 (Language to be used in Parliament) provides for use of Hindi or English for transactions of Parliament but gives the right to members of Parliament to express themselves in their mother tongue.
- Part XVII of the Indian Constitution deals with the official languages in Articles 343 to 351.
- The Eighth Schedule recognises following 22 languages: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.

Source: un.org

20 February, World Day of Social Justice

Why in News

- World Day of Social Justice is observed on February 20 every year.

Key Points

- The **theme** of World Day of Social Justice 2022 is 'Achieving Social Justice through Formal Employment'.
- The main objective of celebrating World Day of Social Justice is to raise a voice against social injustice and to bring the various communities internationally together to eliminate poverty, gender, and physical discrimination, illiteracy, religious discrimination to make a socially integrated society.

History:

- On 26 November 2007, the UN General Assembly declared that 20 February will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.
- The International Labour Organization unanimously adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on 10 June 2008.

Source: un.org

February 13, World Radio Day

Why in News

World Radio Day is celebrated on 13 February every year.

Key Points

The theme of World Radio Day 2022 is "Radio and Trust".

History

World Radio Day was proclaimed by UNESCO in 2011.

It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 as an International Day.

February 13 was chosen as it is the day on which the United Nations established the United Nations Radio in 1946.

Source: un.org

February 13, National Women's Day

Why in News

National Women's Day is celebrated on the birth anniversary (February 13) of the Nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu.

Key Points

Sarojini Naidu played a major role in India's struggle for freedom against British colonial rule.

She participated in the non-cooperation movement and Quit India movement.

After independence, Sarojini Naidu was appointed as the Governor of the United Provinces which is present-day Uttar Pradesh, making her India's first woman governor.

Note: International Women's Day is celebrated annually on 8 March.

Source: India Today

February 11, International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Why in News

- International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated on 11 February every year.

Key Points

Theme:

- Towards the achievement of SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), the International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly 2022 will focus on the following theme: "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Water Unites Us".

History:

- The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is the 11th day of February, by resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on 22 December 2015.
- The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is implemented by UNESCO and UN Women, in collaboration with intergovernmental agencies and institutions, as well as civil society partners that aim to promote women and girls in science.

Source: un.org

February 10, World Pulses Day

Why in News

- World Pulses Day is observed on 10 February every year to raise awareness about the importance of pulses.

Key Points

- The 2022 World Pulses Day's theme is: "Pulses to empower youth in achieving sustainable agrifood systems".

History:

- On 20 December 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2016 as the International Year of Pulses (IYP).
- The celebration of the year, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), increased the public awareness of the nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production.
- Building on the success of the International Year of Pulses and recognizing their potential to further achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with particular relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 12, 13 and 15, Burkina Faso proposed the observance of World Pulses Day.
- In 2019, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 10 February as the World Pulses Day.

Note: The UN General Assembly recently adopted a resolution, sponsored by India and supported by more than 70 countries, declaring **2023 as the International Year of Millets**.

Source: un.org

February 4, World Cancer Day

Why in News

- World Cancer Day is observed every year on February 4th, to increase the awareness of Cancer globally.

Key Points

- Close the Care Gap is the theme of World Cancer Day 2022-2024.
- World Cancer Day is led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to support the goals of the World Cancer Declaration, written in 2008.
- World Cancer Day was established on 4 February 2000 at the World Cancer Summit Against Cancer for the New Millennium, which was held in Paris.

Note:

- As per ICMR, cancer cases in India would increase by 12% in the next 5 years and about 1.5 million people may be suffering from the disease by the year 2025, up from 1.39 million in 2020.

Source: India Today

February 2, World Wetlands Day

Why in News

- World Wetlands Day is observed every year on February 2.
- 2 February 2022 is the first year that World Wetlands Day will be observed as a United Nations international day, following its adoption by the General Assembly on 30 August 2021 in a resolution co-sponsored by 75 member states.

Key Points

- The **theme** for 2022 is 'Wetlands Action for People and Nature'.
- This day also marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar.

Source: un.org

Indian Coast Guard celebrates its 46th Raising Day

Why in News

- The **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** celebrated its 46th Raising Day on February 1.

Key Points

- From just seven surface platforms in 1978, the ICG has grown into a formidable force with 158 ships and 70 aircraft in its inventory
- It is likely to achieve targeted force levels of 200 surface platforms and 80 aircraft by 2025.
- As the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world, it has played a significant role in securing the Indian coasts and enforcing regulations in the maritime zones of India.

Facts about Indian Coast Guard (ICG):

- **Director General:** Virender Singh Pathania
- **Headquarters:** Ministry of Defence, New Delhi
- **Founded:** 1 February 1977

Source: India Today

World Leprosy Day 2022

Why in News

- **World Leprosy Day (WLD)** is celebrated on the last Sunday of January. In 2022, World Leprosy Day is **30 January**.

Key Points

- The **theme** of World Leprosy Day 2022 is 'United for Dignity' and to create an environment for leprosy people to live a dignified life.
- The day was first initiated in 1954 by French Philanthropist Raoul Follereau who made people know about this ancient disease.
- Data published by WHO in September 2021, for the calendar year 2020, showed a drop in new cases of 37 percent in the previous year.
- Today, about 208,000 people worldwide are infected with leprosy, according to WHO, most of them in Africa and Asia.”

Note: In India, Anti Leprosy Day is observed on 30th January every year, i.e., Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom day.

Source: India Today

Sports

16-year-old Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa defeats World No 1 Chess Player Magnus Carlsen

Why in News

- India's 16-year-old Grandmaster **Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa** created history after he defeated world Number one chess champion, Magnus Carlsen, in the eighth round of the Airthings Masters.

Key Points

- 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.
- Praggnanandhaa shot to fame in 2018 when he became India's youngest and world's second youngest Grandmaster after entering the final round at the Gredine Open in Italy.

Source: newsonair

India becomes No.1 team in ICC T20I rankings for the first time in six years

Why in News

- 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.

Key Points

- 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.
- In this way, Rohit Sharma has become the second captain to take India to the number one position.

Source: newsonair

Mumbai to host 2023 International Olympic Committee session

Why in News

- Mumbai has been officially elected as the host for the **2023 International Olympic Committee (IOC) session**.

Key Points

- India will host the session for the first time since 1983.
- An IOC session is the annual meeting of the members of the IOC, comprising 101 voting members and 45 honorary members.
- It discusses and decides on the key activities of the global Olympics movement including adoption or amendment of the Olympic Charter, the election of IOC members and office bearers and election of the host city of Olympics.

Facts about the International Olympic Committee (IOC):

- **Headquarters:** Lausanne, Switzerland
- **President:** Thomas Bach
- **Founded:** 23 June 1894

Source: Indian Express

Leh to host World Cup cycling event on September 4, 2022

Why in News

- Leh is going to host the first-ever highest level of World Cup cycling event in India on September 4, 2022.

Key Points

- **UCI World Cup Eliminator** event is organized by the UT Ladakh Police in association with City Mountainbike and Cycling Federation of India (CFI).
- With this, Leh will be among world-famous cycling event venues like Abu Dhabi, Barcelona, Paris, and India will be on the cycling chart among Germany, France, Sweden, Indonesia, Brazil, Belgium, Turkey, etc.

Source: newsonair

China PR wins AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 Football Tournament

Why in News

- **China PR (People's Republic)** defeated South Korea (Korea Republic) to win the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 final title at the D.Y. Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, India.

Key Points

- This is the record-extending 9th AFC Women's Asian Cup title won by China.

AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022:

- The AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 was the 20th edition of the AFC Women's Asian Cup.
- India was recommended as the host of the tournament by AFC Women's Football Committee and selected as the host in June 2020.

Source: ndtv

ICC U-19 World Cup 2022: India lifts a record fifth title after beating England

Why in News

- In the **ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2022**, **India** lifted a record fifth title after beating England at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

Key Points

- The 2022 ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup was an international limited-overs cricket tournament.

Note: Earlier, India had won the U19 World Cup in 2000, 2008, 2012, and 2018.

Source: newsonair

IOC approves surfing, skateboarding, and sport climbing for Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games

Why in News

- The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** has formally approved the proposal to include surfing, skateboarding, and sport climbing at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

Key Points

- The decision was made during the 139th IOC session in Beijing, one day ahead of the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022.
- The three sports made their Olympic debut at Tokyo 2020 and will also be featured at the Paris 2024 Games.

Facts about International Olympic Committee (IOC):

- **President:** Thomas Bach
- **Headquarters:** Lausanne, Switzerland
- **Founded:** 23 June 1894

Note:

- Recently, India announced a diplomatic ban on the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics (4 February 2022 – 20 February 2022) after Beijing decided to have Qi Fabao, a PLA regiment commander who sustained head injury while fighting in the Galwan Valley border skirmish with India, as torchbearer during the ‘Torch Relay’.

Source: Indian Express

Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra nominated for 2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award

Why in News

- Tokyo Olympics gold medallist **Neeraj Chopra** has been nominated for **2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award**.

Key Points

- India’s first-ever winner of an Olympic athletics gold medal, Neeraj Chopra has been selected as one of the six nominees for the 2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award.
- The other five sportspersons who have been nominated for the award are Australian Open runner-up Daniil Medvedev, British tennis star Emma Raducanu, Barcelona and Spain footballer Pedri, Venezuelan athlete Yulimar Rojas and Australian swimmer Ariarne Titmus.
- Neeraj Chopra is only the third Indian to be nominated for the award after wrestler Vinesh Phogat in 2019 and cricket star Sachin Tendulkar, who won the Laureus Sporting Moment Award 2000-2020.

Source: newsonair

Unnati Hooda, Kiran George win Odisha Open 2022 titles

- Indian teenager **Unnati Hooda** beat compatriot Smit Toshniwal to claim the women's singles title at the Odisha Open 2022 badminton tournament.
- The 14-year old Unnati is the youngest Indian to win the tournament.
- In men's singles, India's 21-year-old **Kiran George** beat Priyanshu Rajawat to emerge as the winner.
- The **2022 Odisha Open** was a BWF Super 100 tournament that took place at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, Cuttack, Odisha, India.

Source: The Hindu

Chennai Super Kings becomes India's First Sports Unicorn Enterprise

Why in News

- Ahead of the 15th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), **Chennai Super Kings (CSK)**, has become the country's first sports Unicorn Enterprise.

Key Points

- Chennai Super Kings have become the first-ever sports Unicorn in the country to have a market share of Rs 7,600 crore. In the gray market, its share is trading in the price band of Rs 210-225.
- The Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led CSK, which won its fourth IPL title in Dubai last year, now has a market cap more than its parent entity, India Cements.

Note: The Sanjiv Goenka-led RPSG Group bought the Lucknow franchise (Lucknow Super Giants) for Rs 7,090 crore, while CVC Capital acquired the rights for the Ahmedabad franchise for 5,625 crore.

Source: news18

2022 Asian Games

Why in News

- The **2022 Asian Games (19th edition)** will take place from September 10 to September 25, 2022, in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China and there will be five co-host cities.

Key Points

- The multi-sporting event will feature 40 sports with a total of 61 disciplines, including Olympic sports like swimming, archery, athletics, badminton, equestrian, fencing, football, hockey, judo, kabaddi, and much more.
- E-sports and breakdancing will debut in the 2022 Asian Games as full medal sports after being approved by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) this year, while Cricket will be back at Asian Games in T20 format after 11 years.
- India is a member of the South Asian Zone of the Olympic Council of Asia and one of the only seven countries that have competed in all the editions of the Asian Games.

Source: TOI

P R Sreejesh wins World Games Athlete of the Year 2021 Award

Why in News

- Veteran Indian Hockey goalkeeper **P R Sreejesh** has won the prestigious **World Games Athlete of the Year 2021** for his performances, becoming only the second Indian to receive the accolade.

Key Points

- P R Sreejesh was the only Indian nominated and was recommended by the International Hockey Federation.
- Sreejesh is a former captain of the Indian men's hockey team and a member of the bronze medal winning team at the Tokyo Olympics.
- In the FIH Stars Awards in October 2021, Sreejesh was named the goalkeeper of the year for 2021.

Note: In 2020, Indian Women's hockey captain Rani Rampal became the first Indian to win the honour for her 2019 show.

Source: newsonair

Australian Open 2022

- The 2022 Australian Open was a Grand Slam tennis tournament that took place at Melbourne Park, Australia from 17 to 30 January 2022.
- It was the 110th edition of the Australian Open, the 54th in the Open Era, and the first Grand Slam of the year.
- **List of winners:**

Men's singles	Women's singles	Men's doubles	Women's doubles	Mixed doubles
Winner- Rafael Nadal (Spain)	Winner- Ashleigh Barty (Australia)	Winner- Nick Kyrgios (Australia), Thanasi Kokkinakis (Australia)	Winner- Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic), Katerina Siniaková (Czech Republic)	Winner- Kristina Mladenovic (France), Ivan Dodig (Croatia)
Runner-up- Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	Runner-up- Danielle Collins (America)	Runner-up- Matthew Ebden (Australia), Max Purcell (Australia)	Runner-up- Anna Danilina (Kazakhstan), Beatriz Haddad Maia (Brazil)	Runner-up- Jaimee Fourlis (Australia), Jason Kubler (Australia)

Note:

- **Rafael Nadal** defeated Daniil Medvedev in the Australian Open Men's Singles final and clinched a record 21st Grand Slam title.
- World Number one **Ashleigh Barty**, won her first Australian Open title after defeating Danielle Collins of the United States in the Women's Singles final.

Source: newsonair

Women's Asia Cup Hockey 2022: India beat China to win Bronze medal

Why in News

- **India** beat China 2-0 to win a **bronze medal** in the **Women's Asia Cup Hockey tournament 2022** at Muscat in Oman.
- **Japan** defeated South Korea to win the Women's Asia Cup Hockey 2022 title.

Key Points

- The Women's Hockey Asia Cup is a women's international field hockey tournament organized by the Asian Hockey Federation.

- The winning team becomes the champion of Asia and qualifies for the FIH Hockey World Cup.

Source: newsonair



Attempt This Monthly Current Affairs Quiz
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1. World Leprosy Day (WLD) is observed every year on the last Sunday of January. In 2022, what is the theme of World Leprosy Day?

- A. Beat Leprosy, End Stigma and advocate for Mental Wellbeing
- B. United for Dignity
- C. Beat Leprosy, End Stigma
- D. Leprosy isn't what you think

2. Consider the following statements regarding the ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN) meeting-

- i. The 3rd ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN) meeting with India was held.
- ii. The headquarters of ASEAN nation is in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

3. Consider the following statements regarding the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) -

- i. India is the Second-largest pharmaceutical manufacturing country.
- ii. Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya launched NIPER Research Portal.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

4. Who authored the book "A Little Book of India: Celebrating 75 Years of Independence"?

- A. Jhumpa Lahri
- B. Ramachandra Guha
- C. Ruskin Bond
- D. S Y Quraishi

5. India won the bronze medal by defeating which country's team in the Women's Asia Cup Hockey 2022?

- A. Malaysia
- B. China
- C. Singapore
- D. Japan

6. Who has been appointed as the Chief Economic Adviser?

- A. Gita Gopinath
- B. Arvind Subramanian
- C. Krishnamurthy Subramanian
- D. V Anantha Nageswaran

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Economic Survey 2021-22-

i. **The central theme of this year's** Enable Markets, Promote 'Pro-Business'

ii. World Bank's and Asian Development Bank's latest forecasts of real GDP growth of 8.7 percent and 7.5 percent respectively for 2022-23 .

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

8. Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Women –

i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed 25th National Commission for Women Foundation Day programme.

ii. The theme of the programme 'She The Change Maker' is aimed at celebrating the achievements of women in different fields.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

9.The Center has decided to convert how many villages in 12 states into 'Villages of Excellence' with technical assistance from the Government of Israel?

- A. 100 Villages
- B. 125 Villages
- C. 150 Villages
- D. 200 Villages

10.According to the data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's foreign exchange reserves declined by how much million dollars during the week ended January 21, 2022?

- A. 650 Million dollars
- B. 550 Million dollars
- C. 678 Million dollars
- D. 578 Million dollars

11.Rafael Nadal won a record 21st Grand Slam title by defeating whom in the men's singles final of the Australian Open?

- A. Daniil Medvedev
- B. Nick Kyrgios
- C. Matthew Ebden
- D. Novak Djokovic

12.Who authored the book "Fearless Governance"?

- A. Subhash Chandra Garg
- B. Ruskin Bond
- C. Kiran Bedi
- D. Meenakashi Lekhi

13.Consider the following statements regarding the Union Budget 2022-23-

i. India's economic growth is estimated at 9.2 percent, the highest among all large economies.

ii. five hundred new-generation Vande Bharat Trains to be developed over the next three years.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

14. Consider the following statements regarding the University Grants Commission (UGC)-

i. UGC has developed a draft National Higher Educational Qualification Framework (NHEQF), the UGC has clarified that the framework is not intended to promote a uniform curriculum or national common syllabus.

ii. The name of current Chairman of UGC is D.P.Singh.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

15. In which state the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has approved the establishment of the country's first Geo Park?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Gujrat
- C. Madhya Pradesh
- D. Tamil Nadu

16. Which Indian player has won the World Games Athlete of the Year 2021 award?

- A. Rani Rampal
- B. P R Sreejesh
- C. Virat Kohli
- D. Neeraj Chopra

17. Indian Coast Guard (ICG) celebrated which Raising Day on 1st February?

- A. 44th
- B. 45th
- C. 46th
- D. 50th

18. World Wetlands Day is observed every year on which date?

- A. 24 January
- B. 30 January
- C. 04 February
- D. 02 February

19. Consider the following statements regarding the UNESCO World Heritage Sites-

i. Hoysala Temples of Belur, Halebid and Somnathapura in Karnataka have been finalised as India's nomination for consideration as UNESCO World Heritage site for the year 2022-2023.

ii. The latest site to be inscribed is Jaipur City, Rajasthan.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

20. Consider the following statements regarding the 2022 Asian Games-

i. The 2022 Asian Games (18th edition) will take place from September 10 to September 25, 2022, in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China.

ii. E-sports and breakdancing will debut in the 2022 Asian Games as full medal sports after being approved by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).

Which of the statements given above is /are incorrect?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

21. Which country will launch the world's first hydrogen-powered flying boat 'The Jet'?

- A. Singapore
- B. Japan
- C. Dubai
- D. China

22. Which state became the 35th state/UT to implement the One Nation One Ration Card scheme?

- A. Jammu Kashmir
- B. Chhattisgarh
- C. Madhya Pradesh
- D. Laddakh

23. Who took over as the Vice Chief of Army Staff?

- A. R. Hari Kumar
- B. CP Mohanty
- C. J.S. Nain

D. Manoj Pande

24. Who won the women's singles title in the Odisha Open 2022 badminton tournament?

- A. Kiran George
- B. Unnati Hooda
- C. Malvika Bansod
- D. Ashmita Chaliha

25. Consider the following statements regarding the Chandrayaan-3 Launch –

- i. Chandrayaan-3 is scheduled for launch in August 2022
- ii. Chandrayaan-3 will include a modified lander and rover and an orbiter

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

26. Consider the following statements regarding the Virtual Digital Assets-

- i. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget 2022 speech, announced a 25 percent tax on income from virtual digital assets.
- ii. "To define the term "virtual digital asset", a new clause (47A) is proposed to be inserted to section 2 of the Act.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

27. World Cancer Day is observed every year on 4th February, what is the theme of 2022?

- A. I Am and I Will
- B. Close the Care Gap
- C. We can I can
- D. We can Care

28. Who took over as the Director General of National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT)?

- A. Dinesh Kumar Khara
- B. S. K. Mohanty
- C. G.R. Chintala
- D. Madan Mohan Tripathi

29. In the budget 2022-23, the allocation of Khelo India scheme was increased by what percent?

- A. 42 Percent
- B. 45 Percent
- C. 48 Percent
- D. 50 Percent

30. Two more Ramsar sites were announced in India on World Wetlands Day, in which one is Gujarat's Khijadia Wildlife Sanctuary and the Second one Ramsar sites is –

- A. Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary
- B. Beas Conservation Reserve
- C. Bakhira wildlife sanctuary
- D. Chilika Lake

31. Consider the following statements regarding the Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) Scheme-

- i. The Government has decided to continue the Scheme of "Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram" (RYSK) over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).
- ii. The RYSK Scheme is the flagship Central Sector Scheme of the Minister of Labour and Employment.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

32. Consider the following statements regarding the International Olympic Committee (IOC)-

- i. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has formally approved the proposal to include surfing, skateboarding, and sport climbing at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.
- ii. The President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is Thomas Bach.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

33. ICC U-19 World Cup 2022: India lifts a record fifth title after beating which country's team?

- A. England
- B. Australia
- C. Bangladesh
- D. South Africa

34. Who has been appointed the chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC)?

- A. K. Sanjay Murthy
- B. Jagadesh Kumar
- C. Yogesh Singh
- D. Govindan Rangarajan

35. Recently, where did Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicate the 'Statue of Equality' to the nation?

- A. Secunderabad
- B. Gandhinagar
- C. Hyderabad
- D. Ahmedabad

36. Which state/UT has been adjudged as the best tableau among the 12 states/UTs that participated in the Republic Day Parade on January 26, 2022?

- A. Goa
- B. Gujarat
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Uttar Pradesh

37. Who has been appointed as the first woman vice-chancellor of JNU?

- A. Lata Singh
- B. Mallarika Sinha Roy
- C. Navaneetha Mokkil
- D. Santishree Dhulipadi Pandit

38. What has been renamed as Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh?

- A. Narmadapuram
- B. Govindpuram
- C. Makhan Nagar
- D. Ramnadipuram

39. Consider the following statements Interim Report of Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission-

- i. The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Delimitation Commission has changed the complexion of most of the 90 Assembly seats.
- ii. The Delimitation Commission is appointed by the Governor of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

40. Consider the following Statements regarding the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI)-

- i. Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0.
- ii. IMI 4.0 will have three rounds and will be conducted in 416 districts (including 75 districts identified for Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav) across 33 States/UTs in the country.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

41. Which state government launched 'Paraya Shikshalay' (Neighborhood School), an open-air classroom program for students of classes 1 to 7?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. West Bengal
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Odisha

42. In which city did BCCI President Sourav Ganguly lay the foundation stone of the world's third largest cricket stadium?

- A. Mumbai
- B. Kolkata
- C. Jaipur
- D. Chennai

43. Consider the following statements regarding the National Ropeways Development Programme-

- i. Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23 announced National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala”.
- ii. The finance minister announced that contracts for 10 ropeway projects for a length of 60 km would be awarded in 2022-23 .

Which of the statements given above is /are not correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

44. Consider the following statements regarding the Powerthon-2022 –

- i. Powerthon-2022 is being launched in line with the aim of Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) introduced by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
- ii. Its main objective is to reduce the AT&C deficit by 20-25 percent and eliminate the ACOS-ARR gap by 2024-25 .

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

45. China PR (People's Republic) won the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 football tournament by defeating which country's team?

- A. India
- B. Sri Lanka
- C. South Korea
- D. Australia

46. Which has become the first union territory to be integrated with the National Single Window System?

- A. Chandigarh
- B. Delhi

- C. Jammu and Kashmir
- D. Puducherry

47. The central government aims to increase the installed renewable energy capacity by how much (GW) by 2030?

- A. 400 GW
- B. 500 GW
- C. 600 GW
- D. 1000 GW

48. Who has been appointed as the state's brand ambassador by the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami?

- A. Akshay Kumar
- B. Rishabh Pant
- C. Aamir Khan
- D. Shilpa Shetty

49. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)'-

- i. The 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)' has been extended for a period of 2021-22 to 2025-26 with an allocation of Rs 4,600 crore.
- ii. In May 2017, the Center had launched SAMPADA (Scheme for Development of Agro-Marine Processing and Agro-Processing Clusters) with an allocation of Rs 6,000 crore.

Which of the statements given above is /are not correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

50. Consider the following statements regarding the Nai Roshni Scheme-

- i. Nai Roshni scheme is a Central Sector Scheme for women belonging to minority community in the age group of 25 to 65 years.
- ii. The Scheme was started in 2012-13

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii

D. Neither i nor ii

51. World Pulses Day is celebrated every year to raise awareness about the importance of pulses.

- A. 2 February
- B. 4 February
- C. 6 February
- D. 10 February

52. Which Indian film has been nominated in the Best Documentary Feature category at the 94th edition of the Academy Awards?

- A. Sarimen
- B. Writing With Fire
- C. India's Daughter
- D. Meru

53. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)?

- A. Dinesh Kumar Khara
- B. Madan Mohan Tripathi
- C. Ravi Mittal
- D. Dinesh Prashad Saklani

54. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and which international agency announced a new partnership under the Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Health Care (SAMRIDH) initiative.

- A. United Nations Organization (UN)
- B. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- C. World Economic Forum (WEF)
- D. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

55. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Accelerate Vigyan' Scheme'

i. Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament, has invited applications under 'ABHYAAS', a program of 'Accelerate Vigyan' Scheme'.

ii. 'Accelerate Vigyan' aims to expand the research base in the country, with three broad goals.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii

- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

56. Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)-

- i. ISRO has launched a total of 150 satellites of Indian Origin and 342 foreign satellites belonging to 36 countries of which nearly 39 satellites are commercial satellites.
- ii. India has a total of 53 operational satellites in space. 21 of these are communication satellites, 8 are Navigation satellites, 21 are Earth Observation Satellites and 3 are Science Satellites.

Which of the statements given above is /are incorrect?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

57. When is the International Day of Women and Girls in Science observed every year?

- A. 4 February
- B. 6 February
- C. 11 February
- D. 28 February

58. Where will India's first biomass-based hydrogen plant be set up?

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Chhattishgarh
- D. Karnataka

59. India will provide grant to which country to implement the 'Unity Digital Identity Framework', which is based on Aadhar card?

- A. Bhutan
- B. Bangladesh
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Afghanistan

60. One Ocean Summit is being organized by which country in collaboration with United Nations and World Bank during 9-11 February 2022?

- A. Germany
- B. France
- C. Japan
- D. Canada

61. Consider the following statements regarding the "SMILE" scheme"-

- i. Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar launched the Central Sector scheme "SMILE: Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise".
- ii. The Ministry has allocated Rs. 365 Crore for the scheme from 2021-22 to 2025-26

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

62. Consider the following statement regarding the 'EIU's Democracy Index 2021-

- i. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), India has ranked 45th position in the 2021 Democracy Index's global ranking.
- ii. With the highest score of 9.75, Finland topped the Democracy Index, and the top three country is, Finland, Norway and New Zealand.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

63. National Women's Day is celebrated every year on 13th February in the memory of which woman?

- A. Mother Teresa
- B. Sarojini Naidu
- C. Kalpana Chawla
- D. Indira Gandhi

64. What is the theme of World Radio Day 2022 this time?

- A. Radio and Trust
- B. New World, New Radio
- C. New World, New Radio - Evolution, Innovation, Connection

D. Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace

65. Who authored the book "Atal Bihari Vajpayee"?

- A. Rajiv Kumar Bhatia
- B. J Sai Deepak
- C. Ruskin Bond
- D. Sagarika Ghose

66. Who has been appointed as the Chief Justice of Madras High Court?

- A. Satish Chandra Sharma
- B. A.K. Goswami
- C. Munishwar Nath Bhandari
- D. Rakash Srivastava

67. Consider the following statements regarding the Char Dham project –

i. The strategic 700-km-long Char Dham project worth ₹12,000 crore aims to provide all-weather connectivity to four holy towns – Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath – in Uttarakhand.

ii. Chairman of Supreme Court panel on Char Dham project Ravi Chopra resigns.

Which of the statements given above is /are incorrect?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

68. Consider the following statements regarding the Japanese Industrial Townships (JITs) in India-

i. Japan is the only country to have dedicated country-centric industrial townships across India. There are currently 114 Japanese companies in JITs.

ii. The two countries had established diplomatic relations in April 1950. This year marks the 72th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

69.44-member contingent of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has gone to which country to participate in the Air Show-2022, scheduled from February 15 to 18?

- A. Australia
- B. Singapore
- C. Malaysia
- D. United Kingdom

70.Which district's Central Jail in Madhya Pradesh has started its own radio channel 'Jail Vani-FM 18.77'?

- A. Indore
- B. Jabalpur
- C. Bhopal
- D. Ujjain

71.How many crore rupees has been allocated by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for various activities related to Medaram Jatara 2022?

- A. 2.5 Crore
- B. 1.25 Crore
- C. 2.10 Crore
- D. 2.26 Crore

72.ISRO successfully launched Earth observation satellite EOS-04 with how many satellites?

- A. One
- B. Two
- C. Three
- D. Four

73.Consider the following Statements regarding the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)-

- i. AB PM-JAY provides health assurance of up to Rs. 4 Lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care-related hospitalizations.
- ii. National Health Authority (NHA) is mandated with the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

74. Consider the following statements regarding the India-Australia Interim Trade Agreement-

i. India and Australia have announced that they are set to conclude an Interim Trade Agreement in March 2022 and a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) 12-18 months thereafter

ii. Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at about \$12.5 billion in FY21 and has already surpassed \$17.7 billion in the first 10 months of FY22.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

75. Recently, who has been appointed as the CEO and MD of Air India.

- A. Ashwani Lohani
- B. Iiker Ayci
- C. Ashwani Bhatia
- D. Sunil Bhaskaran

76. Which company has become the first Indian 'Plastic Waste Neutral' FMCG?

- A. Britannia Industries Ltd
- B. Patanjali Ayurved Limited
- C. Dabur India Ltd
- D. Marico Ltd

77. The Government of India has reduced the Agriculture Cess on Crude Palm Oil (CPO) from 7.5 percent to what percent?

- A. 6.5 Percent
- B. 7 Percent
- C. 5 Percent
- D. 5.5 Percent

78. Monpa tribal community belongs to which state who celebrated their traditional Torgya Festival recently?

- A. Manipr
- B. Nagaland
- C. Arunachal Pradesh
- D. Mizoram
- E. Sikkim

79. Consider the following regarding the "New India Literacy Programme"-

i. Government approved a new scheme "New India Literacy Programme" for the period FYs 2022-2027 to cover all the aspects of Adult Education to align with National Education Policy 2020

ii. The scheme will cover non-literates of the age of 12 years and above in all state/UTs in the country.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

80. Consider the following statements regarding the "New Frontiers: A Programme on Renewable Energy"-

i. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)'s programme "New Frontiers: A programme on Renewable Energy" and In the past 7 years, India has increased its installed capacity of 395,000 MW whereas our peak demand is 100,000 MW.

ii. Under this scheme Diesel pumps will be replaced by solar pumps in the agricultural sector by 2030

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

81. Musician and singer Bappi Lahiri passed away recently, when did he receive the Lifetime Achievement Award?

- A. 2012
- B. 2015
- C. 2018
- D. 2020

82. Who took over as the new chairman of CBSE?

- A. V K Tripathi
- B. M. Jagadesh Kumar
- C. Ravi Mittal

D. Vineet Joshi

83.NITI Aayog has launched Fintech Open Hackathon in association with?

- A. Phone pe
- B. Google Pay
- C. BHIM
- D. PayTM

84.Which poet from Karnataka, who was awarded the Academy Award in 1982 for his poetry collection Jeevadhvani, passed away recently?

- A. Narayan Debnath
- B. R Rajamohan
- C. Nadoja Channaveera Kanavi
- D. Rupinder Singh Suri

85.Consider the Following Statements regarding the India-UAE Virtual Summit-

- i. India is celebrating 75 years of its Independence as Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and UAE is celebrating the 60th anniversary of its foundation. and UAE is India's third largest trade partner.
- ii. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE (United Arab Emirates) Armed Forces, H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan will hold a Virtual Summit on February 18, 2022

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

86.Consider the following statements regarding the Capacity Development Scheme-

- i. The Cabinet has approved the continuation of the Capacity Development (CD) Scheme till 31.03.2026 or till further review, whichever is earlier, subject to the adherence to Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC)
- ii. The outlay approved for the continuation of the Scheme during 15th Finance Commission cycle is ₹3179 crore.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii

D. Neither i nor ii

87. Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and AYUSH Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated water taxi service for the citizens of which city?

- A. Panaji
- B. Mumbai
- C. Kozhikode
- D. Visakhapatnam

88. Who will chair the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023?

- A. Japan
- B. Russia
- C. India
- D. China

89. Which organization launched Quit Tobacco App ('Quit Tobacco App')?

- A. United States Agency for International Development
- B. CARE International
- C. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- D. World Health Organization

90. Which ministry released the notified Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia Policy?

- A. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- B. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
- C. Ministry of Heavy Industries
- D. Ministry of Power

91. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Har Ghar Jal' under Jal Jeevan Mission Scheme'-

i. Chamba, an Aspirational District of Himachal Pradesh has become the 150th 'Har Ghar Jal' District.

ii. Chamba is the fifth aspirational district to become 'Har Ghar Jal'.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

92. Consider the following statements regarding the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) Scheme-

- i. The Government has approved the scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) for continuation till 31.03.2026 or till further review, whichever is earlier.
- ii. The proposal entails an expenditure of Rs. 12929.16 crore out of which Central Share is Rs. 8120.97 crores and the State Share is of Rs. 4808.19 crores.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

93. Which Indian city will host the international Olympic committee session in 2023?

- A. Delhi
- B. Mumbai
- C. Gautam Buddha Nagar
- D. Bengaluru

94. When is International Mother Language Day celebrated?

- A. 11 February
- B. 20 February
- C. 21 February
- D. 28 February

95. Which will be the first country to adopt India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) system?

- A. Bangladesh
- B. Nepal
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Myanmar

96. Who has been appointed as India's first 'National Maritime Security Coordinator' (NMSC)?

- A. R. Hari Kumar
- B. Atul Kumar Jain
- C. S.N Ghormade
- D. G Ashok Kumar

97. Consider the following statements regarding the Meri Policy Mere Hath' Scheme-

i. It is a doorstep distribution drive to be launched to deliver crop insurance policies to farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

ii. PMFBY has successfully entered its 8th year of implementation with the upcoming Kharif 2022 season, completing 7 years of its implementation.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

98. Consider the following statements regarding the Umbrella scheme-

i. The Centre has approved the continuation of the Central Sector Umbrella Scheme of "Border Infrastructure and Management" (BIM) over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle from 2021-22 to 2025-26

ii. India's border with Pakistan is 3,323 km long, including about 775 km of the Line of Control.

Which of the statements given above is /are incorrect?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

99. "A History of Sriniketan: Rabindranath Tagore's Pioneering Work in Rural Construction", Tagore biography is authored by?

- A. Pankaj Mishra
- B. Dharendra K Jha
- C. Jayant Ghoshal
- D. Uma Das Gupta

100. The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Air Force of which country are going to participate in a bilateral exercise named Eastern Bridge-VI at Air Force Station, Jodhpur from February 21 to 25, 2022?

- A. France
- B. Singapore
- C. Oman
- D. Russia

101. According to the Hurun India Wealth Report 2021, the number of dollar-millionaire households in India has increased by what percent over the previous year?

- A. 10 Percent
- B. 11 Percent
- C. 15 Percent
- D. 20 Percent

102. The Government of India will organize which week-long commemoration from February 22 across the country?

- A. Vigyan Sarvatra Puja Week
- B. Cancer Awareness Week
- C. Road Safety Week
- D. International Development Week

103. Consider the following statements regarding the National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme (NMMSS)-

i. Government has approved the continuation of Central Sector National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS) over the 15th Finance Commission cycle for a period of five years i.e., from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with financial outlay of Rs. 1827.00 crore.

ii. The eligibility criteria for this scheme such as increasing the income limit from Rs 1.5 lakh per annum to Rs 2.5 lakh per annum and the renewal criteria under the scheme are to be revised.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

104. Consider the following statements regarding the PM CARES for Children Scheme-

i. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has extended the PM CARES for Children Scheme till 28th February 2022. Earlier the scheme was valid till 31st December 2021

ii. PM Cares for Children scheme provides assistance to these children through convergence approach and provides monthly stipend from the age of 18 years, and a lump sum amount of Rs 10 lakhs on attaining the age of 23 years.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

105. Which country became the number 1 team in ICC T20I rankings for the first time in six years?

- A. India
- B. Pakistan
- C. New Zealand
- D. England

106. Who has been awarded the young mathematician Ramanujan Prize 2021?

- A. Ritabrata Munshi
- B. Neena Gupta
- C. Carolina Araujo
- D. Urmila Balawant Apte

107. Who has been awarded the Best Actor Award at the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival 2022?

- A. Sidharth Malhotra
- B. Allu Arjun
- C. Ranveer Singh
- D. Manoj Bajpayee

108. Which of the following will be cultivated under Aroma Mission of CSIR-IIIM in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir as a part of Purple Revolution?

- A. verbena
- B. Butterfly Bush
- C. Blue Hydrangea
- D. Lavender

109. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Scheme-

- i. The program envisages the completion of 2.95 crore PMAY-G houses with all basic amenities by the year 2025.
- ii. As of 21st February 2022, a total of 1.73 crores PMAY-G houses have been completed against the allocated cumulative target of 2.62 crore houses

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

110. Consider the following statements regarding the Ayush Start-up Challenge-

i. The All-India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in association with Startup India has launched the 'Ayush Start-up Challenge'. The winners of 'Ayush Start-up Challenge' will receive both a cash prize and incubation support from the AIIA.

ii. Ayush market is currently estimated to be around \$10 bn and it is projected to see a 50 percent increase over the course of the next five years.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

111. Who created history by defeating world number one chess champion Magnus Carlsen?

- A. Abhimanyu Mishra
- B. Gukesh
- C. Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa
- D. Mitrabha Guha

112. Which country will chair the International Rubber Study Group (ISRG)?

- A. India
- B. Bangladesh
- C. China
- D. Singapore

113. The latest edition of Indian Navy's multilateral exercise MILAN 2022 is about to begin in which state?

- A. Goa
- B. Visakhapatnam
- C. Mumbai
- D. Kochi

114. When is the Central Excise Day celebrated every year across India to encourage the employees of the Excise Department?

- A. 18 February
- B. 21 February
- C. 24 February
- D. 28 February

115. Consider the Following statements regarding the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA Scheme-

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

ii. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2006 (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'.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

116. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme-

i. 24th February, 2022 is the third anniversary of the launch of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme.

ii. The scheme was initially meant for small and marginal farmers (SMFs) having landholding upto 2 hectares, but scope of the scheme was extended to cover all landholding farmers with effect from 01.06.2020

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

117. Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and which institute together demonstrated Quantum Key Distribution between Prayagraj and Vindhyachal?

- A. Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
- B. Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur
- C. Indian Institute of Technology Mumbai
- D. Indian Institute of Science

118. Defense Accounts Department (DAD) of the Ministry of Defense signed a MoU with whom to cover pension services under the Sparsh initiative?

- A. Infosys
- B. Services India Limited
- C. Common Services Centers
- D. Tata Consultancy Services

119. Which anniversary of the National War Memorial (NWM) will be celebrated on 25 February?

- A. Second
- B. Third
- C. Fourth
- D. Fifth

120. National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and which international organization signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on the jointly formed 'Sustainable Cities India Programme'?

- A. World Bank
- B. United Nations Population Fund
- C. Asian Development Bank
- D. World Economic Forum

###ANSWERS###

1. Ans. B.	21. Ans. C.	41. Ans. B.	61. Ans. C.	81. Ans. C.	101. Ans. B.
2. Ans. B.	22. Ans. B.	42. Ans. C.	62. Ans. D.	82. Ans. D.	102. Ans. A.
3. Ans. B.	23. Ans. D.	43. Ans. B.	63. Ans. B.	83. Ans. A.	103. Ans. A.
4. Ans. C.	24. Ans. B.	44. Ans. D.	64. Ans. A.	84. Ans. C.	104. Ans. C.
5. Ans. B.	25. Ans. A.	45. Ans. C.	65. Ans. D.	85. Ans. B.	105. Ans. A.
6. Ans. D.	26. Ans. B.	46. Ans. C.	66. Ans. C.	86. Ans. C.	106. Ans. B.
7. Ans. B.	27. Ans. B.	47. Ans. B.	67. Ans. A.	87. Ans. B.	107. Ans. C.
8. Ans. B.	28. Ans. D.	48. Ans. A.	68. Ans. A.	88. Ans. C.	108. Ans. D.
9. Ans. C.	29. Ans. C.	49. Ans. D.	69. Ans. B.	89. Ans. D.	109. Ans. B.
10. Ans. C.	30. Ans. C.	50. Ans. B.	70. Ans. A.	90. Ans. D.	110. Ans. C.
11. Ans. A.	31. Ans. A.	51. Ans. D.	71. Ans. D.	91. Ans. B.	111. Ans. C.
12. Ans. C.	32. Ans. C.	52. Ans. B.	72. Ans. B.	92. Ans. C.	112. Ans. A.

13. Ans. A.	33. Ans. A.	53. Ans. C.	73. Ans. B.	93. Ans. B.	113. Ans. B.
14. Ans. C.	34. Ans. B.	54. Ans. D.	74. Ans. C.	94. Ans. C.	114. Ans. C.
15. Ans. C.	35. Ans. C.	55. Ans. C.	75. Ans. B.	95. Ans. B.	115. Ans. A.
16. Ans. B.	36. Ans. D.	56. Ans. A.	76. Ans. C.	96. Ans. D.	116. Ans. C.
17. Ans. C.	37. Ans. D.	57. Ans. C.	77. Ans. C.	97. Ans. A.	117. Ans. A.
18. Ans. D.	38. Ans. A.	58. Ans. A.	78. Ans. C.	98. Ans. D.	118. Ans. C.
19. Ans. A.	39. Ans. A.	59. Ans. C.	79. Ans. A.	99. Ans. D.	119. Ans. B.
20. Ans. A.	40. Ans. C.	60. Ans. B.	80. Ans. D.	100. Ans. C.	120. Ans. D.