



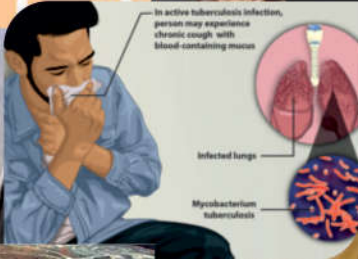
# SURESH'

# 360°

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போட்டித்தேர்விற்கான மாத இதழ்

Issue : 9



- Keezhadi Museum
- GST Appellate Tribunal
- The Road to ending Tuberculosis
- Lithium in India
- Kerala temple deploys life-size robotic elephant for festival





## TNPSC தேர்வுகளில் வெற்றி பெறுவதற்கான

முக்கிய ஆலோசனைகள்...

1. தேர்வுகளில் வெற்றி பெறுவதற்காக சாத்தியமாகக் கூடிய கால அட்டவணையை முதலில் தயாரித்து, அதை உறுதியாகப் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும்.
2. TNPSC தேர்வுக்கான பாடத்திட்டம் என்ன என்பதை முழுமையாக அறிந்துகொண்டு, அதில் எந்தப் பகுதியையும் விடாமல் படிக்க வேண்டும்.
3. முதன்மை ஆதாரங்கள் அல்லது நூல்களில் இருந்து **தரமான குறிப்புகளைத் தயாரித்து** வைத்துக்கொள்ள வேண்டும்.
4. TNPSC தேர்வு எழுதுவதற்கான அறிவுத் திறனை அடுத்த நிலைக்கு மேம்படுத்த எஸ்.சி.இ.ஆர்.டி (SCERT) எனப்படும் மாநிலக் கல்வியல் ஆராய்ச்சி மற்றும் பயிற்சி நிறுவனக்குழு தயாரிக்கும் பாட நூல்களில் இருந்து அவற்றின் அடிப்படைத் தத்துவத்தை புரிந்துகொள்ள வேண்டியது மிகவும் முக்கியமாகும்.
5. பாடங்களில் இருந்து எவ்வாறு வினாக்கள் எழுப்பப்படும் என்பதை அறிந்து கொள்வதற்காக அவற்றின் தத்துவங்கள், உண்மைகள் போன்றவற்றை தேர்வுக்கானக் கோணத்தில் இருந்து புரிந்துகொள்ள வேண்டும்.
6. முந்தைய ஆண்டின் வினாக்களை நன்றாகப் படித்து, அவற்றை ஆய்வு செய்ய வேண்டும்.
7. அத்தியாயங்கள் வாரியாகவும், பாடங்கள் வாரியாகவும் பயிற்சித் தேர்வுகளை எழுதிப் பார்க்க வேண்டும். அவ்வாறு செய்வதன் மூலம் உண்மையான தேர்வு எவ்வாறு இருக்கும் என்பது குறித்த அனுபவம் நமக்குக் கிடைப்பதுடன், **தவறுகளைத் திருத்திக் கொண்டு** மேம்படுத்திக் கொள்ளவும் முடியும்.
8. கடந்த ஆண்டுக்கான பொது அறிவு வினாத்தாள்களுக்கு விடை அளிக்க முயற்சி செய்ய வேண்டும். **உங்களின் பலவீனம் என்ன என்பதை தெரிந்து கொள்ள** அது உதவும். நீங்கள் எந்த அளவிற்குத் தேர்வுக்கு தயாராக இருக்கிறீர்கள்? உங்களின் அறிவுத் திறன், விடை அளிக்கும் வேகம், துல்லியம் ஆகியவற்றை அளவிடுவதற்கும் இது உதவும்.
9. பாடங்களை ஒருமுறையாவது திருப்புதல் **செய்து பார்ப்பது கட்டாயம் ஆகும்.**
10. அனைத்துப் பாடங்களையும் ஒருமுறை திருப்புதல் செய்து பார்ப்பதும், தயார் செய்து வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள குறிப்புகளை மூன்றாவது முறையில் படித்துப் பார்ப்பதும் சிறப்பாகும்.
11. தேர்வுக்கு முந்தைய **ஒரு மாதத்தில் புதிய பாடங்களைப் படித்து ஆராய ஒருபோதும் முயற்சி செய்ய வேண்டாம்.** அந்த ஒரு மாதமும் ஏற்கனவே படித்த பாடங்களைத் திருப்புதல் செய்து பார்ப்பதற்கு மட்டுமே ஒதுக்கப்பட வேண்டும். அந்த ஒரு மாதம் முழுவதும் திருப்புதல், திருப்புதல், திருப்புதல் என்பதே மந்திரமாக இருக்க வேண்டும்.
12. **செய்திகளையும், நாட்டு நடப்புகளையும் தொடர்ச்சியாகப் படித்து வரவேண்டும்.** பாடங்களையும், தேசிய மற்றும் சர்வதேச நிகழ்வுகளையும் நன்கு அறிந்துகொள்ள வேண்டும்.
13. **அடுத்த நாள் தேர்வு நடக்க இருப்பதாகக் கருதிக் கொண்டு** அதற்கேற்ற வகையில் தேர்வுக்குத் தயாராகுவதற்கான உத்தி வகுக்கப்பட வேண்டும். அந்த அளவுக்கான தயாரிப்பு அவசியமாகும்.
14. ஒவ்வொரு நாளும் **உறங்கச் செல்வதற்கு முன் அந்த நாள் முழுவதும் படித்த பாடங்களை ஒருமுறை நினைவுபடுத்திக் கொள்ள வேண்டும்.** அது உங்களின் நினைவுத் திறனை வலுப்படுத்தும்.
15. முதல்நிலைத் தேர்வுக்கான பொது அறிவு முதல் தாளுக்கான தயாரிப்பு முதன்மைத் தேர்வையும் மனதில் கொண்டு தொடரப்பட வேண்டும்.

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## I. Profile of State

### Bihar

- Bihar is located in the eastern part of the country (between 83°-30' to 88°-00' longitude).
- It is an entirely land-locked state, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not too far away.
- Bihar lies mid-way between the humid West Bengal in the east and the sub humid Uttar Pradesh in the west which provides it with a transitional position in respect of climate, economy and culture.
- It is bounded by Nepal in the north and by Jharkhand in the south.

- The Bihar plain is divided into two unequal halves by the river Ganga which flows through the middle from west to east.

Country	India
Formation	22 March 1912
Capital	Patna
Largest city	Patna
Districts	38

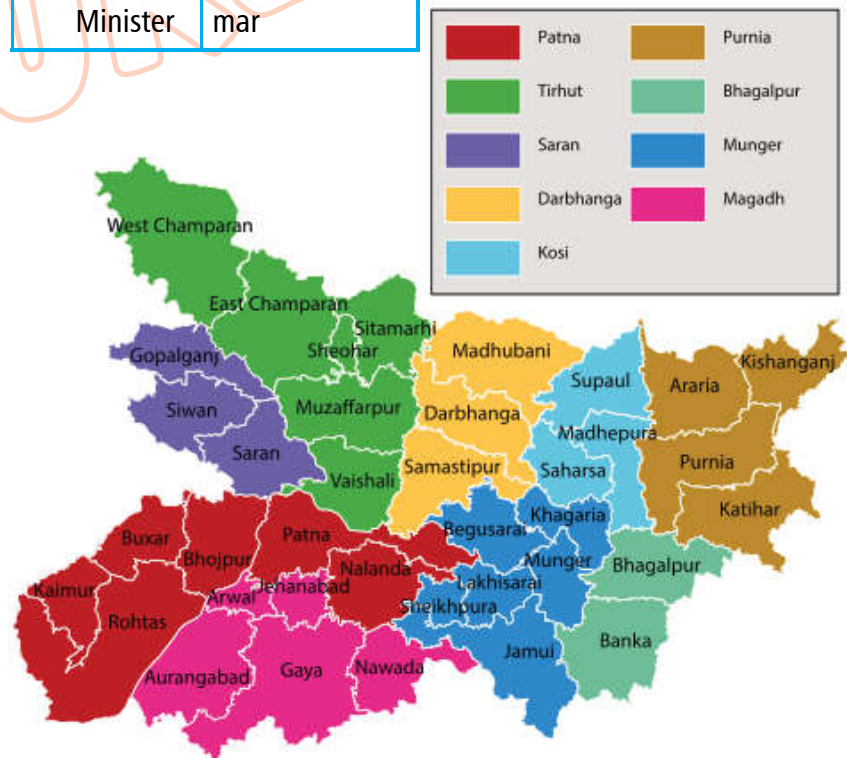
#### Government

• Governor	Shri Phagu Chauhan
• Chief Minister	Shri Nitish Kumar

• Deputy Chief Minister	Shri Tejashwi Prasad Yadav
• Legislature	Bicameral Legislative Council 75 Legislative Assembly 243
High Court	Patna High Court
<b>Area</b>	
• Total	94,163 km <sup>2</sup> (36,357 sq mi)

### Physical Features

Latitude	24°-20'-10" ~ 27°-31'-15" N
Longitude	83°-19'-50" ~ 88°-17'-40" E
Rural Area	92,257.51 sq. kms
Urban Area	1,095.49 sq. kms
Total Area	94,163.00 sq. kms
Height above Sea-Level	173 Feet
Avg. Number of Rainy Days	52.5 Days in a Year



Population (2011)	
• Total	10,40,99,452
• Density	1,106 / km <sup>2</sup> (2,850/sq mi)
Time zone	(GMT+5:30)
Official language	Hindi
Website	state.bihar.gov.in

### Administrative Units

Divisions	9
Districts	38
Sub-Divisions	101
CD Blocks	534
Panchayats	8,406
Number of Revenue Villages	45,103
Number of Towns	199
• Statutory Towns	139
• Non-Statutory Towns	60
Police Stations	853
• Civil Police Stations	813
• Railway Police Stations	40
• Police Districts	44
Civil Police District	40
Railway Police District	4

### Key Statistics - as per 2011 Census

Density of Population	1,106 per sq kms
• Highest Density	Sheohar, 1880 per sq kms
• Lowest Density	Kaimur, 488 per sq kms
Most Populous District	Patna: 58,38,465
Least Populous District	Sheikhpura: 6,36,342
Sex Ratio (Females/Thousand Males)	918
• Highest Ratio	(Gopalganj) 1,021
• Lowest Ratio	(Munger) 876
Lowest Literacy Rate	Purnia, 51.08%
Highest Literacy Rate	Rohtas, 73.37%
Average Population of a District	27,39,459

### History of Bihar

- Bihar is a unique state endowed with rich history.
- It is the seat of significant mythological events and tales from Ramayana.
- It is the birth place of prominent religions including Buddhism and Jainism.
- It was Bihar that sprouted the first seed of democracy.
- It was Bihar where first true kingdom, Maurya Empire, reigned all over the subcontinent.
- Patna, situated on the bank of river Ganga, is the capital of Bihar and state's current geographical boundary is shaped after its partition from Bengal and later on after separation of Jharkhand in 2000.

### Modern History

- During most of British India, Bihar was a part of the Presidency of Bengal, and was governed from Calcutta.
- A prominent figure that emerged from Bihar during India's struggle of Independence was Dr. Rajendra Prasad who later became the first President of free India.
- Dr. Prasad was native of Jiradei in the district of Saran.
- Bihar and Orissa separated from Bengal Presidency in 1912 as a single province and later Orissa became a separate province under the Government of India Act of 1935 and thus Bihar became an administrative unit of British India.
- At the time of Independence in



1947, the State of Bihar, with the same geographic boundary, formed a part of the Republic of India, until 1956.

- At that time, In 1956, an area in the south-east, predominantly the district of Purulia, was separated and incorporated into West Bengal as part of the Linguistic Reorganization of Indian States.

### Role of Bihar in India's struggle of Independence

#### Veer Kunwar Singh

- Bihar's contribution in the struggle of freedom dates back to 1857.
- Babu Kunwar Singh led the Indian Rebellion of 1857 in Bihar.
- He was nearly eighty and in failing health when he was called upon to take up arms.
- He gave a good fight and harried British forces for nearly a year and remained invincible until the end.
- He was an expert in the art of guerilla warfare.
- His tactics left the British puzzled.
- Singh assumed command of the soldiers who had revolted at Danapur on 25 July.
- Two days later he occupied Arrah, the district headquarters.

- Major Vincent Eyre relieved the town on 3 August, defeated Singh's force and destroyed Jagdishpur.

- During the rebellion, his army had to cross the Ganges river.
- Douglas' army began to shoot at their boat.

- One of the bullets shattered Singh's left wrist.

- Singh felt that his hand had become useless and that there was the additional risk of infection due to the bullet-shot.

- He drew his sword and cut off his left hand near the elbow and offered it to the Ganges. In his last battle, fought on 23 April 1858, near Jagdishpur, the troops under the control of the East India Company were completely routed.

- On 22 and 23 April, being injured he fought bravely against the British Army and with the help of his army drove away the British Army, brought down the Union Jack from Jagdishpur Fort and hoisted his flag.

- He returned to his palace on 23 April 1858 and soon died on 26 April 1858.

- Deshratna Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Bihar Vibhuti Anugrah Narayan Sinha during Mahatma Gandhi's 1917 Champaran Satyagraha

- Deshratna Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Bihar Vibhuti Anugrah Narayan Sinha during Mahatma Gandhi's 1917 Champaran Satyagraha

- Resurgence in the history of Bihar came during the struggle for India's independence.

- It was from Bihar that Mahatma Gandhi launched his civil-disobedience movement, which ultimately led to India's independence.

- In 1917, at the persistent request of a farmer named Raj Kumar Shukla from the district of Champaran, Gandhiji took a train ride to Motihari.

- Here he got to know the plight of the indigo farmers suffering under the oppressive rule of the British.

- Alarmed at the tumultuous reception of Gandhiji in Champaran, the British authorities served notice on him to leave the Province of Bihar.

- Gandhiji refused to comply, stating the right of an Indian to freely travel anywhere in his own country.

- For this act of defiance he was detained in the district jail at Motihari.

- From his jail cell, with the help of his friend from South Africa days, C. F. Andrews, Gandhiji

- managed to send letters to journalists and the Viceroy of India describing what he saw in Champaran, and made formal demands for the emancipation of these people.
- When produced in court, the Magistrate ordered his release on the condition of furnishing bail bond. Gandhiji refused to furnish the bail.
  - Instead, he indicated his preference to remain in jail.
  - Alarmed at the huge response he was receiving from the people of Champaran, the magistrate set him free, without any precondition.
  - This was the first instance of the success of civil-disobedience as a tool to win freedom.
  - After this incident, British for the first time, noticed Gandhiji as a national leader and realized the power of civil-disobedience.
  - What Raj Kumar Shukla had started and the massive response people of Champaran gave to Gandhiji, catapulted India's struggle for free India.
  - Therefore, in 1917, a series of events ignited in a remote corner of Bihar led to the massive movement for independence across the country till India gained freedom in 1947.
  - Therefore, many people from Bihar became leading participants in India's struggle for independence.
  - Another personality from Bihar that rose to leadership was Jay Prakash Narayan, affectionately called JP. JP's substantial contribution to modern Indian history continued until his death in 1979.
  - It was he who led a movement that led to massive win of a non-Congress government, The Janata Party, at Delhi, for the first time.
  - In the year 2005 the people of Bihar handed over the reins of power to Nitish Government with full hope and confidence.
  - Shri Kumar is known for his endeavor to establish the rule of law and to move on the path of justice with development.
  - By including all segments of the society together, he laid the foundation of the programme of Good Governance, transparency and all inclusive growth.
  - He formulated programmes of Good Governance first for the period 2005-2010 and then for 2010-2015.
  - Within a period of only a few years Shri Kumar has revamped many public organisations and systems.
  - On one hand he succeeded in establishing effective law and order and rule of law while on the other hand he achieved greater height in the development of Human Resource along with good infrastructure.
  - Reservation to women in PRIs and ULBs, steps towards women empowerment, Right to Public Service Act, Bihar Public Grievance Redressal System, Campaign against Child Marriage and Dowry System, enforcement of Prohibition, Agriculture Road Map, Start up Policy, Seven Resolves, unprecedented progress in Power and Road sector are some of the initiatives which have brought paramount change in socio-economic and administrative scenario.

### Conclusion

- For its geographical location, natural beauty, mythological and historical importance, Bihar feels proud of the assets it has been gifted over a period of time.
- Centuries old stories related to this land are told even today. Many great rulers have lived here and it fills us with a sense of pride when we think of Bihar as the 'Karmabhumi' of Buddha and Mahavir.

## II. National Symbol

### National Emblem



- The State Emblem is an adaptation of the Lion Capital of Asoka at Sarnath.
- In the original, there are four lions, mounted back to back, on a circular abacus, which itself rests on a bell-shaped lotus.
- The frieze of the abacus has sculptures in high relief of an elephant, a galloping horse, a bull and a lion separated by intervening Dharma Chakras.
- The profile of the Lion Capital showing three lions mounted on the abacus with a Dharma Chakra in the centre, a bull on the right and a galloping horse on the left, and outlines of Dharma Chakras on the extreme right and left was adopted as the State Emblem of India on January 26, 1950.
- The bell-shaped lotus was omitted.
- The motto Satyameva Jayate, which means 'Truth Alone Triumphs', written in Devanagari script below the profile of the Lion Capital is part of the State Emblem of India

## III. EMINENT PERSONS AND PLACES, SPORTS, BOOK AUTHORS

### 1. EMINENT PERSONS

#### New World Bank President

- Indian-American business executive Ajay Banga was nominated by US President Joe Biden to head the World Bank.
- He will be the first Indian-American to head either of the two top international financial institutions: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- He was also the president and CEO of Mastercard, the financial services company.
- In 2016, Banga was awarded the Padma Shri by the President of India.
- The president of the World Bank is ex officio chair of the Board of executive directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or the World Bank and the International Development Association (IDA).
- US banker David Malpass was the previous president of the World Bank Group who stepped down recently.





### **Vinod Kumar Shukla**

- Hindi Writer Vinod Kumar Shukla (87) has won the 2023 PEN America award for lifetime achievement in literature.
- It is one of the most coveted literacy prizes worldwide.

### **First woman locopilot in 'Vande Bharat' train**

- Surekha Yadav, Asia's first woman locopilot, also holds the distinction of being the first woman driver to drive the newly launched Vande Bharat train.
- Surekha Yadav from Satara in western Maharashtra became India's first female loco pilot in 1998.

### **PV Satheesh : A pioneer who turned attention to millets**

- P V Satheesh called as the Millets Man of India

### **Revival of organic farming**

- At a time when India was running on cash crops, pump sets and synthetic inputs as a result of the Green Revolution, Satheesh revived rain-fed organic farming and millets
- For this purpose, in 1983, along with his friends, he started a social organization in Medak district of the united state of Andhra Pradesh called 'Deccan Development Society'.

### **Development of women farmers**

- Satheesh has demonstrated

that a simple collective farming initiative can empower Scheduled Caste and Tribal women farmers, ensure their livelihoods and nutrition and eradicate poverty.

- Cultivation of several small grains and crops on the same plot of land can feed humans, cattle, birds; Satheesh learned the traditional knowledge of sowing seeds for biodiversity from women farmers.

### **Traditional seeds in people's hands**

- Through Satheesh's efforts, with the help of the government's Jawahar Work Scheme, small grains were provided to the local public instead of rice
- It was Satheesh who spoke loudly that food security can only be ensured by having traditional seeds in people's hands.
- Traditional seed festivals have become the norm today

### **Innovation efforts**

- In 2007 Millet Network of India was formed
- Natural agronomist Nammalvar inaugurated this Society at a function in Telangana
- The work of Telangana Scheduled Caste and Tribal women farmers was showcased at the Food Summit held in Rome, Italy in 1996 by the Deccan Development Society.
- In 2019, the UN Development Program's 'Equator Prize' was awarded to the Deccan Development Society.

### **First woman to command an army battalion**

- Colonel Geeta Rana has taken charge of an independent field workshop in a forward and remote location in eastern Ladakh.
- A woman officer has, for the first time, taken over the command of an independent unit in the sensitive Ladakh sector.
- In early January, the army for the first time deployed a woman officer, Captain Shiva Chouhan, at Siachen, the world's highest and coldest battleground.

### **Controller General of Accounts**

- Senior Civil Accounts Service officer S.S. Dubey took charge as the 28th Controller General of Accounts (CGA).
- He will be the principal adviser on accounting matters to the Union government.
- He is responsible for preparation of the accounts and conduct of internal audits for the central government.
- The Office of CGA prepares monthly and annual analysis of expenditure, revenues, borrowings and various fiscal indicators for the Union government.
- The Controller General of Accounts (CGA) works under the Department of Expenditure in the Finance Ministry.
- The accounting functions of the CAG were taken away in 1976 and handed over to the CGA.

## 2. Sports

### Tops in all three formats



- The Indian Men's Cricket Team has become the ICC World No.1 in all three formats of the game.
- This is the first time India has become the World No.1 in all three formats at the same time.
- South Africa had achieved this feat in 2014.
- India is only the second team in the world to achieve the rare feat of becoming the World No.1 in all three formats.
- India is also the first Asian team to achieve the feat.

## 3. PLACES

### Chenab Bridge

- The Indian Railways is constructing the world's highest railway bridge in the challenging terrain of the Himalayas, which is expected to be completed in the coming months.
- The Chenab Bridge, an engineering marvel, is a part of the strategically important Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramullah (USBRL) railway link that will connect Jammu & Kashmir to the rest of India.

### Impressive Statistics of the Chenab Bridge

- The Chenab Bridge is 35 meters taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, making it the world's highest rail bridge.

- The 1.3 km long bridge has a design speed of 100 kmph for trains and a lifespan of 120 years.

### Completion and Use of the Bridge

- The USBRL project is expected to be completed by December 2023 or January 2024. The Vande Bharat Express train will run over the Chenab bridge, and a maintenance facility for Vande Bharat trains will be established in Badgam. The new Vande Metro, developed for short-distance inter-city travel, will also run between Jammu and Srinagar.

### The Significance of the Bridge

- The 111 km stretch from Katra

to Banihal is essential, and the 1.3 km long Chenab Bridge is a crucial part of this stretch. Once completed, the entire USBRL Railway project will provide all-weather connectivity and join Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of India.

### Expertise and Cost of the Project

- Several international agencies and premier Indian institutes, such as IIT Roorkee, IIT Delhi, DRDO, and Geological Survey of India, are providing their expertise in planning and implementing the bridge project. The ambitious project is being executed by Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. at an estimated cost of Rs. 1486 crore.

## 4. Events/Awards

### Ellora-Ajanta International Festival 2023

- The three-day Ellora-Ajanta International Festival held at Soneri Mahal in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- The Ellora-Ajanta International Festival aims to promote tourism in Aurangabad district.
- The festival was a massive hit when it was first launched in 1985.
- The Ellora-Ajanta International Festival was last held in 2016.



### India wins GSMA Government leadership Award 2023

#### Content :

- India has been awarded the prestigious GSM Association (GSMA) Government Leadership Award 2023 at Mobile world congress Barcelona on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

#### Reason :

- For implementing best practices in telecom policy and regulation.
- More than 85% of mobile tower clearances are now instantaneous.

### Saraswati Samman Award

- Saraswati Samman Award

2022 for writer Sivasankari

- It is awarded for her Memoir Surya Vamsam written in 2019
- Saraswati Samman Award is being distributed on behalf of KK Birla Foundation
- The recipient of this award will be given a prize money of 15 lakh rupeesThe award is presented annually for the best literary work in prose or poetry for a book selected from 22 languages of India
- In Tamil, Indira Parthasarathy & Manavalan has already received this award.
- Eligible candidates for this award are selected based on the works written by the author during the 10-year period preceding the year in which the award is given

- A panel led by former Supreme Court judge Kumar Sikri selects 22 books from 22 languages and then selects 5 books from them for the award.
- Saraswati Samman Award is announced for one of those five books

### Padma awards

- In India, Padma Awards are given to those who have excelled in various categories and fields such as arts, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, commerce and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civic work, etc.
- Padma Shri awards for this year have been announced for Irular Vadivel Gopal and Masi Sadayan from Tamil Nadu.



- They belong to the Ilular tribe and have traveled to different parts of the world to catch poisonous snakes
- Renowned playback singer from TN, Vani Jayaram was awarded Padma Bhushan

### Padma Shri award

- A bhاراتanatyam guru for over seven decades, legendary nattuvanar K. Kalyanasundaram Pillai
- Social service - 'Palam' Kalyana Sundaram
- Contribution in the field of medicine - Gopalsamy & Veluchamy.

### Oscars for India

- SS Rajamouli's RRR has created history by becoming the first Indian feature film to win an Oscar.
- The film's 'Naatu Naatu' soundtrack by MM Keeravani was awarded the Best Original Song Award.
- Notably, 'Naatu Naatu' won the Golden Globe for the best song earlier this month.
- The win made RRR the first Indian film to win a Golden Globe.
- India won a second Oscar for 'The Elephant Whisperers' which won in the Best Documentary Short film category.

### Oscars awards 2023

- The Academy Awards, or Oscars Awards 2023's 95th anniversary ceremony held recently.
- Oscars Awards 2023 full winner list.

Category	Winners
Best Picture	Everything Everywhere All at once
Best Actress	Michelle Yeoh (Everything Everywhere All at once)
Best Actor	Brendan Fraser (The Whale)
Best Director	Daniel Kwan and Daniel Schienert (Everything Everywhere All at Once)
2023 Best Film Editing	Everything Everywhere All at Once
Best Original Song	"Naatu Naatu" (RRR)
Best Sound	Top Gun : Maverick
Best Adapted Screenplay	Women Talking
Best Original Screenplay	Everything Everywhere All at Once - Daniel Kwan and Daniel Schienert
Best Visual Effects	Avatar : The Way of Water
Best Animated Feature Film	Guillermo del Toro's 'Pinocchio'
Best Actress in a Supporting Role	Jamie Lee Curtis in 'Everything Everywhere All at Once'
Best Actor in a Supporting Role	Ke Huy Quan in 'Everything Everywhere All at Once'
Best Documentary Feature Film	'Navanly' by Daniel Roher, Odessa Rae, Diane Becker, Melanie Miller and Shane Boris
Best Live Action Short Film	'An Irish Goodbye' by Tom Berkeley and Ross White
Best Cinematography	'All Quiet on the Western Front' by James Friend
Best Makeup and Hairstyling	Adrien Morot, Judy Chin and Annemarie Bradley for 'The Whale'
Best Costume Design	Ruth Carter for 'Black Panther : Wakanda Forever'
Best International Feature Film	'All Quiet on the Western Front' - Germany
Best Documentary Short Film	'The Elephant Whisperers' by Kartiki Gonsalves and Guneet Monga
Best Animated Short Film	The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse
Best Original Score	All Quiet on the Western Front
Best Production Design	All Quiet on the Western Front

## Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023

### Context :

- President of India presented the Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023 and graced the launch of Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch The Rain -2023 in New Delhi.
- The award is given for remarkable contributions by women leaders at the grass-root level (Women Champions) who have contributed exceptionally to ODF Plus Model Villages,

Har Ghar Jal Villages, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), Jal Jeevan Mission, and National Water Mission.

- **Ministry** : Ministry of Jal Shakti
- **Example of work done**: Women of the self-help group from Khadki village of Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh came together to ensure tap connection to every house of the village.

### PEN/Nabokov Lifetime Achievement Award

- Vinod Kumar Shukla of India, has won the PEN America award for lifetime achievement in literature.
- This is one of the most coveted literary prizes worldwide.
- He composed acclaimed novels like Naukar Ki Kameez (1979) and poetry collections like Sab Kuch Hona Bacha Rahega (1992).
- The award was founded in 2016 by Pen America in collaboration with the Vladimir Nabokov Literary Foundation.

## Perumal Murugan's Pookkuzhi shortlisted for International Booker Award

### International Booker Prize

- The Booker Awards are presented annually by the Booker Foundation for the best works in English
- Booker Prize for its English translation novel written in foreign languages and published in Great Britain and Ireland
- Last year's Booker Prize Geetan-

## 5. Historic persons

jali - Hindi author Geetanjali - Book "Tomb of Sand" Daisy Rockwell - for translation

### Pookkuzhi Novel

- "Pyre" is the English translation of the 2016 novel Pookkuzhi by writer Perumal Murugan.
- The novel was translated from Tamil to English by Aniruddhan Vasudevan
- Perumal Murugan has become the first Tamil writer to be shortlisted for the International Booker Award

### Perumal Murugan

- The novel Pookkuzhi describes a caste-based marriage and the massacre that ensues
- Perumal Murugan, a writer from Salem, Tamil Nadu, has written the novels Mathorubagan, Kazhimugan, Koolamadari, Poonachi: Or the Story of a Black Goat, Kanganam.
- The English translation of the novel Mathorubagan won the Sahitya Akademi Award.

## 6. Books

### Mundaka Upanishad : The Gateway To Eternity - Karan Singh

- 'Mundaka Upanishad: The Gateway to Eternity', written by former MP Karan Singh was released recently.
- Another book in the same name was released by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan in 1987.

## IV. History - Historical Events

### 200 years of Thol Seelai Porattam

- Tamil Nadu and Kerala Chief Ministers came together in Kanyakumari's Nagercoil on March 6, to com-

memorate 200 years of the Thol Seelai Porattam or Maaru Marakkal Samaram.

- It is a decades-old struggle by women of the oppressed castes in erstwhile Travancore to cover their upper bodies.
- Travancore was comprised parts of present-day south Kerala and south Tamil Nadu.
- Wearing clothes to cover chests was at the time – early 19th century – deemed a right only enjoyed by women of the dominant castes.
- In 1812, the Maharani of Travancore gave order that allowed the depressed class women who converted to Christianity to wear a blouse.
- Social reformer Ayya Vaikunda Swami began the struggle, bringing together women and holding meetings with them.
- The first stage of 'Upper Cloth Revolt' held between 1822-1823.
- The second stage of the revolt happened between 1827-1829.
- It was during the third stage of revolt held between 1958-1859

that the women, irrespective of class, caste and religion, were allowed to wear the upper cloth.

### **Keezhadi museum**

- The Keezhadi museum, constructed in Chetti nadu architectural style was inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin at the excavation site, Sivagangai District.
- The museum contains artefacts unearthed from the Keezhadi excavation sites since 2018.
- Keezhadi had the ancient civilisation that thrived on the banks of the Vaigai.
- Vaigai riverbed was urbanised during the early 6th century BCE, around the same time that the Ganges civilisation was urbanised.
- Artefacts classified into categories of Keezhadi and Madurai, Agrarian and Water Management, Ceramic Industry, Weaving and Iron Industry, Sea Trade and Lifestyle.
- The excavations at Keeladi pushed the Sangam Age to 6th

Century BCE from the earlier assessment of between 3rd Century BCE and 3rd Century CE.

- More than 1000 symbols and 60 pot shells with lettering in Thamizhi, an ancient Tamil script, have been found.
- The ASI carried out explorations at 293 sites along the Vaigai Valley in Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram districts in 2013-14.
- The excavation was carried out at Pallichanthai Thidal of Keeladi.
- The State Department of Archaeology took over from the fourth season in 2018.
- From the sixth season, Konthagai, Agaram and Manalur were added as clusters of Keeladi.
- While Konthagai is largely a burial site, Agaram and Manalur show the existence of an active human habitation. the Sangam Age to 6th Century BCE from the earlier assessment of between 3rd Century BCE and 3rd Century CE.

## **V. POLITY- POLITICAL PARTIES & POLITICAL SYSTEM IN INDIA**

### **The Election Commissioner should be appointed by the President**

#### **Supreme Court verdict**

- Yesterday, the Supreme Court gave a historic verdict that the President should appoint the Election Commissioners and the Chief Election Commissioner as per the instructions of the committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader

of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

#### **Arun Goel**

- Arun Goel was the Secretary of the Ministry of Heavy Industries of the Central Government
- As an IAS officer in Punjab, he voluntarily retired on November 18 last year
- But the next day he was ap-

pointed as the Election Commissioner

- The current Chief Election Commissioner Rajesh Kumar's term ends in February 2025.
- Thereafter, Arun Goel will be the Chief Election Commissioner
- He will be in the Election Commission for more than five years
- Many filed a petition in the



Supreme Court against the sudden appointment Arun Goel as Election Commissioner

### Until the law...

- Election Commissioners should be appointed by the President as per the instructions of the Committee consisting of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- If there is no Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, then the Leader of the Opposition having a single majority should be included in this committee
- This procedure will continue until Parliament passes a law regarding the appointment of Election Commissioners.
- Elections in a democracy must be fair without any doubt
- The Election Commission should ensure that sanctity is maintained
- Otherwise there will be bad consequences
- The Election Commission should function according to the law within the framework of the Constitution
- Article 324 of the Constitution states that a law should be passed for the appointment of Election Commission members
- But Parliament did not pass any law.

### **Voting facility from home for people above 80 years of age**

- For the first time in India, the Election Commission has decided to introduce voting from home for people above 80 years of age and persons with

disabilities.

- People of above 80 years of age are requested to come to the polling station and vote, and we are introducing voting from home to respect their right to vote in situations where they may not be able to walk.
- Pre-registration is required to avail this facility
- The election staff will then go to the house and record the vote in Form 12D in a highly confidential manner.
- All these procedures will be videotaped
- And this information will be communicated to all the political parties in advance
- Saksham mobile application has been developed for the differently abled
- You can choose to vote on it
- Whether you want to vote in person or from home, voting arrangements will be made accordingly.

### App

- For the benefit of the candidates, a mobile app called Suvidha has been developed
- Candidates can file nomination papers and affidavits using this app
- Candidates can also get advance permission for meetings and rallies using this app

### **Foreign lawyers are allowed to practice law in our country**

- The Bar Council of India has approved foreign lawyers and law firms to practice law in our country

### Restrictions

- Foreign Lawyers & Law Firms can practice law in India by duly registering with the Bar Council of India
- They cannot appear in courts directly
- This prohibition does not apply to foreign law firms who come to India solely to provide legal advice on international law or litigation to clients in India
- They cannot open an office here
- They can perform this task only for 60 days in a year

### Security

- Lawyers will be charged Rs 2 lakh for registration with the Bar Council and law firms will be charged Rs 4 lakh
- To be renewed every five years
- Advocates seeking registration must obtain and submit a clearance certificate to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Law, Central Government
- Legal bodies including Bar Associations of the respective country should ensure that the lawyer concerned is qualified to practice law in India
- It should be ensured that they are not involved in legal matters and have not been punished
- The Bar Council of India shall not reject applications submitted for registration without due cause
- The decision of the Council is final
- The Central Government re-

serves the right to cancel or suspend the renewal of registration of foreign lawyers in the interest of national security or other legitimate reasons.

## **What does it take to buy an electoral bond?**

### **Context :**

- Five years ago, the sale window for the first tranche of Electoral Bonds was opened in March 2018.

### **Introduction of Electoral bonds:**

#### **What are Electoral Bonds?**

- A way to donate to political Parties
- Similar to demand draft, but solely for donation to political parties.
- Bears name of the party that donor donates to, NOT name of donor

#### **Who can buy EBs?**

- Any Indian citizen
- Anybody incorporated in India. i.e. All private, public, one - person companies based in India.
- Indian subsidiaries of foreign companies (but Not foreign companies)

#### **Who can receive EBs?**

- Any political Party with >1% votes in previous Lok Sabha / State Assembly Elections
- One SBI bank account must be specified to receive EBs; Election Commission (EC) must be notified.

#### **When can EBs be purchased?**

- In a 10 - day period in the beginning of each quarter.
  - i.e. 1 - 10 January
  - 1 - 10 April
  - 1 - 10 July
  - 1 - 10 October

#### **Where can EBs be purchased?**

- At 29 authorised State Bank of India branches across India.
- Account holders and non - holders with SBI can purchase bonds on supplying KYC details.

#### **How to purchase EBs :**

- Bonds issued in multiples of Rs. 1000, 10000, 1 Lakh and 1 Crore
- Purchasable at
  - Authorised SBI branches; buy with cheque / digital payment (No cash)
  - KYC details of buyer are collected by bank, but remain confidential.
- Buyers purchase bonds bearing only party name, NOT buyers's name
- EB physically handed over to party
- Donation to registered parties with >1% vote share in last Lok Sabha / State Assembly election.
- Bonds must be encashed within 15 days of receipt
- Bonds redeemable only in authorized SBI account notified to EC.
- The Electoral Bond Scheme (EBS), announced in the 2017 Union Budget, was notified

by the Central Government in 2018.

- These bonds can be purchased from select SBI branches by any Indian person or corporation incorporated in India.

#### **Performance of EBS:**

- Concerns related to the operation of EBS:
- Introduce a new type of anonymity by
- Reducing public and legislative oversight.
- For example, only the ruling party via the SBI has a full account of all donations.
- Political parties do not disclose electoral bond donors.
- The only requirement is the annual audit reports with all donations received via electoral bonds.
- Impact of anonymity : Dilutes one voter-one vote principle, an undue advantage to the ruling party, etc.

#### **Way ahead:**

- In 2021, the SC refused to stay the sale of electoral bonds and suggested bringing in more transparency.
- The information regarding donors and donations should be accessible to the Parliament, the Election Commission of India and the Opposition via SBI.
- The RTI must be strengthened.
- Ex-CEC (OP Rawat) suggests that the political funding scheme could be improved by appointing an "independent watchdog".

**Amendments to PMLA rules and its impact on ‘politically exposed persons’, NGOs**

**Context:**

- The Finance Ministry has amended the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and rules in line with the recommendations of the FATF – the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog.

**Background:**

- The government has been struggling to deal with the pandemic-era upsurge in advertisements soliciting investment in virtual assets.
- A 2021 report estimated India with the highest number of ‘crypto owners’ (10.07 crore), more than threefold than the 2nd-ranked U.S.
- ED was investigating several cases related to cryptocurrency frauds wherein crypto exchanges were involved in money laundering.

**Why these amendments?**

- To incorporate more disclosures for NGOs by reporting entities like financial institutions (FIs), banking companies, or intermediaries.
- To define “politically exposed persons” (PEPs).

Amendments	Significance
<p>Defines PEPs: As individuals who have been entrusted with prominent public functions by a foreign country, including the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heads of State/Governments,</li> <li>○ Senior politicians,</li> <li>○ Senior government/judicial/military officers,</li> <li>○ Senior executives of state-owned corporations and</li> <li>○ Important political party officials</li> </ul> <p>The amendment is in relation to foreign PEPs and not domestic ones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The move brings legal uniformity and removes ambiguities (in line with FATF norms) before India’s proposed FATF assessment.</li> <li>• This will help India tackle illicit financial flows (that fuel crime and terrorism)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Beneficial Owners’: Lowered the threshold for identifying beneficial owners by reporting entities, where the client is acting on behalf of its beneficial owner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The term ‘beneficial owner’ are those with the entitlement of more than 25% of shares or capital or profit of the company, which has now been reduced to 10%.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In line with the Companies Act (2013) and Income-tax Act (1961).</li> <li>• Bringing more indirect participants within the reporting net</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPOs: Reporting entities are now required to register details of the client if it’s a non-profit organization (NPO) on the DARPAN portal of NITI Aayog. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The definition of an NPO includes any entity or organization, constituted for religious or charitable purposes under I-T Act</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due diligence documentation requirements: It has now been extended. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It now includes the submission of details such as names of persons holding senior management positions, names of partners, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Until now limited to obtaining the basic KYCs of clients such as registration certificates, PAN copies, etc.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Cryptocurrencies: Virtual digital assets (VDA) trade has been brought under PMLA.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New rules mandate crypto exchanges and intermediaries dealing in virtual assets to maintain the KYCs of their clients and report suspicious transactions to financial intelligence units.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will prevent the misuse of crypto, and NFTs through money laundering and other illegal activities.</li> </ul>
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## Lily Thomas SC verdict

### Context :

- A Surat court sentenced Congress leader (Rahul Gandhi) to two years in jail in a 2019 defamation case and also granted him bail and suspended his sentence for 30 days to allow him to appeal.

### Background:

- As per Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act 1951, conviction of a lawmaker for an offence with a two-year sentence or more leads to disqualification from the House.
- As per Section 8(4) of the RPA the disqualification takes effect only after three months have elapsed from the date of conviction.
  - Within that period, the convicted lawmaker could have filed an appeal against the sentence before a higher court.
- However, this provision was struck down as "unconstitutional" in the SC's landmark 2013 ruling in 'Lily Thomas v Union of India'.

### Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)

- The Act was enacted in 2002 in response to India's global commitment (including Vienna Convention) to combat money laundering.

### The PMLA enables authorities to :

- Confiscate the property earned from illegally gained proceeds.
- Appoint the Adjudicating Authority and Appellate Tribunal to deal with the matter connected with money laundering.
- The act adds the concept of 'reporting entity' which would include a banking company, financial institution, intermediary etc.

### Appellate Tribunal

- Composition :** Chair person + Two other Members
- Qualifications :** For Chairperson (should have been a judge of the Supreme Court or qualified to be judge of a High Court);
- For Member (A member of the

Indian legal service / revenue service / economic service / etc.)

- Tenure :** Term of five years or till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- Functions :** It hears appeals against the orders of the Adjudicating Authority and the authorities under the PMLA.
- Enforcement Directorate (ED) (est. 1956, HQ : New Delhi) is a multi-disciplinary organization mandated to enforce PMLA.

### PMLA Salient Features

- Financial Intelligence Unit
- Punishment for Money - Laundering
- Adjudicating Authority
- Burden of Proof
- Special Court

### Conclusion:

- The decision to mandatorily bring all trade in virtual digital assets under the PMLA now lays the onus of ascertaining the place of origin of all activities in such assets upon individuals and businesses.

### Options available after conviction:

- Get his conviction stayed by a higher court.
- Approaching the President. As per Article 103 of the Constitution, the disqualification case of an MP will be decided by the President in consultation with the Election Commission.



## India-Japan Relations

### Context :

- Japan's Prime Minister recently visited India

### Major Initiatives announced during the visit:

- **Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)** : It is aimed at curbing China's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The key initiatives of the strategy include promoting respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, opposing unilateral changes by China through force, and improving cooperation to address global challenges.
  - Japan will focus on South-east Asia, South Asia (particularly Northeast India), and the Pacific Islands.
  - Japan will promote the Bay of Bengal-Northeast India industrial value chain concept
  - It will assist in developing maritime law enforcement capabilities of countries to free oceans from geopolitical risks.
  - Japan's concept of FOIP is complementary to India's concept of the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)
  - India and Japan will assume the presidencies of G20 and G7 this year respectively.

### Other major dimensions of India-Japan Relations are:

Dimensions of India-Japan Relations	Examples
Shared values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democracy, Freedom and Rule of Law</li> <li>• India and Japan Vision 2025: To work together for peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and the world.</li> </ul>
Defence and Security Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship elevated to Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014)</li> <li>• "2+2" Dialogue</li> <li>• Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement with India</li> <li>• Inclusive and Rule-based International order in Indo-pacific</li> <li>• FOIP (see description above)</li> <li>• Military exercise: Dharma Guardian (army), Veer Guardian (Air Force), MILAN, JIMEX (Navy) and Malabar respectively.</li> </ul>
Strengthening India's Act East Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japan is supporting strategic connectivity linking South Asia to Southeast Asia through the synergy between the "Act East" policy and "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure."</li> <li>• Japanese help during India's BOP crisis in 1991.</li> </ul>
Economic Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bilateral trade: Over US \$ 20 billion (2022)</li> <li>• Comprehensive and Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) since 2011</li> <li>• Industries Competitiveness Partnership</li> <li>• Japan was the 4th largest investor in India in FY2020.</li> </ul>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhism</li> </ul>
Investment and ODA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare: Narrative of AHWIN (Japan's) for AYUSHMAN Bharat</li> <li>• India has been the largest recipient of the Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan for the past decades. E.g., Delhi Metro, Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) and High-Speed Railways in India</li> </ul>

Global Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both are members of G4, Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, Supply chain resilience initiatives, QUAD</li> </ul>
Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LUPEX Mission (India's lunar lander and Japanese rover will explore the moon)</li> </ul>
Nuclear Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India-Japan Nuclear Deal 2016 will help India build the six nuclear reactors in southern India</li> </ul>
Digital Infrastructure Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperation in promoting joint projects for digital transformation in various fields like 5G, Open RAN, Telecom Network Security, submarine cable systems, and Quantum Communications.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change and WTO talks (Japan siding with developed countries); Japan's frosty relations with Russia (Kuril Island dispute)</li> </ul>

Aayog in 2020 on the premise that individuals themselves are the best judges of the 'right' uses of their personal data.

- It is designed as an evolvable/agile framework for good data governance that empowers people to seamlessly and securely access their data and share it with third-party institutions.

### 3 key building blocks of DEPA:

- Enabling regulations,
- Cutting-edge technology standards, and
- New types of public and private organisations with incentives closely aligned to those of individuals.

### Conclusion

- Relations between two power can greatly support stability in the world.
- Also, Japan can help in India's rise e.g. India's quest to become a global semiconductor Chip Manufacturing hub

### A chance for India to shape a data governance regime

#### Context :

- India's G-20 presidency has provided an opportunity for the country to ensure that its digital strategies and data governance are inclusive, transparent, secure and conducive to sustainable development.

#### Background:

- In recent years, India has made great strides in its digital strat-

egies/data governance - by embracing technology (say, UPI) and digitalisation - driving economic growth - improving the lives of citizens.

- However, the issues of ownership and governance of data generated and collected and data sovereignty have become increasingly important.

o Data sovereignty is the idea that data is subject to the laws and governance structures of the nation where they are collected.

- Given this, it is unreasonable to deny people control over their data and India's DEPA – a consent management tool, has generated both excitement and concern among stakeholders.

### Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture (DEPA):

- It was launched by the NITI

### Advantages of DEPA:

- Potential to improve data protection and privacy for citizens
- Allowing individuals to easily manage and control their data consent
- Build trust in digital technologies and data governance.

### The Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture

- Financial Exclusion
- Digital Opportunity
- Data Silos
- Risks of Inaction
- A Global Challenge
- Paradigm shift towards Empowerment
- An Evolving DEPA Framework
- Regulatory Foundation
- A New class of Institutions
- Technology Foundation

- Guiding Principles
- Combinatorial Layered Innovation
- Impact on Kirana Storeowner
- Roadmap
- An Opportunity for Co Creation
- An "India way" for the World

**Risks associated with DEPA:**

- Personal data could be misused or misappropriated if the consent management tool is not properly implemented.
- An implementation may be inconsistent across different sectors and jurisdictions - undermine effectiveness, and create confusion among citizens.

**Way ahead:**

- The DEPA must be implemented in a transparent, consistent and secure manner - requires close collaboration between all the stakeholders.
- Clear, transparent and accountable data governance policies and regulations.
  - India Data Management Office (IDMO) proposed by MeitY will frame/manage review/revise the National Data Governance Framework Policy (NDGFP).
- Investment in the necessary digital infrastructure and skills.
  - India Stack is a unified software platform that provides digital public goods, and application interfaces and facilitates digital inclusion.
- Advances in financial inclusion

(UPI) can be replicated successfully in other areas (health, agriculture).

- International cooperation and collaboration in addressing risks posed by the rapid growth of data and digital technologies.

**Conclusion :**

- It is important for India to navigate a middle way between restrictive data sovereignty and limitless data flow for the development of ethical and responsible data governance practices.

**On the higher judiciary's move on the death penalty**

**Context :**

- The Supreme Court asked the Centre to provide data that may point to a more dignified, less

painful and socially acceptable method of executing prisoners other than death by hanging.

- The Bench has sought fresh data to substantiate the argument that a more humane means of execution can be found.

**Death penalty:**

- The death penalty, also known as capital punishment, is a legal sentence in some countries where a person is put to death by the state as a punishment for a crime they have committed.
- Section 354 (5) of the Code of Criminal Procedure mandates that a person sentenced to death shall "be hanged by the neck till he is dead".

Pros	Cons
Deterrent to crime	Violation of human rights
Provides justice for victims and families	Risk of executing innocent people
Appropriate punishment for heinous crimes	Irreversible
Reduces prison overcrowding and expenses	Discriminatory against marginalized communities
Closure for victims and families	The fallibility of the justice system
Vengeance for the victims and families	Potential for wrongful convictions and biases
Supported by a majority of the public	Can be expensive and time-consuming to execute

### Judgements related to death sentences:

- There are two leading judgments on the issue - Bachan Singh vs the State of Punjab (1980), which upheld the death penalty, but limited it to the 'rarest of rare cases', and
- Deena Dayal vs Union of India and Others (1983), upheld the method by ruling that hanging is "as painless as possible" and "causes no greater pain than any other known method".
- The 35th Report of the Law Commission (1967) noted that electrocution, the use of a gas chamber and lethal injection were considered by some to be less painful.

### Centre's stand on death by hanging:

- In its 2018 affidavit, the government argued that death by hanging was the only "viable" option to execute a death warrant.
- However, the government also sought additional time to examine the methods followed in other countries.

### What is the practice in other countries?

- According to Amnesty International, 55 countries around the world have the death sentence on the books.
- In the United States, an intravenous lethal injection is given in every state (27 states and American Samoa) that allows the death penalty.

- Electrocution is a secondary method in some states.
- Execution by firing squad is employed in China and Saudi Arabia uses beheading apart from other methods.

### The government emphasizes a holistic approach to disaster management

#### Context :

- The 3rd Session of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) has concluded in New Delhi.

#### About the Session:

- The session deliberated on 10-point agenda on Disaster Risk Reduction given by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Sendai Framework apart from other issues.

#### Organized by :

- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)+ National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)+ National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)+ National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)

#### Theme :

- "Building Local Resilience in a Changing Climate

#### PM's 10-Point Agenda:

- Importance of Local Resilience in Disaster Risk Reduction E.g.
  - **Prime Minister's 10-Point Agenda** : Building local capacities and initiatives
  - **Kutch (Gujarat)** : Bhunga

houses of Kutch survived the earthquake to a large extent

- **Kerala** : Traditional houses known as "Nalukettu," are built with sloping roofs to prevent waterlogging during floods.

- **Local Disaster volunteers** : g.Apada Mitra, Yuvak Mandal and Sakhi Mandal

- Need for Development Sectors to Imbibe Principles of Disaster Risk Management

- Importance of Risk Coverage for All

- Women's Leadership and Greater Involvement in Disaster Risk Management

- Investment in Global Risk Mapping

- Leveraging Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction

- Developing a Network of Universities to Work on Disaster-Related Issues

- Utilizing Social Media and Mobile Technologies for Disaster Risk Reduction

- Learning from Disasters through Post-Disaster Studies

- Need for Greater Cohesion in International Response to Disasters

- E.g. in wake of the recent Earthquake in Syria and Turkey, United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) activated its emergency GIS mapping service

#### What is Disaster Risk Reduction?

- Disaster risk reduction is aimed at preventing new and reduc-



ing existing disaster risks and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development.

### Initiatives for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

#### Global:

- **Sendai Framework (2015):** Successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)
- Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2022
- **Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) ( Under the World Meteorological Organization ) :** It provides access to early warnings in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- **Sectoral Guide on Climate Information & Early Warning Systems (by Green Climate Fund):** It identifies investment opportunities in high impact sector for DRR

#### India's Initiatives:

- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure Society (CDRIS) :** To increase the resilience of infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks
- **National Disaster Management Plan 2016 (NDMP) :** To coordinate response to natural or man-made disasters and for capacity-building in disaster

resiliency and crisis response.

- India aims to achieve zero mortality in all disasters in collaboration with state governments and response agencies
- The Disaster Management Act, 2005, seeks to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development planning

#### About NPDRR

- It is a National Platform (est. 2013, HQ: New Delhi), which helps in the formulation of future National Action Plan on DRR
- **Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa scheme:** Under it, Agrometeorological Advisory Services (AAS) being rendered for the benefit of farmers
- Implementing the Per Drop More Crop scheme
- Focusing on Integrated Farming System (IFS) for enhancing productivity and minimizing risks associated with climatic variability under the Rainfed Area Development (RAD)
- The National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project has been launched to develop and promote climate-resilient agriculture in vulnerable areas of the country.
- The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP) has been implemented to assist in disaster management for the coastal environment.

## **Increase in the minimum age of marriage for women to 21 years two years after Bill is notified : Centre**

#### Context :

- The increase in the minimum age of marriage for women to 21 years as provisioned in the Prohibition of Child Marriage Amendment Bill, 2021, would come into effect two years after the Bill is notified following its passage in Parliament.

#### Background:

- According to the NFHS-5, 23% (47% in NFHS-3 and 27% in NFHS-4 ) of women between the age of 20 and 24 were married before 18 years of age.
- In India, the practice of child marriage was first legally prohibited through the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (legal age G = 14 years and B = 18 years)
- This Act was amended in 1978 to increase the minimum age to 18 years for females, and 21 years for men.
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 replaced the 1929 Act, with the same minimum age limits.
- In 2020, the central government set up a task force (Chairperson: Ms Jaya Jaitly) to examine the correlation between the age of marriage and the mother, and the child's health.
- The Committee suggested increasing the age of marriage

for females to 21.

- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Amendment Bill 2021: The Bill, introduced by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and currently with the Parliamentary Standing Committee, amends the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006.

### 2021 Bill

- Increasing the age of marriage for females to 21 years and also specifies that the provisions of the Act shall override any other law, custom, usage or practice.
- Increasing the time period for filing a petition to annul child marriage to five years (i.e., 23 years).

### The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006

- M = 21 years, F = 18 years
- A person who is married before the minimum specified age may apply to annul the marriage within two years of attaining majority (i.e., 20 years of age).

### Object and reasons of the Bill

- Improvement of –
  - Maternal and infant mortality rates (IMR and MMR)
  - Nutrition levels
  - Sex ratio at birth (SRB)
  - Education, professional training and vocational courses
  - Female labour force participation
  - Gender equality, empower-

ment of women.

### Key issues

- Different ages for attaining majority (18) and being allowed to marry (21)
- Prohibiting marriages between the ages of 18 and 21 years – Violates Article 19, 21 (SC in the Navtej Singh Johar case 2018)
- A person married between 18 and 21 years may also apply for annulling the marriage
- Implementation challenges – There has been limited success in curbing the marriage of girls below the age of 18 years.

### Way ahead:

- Two years from the date of notification of the amendment would provide ample time for citizens to prepare for this momentous reform.
- A staggered schedule raising the age of marriage by one year at a time, starting one year after the notification of the amendment.

### Guidelines to Address Human-Wildlife Conflict

- The Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released 14 guidelines to address Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC).
- It aims to facilitate a common understanding among key stakeholders, on what constitutes effective and efficient mitigation of HWC in India.
- The guidelines are advisory in nature, and will facilitate in

further development of site-specific HWC mitigation measures.

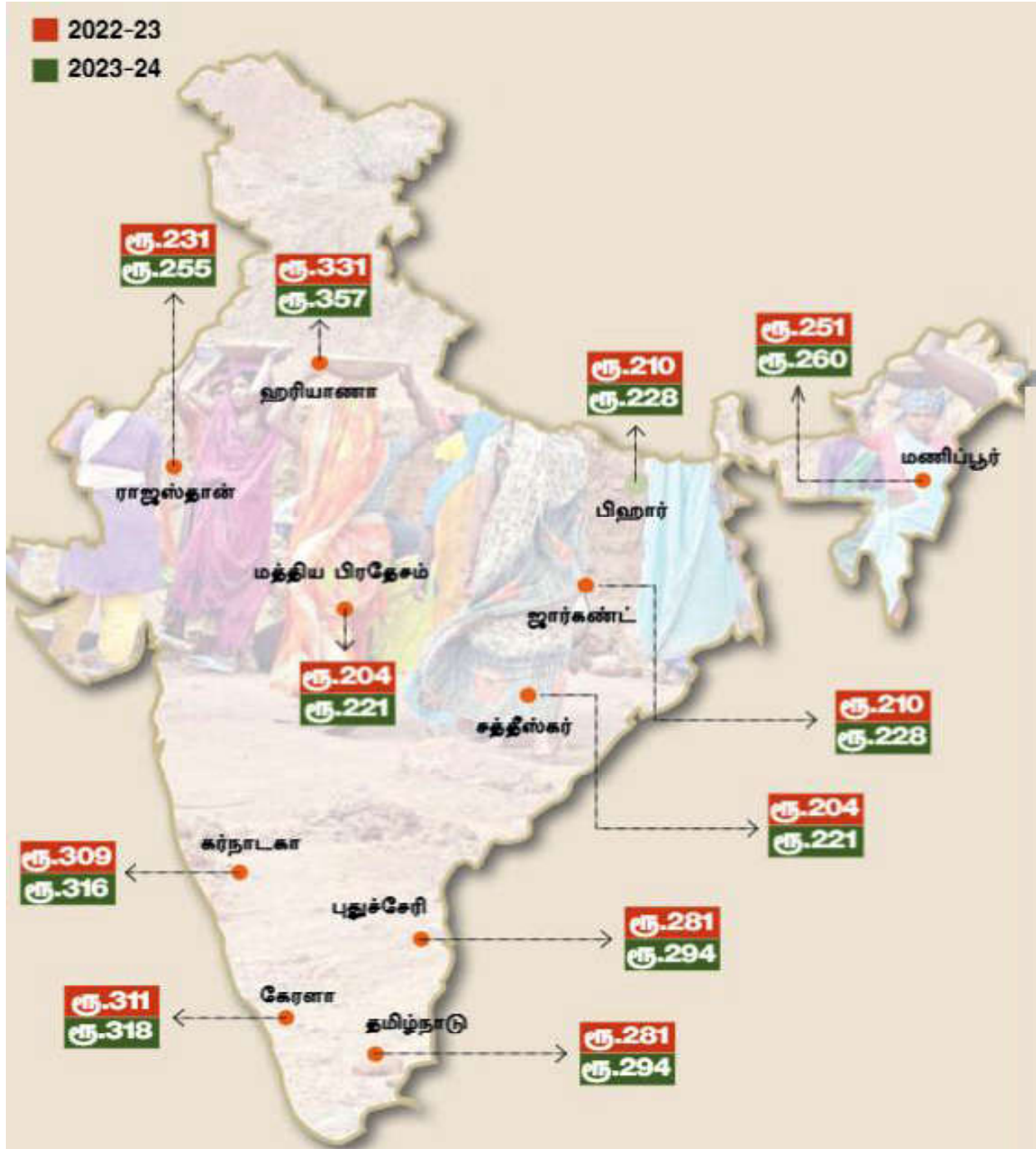
- These guidelines are developed under the Indo-German cooperation project on HWC Mitigation.
- 10 species-specific guidelines
  - Guidelines for Mitigating Human -Elephant, -Gaur, -Leopard, -Snake, - Crocodile, -Rhesus Macaque, -Wild Pig, -Bear, -Blue Bull and -Blackbuck Conflict.
- 4 guidelines on cross-cutting issues
  - Guidelines for Cooperation between the Forest and Media sector in India: Towards effective communication on Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
  - Occupational Health and Safety in the Context of Human–Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
  - Crowd Management in Human-Wildlife Conflict Related Situations
  - Addressing Health Emergencies and Potential Health Risks Arising Out of Human—Wildlife Conflict Situations: Taking a One Health Approach.

### GST Appellate Tribunal

- Lok Sabha cleared changes in the Finance Bill to pave the way for setting up of an appellate tribunal for resolution of disputes under GST.
- As per the amendments, bench-

- es of the GST Appellate Tribunal would be set up in every state.
- This bench will include two judicial members, and two technical members representing the Centre and state.
- There will be a principal bench in Delhi.
- Principal bench will consist of a president, a judicial member and two technical members representing the Centre and state.
- Currently, taxpayers are filing writ petitions before high courts in the absence of the appellate tribunal.

### Increase of MNREGA wages



- The Centre has notified a hike in wage rates under its rural job guarantee programme, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), for the 2023-24 financial year.
- Haryana gave the highest daily wage at Rs 357 per day.
- Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh gave the lowest at Rs 221.
- Goa and Karnataka have received the lowest hike with an increase of a mere two per cent.
- Rajasthan has received the maximum gain, with wages increasing by 10.39 per cent from April 1 over the current wage rate.
- Seven other states have received less than a 5 per cent increase in wage rates for 2023-24 over the current (2022-23) rates.
- They are Meghalaya (3.4 per cent), Manipur (3.59 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (3.7 per cent), Nagaland (3.7 per cent), Assam (3.93 per cent), Tamil Nadu (4.63 per cent), and Puducherry (4.63 per cent)

### **Supreme Court Verdict on ECI Appointments**

- A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court (SC) headed by Justice KM Joseph unanimously gave verdict on appointment

of the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners.

- These appointments shall be made by the President on the advice of a selection Committee.
- This Committee will be consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition of the Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- In case no leader of Opposition is available, the leader of the largest opposition Party in the Lok Sabha in terms of numerical strength will be a part of such committee.
- The Bench also appealed to the central government to constitute an independent secretariat for dealing with the expenditure of the Commission.
- As per the Article 324(2), The appointment of the CEC and other Election Commissioners shall be made by the President.
- It is also subject to the provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament.

- The President determines the conditions of service and tenure of office of the Election.
- Under the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and

Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 they have a tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

- Typically, the senior-most election commissioner is appointed as the CEC.

### **Criterion for Consumer courts**

- The Supreme Court used reduced the mandatory professional experience from 20 to 10 years to preside over consumer courts.
- For this, the Supreme Court used its extraordinary powers under Article 142.
- It also introduced written exams and viva voce to check the candidates' performance.
- The Centre has proposed several amendments to the Consumer Protection (Qualification for appointment, method of recruitment, procedure of appointment, term of office, resignation and removal of President and Members of State Commission and District Commission) Rules, 2020.

### **Three Types of Consumer Courts**

- National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission
- State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission
- District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum



## VI. Public Awareness and General Administration

### Compulsory entrance exam

- Students must have passed the Common University Entrance Test to be admitted to the Under graduate & Post graduate courses
- While initially it was said that the universities who want to can implement this common entrance test system, now the test is mandatory for admission to 113 universities and 47,000 colleges in India.

### Purpose will be distorted

- This is the main objective emphasized in the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Commission, Kothari Commission, etc. set up for the development of education, the National Education Policy 1986 and 1992 and the currently implemented National Education Policy 2020.
- The new education policy calls for raising the population enrollment rate of students in higher education from the current 24 percent to 50 percent by 2030.

### TN in the lead

- Tamil Nadu is the leading state with a total enrollment ratio of 52 percent in higher education admissions

- Rs 1000 per month to female students in higher education to encourage them to pursue higher education.
- First generation students are given government aid

### Consequences

- If CUET is made mandatory, the number of coaching centers for Common Entrance Test will proliferate across the country
- Only those students who have financial means will pay several lakhs of rupees for training and pass
- Students do not focus on 10th and 12th public exams as only the marks of Common Entrance Test are required for higher education admissions.
- This will prevent the acquisition of knowledge in basic subjects

### Solutions

- Admissions in government and private universities are still based on the Common Entrance Test
- University Grants Committee can report how to conduct entrance exams for the admission
- Can examine the methods of conducting choices
- Such surveillance can lead to proper exams and lead to eligible student enrollment.

### Judgment in state language

- For the first time in India two judgments have been uploaded in Malayalam on the website of the Kerala High Court which is a commendable step
- The Kerala High Court has given pride to Malayalam speakers by publishing these judgments on February 21, World Mother Language Day.
- The Tamil Nadu Bar Council has urged the Madras High Court to publish its judgments in Tamil
- Although Article 348(1)(a) of the Constitution of India states that all proceedings of the High Courts shall be in English, Article 348(2) states that the Governor may authorize the official use of Hindi or other languages in the proceedings of the High Court with the approval of the President.

### In India...

- In India, the use of Hindi was allowed in the Rajasthan High Court as early as 1950
- In 1965, the Union Cabinet passed a resolution making it a condition that any proposal to use a language other than English in the High Courts would require the approval of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

- Subsequently, after the approval of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Hindi was allowed to be used in the High Courts of Uttar Pradesh(1969), Madhya Pradesh(1971) and Bihar(1972)

### SUVAS

- On Republic Day this year, the Supreme Court began a new chapter by issuing judgments in four languages: Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, Odiya.
- For this purpose, the Supreme Court is also setting up an artificial intelligence system comprising judges to develop a special software tool called "SUVAS" to translate judgments from English.
- The Kerala High Court has now published news in Malayalam using this tool

### India's first foreign university is set up in Gujarat

- Australia's Deakin University is setting up its branch campus in Gift, Gujarat for the first time
- Deakin is the first foreign university in India to set up an academic campus
- The University Grants Commission is framing norms for foreign universities to set up campuses in India
- However, the foreign universities set up in Gift, Gujarat will be subject to the norms of the Central Commission for International Financial Services
- Deakin University is ranked

266th in the World University Rankings and 50th in the New Universities Rankings.

### Mega Textile Park at Virudhunagar

- The country's first PM Mitra Textile Park will be set up at Kumaralingapuram village in Virudhunagar district.
- 2000 crore mega textile park on 1052 acre SIPCOT land will provide employment to 2 lakh people
- Tamil Nadu accounts for one third of the handloom fabric trade of our country
- Tamil Nadu is known as the yarn bowl of India as it is a major producer and exporter of cotton yarn and is the leading state in spinning, handloom weaving, power loom weaving, ready-made garments and garment manufacturing.
- Next to agriculture, the textile industry provides employment to 4 crore people directly and 6 crore indirectly.

### Same-sex marriages can rock societal values: Centre Government

#### Context:

- The Centre has opposed the Supreme Court pleas seeking legal validation of same-sex marriage, saying it would cause complete havoc with the delicate balance of personal laws and accepted societal values.
- According to the government marriage between a biological

man and woman is a "holy union, a sacrament and a sanskar" in India.

- Any "deviation" from this "statutorily, religiously and socially" accepted norm in "human relationships" can only happen through the legislature and not the Supreme Court.

### What were the petitioners' demands:

- Sought an interpretation of the Special Marriage Act, 1954 in a gender-neutral manner where a person is not discriminated against due to his sexual orientation.
- The Special Marriage Act of 1954 provides a civil form of marriage for couples who cannot marry under their personal law.

### Governments arguments:

- The government argued that the Court had only decriminalised sexual intercourse between same-sex persons in its 2018 judgment in Navtej Singh Johar, and not legitimised this "conduct".
- The court, while decriminalising homosexuality, had never accepted same-sex marriage as part of the fundamental right to life and dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Registration of marriage of same-sex persons would also result in violation of existing personal as well as codified law provisions.
- It is submitted that there cannot

be an untrammelled right under Article 21 and cannot override other constitutional principles, adding that Parliament has designed and framed marriage laws, which are governed by personal laws/codified laws relating to customs of various religious communities, to recognise only the union of a man and a woman to be capable of legal sanction, and thereby claim legal and statutory rights and consequences.

### Ethical aspects of Same-sex marriage

- **Equality** : Denying same-sex couples the right to marry is seen as discrimination and a violation of basic human rights.
- **Consent**: Same-sex couples should be able to marry if they are both consenting adults who are making a free and informed decision to enter into a lifelong commitment.
- **Harm**: Opponents of same-sex marriage argue that it is harmful to society or to children who may be raised by same-sex couples.
- However, many studies have found that there is no evidence to support these claims and that children raised by same-sex parents do just as well as children raised by opposite-sex parents.
- **Tradition**: Some people argue that same-sex marriage goes against traditional values and beliefs.
- However, tradition is not al-

ways a reliable guide to ethics, and there is no inherent ethical value in maintaining a tradition simply because it is old or familiar.

- **Religious beliefs**: For some, same-sex marriage may conflict with their religious beliefs.
- While everyone has the right to their own beliefs, it is important to remember that religious beliefs should not be used to justify discrimination or deny equal rights to others.

### The road to ending tuberculosis

#### Context :

- The existing target of ending tuberculosis (TB) by 2030 lacks implementation and clarity about definitions of "end".

#### Background:

- In 1993, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared TB a global health emergency.
- Founded in 2001, the Stop TB Partnership (a UN-hosted organisation) takes bold and smart risks to serve the needs and amplify the voices of the people, communities, and countries affected by TB.
  - The Stop TB board meets in Varanasi, India, and will coincide with World TB Day 2023 (March 24).
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (2002) began disbursing money directed towards the global TB epidemic in 2003.

### Current obstacles in the global fight against TB:

- The response has been short on urgency and long on processes.
- For example, The Global Fund remains hostage to the zero-sum games imposed by donors and the champions of the three diseases.

### Key areas that remain underserved:

- Development and wide use of an adult TB vaccine: The current vaccine is delivered at birth.
- Getting newer therapeutic agents for TB.
  - Moving to an injection-free and shorter all-oral pills regimen for TB (the current standard is for at least six months) will improve compliance and reduce patient fatigue.
- The space of diagnostics. There are exciting developments for use of AI-assisted handheld radiology with 90-second reporting and 95% plus accuracy for diagnosing TB.
  - This is a mature technology and should be rolled out universally immediately.

### Best practices:

- The COVID-19 vaccine development process shows what can be done with the help of collective will and action.
- India convened the InDx diagnostics coalition in Bengaluru for COVID-19.
- TN-KET (Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappilla Thittam/TB death-free project)

## Initiatives to control Tuberculosis

- The Saksham Project
- The Nikshay Ecosystem
- TB Harega Desh Jeetaga Campaign
- Nikshay Poshan Yojana (NPY)

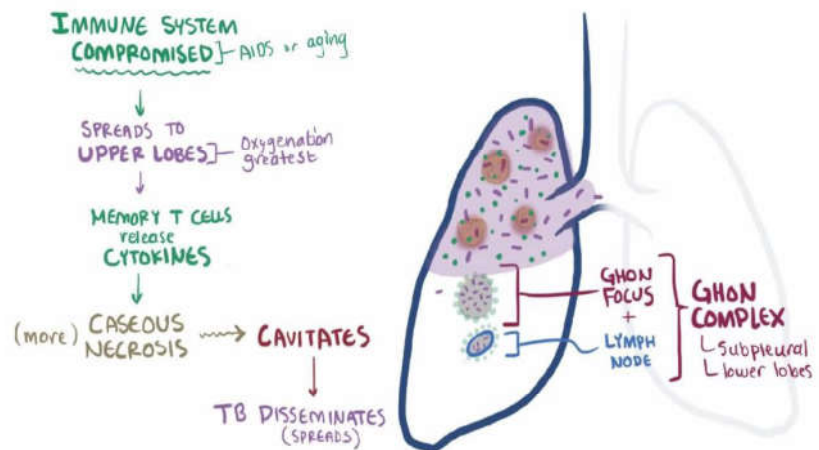
### Way ahead:

- Using social safety programmes to address the poverty drivers of the TB epidemic.
- Leveraging the mobile and computational data revolution to improve treatment outcomes.

### Conclusion:

- India's leadership of the G20

## MYCOBACTERIUM TUBERCULOSIS (TB)



and the focus on health could be catalytic, in the same manner, that the Japanese G7 presidency in 2001 was for the creation of the Global Fund.

- Providing historical symmetry, Japan leads the G7 in 2023, providing leaders of both nations and groupings to act synergistically towards ending TB.

## VII. Welfare Oriented Schemes and their Utility Problem in Public Delivery System (Central Government and State Government)

### 1. Central Government

#### 100 days work program

- It is wrong to dilute this law which has provided almost 15 crore employment to 5 crore families across the country.
- The scheme was implemented through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005
- Although some people mistakenly believe that agriculture has been destroyed by this scheme due to ignorance, it is

this scheme which is still relieving the hunger of marginalized people.

#### The plan getting diversified

- The central government set up a committee headed by Amarjit Sinha, former secretary of the Panchayat Raj department, to look into the effectiveness of the Act.
- In the first meeting of the committee, while developed states like Kerala were creating social

assets through the scheme funds, states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh could not even create jobs.

- However, funds cannot be denied to states under this scheme.
- At the same meeting, the affluent states are making good use of this scheme brought in to eradicate poverty
- The Panchayat Raj Ministry made the attendance registra-



tion system mandatory through an act from January 1 this year

- Due to this, a situation has arisen that even in hilly villages without internet facilities and forest areas where tribals live, if they register their attendance through the app, they will be paid for their work.

### Diminishing importance

- Earlier salary was paid through bank account
- The ministry has made payment of wages through Aadhaar-linked bank account mandatory across the country from February 1
- According to government sta-

tistics, only 43 percent of workers across India have Aadhaar linkage system

- In this year's budget, the fund for this project has been reduced to Rs 60,000 crore
- While last year's wage arrears are estimated at Rs 16,070 crore till January 2023, sector experts say that with the current allocated funds, we are providing jobs for only 20 to 25 days across the country.
- Union Minister Giriraj Singh has said that the law is going to be amended so that the central government do not have to pay the entire amount of scheme wages and the central and

state governments share it in the ratio of 60:40 respectively.

### Immediate action is required

- This Act was not brought to eradicate poverty
- It was brought to improve the livelihood security of rural families
- The Act empowers the people and the village panchayats by giving all the decision-making powers related to the scheme to the grassroots village council.
- It is wrong to dilute this law which is providing almost 15 crore employment to 5 crore families across the country.

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## 2. State Government

### **Kerala temple deploys life - size 'robotic elephant' for festival**

- A Kerala temple, Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple (Thrissur district) has introduced a life - size motorized model of an elephant for performing rituals such as carrying processional deities.
- The 11 - foot - tall robotic elephant weighing 800 kg and made of an Iron frame & rubber coating, was donated by people for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India.
- Film actor Parvathy Thiruvothu joined hands with PETA in

donating the robotic elephant, which cost 5 Lakh rupees.

### **Strawberry : Becoming the livelihood of the Odisha tribes**

- Odisha Tribal Farmers has succeeded in cultivation of Strawberry
- They earn revenue up to Rs 37,500 per 150 kg of Strawberry Cultivation

### Western appearance

- Strawberry is a fruit for all ages, with sweet smell, bright red color, and juicy with sweet & sour taste
- In the 19th century, the type

of strawberry fruit which was now in custom was created by the hybridisation carried out with the American varieties of strawberry.

### Introduction and Growth in India

- Strawberry was introduced by the English at the end of the 19th century in India
- Located in the Western Ghats of Maharashtra, Mahabaleshwar was the summer headquarters in the province of Bombay during the British rule.
- It was cultivated in the 1920s, as the climatic environment was found to be conducive to strawberry cultivation.

- 85% of the total strawberry cultivation of India results in this area
  - In that respect, Mahabaleshwar is the strawberry capital of India
  - Strawberry, a subtropical crop, grows well from November to March.
- Potassium
  - Vitamin C
  - Vitamin B9
  - Iron
  - Copper
  - Phosphorus
  - Vitamins - B6, K, E

### Introduction in Odisha

- In 2021, the Strawberries were cultivated on a small area based on testing, as the climatic environment of Odisha's Tsunabada Plateau was in the same context in Mahabaleshwar of Maharashtra.
- Strawberry cultivation was introduced in other districts after the test was somewhat successful
- The State Horticulture Department promoted Strawberry cultivation by providing financial assistance to tribal farmers and training them in modern technologies
- Farmers who cultivate paddy from April to October cultivate strawberries in November after paddy harvest
- Odisha tribal farmers are delighted as yields are currently on the rise
- The state government is continuing to take steps to enhance the livelihood of the tribes to expand strawberry cultivation to many other districts in the Tsunabada Plateau.

### Nutrients in Strawberry

- Manganese

### Medicinal properties

- Increases immunity
- Maintains blood pressure
- Good for heart
- Controls the stroke impact
- Regulates blood sugar levels
- Reduces cancer impact

### Producing states

- Maharashtra
- Himachal Pradesh
- West Bengal
- Delhi
- Haryana
- Punjab
- Rajasthan
- Uttar Pradesh
- Jammu & Kashmir
- Odisha

### The main varieties that are cultivated

- Chandler
- Tioga
- Torrey
- Selva
- Fern
- Pajaro

### Major countries getting imports from India

- Austria
- Bangladesh

- Germany
- Jordan
- America

### **For the first time, two women were elected to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly**

- Nagaland emerged as a separate state in 1963
- The state has 60 assembly constituencies

### Hekani Jakhlu

- Hailing from Dimapur, Nagaland, Hekani has completed his higher education in capital Delhi and UK capital London
- She is a lawyer, who also started and runs an NGO called Youth Net Nagaland.

### Salhoutuonuo Kruse

- She contested from the Western Angami Assembly constituency on behalf of the National Democratic Progressive Party and won by a margin of seven votes
- Kruse runs hotel in Angami
- She has also been working in an NGO for over 24 years

### **PM VIKAS**

- The Prime Minister's Vishwakarma Kaushal scheme announced in the current year's budget has caught everyone's attention.
- The program focuses on integrating artisans and those involved in small scale industries
- Government will ensure organizational support to every

Vishwakarma such as easy access to credit, capacity building, technology support, empowerment, business name promotion, marketing, etc.

- The project will preserve the rich heritage of artisans while promoting them.

### A strong program

- The partnership with the private sector will be further strengthened through the PM Vikas programme
- Also, the innovation potential of the private sector can increase business efficiency
- All parties should contribute to develop a strong action plan to help artisans and small entrepreneurs
- Most of the artisans are dalit, tribal, backward community or women
- A practical strategy is essential for their success
- The country's skill infrastructure process needs to be restructured to meet the needs of artisans.

### India's symbol of self-reliance

- Small artisans play an important role in the production of local handicrafts
- PM Bikas scheme will empower them
- Empowerment of all stakeholders in rural areas is critical in the country's development journey
- Skilled artisans are the true symbols of India's sense of self-reliance

## Tamilnadu Organic farming policy : 2023

- It got announced in first agriculture budget.
- Now TN government released the policy.
- Aims to create separate wing for certification of organic farming.

### Statistical details

- Tamilnadu stands 14th at National level in organic farming.
- 4,223 metric tonne organic products have been exported in 2020-2021 and yielded a revenue of Rs.108 crore.

### Aim

- Soil health, agriculture ecosystem, biodiversity conservation should be protected.
- They should be maintained in sustainable manner.
- Providing healthy and eco-friendly foods.

### Objectives

- Provide consultation on marketing and certifying process.
- Promoting export of organic products
- Increasing the revenue of farmers
- Government encourages crop loan facility
- Loss occurred due to Natural disasters would be covered under insurance policy.

### Salient features

- Crop-based clusters in potential districts

- Creation of organic zones
- Organic outlets in cities & towns
- Training on export policies and procedures.

### 1. Online single window clearance

- To simplify the certification process, an important aspect in organic farming, it uses online-single window clearance system.
- Registration of farmers, certification and an extensive database will be maintained online.

### 2. Cattle and diary farming

- Certificates will be issued for cattle, diary keeping, Mushroom, Bee, fish rearing and Greenhouse farming through organic certification wing.

### 3. Organic farming zone

- Dry land agriculture clusters will be developed as organic clusters and create organic farming zones.
- Training will be provided to rural youth, farm women, students.

### 4. Garden at schools

- To create an awareness and interest among school students on organic farming and biodiversity conservation.
- Organic farm garden, terrace garden practices will be promoted where space is suitable for the work.

### 5. Food festival

- It will be conducted in each districts at regular interval of time.
- Measures will be taken to open outlets for organic foods in town and cities.

### 6. State level Gene Bank

- To protect all types of traditional plant varieties seeds a gene bank will be established at state level.

### 7. Help centres

- To assist and help farmers in availing online services and other related services a help centre will be opened at each zone.

### 8. Financial Assistance

- It ensures that enough and adequate credit facilities are available for farmers, food preservation through NABARD and other banks.

### 9. e-commerce

- Organic products will be promoted through internet, e-NAM (e-National agricultural Marketing), Mobile Applications, Market platforms.

### 10. High level Review committee

- A committee headed by chief secretary to review the situation of organic farming and its policy.
- The plan and scheme of action will be planned and guided by committee headed by secretary to Department of Agriculture.
- At district level district collector heads the committee to inte-

grate all farm related activities with organic farming.

### Significance

- The policy will be reviewed for every 5 years once. Currently, Tamilnadu has 31,629 hectares of organic farming, and in future it tries to increase the land under organic farm practice.
- 0% of TB drugs are manufactured in India.

### Tamil Nadu Disaster Management Policy

- Reducing the negative effects of all types of disasters through strong disaster management initiatives and avoiding loss of life, damage to public property and critical infrastructure
- Prevention of loss of state-generated economic and development gains is the objective of the updated Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Policy.
- The Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Policy focuses on increasing the multi-disaster warning system, hazard, assessment of disaster protections and analysis of risk, mitigation measures to reduce disaster risk and prioritizing and co-implementing disaster risk reduction activities in development programs implemented by all sectors.
- The policy focuses on reducing disaster-related deaths, number of victims, impact on vulnerable groups and damage to basic services and economic loss.
- The policy provides clear guid-

ance for disaster risk reduction, based on global and national frameworks for disaster risk reduction, and tailored to the vision and priorities of the state.

### World's highest railway flyover in Jammu and Kashmir

- The world's highest railway flyover has been constructed between Bakkal and Kauri in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Built at a cost of Rs 1486 crore across the river Chenab, the bridge is built at a height of 359 meters above the river bed. Its length is 1315 meters
- The bridge is designed to last up to 120 years
- Trains can run at a speed of 100 km per hour on this bridge
- Rs 35,000 crore rail link project between Utampur Srinagar and Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir is underway.
- World's tallest railway flyover has been constructed as part of this project.

### Tamil Nadu Financial Statement 2023 - 24

#### Women's rights

- Women's entitlement amount is Rs.1000 per month
- Bank loan to Women Self Help Groups Rs 30,000 crore
- Rs 350 crores for "Puthumai Pen" Project
- Special Innovation Drive for women entrepreneurs to start up ventures



### Education and youth capacity building

- Chief Minister's Breakfast Program Rs 500 crores
- 18 lakh primary school students will benefit
- Prof. K. Anbazagan School Development Project at Rs 1,500 crore
- Rs 50 Crore "Naan Muthalvan" Project to uplift the youth
- Rs 25 crores for industrial skill schools
- Tamil Nadu Global Innovation Initiatives & Competence Center at Rs 120 crore
- Upgradation of 54 Government Polytechnic Colleges as Centers of Excellence at a cost of Rs 2,783 crore

### Social Justice

- Translation of Annal Ambedkar Thoughts at Rs 5 Crores
- 40 lakh rupees as ex-gratia to the families of Tamil Nadu soldiers who sacrificed their lives
- Old age pension for one lakh more.

### Welfare of farmers

- 14,000 crore in crop loans to benefit farmers
- Nammalwar Award for best performing organic farmers
- Kalaingar's All Village Integrated Agricultural Development Programme - Rs 230 crore; 2504 Village panchayats
- Crop insurance for farmers at Rs 2337 crore
- Free electricity to 23 lakh farmers at Rs 6536 crore

### Career development and employment

- New SIPCOT Industrial Parks in Virudhunagar, Vellore, Kallakurichi, Coimbatore to create 22,000 jobs at rs 410 crores
- 14,500 MW 15 new hydropower projects at Rs 77,000 crore.
- Eminent cities & Prosperous regions
- Renovation of ponds and lakes at Rs 800 crore
- Rs 2000 Crore for Chief Minister's Rural Roads Development Scheme - 5145 km road works
- 1000 New Buses & Upgradation of 500 Old Buses at Rs 500 Crores

### Environmental protection

- 2000 Crore Tamil Nadu Weaving Recovery Initiative to prevent sea erosion, reduce pollution, protect biodiversity

### Admirable Tamil culture

- Great Chola Museum in Thanjavur
- 485 crore rupees for major construction works in Palani, Thiruthani & Samayapuram temples.

### Special schemes for southern districts including Madurai, Tirunelveli

- Rs 8,500 crores for Madurai Metro Rail project
- A special drive to Madurai Jasmine at Rs 7 crore
- Textile Park at Virudhunagar at Rs.1800 crore
- SIPCOT Industrial Park in Virudhunagar District

- Labor quarters for 1500 workers at Gangai Kondan SIPCOT Industrial Estate at Rs 50 crore
- IT Park at Tirunelveli
- Palm Research Center at Kilkulam College of Agriculture, Thoothukudi District at Rs 15 crore
- Rs 130 crores for Banana Cluster Development Project in Theni District
- Chilli zone in Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai & Thoothukudi districts.

### **Enforceable Right to Health in Rajasthan**

- Congress-ruled Rajasthan has implemented the Right to Health Act like no other state in the country
- According to this law, free treatment should be given to all who come to the emergency department for injuries or other injuries in accidents
- No advance payment, treatment fee, medicine fee, etc. should be received
- This applies to both government and private hospitals
- Private doctors, nurses and medical workers are strongly opposing this law.
- The President of the Panchayat or its member is empowered to revoke the rights of private hospitals that violate the provisions of the Right to Health Act
- This has been repealed and the right has been given to the state health authorities as before

- The state government has also offered to provide free emergency treatment.

### **An Environment of Gender Equality**

- Supriya Sahu, the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government, Department of Environment, Climate Change, is leading Tamil Nadu's fight against climate change.
- Sahu chairs the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company (TNGCC), which has three missions:
  - Increase forest and tree cover
  - Address climate change
  - Conserve wetlands
- She believes that women bring a certain sensitivity and understanding to climate change issues and that climate actions must benefit women.

### **Tamil Nadu has launched several initiatives:**

- Promoting climate literacy by creating educational videos and social media posts on climate change in the Tamil language.
- The Green Fellowship program and the Meendum Manjappai program are initiatives that aim to empower women and provide them with opportunities to work on environmental issues and earn a decent income
- Encouraging the use of eco-friendly shopping bags

### **What is the SoO agreement with tribal insurgent groups that the Manipur govt withdrew from?**

#### **Context :**

- The state government of Manipur decided to withdraw from the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with two hill-based tribal militant groups.

#### **Background :**

- Two hill-based tribal militant groups – Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) were allegedly influencing agitation among forest encroachers.

#### **The Kuki people:**

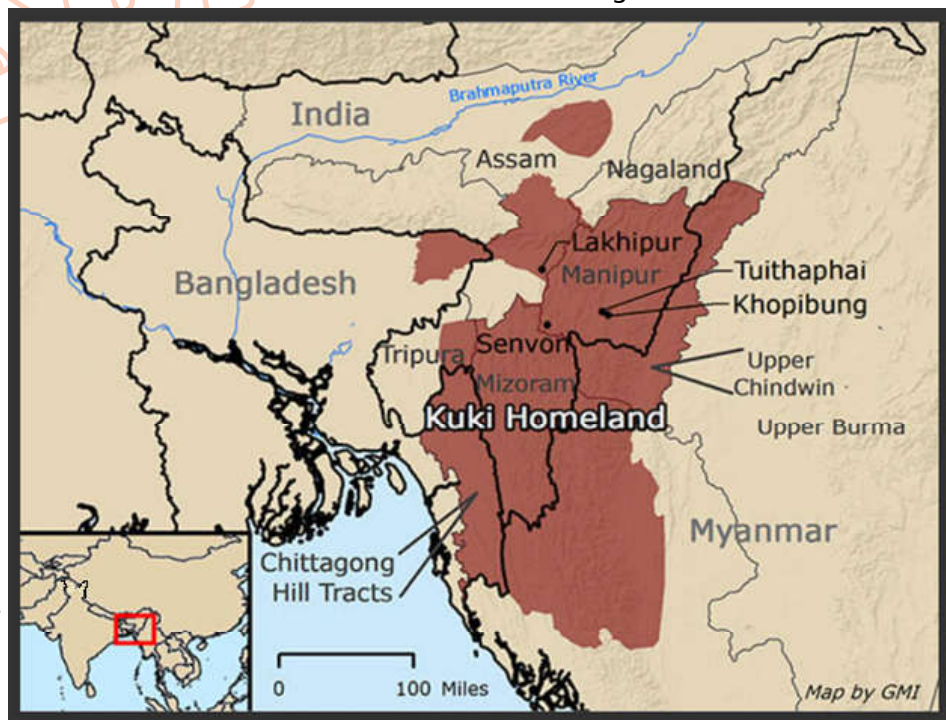
- They are an ethnic group native to the Mizo Hills (formerly Lushai) – a mountainous region in the southeastern part of

Mizoram and Manipur in India.

- In Northeast India, they are present in all states except Arunachal Pradesh and some 50 tribes of Kuki peoples are recognised as STs.
- The Chin people of Myanmar and the Mizo people of Mizoram are related to the Kukis and are collectively termed the Zo

#### **What are the roots of the Kuki insurgency?**

- The Kuki insurgency gained momentum after ethnic clashes with the Nagas of Manipur in the early 1990s.
- While the two tribes have shared a hostile relationship since colonial times, clashes took place in the 1990s when claims of "kuki homeland" in the Manipur hills overlapped with the imagined Naga homeland of Greater Nagaland/ Nagalim.



- While the Naga movement is the country's longest-running insurgency, underground Kuki groups too have fought the Indian government for an 'independent Kuki homeland' since then.

### What is the SoO pact?

- There are nearly 30 Kuki insurgent groups in Manipur, of which 25 are under tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) with the Government of India and the state.
- The SoO pact was signed on August 22, 2008, with the primary objective of initiating political dialogue.

### What are the terms of the SoO pact?

- The important terms under the pact are that security forces, including state and central forces, are not to launch any operations, nor can the underground groups.
- The signatories (like UPF, and KNO) shall abide by the Constitution of India, the laws of the land and the territorial integrity of Manipur.
- They are prohibited from committing all kinds of atrocities, extortion, etc.

### Impact of SoO pact:

- The Kuki outfits who were initially demanding a separate Kuki state have come down to a 'Kukiland territorial council', which would have financial and administrative powers indepen-

dent of the Manipur Assembly and government.

- As a rehabilitation package, the UG cadres living in the designated camps are given a monthly stipend of Rs 5000.
  - Financial assistance is also being provided to maintain the designated camps.

### What next?

- The revocation of the SoO agreement has now raised questions about the government's intent to resolve the issue earliest.
- Feeling ignored, the outfits could once again start insurgency activities threatening the internal security of a strategically located region.

### Right to Health Bill (RTH): Rajasthan

- The Rajasthan Assembly has passed the Right to Health Bill, making Rajasthan the first and only state in India to legislate the right to health.

### Features

- The Bill provides for mandatory free-of-cost emergency treatment for every resident of the state at both government hospitals and private institutions.
- The Bill also mandates that hospitals provide treatment in emergency cases without waiting for medico-legal formalities and give medicines and transport facilities without charging money.

### Significance:

- RTH creates a legal obligation on states to ensure access to timely, acceptable, and affordable health care of appropriate quality
- Right to life (Article 21) included RTH (SC Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs Union of India & Ors)

### Usage :

- The bill can be used to highlight the importance of prioritizing the public's health and welfare, involving all stakeholders (inclusivity), and ensuring accountability and transparency in the healthcare system.

### PM MITRA scheme

### Context :

- The Ministry of Textiles will shortly name the States identified for implementation of Prime Minister MITRA (Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel) scheme.

### About "PM-MITRA" Scheme:

- The scheme aims to realize the vision of building an Aatmanirbhar Bharat by positioning India strongly on the Global textiles map.
- The PM MITRA parks will provide the best ecosystem for the textile industry to be collectively present in one location, with plug-and-play infrastructure, and improve the competitiveness of the textile value chain.
- It will also give a boost to the five F (farm, fibre, factory, fashion, foreign) vision of the Prime Minister.

### PM MITRA - A landmark Decision to Empower Textiles Sector

- Approves 7 Mega Integrated Textile Region & Apparel (MITRA) parks
- 7 MITRA Parks with a total outlay of Rs. 4, 445 Crores in a period of 5 years
- World - class Industrial infrastructure to attract investment
- Generation of 7 lakh direct and 14 lakh of indirect employment

### National Security Act

#### Context :

- National Security Act has been invoked in the case of self-styled Sikh preacher and on-the-run Waris Punjab De chief Amrit Singh.

#### About National Security Act, 1980:

- NSA "empowers the state to detain a person without a formal charge and without trial".
- Under the Act, a person is taken into custody to prevent them from acting in any manner prejudicial to "the security of the state" or for "maintenance of the public order".
- It is an administrative order passed either by the Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate (DM).
- Even if a person is in police custody, the District Magistrate can slap NSA against them. Or, if a person has been granted bail by a trial court, they can be immediately detained under

the NS If the person has been acquitted by the court, the same person can be detained under the NSA.

- The law takes away an individual's constitutional right to be produced before the magistrate within 24 hours, as is the case when the accused is in police custody.
- The detained person also does not have the right to move a bail application before a criminal court.

#### What are the grounds for detention?

- NSA can be invoked to prevent a person from acting in any manner prejudicial to the defence of India, relations of India with foreign powers or the security of India.
- Among others, it can also be applied to prevent a person from acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community.
- An individual can be detained without a charge for a maximum period of 12 months.

#### What is the protection available under the Act?

- The Indian Constitution allows both preventive detention and the right of protection against arrest and detention in certain cases, enshrined under Article 22 of the Constitution.
- However, Article 22(3) provides that the rights available to an arrested person will not be ap-

plicable in case of preventive detention, thus an exception is carved out.

- One crucial procedural safeguard under the NSA is granted under Article 22(5), where all the detained persons have the right to make an effective representation before an independent advisory board, which consists of three members; and the board is chaired by a member who is, or has been, a judge of a high court.

#### TN Ethanol blending policy

- The Tamil Nadu Ethanol Blending Policy (EBP) 2023 was released by the Industries Department.
- Under the EBP programme, the State will encourage sugar industries to set up molasses-based ethanol plants and improve capacity utilisation.
- The policy also will present an opportunity for reviving the sugar industry in the State by improving the capacity utilisation of existing plants.
- Oil marketing companies (OMCs) presently source ethanol from other States, including Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- In the present OMCs, the State currently has installed plant capacity of 664 kilolitres per day (KLPD).
- They are specifically used to produce fuel grade ethanol under the EBP were blending up to 12% of ethanol with petrol in the State.



### Thiruppugazh Panel final report

- Thiruppugazh Committee for the Chennai Flood Disaster Mitigation and Management submitted its final report to Chief Minister in Tamilnadu.
- It had recommended reforms to the regulatory framework and improved gauging of climate change induced flooding and techno-legal regime in mitigating flood management in Chennai.
- The CM had requested the committee to give area-specific

stormwater drainage plans.

- The committee has also proposed area-specific detailed long-term flood management plans for 600 and odd vulnerable areas in the city

### Vote-From-Home

- Karnataka is all set to elect its next government in the elections in April-May.
- For this, the Election Commission of India has introduced the Vote-From-Home Option.
- It will be beneficial to those above the age of 80 years and also those who are suffering from any disabilities.

- This is for the first time that the Election Commission is providing this facility to those above the age of 80 years.
- A mobile application 'Saksham' has been introduced through which they can login and choose the facility to vote.
- Another mobile application called, 'Suvidha' has been developed.
- This is an online portal for candidates to file their nomination and affidavits.
- Candidates can use this portal to seek permission for meetings and rallies

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## VIII. Geography-Geographical marks

### Lithium in India

- The Geological Survey of India states that tons of lithium resources are found in the mountainous Salal-Haimana area of the Reasi district in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir
- Lithium ore, also known as white gold, is one of the raw materials needed for many modern scientific inventions, including cell phones, laptops, and electric vehicles.

### Lithium triangle

- Evergreen is found in Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile in the world, but because of its refining and processing in China,

the international market is now dominated by China.

### Needs

- Starting from batteries of electric vehicles, pharmaceutical spacecraft, aluminum production, fertilizer production, the demand for lithium is also increasing in the medical field.
- Even the pacemaker used in heart surgery requires lithium
- Climate change and environmental protection have forced a shift from fossil energy to electric vehicles
- Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the demand for lithium ion batteries will increase drastically in the coming years

- So countries and companies around the world are competing to control lithium reserves

### Challenges

- Lithium is extracted from hard rock, underground crusts. It needs a lot of water
- Apart from that, environmental problems due to lithium production cannot be avoided
- Hence there is resistance to lithium production internationally.

### Import

- At present, India imports lithium for its requirement from Australia, Argentina
- Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel etc. are essential for solar panel, lap-

top, cell phone, electric vehicle battery etc. so we have no choice but to import.

- So it is not surprising that the discovery of lithium in Jammu has created huge expectations.
- Global lithium reserves are estimated at 80 million tonnes
- But only 22 million tonnes of lithium can be extracted and marketed from them
- Identifying and extracting lithium ore is not easy

**Four stage production**

- Lithium ore production is divided into four phases
- An indication of the presence of ore
- Exploration of lithium ore deposits
- An attempt to extract the ore
- Amount of ore and production from it
- The presence of lithium in Jam-

- mu is not yet fully confirmed
- The final phase will determine whether the currently estimated 5.9 million can be extracted and produced in any quantity from itself.

**Landslide Atlas of India**

**Context :**

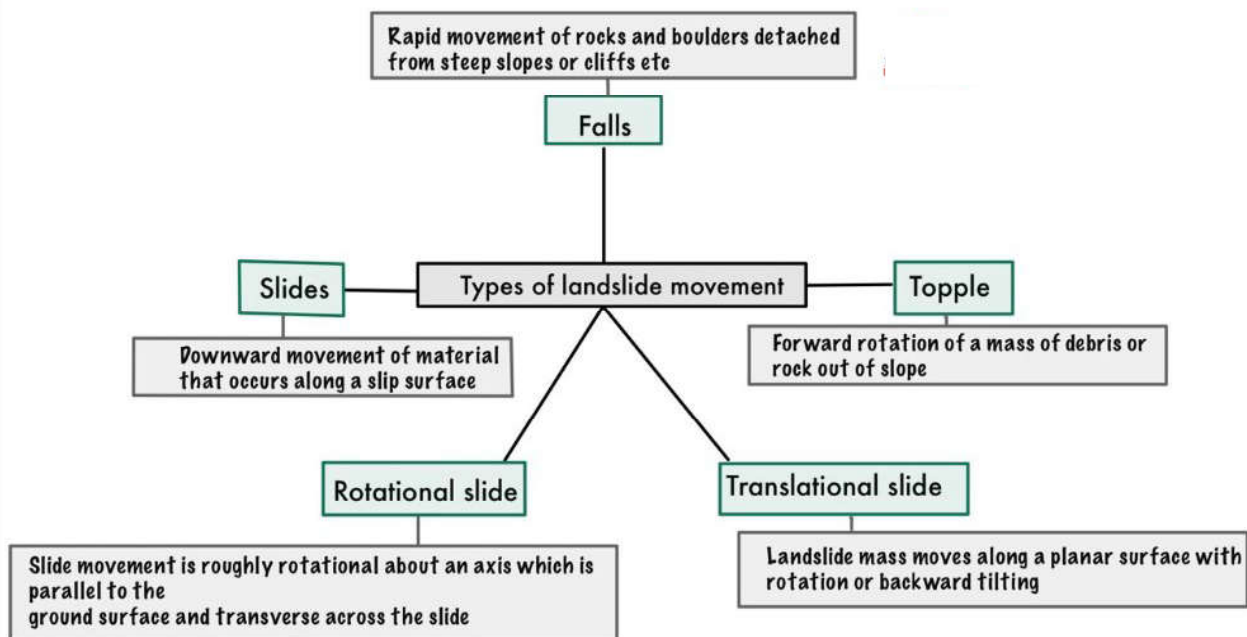
- All 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh have figured on a list prepared by the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) of locations prone to landslides.
- The Landslide Atlas of India was released by Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) at the "National Meet on Disaster Risk Management — Trends & Technologies" held at Hyderabad.
- The NRSC, one of the centres of ISRO, manages data from aerial and satellite sources.

**About Landslide:**

- A landslide is "a movement of a mass of rock, earth or debris down a slope".

**Types of flows**

- **Debris flows** : It is a form of rapid mass movement in which a combination of loose soil, rock, organic matter, and slurry that flows downslope. They are commonly caused by intense precipitation or rapid snowmelt.
- **Earth flow** : It is a down-slope viscous flow of fine-grained material saturated with water.
- **Mudflow**: A mudflow is a wet or viscous fluid mass of fine and coarse-grained material that flows rapidly along drainage channels.
- **Creep** : Creep is the slow, steady, downward movement of material under gravity that occurs in a large area



### Key Findings:

- India is among the top four countries with the highest landslide risk, where every year the estimated loss of life per 100 km<sup>2</sup> is greater than one.
- This Atlas provides risk assessment in landslide locations during the period of 1998-2022 and covers vulnerable regions in 17 states and 02 UTs of India in the Himalayas and Western Ghats.
- Northwest Himalayas contribute 66.5% of landslides in India, followed by Northeast Himalayas (18.8%) and Western Ghats (14.7%).
- Top 5 districts based on their exposure to landslide: Rudrapur and Tehri Garhwal (Uttarakhand), Thrissur (Kerala), Rajouri (J&K), and Palakkad (Kerala)
- The database includes three types of landslide inventory – seasonal, event-based and route-wise

### About NRSC:

- National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) has the mandate for the establishment of ground stations for receiving satellite data, generation of data products, dissemination to the users, development of techniques for remote sensing applications including disaster management support, geospatial services for good governance and capacity building for professionals, faculty, and students.

## **Odisha reports 542 forest fire in March first week, highest in India : FSI**

### Context :

- Forest fires continued to remain unabated in Odisha after the state recorded 542 such cases in March 1 to 7 making it the highest among all states in the country.

### Forest fires in India

#### Causes of a Forest fire:

- **Natural** : Such as lightning, high atmospheric temperatures, and dryness (low humidity) offer favourable circumstances.
- **Man-made** : When a source of fire like naked flame, cigarette, or bidi comes into contact with inflammable material.

#### Types of a forest fire:

- **Surface fire** : Spread along the surface litter (leaves, twigs, dry grasses) on the forest floor.
- **Ground fire** : Fires in the sub-surface organic fuels, such as duff layers under forest stands, burn underneath and are often ignited by surface fires.
- **Crown fire** : A crown fire is one in which the crown of trees and shrubs burn, often sustained by a surface fire.

#### Good/bad:

- Helps in the evolution of forests (such as dry deciduous forests and savannahs),

- Landscape/disease management (indigenous people like the Soligas have used controlled forest fires to reduce incidences of tick-borne diseases),
- Controls the growth of invasive species, etc.
- However, forest fires can have lasting negative impacts on biodiversity (loss of flora, fauna, ecological services), the economic stability of many communities that live in forests, etc.

#### Vulnerability:

- ~65% of Indian forests are prone to occasional/frequent forest fire events.
- Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh were the most impacted states and Gadchiroli, Kandhamal, and Bijapur were the most impacted districts.
- The youngest mountain ranges of the Himalayas/chir (Pine) forests (Western > Eastern as E. Himalayas grow in high rain density) are the most vulnerable stretches of the world.
- There has been a 10-fold increase in forest fire incidences in the last two decades.
- According to the MoEFCC, the country reported 3,45,989 forest fire incidents during (Nov 2020 and June 2021) and the state of Odisha reported 51,968 – the highest in India.

#### Impact of climate change:

- It might lead to more wildfire-inducing 'hot lightning' strikes.

- Hot lightning or long continuing current strikes (which can last up to a third of a second) are more likely to ignite wildfires than typical lightning strikes.
- **Preparedness and mitigation measures** : Forest fires are usually seasonal. Hence, fires can be prevented in the summer –
  - Through the removal of forest litter all along the forest boundary ("Forest Fire Line").
  - By creating firebreaks/ ditches in the forests.
- The FSI is using satellite imaging technology –
- To set up fire alert systems (MODIS, SNPP) and analyse fire-affected forest areas
- To better understand the ecology of forest fires for restoration and fire prevention efforts

## IX. Environment

### Tigers on the rise in India

#### National animal of India : Tiger

- A tiger lives in a forest. Realize that there is food, water, protection and ample space for them to roam around
- A forest where tigers live is a sign of rich forests
- Therefore, it is imperative that we protect tigers for our ecological balance.

#### Tiger Conservation Programme

- The Tiger Conservation Programme was started in 1973 to protect and increase the number of tigers in India
- There were only 1220 tigers then
- Tigers are found in 18 states of India
- About 50 tiger reserves have been created across the country in the last 46 years for their protection
- Every year July 29th is cele-

brated as International Tiger Day

- International Tiger Day has been observed since 2010 to emphasize the need to protect tigers and their habitat.

#### Tiger Census

- A tiger census is conducted in India every four years
- Details of such surveys will be published before World Tiger Day
- Tiger census has been going on every four years since 2006

#### Number of Tigers

- 2006 -1411 tigers
- 2010 - 1706 tigers
- 2014 - 2226 tigers
- 2018 - 2967 tigers

#### Western Ghats

- Madhya Pradesh ranks first. 526 tigers are present in forests of Madhya Pradesh
- 2nd position was occupied by Karnataka with 524 tigers

- 3rd - Uttarkhand (442 tigers)
- Maharashtra - 312 tigers
- TN - 264 tigers

#### Tiger's State

- Madhya Pradesh ranks first in India with more number of tigers.

### Rushikulya Sands team with Olive Riddleys

- About 6.37 lakh Olive Ridley sea turtles have arrived for mass nesting at Rushikulya coast this year, setting a new record for the beach in Ganjam District, Odissa
- From February 23 to March 02, which is treated as the mass nesting period
- This year, the beaches remained unaffected as there were no cyclone and heavy rain and turtles ascended perfectly sloped beaches at Rushikulya river mouth
- Last year, 5.5 lakh Olive Ridley turtles had come to Rushikulya for mass nesting



- The actual number of Olive Ridley turtles coming to Rushikulya river mouth would go up as turtles keep coming to the coast after March 02
- Puri & Devi river mouth beaches too host Olive Ridley turtles this time around
- Zoological survey of India (ZSI) continued tagging of Olive Ridley turtles at three mass nesting sites - Gahirmatha, Devi River and Rushikulya.

### **Green hydrogen energy plant on Chinese border**

- As the Government of India is implementing the National Green Hydrogen Project, work has been initiated to set up a green hydrogen based energy production plant in the northern border region.
- An agreement has been signed with the Renewable Energy Center under the National Thermal Power Corporation
- NTPC will be given all the rights to build, operate and manage the plant to be set up on the Eastern Ladakh border.
- It will operate as a green hydrogen based energy plant coupled with a solar energy plant
- Green hydrogen will be produced by electrolysis of water using solar energy
- When solar energy is not available, energy will be produced using green hydrogen
- Indian Army becomes first government organization to sign

contract with NTPC to set up green hydrogen-based power plant

### **What is the UN High Seas Treaty and why is it needed?**

#### **Context:**

- After more than a decade of negotiations, the UN members have agreed (in New York, US) on the first-ever treaty – the UN High Seas Treaty, to protect the world's oceans outside national boundaries.

#### **What are the high seas?**

- 2/3rd of the world's oceans are currently considered international waters/high seas.
- But until now only about 1% of these waters have been protected.
- According to the IUCN,
- Nearly 10% of marine species on the high seas were found to be at risk of extinction mainly due to overfishing and pollution.
- 41% of the threatened species are also affected by climate change (more CO<sub>2</sub> absorption, more acidic, increased marine heat waves), and deep sea mining.
- For example, Dugongs used to be common marine animals but now less than 1000 remain in the wild.
- Therefore, the issue of climate change in the sea involves implementing other global

agreements such as the Paris Agreement.

### **Can the cheetahs help India's grasslands?**

#### **Context :**

- Since September 2022, India has translocated eight African cheetahs from Namibia and 12 from South Africa.

#### **Background:**

- This is part of a long-term conservation plan to re-introduce the wild cat into the country after it became extinct in the 1950s, primarily due to hunting.
- The aim is to build a self-sustaining population, centred at MP's Kuno National Park, which will also contribute to the global survival of the cheetah as a species.

#### **What are Grasslands?**

- Grasslands (e.g. prairies or savannas) are biomes characterized by vast expanses of grasses and a few scattered trees.
- They are found in regions where there is not enough rain to support forests but where there is enough rainfall to prevent the land from becoming a desert.
- Grasslands are typically located in the interior regions of continents, away from the moderating influence of oceans.
- Approximately 24 per cent of total vegetation cover is grassland in India

**Can the cheetahs help India's grasslands?**

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheetahs have been found in woodlands, but they largely prefer running.</li> <li>They do indicate the overall wellness of –                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>open areas, meadows and grasslands and the</li> <li>ungulate populations (deer and chinkara)/cheetahs' usual prey</li> </ul> </li> <li>So, the health of the cheetah population does count as a surrogate marker of the health of the grasslands.</li> <li>The success story (The Project Tiger 1973) – India now has 53 tiger reserves making up 2.3% of the country's geographical area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheetahs may not help in restoring grasslands until India addresses other issues.</li> <li>For example,                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Wasteland Atlas of India still categorises large stretches of open natural ecosystems as wasteland.</li> <li>Renewable energy projects are granted large tracts of open natural ecosystems, to establish solar panels.</li> <li>The level of human presence is high in these grasslands</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Facts related Cheetah in India**

- Eight Cheetah from Nambia, 12 Cheetah from Saudi Arabia
- Cheetahs are protecting in Kuna National Park, Madhya Pradesh. It will have a 600 - hectare fenced enclosure to house the Cheetahs.
- The carrying capacity of Kuno in 21 Cheetahs.
- In Kuno Cheetahs share its space with Asiatic lions.
- In Kuno National Park existing leopard population are the threats to Cheetah.

**Conclusion :**

- African cheetah is a species which has never been to India.

Yet, its very introduction will enable India 'if not wholly but in some measure' revive its magnificent grasslands.

**Synthesis Report of IPCC AR6**

**Context :**

- According to an IPCC report, climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health and a window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all is fast closing.

**Background:**

- Through its multiple assessment cycles beginning in 1990, the IPCC has analysed research

by scientists on

- Global warming,
- The role humans have had in exacerbating it,
- The long-term climate impact from current and future emissions and what people can do about it.
- The IPCC does not itself undertake scientific assessments but only evaluates the state of scientific evidence on various aspects of climate change.
- The 6th Assessment Report (AR6) assesses scientific, technical, and socio-economic information concerning climate change.

**About the Synthesis Report:**

- This is the final report of the AR6, which integrates findings from six reports (3 working groups + 3 special reports) released by IPCC during the cycle which began in 2015.

**Highlights of the Synthesis report of the AR6:**

**Water availability and food production**

- Physical Water availability
- Agriculture / crop production
- Animal and livestock health and productivity
- Fisheries yields and aquaculture production

**Health and well - being**

- Infectious diseases
- Heat, malnutrition and harm from wildfire
- Mental health

- Displacement

**Cities, settlements and infrastructure**

- Inland flooding and associated damages
- Flood / storm induced damages in coastal areas
- Damages to infrastructure
- Damages to key economic sectors

**Biodiversity and ecosystems**

- Terrestrial ecosystems
- Freshwater ecosystems
- Ocean ecosystems
- Includes changes in ecosystem structure, species ranges and seasonal timing.

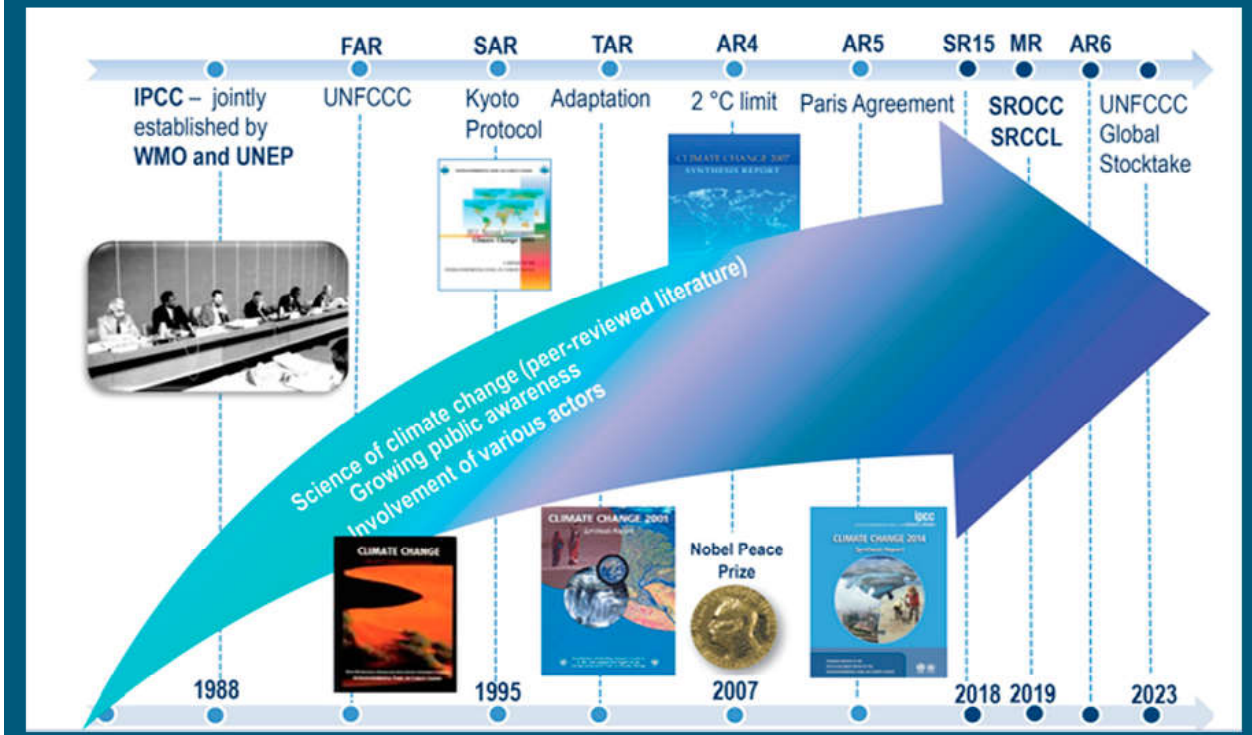
**6 key messages for policymakers:**

- Excess emissions from human activities have raised global temperature by 1.1°C above 1850-1900.
- Current policy action will lead to further temperature rise, and the impacts on humans and other forms of life will become more severe.
- At current emissions levels, we will deplete the remaining carbon budget (of 500 GtCO<sub>2</sub>).
- We need to cut GHG emissions across all sectors urgently, within this decade and no later.
- We have all the solutions we

need to shift to low-carbon economic systems.

- These include –
  - Widespread electrification,
  - Diversifying energy generation to include more wind, solar, and small-scale hydropower,
  - Deploying more battery-powered electric vehicles, and
  - Conserving and restoring forests while also reducing tropical deforestation.
- Political commitment and equity are key to enabling this shift – there is enough finance, it needs to be directed to climate action

# IPCC AR6 SYNTHESIS REPORT



### Challenges:

- Overshooting 1.5°C (expected in the early 2030s) will result in irreversible adverse impacts on certain ecosystems with low resilience (polar, mountain, coastal ecosystems, etc).
- Adaptation gaps exist and will continue to grow if no action is taken and the lower-income group will suffer the most.
  - Though developed countries commit to jointly mobilise \$100 billion in climate finance annually, current global financial flows for adaptation are insufficient.
- Some parts of the world (tropical, coastal, polar and mountain ecosystems) have already reached their adaptation limits.
  - This means adaptive actions cannot avoid negative impacts there.
- There is increased evidence of maladaptation (changes in natural/human systems that inadvertently increase vulnerability to climate stimuli) in various sectors and regions.
  - For example, mangrove plantation in coastal Odisha has disturbed the local ecosystems, affecting marginalised and vulnerable groups adversely.
- There are multiple barriers (variable impacts, risks and co-benefits in deploying them) to implementing carbon capture

and storage (CCS) – a climate change mitigation tool that removes CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere

### Implications of the report for India :

- Increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events – could have dire consequences for agriculture, the economy and public health.

### Opportunity :

- There is a 50-50 chance that by 2030, the global surface temperature in any individual year could exceed 1.5C.

### Recent efforts :

- The loss and damage (L&D) finance facility, which came into prominence during the COP27 (Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt) to the UNFCCC, aims to provide financial assistance to nations most vulnerable and impacted by the effects of climate change.

### Way ahead:

- Engaging public-private sector to mobilise sufficient finances
- Citizens must be provided with climate literacy to drive political commitment, research and urgency towards adaptation.
- Enabling conditions such as policy instruments, greater public support and technological innovation could reduce barriers to CCS.
- The policymakers must priori-

tise investments in disaster risk reduction, including early warning systems, evacuation plans, and infrastructure development to protect vulnerable populations.

### Conclusion:

- Certain future changes are unavoidable but could be limited by deep, rapid and sustained global GHG emissions reduction based on the principle of climate justice.
- Therefore, mainstreaming effective and equitable climate action will not only reduce losses and damages, but will also provide wider benefits.

## **14 guidelines to address Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)**

### Context :

- Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released 14 guidelines to address Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)

### The objective of the guidelines:

- To facilitate a common understanding of effective and efficient mitigation of HWC among key stakeholders
- To facilitate the development of site-specific HWC mitigation measures

### The guidelines:

- 10 species-specific guidelines- Guidelines for Mitigating Human-Elephant, -Gaur, -Leopard,



-Snake, -Crocodile, -Rhesus Macaque, -Wild Pig, -Bear, -Blue Bull and -Blackbuck Conflict; and

- 4 guidelines on cross-cutting issues-
  - Guidelines for Cooperation between the Forest and Media sector in India: Towards effective communication on Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
  - Occupational Health and Safety in the Context of Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation
  - Crowd Management in Human-Wildlife Conflict-Related Situations
  - Addressing Health Emergencies and Potential Health Risks Arising Out of Human—Wildlife Conflict Situations: Taking a One Health Approach.

#### About the guidelines:

- The guidelines are developed under the Indo-German co-operation project on HWC Mitigation. The guidelines are advisory in nature.
- A review of these guidelines is planned to take place every five years from 2023 onwards.

#### About Human-Wildlife Conflict:

##### Definition

- Struggles arising due to direct, recurring threats to human

interests or needs posed by wildlife

##### Causes

- Habitat loss, growth of animal population, changing cropping patterns, movement of animals to human-dominated landscapes, movement of humans to forests, habitat degradation, etc.

##### Impacts

- Loss of life, injury to both animals and humans, damage to crops and agricultural land, rise in violence against animals

##### Examples

- 222 elephants killed by electrocution between 2018-19 and 2020-21;
- 29 tigers killed by poaching between 2019 and 2021;
- 1,579 humans killed by elephants between 2019-20 and 2021-22

##### Initiatives

- Advisory for Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict;
- Empowering gram panchayats;
- Approach of coexistence between humans and wildlife;
- Involvement of local communities in conservation;
- Culture based conservation Model;
- providing insurance, augmenting fodder, taking proactive measures, providing instant relief

#### Wildlife Institute of India Guidelines

- It suggests modification in the designs of the linear infrastructures by way of providing an eco-friendly structure that will ensure the safe movement of wildlife across these linear infrastructures.

##### Case study

- Cultural Model of Conservation: Maldhari Tribe in Junagadh (Gujarat):
- The success of lion conservation in the Gir forest area is due to the peaceful coexistence of tribes with lions.

#### Aravalli Green Wall Project

- India launched its own green wall project that will, through afforestation, cover roughly 1,400-km long and five-km wide green belt.
- This will be the buffer around the Aravalli Mountain range.
- It is covering parts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.
- The ambitious project will involve planting native species of trees and shrubs on scrubland, wasteland and degraded forest land.
- It will prevent eastward expansion of the Thar Desert.
- The green belt will also act as a barrier for the dust coming from the western side of the country to Delhi-NCR.

- The five-km buffer zone of the entire Aravalli covers 6.3 million hectares (Mha) of land.

### **First-ever synchronized survey**

- As many as 246 vultures were spotted in the first ever synchronised survey conducted along the borders of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka.
- Tamil Nadu continues to remain a favourite nesting and roosting ground for vultures among all three states.
- Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) alone accounts for 98 of the bird species.
- The 98 includes the rare sighting of two Egyptian vultures and one Himalayan vulture.



- The Bandipur and Nagarhole tiger reserves in Karnataka, recorded a combined population of 94 vultures.
- Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala is home to 52 vultures

### **A bird's - eye view**

- Four vulture species are found in south India and are concentrated in Nilgiris Biosphere.

### **Mortality details of White - rumped vulture During 2013 to 2021:**

- Adults : 36
- Juveniles : 8
- Death due to poisoning : 8

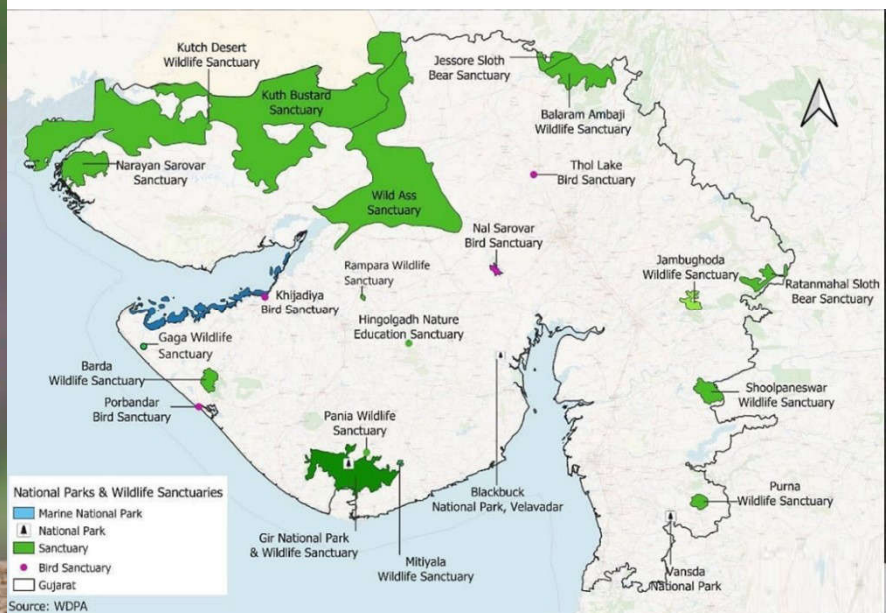
### **Population Estimate of White - rumped Vulture**

- 2016 - 17 : 282
- 2017 - 18 : 172
- 2018 - 19 : 138
- 2019 - 20 : 185

- 2020 - 21 : 122

### **Translocation of Lions of Asiatic Lions**

- The Gujarat government has planned to translocate 40 adult and sub-adult lions to the Barda Wildlife Sanctuary
- Barda sanctuary is located about 100 kilometres away from Gir National Park.
- It has been identified as a potential site to accommodate the Asiatic Lions.
- As per the last count in 2020, there are 674 lions in the state and Gir has long been overflowing with the big cats.
- The Supreme Court of India in 2013 had also ordered relocating some lions to Madhya Pradesh to avoid the possibility of disease or some other disaster wiping out the entire population.



## X. Economy-Economy, Socio-Economic issue

### 1. Economy

#### Meity launches Grievance Appellate Committee which will investigate user's complaints about content in social media

- The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology launched a digital platform titled Grievance Appellate committee, which is a faceless dispute resolution mechanism the would make platforms - big and small accountable to digital citizens.

#### About :

- The Grievance Appellate Committee which will investigate users complaints about content and other issues was established by Union Minister of state for Electronics.
- Faceless taxation as an example of how technology is transforming lives and making lives easier for the citizens.

#### Role of Technology :

- Elaborated on the role of technology in this by giving examples of One Nation One Ration Card and Jan Dhan - Aadhar Mobile trinity, Arogya Setu and Cowin App, railway reservation and common service centers.

#### 18 countries allowed to trade in INR

- Reserve Bank of India allows banks from 18 countries to carry out international trade in Indian rupees
- These banks have been permitted to open special Vostro accounts to facilitate trading in Indian rupees

#### Benefits

- Through this, efforts to make the Indian rupee an international currency to replace the dollar in international trade will intensify
- Export and import charges can be paid based on Indian rupee value
- To implement this, foreign banks have been allowed to open Vostro accounts

#### Which countries are allowed?

- Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Botswana, Fiji, Germany, Guyana, Israel, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda, United Kingdom

#### Vostro Account

- Vostro means "Yours" in Latin
- A Vostro account means that

a domestic bank holds money from a foreign bank in its account

- It means we hold your money
- This arrangement was created so that if international trade is done in rupees instead of dollars, it will be profitable for our country
- Exporters & importers who are customers of banks can settle their transactions entirely in Indian rupees

#### What caused Silicon Valley Bank's failure?

#### Context :

- The downfall of the US-based Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) is the largest failure of a financial institution since the global financial crisis of 2008.

#### What went wrong at SVB?

- The financial institution best known for its relationships with high-flying world technology startups and venture capital experienced a bank run.
- A bank run, which is typically the result of panic (customers withdraw their deposits simultaneously) rather than true insolvency, pushes a bank into

actual insolvency.

- Bank runs have occurred throughout history including during the Great Depression and the 2008-09 financial crisis.

**What happens next?**

- The SVB's large deposits (start-ups and wealthy tech workers) are unsafe.
- The Federal government insures deposits to \$250,000 and anything above it is considered uninsured and likely to be released in an orderly process.
- But many businesses want to access funds to meet payroll and office expenses could lead to furloughs/layoffs.
- There's no buyer of SVB.

**Is this a sign of a repeat of the 2008 global financial crisis?**

- SVB was large but had a unique existence by servicing nearly exclusively the technology world and VC-backed companies.
- Other banks are far more diversified across multiple industries, customer bases and geographies and could survive a deep recession and a significant rise in unemployment.
- However, if the 'contagion effects' from SVB or higher interest rates hit more foreign banks, a flight to safety among global investors could hit capital flows into emerging markets.

- The contagion effect explains the possibility of the spread of economic crisis or boom across countries or regions.
- The fundamental underlying this scenario where price movements in one market are resultant of shocks or volatility in the other market is a perfect information flow.

**Impact on the Indian economy?**

- Many Indian start-ups [especially in the SaaS (software as a service) sector] not only have accounts, but the bank had also been an important lender.
- For example, an investment of a total of \$1.7 million in One97 Communications, the parent company of Paytm.
- As the funding for start-ups is dwindling, this could prove to

be a major roadblock, especially for young businesses.

**Trade in Rupee**

**Context :**

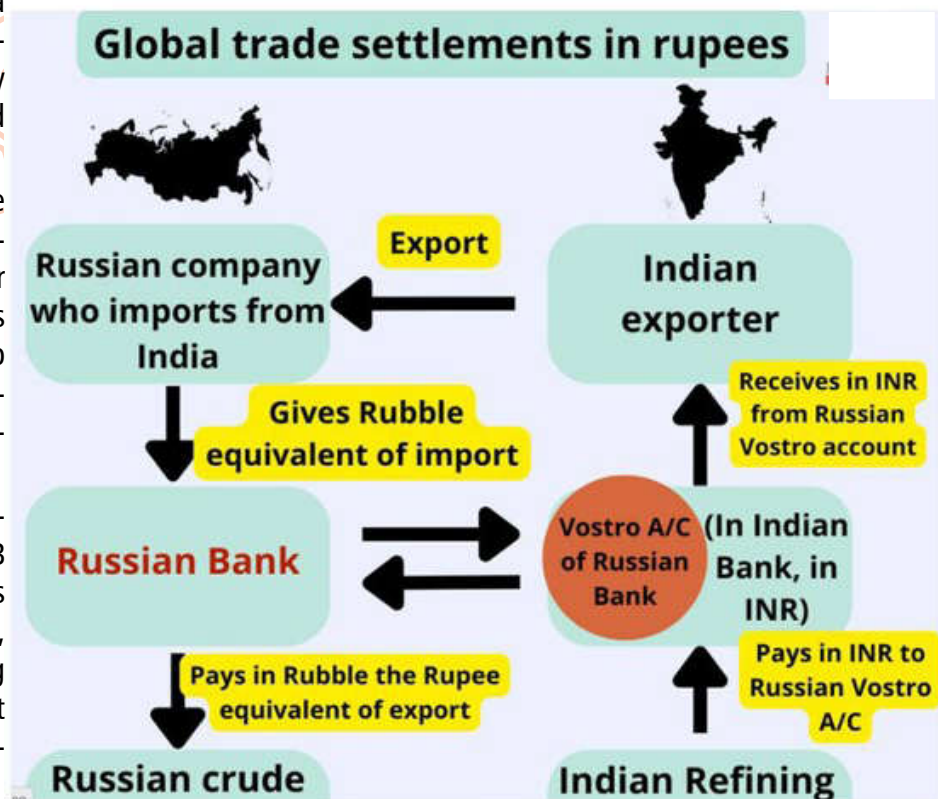
- RBI has permitted banks from 18 countries to open Special Vostro Rupee Accounts (SVRAs) to settle payments in rupees

**What is the Internationalisation of the Rupee?**

- It is a process of increasing rupee acceptance across the world for cross-border trading.

**Benefits :**

- India will have to rely less on foreign currencies and holding foreign exchange reserves;
- Reduced Vulnerability to External Shocks and Currency Risks; Increasing bargaining power of





Indian Enterprises

### What is SVRA?

- SVRA is an account that domestic banks hold for foreign banks in the former's domestic currency, the rupee, which al-

lows domestic banks to provide international banking services to their clients who have global banking needs without having to be physically present abroad.

- RBI had issued a framework for Trade settlement in Rupee (in

July 2022) through SVRA

- Other initiatives for the Internationalization of Rupee are: Cross border trading in Rupee (e.g. Masal Bond); Currency swap agreements

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## 2. Socio-Economic

### Amritpal Singh, a separatist leader in Punjab

- Amritpal Singh Sandhu is a radical self-styled Indian Khalistani separatist and fugitive from Punjab, India. He heads an organisation called Waris Panjab De
- Even today, many Sikhs from abroad are working to create a separate country in the name of 'Khalistan' by dividing Punjabi.
- Amritsar suburban police arrested one of his aides in a kidnapping case
- Following this, Amritpal Singh laid siege to the police station with his supporters armed with knives and guns
- Following this sensational incident, his aide was released
- As a precautionary measure in Punjab, the police have blocked internet services till 12 o'clock today

### The importance of women-led digital solutions

#### Context :

- The theme for International Women's Day 2023 is 'DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality.'

#### Data on Digital Disparity:

- According to a UNICEF report, as many as 90% of the jobs in the world today have a digital component. These jobs, however, are available only to the digitally able, and to more men than women.
- According to the report, in developing countries, only 41% of women have access to the internet compared with 53% of men.
- Women are 20% less likely to own a smartphone and are more likely to borrow phones from a male family member.
- Another report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development revealed that the gender gap in inter-

net use is widening. Software development remains a male-dominated field, with women comprising only 15% of software designers.

#### Examples of how digital literacy helps in tackling issues:

- The FoSafMDM application by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in partnership with the Governments of Odisha and Rajasthan has rolled out technology-based training modules
- This helps in strengthening the capacity of the community in ensuring that proper hygiene and safety measures are followed so that children reap the full benefits of the nutrition that these school meals offer.
- Young women known as 'Digital Sakhis' from Madhya Pradesh are upturning discriminatory social norms through the use of smartphones.

#### Indian situation:

- India accounts for half the world's gendered digital divide

given that only a third of all Internet users in the country are women.

- In Asia-Pacific, India has the widest gender gap of 40%. Less than 32% of women in India own a mobile phone compared to over 60% of men.

### Conclusion :

- Women can harness digital tools for improving nutrition schemes and initiatives, while also using them to create economic opportunities that ensure long-term food and nutrition security.
- Women20—the G20's official engagement platform to promote gender equity—identifies "bridging the gender digital divide" as one of its five priorities that need to be mainstreamed as part of the G20 agenda this year.

## **Why migrant workers' issues recur: The absence of data and coordination between states**

### Context :

- Rumours of migrant workers being assaulted in Tamil Nadu have triggered concern among manufacturers in the state.

### Background :

- Article 19(1)(e) of the Constitution, guarantees all Indian citizens the right to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India, subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of the general public or protection of

any scheduled tribe.

### Issues related to migrant workers in India:

- Lack of social security and health benefits
- Lack of portability of state-provided benefits
- Lack of access to affordable housing
- Lack of data makes it difficult to track labourers during times of crisis
- Inadequate coordination among states on a formal exchange of information
- The nativist agenda of political parties in the states. For example, many state governments have reserved a certain percentage of employment for locals.

### Top Migrant - Friendly Indian States

- The Interstate Migrant Policy Index 2019, prepared by Mumbai non-profit India Migration Now, ranked seven states on the basis of equitable policies for residents and migrants in labour policies, housing, social security, health, sanitation and political participation. The index contains 63 indicators across eight policy areas.
  - Kerala - 62
  - Maharashtra - 42
  - Punjab - 40
  - Haryana - 38
  - Tamil Nadu - 37
  - Gujarat - 35
  - Delhi - 33

### What is the legal framework for migrant welfare?

- The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 mandates that the establishments which employ migrant workers be required to be registered with destination states.
- Contractors will also have to obtain a licence from the concerned authority of the home as well as host states.
- However, this Act has not been fully implemented in practice.
- This Act has been subsumed into the four labour codes notified by the Centre:
  - The Code on Wages, 2019;
  - The Industrial Relations Code, 2020;
  - The Code on Social Security, 2020; and
  - The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.
- These have not been implemented yet.

### Way ahead:

- To put the four labour codes into effect as soon as possible, the central and state governments must collaborate.
- The welfare measures for the community should include –
  - The supply of pulses and edible oil at concessional rates under the PDS,
  - Supplementing what is being given under the 'One Nation One Ration Card'
- An exclusive wing can be

formed to address the issues and problems migrants face.

- Instituting a fresh and comprehensive study of migrant workers and helping in their integration with the local community.

#### Best practices adopted by some Indian states:

- In 2012, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh (AP) signed an MoU to track labourers migrating from

Odisha to work in brick kilns in the-United AP.

- Kerala has set up facilitation centres (maintain data) for migrant workers whom the state refers to as "guest workers".
- Jharkhand has started the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) in 2021 to generate data and then map the labourers who move out to several states for work.
- The first Jharkhand Migrant

Survey (JMS) was recently conducted across 24 districts of the state.

#### Conclusion:

- There is a thin line separating nativism and chauvinism, which can be breached at any time.
- Thus, only registering workers in a database will not help unless worker rights are ensured and violations of rights are strictly dealt with.

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## XI. Science and technology

### **ISRO successfully conducts flight test of Cryogenic engine for Chandrayan - 3**

#### Content :

- ISRO has successfully conducted the flight acceptance hot test of the CE - 20. Cryogenic engine for the Chandrayan - 3 mission.
- The test was successfully conducted on Feb 24 at the ISRO propulsion complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.
- The hot test was carried out for a planned duration of 25 seconds at the High Altitude Test facility.
- The engine will power the cryogenic upper stage of the LVM3

launch Vehicle of the mission.

- Chandrayaan - 3 is India's third moon mission.

#### **India's third moon mission**

- Recently ISRO has successfully conducted flight acceptance hot test CE-20 cryogenic engine that will cover the cryogenic upper stage of LVM-3 launch vehicle of Chandrayaan 3 mission

#### Features

- Test conducted at ISRO propulsion Complex Mahendragiri, Tamilnadu
- Conductor for 25 seconds at high altitude test facility.

#### Test for Chandrayaan 3 Lander

- Successfully conducted at U R Rao Satellite centre in Bangalore
- Tested for EMI-EMC (Electromagnetic induction /Electromagnetic compatibility)

#### Features of Chandrayaan 3

- It is an interplanetary mission
- Has three major modules
  - Propulsion module
  - Lander module
  - Rover
- Works on radio frequency communication between these three modules
- To be launched by 2023, by LVM-3

## Proton Beam Therapy (PBT)

### In news, because

- Not accessible and affordable for many cancer patients

### About PBT

- Viable alternative to radiation therapy
- Can treat solid tumors especially for head and neck cancer
- Can also treat cancer of prostate, ovaries, breast, lungs, bones and soft tissues
- Treated cancer patients - 47% are brain tumours

### Available condition of PBT in India

- Only one device for 1412 million people (at Apollo Hospital)
- Proposed to set up another PBT unit at the National Hadron Beam facility of Tata Memorial Hospital in Navi Mumbai

### Concerns over out of reach

- It is a huge contraption upto 3 storeys tall and cost nearly 500 crores
- Volatile nature of hydrogen
- Regular check for its leakages
- PBT uses hydrogen.

### Estimates

- Nearly 40,000 children in India

diagnosed with cancer and 1400 of them can benefit from PBT

## NISAR satellite: US handover to ISRO

- The United States Air Force has handed over Nisar, a geo-observation satellite jointly developed in the United States by the American space agency NASA and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

### NASA-ISRO

- The satellite is expected to be launched in 2024 from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- The 2800 kg NASA-ISRO Synthetic-aperture radar (NISAR) satellite developed at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California was flown to Bangalore by a US Air Force aircraft and handed over to ISRO.

### Research

- The powerful radar installed on this satellite can accurately study the blue and snow surface of the earth
- ISRO plans to use this satellite for various studies including agricultural area measurement and prediction of earthquake and landslide prone areas.

## ISRO's LVM3

- ISRO's NSIL has bagged a deal worth around Rs 1000 crore to launch UK's OneWeb satellites on GSLV Mark III rocket.
- In the first phase, 36 satellites were launched by the LVM3 rocket.
- All 36 satellites were successfully placed in orbits at a distance of 450 km from Earth
- Their total weight is 5805 kg
- These are launched for web service use
- Described as ISRO's Baahubali, the LVM3 rocket is 43.5 m tall and weighs 640 tonnes.
- Capable of operating in highly complex cryogenic technology.

## Special proteins to repair damaged heart cells

### Context :

- A group of scientists, at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, has come up with a solution where healthy skin cells from an adult can be converted into heart cells using special proteins.

### More about the technology:

- According to scientists, converting cells from one form to another – a.k.a. cellular reprogramming – involves specific proteins, called transcription



factors, that alter the “expression of genes within a cell and direct it to take on a new cellular identity”.

- They developed a toolbox, which consists of six recombinant proteins: GATA4, ME-F2C, TBX5, ETS2, MESP1, and HAND2.
- Each of these proteins plays a significant role in reprogramming fibroblasts – a type of cells that provides structure to tissue – into cardiomyocytes.
- The advantage of recombinant proteins-based cell conversion is they work their miracle inside the nucleus and eventually disappear over time without leaving behind their toxic waste, unlike their genetic counterparts.
- Thus, they are very safe for reprogramming compared to other approaches

### GPT - 4

#### Context :

- Recently, OpenAI has announced GPT - 4, a new large multimodal model that accepts images as input and is better than ChatGPT

#### What is ChatGPT?

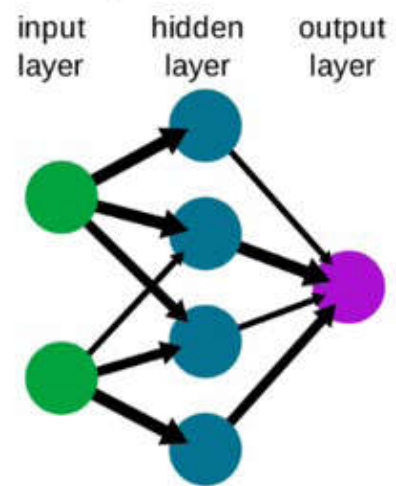
- ChatGPT (Generative Pre - Trained Transformer) is an artificial intelligence (AI) - powered

chatbot which can comprehend and generate natural language or human text

#### How does it work?

- GPT relies on deep learning techniques (a form of machine learning utilizing neural network) to produce human - like text based on inputs.
- Neural networks attempt to simulate behavior of human brain allowing it to learn from large amounts of data.
- GPT uses an algorithm known

A simple neural network



as Transformer to learn how to generate text that is similar to human conversation.

Features	GPT - 4	ChatGPT
Multimodality	Yes (accepts images, but output is text only)	No (doesn't accept image and output is text only)
Information Processing	64,000 words	8,000 words
Accuracy	Higher	Lower
Language	Better at understanding languages that are not English	Less capable in understanding other languages
Robustness	Harder to trick	Easier to trick

#### Evolution of GPT:

- **2018** : OpenAI introduced the first version of GPT
- **2019** : OpenAI launched GPT-2, a more advanced version.
- **2020** : Beta version of ChatGPT, a chatbot that uses the GPT-3 language model to generate responses to user queries.

- GPT-3 was capable of generating text that was virtually indistinguishable from text written by humans.
- **2021** : ChatGPT-3.5 (more user-friendly and had improved response accuracy)
- **2023** : GPT-4 (multimodal language model that can understand both text and images)

## XII. Miscellaneous

### 1. Index

#### India falls 6 spots to rank 144 in Passport Index 2023

- Indian passport slipped six ranks on the Passport Index 2023 released by financial advisory services firm Arton Capital.
- As compared to the 138th rank out of 199 countries in 2022, India ranked 144 with a mobility score of 70 in 2023.
- The ranking was topped by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with a mobility score of 181.
- It was followed by Sweden, Germany, and Finland.

#### IIT Guwahati ranked among world's top universities

- The 2023 edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject, released by QS Quacquarelli Symonds named the world's best universities for the study of 54 academic disciplines on 27 March 2023.
- India is the 12th most-represented territory in the world.
- In the broad subject areas, IIT Guwahati performed best in Engineering & Technology, in which it is placed at 222nd.

#### India's merchandise imports to cross \$700 billion in FY23

- India's merchandise imports are estimated to grow by about 16 per cent to USD 710 billion in FY2023 due to a jump in inbound shipments of crude oil, coal, diamonds, chemicals and electronics.
- This was mentioned in a report by economic think tank GTRI.
- The estimated value of petroleum imports is USD 210 billion and this includes crude oil, LNG and LPG.

### 2. Report

#### Sodium Intake

##### Salt Intake

##### Context :

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has released a report stating that the Earth is well behind its goal on cutting down sodium intake by 30%, by the year 2025

##### What is Sodium?

- It is a soft, silvery - white, highly reactive metal.
- We intake sodium in form of table salt (sodium chloride) or sodium glutamate (flavor enhancer).
- **Function of Sodium** : Helps with the function of nerves and muscles and keep the right balance of fluids
- **Regulation** : Kidneys control how much sodium is in the body. Too much sodium builds up in the blood can lead to high blood pressure.
- **Global average salt intake**: 10.8 grams per day (WHO : consume less than 5 grams of salt per day (one teaspoon).
- **Issues with high sodium intake** : Risk of heart disease, stroke and premature death.
- **WHO Recommendations** : WHO's four "best buy" inter-

ventions - national salt reduction strategies, consumer education, clear labeling of salt content on food, and reformulation of processed foods to contain less salt.

- India has a mandatory declaration of sodium on pre - packaged food.

## **World Happiness Report 2023**

### **Context:**

- For the sixth year running, Finland was named the world's happiest country in an annual U.N.-sponsored index that saw acts of kindness grow in Ukraine despite the Russian invasion.
- India was ranked 126 of the 137 countries on the list.

### **Key Highlights of the report:**

- Northern Europe once again dominated the top spots — with Denmark in second place followed by Iceland.
- While the same countries typically top the list each year, Baltic countries are rising rapidly towards Western European levels.
- War-scarred Afghanistan, which has occupied the bottom spot on the table since 2020, saw its humanitarian crisis deepen since the Taliban government took power in 2021 following the US-led military pull-out.

### **About World Happiness Report:**

- The World Happiness Report, first published in 2012, is based

on people's own assessment of their happiness, as well as economic and social data.

- The report considers six key factors: social support, income, health, freedom, generosity, and absence of corruption.
- It assigns a happiness score based on an average of data over a three-year period.

## **UN World Water Development Report 2023**

### **Context :**

- Recently, 'United Nations World Water Development Report 2023: partnerships and cooperation for water', was released. Also, UN 2023 Water Conference is currently being held in New York

### **Major findings of the report:**

#### **Global:**

- Globally, two billion people do not have safe drinking water and 3.6 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation
- The global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to increase from one-third (2016) to nearly half of the global urban population in 2050, with India projected to be the most severely affected.

#### **India:**

- 80% of people living under water stress lived in Asia; in particular, northeast China, as well as India and Pakistan.

### **Recommendations:**

- Smart management and conservation of the world's water resources means bringing together governments, businesses, scientists, civil society and communities – including indigenous communities – to design and deliver concrete solutions.”
- Water-energy-food nexus is critical in a transboundary context
- E.g. transboundary water cooperation arrangement established by the Mahakali Treaty (Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project) between India and Nepal, which aims to achieve water and energy security for both parties.
- Partnerships that focus on knowledge co-creation instead of knowledge transfer aim to embrace the diversity of expertise and experience within a knowledge system.
- Water resources management practices should incorporate traditional elements:
- E.g. paar systems in western Rajasthan, India, and amunas in Peru
- Use of technology:g., Google began a flood forecasting initiative in 2018, with the goal of preventing catastrophic damage

### **Terms related to water:**

#### **Water scarcity**

- Lack of sufficient available water resources to meet water

usage demands within a region

**Water stress**

- The difficulty of obtaining fresh water sources during a period of time may lead to further depletion and deterioration of available water

**Water shortage/deficits**

- Shortages of water caused by climate change, pollution, increased human demand, and overuse of water

**Water crisis**

- A situation where the available potable, unpolluted water within a region is less than that region's demand

**Other steps to conserve Water:**

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goal 6 includes a specific goal on water and sanitation (Goal 6)

tion (Goal 6)

- UN-mandated Paris Agreement recognizes the interlinkages between water and climate change.
- Dublin Principles water was established as an "economic good"

**About the Report:**

- The WWDR is published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water and its production is coordinated by the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme.
- It is an annual report released on Launched on World Water Day (22nd March) every year

**About the UN 2023 Water Conference (New York from March 22-24, 2023)**

- It will be the second UN Conference dedicated to water after

the one held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1977.

- UN has launched a global campaign called 'Be the Change' to mark World Water Day 2023.
- We will cover its outcome once the conference gets over.
- Jal Jeevan Mission
- The Jal Jeevan Mission aims to deliver safe and enough drinking water to all rural Indian households by 2024 through individual household tap connections.
- It is the Ministry of Jal Shakti's main programme
- It started in 2019
- **Focus:** Community-based approach to water, with comprehensive information, education, and communication as a fundamental component of the goal.

**Works Under Jal Jeevan Mission**

Case Study	Key Issues	Solution	Implementation
Over-extraction of groundwater in Nua-pada district in western Odisha	High concentrations of natural fluoride cause fluorosis and kidney failure; villagers spend 50-60% of their earnings on health-related issues	Switching source of drinking water from groundwater to surface water; formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)	Implementation of National Water Quality Sub-Mission; Larsen and Toubro managing water supply systems till 2025; VWSCs formed in all villages
Groundwater depletion in Dharwad district, Karnataka	Water scarcity due to overexploitation, population pressure, and discharge of effluents and agricultural chemicals; erratic rainfall and absence of perennial surface-water source	Reviving natural ponds for rainwater harvesting and subsurface recharge; formation of VWSCs	Revival of natural ponds identified in villages for JJM implementation in 2020; VWSCs looking after distribution network; periodic monitoring of supplied water quality in district laboratory



Water scarcity in Junagadh district, Gujarat	Dependence on streams and open wells; semi-arid climate	Combining surface water and groundwater sources for the conjunctive system; constructing borewells near water channels to recharge groundwater; block-level water treatment plant supplying treated water	Implementation by WASMO and GWSSB since 2002; VWSCs overseeing operation and maintenance of supply system; district-level laboratory monitoring water quality
Inadequate and contaminated water supply in Ladana village, Jaipur district	Relying on contaminated baori and seasonal streams; water scarcity during summers	Digging pond and open wells for water availability; constructing overhead tank for water storage; receiving water from Bisalpur dam	Digging of Ganga Sagar Talab and three open wells by Watershed and Soil Conservation Department in 2016; Public Health Engineering Department responsible for operation and maintenance; regular water quality testing
Inaccessible springs in North district, Sikkim	Difficulty in fetching water due to steep cliffs; dependence on springs	Installation of water collection structures and conveyance structures around identified springs; formation of VWSCs	Pilot implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019; 90% of households having functional tap connections; VWSCs looking after operation of installed pipelines and retrofitted works; technical support provided by Rural Development Department

### QS World University Rankings

- QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023 12th edition was released recently.
- The QS Rankings highlights that the IIT Delhi has marked its place in top 50 institutions for engineering.
- India is ahead of 5 courses when it comes to marking its place in top 100.
- This year, 44 programmes offered by Indian higher educa-

tion institutions in different disciplines have figured in the top 100 globally.

- Last year, the number was 35.
- IIT Bombay is 67th spot in mathematics.
- IIT-Kanpur has been ranked 87th in engineering-electrical electronic and in computer science information systems 96th.
- IIT-Kharagpur has occupied 94th spot for computer science and information systems.
- IIT-Madras to come at 98th spot for mathematics.

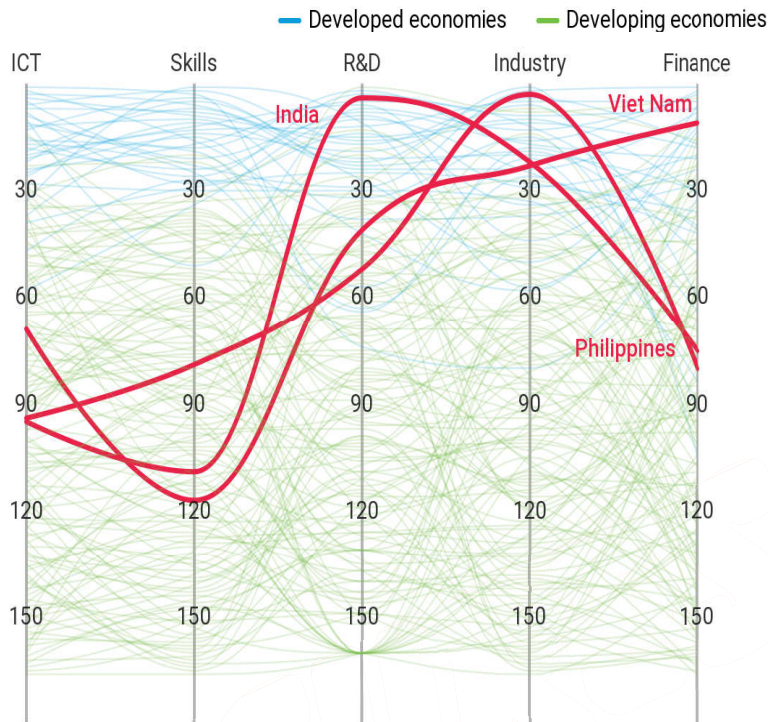
### Technology and Innovation Report 2023

- This was released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- The developed countries are benefiting more from green technologies than developing countries, and this could deepen global economic inequality.
- The green technologies could create a market worth \$9.5 trillion by 2030, up from \$1.5



## The overperformers on frontier technologies

Countries showing stronger capabilities than their per capita GDPs suggest



trillion in 2020.

- The 'frontier technology readiness index' was included in this year report.
- As per this, only a few developing countries have the capacity to take advantage of frontier technologies such as blockchain, drones, and solar power.
- It is dominated by high-income economies, notably the US, Sweden, Singapore, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.
- Notably Brazil was ranked at 40, the Russian Federation at 31, India at 46, China at 35, and South Africa at 56

### UN Water Development Report 2023

- On the eve of World Water Day, UN World Water Development Report 2023 was released.
- India is expected to be the most severely affected country by water scarcity by 2050.
- About 80% of the people living under water pressure are in Asia, especially northeast China, India and Pakistan.
- 26 per cent of the world's population do not have access to safe drinking water
- And 46 per cent lack access to basic sanitation.

- On average, "10% of the global population lives in countries with high or critical water stress".
- Up to 3.5 billion people live under conditions of water stress at least one month a year.
- Globally, 80% of wastewater is released to the environment without any treatment

### Landslide Atlas of India

- The National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad under the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has released the Landslide Atlas of India.
- The team released a list of 147 most landslide-vulnerable districts in 17 states and two Union Territories.
- Rudraprayag and Tehri Garhwal districts of Uttarakhand have the highest landslide density and landslide risk exposure in the country.
- Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, where Joshimath is grappling with a landsubside crisis, has been ranked 19th.
- Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar figure at the bottom at 146th and 147th, respectively.
- Apart from Uttarakhand, among the 10 most landslide-prone districts, four are in flood-prone areas of Kerala, two in Jammu and Kashmir and two in Sikkim.
- After the Himalayas, the Western Ghats has high landslide density.

## 3. Committee

### A M Sapre Committee

- The Supreme Court ordered a six-member expert panel headed by retired Supreme Court Justice AM Sapre to probe the Adani Group Hindenburg matter.
- The expert committee's members are former SBI chairman O.P. Bhatt, Justice J.P. Devadhar (retired), veteran banker K.V. Kamath, Infosys co-founder

Nadan Nilekani and advocate Somasekhar Sundaresan.

- America's Hindenburg has issued a report accusing Adani Group shares of overselling and corruption.
- Opposition parties demanded that the matter be probed by a joint parliamentary committee as Adani Group has investments in public sector

companies like LIC, SBI.

### The Task of the Committee

- The task of this expert committee is to analyze the overall situation including the causes of volatility in the stock market and submit a report
- The committee will also suggest steps to be taken to strengthen investor awareness

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## 4. Minutes : (News in Shorts)

### VAIBHAV Fellowships

#### VAIBHAV

- It has launched the VAIBHAV fellowship scheme for the Indian Diaspora abroad.

#### Aim :

- To improve the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best Institutions in the world.

#### Eligible applicant :

- Should be NRI, PIO or OCI
- Must have obtained Ph.D / M.D / M.S degree from a recognized University.

### Biodiversity Museum

- The State Forest Department has revised its site plan for establishing a Biodiversity museum and Conservation Centre with Eco Park
- Initially the plan was to set up the centre and park at Kakkachi, deep inside kalakad Mundanthurai
- Tiger reserve's core zone. Now, it has been decided to create the facility at Manimuthar Dam park.
- The site identified in Kakkachi was an unusual Golf Course located beyond Manjolai, which records over 4000 mm rainfall annually with rain lashing the area for more than 200 days

a year

- The forests in Kakkachi are the major habitat for arboreal mammal species such as Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Langur, Brown Palm Civet & Flying Squirrel
- Many endemic and endangered flora and fauna are also found here.

### Nano liquid DAP fertilizer

- The central government has approved the introduction of nanotechnology-based liquid DAP (Diammonium phosphate) fertilizer
- The government approved the introduction of nano liquid

DAP fertilizer followed by nano liquid urea fertilizer

- In 2021, Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative of India introduced Nano Liquid Urea
- Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative of India to manufacture Nano DAP
- It will revolutionize Indian agriculture and economy.
- Following Nano DAP fertilizer, IFFCO plans to introduce Nano Potash, Nano Zinc and Nano Copper fertilizers
- Various plants have been set up in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat for liquid urea production
- It is sold at Rs 240 per bottle.

### **A village in Odisha that runs entirely on solar power**

- Sagasahi, a remote village in Odisha's tribal-dominated Sundargarh district, has become entirely solar-powered for its electricity needs.
- Solar based lighting systems have been provided to 90 houses in the village
- Water supply systems with a capacity of 10,000 liters using solar power have been established at 12 locations in the village
- 70 solar street lights have also been set up
- Also, a solar-powered smart classroom is being built in this initiative
- A resolution was passed on behalf of the Gram Panchayat calling Sagasahi village as solar powered village.

### **Operation Trishul**

- It is arranged to bring the criminals who are fleeing abroad in cases of finance, money laundering, kidnapping, murder etc. to India through this scheme.

### **2026 Bullet Train**

- India's first bullet train is planned to run from Ahmedabad in Gujarat to Mumbai in Maharashtra
- The foundation stone for laying the pillars for this was laid in August 2021
- In one and a half years, 154 kilometers of pillars have been erected
- A target has been set to run the country's first bullet train by August 2026.
- It will be available for public use in August 2027

### **Indian Institute of Heritage**

- A unique culture is found in every part of every state of our country
- It has a threat to be disappeared due to modern changes
- Keeping this in mind, an idea to prove that India is a multi-faceted country

### **Research**

- A National Cultural University should be established in the country
- The University can study the Vedas, Upanishads and the history of Indian languages
- A National Cultural University

should be established in Delhi and its member colleges should be established in all states

### **"Aval" Scheme**

- Development of Police Juvenile Forums in Chennai Metropolis
- Skill Development Training for Police
- Public relations through social media
- Self defense training for women and children

### **Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary**

#### **Weaving Recovery Movement**

- Due to the impact of climate change and population growth, the coastal environment and the livelihoods of coastal people are likely to be severely affected in the future.
- The government is planning to implement the Tamil Nadu Weaving Restoration Initiative with the help of 2000 crore World Bank funds to prevent sea erosion, reduce marine pollution and protect marine biological diversity in the next five years.

#### **Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary**

- The government will set up a new sanctuary called Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary on an area of 80,567 hectares in Anthiyur, Gopichettipalayam Circles of Erode District to connect the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve with the Thenkaveri Wildlife Sanctuary.
- It will be the 18th wildlife sanctuary of the state



## One Nation, One Challan initiative

- The Gujarat government is in the process of setting up virtual traffic courts in the state under the One Nation, One Challan initiative.

### Aim :

- To bring all agencies related to traffic violations, such as traffic police and Regional Transport Office, on one platform for seamless collection of challans and data transfer.

### Process :

- The system involves detecting traffic violations through the CCTV network and generating e-challans with relevant penalty amounts that are sent to the mobile number linked with the vehicle.
- Virtual traffic courts will be automatically notified if the challan amount is not paid within 90 days.
- **Usage :** Such e-governance examples can be used in Governance papers to show the use of technology, and collaboration between various departments and provide a speedy justice system

## Mission Hariyali

- It is a volunteer-led initiative in Nalanda district, Bihar, that aims to bring more greenery to the area.
- The volunteers distribute 500-600 saplings daily in public places, schools, and markets,

encouraging children and elders to take a plant home and plant it in available common spaces.

### Impact :

- It has facilitated the planting of over 1 million fruit trees in Nalanda (since 2016). The return of trees in Nalanda has had multiple benefits, including a rise in fruit production and the potential for residents to sell the produce for income.

### Usage :

- To show values such as Environmental consciousness, Community engagement, and how Individual action can make a difference

## Bamboo Crash Barrier ("Bahu Balli")

- The world's first 200-meter-long Bamboo Crash Barrier, named Bahu Balli, has been installed on the Vani-Warora Highway in Maharashtra, India.

### Material :

- The bamboo species used is Bambusa Balcoa, which has been treated with creosote oil and coated with recycled High-Density Poly Ethylene (HDPE).

### Significance :

- Will create more avenues for the bamboo industry in India and it provides an alternative to steel barriers, addresses environmental concerns, and is a rural and agriculture-friendly industry.

## About Bamboo:

- Bamboos are a diverse group of mostly evergreen perennial flowering grasses (it is no longer considered a 'tree' in India).
- Madhya Pradesh is the largest producer of bamboo in India.
- More than 50% of the bamboo species are found in northeast India alone.
- China has the largest diversity (India's the 2nd largest) and is the largest producer of Bamboo in the world.

### Usage :

- Such examples can be used to show innovation, sustainability, and care for safety on roads

## Hallmark Unique Identification Number (HUID)

### Context :

- Bureau of India Standards (BIS) has prohibited the sale of hallmarked gold jewellery or gold artefacts without a 6-digit alphanumeric Hallmark Unique Identification Number (HUID) after 31st March 2023.
- HUID in accordance with the Indian Standards specified in IS 1417: 2016 as
- Hallmarked jewellery lying with consumers as per old schemes shall remain valid.

## About Hallmarking:

- Hallmarking scheme was started by BIS in the year 2000.
- Mandatory Hallmarking has been successfully implemented

with effect from 23 June 2021 vide Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery and Gold Artefacts Order, 2022, and its amendment dated 04 March 2022.

- Before the implementation of 6 digit Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number, hallmarking of Gold jewellery consisted of 4 logos viz, the BIS logo, purity of the article as well as logo of the jeweller and Assaying and Hallmarking Centre.
- After the introduction of HUID, the hallmark consists of 3 marks viz, BIS logo, purity of the article and six-digit alphanumeric HUID.
- A consumer can check and authenticate hallmarked gold jewellery items with a HUID number using 'verify HUID' in BIS CARE app which is available on both Android as well as iOS.

### Why Hallmarking:

- Maintain the quality of gold in the market.
- Consumer protection.



## **Integrated Pensioners' Portal**

### Context :

- The Indian Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has announced the creation of an Integrated Pensioners' Portal to integrate various pension-related portals like Pension Disbursing Bank portals, ANUBHAV, CPENGRAMS, CGHS into a single platform to offer ease of living for pensioners.

### Benefits:

- Will address problems faced by pensioners, including change of bank, submission of life certificate, submission of the death certificate of pensioners, pension slip and retrieval of pension slip, income tax deduction, and pension receipt information.
- The new portal will integrate all 18 Pension disbursing banks
- To ensure "Ease of Living for the elder citizens"

### Related News :

- Also, a nationwide digital life certificate through a face authentication campaign was undertaken in November 2022, resulting in 30 lakh pensioners submitting their life certificates digitally.
- In November 2014, an Aadhar-based scheme for online submission of digital life certificates, "Jeevan Pramaan" was launched to ensure transparency and "Ease of Living" for pensioners while submitting

their life certificates.

- The 'Bhavishya' platform (for Pension Payment and processing) is an integrated online pension processing system that was made mandatory for all central government departments from 2017

## **Indian Railways ties up with ISRO for real-time train tracking**

### Context:

- The Indian Railways is harnessing the power of data analytics for integrated transportation. It has commenced a project, which will now enable real-time tracking of train movements with the assistance of satellite imagery under the Real Time Train Information System (RTIS) project.

### How will it work:

- Railways will take technology help from ISRO.
- ISRO has developed its own regional navigation satellite system called Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) and Bhuvan, a web-based utility which allows users to explore a set of map-based content being deployed for tracking.

### Benefits:

- Real-time tracking of trains is useful during accidents, floods and landslides when there is a need to pin down the train's exact location for rendering help.
- On-time services.

## Group Captain Shaliza Dhami

- The Indian Air Force has announced the appointment of Group Captain Shaliza Dhami as the first woman officer to command a missile squadron in the Western sector facing Pakistan.
- Previously, Indian Army cleared as many as 108 women officers for the rank of Colonel, making them eligible for command roles.
- Currently, there are over 10,000 women officers serving in the armed forces, with the majority serving in the medical services.
- Also, Captain Shiva Chouhan has become the first woman officer in the Indian Army to be deployed at the Siachen glacier

## Janaushadhi Kendra

### Context :

- On the occasion of 'the 5th Jan Aushadhi Diwas', the government inaugurated 'NaMo Day Care Centre' and flagged off four NaMo Mobile Healthcare Units
- The Department of Pharmaceuticals is celebrating Jan Aushadhi Diwas from March 1 to March 7, 2023, to create awareness about the Jan Aushadhi Scheme.

### Objective :

- To generate awareness about the usage of generic medicines and the benefits of Jan Aushadhi

dhi Pariyojana and its salient features and achievements.

### How price of medicine is determined in the PMBJKs?

- A medicine is priced on the principle of a maximum of 50% of the average price of the top three brands of branded medicines. Thus, the prices of Jan Aushadhi Medicines are cheaper by at least 50% and in some cases, by 80% to 90% of the market price of the branded medicines.
- Under the Scheme, medicines are procured from World Health Organization – Good Manufacturing Practices (WHO-GMP) certified suppliers for ensuring the quality of the products.

## India, U.S. to launch a semiconductor sub-committee

### Context :

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing a semiconductor supply chain and innovation partnership under the framework of India – US Commercial Dialogue was signed between the two countries.
- The MoU seeks to establish a collaborative mechanism between the two governments on Semiconductor Supply chain resiliency and diversification in view of the US's CHIPS and Science Act and India's Semiconductor Mission.

### Benefits:

- It aims to leverage the complementary strengths of both countries and facilitate commercial opportunities and the development of semiconductor innovation ecosystems through discussions on various aspects of the semiconductor value chain.
- The MoU envisages mutually beneficial R&D, talent, and skill development.
- This is part of the U.S.-India initiative of Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) that will broaden the "strategic technology partnership".

### About iCET:

- It was established to elevate and expand our strategic technology partnership and defense industrial cooperation between the country's governments, businesses, and academic institutions.

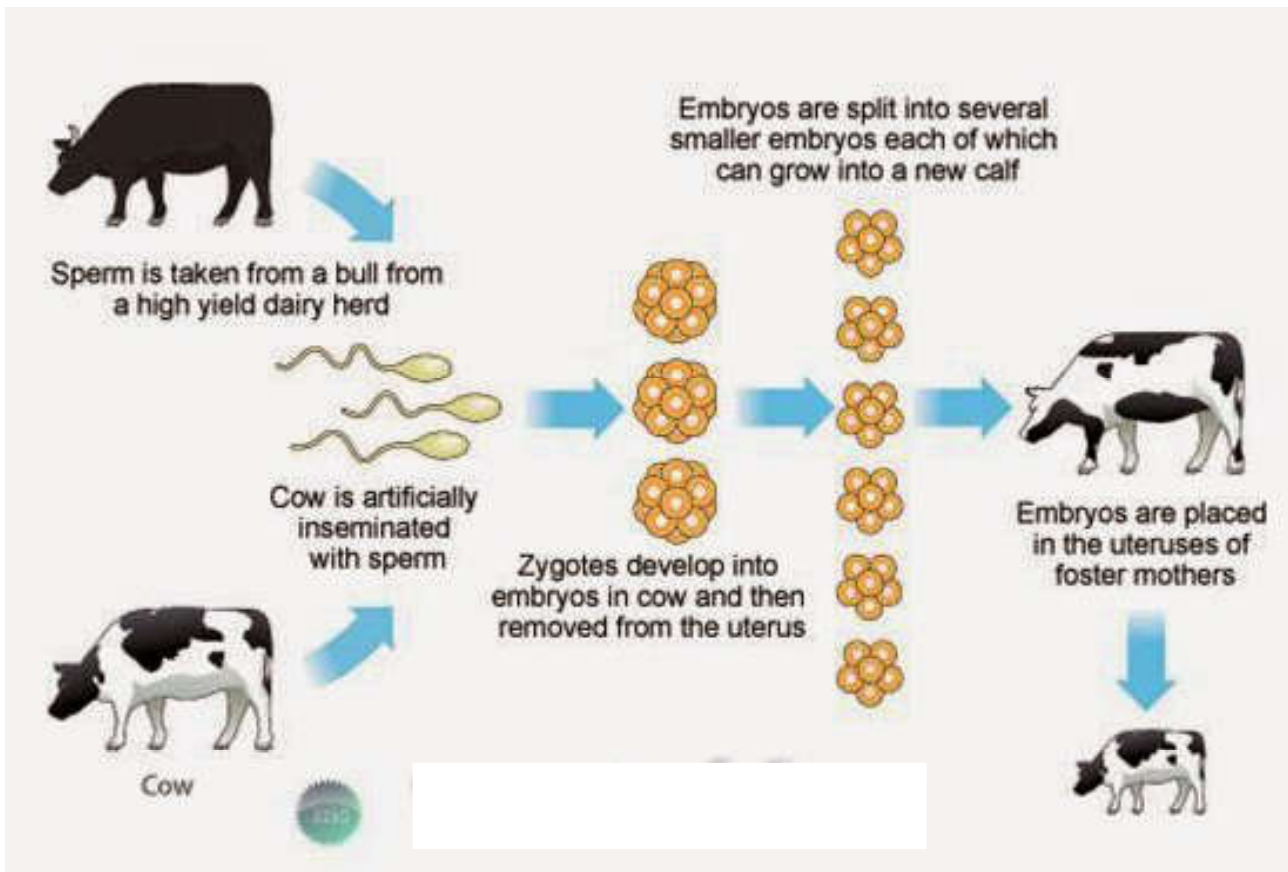
## India's first cloned desi Gir female calf Gangasss

### Context :

- The National Dairy Research Institute (est. 1956, under ICAR, based in Haryana's Karnal) has produced the first-ever clone of a calf belonging to the indigenous Gir cow breed. The calf has been named Ganga.

### Process:

- **Scientists used three animals for producing this calf:** Oocyte was taken from the Sahiwal breed, a somatic cell from the Gir breed, and a surrogate animal was a crossbreed.



### What is Reproductive cloning?

- Reproductive cloning is a process by which an exact genetic replica, or clone, of an existing organism, is created through a type of cloning called somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT).
- This involves removing the nucleus of an egg cell and replacing it with the nucleus of a somatic cell (a non-reproductive cell) from the organism to be cloned.

### Mission Sahbhagita

- Mission Sahbhagita has been launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

- It is an important step towards participatory conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- Its aim is to enable a society ownership approach with communities leading at the forefront.
- The Ministry is currently implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA).
- Under the NPCA scheme, the ministry has sanctioned the central assistance for conservation of 165 wetlands across the country, including 42 Ramsar sites

### DigiClaim

- The Union Minister of Agriculture ministry launched the National Crop Insurance Portal's digitized claim settlement module 'DigiClaim'.
- This is launched under the ambit of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- Now claims will be disbursed electronically, which will benefit the respective farmers of six states.
- Those 6 states are Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Haryana



### **RuPay Card For Pudhumai Penn Scheme**

- Bank of Baroda has partnered with the Government of Tamil Nadu to offer cobranded RuPay Platinum Debit Card.
- The Bank has launched the debit card that would be offered to the beneficiaries of the state government's 'Pudhumai Penn' scheme.
- The Pudhumai Penn scheme by the government aims to enhance the enrolment ratio of the girls from government schools to higher educational institutions.
- Through this scheme, financial assistance of Rs 1,000 per month would be provided to ever girl till the completion of their degree course.

### **First methanol run buses**

- For the first time, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTTC) run some of its city buses using methanol-blended fuel.
- The buses will be operated on a pilot basis.
- These Buses run on 15% methanol-blended fuel.
- On this occasion, a truck that runs on 100% methanol (M 100) also launched.
- Blending 15% methanol in gasoline can result in at least a 15% reduction in the import of

gasoline/crude oil.

- In addition, this would bring down GHG emissions by 20%, thereby improving urban air quality

### **Mulethi cultivation**

- Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in India to start the organized commercial cultivation of Licorice (Mulethi).
- Mulethi' (glycyrrhiza glabra) is not only used as a spice but also in ayurvedic medicines.
- The presence of glycyrrhizin, which is 50 times sweeter than sucrose, gives the roots a sweet flavour.
- In this, Antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antibacterial properties are present.
- Presently, it is largely imported from other countries.

### **DEEPIKA PADUKONE**

- Deepika Padukone become the third Indian presenter at the 95th Oscar Academy Awards of 2023.
- The previous Indian presenters are Persis Khambatta (1980) and Priyanka Chopra (2016)

### **Punnagai scheme**

- The Minister of School Education launched a new scheme for government school students called 'Punnagai'.
- This scheme has been started for the dental care of students.

- In the first phase, the students of class VI-VIII will be subjected to dental examination.
- This project has been started to prevent oral diseases among students.
- This program will benefit school children by screening them and creating awareness about oral diseases, tooth decay and gum problems.

### **World's Longest Railway Platform**

- Prime Minister dedicated World's longest railway platform (1.5 km long) in Hubballi, Karnataka.
- South Western Railway Zones Hubballi is now registered in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest platform.
- Gorakhpur platform in Uttar Pradesh is the second longest at 1,366.33 meters.
- Kollam Junction in Kerala has the third longest platform at 1,180.5 meters.

### **'World's first' bamboo crash barrier**

- India has tested bamboo crash barrier as an environmentally friendly alternative to steel.
- This world's first 200-meter-long Bamboo Crash Barrier has been installed on the Vani-Warora Highway in Maharashtra.



- The bamboo crash barrier will be an alternative to steel and will be environmentally friendly.
- The recycling value of the bamboo crash barrier is 50-70%, while that of steel barriers is 30-50%.

### **Dry Fish outlet in railway Station**

- India's first Dry Fish (Karuvadu) outlet opened at Madurai railway station.
- Shungudi saree is currently sold at Madurai railway station.
- To promote popular local products, the railway administration is setting up outlets under the "One Station, One Item" scheme at the respective district railway stations.
- Around 5,000 railway stations across the country have allowed such sales.
- Below that, at the railway stations in the following other six railway lines under the

- Southern Railway, popular local products are available for sale.
- Chinlapatti handloom sarees at Dindigul railway station,
  - Macaroon at Tuticorin and Vanchi Maniachi,
  - Seaweed products at Rameswaram,
  - Coconut candy at Kovilpatti,
  - karachevu at Virudhunagar and Chattr,

- Bamboo products at Thenkasi and Sengottai.

### **Bird's eye chilly export to US**

- Mizoram would soon export 'bird's eye chilli' of the state to the United States for the first time.
- The Government has obtained geographical identification (GI) tag for bird's eye chilli or 'Mizo chilli'.
- The chilli is to be exported has passed an organic confirmation test in Bangalore last week.
- The chillies are highly pungent.
- The Scoville Heat Units (SCU) of spiciness is 50,000 to 1,00,000.
- The higher the SCU are the greater their spiciness.
- They are widely grown in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, etc





## முதன்மைத் தேர்வுக்கான உத்தி

1. முதன்மைத் தேர்வுக்குப் படிப்பதற்கு முறையானத் திட்டத்தை வகுத்து அதை முழுமையாகப் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும்.
2. நாட்டு நடப்புகள் குறித்த விவரங்களை தினமும் தயார் செய்ய வேண்டும். புதிய தகவல்களைத் தொடர்ந்து தெரிந்து கொள்ள வேண்டும்.
3. தேர்வுக்குத் தயாராவதில் உறுதியாக இருக்க வேண்டும்.
4. ஒவ்வொரு பாடத்திற்கும் ஒதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ள மதிப்பெண்களைக் கருத்தில் கொண்டு அனைத்துப் பாடங்களுக்கும் தயாராவதற்கு போதிய நேரத்தை ஒதுக்க வேண்டும்.
5. தேர்வுக்குத் தயாராவது அலுப்பூட்டும் வகையில் இல்லாமல் இருப்பதை உறுதி செய்யும் வகையில் கால அட்டவணை தயாரிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.
6. திருப்புதலின் போது நேரத்தை மிச்சப்படுத்துவதற்காக, முதல் முறை அல்லது இரண்டாவது முறை பயிலும் போது முக்கிய அம்சங்களை அடிக்கோடிட்டு வைத்திருக்க வேண்டும் / முன்னிலைப்படுத்த வேண்டும். நாம் முதன்முறை படிப்பதன் நோக்கம் தேவையற்ற விசயங்களை விலக்கி, நாம் படிக்க வேண்டிய பாடங்களின் அளவைப் பாதியாகக் குறைப்பதுதான். இரண்டாவது முறை பயிலும் போது, நாம் படிக்க வேண்டிய பகுதிகளை, தேர்வுக்கு முன் உள்ள இரண்டு நாட்களில் திருப்புதல் செய்யும் வகையில், மேலும் குறைக்க வேண்டும்.
7. முந்தைய ஆண்டு வினாத்தாள்களின் அடிப்படையில் விடைகளை எழுதிப் பயிற்சி செய்ய வேண்டும்.
8. தேர்வை எதிர்கொள்வதற்கு ஒரு விண்ணப்பதாரர் எந்த அளவுக்குத் தயாராகியிருக்கிறார் என்பதைப் புரிந்துகொள்வதற்காக அடிக்கடி மாதிரித் தேர்வுகளை எதிர்கொள்ள வேண்டும்.
9. பயிற்சியே ஒருவனை முழுமையாக்குகிறது என்பதே முதன்மைத் தேர்வுக்கான மந்திரமாக இருக்க வேண்டும்.
10. எந்தவொரு பாடத்திற்குமான பயிற்சியில் சேரும் தேர்வர்கள், அதற்கான மாதிரித் தேர்வுகளில் முழு ஈடுபாட்டுடன் பங்கேற்க வேண்டும். முதன்மைத் தேர்வுக்கும், முதல்நிலைத் தேர்வுகளுக்கும் இடையிலான முக்கியமான வேறுபாடு என்னவென்றால், முதல்நிலை தேர்வுக்கான மாதிரித் தேர்வுகளை மூன்றாவது நபரின் துணை இல்லாமல் ஆன்லைனிலோ, ஆஃப்லைனிலோ தனித்தே எழுதலாம். ஆனால் முதன்மைத் தேர்வைப் பொறுத்தவரை மூன்றாவது நபரைக் கொண்டு மதிப்பீடு செய்வது மிகவும் அவசியமாகும். மதிப்பீடு செய்யும் மூன்றாவது நபர் ஒரு வல்லுநராகவோ, அல்லது சிறந்த ஒரு பயிற்சி நிறுவனமாகவோ இருக்கலாம்.
11. முதன்மைத் தேர்வு என்பது தேர்வர் அறிந்துள்ள தகவல்களையும் அவரது நினைவுத் திறனையும் மட்டுமே சோதிப்பதாக இல்லாமல், அவர்களின் புரிதலின் ஆழம், அறிவுசார் திறன்கள் ஆகியவற்றை மதிப்பிடுவதை நோக்கமாகக் கொண்டது ஆகும். பொதுபாடத் தாள்களில் அனைத்து வினாக்களுக்கும் விடை அளிக்க வேண்டும். வினாக்களின் தன்மை ஒவ்வொரு தாள்க்கும் மாறுபடும். ஆனால், அதிக வினாக்கள் இருக்கும் என்பதால் தேர்வர் விடைகளை வேகமாக எழுத வேண்டும். விடையளிக்க வேண்டிய வார்த்தைகளின் வரம்பும் அதிகமாக இருக்கக் கூடும்.
12. முதன்மைத் தேர்வைப் பொறுத்தவரை, வார்த்தைகளின் எண்ணிக்கையை கவனத்தில் கொள்ளப்பட வேண்டிய மிக முக்கியமான அம்சமாகும்.
13. முதன்மைத் தேர்வுகளை எழுதுவதற்கான அணுகுமுறையில் தேர்வர்கள் மிகவும் தெளிவாக இருக்க வேண்டும். தேர்வு அறையில், வினாத்தாளைப் பெற்ற பிறகு, விடைகளை வேகமாக எழுத வேண்டி இருக்கும் என்பதால், சிந்திப்பதற்கு நேரம் இருக்காது. எனவே, வினாக்களை புத்திசாலித்தனமாகத் தேர்வு செய்து விடை அளிக்க வேண்டும்.
14. வினாக்களில் தரப்பட்டுள்ள கருத்துரை கொடு, கருத்து தெரிவி, விரிவாகச் சொல், காட்சிப்படுத்து, தெளிவுப்படுத்து போன்ற வார்த்தைகளின் பொருளைப் புரிந்துகொண்டு, அதற்கேற்ற வகையில் உங்கள் எழுத்துத் திறனை வெளிப்படுத்த வேண்டும்.



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