

A blurred background image of a student with glasses sitting at a desk, using a laptop. The student's hands are visible, one holding a blue pen and the other on the keyboard. The image is partially obscured by a large purple and orange graphic overlay on the left side.

Monthly Current Affairs April 2022

मासिक समसामयिकी 2022

Monthly Current Affairs

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International Relations

World will face at least 560 climate disasters every year by 2030: UN

Why in News

- The world will face around 560 disasters every year by 2030, warned the United Nations in a new report.



Key Points

- The world has experienced 350-500 medium- to large-scale disasters every year over the last 20 years.
- This is five times higher than the previous three decades, the **Global Assessment Report (GAR 2022)** recently released by the United Nations.
- The **UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)** released the report ahead of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in May, 2022.
- The rapid rise in the disaster frequency can be attributed to climate change and inadequate risk management.
- As the Sendai Framework's mid-term review is underway, this report should be a wake-up call that countries need to accelerate action across the framework's four priorities to prevent escalating disasters.
- An additional 37.6 million people are estimated to be living in conditions of extreme poverty due to the impacts of climate change and disasters by 2030.
- A majority of countries that face a high disaster risk are also among those with the highest share of population living under the national poverty line.
- These include the Philippines, Bangladesh, Myanmar, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Vietnam from the Asia-Pacific region.

Source: DTE

India's Russian Crude buy since Ukraine conflict double than 2021 purchase

Why in News

- India has bought more than twice as much crude oil from Russia in the two months since its invasion of Ukraine as it did in the whole of 2021.
- India has taken advantage of discounted prices to ramp up oil imports from Russia at a time when global energy prices have been rising.



Key Points

- After the US and China, India is the world's third-largest consumer of oil, over 80% of which is imported.
- But in 2021, only around 2% of its total oil imports (12 million barrels of Urals crude) came from Russia, according to Kpler, a commodities research group.
- But so far, the amount of Urals oil contracts made for India covering March, April, May and June - around 26 million barrels - is higher than the quantity purchased during the whole of 2021, according to Kpler.
- Following its invasion of Ukraine, there are now fewer buyers for Russia's Ural crude oil, with some foreign governments and companies deciding to shun Russian energy exports, and its price has fallen.

Source: BBC

European Union (EU) Digital Services Act (DSA)

Why in News

- The European Parliament and European Union (EU) Member States announced that they had reached a political agreement on the **Digital Services Act (DSA)**.



Key Points

- **Digital Services Act (DSA)** is a landmark legislation to force big Internet companies to act against disinformation and illegal and harmful content, and to “provide better protection for Internet users and their fundamental rights”.
- It seeks to end the era of self-regulation by tech companies, and give ‘practical effect to the principle that what is illegal offline, should be illegal online’.
- It will apply to a “large category of online services, from simple websites to Internet infrastructure services and online platforms.”

Background:

- The Commission made its proposal on the **Digital Services Act** on 15 December 2020, together with the proposal for the **Digital Markets Act**, on which the European Parliament and Council reached a political agreement on 22 March 2022.
- The political agreements on these two files will work together to ensure a safe, open and fair online environment in the EU.

Note: In India, a bill (Data Protection Bill 2019) on similar issue is pending in Parliament.

Source: Indian Express



Border Haat at India-Bangladesh border in Meghalaya opens after two years

Why in News

- The **Border Haat** at India-Bangladesh border in Meghalaya was opened after a gap of two years.



Key Points

- The decision to open the Border Haat between Balat in East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya and Lauwaghar at Dalora in Sunamganj District of Bangladesh was taken by the Joint Border Haat Management Committee.
- At present, India and Bangladesh have seven established Border Haats and nine more new Border Haats are in the pipeline.
- **Border Haats** enable local residents on both sides of the border to trade the local produce.

Note: As of 2021, India has border Haats only with 4 of its BIMSTEC neighbours, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal.

Source: newsonair

World military spending at all-time high despite pandemic: SIPRI

Why in News

- World military spending continued to grow in 2021, reaching an all-time high of \$2.1 trillion despite the economic fallout of the pandemic, according to new data on global military spending published by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.



Key Points

- The five largest spenders in 2021 were the U.S, China, India, the U.K and Russia, together accounting for 62% of expenditure.
- India's military spending of \$76.6 billion ranked third highest in the world. This was up by 0.9% from 2020 and by 33% from 2012.
- In a drive to strengthen the indigenous arms industry, 64% of capital outlays in the 2021 Indian military budget were earmarked for acquisitions of domestically produced arms.
- As a result of a sharp economic recovery in 2021, the global world military expenditure as a share of the world gross domestic product (GDP), fell by 0.1 percentage points, from 2.3% in 2020 to 2.2% in 2021.

About Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI):

- SIPRI is an international institute based in Stockholm.



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- It was founded in 1966 and provides data, analysis and recommendations for armed conflict, military expenditure and arms trade as well as disarmament and arms control.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Elon Musk acquires Twitter for \$44 billion

Why in News

- American billionaire Elon Musk reached an agreement to buy Twitter for roughly \$44 billion.



Key Points

- The deal, which was unanimously approved by Twitter's board, is expected to close this year. Under the deal, Twitter's shares will be delisted and it will be taken private.

About Twitter:

- Twitter is an American microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interacts with messages known as "tweets".
- **CEO:** Parag Agrawal

Source: [Indian Express](#)

World's poorest countries need \$600 million a year for water, sanitation in healthcare centres: WaterAid

Why in News

- According to a new report, around \$600 million a year is required to provide water and sanitation in the healthcare centres in some of the poorest countries by 2030.
- The analysis by **WaterAid**, an international non-governmental organisation, is based on a latest research paper published in the journal Lancet, which focused on the lack of water, sanitation and hygiene access in health facilities in the **46 Least-Developed Countries (LDC)**.



Key Points

- Around \$6.5-9.6 billion will be needed from 2021 to 2030 to achieve water and sanitation provision in every public health facility in the world's poorest countries.
- Domestic public resources are a critical source of finance for achieving universal access to **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**.



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- Half of healthcare facilities in LDCs lack basic water services and 60 percent have no sanitation services.
- One in four healthcare facilities in the world lacks basic water services, said the first comprehensive global assessment of WASH in healthcare facilities by WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene.
- Arounds 75 percent of global funding for water and sanitation is now in the form of loans.
- WaterAid is calling on the world's richest countries, including the G7 who will meet in Germany in June 2022, to deliver on the \$600 million annual funding gap in order to provide lifesaving water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to healthcare centres in some of the poorest countries by 2030.

Source: DTE

Yemeni president Abdrabbuh Hadi steps down under Saudi pressure

Why in News

- Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, President of Yemen stepped down under pressure from Saudi Arabia and is now under de-facto house arrest.

Key Points

- Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi stepped down after 7 years of war in the country and handed over his power to the newly created presidential council, which consists of 8 political leaders.
- The council's formation was announced following inter-Yemeni consultations in Saudi Arabia's capital of Riyadh, where the Saudi leadership called on the council to initiate talks with the Houthis to establish peace in Yemen, which had been torn by violent conflict for years.

Facts about Yemen:

- Yemen, officially the Republic of Yemen, is a country in Western Asia, on the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula.
- **Capital:** Sana'a
- **Currency:** Yemeni rial

Source: Business Standard



Ukraine requests US to designate Russia as a “State Sponsor of Terrorism”

Why in News

- Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has asked President Joe Biden to designate Russia as a “**State Sponsor of Terrorism**”, which would activate perhaps the harshest suite of sanctions available with the United States against the government of President Vladimir Putin.



Key Points

- The US Secretary of State (the minister primarily in charge of foreign relations) has the power to designate countries that “have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism” as “State Sponsors of Terrorism”.
- The US can place **four categories of sanctions** on countries that are on this list: restrictions on US foreign assistance; a ban on defence exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.
- Sanctions can also be placed on countries and persons that engage in certain trade with designated countries.

Countries on the list:

- As of now, there are four countries on the list of state sponsors of terrorism.
- The first to be designated among them was Syria (December 29, 1979), followed by Iran (January 19, 1984), and North Korea (November 20, 2017). Cuba was re-designated as a state sponsor of terrorism on January 12, 2021.

Statutes authorising designation:

- There are currently three statutes that authorise the Secretary of State to designate a foreign government for repeatedly providing support for acts of international terrorism:
 - Section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961
 - Section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA)
 - Section 1754(c) of the Export Controls Act of 2018

Source: Indian Express



Global Wind Report 2022

Why in News

- The **Global Wind Report for 2022** has been published by the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC).

Key Points

Highlights of the Report:

- Wind energy installations every year across the world must quadruple from the 94 GW installed in 2021 within this decade to meet the global climate targets.
- Without the necessary amplification, restricting global warming over pre-industrial levels to 1.5 degrees Celsius — a target set by the Paris Agreement — and achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050 may become difficult.
- New offshore installations in 2022 are likely to decline to the 2019 / 2020 levels, primarily due to the reduction of installations in China.
- However, market growth is expected to regain momentum from 2023, eventually passing the 30GW-mark in 2026.
- Carbon dioxide emissions can reduce by 0.3-1.61 gigatonnes every year by 2050 if offshore wind energy generation is scaled up.

Scope in India:

- In India, more than 1.4 GW of wind was installed in 2021, exceeding the 1.1 GW of installations during the previous year.
- The Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has set a target of installing 5 GW of offshore capacity by 2022 and 30 GW by 2030. India is yet to develop its offshore wind energy facility.
- India can generate 127 GW of offshore wind energy with its 7,600 km of coastline.

Related Initiatives:

- National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy
- National Offshore Wind Energy Policy

Source: DTE



India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

Why in News

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh along with External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar participated in the **4th India-USA 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** on April 11, 2022 in Washington DC. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin represented the United States.
- All four high officials were present as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden met virtually on April 11, ahead of the 2+2 dialogue.



Key Points

Dialogue with the US:

- The US is India's oldest and most important 2+2 talks partner.
- The first 2+2 dialogue between the two countries was held during the Trump Administration, when then Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and then Secretary of Defence James Mattis met the late Sushma Swaraj and then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi in September 2018.
- The second and third editions of the 2+2 dialogues were held in Washington DC and New Delhi in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

Defence and strategic agreements:

- India and the US have signed a troika of "foundational pacts" for deep military cooperation, beginning with the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, followed by the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) after the first 2+2 dialogue in 2018, and then the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020.

2+2 talks between India and allies:

- The 2+2 dialogue is a format of meeting of the foreign and defence ministers of India and its allies on strategic and security issues.
- India has 2+2 dialogues with four key strategic partners: the US, Australia, Japan, and Russia. Besides Russia, the other three countries are also India's partners in the Quad.

Source: Indian Express



UNGA votes to suspend Russia from Human Rights Council

Why in News

- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** has suspended **Russia** from the **Human Rights Council (HRC)** amid its ongoing war with Ukraine.



Key Points

- The resolution titled 'Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council' was adopted with 93 votes in favour, 24 against and 58 abstentions, including India.
- With this, Russia became the second country to have its membership rights stripped at the rights council, which was established in 2006.
- In 2011, Libya was suspended by the assembly.

About United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC):

- The United Nations Human Rights Council is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Founded: 15 March 2006

Source: Indian Express

Forbes World's Billionaires List 2022

Why in News

- Recently, Forbes has released the 36th Annual World's Billionaires List 2022.
- Elon Musk has topped the list for the first time.



Key Points

Top 3 on the Forbes World's Billionaires List 2022:

Rank	Name	Net Worth	Source of wealth
1	Elon Musk	\$219 billion	Tesla, SpaceX
2	Jeff Bezos	\$171 billion	Amazon



3	Bernard Arnault & family	\$158 billion	LVMH
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- Forbes found 2,668 billionaires around the globe for the 2022 World's Billionaires list, down from a record 2,755 last year.
- Collectively, they're worth \$12.7 trillion, down from a record \$13.1 trillion on the 2021 list.
- The U.S. still reigns supreme, with 735 billionaire citizens, 11 more than in 2021.
- **India's Mukesh Ambani**, Chairman of RIL has ranked 10th position on the global list with a net worth of \$90.7 billion.

Source: [forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com)

India hosts Clean Energy Ministerial Senior Officials meeting

Why in News

- India is hosting the **Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) Senior Officials meetings** starting from 6 April, 2022. This will conclude on 8 April.
- The meeting will also be used to prepare the agenda for the upcoming Clean Energy Ministerial Meeting in September 2022.



Key Points

- The meeting is being organised to review the work of various work streams in Clean Energy Policies.
- The Government of India and the United Kingdom lead the plenary dialogue on the future of Energy Transition.
- This was followed by discussions on topics such as Clean Power, Green Steel, and Hydrogen.
- International Energy Agency, International Renewable Energy Agency and UN High Level Action Champions presented the findings of the State of Sectoral Transitions (SoST) draft report.

About Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM):

- CEM is a high-level global forum of 29 member countries to promote policies and programs that advance clean energy technology through sharing of knowledge and best practices with a focus on transition to a global clean energy future.

Source: [ET](https://www.thehindu.com)



IPCC report on Mitigation of Climate Change scientifically establishes India's position on the historical responsibility of developed countries for consuming the carbon budget

Why in News

- Welcoming the Summary of Policymakers (SPM) and the Working Group III (WG3) contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released on 4th April 2022, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav said that the historical responsibility of developed countries for consuming the carbon budget is scientifically established by the report, and called for the need of taking deep and urgent global emissions reduction.



Key Points

- The Report dealing with climate change mitigation and international cooperation is a major contribution of IPCC to the global fight against climate change.
- It also states that public finance falls short of the Copenhagen (reiterated when the Paris Agreement was signed) goal of USD 100 billion per year by 2020.
- Among other important things the Report has underlined the need for deep and urgent global emissions reduction mentioning that four-fifths of the total carbon budget for 1.5 deg C temperature increase and two-thirds of the total carbon budget for 2 deg C warming has been already consumed.
- Both cumulative and per capita annual emissions rose during the pre-2020 period. Pre-2020 emissions reduction in developed countries has been insufficient in comparison to the developing world's needs for sustainable development. Both historical cumulative emissions and per capita annual emissions show that India's role (as part of South Asia) is minimal.

In India:

- Further, at COP26 in November 2021 at Glasgow, United Kingdom, as the implementation of the Paris Agreement began, India reaffirmed its commitment to climate actions, including the goal of net zero by 2070.

About Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:

- It is the international body for assessing the science related to climate change.



- It was set up in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

Source: PIB

India contributes \$500,000 to UN Women

Why in News

- India** has contributed USD 500,000 to the **UN Women**, the United Nations agency for gender equality and women empowerment.



Key Points

- The amount was handed over by T. S. Tirumurti, India's permanent representative to the UN to Dr. Sima Bahous, UN Women Executive Director.

About UN Women:

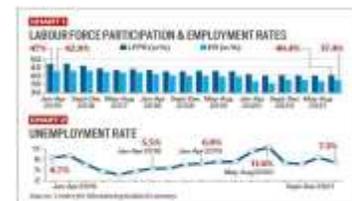
- UN Women is a United Nations agency committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, founded in 1976) and other organisations merged to form UN Women, which began operations in January 2011.

National

India's labour force participation rate (LFPR)

Why in News

- Data from the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)** shows that **India's labour force participation rate (LFPR)** has fallen to just 40% from an already low 47% in 2016.



Key Points

- This suggests not only that more than half of India's population in the working-age group (15 years and older) is deciding to sit out of the job market, but also that this proportion of people is increasing.
- The LFPR essentially is the percentage of the working-age (15 years or older) population that is asking for a job; it represents the "demand" for jobs in an economy.



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- It includes those who are employed and those who are unemployed.
- The Unemployment Rate (UER) is nothing but the number of unemployed (category 2) as a proportion of the labour force.

Significance of LFPR in India:

- Typically, it is expected that the LFPR will remain largely stable. As such, any analysis of unemployment in an economy can be done just by looking at the UER.
- But, in India, the LFPR is not only lower than in the rest of the world but also falling. This, in turn, affects the UER because LFPR is the base (the denominator) on which UER is calculated.
- The world over, LFPR is around 60%. In India, it has been sliding over the last 10 years and has shrunk from 47% in 2016 to just 40% as of December 2021.

Recent Initiatives taken by Government:

- Start Up India Scheme
- Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE)
- PM-DAKSH
- MGNREGA
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Source: Indian Express

PM SVANidhi scheme to continue till December 2024

Why in News

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the continuation of lending under the **Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** beyond March 2022 till December 2024.



Key Points

About Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi):

- Through the Scheme, affordable collateral-free loans are being facilitated to the Street Vendors.
- The Scheme had envisaged to facilitate loans for an amount of Rs. 5,000 crore.
- Today's approval has increased the loan amount to Rs. 8,100 crore, thereby providing the Street vendors working capital to further expand their business and making them AtmaNirbhar.
- The budget for promotion of digital payments including cashback to the vendors has also been enhanced.



- The approval is expected to benefit nearly 1.2 crore citizens of Urban India.
- Under PM SVANidhi, significant achievements have already been made. As on April 25, 2022, 31.9 lakh loans have been sanctioned and 29.6 lakh loans amounting to Rs. 2,931 crore have been disbursed.
- This scheme was started in June 2020.

Source: PIB

MoU between CSIR and iCreate to harness India's tech strength

Why in News

- The Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel presided over the MoU signing between the Government of Gujarat's flagship technology incubator - **iCreate (International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Technology)** and the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**.



Key Points

- Under the MoU, CSIR and iCreate intend to establish a collaborative support system for promising tech start-ups by making combined resources available for entrepreneurs and innovators in the country.
- Such start-ups will access CSIR's equipment, facilities, and scientific manpower.
- CSIR will provide intellectual property support and explore methods of financially supporting innovative start-ups from India to boost emerging entrepreneurs.

About iCreate (International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Technology):

- It is an autonomous centre of excellence of the Government of Gujarat and is India's largest institution for transforming start-ups based on tech innovation into successful businesses.
- To date it has supported over 412 innovations and 30+ patents with a high-touch, entrepreneur first model, connecting them with mentors, markets and money.
- It is home to Cisco's largest Innovation Lab in India and has partnerships with leading institutions in the US, Israel and other countries.

Startup Ecosystem in India:

- India has the 2nd largest startup ecosystem in the world.
- Around 20,000 startups in India; around 4,750 of these are technology led startups.



Other Related Initiatives:

- Startup India Seed Fund Scheme
- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Startup Forum
- Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge

Source: PIB

Centre scraps MP quota in Kendriya Vidyalayas, revises admission guidelines

Why in News

- The central government has scrapped the discretionary Member of Parliament (MP) quota for admissions to **Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs)**, and issued revised admission guidelines.



Key Points

- Under the KVS Special Dispensation Admission Scheme, or MP quota, a Member of Parliament had the power to recommend a maximum of 10 students from their respective constituencies in every academic year for admissions in classes 1 to 9.
- Other than the MP quota, the KVS has also removed other reservations, including 100 children of education ministry employees, children and dependent grandchildren of MPs and retired KV employees, and discretionary quota of school management committee chairman, among others.
- The new quotas included 50 seats for the wards of group B and C central police organisations such as the CRPF, BSF, ITBP, SSB, CISF, NDRF, and Assam Rifles under the Union ministry of home affairs, posted for internal security, border postings.
- Besides, the KVS has also officially included children covered under the PM CARES scheme under the provisions.

Source: HT

Covaxin, Corbevax get emergency use nod for children below 12 years

Why in News

- The **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)** grants Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) to Corbevax for those aged 5-12, Covaxin for 6-12 age group and Zycov-D for those above 12 years.



Key Points

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has given Bharat Biotech's COVID vaccine Covaxin restricted emergency use authorisation for children between the age of 6-12 years.
- Further DCGI also granted emergency use authorisation to Corbevax for children between the age of 5-12 years.
- Cadila Health's ZyCoV-D has received restricted emergency use authorisation for children above the age of 12 years of age.

Note: World Immunization Week 2022 is being celebrated from 24th to 30th April 2022. The theme of 2022 is 'Long Life for All'.

Source: ET

Raisina Dialogue 2022

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the inaugural session of **Raisina Dialogue 2022** where President of the European Commission, Ms. Ursula Von Der Leyen delivered the keynote address.



Key Points

- The seventh edition of The Raisina Dialogue 2022 is being held in-person in New Delhi from 25 April to 27 April 2022.
- The **theme** for **Raisina Dialogue 2022** is "Terra Nova: Impassioned, Impatient, and Imperilled".
- There are six broad thematic pillars of the Dialogue including Rethinking Democracy, End of Multilateralism, Water Caucuses, Achieving Green Transitions.

About Raisina Dialogue:

- It is a multilateral conference held annually in New Delhi.
- Since its inception in 2016, the conference has emerged as India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics.
- The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation, an independent think tank, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs of India.

Source: newsonair



India, again, 'Country of Particular Concern' on religious freedom grounds: U.S. Commission

Why in News

- The **United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** recommended, for the third year in a row, that **India** be designated a '**Country of Particular Concern**' (CPC) in 2021, i.e., the category of governments performing most poorly on religious freedom criteria.



Key Points

Highlights of the Report:

- It was said in report that religious freedom conditions in India had “significantly worsened” in 2021.
- The report section on India said that the government had “repressed critical voices”, especially minority communities and individuals reporting on them.
- It mentions the arrest of rights activist Khuran Pervez in Kashmir, and the July 2021 death of octogenarian Father Stan Swamy, arrested in October 2020 under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA).
- The report touches on challenges faced by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), especially with regard to foreign funding. It also highlights anti-conversion laws.

Note:

- Other countries recommended for the CPC designation were: Afghanistan, Nigeria, Syria and Vietnam.
- USCIRF recommended that the State Department redesignate Myanmar, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan as CPCs.

State of Freedom of Religion in India:

- Freedom of religion in India is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 25-28 of the Constitution of India.
- Further, Article 29 and 30 of the Constitution deal with the protection of interests of minorities.

About United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF):

- USCIRF is a U.S. federal government commission created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.
- **Founded:** 28 October 1998



- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C. **Source:** The Hindu

AAHAR 2022

Why in News

- The **Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** is co-organising the 36th edition of Asia's biggest B2B international food and hospitality fair **AAHAR 2022** in association with the India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO).



- It is being organised from April 26-30, 2022 at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi).

Key Points

- More than 80 exporters from different segments of agricultural products, which include GI products, processed food, organic, frozen food products, millets, etc are participating.

Note:

- More than 150 food and agri Products have been registered as GI by the GI Registry out of which 123 GI products fall under APEDA's category till March, 2022.
- As per the DGCI&S data, the agricultural exports have grown by 19.92 percent during 2021-22 to touch \$50.21 billion.
- The growth rate is remarkable as it is over and above the growth of 17.66 percent at \$41.87 billion achieved in 2020-21.

Source: ET

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates 'Kisan Bhagidari-Prathmikta Hamari' campaign

Why in News

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is organizing the '**Kisan Bhagidari, Prathmikta Hamari**' campaign from 25th April to 30th April 2022 under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' in association with various other Ministries & Departments of the Government of India.



Key Points

- During the week-long campaign, Agriculture Minister will also launch a country-wide workshop on crop insurance organized by the Common Service Centre.
- Krishi Mela at each Krishi Vigyan Kendra is also being organised.



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- The campaign also highlights the achievements and activities under various flagship schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana.

Note: As a part of the 'Kisan Bhagidari-Prathmikta Hamari' Campaign, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, under the **Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME)** Scheme, organized the **One District One Product (ODOP)** -based workshop on the Processing and Value addition of Walnuts in Kishtwar district, Jammu and Kashmir.

About Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme:

- Launched under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, PMFME Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme that aims to enhance the competitiveness of existing individual micro-enterprises in the unorganized segment of the food processing industry and to promote formalization of the sector and provide support to Farmer Producer Organizations, Self Help Groups, and Producers Cooperatives along their entire value chain.
- With an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25, the scheme envisions to directly assist the 2,00,000 micro food processing units for providing financial, technical, and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises.

Source: newsonair

PM Modi participates in the inaugural ceremony of year-long joint celebrations of 90th anniversary of Sivagiri Pilgrimage and Golden Jubilee of Brahma Vidhyalaya

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the inaugural ceremony of year-long joint celebrations of the **90th anniversary of Sivagiri Pilgrimage and Golden Jubilee of Brahma Vidhyalaya** at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg.
- He also launched the logo for year- long joint celebrations.



Key Points

- Both **Sivagiri Pilgrimage** and **Brahma Vidhyalaya** were started with the blessing and guidance of great social reformer Shri Narayana Guru.
- The Prime Minister said that Shri Narayan Guru talked of modernity but he also enriched Indian culture and values.
- He fought a logical and practical fight against the discrimination going on in the name of casteism.



- The **Brahma Vidhyalaya** of Sivagiri was set up to realise this vision. Brahma Vidhyalaya offers a course of 7-years on Indian Philosophy including the works of Shri Narayan Guru and scriptures of all-important religions of the world.

About Sivagiri Pilgrimage:

- Sivagiri is an area in Varkala municipality of Trivandrum District in Kerala.
- It is a pilgrimage centre of Varkala Town where the tomb or samadhi of Shri Narayana Guru is situated.
- His tomb attracts thousands of devotees every year during the Sivagiri Pilgrimage days (Sivagiri Theerthadanam), from 30 December to 1 January.

Source: PIB

PM Modi, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen review progress in India-EU strategic partnership

Why in News

- PM Narendra Modi held talks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in New Delhi.

Key Points

- Prime Minister Modi and Ms Leyen reviewed progress in the **India-EU strategic partnership** and agreed to deepen cooperation in areas of trade, climate, digital technology and people to people ties.
- They reviewed the progress in the forthcoming re-commencement of negotiations on a **Free Trade Agreement and Investment Agreement**.
- They announced the establishment of an **India-EU Trade and Technology Council**.
- Both leaders noted the increasing policy convergences on Indo-Pacific and exchanged views on other regional and global issues of mutual interest including cooperation in WTO, G-20, Afghanistan and Myanmar.
- The leaders had an extensive discussion on climate related issues, including on possibilities of collaboration between India and the EU in areas like Green Hydrogen.



Facts about the European Union (EU):

- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium
- **Founded:** 1 November 1993
- **Members Countries:** 27
- The **United Kingdom** became the first member state to leave the **European Union** on 31 January 2020.
- In 2012, the **European Union** was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize**.



Source: PIB

Ministry of Civil Aviation organises “Yog Prabha”

Why in News

- Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Gen VK Singh (Rtd) inaugurated the mega 'Yog Prabha' event at Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) organised “Yog Prabha”.



Key Points

- Over 900 officials of MoCA and its Attached organizations/PSU/Autonomous bodies participated in this mega event.

About International Day of Yoga:

- At the initiative of the PM Narendra Modi, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** took a historic decision in 2014 to declare **21st June as the International Day of Yoga (IDY)**.

Note: With almost two months to International Yoga Day on 21st June 2022 during the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Yog Prabha helped in creating a wider awareness among the participants about importance of Yoga and will motivate them to participate Yoga daily.

Source: ET

PM Modi holds bilateral talks with British PM Boris Johnson

Why in News

- Recently, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson visited in India. This was his maiden visit to India as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with British PM Boris Johnson.



Key Points

- India and United Kingdom have decided to do their best to conclude the Free Trade Agreement by the end of 2022.
- India and UK had launched an ambitious Roadmap-2030 to guide the bilateral relationship in this decade.
- India and UK are launching a virtual Hydrogen Science and Innovation hub to accelerate affordable green hydrogen, as well as new funding for the



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Green Grids Initiative announced at COP26, and collaboration on joint work on the electrification of public transport across India.

- They emphasized maintaining the Indo-Pacific region based on free, open, inclusive, and rules-based order.
- PM Modi welcomed UK's decision to join Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
- Both sides also agreed on intensifying operations in countering threats in new domains like cyber security, space, and artificial intelligence as well as on strengthening cooperation on counter-terrorism and addressing violent extremism and radicalism.

Source: Indian Express

Centre extends ceasefire pact with 3 Naga groups by a year

Why in News

- The Central government has extended ceasefire agreement with 3 Naga groups for further period of one year.

Key Points

- The groups include National Socialist Council of Nagaland-NK (NSCN-NK), National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Reformation (NSCN-R) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khango (NSCN-K-Khango).
- All these groups are breakaway factions of NSCN-IM and NSCN-K.
- According to a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs, it was decided to extend the ceasefire agreements for a further period of one year with effect from April 28, 2022 to April 27, 2023 with NSCN-NK and NSCN-R, and from April 18, 2022 to April 17, 2023 with NSCN-K-Khango.

Note:

- The Centre had signed ceasefire agreement with the Niki Sumi faction of the NSCN-K in September 2021.
- The Centre had signed a "Framework Agreement" with the NSCN (IM) in August 2015.

Other related Peace Agreements:

- Bodo Peace Accord, 2020
- Bru Accord, 2020
- Karbi Anglong Agreement, 2021

Source: Indian Express



NITI Aayog releases Draft Battery Swapping Policy

Why in News

- NITI Aayog has released **Draft Battery Swapping Policy** for the comments of Stakeholder.

Key Points

About Draft Battery Swapping Policy:

- Under this Policy, all metropolitan cities with a population above 40 lakh will be prioritised for development of battery swapping network under the first phase.
- All major cities such as state capitals, UT headquarters and cities with population above 5 lakh will be covered under the second phase, given the importance of the two-wheeler and three-wheeler vehicle segments in growing cities.
- Vehicles with swappable batteries will be sold without a battery, providing the benefit of lower purchase costs to potential EV owners.



Note:

- During the COP26 summit in Glasgow, India committed to reduce carbon emission intensity by 45%, and take our non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030 and meet 50% of our energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030, and finally achieve the Net Zero target by 2070.
- The road transport sector is one of the major contributors to CO2 emissions and accords to one third of the particulate matter emissions.
- Several supporting initiatives have been implemented, such as the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric (Hybrid) Vehicles in India (FAME) I and II, and the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) for National Programme on Advanced Cell (ACC) Battery Storage (NPACC), to boost indigenous battery manufacturing capacity.

Source: ET

India to get world's longest and highest tunnel in Himachal

Why in News

- India will soon be home to the world's longest highway tunnel beneath the 16,580 ft high Shinku-La Pass, between Zaskar Valley in Ladakh and Lahaul Valley in Himachal Pradesh.

Key Points

- The tunnel will be ready by 2025, and will provide all-weather connectivity between Ladakh and Himachal.



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- Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Chief Lt General Rajeev Chaudhury informed that the **Shinku-La tunnel** will be 4.25km in length.

Note:

- **Atal Tunnel**, named after former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee is a highway tunnel built under the Rohtang Pass in the eastern Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas on the Leh-Manali Highway in Himachal Pradesh, India.
- At a length of 9.02 km, it is the longest highway single-tube tunnel above 10,000 feet in the world.

Source: TOI

India's first portable solar rooftop system unveiled in Gandhinagar

Why in News

- **India's first portable solar rooftop system** was inaugurated at Swaminarayan Akshardham temple complex in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.



Key Points

- The installation of 10 PV Port systems in the temple complex has been supported by the German development agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).
- The systems have been installed under the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy's initiative to develop renewable energy cities across India.
- The PV Ports have been manufactured by New Delhi-based Servotech Power Systems Ltd (SPSL), a leading maker of solar products under the Make in India project.

Source: Business Standard

Oil India Limited (OIL) commissions India's first pure green hydrogen plant in Assam

Why in News

- Oil India Limited (OIL) has commissioned "India's first 99.999% pure" green hydrogen plant in Assam.

Key Points

- Oil India Limited has taken the first significant step towards **Green Hydrogen Economy** in India with the commissioning



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of India's First 99.999% pure Green Hydrogen pilot plant, with an installed capacity of 10 kg per day at its Jorhat Pump Station in Assam.

- The plant produces Green Hydrogen from the electricity generated by the existing 500kW Solar plant using a 100 kW Anion Exchange Membrane (AEM) Electrolyser array.
- This plant is expected to increase its production of green hydrogen from 10 kg per day to 30 kg per day in future.

Source: The Hindu

PM Modi inaugurates Global AYUSH Investment & Innovation Summit in Gujarat

Why in News

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Global AYUSH Investment & Innovation Summit on 20th April, 2022** at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- The Prime Minister of Mauritius Mr. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO) were present on the occasion.



Key Points

- The Summit will help uncover investment potential, and give a fillip to innovation, research & development, start-up ecosystem, and the wellness industry.
- Prime Minister Modi also digitally launched Ayush Export Promotion Council on this occasion.
- He also launched IT initiatives like Ayush Information Hub, Ayush next, Ayusoft etc.
- He also announced to create a new category for Indian VISA- Ayush VISA, so that foreigners can avail the benefit of Indian expertise in Ayush sector.
- India is also going to make a special AYUSH Mark. This Mark will be applied to the highest quality AYUSH products made in India.
- FSSAI has also announced a new category named 'AYUSH Aahar' in its regulations last week.

Note:

- The AYUSH sector was less than \$3 billion in 2014, which has now crossed \$ 18 billion.



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- Two MoUs have been also signed by Ministry of Defence with Ministry of AYUSH, one for starting Ayurveda Centres at 37 Cantonment Hospitals and another for starting Ayurveda Centres at 12 Military Hospitals of Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS).

Source: newsonair

Central Government amends Nidhi Rules, 2014

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Company Affairs** said that the Central Government has amended **Nidhi Rules, 2014** to safeguard the interest of general public.

Key Points

- Under the Companies Act, 1956, a **Nidhi or Mutual Benefit Society** meant a company which the Central Government declared as Nidhi or Mutual Benefit Society by notification in the official gazette.
- Under the Companies Act, 2013, initially there was no need for a company to get declaration from Central Government to function as a Nidhi Company.
- Such companies were required to only incorporate as a Nidhi and meet requirements under sub-rule (1) of rule 5 of Nidhi Rules viz., minimum membership of 200, Net Owned Fund of Rs. 10 lakh, NOF to deposit ratio of 1:20 and keeping 10% unencumbered deposits in schedule commercial banks or post offices within one year of commencement of Nidhi Rules, 2014.
- After the amendment in the Companies Act, 2013 w.e.f. 15.08.2019 and resultant amendments in Nidhi Rules, 2014 w.e.f. 15.08.2019, companies incorporated as Nidhis were required to apply to the Central Government in Form NDH-4 for declaration within 14 months of incorporation, if they were incorporated after the commencement of the Nidhi (Amendment) Rules w.e.f. 15.08.2019 and within 09 months of commencement of the Nidhi (Amendment) Rules w.e.f. 15.08.2019, if they were incorporated as Nidhis after 2014 but prior to 15.08.2019.

Note:

- Under the Companies Act, 1956, about 390 companies were declared as Nidhi companies only.
- During 2014-2019, more than ten thousand companies get incorporated.

Source: PIB



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967

Why in News

- A commander and associate member of terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, Sheikh Sajad has been notified as a terrorist under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967**.

Key Points

- The Ministry of Home Affairs in a notification said, Sheikh Sajad has been actively radicalizing, motivating and recruiting youth of Jammu and Kashmir to support terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba and has been involved in terror funding.



About Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967:

- It is an Indian law aimed at prevention of unlawful activities associations in India.
- Its main objective was to make powers available for dealing with activities directed against the integrity and sovereignty of India.
- The most recent amendment of the law, the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019 (UAPA 2019)** has made it possible for the Union Government to designate individuals as terrorists without a due process of law.
- UAPA is also known as the Anti-terror law.

Source: newsonair

PM Modi lays the foundation stone of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Gujarat

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of **WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM)** in Jamnagar, Gujarat on April 19, 2022, in the presence of the Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO).
- The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation a new dairy complex and potato processing plant at Diyodar, Banaskantha district. The new dairy complex is a greenfield project.



Key Points

About WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM):

- GCTM will be the first and only global outpost centre for traditional medicine across the world.
- It will emerge as an international hub of global wellness.
- It will focus on data, innovation and sustainability and will optimize the use of traditional medicine.

Note: In 2016, the Ministry of AYUSH signed a PCA (Project Collaboration Agreement) with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the area of traditional medicine.

Source: newsonair

Indo-Finnish Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing

Why in News

- Recently, Visiting Finland Minister of Economic Affairs, Mika Lintila met Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Jitendra Singh and the two Ministers announced the decision to establish an **Indo-Finnish Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing**.



Key Points

- Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Indian side has identified three premier institutes viz IIT Madras, IISER Pune and C-DAC Pune for Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing.
- India is keen to develop research collaborations with Finnish R&D institutions and technology collaboration with Finnish Industry especially focusing on the following technology domains and application of Quantum Computing in areas such as: Sustainable Energy Technologies, Environment and Clean Technologies, Biobased Economy, BioBanks and Bio based materials for different applications, Water and Marine Technologies, Food & Agri Technologies, Affordable Healthcare, Technologies for Advanced Manufacturing, Integration of AI and Machine Learning in all domains.

Note: India and Finland are consultative members of the Antarctic Treaty and have active stations in Antarctica. Finland would be hosting the **Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM)** in 2023 and India in 2024.

Source: The Hindu



National Cyber Security Incident Response Exercise (NCX India)

Why in News

- **National Security Council Secretariat** organised **National Cyber Security Incident Response Exercise (NCX India)** for Government officials and Critical Sector Organisations to strengthen India's Cyber posture.
- National Cyber Exercise (NCX) India is being conducted as a hybrid exercise over a period of ten days from 18 to 29 April 2022.



Key Points

About National Cyber Security Incident Response Exercise (NCX India):

- The program is being conducted by the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Govt. of India in association with Data Security Council of India (DSCI) as the Knowledge Partner and supported by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The platform for training is being provided by CyberExer Technologies, an Estonian cybersecurity company accredited for globally conducting several large cyber exercises.
- The participants will be trained on various key cyber security areas such as Intrusion Detection Techniques, Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP), Vulnerability Handling & Penetration Testing, Network Protocols & Data Flows, Digital Forensics, etc.

Cyber Security Initiatives:

- National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre
- Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra
- Information Technology Act, 2000
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre

Source: PIB

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package: Insurance Scheme for Health Workers fighting COVID-19

Why in News

- The '**Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP), insurance scheme for Health Care Workers Fighting COVID-19**' has been



extended for a further period of 180 days from 19th April, 2022.

Key Points

- It has been decided to extend the policy so as to continue to provide the safety net to the dependents of health workers who are deputed to take care of COVID-19 patients.

About Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP):

- The PMGKP was launched on 30th March, 2020 to provide comprehensive personal accident cover of Rs. 50 Lakh to 22.12 lakh health care providers including community health workers and private health workers who may have been in direct contact and care of COVID-19 patients and may be at risk of being impacted by this.
- Further, on account of the unprecedented situation, private hospital staff/retired/ volunteer/local urban bodies/contract/daily wage/ad-hoc/outsourced staff requisitioned by states/central hospitals/autonomous hospitals of central/states/UTs, AIIMS & Institute of National Importance/hospitals of Central Ministries specifically drafted for care of COVID-19 patients are also covered under the PMGKP.
- Since the launch of the scheme, so far, 1905 claims of Health workers who died while being deployed for COVID related duties have been settled.

Note: Earlier, the Union Cabinet extended the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)** by another 6 months till September 2022.

Source: PIB

India's National Cyber Security Strategy

Why in News

- In 2020, the National Cyber Security Strategy was conceptualised by the Data Security Council of India (DSCI) headed by Lt General Rajesh Pant.



Key Points

- Amid a surge in cyberattacks on India's networks, the Centre is yet to implement the National Cyber Security Strategy which has been in the works since 2020.

Need for a National Cyber Security Strategy:

- Increasing Number of Cyber Attacks: As per American cyber security firm Palo Alto Networks' 2021 report, Maharashtra was the most targeted state in India — facing 42% of all ransomware attacks.
- Cyber Warfare Offensives
- Increased Digital usage Post-Covid
- There were 6.97 lakh cyber security incidents reported in the first eight months of 2020, nearly equivalent to the previous four years combined,



according to information reported to and tracked by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

Present Government Initiatives for Cyber Security:

- Cyber Swachhta Kendra
- Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative
- Online cybercrime reporting portal
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Information Technology Act, 2000

Source: The Hindu

Extreme poverty in India decline 12.3% in 2011-2019: World Bank

Why in News

- According to a policy research working paper of World Bank, Poverty in India is 12.3% lower in 2019 compared with 2011. The poverty headcount rate has declined from 22.5% in 2011 to 10.2% in 2019.



Key Points

- Poverty reduction was higher in rural areas as against urban India.
- Rural poverty dropped by 14.7% while urban poverty declined by 7.9% during 2011 to 2019.
- According to the study, farmers with small landholding sizes have experienced higher income growth. Real incomes for farmers with the smallest landholdings have grown by 10% in annualized terms between the two survey rounds in 2013 and 2019 compared to a 2% growth for farmers with the largest landholding.

Source: Business Standard

Mauritius PM Pravind Kumar Jugnauth arrives on 8-day visit in India

Why in News

- **Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth** is in India on an eight-day visit (April 17 to 24, 2022) to strengthen ties between the two countries in both economic as well as strategic sectors, especially in maritime security.



Key Points

- India and Mauritius enjoy uniquely close ties, bound by shared history, culture and heritage.



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- Jugnauth will participate in the ground-breaking ceremony of the WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar on April 19 and the Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit in Gandhinagar on April 20, along with PM Narendra Modi.
- India has been one of the largest trading partners and exporter of goods and services to Mauritius since 2007.
- India's exports to Mauritius are largely of petroleum products. Besides petroleum products, main items of India's exports to Mauritius are pharmaceuticals, cereals, cotton etc. Main items of Mauritius exports to India are vanilla, instruments and apparatus for medical/surgical sciences, needles, aluminum alloys among others.

Note:

- In March 2022, Mauritius became a member of the Colombo Security Conclave, a grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The grouping of NSAs from these countries works for regional security by focusing on areas such as maritime security, countering terrorism, combating trans-national crime and cyber security.
- Earlier in January 2022, PM Modi and Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth had jointly inaugurated the India-assisted social housing units project in Mauritius virtually. They also launched the Civil Service College and 8 MW Solar PV Farm project in Mauritius that is being undertaken under India's development support.

Source: Indian Express

Agriculture Minister launches two online portals CROP and PQMS of Plant Protection Division

Why in News

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar launched two portals, one for the **Computerized Registration of pesticide (CROP)** and the other for **Plant Quarantine Information System (PQIS)**.



Key Points

- The new portals will benefit farmers, exporters as well as industrialists.
- Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DAFW), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, through the Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine & Storage (DPPQS), Faridabad has been catering to Indian exporters and importers of agriculture commodities and Indian Pesticide Industry, through its two portals namely, Computerized



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Registration of pesticide (CROP) and Plant Quarantine Information System (PQIS).

- The PQMS portal will provide a transparent system with no physical touch points for the applicants and ensure convenience to the users, through an online system including e-payments and uploading of documents, online accreditation and renewal of treatment agencies/facilities and downloading of certificates.
- Similarly, the re-developed CROP portal will immensely help in ease of doing business and provide greater and timely Crop protection solutions to farmers of the country.

Source: newsonair

40th 'Hunar Haat'

Why in News

- Recently, Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports, Anurag Thakur inaugurated the **40th edition of the 'Hunar Haat'** in the presence of Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, in Mumbai.



Key Points

- The 40th edition of Hunar Haat, a credible platform to promote 'Swadeshi' products, is being held in Mumbai from 16th to 27th April, 2022.
- In this 40th edition of Hunar Haat, more than a thousand craftsmen and artisans coming from 31 states have put up 400 stalls.
- The Minister also spoke about '**One District One Product**', where each district is recognised for one product.
- Shri Thakur also informed about **Tejas'a skilling programme** which has been launched by Govt. of India. Under this initiative India will send skilled manpower to the UAE.
- Hunar Haats are organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs under **USTTAD** (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme.

Source: PIB



2021 Human Rights Report on India: United States

Why in News

- The US State Department released a strong and critical Report on Human Rights in India in 2021.

Key Points

- The report is submitted each year to the US Congress.

Key Highlights of the Report:

- Indian law “prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention but both occurred during the year”, with police using “special security laws to postpone judicial reviews of arrests”.
- India has "significant human rights issues" such as "restrictions on free expression and media, including violence" and "threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecutions against journalists”.
- The India chapter of the report also cited "terrorists and extremists perpetrating killings, violence, and intimidation" against journalists critical of the government.
- The report noted India was downgraded from free to partly free in the Freedom in the World 2021 report, and said the government had blocked Twitter accounts of several journalists who covered the farmers' protest last year.
- The report highlighted the cases of Amnesty International India, whose assets were frozen by the Enforcement Directorate, and the suspension of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) license of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) for alleged violations.

Human Rights Related Provisions in India:

Enunciated in the Constitution:

- Fundamental Rights: Articles 12 to 35 of the Constitution
- Directive Principles of State Policy: Article 36 to 51 of the Constitution

Statutory Provisions:

- Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993 (as amended in 2019)
- India took an active part in drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Source: The Hindu



GoI-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-27

Why in News

- Recently, NITI Aayog and the United Nations organized a day-long national validation workshop on the upcoming **Government of India-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-27**.
- This was the first such congregation that saw the participation of officials from 30 Union ministries, heads of 26 UN agencies, and representatives from all states and union territories.



Key Points

- The previous GoI-UNSDCF 2018-22 was an agenda of cooperation, results and strategies to achieve national development priorities and the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- The 2018-22 framework is guided by the joint steering committee, chaired by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman and UN Resident Coordinator India, with members from the Department of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- The 2023-27 framework aims to align the four pillars of the 2030 Agenda—People, Prosperity, Planet and Participation—with India's national priorities and provide direction to the efforts of all the UN entities working across the country.
- The new framework has identified six outcome areas: (i) health and well-being (ii) nutrition and food (iii) quality education (iv) economic growth and decent work (v) environment, climate, wash and resilience (vi) empowering people, communities, and institutions.

Source: PIB

Govt approves continuation of revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan till March 2026

Why in News

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved continuation of revamped Centrally Sponsored Scheme of **Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)** for implementation during the period from 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2026 (co-terminus with XV Finance Commission period) to develop governance capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).



Key Points

Financial implications:

- The total financial outlay of the scheme is Rs.5911 crore with the Central Share of Rs.3700 crore and that of State Share of Rs.2211 crore.

Major impact including employment generation potential:

- The approved scheme of RGSA will help more than 2.78 lakh Rural Local Bodies including Traditional Bodies across the country to develop governance capabilities to deliver on SDGs through inclusive local governance with focus on optimum utilisation of available resources.

Background:

- The then Finance Minister, in his budget speech for 2016-17, announced the launch of new restructured scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), for developing governance capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- In compliance of this announcement and the recommendations of the Committee under the Chairmanship of the Vice Chairman-NITI Aayog, Centrally Sponsored Scheme of RGSA was approved by the Union Cabinet on 21.04.2018 for implementation from Financial Year 2018-19 to 2021-22 (01.04.2018 to 31.03.2022).

Source: PIB

PM Modi inaugurates 'Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya'

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the '**Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya**' (Prime Ministers' Museum) in New Delhi.

Key Points

- The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya is built at Delhi's Teen Murti Estate and covers the lives and contributions of all the 14 former Prime Ministers of the country.
- The facility has as many as 43 galleries, displays on freedom struggle and a framing of the Constitution of India.

Source: TOI



Allow colour blind candidates to study film editing courses, Supreme Court tells FTII

Why in News

- The Supreme Court has directed the **Pune-based Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)** not to exclude candidates suffering from **colour blindness** from its courses on film making and editing and asked it to make changes to its curriculum instead.



Key Points

Colour blindness:

- Colour blindness, also known as colour deficiency, is the inability to see colours in the normal way.
- Colour blind individuals often cannot distinguish between certain colours — usually greens and reds, and sometimes blues as well.
- Two types of cells in the retina detect light — the “rods”, which distinguish between light and dark, and the “cones” that detect colour.
- There are three types of cones that see colour — red, green, and blue — and our brains use the information from these cells to perceive colour.
- Colour blindness can be the result of the absence of one or more of these cone cells, or their failure to work properly.
- Colour blindness may be of different kinds and degrees.

Causes:

- Most colour blind people are born with the condition (congenital colour blindness). Congenital colour vision deficiencies are usually passed on genetically.
- A problem with colour vision that arises later in life could be the result of disease, trauma, or ingested toxins.
- Medical conditions that may increase the risk of getting colour blindness include glaucoma, diabetes, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, alcoholism, leukaemia, and sickle-cell anaemia.

Note: In June 2020, India's Ministry of Road Transport and Highways amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 to enable citizens with mild to medium colour blindness to obtain a driver's licence.

Source: Indian Express



Government launches country's biggest ever Quiz Contest Sabka Vikas Mahaquiz

Why in News

- MyGov under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is organising the **Sabka Vikas Mahaquiz Series**, which is part of an outreach effort to build awareness in citizens.
- This quiz has been fittingly launched on the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar on 14th April 2022.



Key Points

- The quiz aims to sensitise the participants about the various schemes and initiatives and how to avail the benefits.
- The first quiz is the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)** under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

About Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):

- PMGKAY is a pro-poor scheme intended to reduce the challenges encountered by the poor because of disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Under the scheme, all National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries are entitled to 5 kgs of free food grain every month.
- This is over and above the highly subsidised food grains available to NFSA beneficiaries.

Source: newsonair

India holds maiden MEA-led Inter-Ministerial Coordination Group on Neighbourhood outreach

Why in News

- Recently, the first meeting of **Inter-Ministerial Coordination Group (IMCG)** on India's neighbourhood outreach was convened by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla.



Key Points

- The focus of the meeting was construction of border infrastructure that would facilitate greater trade with neighbours like Nepal; special needs of countries such as Bhutan and Maldives in terms of supply of essential



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commodities; opening rail connectivity with Bangladesh; Humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and Myanmar; and Fisheries issue with Sri Lanka.

About Inter-Ministerial Coordination Group (IMCG):

- IMCG is supported by inter-ministerial joint task forces (JTFs) convened by joint secretaries in the External Affairs Ministry.
- A whole-of-government approach has been adopted to ensure greater connectivity, stronger inter-linkages and greater people-to-people connect under the “Neighbourhood First” policy.
- This includes coordination with various ministries, departments, and agencies of the Central and state governments.

Source: ET

‘SVANidhi se Samridhhi’ program

Why in News

- Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched ‘SVANidhi se Samridhhi’ program in additional 126 cities across 14 States/ UTs.

Key Points

About ‘SVANidhi se Samridhhi’

program:

- ‘SVANidhi se Samridhhi’, an additional program of PMSVANidhi was launched on 4th January 2021 in 125 cities in Phase 1, covering approximately 35 Lakh Street vendors and their families.
- Considering the success of Phase I, MoHUA launched the program expansion to additional 126 cities with an aim to cover 28 Lakh Street vendors and their families, with a total target of 20 Lakh scheme sanctions for FY 2022-23.

About PMSVANidhi Scheme:

- MoHUA has been implementing Prime Minister Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), a Central Sector Scheme since 1st June 2020.
- The scheme aims to provide an affordable working capital loan to Street Vendors and has successfully crossed the 30 Lakh mark.
- Under the program, socio-economic profiling of PMSVANidhi beneficiaries and their families is conducted to assess their eligibility for 8 Government of India’s welfare schemes and facilitate sanctions of eligible schemes.
- These schemes include Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, PM Suraksha Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Registration under Building and other Constructions Workers (Regulation of Employment and



Conditions of Service) Act (BOCW), Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana, National Food Security Act (NFSA) portability benefit – One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC), Janani Suraksha Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY).

- Quality Council of India (QCI) is the implementing partner for the programme.

Source: PIB

For the first time in 11 years, the number of domestic patent filing surpasses the number of international patent filing in India

Why in News

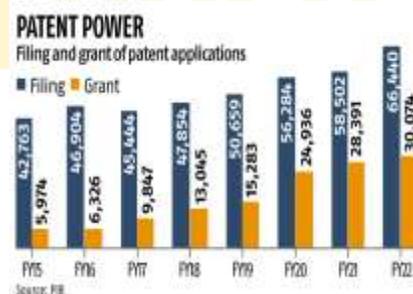
- India achieved yet another milestone in context of IP innovation ecosystem, wherein for the first time in the last 11 years, the number of domestic patent filing has surpassed the number of international patent filing at Indian patent office in the Quarter Jan-Mar 2022



i.e. of the total 19796 patent applications filed, 10706 were filed by Indian applicants against 9090 by non-Indian applicants.

Key Points

- Some of the key initiatives taken by the Government over the years that has bolstered India's IP regime includes fee concessions like 10% rebate on online filing, 80% fee concession for Start-ups, Small Entities and educational institutions, and provisions on expedited examination for Startups and MSMEs along with other categories.



- It will take India a step closer to India's ambitious target of being in the top 25 nations of Global Innovation Index.

The cornerstone laid down by National IPR policy and the efforts made by the Government has transpired into the following achievements for India:

- Filing of patents have increased from 42763 in 2014-15 to 66440 in 2021-22, more that 50% increase in a span of 7 years
- Nearly five times increase in grant of patents in 2021-22 (30,074) as compared to 2014-15 (5978)



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- Reduction in Time of patent examination from 72 months in Dec 2016 to 5-23 months at present, for different technological areas
- India's ranking in **Global Innovation Index** has increased to **46th in 2021** (+35 ranks) as compared to from 81st in 2015-16

Source: Business Standard

5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program (VEPP)

Why in News

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) for “**5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program (VEPP)**” initiative to build strong collaboration partnerships across 5G Use-case ecosystem stakeholders with velocity and with an exclusive emphasis to address User/Vertical Industry needs.



Key Points

- In order to multiply the 5G opportunities across the usage verticals, under the guidance of Secretary (Telecom), an **Inter-Ministerial Committee** chaired by Member (Technology), Digital Communications Commission is constituted with representatives from Ministry of Electronics and IT, Department of Science and Technology & relevant Vertical Ministries viz. Agriculture, Health, Urban Affairs, Education, Power, Mines, Jalshakthi, Commerce, Ports, Railways, Heavy Industries, Road Transport, Tourism etc. to facilitate collaborative efforts across stakeholders.
- “5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program” is being offered to Industry verticals which have potential as testing cum breeding grounds for innovative 5G use cases, through an Expression of Interest (EoI) to enable close collaboration between User verticals and 5G Tech stakeholders (Service providers, Solution providers & partner OEMs).

About 5G Technology:

- 5G is the 5th generation mobile network.
- It is a new global wireless standard after 1G, 2G, 3G, and 4G networks.
- Internet speeds in the high-band spectrum of 5G has been tested to be as high as 20 Gbps (gigabits per second).

Source: Indian Express



Utsav Portal

Why in News

- Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and DONER G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the 2 days Conference of **Amrit Samagam** being held from 12th – 13th April in New Delhi.
- During the inaugural day of the 2 days' Amrit Samagam Conference, G. Kishan Reddy also launched the **Utsav Portal**.



Key Points

- The Utsav Portal website, a digital initiative launched by the Ministry of Tourism, aims to showcase all the events, festivals and live darshans across India to promote different regions of the country as popular tourist destinations worldwide.

Note:

- The Ministry had also released a digital Calendar on the theme of dedicated tourist sites on AKAM (Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav) on the occasion of **National Tourism Day on 25th January**.
- The Ministry has sanctioned 03 projects during 2021-22 for a total amount of Rs 112.25 crore, with the objective of integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations, under the **PRASHAD Scheme**.
- The Ministry has also recently revamped its Swadesh Darshan Scheme as **Swadesh Darshan 2.0**.

Source: PIB

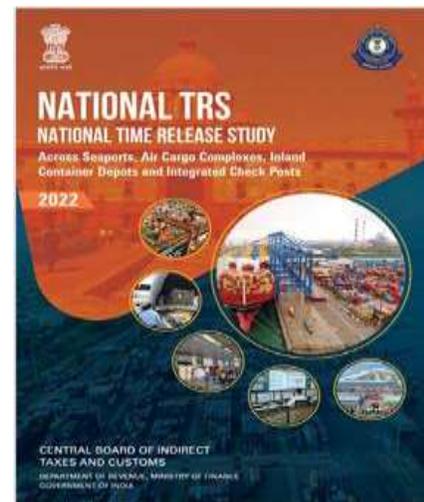
National Time Release Study, 2022

Why in News

- Vivek Johri, Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), released the **National Time Release Study (NTRS), 2022**.

Key Points

- NTRS 2022 is essentially a performance measurement tool for assessing the cargo clearance process of international trade, as recommended by the World Trade Organization (WTO) under the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).



- NTRS covered 15 major Customs formations, including four port categories - seaports, air cargo complexes (ACCs), inland container depot (ICDs) and integrated check posts (ICPs), which handle about 80 percent of the bills of entry (imports documents) and 70 percent of the shipping bills (export documents).
- The NTRS 2022 has reported further improvement in the average cargo release time for all the four port categories in 2022 over corresponding period of the previous year: by 2 percent for ICPs to significantly higher 16 percent for ACCs. For the sea cargo cleared through the sea port or inland container depots average release time has improved by 12 percent.
- With this improvement, the ICPs have achieved the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan (NTFAP) target release time to be achieved by 2023, whereas the other three port categories have reached 75 percent of NTFAP target.

Source: PIB

State Energy and Climate Index Round- 1

Why in News

- NITI Aayog has launched the **State Energy & Climate Index (SECI)- Round I** on 11th April 2022.

Key Points

- **Gujarat, Kerala, and Punjab** have been ranked as the top three performers in the category of larger states.
- **Goa**, emerged as the top-performing state in the smaller states category, followed by Tripura, and Manipur.
- Among UTs, **Chandigarh, Delhi, and Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli** are the top performers.
- The State Energy & Climate Index Round-I will help initiate a dialogue with the states on the energy sector so that much required policy improvements can be made.

Score and Ranking of Larger States

Rank	States/UTs	DISCOM's Performance	Access, affordability & reliability	Clean Energy Initiatives	Energy Efficiency	Env Sustainability	New Initiatives	SECI score
1	Gujarat	72.7	52.4	36.2	45.7	75.1	5.5	56.1
2	Kerala	64.4	67.2	21.0	24	46.2	1.7	49.1
3	Punjab	77.1	48.6	29.1	29.1	27	2.3	48.6
4	Haryana	69.6	53.4	42.6	11.7	53.6	6.9	47.9
5	Uttarakhand	61.9	43.2	18.2	20.0	40.7	14.7	46.0
6	Madhya Pradesh	67.7	51.2	24	25.7	20.2	10.6	46.0
7	Himachal Pradesh	67	66.2	14.2	20.1	62.1	20.1	45.4
8	Karnataka	58.8	45.2	27	37.2	41.7	14.5	43.8
9	Tamil Nadu	67.2	40.2	21.7	22.4	38.2	4	42.4
10	Jharkhand	47.2	38.2	4.2	29	39.9	17.8	40.8
11	Telangana	55.1	60.4	16	64.7	24.6	0.4	41.9
12	Andhra Pradesh	63.7	42.2	30.0	40	20	0	41.8
13	Uttar Pradesh	59.8	37.8	13.0	42	30.0	27.4	41.1
14	West Bengal	55.2	52	4.5	27.7	40.9	9	38.9
15	Bihar	61.2	45	4.0	22.8	32.7	7.6	38.2
16	Odisha	59.0	37.4	4.8	25.8	22.6	0.9	37.1
17	Rajasthan	49.2	40.9	15.5	44	31.4	4.8	35.4
18	Jharkhand	58.2	40.5	2.0	17.2	19	9.2	35.2
19	Madhya Pradesh	52.7	42.7	6.2	8.3	24.1	8.3	33.8
20	Chhattisgarh	58.4	45.4	2.1	0	5.8	4.2	31.7

Score and ranking of Smaller States

Rank	States/UTs	DISCOM's Performance	Access, affordability & reliability	Clean Energy Initiatives	Energy Efficiency	Env Sustainability	New Initiatives	SECI score
1	Goa	63.4	59.6	62.4	16.6	43.7	12.4	51.4
2	Tripura	57.2	33.1	22.9	31.7	39.6	58.7	45.0
3	Manipur	57.6	34.1	4.7	22.1	41.3	7.3	36.0
4	Mizoram	51.7	39.3	18.9	29.7	38.2	1.1	35.9
5	Sikkim	43.2	37.6	13.8	33.3	52.2	0.6	33.3
6	Meghalaya	47.9	30.9	1.9	4	39.8	2.8	29.4
7	Nagaland	35.9	32.9	12.2	26.4	40	3.4	27.9
8	Arunachal Pradesh	31.1	43.2	5.8	19.8	49	1.1	27.0



- The State Energy & Climate Index Round-I ranks the states' performance on 6 parameters, namely, (1) DISCOM's Performance (2) Access, Affordability and Reliability of Energy (3) Clean Energy Initiatives (4) Energy Efficiency (5) Environmental Sustainability; and (6) New Initiatives.
- The parameters are further divided into 27 indicators. Based on the composite SECI Round I score, the states and UTs are categorized into three groups: Front Runners, Achievers, and Aspirants.
- The states have been categorized based on size and geographical differences as larger states, smaller states, and UTs.

Rank	States/UTs	DISCOM's Performance	Access, affordability & reliability	Clean Energy Initiatives	Energy Efficiency	Env Sustainability	New Initiatives	SECI score
1	Chandigarh	65.6	58.7	68.2	16.2	62.5	14.1	55.7
2	Delhi	66.2	38.3	67.2	43.9	36.6	49.7	55.6
3	D&D and DAN	71.5	60.3	68.6	0	36	7.9	53.2
4	Puduchery	67.9	57.7	20.3	0.6	42.7	37.9	48.5
5	A&N	37.7	35	20.6	1.3	49.5	0	29.4
6	J&K	31.2	51.4	11.6	9.9	51.8	4.5	29.3
7	Lakshadweep	42.9	25.9	33.6	0	7.1	0	26.9

Source: PIB

MoU signed between UIDAI and ISRO for technical collaboration

Why in News

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the **Unique Identification Authority Of India (UIDAI)**, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), New Delhi and **National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC)**, **ISRO**, Hyderabad, for technical collaboration.



Key Points

- NRSC will be developing the Bhuvan-Aadhar portal providing information and locations of the aadhaar centres across India.
- NRSC will also provide a web based portal to collect and store data pertaining to existing and new enrolment centres to improve citizen centric services by carrying out regular statutory inspections.
- Bhuvan will facilitate complete geographic information storage, retrieval, analysis and reporting for Aadhaar centres, with a high resolution backdrop of natural color satellite images.

About Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI):

- UIDAI is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and



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Services) Act, 2016 ("Aadhaar Act 2016") on 12 July 2016 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

- UIDAI has so far issued Aadhaar numbers to more than 132 crore residents.

Source: PIB

First ever NTCA meeting outside National Capital held at Arunachal Pradesh

Why in News

- The 20th Meeting of **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** was held in Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav.
- For the first time in history the NTCA meeting happened outside the national capital.



Key Points

- The NTCA has prepared a Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) to deal with the reintroduction and supplementation.
- In order to help the tiger reserve managers assess their fire preparedness and manage the complete life cycle of forest fires, the NTCA has prepared a Forest Fire Audit Protocol for Tiger Reserves.
- Based on the suggestions made by the committee, the technical manual on Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of Tiger Reserves in India is being released by NTCA.
- India harbors about 70% of the world's tiger population in the wild.

About National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):

- NTCA was established in December 2005, following a recommendation of the Tiger Task Force, constituted by the Prime Minister of India for reorganised management of Project Tiger and the many Tiger Reserves in India.
- A programme for protection called, 'Tiger Protection Program' (popularly known as Project Tiger) was started in 1973, by the Government of India in co-operation with WWF.

Source: PIB



Ministry of I&B constitutes Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) Promotion Task Force

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (I&B)** has constituted an **Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) Promotion Task Force**.



Key Points

- The AVGC Promotion Task Force shall be **headed by Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**.
- The AVGC Promotion Task Force will submit its first action plan within 90 days.
- The AVGC Promotion Task Force has been constituted to promote the AVGC sector in the country under the aegis of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- The Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic sector in India has the potential to become the torch bearer of “Create in India” & “Brand India”.
- India has the potential to capture 5% (~\$40 billion) of the global market share by the year 2025, with an annual growth of around 25-30% and creating over 1,60,000 new jobs annually.

Source: The Hindu

Cabinet approves extension of Atal Innovation Mission

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved continuation of **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**, till March 2023.



Key Points

The intended targets that will be achieved by AIM are:

- Establishing 10000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs)
- Establishing 101 Atal Incubation Centers (AICs)
- Establishing 50 Atal Community Innovation Centers (ACICs)
- Supporting 200 startups via the Atal New India Challenges
- The total budgeted expenditure of Rs. 2000+ crore shall be incurred in the process of the establishment and supporting the beneficiaries.

About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):



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- The Mission has been set up under the NITI Aayog, in accordance with the Finance Minister's declaration in the 2015 Budget Speech.
- The objectives of the AIM are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country via interventions at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.

Source: Business Standard

Cabinet approves distribution of fortified rice across Government Schemes

Why in News

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has accorded its approval for supply of fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman-PM POSHAN [erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM)] and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) of Government of India in all States and Union Territories (UTs) by 2024 in a phased manner.



Key Points

- The entire cost of rice fortification (around Rs. 2,700 crore per annum) would be borne by the Govt. of India as part of food subsidy till its full implementation upto June, 2024.
- The FCI and State Agencies are already engaged in procurement of fortified rice and so far nearly 88.65 LMT of fortified rice has been procured for the supply and distribution.
- Earlier, the Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on "Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System" was implemented for a period of 3 years beginning from 2019-20.
- Eleven States- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand successfully distributed the fortified rice in their identified districts (one district per State) under the pilot scheme.

Source: Indian Express



'AVSAR' Scheme

Why in News

- **Airport Authority of India (AAI)** has taken an initiative to allocate space to **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** at its airports for selling/showcasing the self-made products of their region through '**AVSAR**' Scheme.



Key Points

About "AVSAR" (Airport as Venue for Skilled Artisans Of The Region) Scheme:

- Under "AVSAR", an opportunity to help the indigent to mobilize their households into functionally effective self-earned groups for self-reliance and self-dependence, has been provided.
- Under this scheme, an area of 100-200 square feet has been earmarked at each AAI operated airport.
- The space is being allotted to the self- help groups, turn on turn basis, for a duration of 15 days.
- Few outlets have already been commissioned at Chennai, Agartala, Dehradun, Kushinagar, Udaipur & Amritsar Airport wherein SHGs operated by local women, are showcasing and marketing their homemade local products like Puffed Rice, Packaged Papad, Pickles, Bamboo based Ladies Bag/Bottle/Lamp Sets, local artefacts, traditional craft, natural dyes, embroidery and indigenous weaves with contemporary design to the air travellers.

Source: PIB

India's contribution of USD 72,124 to UNESCO Fund for Elimination of Doping in Sport in 2022

Why in News

- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports released India's contribution of USD 72,124 to **UNESCO Fund for Elimination of Doping in Sport** in 2022.



युवा कार्यक्रम
एवं खेल मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
**YOUTH AFFAIRS
AND SPORTS**

Key Points

- As per the resolution of 7COP held at Paris, 29-31 September, 2019, the State Parties had agreed for 1% of the contribution of the regular budget of



respective nations to UNESCO towards the Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sport.

- First time in 2021, the Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports made a contribution of USD 28172 towards the UNESCO Fund on the basis of a request received from UNESCO.

Background:

- Copenhagen Declaration on Anti-Doping in Sport was agreed to by the Government of India in March, 2003, which was the political document through which Governments signaled their intention to formally recognize and implement the World Anti-Doping Code brought out by the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**.
- This was the first step towards the preparation of the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport.
- India is a signatory to the International Convention Against Doping in Sport, also known as the “UNESCO Anti-Doping Convention”, which was ratified by India on 07 November 2007.
- The **National Anti-Doping Agency**, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs, is responsible for adopting, implementing and enforcing anti-doping programmes in India.

Source: PIB

Comprehensive Training Program on Natural Farming

Why in News

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the **Comprehensive Training Program on Natural Farming**, organized by the **National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)**, Hyderabad.



Key Points

About MANAGE:

- MANAGE was established in 1987, as the National Centre for Management of Agricultural Extension at Hyderabad, by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India as an autonomous Institute.
- MANAGE is the Indian response to challenges of agricultural extension in a rapidly growing and diverse agriculture sector.

Natural farming:

- It can be defined as a “chemical- free farming and livestock based.



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- Natural farming is a promising means of reducing the dependence of farmers on external inputs, reducing the cost of cultivation and increasing the income of the farmers.
- The Government is promoting the Indian Natural Farming System (BPKP) as a sub-scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) to promote traditional indigenous practices.
- In the coming days, trained master trainers will organize 750 awareness programs for 30,000 village heads across the country and help in taking forward the initiative of natural farming in their respective states.
- 4.09 lakh hectare area is covered under natural farming.
- An announcement has also been made in the budget for the year 2022-23 to promote natural farming.

Other Initiatives related to Agriculture:

- National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- Rainfed Area Development
- Sub-mission on Agro Forestry
- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region

Source: PIB

'One Health' pilot project

Why in News

- The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), Government of India has launched a pilot project in the state of Uttarakhand to implement the **One Health** Framework by One Health Support Unit.

Key Points

One Health Concept:

- One Health is an approach that recognizes that the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment.
- One Health' vision derives its blueprint from the agreement between the tripartite-plus alliance comprising the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).
- The key objective of the Unit is to develop a national One Health roadmap based on the learnings of the pilot project implementation.



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- The Inter-ministerial One Health committee under the chairmanship of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India has been established to lead the implementation of the One Health Support Unit.
- By developing the One Health Framework, India will successfully address the need for efficient disease reporting and response coordination, optimum utilization of resources, emergency preparedness, build capability to handle diseases of economic and zoonotic importance, and create public awareness on animal diseases of zoonotic and economic significance.
- In keeping with the long-term objectives, India established a National Standing Committee on Zoonoses as far back as the 1980s.

Source: PIB

Chhattisgarh ranks first in the country with the lowest unemployment rate

Why in News

- Chhattisgarh has been ranked first among states with the lowest unemployment rate in the country.
- According to the **latest data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)**, Chhattisgarh has registered an unemployment rate of 0.6 percent this March, which is the lowest so far.



Key Points

- As per the data, Haryana has the highest unemployment rate at 26.7 percent, followed by Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir at 25 percent each and Jharkhand at 14.5 percent.
- Chhattisgarh ranks first in the country with the lowest unemployment rate while the country's unemployment rate stood at 7.6 percent in the same month (March).
- The Chhattisgarh government adopted a new model of development three years ago in line with Mahatma Gandhi's vision of 'Gram Swaraj' envisaging inclusive development of the state and launched various schemes including Suraji Gaon Yojana, Narva-Garva-Ghurva-Bari programme, Godhan Nyay Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana etc. for boosting the rural economy.
- The state government has set up the 'Chhattisgarh Employment Mission' intending to create around 15 lakh new employment opportunities in the next five years.

Source: Indian Express



'XE' variant of coronavirus

Why in News

- Recently, The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) announced that a 50-year-old woman with a travel history to South Africa may have been infected with the **newly-discovered 'XE' variant of the coronavirus.**



Key Points

- XE, a sub-variant of Omicron, which caused the third wave of Covid-19 this winter, had not been found in India until now.

XE variant of coronavirus:

- The Omicron variant, which is responsible for over 90 per cent of the infections detected this year, has two prominent sub-variants, called BA.1 and BA.2. There is a BA.3 sub-variant as well, but that is less common.
- During the initial phase, the BA.1 sub-variant was the most widespread. In India, however, it was the BA.2 that was the most dominant during the third wave.
- BA.2 was found to be slightly more transmissible than BA.1, even though it was not more dangerous.
- In the last couple of months, the BA.2 variety has become the most widespread across the globe, accounting for almost 94 per cent of all Omicron infections in the last one month, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Source: Indian Express

De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Tribes

Why in News

- Recently, a standing committee of Parliament has criticised the functioning of the development programme for de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes.
- The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, headed by BJP Lok Sabha MP Rama Devi, tabled its 31st report in Parliament.
- The report said the “Committee are constrained to note that the Scheme for economic empowerment of DNT communities formulated to provide



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coaching, health insurance, facilitate livelihood and financial assistance for construction of homes for the members of DNT, with total outlays of Rs 200 crore for the period of five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and the Department could not spend even a single rupee in 2021-22.

Key Points

De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Tribes:

- These are communities who are the most vulnerable and deprived.
- Denotified tribes (DNTs) are communities that were 'notified' as being 'born criminal' during the British regime under a series of laws starting with the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.
- Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time.

Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT):

- A National Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT) was constituted in 2006 by the then government.
- It was headed by Balkrishna Sidram Renke and submitted its report in June 2008, in which it said, "It is an irony that these tribes somehow escaped the attention of our Constitution makers and thus got deprived of the Constitutional support unlike Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes."
- The Renke commission estimated their population at around 10.74 crore based on Census 2001.
- A new Commission constituted in February 2014 to prepare a state-wise list, which submitted its report on January 8, 2018, identified 1,262 communities as de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic.
- While a number of these tribes are categorised under SC, ST and OBC, many are not.
- The standing committee report in Parliament has cited a statement by the Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, that 269 DNT communities are not covered under any reserved categories.

About Development and Welfare Board for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC):

- The government set up the Development and Welfare Board for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC) under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the purpose of implementing welfare programmes.
- The DWBDNC was constituted on February 21, 2019 under the chairmanship of Bhiku Ramji Idate.

Source: Indian Express



Government accords 'In-Principle' approval for five new sites for locating nuclear power plants

Why in News

- Recently, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said in Lok Sabha that the Government has accorded 'In-Principle' approval for five new sites for locating nuclear power plants in future.



Key Points

- The Government has accorded administrative approval and financial sanction for construction of 10 indigenous 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) to be set up in fleet mode.
- On progressive completion of the projects under construction and accorded sanction, the nuclear capacity is expected to reach **22480 MW by 2031**.
- There are presently 22 reactors with a total capacity of 6780 MW in operation and one reactor, KAPP-3 (700 MW) has been connected to the grid on January 10, 2021.

Note:

- The requirement of uranium for domestic safeguarded nuclear reactors is met by indigenously mined and produced uranium.
- Moreover, Natural Uranium Ore Concentrate (UOC) is being procured from countries having Inter Governmental Agreement for supply of nuclear fuel.
- Efforts have been made to procure nuclear fuel from Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Canada.

Source: newsonair

Digital Dashboard for District Ganga Committee Performance Monitoring System

Why in News

- Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched the '**Digital Dashboard for District Ganga Committees (DGCs) Performance Monitoring System**' (GDPMS).



Key Points

- DGC Digital Dashboard will go a long way in establishing a people-river connect and will play an important role in the success of **Namami Gange Programme**.

About District Ganga Committees:

- District Ganga Committees were constituted in the districts on the Ganga River basin for putting in place a mechanism at the district level to ensure people's participation in management and pollution abatement in river Ganga and its tributaries.
- The DGCs are mandated to ensure proper utilization of assets created under Namami Gange, monitor drains/sewage falling in River Ganga and its tributaries, create strong connect of people with Ganga rejuvenation.

Source: PIB

Stand Up India Scheme completes 6 years

Why in News

- The sixth anniversary of the Stand Up India scheme was on 5th April 2022.
- Over 30 thousand 160 crore rupees have been sanctioned under Stand Up India Scheme to more than 1 lakh 33 thousand 995 accounts since inception of the Scheme.



Key Points

About Stand Up India scheme:

- Stand Up India scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 5th April 2016.
- It facilitates loans to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, and women borrowers for setting up a greenfield enterprise in manufacturing, services, or trading sector.

Purpose of Stand Up India:

- Promote entrepreneurship amongst women, SC & ST category
- Provide loans for greenfield enterprises in manufacturing, services or the trading sector and activities allied to agriculture;
- Facilitate bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore to at least one Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch of Scheduled Commercial Banks

Note: In 2019-20, the Stand Up India scheme was extended for the entire period coinciding with the 15th Finance Commission period of 2020-25.

Source: newsonair



Mission Integrated Bio-refineries

Why in News

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh launched a major futuristic PPP (Public Private Participation) mode initiative for 'Clean Energy' with the full launch of "**Mission Integrated Bio-refineries**" to accelerate Clean Energy solutions through Public -Private Alliances.



Key Points

- Dr Jitendra Singh also launched three **Material Acceleration Platforms (MAP)** set up by Department of Science and Technology (DST) on Integrated Clean Energy Material Acceleration Platform on Storage, Integrated Clean Energy Material Acceleration Platform on Materials and Integrated Clean Energy Material Acceleration Platform on Bioenergy and Hydrogen with a total cost of \$ 6 Million USD.
- He enumerated that these platforms would leverage emerging capabilities in next-generation computing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, and robotics to accelerate the pace of materials discovery up to 10 times faster.
- He also announced '**National Funding Opportunity on Sustainable Aviation Fuels**' to support and conduct RD&D (Research, Development & Demonstration) to foster technological innovations in advanced biofuels for aviation applications.
- He announced the funding opportunity of **Hydrogen Valley Platform**, which is also a global initiative to optimise the hydrogen demand and supply by onsite generation and utilization, utilize the renewable resources effectively, and water excess areas with geographical identity.
- DST has committed to facilitate the delivery of three clean hydrogen valleys in India by 2030.

Mission Integrated Bio-refineries:

- The Mission is Co-led by India and the Netherlands. Also involved are Brazil and Canada as core members, and the European Commission and the United Kingdom as supporting members.
- This is the sixth Mission launched by Mission Innovation, and joins initiatives focused on clean hydrogen, green power systems, net zero shipping, carbon dioxide removal and urban transitions.

Mission Innovation:



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- Mission Innovation is a global initiative to catalyse action and investment in research, development and demonstration to make clean energy affordable, attractive and accessible to all this decade.
- Launched alongside the Paris Agreement in 2015

Source: PIB

Union Environment Minister launches Awareness Mascot 'Prakriti' & green initiatives for effective Plastic Waste Management

Why in News

- The Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav launched 'Prakriti', a mascot to spread greater awareness among masses about small changes that can be sustainably adopted in our lifestyle for a better environment, and various green initiatives taken by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to ensure effective Plastic Waste Management (PWM) in the country.
- The event also saw felicitation of the winners of the India Plastic Challenge-Hackathon 2021.



Key Points

- To tackle the challenge of plastic pollution, the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi announced India's pledge to phase out Single Use Plastics (SUPs) by 2022.
- India is generating about 3.5 Million Tonnes of plastic waste annually and the per capita plastic waste generation has almost doubled over the last five years.
- Further, he informed about the recently released IPCC Working Group III contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), which focuses on mitigation measures to keep the world aligned to the Plastic Waste Management goals and what we can do to remain on the roadmap set by the Paris Agreement.

Source: PIB



PM Narendra Modi holds talks with Nepal PM Sher Bahadur Deuba in Delhi

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba held delegation-level talks at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on 2 April 2022.
- Prime Minister Deuba, accompanied by a high-level delegation, arrived in New Delhi on 1 April 2022 on a three-day visit.



Key Points

- This is Prime Minister Deuba's first bilateral visit abroad since assuming office for the fifth time in July last year.
- Nepal is important for India in the context of its overall strategic interests in the region, and the leaders of the two countries have often noted the age-old "Roti Beti" relationship.
- Nepal shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states - Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Note: The last Head of State/Head of Government-level visit from Nepal was in May 2019, when then PM K P Oli visited India for the swearing-in ceremony of PM Narendra Modi. Before that PM Modi had visited Nepal in August 2018 for the 4th BIMSTEC Summit in Kathmandu.

Source: Business Standard

Central govt exempts genome edited crops from stringent GM regulations

Why in News

- The Central government has for the first time issued an order exempting certain types of genome edited crops from the stringent regulations applicable on **genetically modified or GM crops** thus giving a big boost to their further research and development.



Key Points

- The Ministry of Environment and Forest in an order issued recently, exempted SDN1 and SDN2 genome edited plants from Rules 7-11 of the Environment Protection Act (EPA) for manufacture, use or import or



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export and storage of hazardous microorganisms or genetically engineered organisms or cells rules-1989.

- Genome editing or gene editing was discovered back in 2012, but Indian regulators took nearly a decade to comprehend its potential for developing crops resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses and with nutritional superiority.

Genome editing:

- A decade ago, scientists in Germany and the US discovered a technique which allowed them to 'cut' DNA strands and edit genes. For agriculture scientists this process allowed them to bring about desired changes in the genome by using site directed nuclease (SDN) or sequence specific nuclease (SSN).

Note: Globally, European Union countries have bracketed genome edited crops with GM crops. Countries like Argentina, Israel, US, Canada, etc have liberal regulations for genome edited crops.

Source: Business Standard

Broadcast Seva Portal for broadcasters launched

Why in News

- Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and Youth Affairs & Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur launched the **Broadcast Seva Portal** in New Delhi.



Key Points

About Broadcast Seva Portal:

- Broadcast Seva Portal is an online portal solution for speedy filing and processing of applications of broadcasters for various kinds of licenses, permissions, registrations, etc.
- It will reduce the turnaround time of applications and at the same time will help applicants track the progress.
- It will reduce the human interface that was required earlier and thus add to capacity building of the Ministry and will be a major step towards Ease of Doing Business.
- It will boost the business environment and empower the entire broadcast sector by directly benefiting more than 900 Satellite TV Channels, 70 Teleport operators, 1700 Multi-service operators, 350 Community Radio Stations (CRS), 380 Private FM Channels and others.
- The portal would bring Transparency, Accountability & Responsiveness in the ecosystem and all information will be available on a single dashboard.



Source: HT

Railway Protection Force: Operation Upalabdh

Why in News

- Recently, **RPF (Railway Protection Force)** conducted a Pan India Drive against the touts under **Operation Upalabdh**.



Key Points

About Operation Upalabdh:

- The month long drive under Operation Upalabdh has been able to curb the activities of touts substantially and make railway tickets available to the common man.
- Indian Railways advises the common public not to procure tickets from unauthorised persons as it is not only likely to be forfeited once detected, but may also land the buyer in legal trouble.

About Railway Protection Force (RPF):

- RPF is a security force under the ownership of Indian Railways, Ministry of Railways, Government of India established by the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957.
- It has the power to search, arrest, investigate, and prosecute offenses committed under Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act 1966,

Note: In February 2022, the RPF had launched a nationwide operation to curb human trafficking named **Operation AAHT**.

Source: PIB

President Kovind holds bilateral talks with his Turkmenistan counterpart Serdar Berdimuhamedow

Why in News

- President Ram Nath Kovind** and his Turkmenistan counterpart Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow held delegation-level talks at Oguzhar palace Ashgabat and exchanged views on various regional and international issues.
- This is the first-ever visit of the President of India to independent Turkmenistan and comes just after the inauguration of new Turkmen President Berdimuhamedov.



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- A postage stamp commemorating 30 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Turkmenistan was also released.

Key Points

- India and Turkmenistan signed four agreements, including in financial intelligence and disaster management.
- The two leaders highlighted the significance of the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Ashgabat Agreement on International Transport and Transit Corridor.
- President Kovind pointed out that the Chabahar port built by India in Iran could be used to improve trade between India and Central Asia.
- On the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, President Kovind suggested that issues related to security of the pipeline and key business principles may be addressed in Technical and Expert level meetings.

Note:

- Turkmenistan is an important partner for India in the India-Central Asia Summit framework, the first of which India hosted virtually in January this year.
- President Kovind's trip to Turkmenistan will be followed by a state visit to the Netherlands from April 4-7 at the invitation of King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima.

Source: Indian Express

India and Australia sign Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement

Why in News

- The Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, and Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Government of Australia, Dan Tehan signed the **India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA)**, in a virtual ceremony in presence of the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison.



Key Points

Salient features of India-Australia ECTA:



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- The India-Australia ECTA is the first trade agreement of India with a developed country after more than a decade.
- The Agreement encompasses cooperation across the entire gamut of bilateral economic and commercial relations between the two friendly countries, and covers areas like Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, Dispute Settlement, Movement of Natural Persons, Telecom, Customs Procedures, Pharmaceutical products, and Cooperation in other Areas.

Note:

- Australia is the 17th largest trading partner of India and India is Australia's 9th largest trading partner.
- India-Australia bilateral trade for both merchandise and services is valued at US\$ 27.5 billion in 2021.
- India's merchandise exports to Australia grew 135% between 2019 and 2021.
- India's merchandise imports from Australia were US\$ 15.1 billion in 2021, consisting largely of raw materials, minerals and intermediate goods.
- India and Australia are partners in the trilateral **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)** arrangement along with Japan which seeks to enhance the resilience of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific Region.
- Further, India and Australia are also members of the recently formed **Quad**, also comprising the US, and Japan, to further enhances cooperation and develops partnership across several issues of common concern.

Source: PIB

Prime Minister Modi interacts with students in the 5th Pariksha Pe Charcha Programme

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with students on the subject of upcoming exams on 01 April 2022 in the 5th Pariksha Pe Charcha Programme.



Key Points

- The programme was organised at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi, where school students of grades 9th to 12th, parents, and teachers had interaction with the Prime Minister.



- The program was organised by the Ministry of Education's Department of School Education and Literacy.
- **Note:** First edition of the Pariksha Pe Charcha was held on February 16, 2018.
Source: HT

CJI N V Ramana launches FASTER software to transmit court orders swiftly

Why in News

- Chief Justice of India N V Ramana launched **FASTER (Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records)** — a digital platform to communicate interim orders, stay orders, bail orders etc., of the Supreme Court to authorities concerned through a secured electronic communication channel.



Key Points

- The FASTER system is developed by the Registry in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre.
- To reach all districts of India through this system, so far 73 nodal officers have been nominated at various levels.
- All nodal officers have been connected through a specific Judicial Communication Network (JCN) by creating a secured pathway.

Note: The Supreme Court has also launched other programmes involving technology like Artificial Intelligence (AI) based portal 'SUPACE' in the judicial system aimed at assisting judges with legal research.

Source: Indian Express



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State

MoU signed between NHLML and State Government for construction of Ropeways in Himachal Pradesh under the Parvatmala Yojana

Why in News

- Union Minister for Road transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari along with Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Jai Ram Thakur witnessed the signing of MoU between NHLML (National Highways Logistics Management Limited) and State Government of Himachal Pradesh for construction of Ropeways in Himachal Pradesh under the ambitious **Parvatmala Yojana**.



Key Points

- This is a significant MoU which will facilitate a unique, eco-friendly, scenic and seamless travel experience for tourists. By leveraging world class technology, 7 ropeway projects of total length 57.1km at total cost of Rs 3,232 Crore will be constructed in the State.

About Parvatmala Yojana:

- Union Finance Minister, while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23 announced National Ropeways Development Programme "Parvatmala" 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 scheme is being presently started in regions like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states.

Source: PIB

Tamil Nadu passes 2 bills to take away governor's powers to name VCs

Why in News

- The Tamil Nadu assembly passed two bills to amend the laws of 13 universities to transfer the power to appoint their vice-chancellors from the governor to the state government.



Key Points

- Chief Minister M K Stalin said the state government's lack of power to appoint vice-chancellors had a huge impact on higher education.
- He pointed out that in Gujarat, the home state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the state government had been appointing vice-chancellors from three names recommended by a search committee.
- The proposed bills stress that “every appointment of the Vice-Chancellor shall be made by the Government from out of a panel of three names” recommended by a search-cum-selection committee.
- According to the UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2018, the “Visitor/Chancellor” — mostly the Governor in states — shall appoint the VC out of the panel of names recommended by search-cum-selection committees.
- Under the Central Universities Act, 2009, the President of India shall be the Visitor of a central university.
- Chancellors in central universities are titular heads, who are appointed by the President in his capacity as Visitor.
- The Vice Chancellor too is appointed by the Visitor from panels of names picked by search and selection committees formed by the Union government.

Note: Moreover, the Justice Madan Mohan Punchhi Commission constituted by the Centre in 2007 to look into Centre-state relations had recommended that governors should not be vested with the powers to appoint the VCs since "there would be a clash of functions and powers". Nineteen states offered their remarks endorsing the commission's report.

Source: TOI

Shivamogga airport to be named after B S Yediyurappa

Why in News

- Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai recently announced that the under-construction Shivamogga airport will be named after former Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa.



Key Points

- The proposal will now be sent to the civil aviation ministry.
- The airport will be ready for inauguration in December 2022.
- The project has been taken up under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) programme.



- The Shivamogga airport will have the 2nd longest runway in Karnataka after Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.

Source: Indian Express

'Radio Aksh'- India's first radio channel for visually-impaired people launched in Maharashtra

Why in News

- Country's first-ever radio channel for the visually impaired, named '**Radio Aksh**' has been launched in Nagpur, Maharashtra.



Key Points

- It has been launched with the help of the Blind Relief Association Nagpur and Samdrushti Kshamata Vikas Avam Anusandhan Mandal (Saksham).
- This concept was created as a substitute for audiobooks provided by Samdrushti Kshamata Vikas Avam Anusandhan Mandal to the visually impaired on their digital devices, access to which was cut off due to the COVID-19 pandemic due to restrictions on travelling.

Source: TOI

In a first, Maharashtra app maps workers' migration for portability of ICDS scheme

Why in News

- In a first of its kind project in the country, the Maharashtra government has developed a website-based **Migration Tracking System (MTS)** application to map the movement of vulnerable seasonal migrant workers through individual unique identity numbers.



Key Points

- The state government's women and child development (WCD) department launched it as a pilot project in November last year in six districts with high tribal population including Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Amravati, Jalna, Palghar and Nandurbar.
- The MTS project is envisaged to maintain the continuity of the **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** like nutrition supply, immunisation and health check-up etc. to migrant beneficiaries including children aged up to 18 years, lactating mothers and pregnant women registered with the anganwadi centres.



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- Their migration will be tracked for ensuring the portability of the ICDS for their families in their destination districts within or outside the state until their return to their native places.

About Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS):

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- It was launched in 1975.

Schemes under the ICDS:

- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- Anganwadi Services Scheme
- National Creche Scheme
- Scheme for Adolescent Girls
- POSHAN Abhiyaan
- Child Protection Scheme

Source: Indian Express

Mumbai recognized as '2021 Tree City of the World' by United Nations

Why in News

- **Mumbai** has been recognised as '2021 Tree City of the World' by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) jointly with Arbor Day Foundation.



Key Points

- Mumbai received recognition for its “commitment to growing and maintaining urban trees and greenery in building healthy, resilient and happy cities”.
- Mumbai is the second city in India to receive this distinction.
- Previously, Hyderabad was the only city in India to receive this honour.
- The United Nations' 'Tree City of the World' programme provides direction, assistance, and worldwide recognition for communities' dedication to its urban forest, and provides a framework for a healthy, sustainable urban forestry.

Source: Indian Express



Punjab-Haryana dispute over rivers waters and SYL Canal

Why in News

- The Haryana Vidhan Sabha has passed a resolution seeking completion of the **Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal**, bringing back into focus the contentious issue of sharing of river waters between Haryana and Punjab.

Key Points

The river waters:

- The canal, once completed, will enable sharing of the waters of the rivers Ravi and Beas between the two states. The issue dates back to 1966 at the time of reorganisation of Punjab and formation of Haryana. Punjab was opposed to sharing the waters of the two rivers with Haryana, citing riparian principles.

The shares:

- A decade before the formation of Haryana, the water flowing down Ravi and Beas was assessed at 15.85 million acre feet (MAF) per year. The Union government had organised a meeting in 1955 between the three stakeholders — Rajasthan, undivided Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir — and allotted 8 MAF per year to Rajasthan, 7.20 MAF to undivided Punjab and 0.65 MAF to J&K.

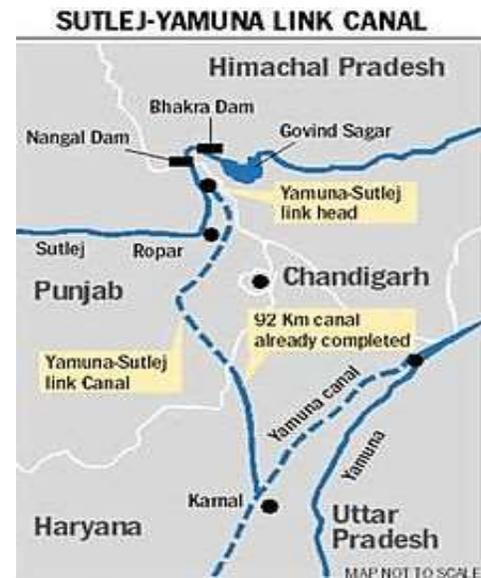
The canal:

- On April 8, 1982, then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi launched the construction of the SYL Canal with a groundbreaking ceremony in Kapoori village in Patiala district. A stretch of 214 km was to be constructed, out of which 122 km was to cross Punjab and 92 km in Haryana. But the Akalis launched an agitation in the form of Kapoori Morcha against the construction of the canal. Then in July 1985, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and then Akali Dal chief Sant Harchand Singh Longowal signed an accord agreeing for a new tribunal to assess the water.

Punjab's argument:

- As per a state government study, many areas in Punjab may go dry after 2029. The state has already over-exploited its groundwater for irrigation purposes as it fills granaries of the Centre by growing wheat and paddy worth Rs 70,000 crore every year.

Haryana's claim:



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- Haryana has been staking claim to the Ravi-Beas waters through the SYL Canal on the plea that providing water for irrigation was a tough task for the state. In southern parts, where underground water had depleted up to 1700 feet, there was a problem of drinking water.

Source: Indian Express

Punjab Assembly passes resolution seeking immediate transfer of Chandigarh to state

Why in News

- Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann moved a resolution in the assembly seeking immediate transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab.
- The longstanding dispute between Punjab and Haryana over Chandigarh flared up after the Centre notified Central Service Rules for employees in the Union Territory instead of the Punjab Service Rules.



Key Points

- After Partition, Shimla was made the temporary capital of Indian Punjab.
- The capital was officially moved from Shimla to Chandigarh on September 21, 1953.
- The Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966 carved out the new state of Haryana from undivided Punjab, created the new Union Territory of Chandigarh under the direct control of the Centre, and transferred the hill territories of Punjab to Himachal Pradesh.
- Chandigarh, identified as the capital of Punjab in The Capital of Punjab (Development and Regulation) Act, 1952, became the common capital of both Punjab and Haryana, and properties were divided between the states in the ratio 60:40.

Note:

- The concept of Union Territories was not in the original version of the Constitution but was added by the Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956.
- According to Article 3 of the Indian Constitution, the constitutional power to create new states and union territories in India is solely reserved to the Parliament of India.

Source: Indian Express



Economy

India Post Payments Bank launches 'Fincluvation'

Why in News

- **India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)** announced the launch of **Fincluvation**– a joint initiative to collaborate with Fintech Startup community to co-create and innovate solutions for financial inclusion.



Key Points

About Fincluvation:

- Fincluvation will be a permanent platform of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) to co-create inclusive financial solutions with participating start-ups.
- Fincluvation invites startups to Participate, Ideate, Develop and Market intuitive and tailored products and services that can be taken to the customers.
- Fincluvation will allow the start-ups to work with IPPB and DoP experts to develop solutions and conduct pilots using the postal network and IPPB's technology stack.

About India Post Payments Bank (IPPB):

- IPPB has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by Government of India.
- It was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 1, 2018.

Source: PIB

IMF slashes forecast for India's FY23 GDP growth to 8.2% from earlier 9%

Why in News

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, in its latest **World Economic Outlook Report** released recently, slashed its forecast for India's FY23 GDP growth to 8.2 percent from earlier 9 percent.



Key Points



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- The IMF has also slashed its global growth outlook for calendar year 2022 to 3.6 percent from 4.4 percent saying that global economic prospects have worsened significantly due to commodity price volatility and disruption of supply chains caused by the war in Europe.

Note: Earlier, the World Bank has cut India's GDP forecast for FY22-23 to 8 percent. Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has also sharply cut India's growth projection at 7.2 percent for FY22-23, while the second advance estimate of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation had said that GDP growth would be 8.9 percent.

Facts about International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- **Formation:** 27 December 1945
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., U.S.
- **Membership:** 190 countries
- **Managing Director:** Kristalina Georgieva
- **First Deputy Managing Director:** Gita Gopinath

Source: TOI

Government amends FEMA rules to allow 20% FDI in LIC

Why in News

- The Central government has amended rules of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA)**, paving the way for up to 20 percent **FDI (Foreign Direct Investment)** in the insurance behemoth **LIC**.



Key Points

- The government is planning to dilute its stake in LIC through the Initial Public Offering (IPO).
- LIC in February, 2022 had filed the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) before the markets regulator SEBI for the IPO.
- Following the Cabinet approval, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on March 14, 2022 had amended the Foreign Direct Investment policy to facilitate overseas investment in LIC ahead of the mega public offer.
- FEMA notification was required to operationalise the provisions DPIIT issued through a press note, including FDI policy changes that will allow large foreign portfolio investors to subscribe to shares of LIC.
- These rules may be called the Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) (Amendment) Rules, 2022.
- The notification has inserted a paragraph in the existing policy, allowing up to 20 percent FDI in LIC through the automatic route.



- Foreign investment in LIC shall be subject to the provisions of the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, (LIC Act) as amended from time to time and such provisions of the Insurance Act, 1938, as amended from time to time, as are applicable to LIC.

About Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA):

- FEMA is an Act of the Parliament of India "to consolidate and amend the law relating to foreign exchange with the objective of facilitating external trade and payments and for promoting the orderly development and maintenance of foreign exchange market in India".
- It was passed in 1999 in parliament, replacing the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA).
- It enabled a new foreign exchange management regime consistent with the emerging framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Source: Business Standard

Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)

Why in News

- So far, India has signed 13 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with its trading partners, including the 3 agreements, namely India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), India-UAE Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA) signed during the last five years.
- This information was given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Smt. Anupriya Patel, in the Lok Sabha recently.

**Key Points**

- The economic impact assessment of FTAs undertaken both in terms of data analysis and stakeholder consultations from time to time, has revealed that there has been growth in both exports and imports with FTA partners.

The list of FTAs signed by India:

SN	Name of the Agreement
1	India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA)



SN	Name of the Agreement
2	Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives and Afghanistan)
3	India-Nepal Treaty of Trade
4	India-Bhutan Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit
5	India-Thailand FTA - Early Harvest Scheme (EHS)
6	India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)
7	India-ASEAN CECA - Trade in Goods, Services and Investment Agreement (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam)
8	India-South Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)
9	India-Japan CEPA
10	India-Malaysia CECA
11	India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA)
12	India-UAE CEPA
13	India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)

Source: PIB



HDFC to merge with HDFC Bank to create third most valuable company in the country

Why in News

- HDFC Limited will merge with HDFC Bank.
- The merger is set to make the company the third most valuable in the country.



Key Points

- HDFC will acquire a 41 percent stake in HDFC Bank through the transformational merger.
- HDFC Limited Chairman Deepak Parekh has described it as a merger of equals. He said mergers will enhance diversity of assets of the combined entity.

About HDFC Bank Limited:

- HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai.
- It is India's largest private sector bank by assets and world's 10th largest bank by market capitalisation as of April 2021.
- **Founded:** August 1994, India

About HDFC Ltd:

- Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited is an Indian financial services company based in Mumbai.
- It is a major housing finance provider in India.
- **Founded:** 1977

Source: Business Standard

India's merchandise exports hit a record high \$418 billion in 2021-22

Why in News

- India's merchandise exports spurt to a record high of USD 418 billion in the 2021-22 fiscal on higher shipments of petroleum products, engineering goods, gems and jewellery and chemicals, according to official data released recently.



Key Points



- India's goods trade (exports and imports) crossed USD 1 trillion during 2021-22 as the country's imports too have touched an all-time high of USD 610 billion.
- Outbound shipments touched an all-time monthly high of USD 40.38 billion in March 2022. Exports stood at USD 35.26 billion in March 2021.
- India's merchandise exports had breached the targeted USD 400 billion mark on March 21 this year.
- Agriculture exports crossed USD 48 billion during April 2021-March 2022.
- **Note:** The top export destinations are the US, the UAE, Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Singapore, Hong Kong, the UK, Belgium and Germany.

Source: India Today

Polity

Policy for use of land acquired under the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition & Development) Act, 1957

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet has approved the policy for use of land acquired under the **Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition & Development) Act, 1957 [CBA Act]**.



Key Points

- The policy provides for utilisation of such land for the purpose of development and setting up of infrastructure relating to coal and energy.
- The CBA Act provides for acquisition of coal bearing lands and their vesting in Government companies, free from any encumbrance.
- The approved policy provides a clear policy framework for utilisation of following types of lands acquired under the CBA Act: Lands no longer suitable or economically viable for coal mining activities; or Lands from which coal has been mined out / de-coaled and such land has been reclaimed.
- The Government coal companies, such as Coal India Ltd. (CIL) and its subsidiaries shall remain owners of these lands acquired under the CBA Act and the policy allows only leasing of the land for the specified purposes given in the policy.

Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957:



- **CBA Act, 1957** provides for the acquisition of land containing or likely to contain coal deposits and for matters connected therewith.
- For other requirements, like permanent infrastructure, offices, residence etc. the land is acquired under Land Acquisition Act, 1894.

Source: HT

Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022

Why in News

- Recently, Lok Sabha passed **Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022**.



Key Points

- The Bill moved by External affairs Minister S. Jaishankar amends the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005.
- The 2005 Act prohibits unlawful activities (such as manufacturing, transport, or transfer) related to weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery.
- Weapons of Mass Destruction are biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons.
- The present Bill bars persons from financing any prohibited activity related to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.
- To prevent persons from financing such activities, the central government may freeze, seize or attach their funds, financial assets, or economic resources (whether owned, held, or controlled directly or indirectly).
- It may also prohibit persons from making finances or related services available for the benefit of other persons in relation to any activity which is prohibited.

Efforts to control the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction are enshrined in international agreements such as:

- Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968
- Biological Weapons Convention of 1972
- Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993

Source: Indian Express



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Defense

Govt amends Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 to promote 'Make in India' in military procurement

Why in News

- To further promote 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence and enable Ease of Doing Business, Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020 has been amended based on the approvals accorded by Defence Acquisition Council (DAC).



Key Points

- Import of defence equipment/sourcing from Foreign Industry of capital acquisitions should only be an exception and undertaken with specific approval of DAC/Defence Minister.
- As advised by Ministry of Finance and to reduce financial burden on the Indian Defence Industry whilst maintaining financial safeguards, requirement of Integrity Pact Bank Guarantee (IPBG) has been dispensed with.
- Further, as per extant Government of India policy, Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) is not required from Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs).
- To create an ecosystem which fosters innovation and encourages technology development in Defence by engaging R&D institutes, academia, industries, startups and individual innovators, the **iDEX framework** was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2018.
- To enable the budding startup talent pool of the country to contribute towards the twin mantras of self-sufficiency and indigenization, the procurement process under iDEX procedure of DAP 2020 has been simplified.
- Make-II procedure of DAP-2020, involving indigenisation of defence equipment through industry funded projects at prototype development stage, has been simplified by incorporating Single Stage Composite Trials of prototypes and dispensing off with quantity vetting and scaling for initial procurements in the delegated cases.

Source: India Today

iDEX-Prime & 6th Defence India Start-up Challenge



Why in News

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) Prime** and **sixth Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC 6)** during **DefConnect 2.0** in New Delhi.



Key Points

About Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX):

- It was launched in April 2018.
- It aims to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries including MSMEs, start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes and academia.
- The aim of **iDEX-Prime** is to support projects, requiring support beyond Rs 1.5 crore up to Rs 10 crore, to help ever-growing start-ups in the defence sector.

About Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC 6):

- The DISC 6 with 38 Problem Statements was launched.
- Apart from the three Services and some Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) which have participated in earlier editions, DISC 6 witnesses the participation of newly-formed seven defence companies, Indian Coast Guard and organisations under Ministry of Home Affairs for the first time.
- The Problem Statements relate to Artificial Intelligence (AI), Advanced Imaging, Sensor Systems, Big Data Analytics and Autonomous Unmanned Systems and Secured Communication among others.
- Defence Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) on 4th Aug 2018 at Bengaluru.

Government Initiatives Regarding Indigenisation:

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

Source: PIB



Sixth scorpene submarine 'INS Vagsheer' launched in Mumbai

Why in News

- Yard 11880, the sixth and last submarine 'INS Vagsheer' of the Indian Navy's Kalvari class submarines of Project 75 has been launched at the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).



Key Points

- The first of the Project - 75 submarines was commissioned into the Navy in December 2017 and presently four submarines (INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi and INS Karang, and INS Vela) of this Project are in commission in the Indian Navy.
- The fifth submarine 'INS Vagir' is progressing with the Sea Trials and is likely to be delivered this year.
- The sixth submarine will now commence setting to work of various equipment and their harbour trials.
- The submarines are being manufactured at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in collaboration with Naval Group, France.

Source: HT

Defence Secretary inaugurates National Level Pollution Response Exercise 'NATPOLREX-VIII'

Why in News

- Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar inaugurated the 8th edition of two-day (April 19-20, 2022) **National Level Pollution Response Exercise, 'NATPOLREX-VIII'**, conducted by Indian Coast Guard (ICG) off Mormugao harbour, Goa.



Key Points

- The event was attended by more than 85 participants from 50 agencies, including 29 observers from 22 friendly foreign countries & International Organisations and two Coast Guard ships from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- The objective of NATPOLREX-VIII is to enhance the preparedness and response capability of all the stakeholders in combating marine spills.
- It aims at validating the procedures and guidelines as contained in the **National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP)** at the national



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and regional levels under the aegis of SACEP MoU to which India is a member state.

- Today, the Indian Coast Guard is capable of handling the highest level of oil spills in this region, which is 700 tonnes and above.

Note: Besides NATPOLREX, ICG is concurrently conducting a capacity building professional training course in Marine Oil Response and Preparedness for 45 international participants from 18 countries including member states from **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** at Chennai from April 18-29, 2022.

Source: India Today

India - Australia Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA) Coordinated Operations

Why in News

- A **P8I Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA)** of the Indian Navy has arrived at Darwin, Australia.



Key Points

- The aircraft and its crew would be undertaking an operational turnaround at Darwin.
- During its stay, the team from the Indian Navy's maritime patrol squadron, Albatross, is scheduled to engage with its counterparts from the 92 Wing of the Royal Australian Air Force.
- P8 aircraft from both the countries, would be conducting coordinated operations in Anti-Submarine Warfare and surface surveillance, to enhance maritime domain awareness.
- The P8 aircraft, with their demonstrated long reach, have operated jointly during **Malabar and AUSINDEX series of exercises**, and have a common understanding of operating procedures and information sharing.

Source: India Today

Anti-Tank Guided Missile 'HELINA' successfully flight tested

Why in News

- Indigenously developed helicopter launched **Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) 'HELINA'** was successfully flight tested at high-altitude ranges as part of user validation trials in Pokhran.



Key Points



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- The flight-test was jointly conducted by the teams of scientists from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The flight trials were conducted from an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and the missile was fired successfully engaging a simulated tank target.
- Helina has a maximum range of seven kilometers and has been designed and developed for integration on weaponized versions of the ALH.
- Helina has been developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad under the Missiles and Strategic Systems (MSS) cluster of the DRDO. Successful user trials of the missile have been conducted since 2018.

Source: Indian Express

Pinaka Mk-I (Enhanced) Rocket System and Pinaka Area Denial Munition Rocket Systems successfully flight-tested by DRDO & Indian Army

Why in News

- **Pinaka Mk-I (Enhanced) Rocket System (EPRS) and Pinaka Area Denial Munition (ADM) rocket systems** have been successfully flight-tested by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Army at Pokhran Firing Ranges.



Key Points

- The Pinaka rocket system has been developed by Armament Research and Development Establishment, Pune supported by High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, another Pune-based laboratory of DRDO.
- The EPRS is the upgraded version of the Pinaka variant which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade.
- The system has been upgraded with advanced technologies enhancing the range to meet the emerging requirements.

Note:

- Earlier, DRDO successfully flight tested **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR)** booster at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- In continuation with Government's efforts to promote Private Industry, MSMEs and Start-ups in defence production ecosystem, the Ministry of Defence has now decided that 25% of the Domestic Capital Procurement/



Acquisition Budget, amounting to Rs. 21,149.47 Crore, will be earmarked for Domestic Private Industry in the Financial Year 2022-23.

Source: PIB

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases the third positive indigenisation list

Why in News

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released the **third positive indigenisation list of 101 items**, comprising major equipment/platforms.
- It is based on the first list (101) and second list (108) that were promulgated on August 21, 2020 and May 31, 2021 respectively.



Key Points

- The list, notified by the Department of Military Affairs, Ministry of Defence, lays special focus on equipment/systems, which are being developed and likely to translate into firm orders in the next five years.
- These weapons and platforms are planned to be indigenised progressively with effect from December 2022 to December 2027.
- These 101 items will, henceforth, be procured from local sources as per provisions of **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020**.
- The third list comprises highly complex Systems, Sensors, Weapons and Ammunitions like Light Weight Tanks, Mounted Arty Gun Systems, Guided Extended Range (GER) Rocket for PINAKA MLRS, Naval Utility Helicopters (NUH), Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPV) etc.

Related Initiatives:

- In May 2020, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit under the automatic route in the defence sector was hiked from 49% to 74%.
- Corporatization of the Ordnance Factory Boards
- Defence India Startup Challenge
- SRIJAN Portal
- E-Biz Portal

Source: PIB



9th Edition of India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise culminated

Why in News

- The 9th Edition of the India - Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise which commenced on 25 Mar 2022 at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (HP) culminated on 06 April 2022.



Key Points

- Over the past two weeks, Special Forces contingents from India and Kyrgyzstan shared their expertise and best practices of tactics, techniques and procedures to counter existing and emergent threats across the entire spectrum of conflict.
- Besides sharing special skills and techniques between participating Special Forces contingents, the joint training further strengthened the existing bond between India and Kyrgyzstan that has fostered over years of mutual respect for strategic autonomy, democratic values and zero tolerance for terrorism.

Facts about Kyrgyzstan:

- **Capital:** Bishkek
- **President:** Sadyr Japarov
- **Currency:** Kyrgyzstani som

Source: PIB

Appointments/Resignations

TCS' Krishnan Ramanujam appointed as Nasscom Chairperson for 2022-23

Why in News

- Nasscom announced that Krishnan Ramanujam, President, Enterprise Growth Group at Tata Consultancy Services has been appointed as its Chairperson for 2022-23.



Key Points

- Ramanujam succeeds Rekha M. Menon, Chairperson and Senior Managing Director of Accenture in India, in this role.

About National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom):

- Nasscom is an Indian non-governmental trade association and advocacy group, focused mainly on the technology industry of India.



- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Founded:** 1 March 1988

Source: The Hindu

Emmanuel Macron re-elected for second consecutive term as President of France

Why in News

- Emmanuel Macron has won a second term in France's presidential election.

Key Points

- Emmanuel Macron defeated far-right rival Marine Le Pen.
- This is the first time in two decades that France has chosen a president for a second straight term.



Source: newsonair

Eminent physicist Ajay Kumar Sood appointed Principal Scientific Advisor

Why in News

- Eminent physicist **Ajay Kumar Sood** has been appointed as the **Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA)** to the government.

Key Points

- Mr. Sood, a member of the Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, has been appointed to the post for a period of 3 years to succeed K Vijay Raghavan.
- The **Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA)**'s office aims to provide pragmatic and objective advice to the Prime Minister and cabinet on matters related to science, technology and innovation.



Source: HT



Economist Suman K Bery appointed as Niti Aayog's vice chairman

Why in News

- Economist **Dr. Suman K Bery** has been appointed as Niti Aayog's vice chairman after Rajiv Kumar stepped down from the post.



Key Points

- The Ministry of Personnel in a statement said that the appointments committee of the cabinet had appointed Suman Bery as the full-time member of the Niti Aayog, and later as the vice chairperson from May 1, 2022.
- Suman Bery was the director-general of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
- Bery also served as a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, India's Statistical Commission and of the Reserve Bank of India's Technical Advisory Committee on Monetary Policy.

Facts about NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India):

- **Formed:** 1 January 2015
- **Preceding Government Agency:** Planning Commission
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Chairperson:** Narendra Modi

Source: Indian Today

Government appoints Lt Gen Manoj C Pande as next Chief of Army Staff

Why in News

- Government has appointed Lt Gen Manoj C Pande, presently Vice Chief of the Army Staff, as the next Chief of the Army Staff (29th) with effect from April 30, 2022.



Key Points

- Manoj C Pande is the first officer from the Corps of Engineers to become the Chief of Army Staff.
- He will succeed General Manoj Mukund Naravane, who is scheduled to complete his 28 month-tenure on April 30.
- For his illustrious service, Lt Gen Manoj C Pande has been conferred with Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal.

Source: HT



India gets elected to four UN ECOSOC bodies

Why in News

- India has been elected to four key bodies of the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, including the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.



Key Points

- India gets elected to four UN ECOSOC Bodies: Commission for Social Development, Committee on NGOs, Commission on Science & Technology for Development and Ambassador Preeti Saran gets re-elected to Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

Note: Earlier in April 2021 also, India got elected to three UN ECOSOC bodies which include, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Executive Board of UN Women, and the Executive Board of the World Food Programme.

About Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

- ECOSOC is one of the six principal organs of the UN System established by the UN Charter in 1945.
- It consists of 54 members of the United Nations elected by the General Assembly.

Source: India Today

Iqbal Singh Lalpura reappointed as Chairperson, National Commission for Minorities

Why in News

- The central government re-appointed retired Punjab-cadre IPS Officer Iqbal Singh Lalpura as the chairperson of the **National Commission for Minorities (NCM)**.



Key Points

- Lalpura, who was first appointed as chairman in September last year, had to resign from the post in December to contest as the BJP candidate from Ropar assembly constituency, which he lost.

About National Commission for Minorities (NCM):



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- The Union Government set up the National Commission for Minorities under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.
- Six religious communities, viz; Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and Jains have been notified in Gazette of India as minority communities by the Union Government all over India.
- **Founded:** 17 May 1993
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

Source: HT

Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla to be G20 coordinator

Why in News

- Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla will be appointed as coordinator for the G20 summit, which will be hosted by India in 2023.

Key Points

- Shringla, who retires on April 30, 2022, will take charge of his new role as G20 coordinator on May 1, 2022.
- This is a newly created role for organising the summit. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will remain the G20 sherpa.
- India will hold the presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023.



About the G-20:

- The G-20 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 G-20 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.

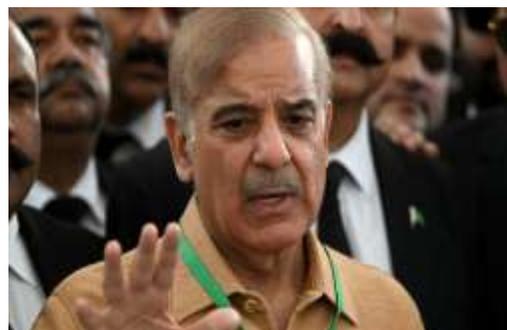
Source: Indian Express



Shehbaz Sharif elected Pakistan's 23rd Prime Minister

Why in News

- Shehbaz Sharif, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president, was elected unopposed as the 23rd Prime Minister of Pakistan by the National Assembly, after a week-long constitutional crisis that climaxed when Imran Khan lost a no-confidence vote.



Key Points

- Shehbaz, the younger brother of former three-time Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, received 174 votes.
- He has served as chief minister of the country's most populous and politically crucial Punjab province thrice.

Source: HT

Eminent scholar-academician Manoj Soni appointed as UPSC's new chairman

Why in News

- Recently, eminent scholar-academician, **Dr Manoj Soni** was appointed as the new Chairman of the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**.



Key Points

- Manoj Soni succeeds Pradip Kumar Joshi.
- Prior to this, Dr Manoj served as the vice-chancellor of two universities.

About Union Public Service Commission (UPSC):

- UPSC is India's premier central recruitment agency for recruitment of all the Group 'A' officers under Government of India.
- The agency's charter is granted by Part XIV of the Constitution of India, titled as Services Under the Union and the States.
- **Formed:** 1 October 1926
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

Source: ET



Vinay Mohan Kwatra, India's ambassador to Nepal, appointed new foreign secretary

Why in News

- Vinay Mohan Kwatra, the ambassador to Nepal, has been appointed the new foreign secretary of India.

Key Points

- Kwatra will succeed Harsh Vardhan Shringla, who will retire at the end of April.
- He has been serving as Ambassador of India to Nepal from March 2020.
- Vinay Mohan Kwatra, who has been in foreign service for over 32 years, has also served as Ambassador to France.

Source: HT



Hungary PM Viktor Orban wins fourth term

Why in News

- Nationalist Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's Fidesz party had won a fourth term in office.

Key Points

- Viktor Orban in November 2020 became the country's longest-serving Prime Minister. In December 2021, he became the longest-serving incumbent head of government in the European Union.
- For the first time more than 200 international observers monitored the election in Hungary, an EU member, along with thousands of domestic volunteers from both camps.

Facts about Hungary:

- **Capital:** Budapest
- **Currency:** Hungarian forint

Source: TOI



Dr. S Raju takes over as DG, Geological Survey of India

Why in News

- **Dr. S Raju** has taken over as the Director General of **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** in Kolkata.



Key Points

- He succeeds R. S. Garkhal who superannuated on 31st March 2022.
- Prior to assuming the present post Dr. Raju was holding the post of Additional Director General and National Head, Mission-III & IV at GSI HQ.

About Geological Survey of India (GSI):

- It is a Government of India organization under the Ministry of Mines, one of the oldest of such organisations in the world and the second oldest survey in India after Survey of India.
- **Headquarters:** Kolkata, West Bengal
- **Founded:** 4 March 1851

Source: PIB

ITU's Standing Council Standing Committee appoints India's Aprajita Sharma as Vice-Chairperson

Why in News

- India has secured a leadership position in Council Standing Committee on Administration and Management of **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** as an Indian official has been appointed as vice chairperson for the same.
- The International Telecommunication Union at Council meetings held at Geneva from 21st March till 31st March, 2022, has announced the appointment of **Ms Aprajita Sharma**, an IP&TAF Service officer as the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Administration and Management.



Key Points

- She will remain as vice chairperson of Council Standing Committee for the years 2023 and 2024 and its chairperson for the years 2025 and 2026.

About International Telecommunication Union (ITU):

- It is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for all matters related to information and communication technologies.



- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- **Founded:** 17 May 1865
- **Head: Secretary-General;** Houlin Zhao

Source: ET

Awards & Honours

India creates Guinness world record by waving 78,220 flags simultaneously

Why in News

- India has created world record by waving 78,220 tricolors simultaneously.
- On April 23, 2022 India entered the **Guinness Book of World Records** by waving over 78 thousand tricolor flags simultaneously at the Veer Kunwar Singh Vijayotsav programme in Bhojpur, Bihar.



Key Points

- The event was organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Culture as part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75th anniversary of India's independence.
- The 'Amrit Mahotsav' was organised to commemorate the 164th anniversary of freedom fighter Veer Kunwar Singh - a key figure in the 1857 mutiny.
- Veer Kunwar Singh fought his last battle near Jagdishpur on April 23, 1858, and defeated the East India Company in this battle.
- Kunwar Singh died in service for the nation after taking down the Union Jack flag from Jagdishpur Fort.

Source: HT

PM Modi receives first Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** received the first **Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award** for his selfless service to the nation and society at the 80th annual Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Awards ceremony in Mumbai.



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Key Points

- The Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award was instituted in the memory and honour of Lata Mangeshkar who died at the age of 92 on February 6, 2022.

Other Recent Awards won by PM Modi:

- Bhutan's Highest Civilian Award (2021)
- Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award (2021)
- Legion of Merit by the US Government (2020)

Source: HT

PM Modi confers Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration

Why in News

- On the occasion of **Civil Services Day**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.



Key Points

- **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence** in Public Administration have been instituted with a view to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts/implementing units and Central/State organisations for the welfare of common citizens.
- They are also conferred for effective implementation of identified priority programs and innovation.
- Exemplary work done in the following five identified priority programmes will be given awards which is to be presented on **Civil Services Day 2022**: (i) Promoting "Jan Bhagidari" or People's Participation in **Poshan Abhiyan**, (ii) Promoting excellence in sports and wellness through **Khelo India scheme**, (iii) Digital payments and Good Governance in **PM SVANidhi Yojana**, (iv) Holistic Development through **One District One Product scheme**, (v) Seamless, End-to-End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention.
- A total of 16 awards for 5 identified Priority Programmes and for innovations in the sphere of public administration/delivery of services etc. will be given this year.

Note: The central government observes April 21 as Civil Services Day.

Source: HT



David Attenborough receives the UN's most distinguished environment award

Why in News

- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** has awarded **David Attenborough** the **Champions of the Earth Lifetime Achievement Award** for his dedication to research, documentation and advocacy for the protection of nature and its restoration.



Key Points

- This Lifetime Achievement Award is given in a historic year for the global environmental community. 2022 marks fifty years since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, which was one of the first international meetings on the environment.
- The conference spurred the formation of environment ministries and agencies around the world, kick started a host of new global agreements to collectively protect the environment, and led to the formation of **UNEP**, which is observing its 50th anniversary this year.

Facts about United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):

- Headquarters:** Nairobi, Kenya
- Founded:** 5 June 1972
- Executive Director:** Inger Andersen

Source: DTE

Civil Aviation Ministry's "UDAN" scheme selected for Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration

Why in News

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) flagship Regional Connectivity Scheme **UDAN (UdeDeshkaAamNagrik)** has been selected for Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2020 under the category "Innovation (General) – Central".



Key Points

About the Award:

- Government of India has initiated this award to acknowledge, recognize and reward extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts and Organizations of State/Government.



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- This scheme emphasises on Good Governance, Qualitative achievements, and last mile connectivity rather than only on achievement of quantitative targets. The award consists of a trophy, scroll and an incentive of Rs 10 lakhs.

Note: The Ministry of Civil Aviation will receive the award on 21st April, i.e. Civil Service Day.

About UDAN scheme:

- Launched in 2016, UDAN scheme aims to fulfill the aspirations of the common man by following the vision of *UdeDeshkaAamNagrik*, with an enhanced aviation infrastructure and air connectivity in tier II and III cities.
- In a short span of 5 years, today 415 UDAN routes connect 66 underserved/unserved airports, including heliports and water aerodromes, and over 92 lakh people have benefited from it.
- More than 1 lakh 79 thousand flights have flown under this scheme.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation plans and commits to construct 100 new airports by 2024 in India with 1,000 new routes under UDAN RCS scheme by the year 2026.

Source: PIB

Falguni Nayar wins EY Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2021

Why in News

- Falguni Nayar, Founder & CEO, Nykaa, has been named EY Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2021.

Key Points

- Nayar will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award (WEOY) on June 9, 2022.
- The EY Entrepreneur of the Year (EOY) Awards is a global business awards programme which is celebrated across 60 countries.



Source: Business Today

NMDC wins two awards at 80th SKOCH Summit 2022

Why in News

- The largest iron ore producer of India, **National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC)**, under Ministry of Steel awarded one gold and one silver award in the 80th SKOCH Summit 2022.

Key Points



- The theme for the SKOCH Summit was 'State of BFSI & PSUs'.
- NMDC won the Gold Award in the category social responsibility for the project 'Promotion of Technical Education & Skill Development in Dantewada District through NMDC ITI Bhansi' and the Silver Award in the category digital inclusion for the 'Project Kalpataru' for ERP implementation.

Source: The Hindu

56th Jnanpith Award presented to Assamese poet Nilamani Phookan

Why in News

- Eminent Assamese poet **Nilamani Phookan** was conferred the **56th Jnanpith Award**, the ceremony of which was held for the first time in Assam.



Key Points

- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the Chairperson of Jnanpith Selection Board Pratibha Ray handed over the trophy, cheque and other mementos to the 88-year-old Phookan.
- Phookan is the third Assamese to receive the Jnanpith Award after novelist Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya (1979) and Mamoni Raisom Goswami (2000).
- Phookan had won the Sahitya Academy Award in 1981 for his poetry collection 'Kobita'.
- He was conferred with the Padma Shri in 1990 and the Sahitya Academy Fellowship in 2002.

About Jnanpith Award:

- The Jnanpith Award is the oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature".

Source: Indian Express

PM Narendra Modi to receive inaugural Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be honoured with the inaugural Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award, instituted in the memory of the veteran singer (Lata Mangeshkar) who passed away in February this year.



Key Points



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- Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan informed that the award ceremony will be held on 24th of April at Mumbai's Shanmukhanand Hall.
- The Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Puraskar will be given every year to only one individual who has made path-breaking, spectacular and exemplary contributions to the nation, its people and society.

Source: India Today

Vice-President confers Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards and Lalit Kala Akademi Awards

- Vice-President, M. Venkaiah Naidu presented the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship and Sangeet Natak Awards** for the year 2018 to 44 eminent artists (4 Fellows and 40 awardees), and 3 Fellows and 20 National Awards of **Lalit Kala Akademi** for the year 2021 in a joint ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi has elected four Fellows in the year 2018 for their eminent contribution in the field of the Performing Arts, namely Shri Zakir Hussain, Shri Jatin Goswami, Dr. Sonal Mansingh and Shri Thiruvaidaimarudur Kuppiyah Kalyanasundaram.
- The Lalit Kala Akademi has awarded the prestigious Fellowship to three outstanding artists with an expansive oeuvre namely Shri Himmat Shah, Shri Jyoti Bhatt and Shri Shyam Sharma.



About Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards:

- Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (Akademi Puraskar) are national honours bestowed by the Republic of India on performing artists as well as teachers and scholars in the field of performing arts.
- The recipients are selected by the Akademi's General Council, consisting of distinguished musicians, dancers, theatre artists and scholars in these disciplines and nominees of the Government of India, State Governments and Union Territories of the Indian Union.

Source: PIB



Ramdarash Mishra selected for Saraswati Samman 2021

Why in News

- Noted poet and litterateur **Prof Ramdarash Mishra** will be awarded the prestigious **Saraswati Samman 2021**, for his collection of poems 'Mein to Yahan Hun'.



Key Points

- Born in Dumri village in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district on August 15, 1924, Mishra has excelled in different branches of Hindi literature.

About Saraswati Samman:

- The Saraswati Samman is an annual award for outstanding prose or poetry literary works in any of the 22 languages of India listed in Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India.
- The Saraswati Samman was instituted in 1991 by the K. K. Birla Foundation. It consists of ₹15,00,000, a citation and a plaque.
- Candidates are selected from literary works published in the previous ten years by a panel that included scholars and former award winners.

Source: HT

Grammy Awards 2022

- The 64th Annual Grammy Awards were held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. This was the first time a Grammy Awards ceremony was held in Las Vegas, USA.
- Every year, the Grammys honour musical artistes, compositions and albums.
- They have been held every year since 1959.
- Jon Batiste emerged as the biggest winner, with 5 wins out of 11 nominations.
- **Indian-American singer Falguni Shah** has won the Grammy Award 2022 for the Best Children's Music Album for A Colourful World.
- **Indian music composer Ricky Kej** has made India proud again at the Grammy Awards stage. After bagging the prestigious music award in 2015 for his album 'Winds of Samsara', this year Kej lifted the coveted award



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along with Rock-legend Stewart Copeland (The Police) for the Best New Age Album 'Divine Tides'.

List of main winners of the 64th annual Grammy Awards:

- Album Of The Year: 'We Are' by Jon Batiste
- Record Of The Year: 'Leave the door open' by Bruno Mars and Anderson Paak
- Best New Artist: Olivia Rodrigo
- Best Rap Album: "Call Me If You Get Lost," Tyler, the Creator
- Best Country Album: "Starting Over," Chris Stapleton
- Song Of The Year: "Leave the Door Open," Silk Sonic (Brandon Anderson, Christopher Brody Brown, Dernst Emile II and Bruno Mars)
- Best Rock Album: "Medicine at Midnight," Foo Fighters
- Best Rock Song: "Waiting On a War," Foo Fighters
- Best Music Video: "Freedom," Jon Batiste
- Best Country Song: "Cold," Chris Stapleton
- Best Folk Album: "They're Calling Me Home," Rhiannon Giddens with Francesco Turrisi
- Best Music Film: "Summer of Soul"

Source: Indian Express

Important Days

April 28, World Day for Safety and Health at Work

Why in News

- World Day for Safety and Health at Work is a UN international day that is celebrated every April 28.

Key Points

- The World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2022 focuses on enhancing social dialogue towards a culture of safety and health.
- It is concerned about safe work and awareness of the dimensions and consequences of work-related accidents and diseases; to place **Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)** on the international and national agendas.



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- World Day for Safety and Health at Work was first celebrated by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** in 2003.

Source: un.org

April 26, World Intellectual Property Day

Why in News

- World Intellectual Property Day (World IP Day)** is observed annually on 26 April.

Key Points

- The **theme** for World Intellectual Property Day 2022 is "IP and Youth: Innovating for a Better Future."
- The day was established by the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** in 2000 to "raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life".
- 26 April was chosen as the date for World Intellectual Property Day because it coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization entered into force in 1970.



Intellectual Property:

- Intellectual property (IP) refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce.
- IP is protected in law by, for example, patents, copyright and trademarks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create.

Source: wipo.int

April 24, National Panchayati Raj Day

Why in News

- National Panchayati Raj Day is observed on 24 April annually.

Key Points

- Then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh declared the first National Panchayati Raj Day on 24 April 2010.
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj commemorates 24th April as the National Panchayati Raj Day, as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment came into force on this date.



Note:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Jammu and Kashmir to participate in the celebration of National Panchayati Raj Day 2022.
- The Prime Minister inaugurated the Banihal Qazigund Road Tunnel. The 8.45-kilometre long tunnel will reduce the road distance between Banihal and Qazigund by 16 kilometres.
- The Prime Minister also launched the Amrit Sarovar initiative. It is aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

Source: [newsonair](#)

April 25, World Malaria Day

Why in News

- **World Malaria Day (WMD)** is an international observance commemorated every year on 25 April and recognizes global efforts to control malaria.

Key Points

- The **theme** for World Malaria Day 2022 is "Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives."
- World Malaria Day was instituted by WHO Member States during the World Health Assembly of 2007.

Note:

- In 2020, there were an estimated 241 million new cases of malaria and 627000 malaria-related deaths in 85 countries.
- More than two thirds of deaths were among children under the age of 5 living in the WHO African Region.

Source: [who.int](#)



April 22, International Mother Earth Day

Why in News

- International Mother Earth Day (Earth Day) is observed on 22 April every year.

Key Points

- The **theme** for International Mother Earth Day 2022 is "Invest In Our Planet".
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated 22 April as International Mother Earth Day through a resolution adopted in 2009.



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- The UN Conference on the Human Environment 1972 in Stockholm marked the beginning of a global awareness as well as the establishment of World Environment Day on 5 June and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Source: un.org

April 21, National Civil Services Day

Why in News

- The **National Civil Services Day** is observed on April 21 every year and is dedicated to India's civil servants for their contribution and hard work in public administration.

Key Points

- The **theme** for Civil Services Day 2022 is "Vision India@2047 – Bringing Citizens and Government closer".
- The first National Civil Service Day was observed in the year 2006.
- The Government of India chose April 21 as the National Civil Service Day as on this day the country's first home minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the newly appointed Administrative Services Officers in 1947.
- The historic occasion took place at the Metcalfe House in Delhi.
- Sardar Patel had referred to the civil servants as the "steel frame of India".



April 18, World Heritage Day

Why in News

- The International Day for Monuments and Sites (IDMS), also known as World Heritage Day, is observed on April 18.

Key Points

- The **theme** for World Heritage Day 2022 is "Heritage and Climate".
- The International Day for Monuments and Sites was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.

India's UNESCO World Heritage Sites:



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- 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.

Source: Indian Express

April 17, World Hemophilia Day

Why in News

- Every year, April 17 is observed as World Hemophilia Day.



Key Points

- The **theme** for World Hemophilia Day 2022 is 'Access for All: Partnership. Policy. Progress'.
- It is an international awareness day for hemophilia and other bleeding disorders and also marks the birth anniversary of Frank Schnabel, the founder of the World Federation of Hemophilia.

About Hemophilia:

- Hemophilia is a disorder that results in excessive bleeding. People who are suffering from severe hemophilia may bleed for no reason.

Source: HT



April 14, World Chagas Disease Day

Why in News

- World Chagas Disease Day is celebrated on April 14 to raise awareness around chagas disease.

Key Points

- The **theme** for 2022 is 'finding and reporting every case to defeat chagas disease'.



History:

- It was first celebrated on April 14, 2020, following the approval and endorsement received by the World Health Assembly at WHO in May 2019.
- It was named after Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, the Brazilian doctor who diagnosed the first case on April 14, 1909.

Note: World Chagas Disease Day is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO), along with World Tuberculosis Day, World Health Day, World Malaria Day, World Immunization Week, World No Tobacco Day, World Blood Donor Day, World Hepatitis Day, World Patient Safety Day, World Antimicrobial Awareness Week and World AIDS Day.

Source: who.int

April 13, Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Why in News

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919.



Key Points

- Around 50 soldiers of the British Indian Army, under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer, fired on unarmed people who had gathered for Baisakhi at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar.
- The people, a majority of whom were Sikhs, had gathered in Jallianwala Bagh to celebrate Baisakhi and also to condemn the arrest and deportation of two freedom fighters, Satya Pal and Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew.
- According to the British government, 379 people died and 1,200 were wounded in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Source: HT



April 10, World Homeopathy Day

Why in News

- World Homeopathy Day is celebrated every year on April 10.

Key Points

- World Homoeopathy Day is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of the founder of Homoeopathy, Dr. Christian Fredrich Samuel Hahnemann to mark his 267th birth anniversary.

Note:

- A two-day scientific convention was organised on 9th & 10th April 2022 in New Delhi under the aegis of Ministry of Ayush by three apex bodies, namely, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, National Commission for Homoeopathy and National Institute of Homoeopathy.
- The theme of this scientific convention was 'Homoeopathy: People's Choice for Wellness'.

Source: Business Standard



April 7, World Health Day

Why in News

- World Health Day is celebrated every year on 7 April to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948.

Key Points

- The theme for World Health Day 2022 is 'Our Planet, Our Health'.

History:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) convened the first World Health Assembly in 1948, which called for the establishment of a "World Health Day."
- The first World Health Day was held on April 7, 1950, and it has been observed on that date every year thereafter.

Source: India Today



April 05, National Maritime Day

Why in News

- National Maritime Day is observed on April 5th every year.



Key Points

- The National Maritime Day was first celebrated on April 5, 1964.
- The legacy of Indian shipping first started on April 5th, 1919, when the first ship The SS Loyalty manufactured by The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd. sailed from Mumbai to the United Kingdom.
- India also became a member of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in 1959.
- **Note: World Maritime Day** is observed every year on the last Thursday of the month of September.

Source: India Today

April 2, World Autism Awareness Day

Why in News

- World Autism Awareness Day is observed on April 2, every year.



Key Points

- The **theme** for World Autism Awareness Day 2022 is "Inclusive Quality Education for All".
- The objective of the day is to create awareness about Autism and also to encourage people to support those who are suffering from this disorder.

History:

- It was designated by the United Nations General Assembly resolution.
- World Autism Awareness Day, passed in council on 1 November 2007, and adopted on 18 December 2007.

About Autism:

- Autism is a neurodevelopment disorder characterized by deficits in social and language communication, as well as repetitive behaviors and restricted interests.

Note: As per the 2011 Census of India, there are 7,862,921 children with disability below the 19-year age group, among which 595,089 have an intellectual disability.

Source: newsonair



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Science & Technology

AAI successfully conducts flight trials using GAGAN based LPV approach procedure

Why in News

- **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** successfully conducted at Kishangarh Airport, Rajasthan trial using **GAGAN (GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation)** based LPV Approach Procedures.
- The successful trial is a great achievement and major milestone in field of Air Navigation Services (ANS) in the history of Indian Civil Aviation Sector.
- India is the first country in Asia Pacific Region to achieve such a landmark.



Key Points

- **LPV (Localizer Performance with Vertical Guidance)** permits aircraft guided approaches that are operationally nearly equivalent to Cat-I/ILS, without the need for ground-based navigational infrastructure. The service relies on the availability of GPS and GAGAN Geo Stationary Satellites (GSAT-8, GSAT-10 and GSAT-15), launched by ISRO.
- GAGAN is an Indian Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS) jointly developed by AAI and ISRO.
- GAGAN System was certified by DGCA in 2015 for Approach with Vertical Guidance (APV 1) and en-route (RNP 0.1) operations.
- There are only four Space-Based augmentation systems available in the world namely India (GAGAN), US (WAAS) Europe (EGNOS) and Japan (MSAS).
- LPV approaches will make it possible to land at airports not equipped with expensive Instrument Landing Systems, which includes many small regional and local airports.

Source: PIB



Solar power production in India getting impacted by Forest fires: Study

Why in News

- A new study has found that forest fires which plague different parts of India, especially during the summer season play a major role in reducing solar power production in India.



Key Points

- Such analysis of the energy and financial losses due to the direct and indirect effects of forest fires on the production of solar plants can help grid operators to plan and schedule power generation, as also the distribution, supply, security, and overall stability of power production.
- Recently, solar energy generation has been widely used in developing countries such as India which has sufficient solar resources. However, several factors like clouds, aerosols, and pollution generated from various sources limit the solar irradiance causing performance issues in the photovoltaic and concentrated solar power plant installations.

Note:

- A group of researchers at the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital an autonomous research institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Govt. of India, and the National Observatory of Athens (NOA), Greece tried to trace the factors that reduce solar energy production.
- They found that apart from clouds and aerosols, forest fires play a very crucial role in reducing solar energy production.

Source: ET

Indian scientists develop plasma-based decontaminant for COVID-

Why in News

- Indian Scientists have developed a plasma-based disinfectant generated with the help of **Cold Atmospheric Pressure Plasma (CAP)** which could act as a green decontaminant for COVID 19.



Key Points

- A team of scientists from the Life Sciences and Physical Sciences divisions from the Institute of the Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST), an autonomous research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India, Guwahati, Assam has demonstrated that the



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plasma generated by cold atmospheric pressure has the potential to deactivate SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, which binds to human ACE2 receptor for inducing viral infection and subsequent COVID-19.

- **Plasma**, the fourth state of matter which makes up most of the universe when produced in controlled conditions in the lab and is termed as **Cold Atmospheric Pressure Plasma (CAP)**.
- This research recently published in the international journal of the RSC (Royal Society of Chemistry) Advances shows that short-lived highly reactive oxygen and nitrogen species (ROS/RNS) generated in the plasma led to complete deactivation of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein occurs within 2 min of CAP treatment.
- The RT-PCR analysis has also established that CAP can deactivate the RNA of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Source: Business Today

IIT Madras launches India's first indigenously developed polycentric prosthetic knee 'Kadam'

Why in News

- **IIT Madras** researchers have launched the country's first Made-in-India polycentric prosthetic knee '**Kadam**'.

Key Points

- The polycentric knee has been developed in association with **Society for Biomedical Technology (SBMT)** and **Mobility India**.
- **SBMT** was established under DRDO by former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam to enable indigenous medical device development.
- **Mobility India**, an NGO in Bengaluru, will mass manufacture and take Kadam to the market along with overseeing the processes of fitment and training and ensuring easy access for the users.
- It was developed by a team at TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2) at IIT Madras, which also developed and commercialized 'Arise,' the country's first standing wheelchair and NeoFly-NeoBolt, an active wheelchair.

Source: India Today



ICMR-NIV scientists find presence of IgG antibodies against Nipah in 51 bat samples from southern India

Why in News

- Scientists at Pune's Indian Council of Medical Research – National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV) were able to detect the presence of IgG antibodies against **Nipah virus infection (NiV)** in 51 bats that were captured from Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.



Key Points

- Nipah virus (NiV) is one of the priority pathogens with a pandemic potential. Though the spread is far slower than SARS-CoV-2, case fatality is the biggest concern.
- The first human infection with NiV was identified during an outbreak of severe encephalitis in Malaysia in 1998–1999.
- Both animal-to-humans and human-to-human transmission has been documented during different outbreaks.
- More than 700 human cases of Nipah virus infections were reported from Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, Singapore and Philippines during 1998– 2018.

Antibody:

- Antibody, also called immunoglobulin, is a protective protein produced by the immune system in response to the presence of a foreign substance, called an antigen.
- A wide range of substances are regarded by the body as antigens, including disease-causing organisms and toxic materials.
- Antibodies recognize and attack onto antigens in order to remove them from the body.

Different Types of Antibodies:

- IgG, IgM, IgA, IgD, IgE

Source: Indian Express

Indian Antarctic Bill-2022

Why in News

- Nearly 40 years after India first signed the Antarctic Treaty, the government has brought in a draft **Indian Antarctic Bill-2022** to regulate and monitor activities at its research stations in the frozen continent.



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- Earth Sciences Minister Dr Jitender Singh tabled the draft Bill in Lok Sabha.

Key Points

About Antarctica Bill:

- The draft bill is the first domestic legislation with regard to Antarctica in India.
- Twenty-seven countries already have domestic legislations on Antarctica. Many others, such as India, are now following suit.
- The Bill now puts into place a comprehensive list of regulations related to Antarctica, for such scientific expeditions, as well as for individuals, companies and tourists.
- The most significant part of the Bill is extending the jurisdiction of Indian courts to Antarctica, for crimes on the continent by Indian citizens, or foreign citizens who are a part of Indian expeditions.
- The Bill also provides for Indian tour operators to be able to operate in Antarctica after acquiring a permit.
- There are 40 permanent research stations in Antarctica of which two – Maitri and Bharati — are Indian.

About Antarctica Treaty:

- The Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959 by 12 countries and came into force in 1961.
- The objectives of the treaty are to demilitarize Antarctica and establish it as a zone used for peaceful research activities and to set aside any disputes regarding territorial sovereignty, thereby ensuring international cooperation.
- Currently, 54 nations are signatories to the Antarctic Treaty, but only 29 nations have a right to vote at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings – this includes India.
- India signed the Antarctic Treaty in 1983 and received consultative status the same year.

Source: Indian Express



Environment

Parliamentary panel suggests changes to Wildlife Protection (amendment) Bill 2021

Why in News

- The parliamentary panel headed by senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh submitted a 254-page report after reviewing the **Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Bill 2021**.
- It highlighted several concerns regarding the legislation and urged the Union environment ministry to consider the recommendations of scientists and conservationists mentioned in the report.



Key Points

About Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:

- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 provides a legal framework for the protection of various species of wild animals and plants, the management of their habitats, and the regulation and control of trade in wild animals, plants and products made from them.
- The Act also lists schedules of plants and animals that are afforded various degrees of protection and monitoring by the government.
- The Act has been amended several times, with the last amendment having been made in 2006.

Key features of the Bill:

- The most important reason given by the environment ministry for introducing the bill was the urgent need to provide legislative backing to commitments made by India over the past many years to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), a multilateral treaty to protect endangered plants and animals that came into force in 1975.
- The bill's objectives include ensuring that international trade in wildlife is legal, sustainable and traceable by implementing CITES.
- The Ministry has streamlined the scheduling of species from the original six schedules to just three — Schedule I for species that will enjoy the highest level of protection, Schedule II for species that will be subject to a lesser degree of protection and Schedule III that covers plants.

Source: HT



Scientists discover new eel species from Kerala, Bengal

Why in News

- A group of Indian scientists have discovered a **new species of eel** from among specimens collected from the Kalamukku and Digha Mohana fishing harbours in Kerala and West Bengal respectively.



Key Points

- The newly discovered eel belongs to the Congrid eels group and has been named *Ariosoma indicum*.
- Scientists from the Indian Council of Agriculture Research-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR), Lucknow and the Estuarine Biology Regional Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Gopalpur-on-Sea, Odisha, confirmed *Ariosoma indicum* as a new species.
- The total length of the new species is 362 millimetres.
- The *Ariosoma* genus has 7 species, including the newly identified eel that have been documented in Indian waters. Globally, there are 223 species in the genus.

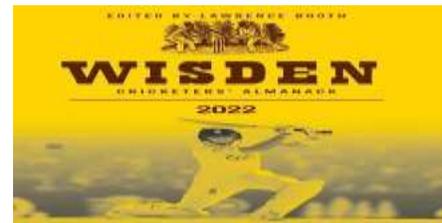
Note: The new eel species is not listed as 'Threatened' or 'Endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s Red List.

Source: DTE

Sports

Jasprit Bumrah, Rohit Sharma named among Wisden's five 'Cricketers of the Year' 2022

- India captain **Rohit Sharma** and pace spearhead **Jasprit Bumrah** have been named among five players in Wisden's 'Cricketers of the Year' in the 2022 edition of the Almanack.
- Besides the duo, the list also features New Zealand batter Devon Conway, England pacer Ollie Robinson and Proteas women star Dane van Niekerk.



About Wisden Cricketers' Almanack:



- Wisden Cricketers' Almanack colloquially the Bible of Cricket, is a cricket reference book published annually in the United Kingdom.

Source: ET

India to host Street Child Cricket World Cup in 2023

Why in News

- India will host the Street Child Cricket World Cup in 2023.

Key Points

- Organised by Street Child United and Save the Children India, the Street Child Cricket World Cup 2023 will welcome 22 teams from 16 countries to India next year.
- This event will take place in September ahead of the ICC World Cup.

Source: newsonair



Australia's Victoria state to host 2026 Commonwealth Games

Why in News

- **Australia's Victoria state** will host the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Key Points

- The Games will be staged in March 2026 across multiple cities and regional hubs including Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Gippsland, each with its own athletes' village.
- An initial list of 16 sports, including Twenty20 cricket, have been put forward for the Games, with further sports to be added later this year.
- It will be the sixth time that Australia has staged the Commonwealth Games and the second time in Victoria.

Note: The 2022 Commonwealth Games are due to be held in Birmingham, England, from July 28 to August 8.

About Commonwealth Games:

- The Commonwealth Games, often referred to as the Friendly Games, is an international multi-sport event involving athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations.
- The event was first held in 1930, and, with the exception of 1942 and 1946, has taken place every four years since then.

Source: Indian Express



Rohit Sharma becomes 2nd Indian to score 10,000 runs in T20

Why in News

- **Rohit Sharma** has become only the second Indian after Virat Kohli to score 10,000 runs in the T20 cricket.

Key Points

- India and Mumbai Indians skipper achieved this milestone during the IPL 2022 match of Mumbai Indians against Punjab Kings in Pune.
- Rohit Sharma became the seventh batter overall to reach the 10 thousand runs in T20s.
- West Indian legend Chris Gayle is leading the list of run-getters with 14,562 runs to his name followed by Pakistan's Shoaib Malik (11698), West Indies Kieron Pollard (11474), Australia's Aaron Finch (10499), Virat Kohli (10379) and Australia's David Warner (10373).

Source: newsonair



Netherlands lift fourth FIH Junior Women's Hockey World Cup 2022 title

- The **Netherlands** lifted their fourth FIH Junior Women's Hockey World Cup 2022 title after beating Germany in the final at Potchefstroom, South Africa.
- Earlier, England defeated India in the shoot-out after a 2-2 draw to claim the bronze medal in the third-place match.
- The **2022 Women's FIH Hockey Junior World Cup** is the ninth edition of the Women's FIH Hockey Junior World Cup, the biennial women's under-21 field hockey world championship organized by the International Hockey Federation.



Source: newsonair

India win first ever gold medal at WSF World Doubles Squash championships 2022

- India's Dipika Pallikal Karthik and Saurav Ghosal defeated Adrian Waller and Alison Waters of England in the mixed doubles finals to win India's first ever gold medal at WSF World Doubles Squash championship 2022 at Glasgow, Scotland.



- Apart from this, Dipika Pallikal also won the women's doubles gold with her partner Joshna Chinappa.

Source: newsonair

Sports Minister launches new rare chemical Reference Materials to strengthen anti-doping testing

Why in News

- The National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) has indigenously developed six new and rare Reference Materials (RMs), which is the purest form of chemical required for anti-doping analysis in all WADA-accredited Laboratories across the world.
- The RMs were launched by the Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur during the 15th Governing Body Meeting of NDTL.



Key Points

- The six RMs have been developed in less than a year by NDTL in association with the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER)-Guwahati and the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu.
- These Reference Materials are not readily available across the world but are needed by every WADA-accredited laboratory for their anti-doping analysis.
- India itself has been importing RMs from Canada and Australia.

Source: newsonair

Australia wins 7th ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2022 title

Why in News

- **Australia** won the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2022 title after defeating England in the final by 71 runs at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Key Points

- This is the record for the seventh time Australia women have won the world cup.



- The 2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup was the twelfth edition of the Women's Cricket World Cup, which was held in New Zealand in March and April 2022.

Source: India Today

Books & Authors

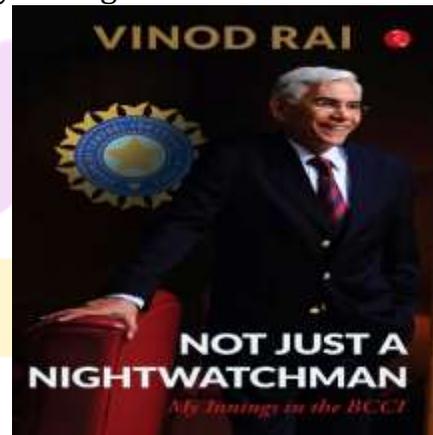
Former CAG Vinod Rai's book 'Not Just A Nightwatchman: My Innings with BCCI'

Why in News

- Former CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General) and chief of Supreme court-appointed CoA (Committee of Administrators), Vinod Rai has penned a book titled as, "Not Just A Nightwatchman: My Innings with BCCI".

Key Points

- In the book Vinod Rai has narrated his stint of 33 months at BCCI, when he was appointment as the head of the Supreme Court-mandated Committee of Administrators (CoA) in the BCCI.
- The book has been published by Rupa Publications India.
- Vinod Rai is a former IAS officer who served as the 11th Comptroller and Auditor General of India.



Geetanjali Shree's 'Tomb of Sand' first Hindi novel on International Booker shortlist

Why in News

- Author Geetanjali Shree's novel 'Tomb of Sand' became the first Hindi language work of fiction to be shortlisted for the International Booker Prize.

Key Points

- Shree's book, translated into English by Daisy Rockwell and described by the judges as "loud and irresistible novel", will compete with five other titles from



around the world for the prestigious 50,000 pounds literary prize, which is split evenly between the author and translator.

- Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh-born Shree is an author of three novels and several story collections, with her work translated into English, French, German, Serbian, and Korean.
- Complementing the Booker Prize for Fiction, the international prize is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.
- The winner for 2022 will be announced at a ceremony in London on May 26.

Source: Indian Express

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan releases a book “Birsa Munda – Janjatiya Nayak”

Why in News

- Union Education and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan released a book “Birsa Munda – Janjatiya Nayak” written by Prof. Alok Chakrawal, Vice Chancellor, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur.



Key Points

- This book is a comprehensive attempt to bring to the fore the struggle of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and the contribution of forest dwellers in the freedom movement.
- He appreciated Prof. Alok Chakrawal for making an effort to inscribe the story of the unsung heroes of freedom in the national memory on Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Source: PIB

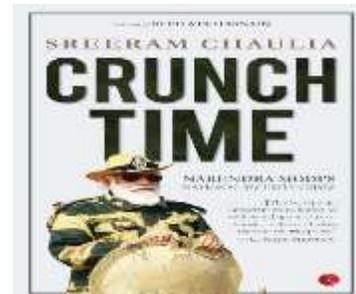
Sreeram Chaulia ‘s new book “Crunch Time: Narendra Modi’s National Security Crises”

Why in News

- Dr Sreeram Chaulia has authored a new book titled “Crunch Time: Narendra Modi’s National Security Crises”.

Key Points

- The book was released by Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs at the India International Centre in New Delhi.



- Dr Sreeram Chaulia is the Dean of the Jindal School of International Affairs of OP Jindal Global University, Sonipat.
- The book highlights the much needed public faith in the state to protect the country from security threats posed by India's external adversaries.
- The book analyses Prime Minister Modi's series of decision-making moves during the crises with Pakistan and China.

Obituaries

Veteran Congress leader K Shankaranarayanan passes away

- Former Governor of various states and senior Congress leader K Shankaranarayanan passed away at 89.
- He served as Governor in six states (Maharashtra, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa and Jharkhand).
- He played a notable role as Finance Minister in A.K. Antony's Cabinet from 2001 to 2004.
- He was elected to the state assembly from the assembly constituencies of Trithala, Sreekandapuram, Ottapalam and Palakkad.



Source: The Hindu

Noted writer Binapani Mohanty passes away

- Noted Odia writer Binapani Mohanty passed away at 85.
- Mohanty has more than 100 books to her credit.
- Besides getting the Padma Shri in 2020, Mohanty received Sahitya Akademi Award, Sarala Samman, and Atibadi Jagannatha Das Sammana by Odisha Sahitya Akademi.



Source: TOI



Legendary Odia musician and singer Prafulla Kar passes away

- Legendary Odia music composer, singer, writer and lyricist Prafulla Kar passed away at 83.
- He was popular for his numerous songs including 'Kamala Desha Rajakumara'.
- He had received the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2015 and was honoured with the Jayadeva award in 2004. He had received the state film award eight times, six times in a row.



Source: TOI

18-Year-Old Tamil Nadu Table Tennis Player Vishwa Deenadayalan passes away

- 18-Year-Old Tamil Nadu Table Tennis Player Vishwa Deenadayalan, who was on his way to Shillong to participate in the 83rd Senior National and Inter-State Championships, passed away in a road accident.
- He had won several junior, sub-junior and cadet titles in the country and abroad.



Source: Indian Express

Pakistani humanitarian activist Bilquis Bano Edhi passes away

- Pakistani humanitarian activist **Bilquis Bano Edhi** passed away.
- Bilquis Bano Edhi was a Pakistani professional nurse and one of the most active philanthropists in the country.
- Bilquis worked shoulder to shoulder with her husband in establishing the Abdul Sattar Edhi Foundation, a welfare organisation that gained worldwide fame for its humanitarian work in many areas.
- For her contributions, she was awarded the 1986 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service and the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice in 2015.



Source: Business Today

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