



Prelim Booster News Discussion

01-June-2021

Mali Crisis



The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is attempting to mediate to solve the crisis in Mali.

👉 Recently in Mali

- ⊙ **After the takeover in 2020**, the **military agreed to appoint civilians as interim president and prime minister under pressure from ECOWAS.**
- ⊙ **But Recently**, soldiers **detained transitional president and prime minister**, releasing them after 3 days while saying that they had resigned.
- ⊙ **The twin arrests triggered** a diplomatic uproar and marked **Mali's second apparent coup** within a year.
- ⊙ Mali's constitutional court completed **Goita's rise to full power** as transitional president.





Background

- ⊙ **The 2011 crisis in Libya** led Mali along the path to chaos.
- ⊙ Weapons from Libya were supplied across the Sahara Desert and fuelled a **separatist conflict in northern Mali**. This turned into an Islamist militant offensive which **prompted a coup in the capital Bamako (Mali)**.
- ⊙ **Reasons**: Mali has three overlapping sets of problems:
 1. Political crisis that grew out of the **disputed legislative elections of March 2020**.
 2. **Economic crisis due to economic stagnation, corruption** and further complications by the Covid-19 pandemic. There was dissatisfaction among the troops due to poor payments.
 3. **Security crisis** due to the failure to contain terrorism and jihadists and the actions of the military against civilians.

Background

- ⊙ **Military Coup (2020):**
- ⊙ Mali's **President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita** has **resigned** after soldiers had arrested him and Prime Minister Boubou Cisse in the capital, Bamako as part of a coup.
- ⊙ It calls itself the **National Committee for the Salvation of the People** and has **pledged to stabilise the country by enacting a political transition** and stage elections within a reasonable time.
- ⊙ **It would respect all the past agreements**, including Mali's support for anti-jihadist missions in the region and **2015 peace agreement** between the Malian government and armed groups in the north of the country.

Economic Community of West African States

- ⊙ What is it? → It is a regional political and economic union of fifteen countries located in West Africa.
- ⊙ Established in → 1975, with the signing of the Treaty of Lagos.
- ⊙ The goal of ECOWAS is to achieve “collective self-sufficiency” for its member states by creating a single large trade bloc by building a full economic and trading union.
- ⊙ It also serves as a peacekeeping force in the region.
- ⊙ Considered one of the pillar regional blocs of the continent-wide African Economic Community (AEC).
- ⊙ ECOWAS includes two sub-regional blocs →
 1. The West African Economic and Monetary Union is an organisation of eight, mainly French-speaking states.
 2. The West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ), established in 2000, comprises six mainly English-speaking countries.

ICGS Sajag

NEWS

The National Security Advisor (NSA) has commissioned the Offshore Patrol Vessel(OPV) ICGS Sajag. (ICGS- Indian Coast Guard ship).

👉 About

- © Goa Shipyard Limited has indigenously designed and built the Indian Coast Guard Ship Vessel “Sajag”.
- © Features → The ship is fitted with advanced technology equipment, weapons and sensors. It is also capable of carrying a twin-engine helicopter and four high-speed boats.



ICGS Sajag

◎ Significance → The ICGS Sajag is the third in a series of five offshore patrol vessels under Samarth Class.

👉 Offshore Patrol Vehicles(OPVs):

◎ Offshore Patrol Vehicles(OPVs) are long-range surface ships. They are capable of operation in maritime zones of India including island territories with helicopter operation capabilities.

Climate Breakthroughs Summit

NEWS

Recently, world leaders convened at the Climate Breakthroughs Summit **to demonstrate progress** in critical sectors of the global economy, including steel, shipping, green hydrogen and nature.

👉 About

- © Agency involved → Climate Breakthroughs Summit is a **collaboration between** World Economic Forum, Mission Possible Partnership, United Nations Climate Champions and the United Kingdom Climate Change Conference (COP26) Presidency.
- © It also aims to discuss the **breakthroughs needed to achieve a net-zero emission world in time.**



Climate Breakthroughs Summit

👉 Key highlights of the summit:

- ⦿ During the summit, the United Nations made a call for coordinated action to secure global net-zero emissions.
- ⦿ UN also demands to fulfil the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels by 2050.
- ⦿ Moreover, Maersk, the world's largest container shipping line and vessel operator, joined the Race to Zero campaign during the summit.

Climate Breakthroughs Summit

👉 About Race To Zero Campaign:

- 🕒 Race to Zero is the UN-backed global campaign rallying non-state actors – including companies, cities, regions, financial and educational institutions – to take rigorous and immediate action to halve global emissions by 2030 and deliver a healthier, fairer, zero-carbon world in time.
- 🕒 Race To Zero mobilizes actors outside of national governments to join the Climate Ambition Alliance.

👉 Climate Ambition Alliance

- 🕒 The CAA currently includes 120 nations and several other private players that have committed to achieving zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 🕒 Signatories are responsible for 23% of current greenhouse-gas emissions worldwide and 53% of global GDP.
- 🕒 **India is not part of this Alliance.**

PM-CARES for Children Scheme

NEWS

The Prime Minister has announced a special PM-CARES for Children scheme. The scheme includes a comprehensive financial aid package for children orphaned during the pandemic.

👉 About

- © Eligibility → All children who have lost both parents or surviving parent or legal guardian/adoptive parents due to Covid 19 will be supported under the scheme.
- © Need for these measures → As India battles a raging second wave, cases of children losing their parents to Covid-19 are also mounting.



PM-CARES for Children Scheme

⦿ Features of the scheme →

- Fixed Deposit in the name of the child → A corpus of Rs 10 lakh for each child when he or she reaches 18 years of age.
- School Education: For children under 10 years → Admission will be given in the nearest Kendriya Vidyalaya or in a private school as a day scholar.
- School Education: for children between 11-18 years → The child will be given admission in any Central Government residential school such as Sainik School, Navodaya Vidyalaya etc.
- Support for Higher Education → The child will be assisted in obtaining an education loan for Professional courses / Higher Education in India as per the existing Education Loan norms.

PM-CARES for Children Scheme

- Health Insurance → All children will be enrolled as a beneficiary under Ayushman Bharat Scheme (**PM-JAY**) with a **health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakhs.**



Government stands with children **who lost their parents due to COVID-19**



Such children to **get a monthly stipend** once they **turn 18** and a fund of 10 lakh when they **turn 23** from PM CARES



Free education to be ensured for children who lost their parents to COVID-19



Children will be assisted to **get an education loan for higher education & PM CARES will pay interest on the loan**



Children will **get free health insurance of 5 lakh under Ayushman Bharat till 18 years** & premium will be paid by PM CARES



Children represent the future of the country and we will do everything to support and protect the children: **PM Narendra Modi**



It is our duty, as a society, to care for our children and instil hope for a bright future: **PM Narendra Modi**

Cali

NEWS

The Colombian Army has tightened its control over Cali following the latest anti-government protests.

👉 About

- © Cali is the second-largest city in Colombia by area and the third most populous.
- © It is the only major Colombian city with access to the Pacific Coast.
- © Cali is located in the Cauca Valley to the west of the Cauca River.



YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme



Ministry Of Education has launched YUVA To Mentor Young Authors.

👉 About

- © Launched by → the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education.
- © Purpose → It is an Author Mentorship scheme that aims to mentor authors under the age of 30. It will train them to promote reading, writing, and book culture in the country.
- © This will allow India to project its writings globally.



YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme

- ⦿ This scheme is in line with PM's vision to encourage young writers to write about India's freedom struggle.
- ⦿ Implementation → National Book Trust of India under the Ministry of Education as the Implementing Agency will ensure execution of the Scheme.
- ⦿ Part of → The scheme is a part of the India@75 Project (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav). The project aims to bring out the perspectives of the young generation of writers on themes like unsung heroes, freedom fighters, and others in an innovative and creative manner.
- ⦿ Key Features of the YUVA Scheme →
 - Under the Scheme, a total of 75 authors will be selected through the All India Contest.

YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme

- The themes of the contest are unsung heroes, freedom fighters, National Movement among others.
- The young authors will be trained by eminent authors/mentors. The books by these authors will be published by National Book Trust, India.
- The books will also be translated into other Indian languages. It will ensure the exchange of culture and literature thereby promoting 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.
- Moreover, a consolidated scholarship of Rs.50,000 per month for a period of six months per author will be paid under the Mentorship Scheme.

YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme

👉 National Book Trust

- ⦿ National Book Trust(NBT) is an Indian publishing house.
- ⦿ It was founded in 1957 as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education of the Government of India.
- ⦿ Mandate → The activities of the Trust include publishing, promotion of books and reading, promotion of Indian books abroad, assistance to authors and publishers, and promotion of children's literature.



राष्ट्रीय पुस्तक न्यास, भारत
मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार
NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA
Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	ICGS Sajag -> nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.	
2.	PM-CARES for Children Scheme -> All children who have lost both parents or surviving parent or legal guardian/adoptive parents due to Covid 19 will be supported under the scheme.	
3.	Economic Community of West African States -> Established in 1975, with the signing of the Treaty of Lagos.	
4.	YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) Scheme -> Under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.	
5.	Cali -> second-largest city in Brazil by area.	

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02-June-2021

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Nano Urea Liquid

NEWS

Recently, the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) introduced the **world's first Nano Urea Liquid** for farmers across the world.

👉 About

- © What is it? → It is a **nutrient (liquid) to provide nitrogen to plants** as an **alternative to the conventional urea**.
- © It is developed to **replace conventional urea** and it can curtail the requirement of the same by at least 50%.

#IFFCONanoUrea

IFFCO
सुधोक्त: सहकारी स्वामित्व
Wholly owned by Cooperatives

IFFCO NANO UREA LIQUID

Introducing World's First Nano Urea for Farmers



- Reduces Input Cost
- Increases Farmers' Income
- Environment-friendly
- Enhances Crop Productivity
- Improves Nutritional Value
- Cheaper than Conventional Urea

IFFCO NANO UREA LIQUID

एक बैग का उपयोग करें, कम लागत, बेहतर फल, कम प्रदूषण।
Use One Bag of Urea, Less Cost, More Yield, Less Pollution.

IFFCO NANO UREA LIQUID

एक बैग का उपयोग करें, कम लागत, बेहतर फल, कम प्रदूषण।
Use One Bag of Urea, Less Cost, More Yield, Less Pollution.

Nano Urea Liquid

- It contains 40,000 mg/L of nitrogen in a 500 ml bottle which is equivalent to the impact of nitrogen nutrient provided by **one bag of conventional urea**.
- ◎ Conventional urea is effective 30-40% in delivering nitrogen to plants, while the effectiveness of the Nano Urea Liquid is over 80%.
 - Its effectiveness has been tested in over 11,000 farmers' fields for 94 crops like rice and wheat.
 - An average 8% increase in yield has been witnessed.
- ◎ Developed At →
 - It has been indigenously developed at Nano Biotechnology Research Centre, Kalol, Gujrat in line with Atmanirbhar Bharat and Atmanirbhar Krishi.
 - India is dependent on imports to meet its urea requirements.

Nano Urea Liquid

◎ Significance →

- It has been found effective and efficient for plant nutrition which increases the production with improved nutritional quality.
- It will also have a huge positive impact on the quality of underground water, a very significant reduction in global warming with an impact on climate change and sustainable development.

Bell of Faith Scheme



Kerala's 'Bell of Faith' scheme will be expanded to the villages to reach senior citizens staying alone. Earlier, the scheme was successfully implemented in a number of urban households in Kerala.

👉 About

- ◎ Bell of Faith Scheme was launched by the Kerala Police in 2018.
- ◎ It aims to provide security to senior citizens staying alone as part of Kerala's Community Policing Scheme.
- ◎ Under the Scheme, police have installed a bell in the senior citizens' houses.



Bell of Faith Scheme

- ⦿ The neighbour will get an alert with an alarm when the senior citizen rings the bell during an emergency.
- ⦿ The neighbour can immediately rush to the house or contact the police or hospital.

Significance of the Scheme:

- ⦿ The Bell of Faith scheme sets an example for community participation to ensure the well-being and safety of the elderly.
- ⦿ Moreover, this scheme can be of great support for the senior citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic as many live in fear for their health.

AmbiTag



Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a first-of-its-kind IoT device called AmbiTag (Available at the production cost of Rs. 400).

👉 About

- © What is it? → AmbiTag is the first-of-its-kind Internet of Things(IoT) device.
- © Purpose → The device will be helpful in the secure transportation of vaccines, blood and body organs, perishable products (food and dairy) among others.



AmbiTag

- ◎ How does the device work? →
 - It generates an alert when the temperature goes beyond a pre-set limit.
 - That recorded temperature further helps to know whether that particular item transported from anywhere in the world is still usable or perished because of temperature variation.
 - Shaped as USB device, AmbiTag continuously records the temperature of its immediate surroundings from -40 to +80 degrees in any time zone for a full 90 days on a single charge.
- ◎ Developed under → AWaDH (Agriculture and Water Technology Development Hub) and its Startup ScratchNest developed the device.

AmbiTag

⦿ Significance →

- AmbiTAG is India's first indigenous temperature data logger for the cold chain management
- Moreover, the device is also particularly critical for vaccines including the Covid-19 vaccine, organs, and blood transportation.

👉 AWaDH

- ⦿ AWaDH is a research center at IIT Ropar.
- ⦿ Established with support from the Department of Science and Technology(DST) and the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).
- ⦿ It carries out extensive research in the field of agriculture and water.

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

NEWS

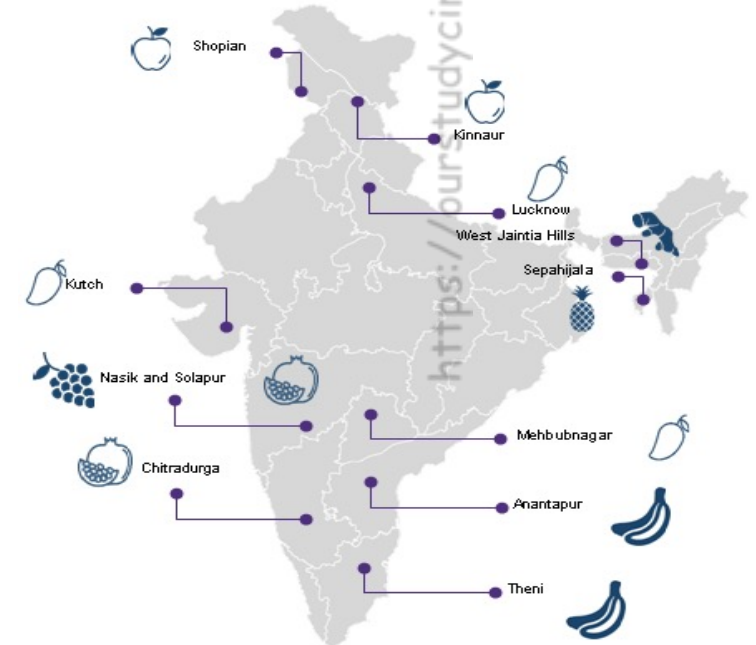
The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched the Horticulture Cluster Development Programme(CDP).

Horticulture: Art or practice of gardening and cultivating plants and trees.
Ex- Fruits and vegetables, Decorative indoor plants and Medicinal plants.

👉 About

- © What is it? → It is a central sector programme aimed at growing and developing identified horticulture clusters to make them globally competitive.
- © Horticulture cluster is a regional/geographical concentration of targeted horticulture crops.

Identified Crops and Clusters in the Pilot Phase



Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

- ◎ Nodal Agency → The nodal agency for the programme will be the National Horticulture Board(NHB).
- ◎ Coverage →
 - The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare(MoA&FW) has identified 53 horticulture clusters. Of which 12 have been selected for the pilot launch of the programme.
 - Based on the learnings from the pilot project, the programme will be scaled up to cover all the identified clusters.
 - These clusters will be implemented through Cluster Development Agencies(CDAs). CDAs are appointed on the recommendations of the respective State/UT Government.

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

◎ Objectives →

- To address all major issues related to the Indian horticulture sector including pre-production, production, post-harvest management, logistics, marketing and branding.
- To leverage geographical specialisation and promote integrated and market-led development of horticulture clusters.
- To converge with other initiatives of the Government such as the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.

◎ Benefit → The programme will benefit about 10 lakh farmers and is expected to attract an investment of Rs. 10,000 crore when implemented in all the 53 clusters.

World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day

NEWS

Delegates at the 74th World Health Assembly unanimously adopted a proposal by the United Arab Emirates, to declare January 30 as ‘World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day’.

👉 About Neglected Tropical Diseases

- © Neglected Tropical Diseases(NTD) are a group of infections. These diseases are most common in the tropical regions of Africa, Asia, and the Americas among marginalized communities.
- © The basic reason behind them is no access to clean water or safe ways to dispose of human waste.



World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day

- ⊙ Caused by → A variety of pathogens such as viruses, bacteria, protozoa, and parasitic worms.
- ⊙ These diseases generally receive less funding for research and treatment than diseases like tuberculosis, HIV-AIDS, and malaria.
- ⊙ Some examples of NTDs include snakebite envenomation, scabies, yaws, trachoma, Leishmaniasis, and Chagas disease.
- ⊙ Cases → NTDs affect more than a billion people globally. However, the diseases are preventable and treatable.

World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day

- ◎ The WHO's new road map for 2021–2030 calls for three strategic shifts to end NTDs →
 - From **measuring process to measuring impact.**
 - From **disease-specific planning** and programming to **collaborative work** across sectors.
 - From **externally driven agendas** **reliant** to programmes that are **country-owned and country-financed.**
- ◎ Why was January 30 chosen? →
 - It was on this day that the **London Declaration on NTDs** was adopted, January 30, 2012.
 - The first World NTD Day was celebrated **informally in 2020.**

Quick revision (True/False)

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1.	Bell of Faith Scheme -> launched by the Kerala Police. provide security to senior citizens staying alone.	
2.	AmbiTag -> helps to know whether a particular soil in a region is suitable for a particular vegetable or fruits.	
3.	Horticulture Cluster Development Programme -> is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the National Horticulture Board.	
4.	London Declaration -> on Neglected Tropical Diseases.	

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

03-June-2021

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National Human Rights Commission

NEWS

The President of India appointed Justice Arun Kumar Mishra as the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

👉 About NHRC

- © NHRC, established in 1993, is an independent statutory body as per the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act of 1993.
- © Objective → To protect and promote human rights related to life, liberty, equality and dignity of individuals.



Controversy

- © Justice Mishra stoked controversy in February 2020, when as a sitting of the apex court, he described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as an “internationally acclaimed visionary who could think globally and act locally” at an international conference.
- © Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha have registered his dissent after the Committee didn't accept his suggestion to appoint a member from either Dalit, Adivasi or Minority communities.
- © He argued that since most complaints at the NHRC pertained to these socially disadvantaged groups, there should be at least one representative from these communities in the Commission.

THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NHRC)

	The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993	The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill 2019
Chairperson	The Commission shall consist of a Chairperson who has been a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.	The Bill amends this to provide that a person who has been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or a Judge of the Supreme Court will be the chairperson of the NHRC.
Other Members	The Act provides that NHRC must consist of two Members to be appointed from amongst persons having knowledge of, or practical experience in, matters relating to human rights.	The Bill amends this to allow three members to be appointed, of which at least one will be a woman.
Ex-officio members	The Chairpersons of the National Commission for Minorities, the National Commission for the Scheduled Castes, the National Commission for the Scheduled Tribes and the National Commission for Women shall be deemed to be Members of the Commission.	The Bill provides for including the chairpersons of the National Commission for Backward Classes, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights, and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities as members of the NHRC.
Term	The Act states that the chairperson and members of the NHRC will hold office for five years or till the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier.	The Bill reduces the term of office to three years or till the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier.
Reappointment	The Act allows for the reappointment of members of the NHRC for a period of five years.	The Bill removes the five-year limit for reappointment.
Powers of Secretary-General	The Act provides for a Secretary-General who shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission and shall exercise powers as may be delegated to them.	The Bill amends this and allows the Secretary-General to exercise all administrative and financial powers (except judicial functions), subject to the chairperson's control.

National Human Rights Commission

Appointment → A Selection Committee will recommend the candidates to the President. The Selection Committee includes:

- Prime Minister (Chairman)
- Speaker of Lok Sabha
- Union Home Minister
- Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha
- Leaders of the Opposition in both Houses of the Parliament.

⊙ Power → The Commission shall have all the powers of a civil court namely:

- Summoning and enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath;
- Discovery and production of any document;
- Receiving evidence on affidavits.

One Nation One Standard Mission

NEWS

The Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) became the first Institution to be declared Standard Developing Organisation (SDO) under the "One Nation One Standard" mission.

👉 About

- © The 'One Nation One Standard' Mission was first deliberated in September, 2019.
- © The mission was envisioned on the line of 'one nation, one ration card' scheme in order to ensure quality products in the country.
- © The purpose is to converge multiple standards with the BIS which is a recognised national body for standardisation in India.



One Nation One Standard Mission

- ⦿ The recognition is valid for 3 years and will require renewal after completion of the validity period.
- ⦿ Objectives →
 - Aggregating and integrating the existing capabilities and dedicated domain specific expertise available with various organizations in the country engaged in standards development in their specific sectors.
 - The idea is to develop one template of standard for one given product instead of having multiple agencies set it.
 - Enable convergence of all standard development activities in the country resulting in One National Standard for One Subject.
- ⦿ Benefits → This will help in establishing in the long run Brand India. This will also ensure market relevance for the Indian standards.

One Nation One Standard Mission

👉 Bureau of Indian Standards

- ◎ It has been established for the harmonious development of the activities of standardization, marking and quality certification of goods and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- ◎ It was established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 which came into effect in December 1986. It works under the aegis of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- ◎ A new Bureau of Indian standard (BIS) Act 2016 has been brought into force with effect from October 2017.
 - The Act establishes the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) as the National Standards Body of India.

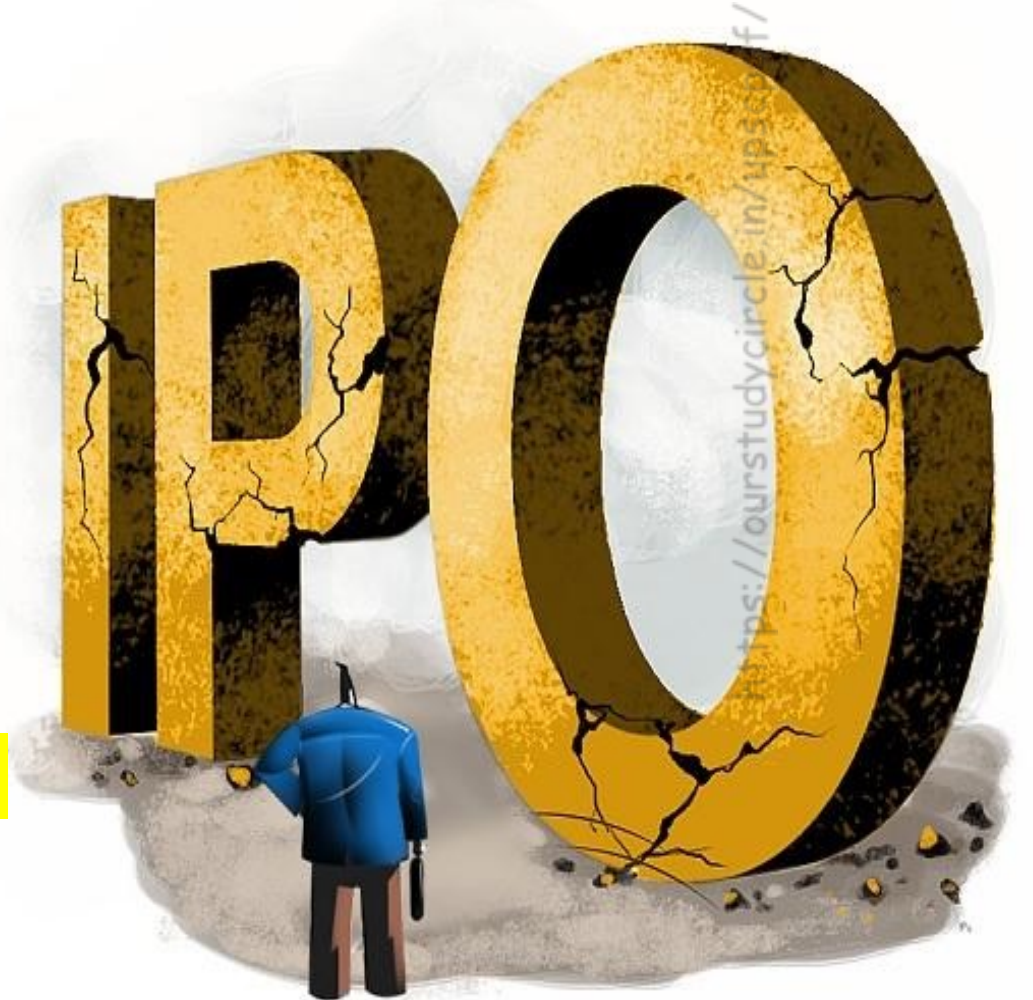
IPO grey market

NEWS

Paytm's stock has risen from ₹11,500 to ₹21,000 in four days in the grey market.

👉 About

- © IPO → Generally, when companies wish to raise funds to fuel their growth, they sell a part of their stock on the stock market. This process is called an initial public offering, or IPO.
- © But, an IPO grey market is an unofficial market where IPO shares or applications are bought and sold before they become available for trading on the stock market.



IPO grey market

- ⊙ It is also termed a parallel market or an over-the-counter market.
- ⊙ Is it allow? How is it governed? →
 - Since it's unofficial, inevitably, there are no regulations that govern it. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), stock exchanges, and brokers have no part to play in it. These transactions are undertaken in cash on a one-on-one basis.
- ⊙ Kostak (price of application) rate? →
 - It relates to an IPO application. So, the rate at which an investor buys an IPO application before the listing is termed the Kostak rate.
- ⊙ Why do investors trade in the Grey Market? →
 - It's an excellent opportunity for investors to purchase a company's shares even before they are listed, especially if they feel that the company's stock will increase in value.

IPO grey market

- If an investor has missed the deadline for the IPO application or wishes to buy more shares then they can approach the IPO grey market.
- ◎ What is in it for the companies? →
 - For companies, the grey market is a great way to know how the demand for their shares is and how the company's shares might perform once it is listed.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights



The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has informed the Supreme Court that nearly **10,000 children need immediate care and protection due to the impact of Covid-19**.

👉 About

- © NCPCR is a **statutory body** established in **2007** under the **Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act (CPCR), 2005**.
- © Nodal Ministry → It is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Women & Child Development**.



National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

- ◎ **Mandate** → The Commission's Mandate is to **ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms** are in **consonance with the Child Rights** perspective **as enshrined in the Constitution** of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ◎ **Composition** →
 - This commission has a **chairperson and six members** of which at least **two should be women**.
 - All of them are **appointed by Central Government** for **three years**.
 - The maximum age to serve in commission is **65 years for Chairman** and **60 years for members**.

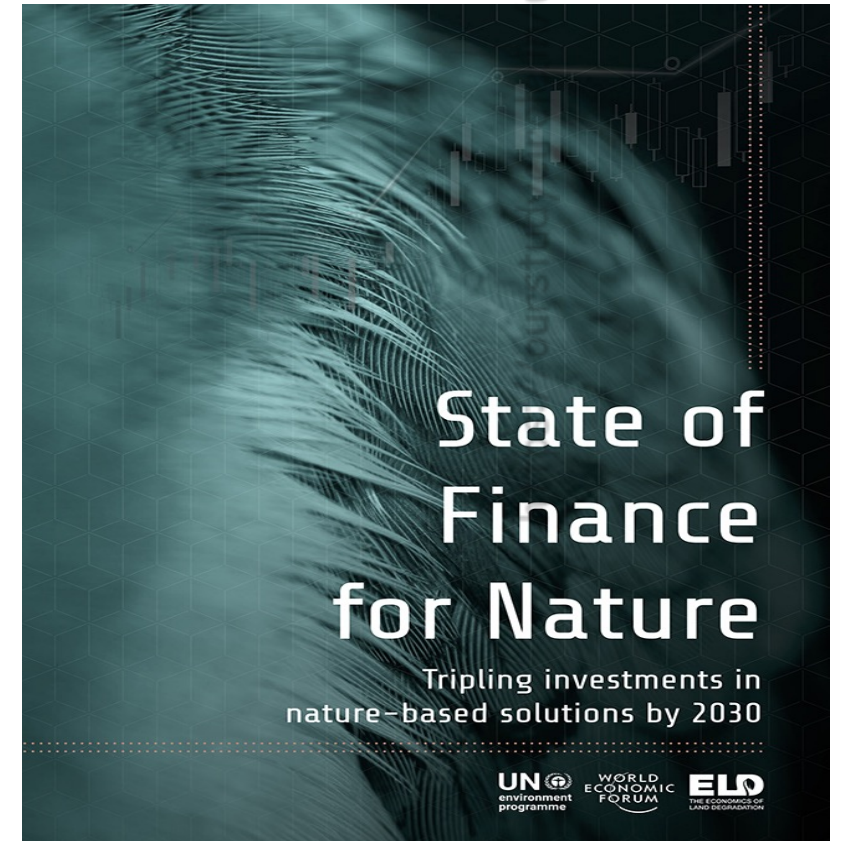
State of Finance for Nature Report



The **State of Finance for Nature Report** has been released. The report recommended more investments in “**Nature-based solutions**”.

👉 About

- © Released by → **United Nations Environment Programme, World Economic Forum** and the **Economics of Land Degradation Initiative**.
- © Purpose → The report **tracks the global trends in public and private investment** in nature-based solutions.
- © By this, it aims to improve data quality and identify opportunities for governments, businesses and financiers.



State of Finance for Nature Report

- ⊙ Nature-based solutions(NbS) refer to sustainable management and the use of nature to tackle socio-environmental challenges.
- ⊙ These challenges range from disaster risk reduction, climate change and biodiversity loss to food and water security as well as human health.

👉 Key Findings

The current investments in Nature-based solutions amount to USD 133 billion. This is about 0.10% of global GDP.

The largest proportion of public investment is carried out by the United States, with approximately \$36 billion a year in NbS spending.

It is followed by China, Japan, Germany and Australia.

Resolution to End Malaria



Recently, the **74th World Health Assembly (WHA)** has adopted a new resolution to **accelerate efforts to end malaria.**

👉 About

- © The resolution is led by the **United States of America** and **Zambia**.
- © Aim → The aim of the resolution is to **urge the Member States** to **step up progress** on containing the disease.
- © It is in **line with WHO's updated global malaria strategy** and the **WHO Guidelines for malaria.**



Resolution to End Malaria

- ⦿ The resolution called on countries to expand investment, scale-up funding for a global response.
- ⦿ Also, it will boost investment in the research and development of new tools.

👉 WHO's Global Malaria Program:

- ⦿ The WHO Global Malaria Program is responsible for coordinating WHO's global efforts to control and eliminate malaria.
- ⦿ The work of the program is guided by the “Global technical strategy for malaria 2016–2030”.

Resolution to End Malaria

👉 Malaria:

- ⦿ Malaria is a life threatening mosquito borne blood disease caused by plasmodium parasites.
- ⦿ It is predominantly found in the tropical and subtropical areas of Africa, South America as well as Asia.
- ⦿ The parasites spread through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes.
 - After entering the human body, parasites initially multiply within the liver cells and then attack the Red Blood Cells (RBCs) resulting in their rupture.
- ⦿ There are 5 parasite species that cause malaria in humans, and 2 of these species – Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax – pose the greatest threat.

Resolution to End Malaria

- ⊙ Symptoms of malaria include fever and flu-like illness, including shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness.
- ⊙ It is preventable as well as curable.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	National Human Rights Commission -> is a Constitutional body.	
2.	Bureau of Indian Standards -> works under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.	
3.	IPO grey market -> there are no regulations that govern it.	
4.	State of Finance for Nature Report -> Released by Reserve Bank of India.	
5.	Malaria -> mosquito borne blood disease caused by plasmodium parasites.	

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

04-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Model Tenancy Act

NEWS

The Union Cabinet has approved the **Model Tenancy Act** for circulation to all States / Union Territories for adaptation by way of enacting fresh legislation or amending existing rental laws suitably. It will help overhaul the legal framework with respect to rental housing across the country.

👉 About

- © The government had first released the draft of the MTA in 2019.
- © The Act aims to bridge the trust deficit between tenants and landlords by clearly delineating their obligations.



Model Tenancy Act

👉 Highlights of the Model Law

- ⦿ Applicable prospectively and will not affect the existing tenancies.
- ⦿ Written agreement is a must for all new tenancies. The agreement will have to be submitted to the concerned district 'Rent Authority'.
- ⦿ The law also speaks about roles and responsibilities of landlord and tenants.
- ⦿ No landlord or property manager can withhold any essential supply to the premises occupied by the tenant.
- ⦿ If tenancy has not been renewed, the tenancy shall be deemed to be renewed on a month-to-month basis on the same terms and conditions as were in the expired tenancy agreement, for a maximum period of six months.

Model Tenancy Act

- ⊙ **Compensation in case of non-vacancy**: On the expiry of extended period of six months of agreed tenancy period or the termination of tenancy by order or notice, the tenant shall be a tenant in default and liable to pay **compensation of double of the monthly rent for two months and four times of the monthly rent thereafter.**
- ⊙ A landowner or property manager may **enter a premise** in **accordance with written notice** or **notice through electronic medium** served to the tenant at least twenty-four hours before the time of entry.
- ⊙ Significance → It is an **important piece of legislation** that promises to **ease the burden on civil courts**, unlock rental properties stuck in legal disputes, and prevent future tangles by balancing the interests of tenants and landlords.

Model Tenancy Act

Model **Tenancy** Act



- Will not affect the existing tenancies
- Written agreement must for all new tenancies
- Separate rent authorities, courts and tribunals to be set up in every district
- States and Union territories can adopt Model Tenancy Act by enacting fresh legislation or they can amend their existing rental laws suitably

Rent Control Act

- ⊙ **Transfer of Property Act, 1882.**
- ⊙ **DRC Act, 1958, last amended in 1988**
- ⊙ **Leave and license agreements**, on the other hand, are entered into for a period of 11 months, with an option to renew the agreement at the expiration of the agreement. As a rental agreement that is 11 months long is just a license for the tenant to occupy the premises for a short duration, **rent control laws do not apply.**

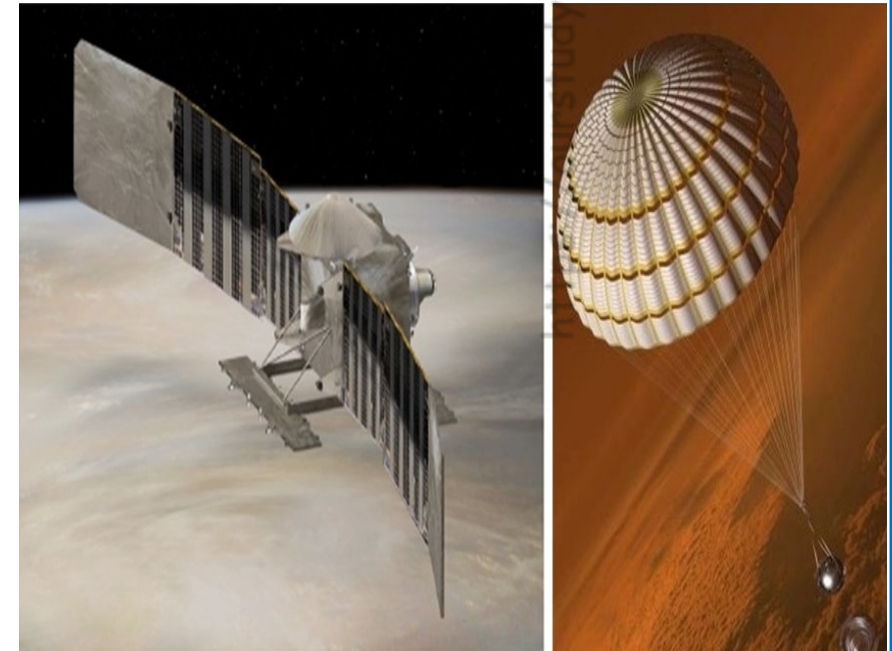
DaVinci Plus and Veritas



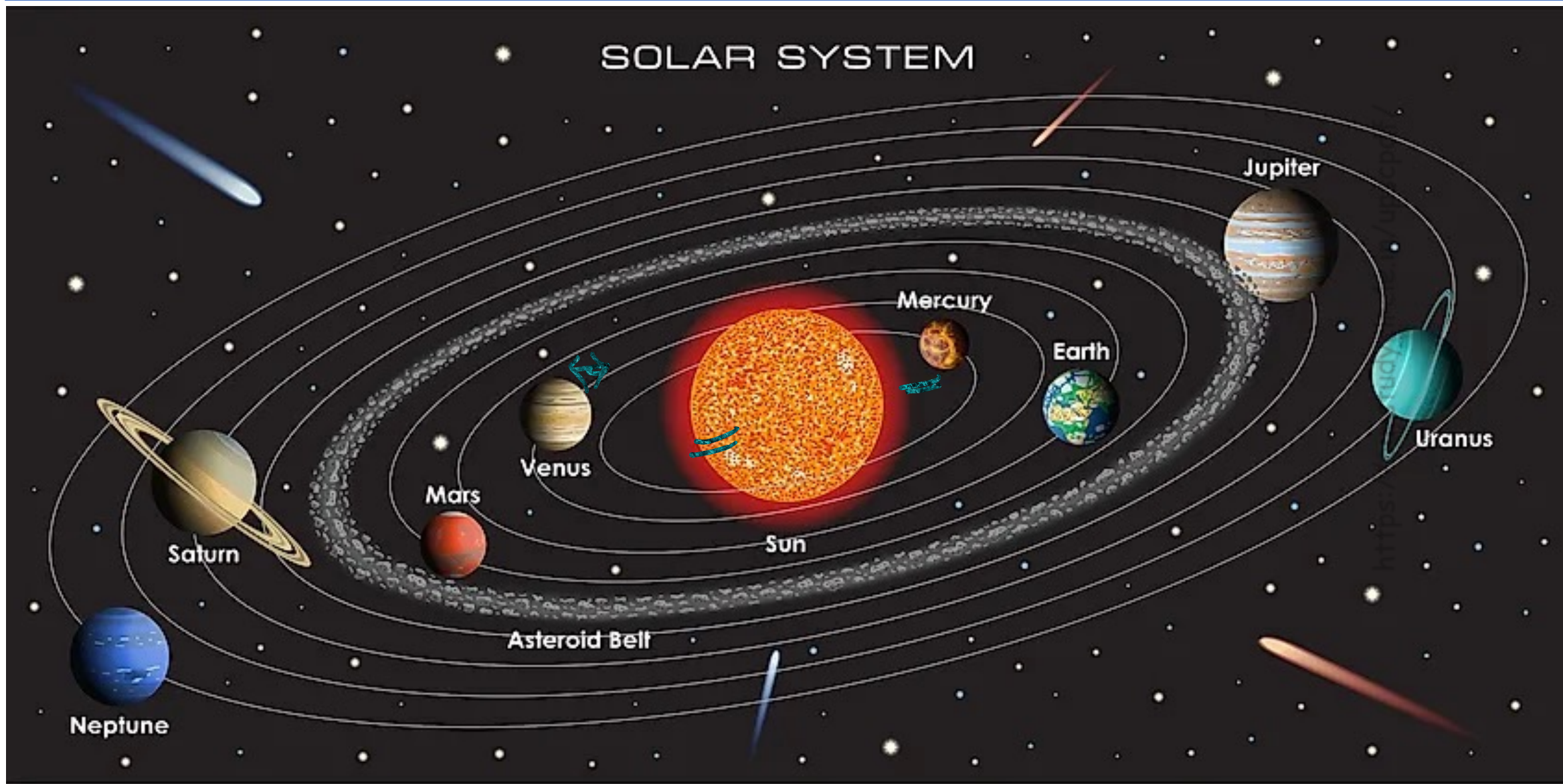
NASA has announced two new Venus Missions. It will examine the planet's atmosphere and geological features.

👉 About

- © Aim → The two sister missions aim to understand how Venus became an inferno-like world capable of melting lead at the surface.
- © The new missions will give fresh views of the planet's atmosphere, made up mostly of carbon dioxide, down to the core.



DaVinci Plus and Veritas



DaVinci Plus and Veritas

◎ DaVinci Plus →

- Davinci+ stands for Deep Atmosphere Venus Investigation of Noble gases, Chemistry, and Imaging.
- Aim → The mission will measure the planet's atmosphere to gain insight into how it formed and evolved. It will also aim to determine whether Venus ever had an ocean and was possibly habitable.
- Significance → This would be the first U.S.-led mission to Venus' atmosphere since 1978. The results from the mission could reshape our understanding of terrestrial planet formation in our solar system and beyond.

◎ Veritas →

- VERITAS stands for Venus Emissivity, Radio Science, InSAR, Topography, and Spectroscopy.

DaVinci Plus and Veritas

- Aim → The mission will map the planet's surface to understand its geologic history and investigate how it developed so differently than Earth.
- The mission will use a form of radar to chart surface elevations and discover whether volcanoes and earthquakes are still happening.
- ◎ Indian Initiative → India plans to launch a new orbiter named Shukrayaan to Venus in 2024.

DaVinci Plus and Veritas

👉 Venus

- ◎ It is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. It is the second planet from the Sun and sixth in the solar system in size and mass.
- ◎ It is the second brightest natural object in the night sky after the Moon, probably that is the reason why it was the first planet to have its motions plotted across the sky, as early as the second millennium BC.
- ◎ Unlike the other planets in our solar system, Venus and Uranus spin clockwise on their axis.
- ◎ It is the hottest planet in the solar system because of the high concentration of carbon dioxide which works to produce an intense greenhouse effect.
- ◎ A day on Venus is longer than a year. It takes Venus longer to rotate once on its axis than to complete one orbit of the Sun.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

NEWS

The Union Cabinet of India has approved the ratification of an Agreement on “Cooperation in the field of Mass Media” between all the Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Agreement was signed in June, 2019.

👉 About

- © What is it? → The SCO is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation.
- © It is a Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance and has been the primary security pillar of the region.
- © History → It was established in 2001. It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism.



Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

- ⊙ The Heads of State Council (**HSC**) is the **supreme decision-making body** in the SCO. It **meets once a year** and adopts decisions and guidelines on all important matters of the organisation.
- ⊙ The SCO's official languages are **Russian** and **Chinese**.
- ⊙ The organisation has two permanent bodies →
 - the **SCO Secretariat** based in **Beijing**.
 - the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (**RATS**) based **in Tashkent**.
- ⊙ Membership →
 - Eight member states: **India**, **Kazakhstan**, **China**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Pakistan**, **Russia**, **Tajikistan**, and **Uzbekistan**.
 - Four observer states: **Afghanistan**, **Belarus**, **Iran** and **Mongolia**.

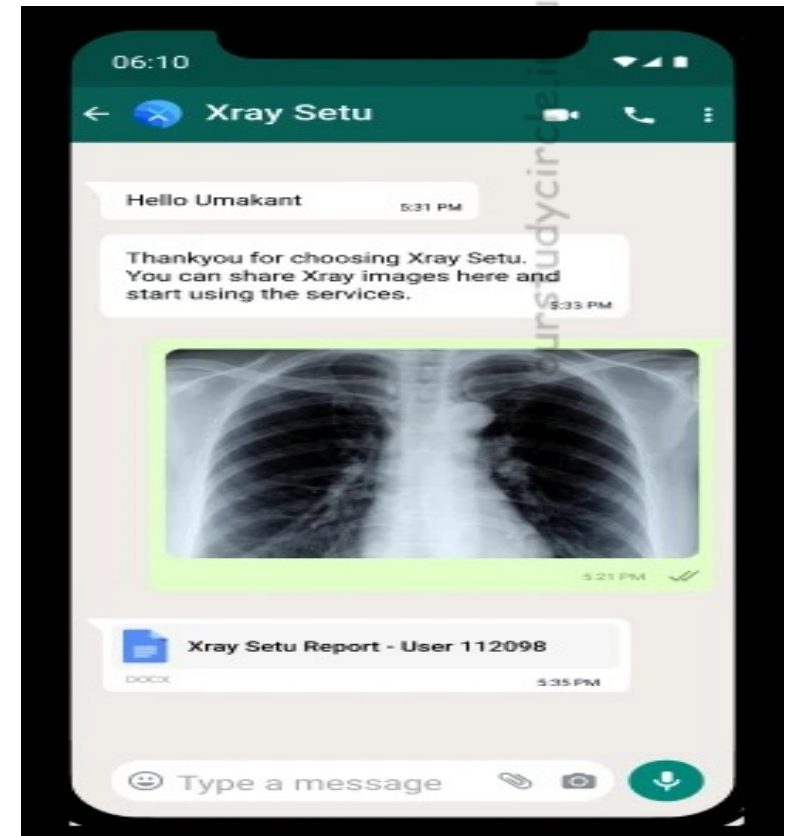
XraySetu Service



The government has launched XraySetu service for rapid screening of COVID 19. with the help of Chest X-ray interpretation over WhatsApp for doctors who have access to X-ray machines.

👉 About

- © What is it? → XraySetu is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Xray interpretation platform.
- © Purpose → It has been developed to identify COVID-19 positive patients even from low-resolution Chest X-Ray images sent over WhatsApp (8046163838).



XraySetu Service

- ⦿ Developed by → ARTPARK (AI & Robotics Technology Park) in collaboration with Bangalore-based HealthTech startup Niramai and Indian Institute of Science(IISc).
- ⦿ How does XraySetu work? →
 - A doctor takes a phone picture of the Chest X-Ray of a suspected patient.
 - Then the doctor sends the X-Ray pic over to a Whatsapp number of XraySetu via chatbot.
 - At XraySetu end, image review is done, and then it is sent to the XraySetu AI service.
 - XraySetu AI Service then analyses the X-ray using specialized machine learning and deep learning algorithms built for detecting unique Covid features in the lungs.

XraySetu Service

- After analysing, a **full report** with a probability of COVID, pneumonia, markings on the lung image is **automatically generated**.
- The doctor then receives the report from the same WhatsApp number on his phone. The **doctor then reads the report** and **appropriately advises the patient**.

XraySetu Service

👉 About ARTPARK

- ◎ ARTPARK (AI & Robotics Technology Park) is a not-for-profit foundation. It was established by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, with support from the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- ◎ Purpose → To promote technology innovation missions in AI (Artificial Intelligence) and Robotics. These missions should have a societal impact in sectors such as healthcare, education, mobility, infrastructure, agriculture, retail, and cyber-security.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	DaVinci Plus -> designed to better understand the geology of Mars and seek signs of ancient life.	
2.	Model Tenancy Act -> Under the act, written agreement is not necessary for new tenancies.	
3.	Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) of SCO -> based in Beijing, China.	
4.	XraySetu Service -> developed to identify COVID-19 positive patients even from low-resolution Chest X-Ray images sent over WhatsApp.	
5.	Venus -> It is the hottest planet in the solar system.	

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

05-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

H10N3 strain of Bird Flu

NEWS

China has reported the world's first case of a human infected with H10N3 avian influenza in its eastern province of Jiangsu.

👉 About

- © H10N3 strain of bird flu is a subtype of the Influenza A virus which is commonly known as the bird flu virus.
- © The virus is normally fatal to wild birds and poultry because among animals it can be spread through respiratory droplets.



World: After Covid we Will be Happy



We have First
Human Case
of H10N3
(Bird Flu)



H10N3 strain of Bird Flu

- ⊙ Risk → H10N3 is a low pathogenic or relatively less severe strain of the avian flu in poultry. Its risk of spreading on a large scale is very low.
- ⊙ Human-Human Transmission → There was no indication or cases of human-to-human transmission of the H10N3 virus.
- ⊙ Is it a Common Virus? → H10N3 is not a very common virus and only around 160 isolates of the virus were reported in the 40 years to 2018.
 - However, still, flu viruses can mutate rapidly and mix with other strains circulating on farms or among migratory birds.
 - This is known as reassortment (mixing of the genetic material). This reassortment can make genetic changes that pose a transmission threat to humans.

SDG India Index 2020-21



Recently, the third edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2020–21 was released by NITI Aayog.

👉 About Index

- © The SDG India Index was launched in 2018 by NITI Aayog. It was developed in collaboration with the United Nations.
- © Aim → As the States, progress will determine India's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Report Card

Niti Aayog unveils 2020-21 SDG India Index

Tracks progress of states on social indicators

Index in line with global SDG-2030

CURRENT POSITION

12 more states join front-runner category

Maximum improvement on clean water & sanitation

Fares in better affordable, clean energy

STATES ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE

Kerala, HP, TN, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Uttarakhand

STATES BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE

Manipur, MP, Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, Odisha

WORST PERFORMERS

Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, UP, Rajasthan

SDG India Index 2020-21

- ⦿ The index aims to instil competition among States to improve their performance across social indices.
- ⦿ Indicators Covered → The third edition of the index covered 16 SDG Goals on 115 quantitative indicators.
- ⦿ In 2018, around 13 SDG goals with 62 indicators were covered.
- ⦿ Methodology →
 - Scoring: A composite score for SDG Index is computed in the range of 0–100 for each State/UT based on its aggregate performance across 16 SDGs.
 - The higher the score of a State/UT, the closer it is towards achieving the 2030 national targets.

SDG India Index 2020-21

- **Classification:** States/UTs are classified based on the SDG India Index Score as follows:
- **Aspirant**: 0–49
- **Performer**: 50–64
- **Front Runner**: 65–99
- **Achiever**: 100.

Key Findings

- ◎ India's overall SDG score **improved by 6 points** — from 60 in 2019 to **66 in 2020-21**.
 - This is due to **improvement in providing facilities** including clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy among others.

SDG India Index 2020-21

- ◎ Categories → Currently, there are no states in the aspirant and achiever category. Around 15 states/UTs are in the performer category and 22 states/UTs in the front runner category.
- ◎ State Wise Performance →
 - Kerala has topped the index with a score of 75.
 - It was followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu with a score of 74.
 - Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam were the worst-performing states in the SDG India index.
- ◎ UTs → Chandigarh maintained its top spot among the UTs with a score of 79, followed by Delhi (68).
- ◎ Top Gainers → Mizoram, Haryana and Uttarakhand are the top gainers in 2020-21 in terms of improvement in score from 2019.

World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021

NEWS

Recently, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has released the World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends (WESO) report 2021.

👉 About

- © The report analyses key labour market issues including unemployment, labour underutilisation, working poverty, income inequality, labour income share and factors that exclude people from decent work.
- © It highlights how the COVID-19 crisis had worsened pre-existing inequalities by hitting vulnerable workers harder.



World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021

👉 Key Findings

- ⦿ Covid-19 induced jobs loss will reach 75 million in 2021, before falling to 23 million in 2022.
- ⦿ Unemployment is expected to stand at 205 million people in 2022.
- ⦿ The quality of newly created jobs would likely deteriorate in developing and emerging economies.
- ⦿ Compared to 2019, an additional 108 million workers worldwide are now categorized as poor or extremely poor.

World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021

👉 International Labour Organisation

- ◎ It was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice.
 - It became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946.
- ◎ It is a tripartite organization, the only one of its kind bringing together representatives of governments, employers and workers in its executive bodies.
- ◎ Members →
 - India is a founding member of the ILO with a total 187 member States.
 - In 2020 India assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of ILO.
- ◎ Headquarter → Geneva in Switzerland.

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpd>

Seed Minikit Programme

NEWS

The Seed Minikit Programme was launched by Union Agriculture Minister by distributing Seed Minikits (higher yielding varieties of seeds) of Pulses and oilseeds to farmers.

👉 About

- © Launched by → Ministry of Agriculture.
- © Seed Minikit Programme aims to distribute high yielding varieties of seeds of pulses and oilseeds to farmers.
- © Funding → The programme is wholly funded by the Center through the National Food Security Mission.



Seed Minikit Programme

- ◎ Nodal Agencies → The seed mini-kits are being provided by the following central agencies –
 - National Seeds Corporation(NCS)
 - NAFED
 - Gujarat State Seeds Corporation.
- ◎ Significance → This programme is a major tool for introducing new varieties of seeds in fields and instrumental in increasing the seed replacement rate.

Devika Project of Udhampur

NEWS

Recently, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions has said that Devika Project is for all and therefore suggestions are welcome from every Party.

👉 About

- © It is North India's first- of- its- kind project located in Udhampur, Jammu & Kashmir.
- © It is Rs.190 Crore project under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) which started in March 2019.



Devika Project of Udhampur

- ◎ The activities involved under the project are →
 - Bathing “ghats” (places) on the banks of the Devika River will be developed;
 - Encroachments will be removed; and
 - Natural water bodies will be restored and catchment areas will be developed along with cremation ground.
- ◎ The project includes the construction of three sewage treatment plants of.



Devika Project of Udhampur

👉 About Devika River

- ◎ It holds great religious significance as it is revered by Hindus as the sister of river Ganga.
- ◎ In the Nilmat Puran that was written in the 7th century by Nela Muni, it is mentioned that the Devika River is a manifestation of the mother Goddess Parwati herself to benefit the people of Mader Desha.
- ◎ It originates from the hilly Suddha Mahadev temple in Udhampur district of Jammu & Kashmir and flows down towards western Punjab (now in Pakistan) where it merges with the Ravi River.

Industrial Deep Decarbonisation Initiative

NEWS

India along with Govt. of United Kingdom has recently launched a new workstream to promote **industrial energy efficiency** under the **Industrial Deep Decarbonization Initiative (IDDI)** at the 12th Chief Energy Ministerial (CEM).

👉 About IDDI

- © It is a Clean Energy Ministerial's (CEM's) initiative.
- © It is a global coalition of public and private organisations who are working to stimulate demand for low carbon industrial materials.



Industrial Deep Decarbonisation Initiative

- ⊙ In collaboration with national governments, IDDI works to standardise carbon assessments, establish ambitious public and private sector procurement targets, incentivise investment into low-carbon product development and design industry guidelines.
- ⊙ Supporting Countries → Coordinated by UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the IDDI is co-led by the UK and India and current members include Germany and Canada.

Industrial Deep Decarbonisation Initiative

👉 Clean Energy Ministerial Initiative

- ⦿ It was established in December 2009 at the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change conference of parties in Copenhagen.
- ⦿ Purpose → CEM is a high-level global forum to promote policies and programs that advance clean energy technology, to share lessons learned and best practices, and to encourage the transition to a global clean energy economy.
- ⦿ Members →
 - 29 countries are part of CEM.
 - India is also a member country.

Red Tourism

NEWS

As the Chinese Communist Party celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, the popularity of 'red tourism' is at an all-time high in the country and is bringing in huge revenues for China.

👉 About

- © Launched in **2004**, Red Tourism **involves visiting places** that are of **historical and cultural importance to the Communist Party's history**, while also providing an impetus to tourism and local businesses.
- © It **reminds people of the sacrifices** made by the leaders of the Communist party to forge a modern China.



Quick revision (True/False)

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

07-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Anti-hail gun

NEWS

To help out horticulturists who face crop damage due to hailstorms, the Himachal Pradesh government will be testing the use of indigenously developed 'anti-hail guns'.

👉 About Anti-hail gun

- © What is it? → An anti-hail gun is a machine that generates shock waves to disrupt the growth of hailstones in clouds.
- © Developed by → developed indigenously by IIT Bombay along with Dr Y S Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry at Nauni (Solan). They are likely to be much cheaper than the imported ones.



Anti-hail gun

But, what is the need? Why is hail a big issue in HP? →

Every summer from March to May, frequent hailstorms in the fruit-growing areas of Himachal destroy apples, pears and other crops, causing massive losses to farmers.

- In some hail-prone areas such as Narkanda and Theog, the entire apple crop in an orchard may sometimes get destroyed during such storms.



Anti-hail gun

- ⊙ How do anti-hail guns prevent a hail storm? →
 - Anti-hail gun comprises a tall, fixed structure somewhat resembling an inverted tower, several meters high with a long and narrow cone opening towards the sky.
 - The gun is “fired” by feeding an explosive mixture of acetylene gas & air into its lower chamber. This releases a shock wave (waves that travel faster than the speed of sound, such as those produced by supersonic aircraft).
 - These shock waves supposedly stop water droplets in clouds from turning into hailstones, so that they fall simply as raindrops.

SAGE initiative and SAGE portal



The Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, launched the SAGE (Senior care Aging Growth Engine) initiative and SAGE portal to support India's elderly persons.

👉 About

- © SAGE Initiative and SAGE Portal have been launched with an aim to provide “one-stop access” for elderly care. The portal will provide access to all elderly care products and services developed by credible start-ups.
- © The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment will act as a facilitator for this scheme.



SAGE initiative and SAGE portal

👉 Key Features of the Initiative

- ⦿ Helping start-ups → The initiative aims to help startups that are interested in the field of providing services for elderly care.
 - Selection of start-ups → Start-ups will be selected by an independent screening committee of experts.
 - Basis of selection → The committee will select the startups on the basis of their innovative products and services across sectors. Such as health, housing, care centres, food, wealth management and legal guidance.
 - Fund → A fund of up to Rs 1 crore as one-time equity will be granted to each selected start-up.

Blue Finned Mahseer

NEWS

Recently, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has moved Blue-finned Mahseer from Endangered to the Least Concern' status on its Red List.

👉 About Blue Finned Mahseer

- © The Mahseer belongs to the genus Tor, of which there are several subspecies to be found in India and in other range countries in South Asia.
- © The Blue-finned Mahseer or Tor Khudree is one of the subspecies of the Mahseer.



Blue Finned Mahseer

- ⊙ IUCN Status → Least Concern (LC).
- ⊙ Features →
 - It is a silvery-bluish coloured fish with blood-red fins or fins tipped with a bluish tinge.
 - Indicator species: Blue finned Mahseer is very sensitive to dissolved oxygen levels, water temperature and sudden climatic changes. It just cannot bear pollution.
 - Hence, it acts as an indicator of ecosystem health because its prime requirement is a clean and pure environment.
- ⊙ Diet → The fish feeds on plants, fruits, insects, shrimps. They are also predatory and prey on smaller mahseer.

Blue Finned Mahseer

- ⦿ Habitat → Blue Finned Mahseer is found in the Mula-Mutha River close to the Indian city of Pune, a part of the Krishna River basin. It is also found in other rivers of the Deccan Plateau.
- ⦿ The species is migratory and moves upstream during rains.
- 👉 **Conservation Initiative by Tata power:**
- ⦿ Tata Group is involved in the conservation of the blue-finned and golden mahseer for 50 years in an Artificial Lake at the Walvan Hatchery in Lonavala (near Pune), Maharashtra.
- ⦿ The company created a huge lake by damming the Indrayani River. It is at this artificial lake where Blue-Finned and Golden species of Mahseer congregate. Once the eggs hatch, they remain in the lake for 4-6 months.
- ⦿ They are then handed over to various fisheries departments across the country, who in turn introduce them to lakes and rivers in their states.

Project-75I

NEWS

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by the Defence Minister has approved a Request For Proposal (RFP) for the construction of six conventional submarines under Project-75I.

👉 About

- © The six submarines under Project-75I will be built under the strategic partnership model.
- © Estimated cost → Rs 43,000 crore.
- © Part of → The submarines are part of the 30-year submarine-building programme approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security in 1999.



Project-75I

- ⊙ Features → The submarines will be equipped with air-independent propulsion (AIP) systems that will enable the vessels to stay underwater for longer periods and enhance their combat capabilities.
- ⊙ The first submarine built under the project is likely to be delivered by 2030.
- ⊙ Two Indian companies shortlisted as strategic partners are Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and Larsen & Toubro.
- ⊙ The foreign manufacturers selected for the project are **French** Naval Group, **German** conglomerate Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems, **Russia's** Rubin Design Bureau, **Spain's** Navantia and **South Korea's** Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Company.

Project-75I

◎ Significance of this Project-75I →

- This is the first project to be approved under the Strategic Partnership Model.
- This would be one of the largest 'Make in India' projects. It will create an industrial ecosystem for submarine construction in India.
- From a strategic perspective, Project-75I will help reduce current dependence on imports and gradually ensure greater self-reliance.

◎ Strategic Partnership Model → It is a part of the Defence Procurement Procedure. The model envisages indigenous manufacturing of major defence platforms by an Indian strategic partner. Indian partner will collaborate with a foreign original equipment manufacturer(OEM) to set up production facilities in the country.

Black Carbon

NEWS

The World Bank has released a report titled “Glaciers of the Himalayas, Climate Change, Black Carbon and Regional Resilience”.

👉 About Himalaya, Karakoram and Hindu Kush (HKHK) mountain region

- © The glaciers in the HKHK mountain ranges, containing almost 55000 glaciers. They store more freshwater than any region outside the North and South Poles.
- © Their ice reserves feed into three major river basins in South Asia—the Indus, Ganges, and the Brahmaputra. These rivers are home to 750 million people.



Black Carbon

👉 About Black Carbon (BC):

- ⦿ Black carbon (BC) is a short-lived climate pollutant. It is the second-largest contributor to warming the planet after carbon dioxide(CO₂).
- ⦿ It absorbs solar energy and warms the atmosphere. When it falls to earth with precipitation, it darkens the surface of snow and ice. Thus reducing their albedo (the reflecting power of a surface), and warming the snow, resulting in the faster glacial melting.
- ⦿ However, unlike other greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), Black carbon is quickly washed out and can be eliminated from the atmosphere if emissions stop.
- ⦿ Source of Black Carbon in HKHK region →
 - Industry [primarily brick kilns] and residential burning of solid fuel together account for 45–66% of Black carbon emissions; On-Road diesel fuels(7–18%) and Open burning (less than 3% in all seasons).

Black Carbon

👉 Key findings

- ⦿ Black carbon (BC) deposits produced by human activity accelerate the pace of glacier and snow melt in the Himalayan region.
- ⦿ The rate of retreat of HKHK glaciers is estimated to be 0.3 metres per year in the west to 1.0 metre per year in the east. Black carbon adds to the impact of climate change.
- ⦿ Deposits of Black carbon act in two ways hastening the pace of glacier melt: by decreasing surface reflectance of sunlight and by raising air temperature.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Anti-hail gun -> developed indigenously by DRDO.	
2.	SAGE initiative -> aims to help startups that are interested in the field of providing services for elderly care.	
3.	Blue Finned Mahseer -> IUCN: Endangered.	
4.	Project-75I -> six submarines under Project-75I will be built under the strategic partnership model.	
5.	Black Carbon -> is a long-lived climate pollutant.	

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

08-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Burkina Faso

NEWS

Suspected fundamentalists linked to Al-Qaeda and Islamic State have killed at least 160 civilians in Burkina Faso near the borders with Mali and Niger (village of Solhan).

👉 Issue

- ⦿ The country's president, Roch Kabore, has declared three days of national mourning.
- ⦿ U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the latest attack in which at least seven children were killed.
- ⦿ Guterres called it a "heinous attack." He said it underscores the urgent need for the international community to help governments in the region fight violent extremism.
- ⦿ It is deadliest attack since 2015 (After President Blaise Compaoré)





**BURKINA
FASO**

Ouagadougou

Solhan

Niger

Bénin

Côte
d'Ivoire

Ghana

Togo

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Mali

Niger

Burkina Faso

Ouagadougou

Guinea

Benin

Nigeria

Ivory Coast

Togo

Ghana

Liberia

Burkina Faso

- ◎ Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in western Africa.
- ◎ Location → It is bounded by Mali to the north and west, Niger to the northeast, Benin to the southeast, and Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo to the south.
- ◎ It is a low-income Sahelian country with limited natural resources.
- ◎ Its economy is largely based on agriculture, which employs 80% of the workforce, although gold exports have increased.
- ◎ The country occupies an extensive plateau, and its geography is characterized by a savanna that is grassy in the north and gradually gives way to sparse forests in the south.

I-Familia

NEWS

The Interpol has launched a new global database named 'I-Familia'. It will identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world through DNA of relatives.

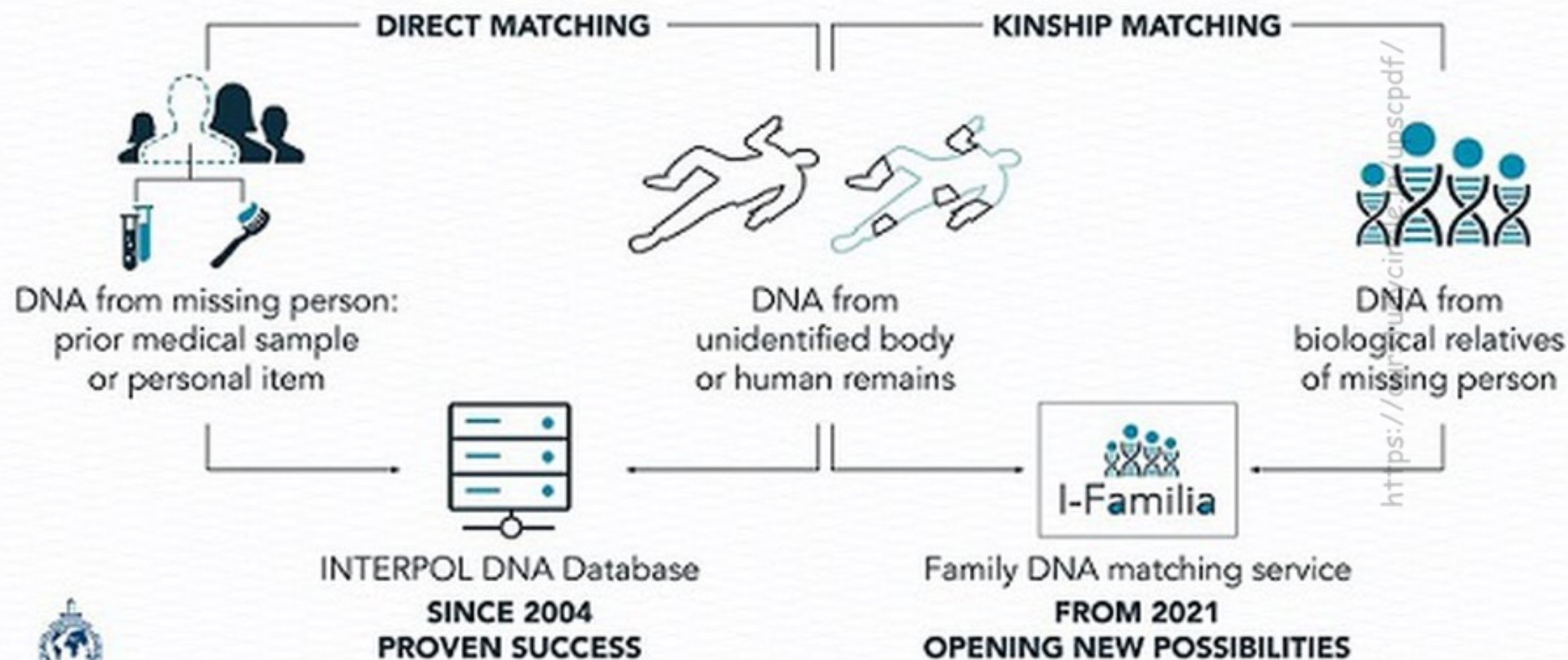
👉 About

- © What is it? → I-Familia is a global database launched to identify missing persons through family DNA. It will help the police to solve cases in member countries.
- © Interpol applies cutting-edge scientific research and uses the DNA of relatives to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains around the world.



INTERPOL

TWO TYPES OF DNA MATCHING



I-Familia

- ⊙ DNA kinship matching is used mostly in cases where a direct sample of the missing person is not available.
- ⊙ Components → I-Familia has three components:
 - Dedicated global database to host the DNA profiles provided by relatives. It is held separately from any criminal data;
 - DNA matching software called Bonaparte developed by Dutch company Smart Research; and
 - Interpretation guidelines developed by Interpol.

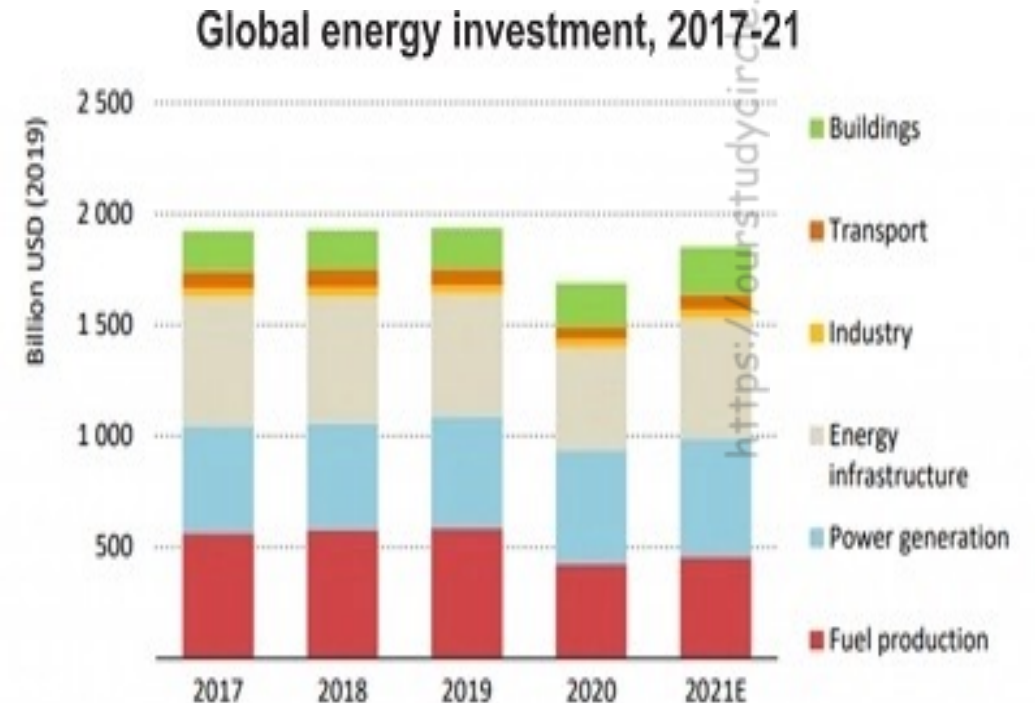
World Energy Investment Report 2021



Recently, the International Energy Agency (IEA) published the World Energy Investment Report, 2021.

👉 About

- © The report presents the latest data and analysis of how energy investment flows are recovering from the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- © This includes full-year outlook estimates for 2021.



World Energy Investment Report 2021

👉 Key Findings

- ⦿ Global energy investments are set to recover by nearly 10% in 2021 to **\$1.9 trillion** reversing the decline in 2020.
- ⦿ **Global Power Sector** which saw flat investments in 2020 is **set to receive the highest ever funding** i.e. up by about 5% to more than \$820 billion. Among them, Renewables are forecast to account for 70% of the total.
- ⦿ The technologies like Carbon Capture and Storage(CCS) are yet to attain commercial success. So, the investments in oil are expected to grow by about 10%.
- ⦿ Net Zero Plan: The commitments to the Net Zero plan is gaining momentum, but its transition to actual action is not visible.

World Energy Investment Report 2021

👉 International Energy Agency

- ◎ It is an autonomous Intergovernmental Organisation established in 1974 in Paris, France.
- ◎ IEA mainly focuses on its energy policies which include economic development, energy security and environmental protection. These policies are also known as the 3 E's of IEA.
- ◎ India and IEA →
 - India became an Associate member of IEA in March 2017 but it was in engagement with IEA long before its association with the organization.
 - Recently, India has inked a Strategic Partnership Agreement with the IEA to strengthen cooperation in global energy security, stability and sustainability.

Reports → World Energy Investment Report, World Energy Outlook Report, Global Energy Review.

Performance Grading Index



The Union Education Minister has approved the release of **Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2019-20** for States and Union Territories.

👉 About

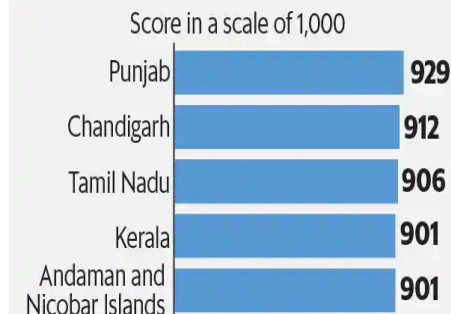
- Released by → **Department of School Education and Literacy** (DoSEL), Ministry of Education.
- Performance Grading Index (PGI) is a **tool to provide insights** on the **status of school education in States and UTs**.
- This includes key levers that drive their performance and critical areas for improvement.

Improved performance

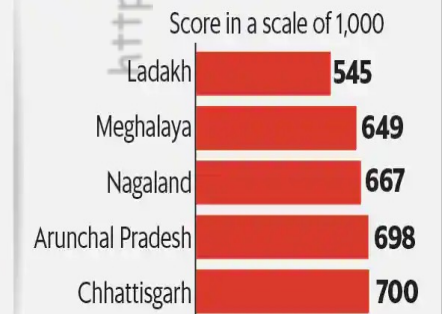
Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Puducherry, Punjab and Tamil Nadu have improved overall score in the performance grading index by 10%.

Score of states in school performance index

Top 5 states/UTs



Bottom 5 states/UTs



Source: Union education ministry

Performance Grading Index

- ◎ Parameters → The index is structured in two categories namely: Outcomes and Governance & Management. These categories comprise a set of 70 indicators aggregate with a total weightage of 1000. These indicators are related to:
 - Learning outcomes
 - Access
 - Infrastructure and facilities
 - Equity and
 - Governance and management.
- ◎ Data → The index is based on the data drawn from the Unified District Information System for Education, National Achievement Survey (conducted by NCERT in 2017), Mid-Day Meal, Public Financial Management System, and the Shagun portal (92 lakh teachers and 26 crore students) — all maintained by the department of school education.

Performance Grading Index

⦿ First Released in → The Index was first published in 2019 with the reference year 2017-18.

👉 Important Findings

⦿ Punjab scored highest: Punjab has recorded the highest score in the index with a total of 929 out of 1,000. This is a huge improvement from 769 in 2020.

⦿ Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have all scored higher than 90% in the Index for 2019-20.

⦿ Gujarat drops from second to 8th place.

⦿ Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh also saw a severe drop in their scores. Thus pushing both States to an overall performance that was worse than in the previous edition of the index.

Lamu port

NEWS

Kenya recently launched its newest mega infrastructure project, the Lamu port, which is a **part of an ambitious transport corridor** between Lamu (a small archipelago north of Mombasa in Kenya), South Sudan and Ethiopia.

👉 About

- © The Lamu port is going to be **Kenya's second deep-water port** after Mombasa.
- © The port is **part of the wider US \$23 billion Lamu Port South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) corridor** and has been constructed by China Communications Construction Company, with the first three of the planned 32 berths coming at a cost of US \$367 million.





1000 mi
1000 km



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Saltwater Crocodile

NEWS

Recently, a saltwater or estuarine crocodile has been found dead in the Patasala river near Silapokhari village within the Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) in Odisha (**only State in India with all crocodiles species: Gharial, Mugger and Saltwater crocodiles**).

👉 About

- © It is considered as the Earth's largest living crocodile species.
- © The estuarine crocodile is infamous globally as a known maneater.



Lamu port

⊙ Habitat →

- It is found in Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park, the Sundarbans in West Bengal and the Andamans and Nicobar Islands.
- It is also found across Southeast Asia and northern Australia.

⊙ Protection Status →

- IUCN Red List: Least Concern
- Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I
- CITES : Appendix I (except the populations of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, which are included in Appendix II).

- ## ⊙ Threats → Illegal hunting, habitat loss, and antipathy toward the species because of its reputation as a man-eater continue to put pressure on the population.

Lamu port

⦿ Conservation Efforts →

- In 1975, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) started a crocodile breeding and rearing project.
- Efforts have increased the number of crocodiles in BNP to 1,768 in January 2021 from just 96 in 1974.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	I-Familia -> is a global database launched to identify missing persons through family DNA.	
2.	International Energy Agency -> established in 1957 in Vienna, Austria.	
3.	Burkina Faso -> is a landlocked country in western Africa.	
4.	Performance Grading Index -> Launched by Niti Aayog.	
5.	Saltwater Crocodile -> The Chambal river in the northern slopes of the Vindhya mountains (Madhya Pradesh) is known as the primary habitat of Saltwater Crocodile.	

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

09-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Sea Snot

NEWS

There has been growing environmental concern in Turkey over the accumulation of 'sea snot', a slimy layer of grey or green sludge in the country's seas, which can cause considerable damage to the marine ecosystem.

👉 About Sea Snot

- ◎ It is a slimy layer of grey or green sludge (गाद), which can cause considerable damage to the marine ecosystem.
- ◎ It is formed when algae are overloaded with nutrients.





RUSSIA

CHINA

INDIA

<https://olastudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Sea Snot

- ⦿ A 'sea snot' outbreak was first recorded in the country in 2007. Back then, it was also spotted in the Aegean Sea near Greece.
- ⦿ Overloading of nutrients happens because of warm weather caused by global warming, water pollution, uncontrolled dumping of household and industrial waste into the seas etc.

👉 Where has it been found?

- ⦿ Turkey's Sea of Marmara, which connects the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea, has witnessed the largest outbreak of 'sea snot'.
- ⦿ The sludge has also been spotted in the adjoining Black and Aegean seas.



Sea Spot

👉 How badly can the crisis affect the marine ecosystem?

- ⦿ Divers have said that it has caused mass deaths among the fish population, and also killed other aquatic organisms such as corals.
- ⦿ The mucilage is now covering the surface of the sea and has also spread to 80-100 feet below the surface.
- ⦿ If unchecked, this can collapse to the bottom and cover the sea floor, causing major damage to the marine ecosystem.
- ⦿ Over a period of time, it could end up poisoning all aquatic life, including fishes, crabs, oysters (घोंघा/ सीप) and sea stars.

ASEAN



China is hosting Foreign Ministers from the 10 ASEAN countries. The event also marks the 30-year anniversary of relations.

👉 About ASEAN

- © The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional organization which was established to promote political and social stability.
- © Motto → The motto of ASEAN is “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.



Image: ASEAN

ASEAN

- ◎ ASEAN Secretariat → Indonesia, Jakarta.
- ◎ Formation → Established in 1967 with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by its founding fathers.
- ◎ Founding Fathers of ASEAN are → Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- ◎ Ten Members → Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- ◎ Significance of ASEAN for India →
 - Against the backdrop of aggressive moves by China, including the Ladakh standoff, India placed the ASEAN at the centre of India's Act East policy and held that a cohesive and responsive ASEAN is essential for security and growth for all in the region.

UN's CEO Water Mandate

NEWS

NTPC Ltd. has become a signatory to the United Nations' Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate.

👉 About

- © It is a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General and the UN Global Compact, implemented in partnership with the Pacific Institute.
- © Established in → 2007.
- © Aim → It aims to demonstrate commitment and efforts of companies to better their water and sanitation agendas as part of long term Sustainable Development Goals.



UN's CEO Water Mandate

- ◎ It is a **global commitment platform** for **corporate water stewardship**. Water stewardship is the use of water in ways that are socially equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial.
- ◎ It has six commitment areas →
 - Direct operations (i.e. Measuring and Reducing water use).
 - Supply chain and watershed management.
 - Collective action.
 - Public policy.
 - Community engagement.
 - Transparency.

UN's CEO Water Mandate

👉 **United Nations Global Compact Initiative:**

- ⦿ United Nations Global Compact is a non-binding United Nations Initiative.
- ⦿ Purpose → It aims to encourage companies worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. For that, the UN categorised 10 principles range from human rights, anti-corruption, environment, labour, etc.
- ⦿ Launched in → The initiative was announced by the then UN Secretary-General in 1999. It was officially launched at UN Headquarters in New York City in 2000.

G7 corporate tax deal



A group of the world's richest nations reached a landmark deal to close cross-border tax loopholes used by some of the world's biggest companies.

👉 About

- © The Group of Seven (G7) would support a minimum global corporation tax rate of at least 15%.
- © They would put in place measures to ensure taxes were paid in the countries where businesses operate.



G7 corporate tax deal

⦿ How will it work? →

- Global minimum tax rate would apply to Overseas profits.
- Governments could set whatever local corporate tax rate they want, but if companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments could top-up their taxes to the minimum rate, thus eliminating the advantage of shifting profits.
- The Organisation of Economic, Cooperation and Development (OECD) has also been coordinating tax negotiations on rules for taxing cross-border Digital Services and curbing tax base erosion, including a global corporate minimum tax.
- Also, countries would lose the device used to push policies that suit them once a global minimum rate is put in place.

G7 corporate tax deal

- ◎ Impact on India → The decision is likely to benefit India as India has wanted to keep corporate tax rate artificially lower to attract FDI in comparison to tax havens or low taxation countries.

United Nations General Assembly

NEWS

In a first for the Maldives, Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid was elected the President of the UN General Assembly for 2021-22. This time the UNGA head will be chosen from the Asia-Pacific grouping.

👉 About UNGA

- © The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN.
- © All 193 Member States of the UN are represented in the General Assembly, making it the only UN body with universal representation.



United Nations General Assembly

- ◎ The **President** of the General Assembly is **elected each year** by assembly to **serve a one-year term** of office.
- ◎ The presidency **rotates annually** between the **five geographic groups**: African, Asia-Pacific, Eastern European, Latin American and Caribbean, and Western European and other States.
- ◎ How are the decisions taken?
 - **Decisions on important questions**, such as those on peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.
 - **Decisions on other questions** are by simple majority.
 - The Assembly has **no binding votes** or **veto powers** like the UN Security Council.

Lynetteholm Island

NEWS

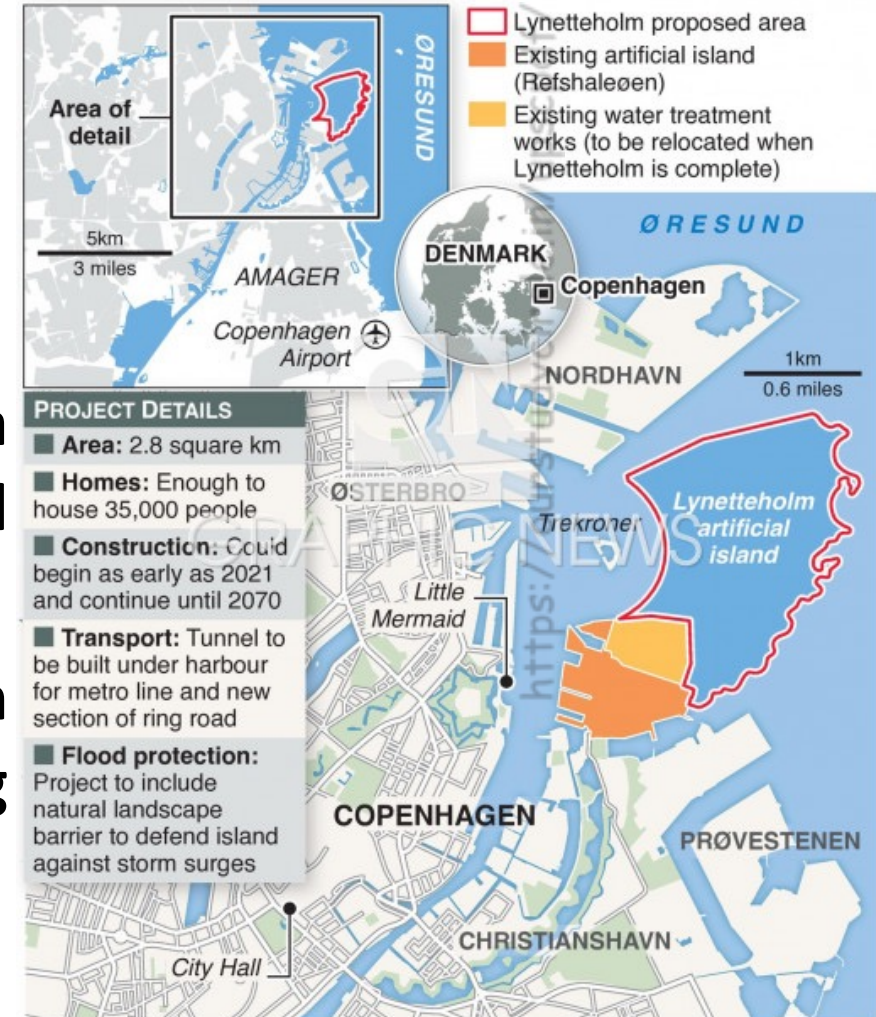
Recently, Denmark has approved the building of Lynetteholm, an artificial island off the coast of Copenhagen (capital of Denmark, located near Baltic Sea).

👉 About

- © The 275-hectare project was designed as a housing and business district for around 35,000 people.
- © It will be built using soil from construction projects in Copenhagen and the surrounding area.

Copenhagen's Lynetteholm island plan

Denmark's Parliament is to debate the construction of Lynetteholm – an artificial island in Copenhagen's North Harbour. The massive engineering project would require an investment of over \$3 billion*





Lynetteholm Island

⊙ Concerns Raised →

- Transportation of materials by road will involve a large number of vehicles. About 350 lorry journeys will be required in a day through Copenhagen once the construction has started.
- Movement of sediment at sea and the possible impact on water quality, ecosystems of the Baltic Sea environment.
- Following this, a case against the development of Lynette Holm has been filed before **European Court of Justice** by environmental groups.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
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3.	ASEAN -> Established in 1967. Secretariat - Indonesia, Jakarta	
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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

10-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve

NEWS

Administrative and financial sanction for improvement and maintenance of a forest road **not in use for decades** in the core zone of Srivilliputhur - Megamalai Tiger Reserve (SMTR) has come as a shocker to the activists .

👉 About Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve

- © Establishment → Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve is the **fifth Tiger Reserve of Tamil Nadu** and the **51st tiger reserve of India**.
- © It was jointly declared as a Tiger Reserve by the Centre and Tamil Nadu governments in **February 2021**.



Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve

- ⊙ For this, the Megamalai WLS and the adjoining Srivilliputhur WLS were clubbed together.
- ⊙ Vegetation → It has a mix of tropical evergreen forests and semi-evergreen forests, dry deciduous forests and moist mixed deciduous forests, grassland.
- ⊙ Fauna →
 - Meghamalai has a large population of spotted deer, Indian gaurs, wild boars and other carnivores.
 - The adjoining Srivilliputhur hosts grizzled giant squirrels, flying squirrels, leopards, Nilgiri tars, jungle cats, Sambar, elephants, lion-tailed macaques and many species of birds.

Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve

- ◎ Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve will be the 5th tiger reserve of Tamil Nadu. The other four are →
1. Mudumalai (MTR)
 2. Anamalai (ATR)
 3. Sathyamangalam (STR)
 4. Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR)

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

NEWS

The Chemical Weapons Convention (international chemical weapons watchdog) told the U.N. Security Council that Syria had likely or definitely used chemical weapons in 17 cases.

👉 About OPCW

- © OPCW is an intergovernmental organization and the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention.
- © This convention has been in force since 1997 and 193 members.
- © Aim → To achieve the vision of a world free of chemical weapons by implementing the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

⊙ Functions →

- The OPCW is authorized to perform inspections to verify that signatory states are complying with the convention.
- It can also perform testing of sites and victims of suspected chemical weapons attacks.

⊙ Headquarters → The Hague, Netherlands.

⊙ Significance → The OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

👉 Chemical Weapons Convention

- ⦿ Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is a multilateral treaty that bans chemical weapons and requires their destruction within a specified period of time.
- ⦿ History → The negotiations for the convention started in 1980 at the UN Conference on Disarmament. The convention opened for signature in 1993 and entered into force in 1997.
- ⦿ Purpose → The convention prohibits the large-scale use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of chemical weapons and their precursors, except for very limited purposes (research, medical, pharmaceutical or protective).
- ⦿ Implemented by → the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

- ◎ **Members →** The convention is open to all nations and currently has 193 states-parties. India signed the treaty in 1993.
 - Israel has signed but has yet to ratify the convention.
 - Three states have neither signed nor ratified the convention are Egypt, North Korea and South Sudan.
- ◎ **Significance →** A unique feature of the Convention is its incorporation of the 'challenge inspection'. Under this, any State Party in doubt about another State Party's compliance can request a surprise inspection.

Aducanumab

NEWS

Aducanumab (Aduhelm), from the company Biogen, is the new drug approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treating Alzheimer's disease.

👉 About

- © Aduhelm is not a cure, but it slows down cognitive decline.
- © Alzheimer's disease causes the accumulation of the debris caused by the breakdown of neurons in the brain, leading to plaque formation.
- © So, Aducanumab is designed to reduce the presence of amyloid beta, a protein that forms plaques in the brain.



Aducanumab

- ⊙ Aducanumab aims at altering the course of the disease by slowing the deterioration of brain function by reducing plaque formation.
- ⊙ Significance → Since there is no treatment so far, the drug that can slow down Alzheimer's disease holds much promise and is a ray of hope.

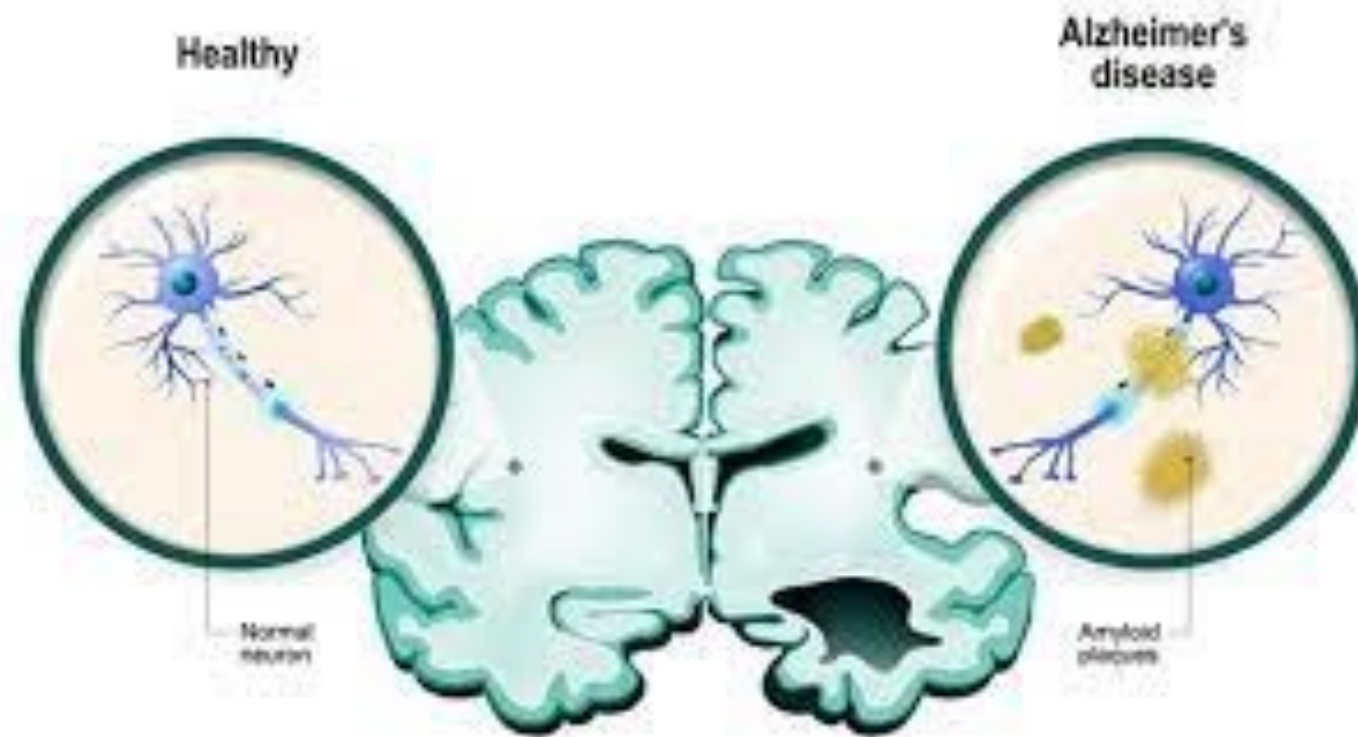
Aducanumab

👉 Alzheimer's Disease

- ⊙ Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink (atrophy) and brain cells to die.
- ⊙ The disease is the most common cause of dementia — a continuous decline in thinking, behavioural and social skills that affect a person's ability to function independently.
- ⊙ Caused by → Alzheimer's disease is thought to be caused by the abnormal build-up of proteins in and around brain cells.
- ⊙ One of the proteins involved is called amyloid, deposits of which form plaques around brain cells.
 - The other protein is called tau, deposits of which form tangles within brain cells.

Aducanumab

- ⦿ Vulnerability → Alzheimer disease most commonly affects older adults, but it can also affect people in their 30s or 40s.



Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyan

NEWS

NITI Aayog and Piramal Foundation launched Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan in 112 Aspirational Districts.

👉 About

- © Purpose → Campaign Will Provide Covid Home-Care Support to 20 Lakh Citizens.
- © The Abhiyaan is being part of a special initiative, Aspirational Districts Collaborative, in which local leaders, civil societies and volunteers work with district administrations to address emerging problems across key focus areas of the Aspirational Districts Programme.



Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyan

- ⦿ It will be led by district magistrates in partnership with over 1000 local NGOs, which will enlist and train over 1 lakh volunteers to connect with patients through inbound/outbound calls.

👉 Aspirational Districts Programme

- ⦿ It was launched in January 2018, the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' Programme (TADP).
- ⦿ Objective → To transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.
- ⦿ Ministry → At the Government of India level, the programme is anchored by NITI Aayog. In addition, individual Ministries have assumed responsibility to drive the progress of districts.

Central Adoption Resource Authority

NEWS

The Supreme Court has directed the States/UTs to take stringent action against private individuals and NGOs who invite people to illegally adopt children orphaned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

👉 About CARA

- © Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is the nodal body for adoption of Indian children.
- © CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognised adoption agencies.



Central Adoption Resource
Authority

Ministry of Women & Child
Development

Government of India

Central Adoption Resource Authority

- ⊙ Working → It regulates in-country and inter-country adoptions (in accordance with the provisions of The Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption, 1993, ratified by Government of India in 2003).
- ⊙ Status → It is an autonomous and a statutory body of the Union Women and Child Development Ministry.
- ⊙ The mandatory registration of CCIs and linking to CARA has been provided in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- ⊙ Set up in → 1990.
- ⊙ In 2018, CARA has allowed individuals in a live-in relationship to adopt children.
- ⊙ HQ → New Delhi.

QS World University Rankings 2022



Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has entered the top 1,000 of the QS World University rankings for the first time, as its new undergraduate engineering programme now makes it eligible for the rating.

👉 About

- © Released by → Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a British company specialising in the analysis of higher education institutions around the world.
- © Purpose → It is an annual publication of university rankings which comprises the global overall and subject rankings.



QS World University Rankings 2022

👉 Key Findings

- ⦿ Top 5 universities in World → Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of Oxford, UK; Stanford University, USA; Cambridge University, UK; Harvard University, USA.
- ⦿ Indian scenario → Only three educational institutes from India, the IIT Bombay (177), IIT Delhi (185) and IISc Bengaluru (186) feature in the top 200 list.

2022 global rank	Name
177=	Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
185	Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
186=	Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
255=	Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
277=	Indian Insitute of Technology, Kanpur
280	Indian Insitute of Technology, Kharagpur
395=	Indian Insitute of Technology, Guwahati
400=	Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
501-510 (ranking band)	University of Delhi
561-570 (ranking band)	Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Central Adoption Resource Authority -> Under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.	
2.	Chemical Weapons Convention -> Three countries that have neither signed nor ratified the convention are India, Pakistan and China.	
3.	Alzheimer's Disease -> is a progressive neurologic disorder.	

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

11-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

UN Secretary-General



The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) approved ninth UN Secretary-General António Guterres for a second term for five more years starting January 1, 2022.

👉 About Selection process

- © The Secretary-General is appointed by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on the recommendation of the UNSC.
- © The five permanent members of the 15-nation-strong UNSC are the most powerful players in the process of selection of Secretary-General, as any one of them can eliminate a candidature by a veto.



UN Secretary-General

- ⊙ [Five permanent members of the UNSC - China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.]
- ⊙ The 10 elected non-permanent members of the UNSC, of which India is currently a part, do not have veto powers.
- ⊙ But their backing is still crucial as a candidate requires at least nine out of 15 votes to be recommended for the top job.

Functions of UN Secretary-General:

- ⊙ The UN Charter refers to the Secretary-General as the UN chief administrative officer.
- ⊙ Mandate → UN Secretary-General shall act and perform such functions as given to him by the UN Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs.

UN Secretary-General

- ◎ Functions → The Secretary-General's day-to-day work includes:
- attendance at sessions of United Nations bodies;
 - consultations with world leaders, government officials and
 - worldwide travel intended to keep the Secretary-General in touch with the peoples of the UN member states.

Dehing Patkai

NEWS

Recently, the Assam government notified Dehing Patkai as the 7th National Park of the state.

👉 About Dehing Patkai

- © It is located within the larger Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve, which spreads across the coal- and oil-rich districts of Upper Assam (Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts).
- © The oldest refinery of Asia in Digboi and 'open cast' coal mining at Lido are located near the sanctuary.





Location in Assam, India

Location
Area

Assam
111.19 km²

<https://ourstudycircle.com/wp-content/>

Dehing Patkai

- ◎ The Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary is also known as the Jeypore Rainforest.
- ◎ Naming → Dehing is the name of the river that flows through this forest and Patkai is the hill at the foot of which the sanctuary lies.
- ◎ Flora → It is believed to be the last remaining contiguous patch of lowland rainforest area in Assam.
- ◎ Fauna →
 - Rare fauna found in the region include Chinese pangolin, flying fox, wild pig, sambar, barking deer, gaur, serow and Malayan giant squirrels.
 - It is the only sanctuary in India which is home to seven different species of wild cats - tiger, leopard, clouded leopard, leopard cat, golden cat, jungle cat and marbled cat.

Dehing Patkai

- Assamese macaque, a primate found in the forest, is in the red list of Near Threatened species.
- It has the highest concentration of the rare endangered White Winged Wood Duck.

☉ National Parks in Assam →

- Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri, Orang, Dibru-Saikhowa and Raimona National Park.

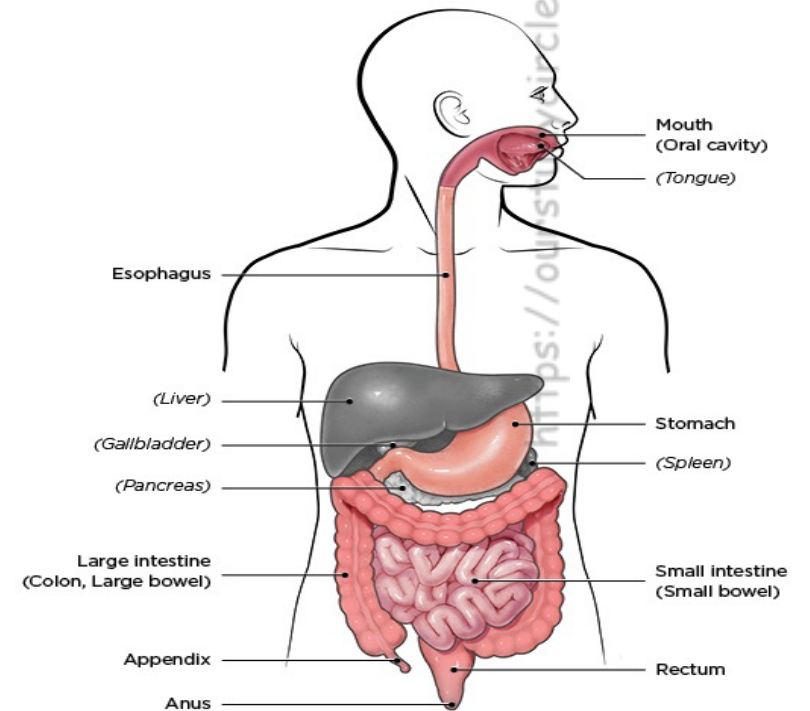
Inflammatory bowel disease



According to a study published in the **American Journal of Gastroenterology** (branch of medicine focused on the digestive system and its disorders), **Pfizer or Moderna Covid-19 vaccines** are **safe for patients with inflammatory bowel diseases(IBD).**

👉 About

- © Inflammatory bowel disease(IBD) represents a **group of intestinal disorders** that cause prolonged inflammation of the digestive tract.
- © Types → The two most common IBDs are **ulcerative colitis** (UC) and **Crohn's disease**:
 - **Ulcerative Colitis(UC)** involves **inflammation of the large intestine.**



Dehing Patkai

- Crohn's disease can cause inflammation in any part of the digestive tract. However, it mostly affects the tail end of the small intestine.
- ◎ Causes of IBDs → Family history and genetics, Weak Immune System, Smoking, Age and Environmental Factors among others.
- ◎ Treatment → Treatment may include immunosuppressive drugs to control the inflammation.

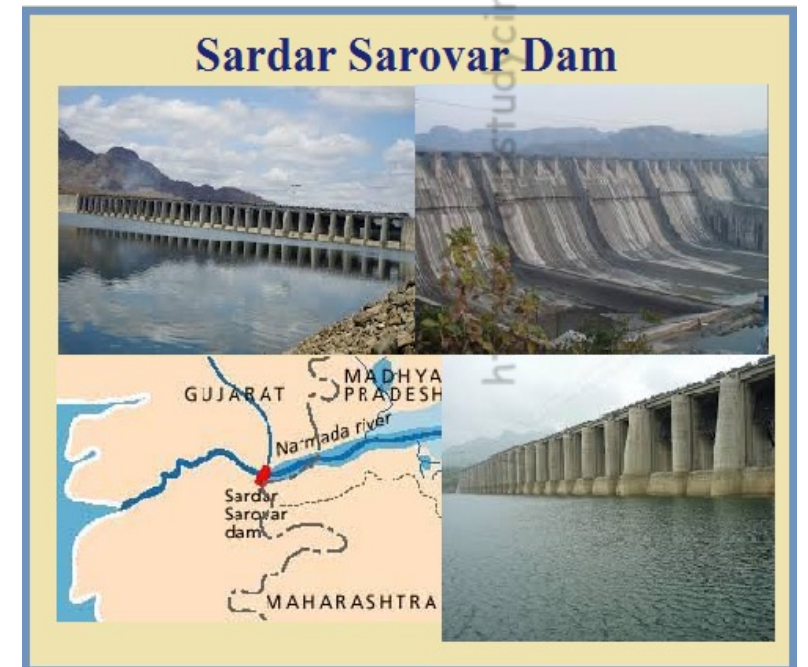
Sardar Sarovar Dam

NEWS

In the ongoing summer, the Sardar Sarovar Narmada dam released about 1.3 Million Acre Feet (MAF) water for irrigation between April 1 and May 31 in its command area of 21.29 lakh hectares.

👉 About Sardar Sarovar Dam

- © The Sardar Sarovar Narmada Dam or Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP) is a gravity dam built on the Narmada River in Narmada district of Gujarat.
- © It is the second biggest dam in terms of volume of concrete used in it. It is the third highest concrete dam in India.



Sardar Sarovar Dam

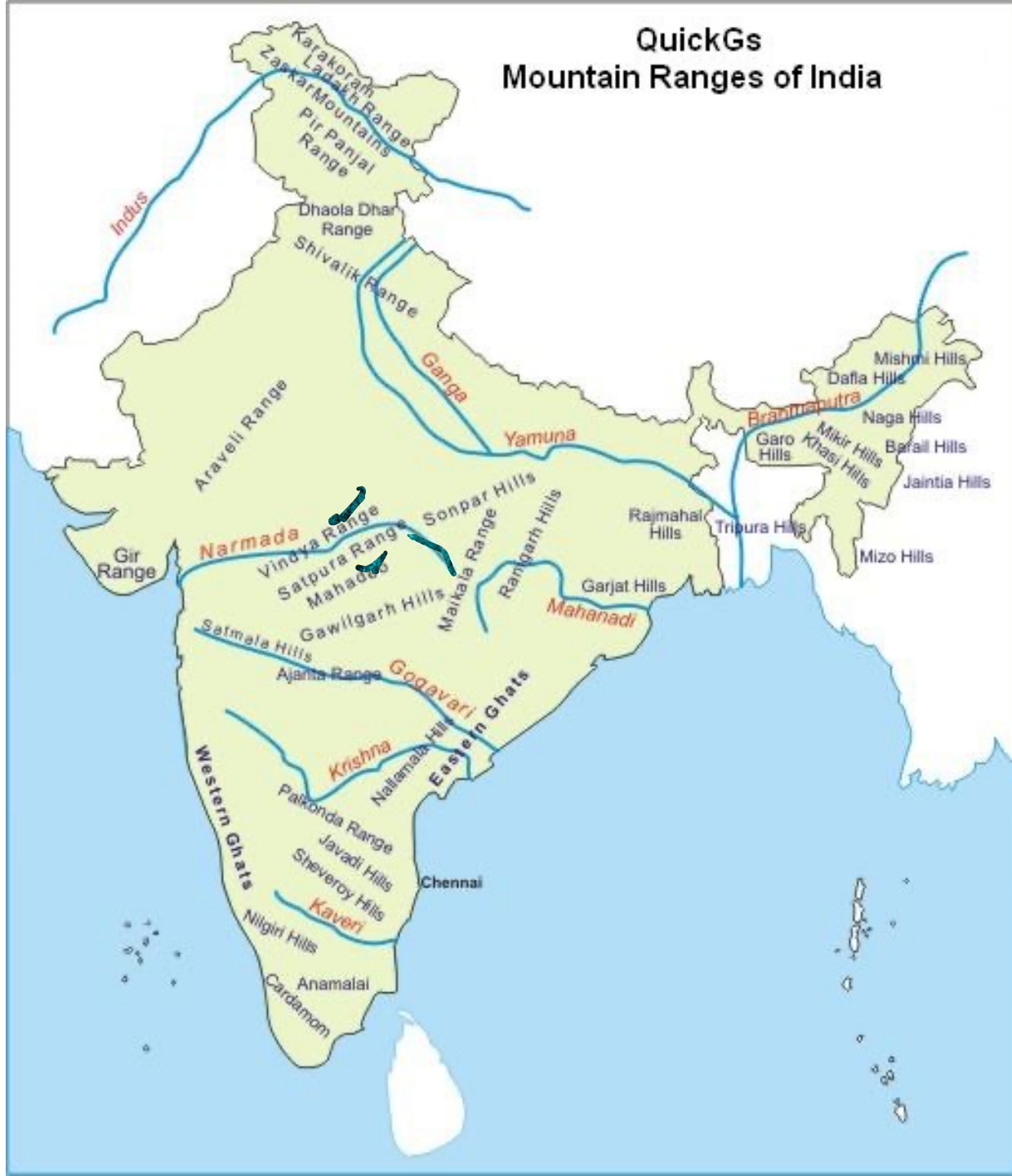
- ⊙ The Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP) involves a series of large irrigation and hydroelectric multi-purpose dams.
- ⊙ It took form in 1979 as part of a development scheme to increase irrigation and produce hydroelectricity.
- ⊙ The power benefits from the project are to be shared thus: Madhya Pradesh at 57%, Maharashtra at 27% and Gujarat at 16%

Sardar Sarovar Dam

👉 Narmada River

- ⦿ Narmada is the largest west flowing river of the peninsular region flowing through a rift valley between the Vindhya Range on the north and the Satpura Range on the south.
- ⦿ It rises from Maikala range near Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh.
- ⦿ It drains a large area in Madhya Pradesh besides some areas in the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat.
- ⦿ The river near Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) forms the DhuanDhar Falls.
- ⦿ There are several islands in the estuary of the Narmada of which Aliabet is the largest.
- ⦿ Major Tributaries: Hiran, Orsang, the Barna and the Kolar.
- ⦿ The major Hydro Power Projects in the basin are Indira Sagar, Sardar Sarovar etc.

QuickGs Mountain Ranges of India



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Indo-Thai CORPAT

NEWS

Recently, the 31st edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted.

👉 About

- © The two navies have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005.
- © The aim of the Indo-Thai CORPAT exercise is to keep the vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Indo-Thai CORPAT

- ⦿ It builds up the understanding and interoperability between navies.
- ⦿ The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, and His Majesty's Thailand Ship (HTMS) Krabi, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies are participating in the CORPAT.

👉 **Other Military Exercises between India and Thailand:**

- ⦿ Exercise MAITREE (Army).
- ⦿ Exercise SIAM BHARAT (Air Force).

Indo-Thai CORPAT

👉 INS Saryu

- ◎ It is an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel (NOPV)
- ◎ It is designed and built by Goa Shipyard Limited.
- ◎ It is aimed at meeting the increasing ocean surveillance and patrolling requirements of the Indian Navy.

Addu Atoll

NEWS

President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has said that the Maldives has made no decision on opening an Indian consulate in its southern Addu Atoll.

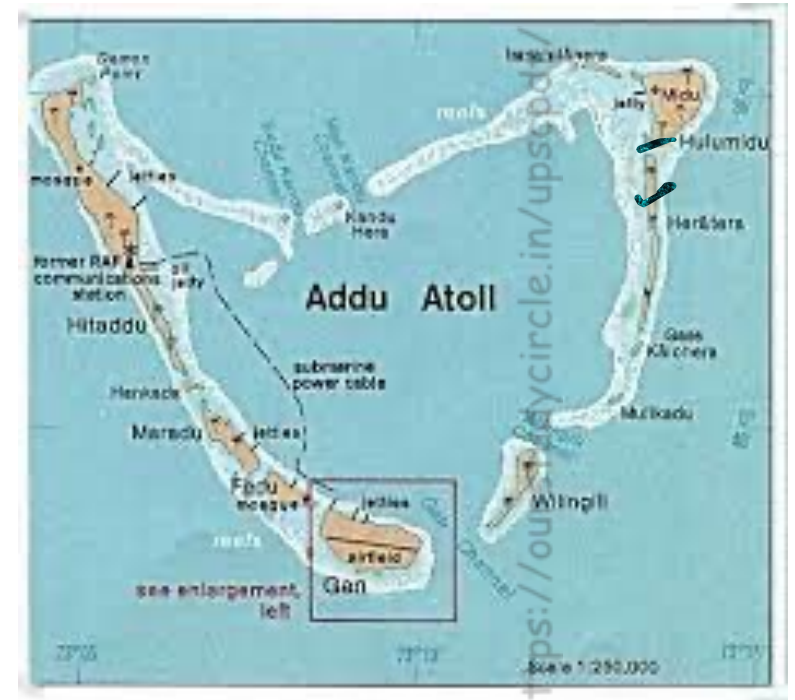
👉 About

- © Addu Atoll, also known as Seenu Atoll (Atoll is ring-shaped coral reef, island), is the southernmost atoll of the Maldives.
- © Apart from its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, Addu is the second largest city in the archipelago, home to over 30,000 people.



Addu Atoll

- ⦿ Addu Atoll, together with Fuvahmulah, extend the Maldives into the Southern Hemisphere.



Argostemma quarantena

NEWS

A new plant species belonging to the coffee family has been spotted in the Wagamon hills in Kerala.

👉 About

- © It has been named Argostemma quarantena to commemorate the millions who have died in the pandemic.
- © It is a herbaceous species from the family Rubiaceae.
 - Herbaceous plants are plants that have no persistent woody stem above ground.



Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	UN Secretary-General -> appointed by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on the recommendation of the UNSC.	
2.	Argostemma quarantena -> spotted in the Wagamon hills in Kerala.	
3.	Dehing Patkai NP -> Madhya Pradesh.	
4.	Sardar Sarovar Dam -> is a gravity dam built on the Tapi River.	
5.	CORPAT exercise -> between the Indian Navy and French Navy.	

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Quick revision (True/False)

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

12-June-2021

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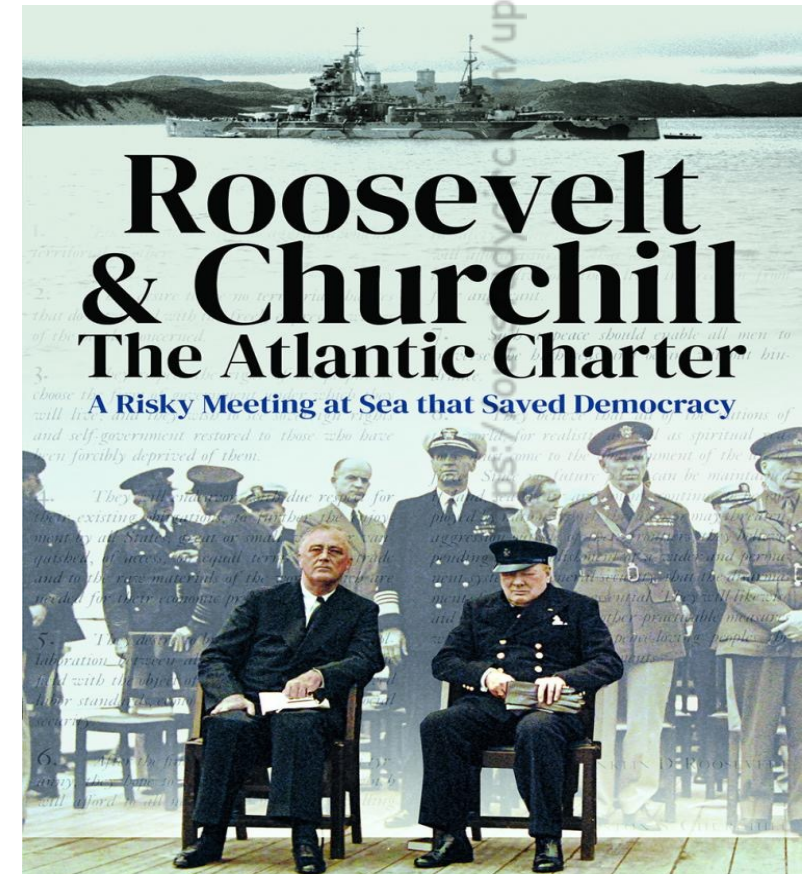
Atlantic Charter

NEWS

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and US President Joe Biden have signed a new Atlantic Charter aimed at working together on global challenges during their first-ever in-person meeting.

👉 About

- © The Atlantic Charter was a statement issued on 14 August 1941 that set out American and British goals for the world after the end of World War II.
- © The charter's adherents signed the Declaration by United Nations on 1 January 1942, which was the basis for the modern United Nations.



Atlantic Charter

- ⦿ The charter inspired several other international agreements and events that followed the end of the war.
- ⦿ The dismantling of the British Empire, the formation of NATO, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) all derived from the Atlantic Charter.

👉 Why sign new charter?

- ⦿ At their meeting, the two leaders plan to sign what they're calling a new Atlantic Charter, pledging to "defend the principles, values, and institutions of democracy and open societies."
- ⦿ US hopes to reassure European allies that the US had shed the transactional (लेन-देन संबंधी) tendencies of Donald Trump's term and is a reliable partner again.

Beed Model

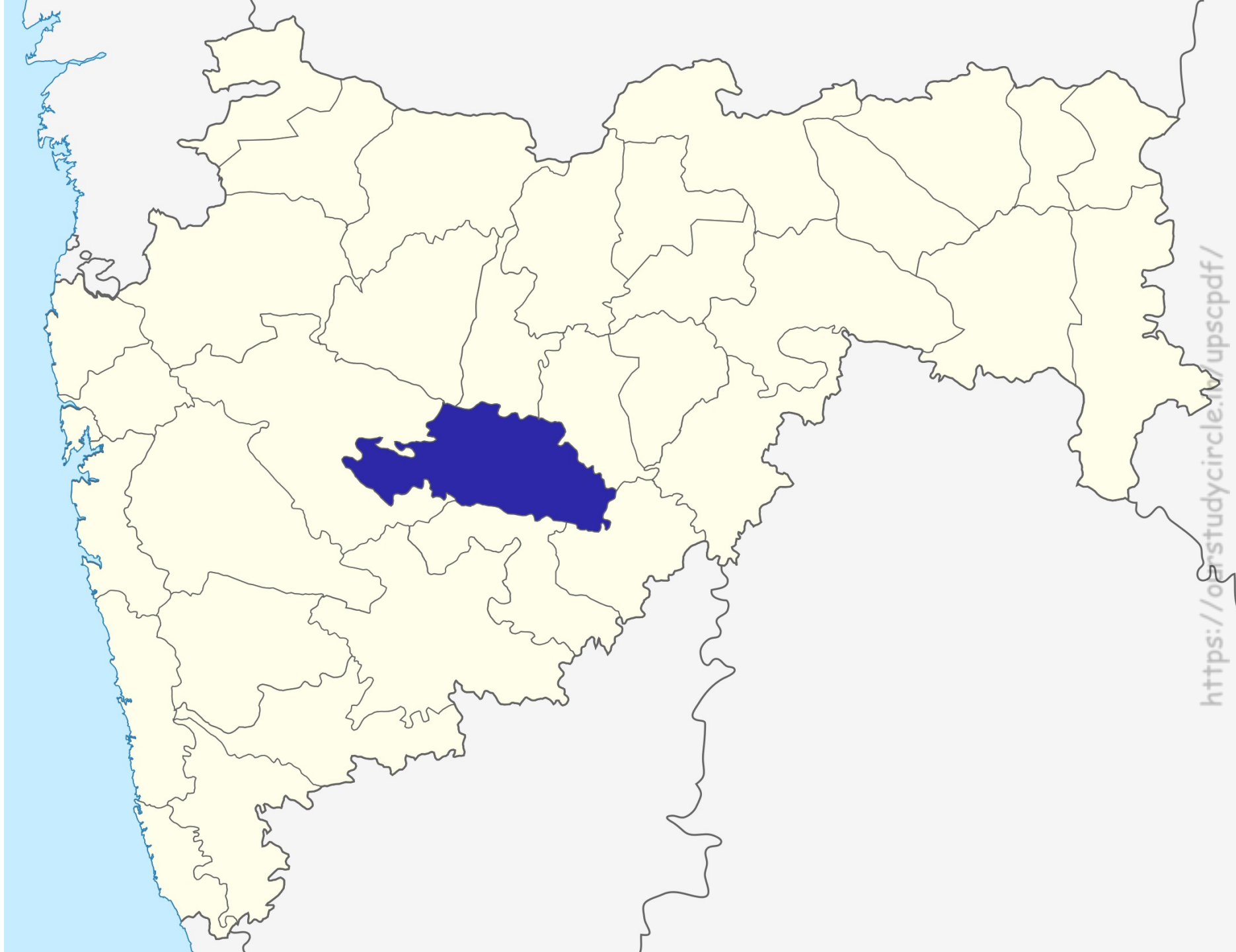
NEWS

Maharashtra government has asked for state-wide implementation of the 'Beed model' of the crop insurance scheme Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yagna (PMFBY).

👉 About Beed Model of Crop Insurance

- © Under this model, the insurance company provides a cover of 110% of the premium collected.
- © In case the compensation amount exceeds the 110% mark, the state government would pay the bridge amount.





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Beed Model

⦿ But if the compensation was less than the premium collected, the insurance company would keep 20% of the amount as handling charges and reimburse the rest to the state government.

👉 Why was the Beed Model of Crop Insurance launched?

- ⦿ Beed is a drought-prone district in Maharashtra. Farmers here have repeatedly lost crops either to failure of rains or too heavy rains.
- ⦿ Due to this, insurance companies have sustained losses given high payouts. Moreover, the state government also had a difficult time getting bids for tenders to implement the scheme in Beed.
- ⦿ Hence, the Maharashtra Government decided to modify the crop insurance guidelines for the district.

Beed Model

👉 Effects on the state government

- ⦿ In a normal season where farmers report minimal losses, the state government is expected to get back money that can form a corpus to fund the scheme for the following year.
- ⦿ However, the state government would have to bear the financial liability in case of losses due to extreme weather events.

Beed Model

👉 Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojna

- ⦿ Launched in **2016**, the flagship PMFBY insures farm losses against inclement weather events.
- ⦿ It is a central scheme implemented by state agriculture departments as per central guidelines.
- ⦿ Coverage of crops → It covers food crops, oilseed crops, annual commercial/horticultural crops.
- ⦿ Premium → The prescribed premium is
 - 2% for Kharif crops
 - 1.5% for Rabi crops
 - 5% for commercial and horticultural crops.
- ❖ Completely voluntary → The enrolment under the scheme is 100% voluntary for all farmers. Earlier, the scheme was compulsory for loanee farmers.

UPSC GS Prelim 2016

Q. With reference to 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana', consider the following statements:

1. Under this scheme, farmers will have to pay a uniform premium of two percent for any crop they cultivate in any season of the year.
2. This scheme covers post-harvest losses arising out of cyclones and unseasonal rains.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) **2 only**
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Pakke tiger reserve

NEWS

More than 200 contingency workers of the Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh went on an indefinite strike over non-payment of wages since December 2020.

👉 About

- © Location → It is located in the Pakke Kessang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- © Names → Pakke Tiger Reserve, also known as Pakhui Tiger Reserve, is a Project Tiger reserve.
- © Biodiversity → It falls within the Eastern Himalaya Biodiversity Hotspot.



Pakke tiger reserve

- ⊙ This Tiger Reserve has won India Biodiversity Award 2016 in the category of 'Conservation of threatened species' for its Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme.
- ⊙ It is bounded by Bhareli or Kameng River in the west and north, and by Pakke River in the east.
- ⊙ Neighbours → Papum Reserve Forest in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam's Nameri National Park, Doimara Reserve Forest and Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary.

UPSC PRELIMS 2018

Q. In which one of the following States is Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary located?

- a) **Arunachal Pradesh**
- b) Manipur
- c) Meghalaya
- d) Nagaland

Fast Radio Bursts

NEWS

Recently, researchers from the Pune-based Tata Institute for Fundamental Research (TIFR) and the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA), have assembled the largest collection of Fast Radio Bursts (FRBs) catalogue-सूची

👉 About FRBs

- © FRBs are bright bursts of radio waves (radio waves can be produced by astronomical objects with changing magnetic fields) that blaze for a few milliseconds before vanishing without a trace.
- © They are spotted in various and distant parts of the universe as well as in our own galaxy. However, their origins are still unknown, and their appearance is highly unpredictable.



Fast Radio Bursts

- ⊙ The first FRB was spotted in 2007. Since then, scientists had only caught sight of around 140 bursts in their telescopes.
- ⊙ Source → Magnetars could be the source of some fast radio bursts(FRBs).
- ⊙ Magnetar → It is a type of neutron star. The magnetic field of such a star is very powerful. It can be over a thousand times stronger than a typical neutron star's magnetic field.
- ⊙ Neutron → The formation of a neutron star occurs when the core of a massive star undergoes gravitational collapse at the end of its life.

Gharial

NEWS

Odisha has announced a cash reward of Rs 1,000 for rescuing gharials, a critically endangered crocodile species, and informing wildlife personnel.

👉 About Gharial

- © It is a species of Asian crocodilian distinguished by their long, thin snouts which resembles a pot (ghara in Hindi).
- © Habitat → They prefer to live in riverine habitats with deep, clear, fast-moving water and steep, sandy banks.



Gharial

- ⊙ Distribution → It was once found across Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. However, currently it survives in several severely fragmented populations in India and Nepal.
- ⊙ In India, Gharials are present in Son River, Girwa River, the Ganges, Mahanadi River and the Chambal River.
- ⊙ Protected areas → National Chambal Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ⊙ Protection Status →
 - IUCN Red list: Critically Endangered
 - Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I
 - CITES: Appendix I.
- ⊙ Threat → Construction of Dam, barrages, and water abstraction, entanglement in fishing nets, River bed cultivation and sand mining.

Gharial

⦿ Conservation Efforts → Breeding Centres of Kukrail Gharial Rehabilitation Centre in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, National Chambal Sanctuary (Gharial Eco Park, Madhya Pradesh).

👉 Mahanadi River

⦿ The Mahanadi River system is the third largest of peninsular India after Godavari and Krishna, and the largest river of Odisha state.

⦿ The catchment area of the river extends to Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Maharashtra.

⦿ Source → It rises from a place near Sihawa in Bastar hills in the state of Chhattisgarh to the south of Amarkantak.

⦿ Major Tributaries → Seonath River, Hasdeo river, Mand river, Ib river, Jonking river, Tel river

Gharial

Q. If you want to see gharials in their natural habitat, which one of the following is the best place to visit?

- a) Bhitarkanika Mangroves**
- b) Chambal River**
- c) Pulicat Lake**
- d) Deepor Beel**

Fastly

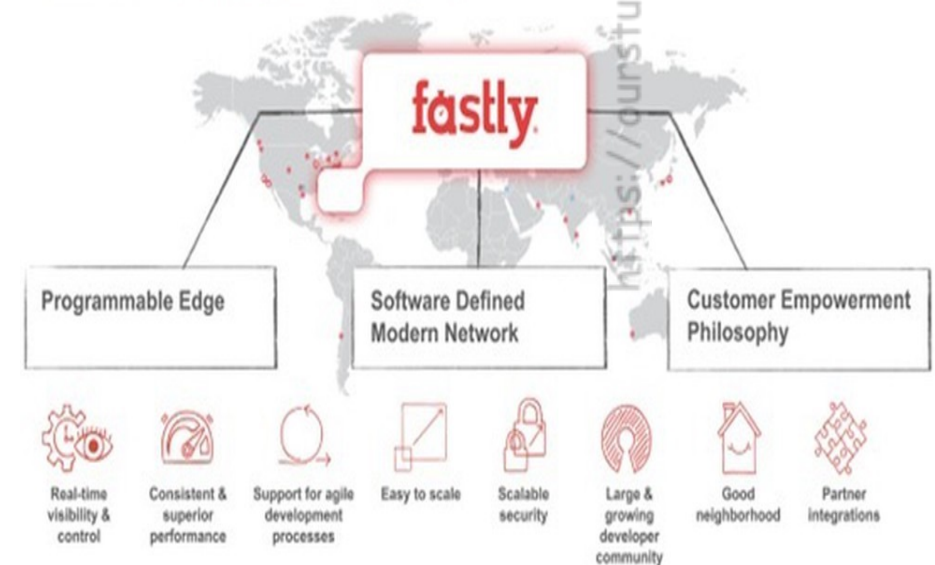
NEWS

On 8 June 2021, Fastly reported problems with their CDN service which caused many major websites, such as Reddit, gov.uk, Twitch, Spotify and Amazon, along with major news sources such as The New York Times, The Guardian, CNN and the BBC, to become unavailable.

👉 About

- © Fastly is an American cloud computing services provider.
- © It is designed to help developers extend their core cloud infrastructure to the edge of the network, closer to users.

The developer's edge



Fastly

- ⦿ The Fastly edge cloud platform includes their content delivery network (CDN), image optimization, video and streaming, cloud security, and load balancing services.
- ⦿ A content delivery network is an arrangement that allows customer websites to store data such as images and videos on various mirror servers across countries so that the data is closer to users, and thus shows up faster.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Beed model -> Related to cultured pearl Farming.	
2.	Atlantic Charter -> statement issued on 14 August 1941 that set out American and British goals for the world after the end of World War II.	
3.	Pakke tiger reserve -> Assam.	
4.	Mahanadi River -> Major Tributaries: Seonath River, Hasdeo river, Mand river, Ib river, Jonking river, Tel river.	

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

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3.	Pakke tiger reserve -> Assam.	False
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Prelim Booster News Discussion

14-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Brood X Cicadas

NEWS

Recently, a swarm (दल) of cicadas 'Brood X' bombarded the plane Air Force One which led to delay of US President Joe Biden's first trip abroad.

👉 About Brood X

- © The term 'brood' refers to a population of cicadas that is isolated from other populations because of differences in their year of emergence or locality.
- © It is found in Pennsylvania, northern Virginia, Indiana and eastern Tennessee.



Brood X Cicadas

👉 Cicadas

- ◎ Cicadas live underground for extended periods of time, typically 13 or 17 years, and feed on roots of trees both underground and above it.
- ◎ Among periodical cicadas, there are seven species and there are also some annual cicadas, which come out every year.
- ◎ They do not bite or sting, but when the males sing, their collective chorus can reach up to 100 decibels.
- ◎ What do cicadas do underground?
 - The males emerge from underground once they become adults, which take about 17 years for some periodical cicadas.

Global Liveability Index

NEWS

Auckland (New Zealand) has topped the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Global Liveability Index of 140 cities around the world.

👉 About Index

- © Released by → Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- © The index assesses the locations that provide the best and the worst living conditions around the world. It assesses 140 cities around the world.



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Global Liveability Index

- ◎ Parameters → The index takes into account more than 30 qualitative and quantitative factors. These factors are spanning five broad categories: stability (25%), healthcare (20%), culture and environment (25%), education (10%), and infrastructure (20%).
 - However, due to the pandemic, the EIU added new indicators to it. It includes stress on healthcare resources as well as restrictions around local sporting events, theatres, music concerts, restaurants, and schools.
- ◎ Scores → Each factor in a city is rated as acceptable, tolerable, uncomfortable, undesirable, or intolerable.
- ◎ Factor-wise scores are then compiled and weighted to provide a score of 1–100 where 1 is considered intolerable and 100 is considered ideal.

Global Liveability Index

👉 Key Takeaways

- 🕒 Top Five Liveable Cities → Auckland (New Zealand), Osaka (Japan), Adelaide (Australia), Wellington (New Zealand), and Tokyo (Japan).
- 🕒 Top Five Least Liveable Cities → Damascus (Syria), Lagos (Nigeria), Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea), Dhaka (Bangladesh), and Algiers (Algeria).

👉 Economist Intelligence Unit

- 🕒 The Economist Intelligence Unit is the research and analysis division of The Economist Group, which is the sister company to The Economist newspaper.
- 🕒 Founded → 1946.
- 🕒 Headquarters location → London, United Kingdom.

India's ranking in the 'Ease of Doing Business Index' is sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following has declared that ranking?

- (a) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- (b) World Economic Forum
- (c) World Bank**
- (d) World Trade Organization (WTO)

Which of the following is/are the indicator/indicators used by IFPRI to compute the Global Hunger Index Report?

- 1.Undernourishment
- 2.Child stunting
- 3.Child mortality

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3**
- (d) 1 and 3 only

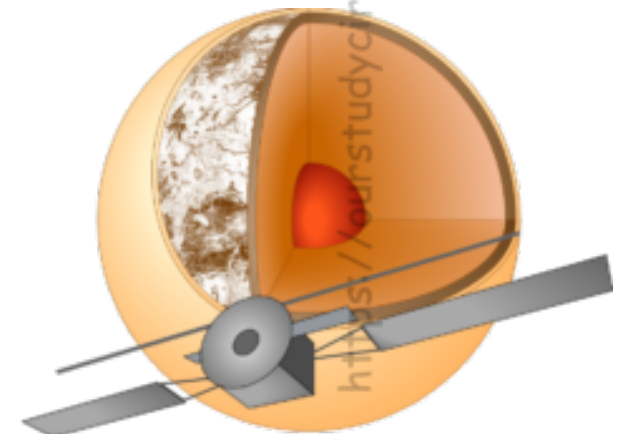
EnVision mission

NEWS

Following NASA's footsteps, the European Space Agency (ESA) announced that it has selected EnVision as its next orbiter that will visit Venus sometime in the 2030s.

👉 About

- © It is an European Space Agency (ESA) led mission with contributions from NASA.
 - The earliest launch opportunity for EnVision is 2031, followed by 2032 and 2033.
- © The spacecraft will take about 15 months to reach Venus and will take 16 more months to achieve orbit circularisation.



ENVISION
Europe's Revolutionary Mission to Venus

Solar System



EnVision mission

- ⊙ The spacecraft will carry a range of instruments to study the planet's atmosphere and surface, monitor trace gases in the atmosphere and analyse its surface composition.
- ⊙ A radar provided by NASA will help to image and map the surface.
- ⊙ Significance → It will follow another ESA-led mission to Venus called 'Venus Express' (2005-2014) that focussed on atmospheric research and pointed to volcanic hotspots on the planet's surface.

EnVision mission

👉 Other Missions

🌐 US →

- NASA has announced two new robotic missions to Venus - DAVINCI+ and VERITAS. It will be launched between 2028-2030.
- Mariner series 1962-1974, Pioneer Venus 1 and Pioneer Venus 2 in 1978, Magellan in 1989.

🌐 Russia → Venera series of space crafts 1967-1983, Vegas 1 and 2 in 1985.

🌐 Japan → Akatsuki spacecraft has been studying the planet's atmosphere since 2015.

🌐 Indian Initiative → India plans to launch a new orbiter named Shukrayaan to Venus in 2024.

Which of the following pair(s) is/are correctly matched?

Spacecraft

Purpose

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 1.Cassini-Huygens | : | Orbiting the Venus and transmitting data to the Earth |
| 2.Messenger | : | Mapping and investigating the Mercury |
| 3.Voyager 1 & 2 | : | Exploring the outer solar system |

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only**
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

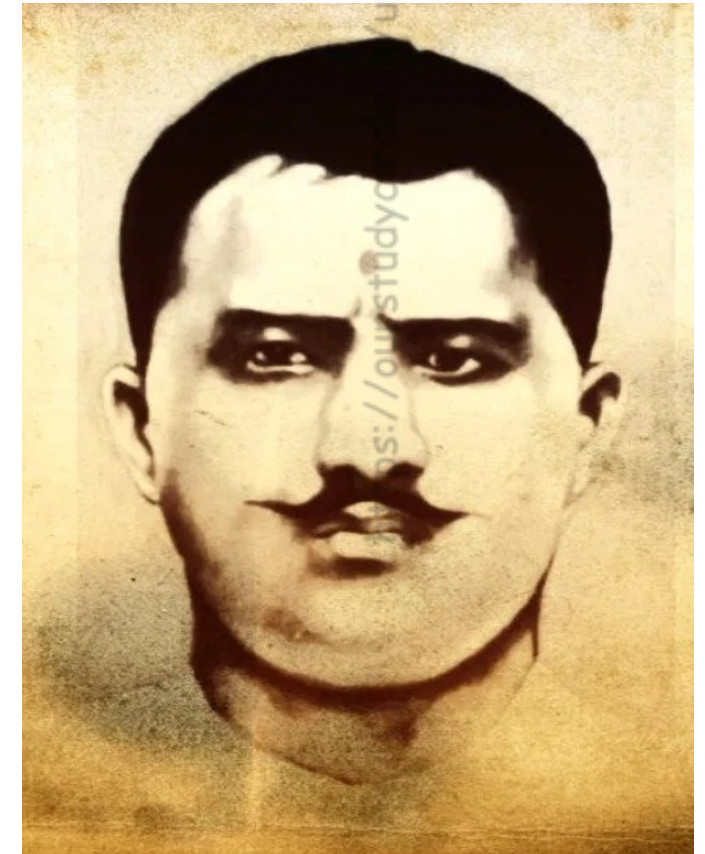
Ram Prasad Bismil

NEWS

Recently, the Ministry of Culture has paid tribute to Shaheed Ram Prasad Bismil on his birth anniversary at Shahjahanpur (UP) as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

👉 About

- © Birth → He was born on 11th June, 1897 in Shahjahanpur (Uttar Pradesh).
- © He was associated with the Arya Samaj from an early age.
- © He wrote powerful patriotic poems in Urdu and Hindi under the pen name of names of 'Bismil', 'Ram' and 'Agyat'.



Ram Prasad Bismil

- ◎ The ideals of freedom and revolution got first ingrained in his mind after he read the death sentence passed on Bhai Parmanand (founder member of the Ghadar Party), an Indian nationalist and Arya Samaj missionary.
- ◎ Organisations against British Rule →
 - He organised Matrivedi and Shivaji Samiti along with Genda Lal Dixit and youths from Etawah, Mainpuri, Agra and Shahjahanpur districts.
 - He formed the Hindustan Republican Association with leaders like Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad.
 - He participated in the Mainpuri conspiracy of 1918 and the Kakori conspiracy of 1925 (village near Lucknow, on 9 August 1925) with Ashfaq Ullah Khan and Roshan Singh to protest against the British Rule.

Ram Prasad Bismil

- He published a pamphlet titled 'Deshwasiyon ke Naam' and distributed it along with his poem 'Mainpuri ki Pratigya' in 1918.
- He wrote 'Mera Rang De Basanti Chola' and 'Sarfaroshi Ki Tamanna' which became the anthem for freedom fighters.

Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization

NEWS

Recently, the Government of India has released funds for various activities of Farm Mechanization under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) scheme.

👉 About

- © SMAM was launched in 2014-15 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- © Under it, subsidy is provided for purchase of various types of agricultural equipment and machinery to the extent of 40-50% for States other than NER (North Eastern Region) States and for NER States it is 100% limited to Rs.1.25 lakhs per beneficiary.



Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization

- ⊙ The agriculture ministry has also developed a Multilingual Mobile App, 'CHC (Custom Hiring Centres)- Farm Machinery' which connects farmers with Custom Hiring Service Centres situated in their locality.
- ⊙ Aim → Increasing the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions and difficult areas where farm power availability is low.
- ⊙ Objectives →
 - Promoting 'Custom Hiring Centres' and 'Hi-tech Hubs of High-Value Machines' to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small and fragmented landholding and high cost of individual ownership.
 - Creating awareness among stakeholders through demonstration and capacity building activities.

Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization

Note → Agriculture mechanization is the process of replacing human and animal labour with machines in the agriculture sector. The use of tractors, threshers, harvesters, pump sets is a part of farm mechanization.

Heritage Trees

NEWS

The Maharashtra government has proposed amendments to the Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Protection and Preservation of Trees Act of 1975, to introduce provisions for the protection of 'heritage trees'.

👉 About

- © A tree with an estimated age of 50 years or more shall be defined as a heritage tree. It may belong to specific species which will be notified from time to time.
- © Method to determine the age of the tree: The environment department in consultation with the forest department will issue guidelines to determine the age of the tree.



Heritage Trees

◎ Compensatory Plantation →

- Compensatory plantation will include planting the number of trees equivalent to the age of trees to be cut.
- The saplings need to be six to eight feet in height while planting, and they will undergo geo-tagging with seven years of caring period.
- The option of monetary compensation has also been given, instead of the compensatory plantation.

◎ Tree Authority →

- As per amendments, tree Authority will be formed in local civic bodies and councils which will take all decisions regarding the protection of trees.
- It will have to ensure tree census to be carried out every five years along with counting of heritage trees.

Heritage Trees

- The Tree Authority is tasked with “increasing the tree cover in urban areas and protecting the existing ones.”
- A proposal to cut more than 200 trees of age 5 years or more, will be referred to the state tree authority.
- ◎ Tree Cess → The State authority will issue directions for the use of tree cess. The fine amount cannot be more than ₹1 lakh per tree in case of violations.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Global Liveability Index -> Released by UN-Habitat.	
2.	EnVision mission -> ISRO led mission. will visit Venus sometime in the 2030s.	
3.	Brood X -> an anti-aircraft weapon system.	
4.	Ram Prasad Bismil -> formed the Hindustan Republican Association with leaders like Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad.	
5.	Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization -> launched in 2014-15 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.	

Quick revision (True/False)

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

15-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Pyrostria Laljii

NEWS

A 15-meter-tall tree that belongs to the genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Andaman Islands by a team of researchers from India and the Philippines.

👉 About

- © The new species *Pyrostria laljii*, is also the first record of the genus *Pyrostria* in India. Trees belonging to these species are usually found in Madagascar.
- © Conservation Status → Critically endangered as per IUCN status.





Pyrostria Laljii

⊙ Physical features →

- The tree is distinguished by a long stem with a whitish coating on the trunk.
- Other physical features that distinguish the tree from other species of the genus is its umbellate inflorescence (छतरदार पुष्पगुच्छ) with 8-12 flowers.
- The colour of the flowers varies from white to cream, and turns brown after pollination.
- The fruit drupes (fruit that usually contains a single seed) of the tree are obovoid (egg-shaped) or subglobose (not quite globe-shaped), green to yellow or white, when mature turning pale yellow to brown.

⊙ Named after → The tree has been named Pyrostria laljii after Lal Ji Singh, Joint Director, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Botanical Survey of India.

Pyrostria Laljii

☉ Where was the tree found? →

- It was **first** reported from **South Andaman's Wandoor forest**.
- The **other places** in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands where the tree could be located are the **Tirur forest near the Jarawa Reserve Forest** and **the Chidia Tapu (Munda Pahar) forest**.

👉 **New species Pokeweed Species**

- ☉ Researchers have also discovered a new species of pokeweed named **Rivina andamanensis**. It is a North American plant with red stems, spikes of cream flowers, and purple berries.
- ☉ It was found growing **under large trees, shaded and rocky areas**, along with **herbs and shrubby plants**. “



Pyrostria Laljii

- © This discovery of new species, representing the first record of the pokeweed family Petiveriaceae in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, adds one more family to the islands' flora.



Question: Prelims GS 2016

Q. Recently, our scientists have discovered a new and distinct species of banana plant which attains a height of about 11 metres and has orange-coloured fruit pulp. In which part of India has it been discovered?

- a) **Andaman Islands**
- b) **Anaimalai Forests**
- c) **Maikala Hills**
- d) **Tropical rain forests of northeast**

iDEX-DIO

NEWS

The Defence Minister has approved the budgetary support of Rs 498.8 crore for iDEX-DIO (Innovations for Defence Excellence – Defence Innovation Organisation) for the next five years.

👉 About

- © It was launched by the Government in April 2018.
- © Aim → iDEX aims to promote innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace by engaging Industries (which includes MSMEs, start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes & academia).



iDEX-DIO

- It will also provide grants/funding and other support to them to carry out R&D. However, R&D should have a good potential for future adoption for Indian defence and aerospace needs.
- ◎ Objectives of IDEX →
 - Facilitate rapid development of new, indigenized, and innovative technologies for the Indian defence and aerospace sector in shorter timelines.
 - Create a culture of engagement with innovative startups, to encourage co-creation for defence and aerospace sectors.
 - Empower a culture of technology co-creation and co-innovation within the defence and aerospace sectors.
- ◎ Nodal Body → iDEX will be funded and managed by Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO).

iDEX-DIO

👉 Defence Innovation Organization (DIO)

- ⦿ Defence Innovation Organisation(DIO) is a not-for-profit Organisation, incorporated under Section 8 of the Companies Act.
- ⦿ Founding Members → Its two founding members are Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) & Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- ⦿ Functions → DIO will provide high-level policy guidance to iDEX. However, iDEX will be functionally autonomous. The CEO of both DIO and iDEX will be the same. It will facilitate coordination and separation of functions also without any conflicts.

👉 Other Related Initiatives

- ⦿ Defence Industrial Corridors → To support the growth of the Defence sector and enhance manufacturing capacity in the sector, two Defence Industrial Corridors are being set up in India, one in Uttar Pradesh and another in Tamil Nadu.
- ⦿ Artificial Intelligence in Defence →
 - N Chandrasekaran Task Force was set up in 2018 to study implications of AI in national security.
 - Defence Artificial Intelligence Project Agency (DAIPA) was created in March, 2019.
 - DAIPA aims for greater thrust on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Defence, formulation of an AI roadmap for each Defence PSU and Ordnance Factory Board to develop AI-enable products.

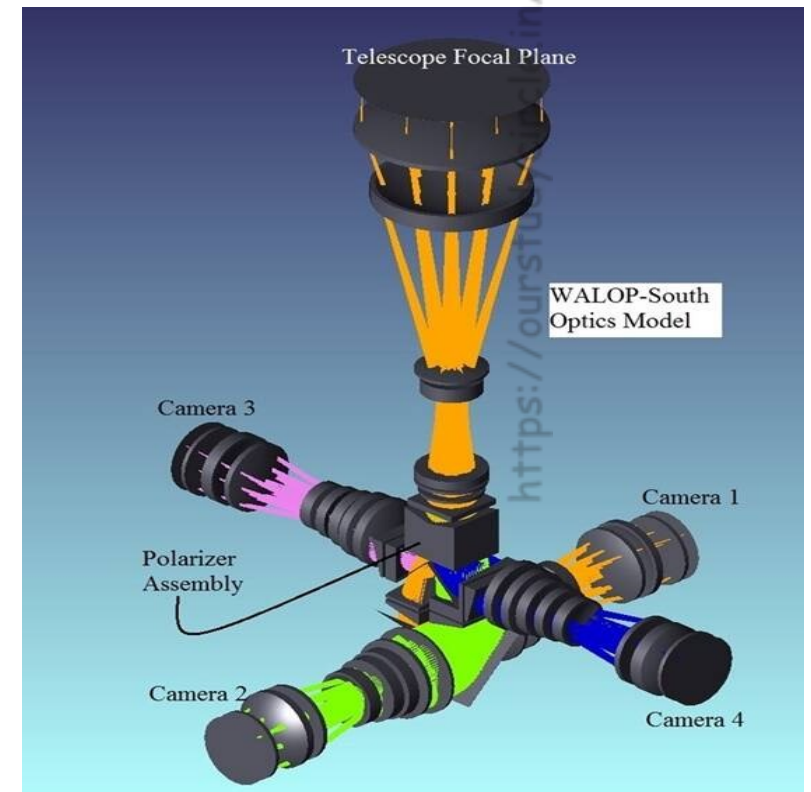
PASIPHAE Survey

NEWS

The Wide Area Linear Optical Polarimeter (WALOP), a vital instrument for the PASIPHAE Project, is being developed at Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), India.

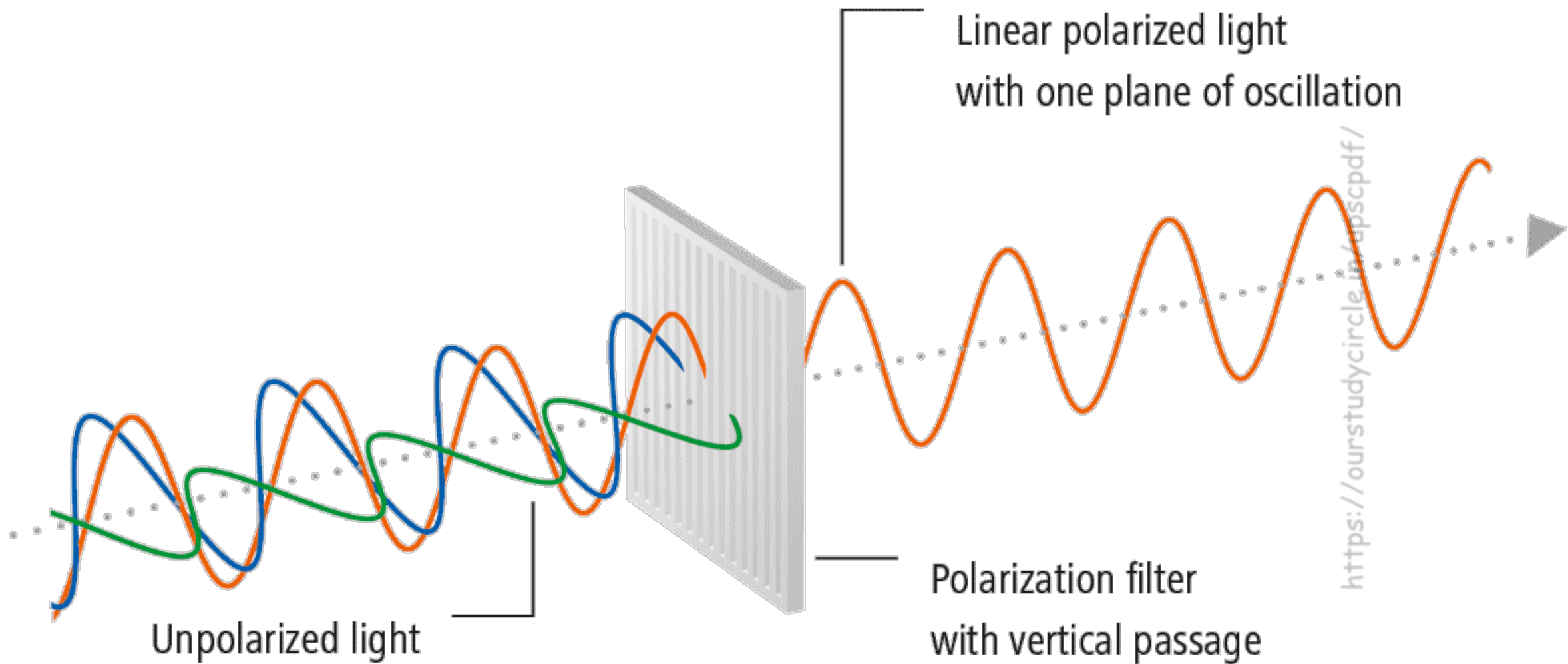
👉 About

- © Polar-Areas Stellar-Imaging in Polarisation High-Accuracy Experiment (PASIPHAE) is an international collaborative sky surveying project.
- © The project has been funded by the world's leading institutions from USA, Norway, South Africa and Private foundations.



PASIPHAE Survey

- ◎ Scientists aim to study the polarisation in the light coming from millions of stars.
- ◎ The survey will use two high-tech optical polarimeters to observe the northern and southern skies, simultaneously.
- ◎ It will focus on capturing starlight polarisation of very faint stars that are so far away that polarisation signals from there have not been systematically studied.
- ◎ The distances to these stars will be obtained from measurements of the GAIA (Global Astrometric Interferometer for Astrophysics) satellite (of European Space Agency)
- ◎ By combining these data, astronomers can create a 3-Dimensional model of the distribution of the dust and magnetic field structure of the galaxy using a novel polarimeter instrument known as WALOP (Wide Area Linear Optical Polarimeter).



<https://ourstudycircle.in/tspscpdf/>

PASIPHAE Survey

👉 WALOP

- ⦿ Wide Area Linear Optical Polarimeter (WALOP) is an instrument, when mounted on two small optical telescopes, that will be used to detect polarised light signals emerging from the stars.
- ⦿ A WALOP each will be mounted on the 1.3-metre Skinakas Observatory, Crete (Greek islands), and on the 1-metre telescope of the South African Astronomical Observatory located in Sutherland.
- ⦿ Once built, they will be unique instruments offering the widest ever field of view of the sky in polarimetry. In simple terms, the images will simultaneously have the finest of details of a star.
- ⦿ 200 kg weighing WALOP will be capable of observing hundreds of stars concurrently present both in the northern and the southern skies

PENCIL Portal

NEWS

Union Minister of Women and Child Development and Textiles, has appealed to citizens to report the instances of Child Labour on PENCIL Portal or by calling on Childline-1098.

👉 About

- ◎ PENCIL Portal stands for Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour.
- ◎ Purpose → It is an electronic platform that aims at achieving the target of a child labour free society. For this aim, it coordinates actions of the Centre, State, District, Governments, civil society, and the public.

Let us join hands
to end Child Labour

Children shouldn't work on fields,
but on DREAMS!

If you find any child working anywhere,
report to local police station or
on Pencil Portal at www.pencil.gov.in

#SayNoToChildLabour

श्रम एवं रोजगार मंत्रालय
Ministry of Labour & Employment
भारत सरकार (Government of India)

www.pencil.gov.in @labourministry LabourMinistry

PENCIL Portal

👉 **CHILDLINE 1098**

- ◎ CHILDLINE 1098 is a free, emergency phone service for children in need of aid and assistance.
- ◎ The helpline responds to the emergency needs of children. Further, it also links them to relevant services for their long-term care and rehabilitation.
- ◎ The helpline is managed and monitored by the CHILDLINE India Foundation(CIF).

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Pyrostria Laljii -> genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Western Ghat.	
2.	iDEX-DIO -> funded and managed by Defence Research and Development Organisation.	
3.	PASIPHAE Survey -> aim to study the polarisation in the light coming from millions of stars.	
4.	PENCIL Portal -> an electronic platform that aims at achieving the target of a child labour free society.	

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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

16-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

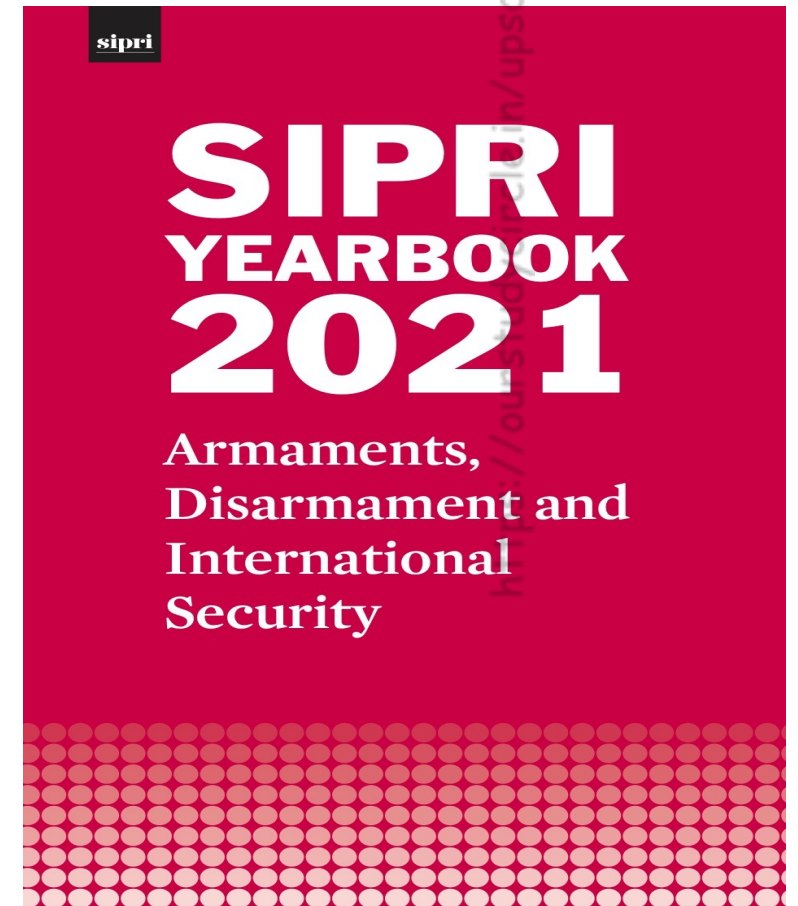
SIPRI Year Book 2021



Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released its Year Book 2021.

👉 About Key Findings

- © India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads at the start of 2021, compared with 150 at the start of last year, while Pakistan had 165 warheads, up from 160 in 2020.
- © China's nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads, up from 320 at the start of 2020.



SIPRI Year Book 2021

- ◎ The nine nuclear armed states — the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea — together possessed an estimated 13,080 nuclear weapons at the start of 2021.
- ◎ Russia and the U.S. together possessed over 90% of global nuclear weapons.

SIPRI Year Book 2021

World nuclear forces, January 2021

Country	Deployed warheads*	Other warheads**	Total 2021	Total 2020
USA	1 800	3 750	5 550	5 800
Russia	1 625	4 630	6 255	6 375
UK***	120	105	225	215
France	280	10	290	290
China		350	350	320
India		156	156	150
Pakistan		165	165	160
Israel		90	90	90
North Korea****	...	[40-50]	[40-50]	[30-40]
Total	3 825	9 255	13 080	13 400

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Warheads (SIPRI estimates)

Russia
6,255
(deployed 1,625)

USA
5,550
(deployed 1,800)

China
350

France
290

UK
225

Pakistan
165

India
156

Israel
90

N Korea
40-50

INDIA

LAND VECTOR

► **Prithvi-II** (350-km) | **Agni-I** (700-km), **Agni-II** (2,000-km) & **Agni-III** (3,000-km) inducted

► **Agni-V** (over 5,000-km) in process of induction

AIR VECTOR

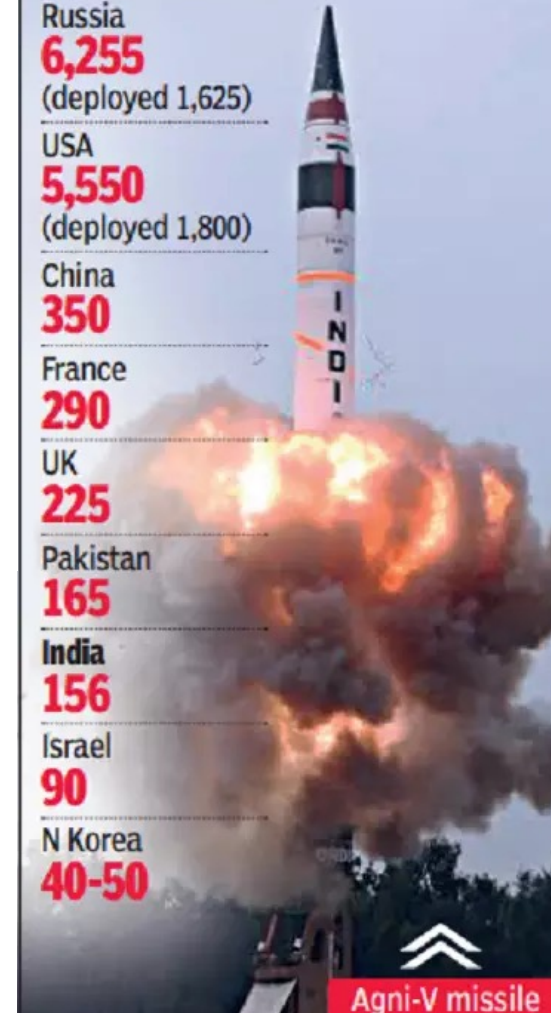
► **Sukhoi-30MKI** | **Mirage-2000** | **Jaguar** fighters & now **Rafales** can deliver nuclear bombs

SEA VECTOR

► Only **1 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine** (SSBN), 6,000-tonne **INS Arighat**. Armed with **750-km range K-15 sub-launched nuclear missiles (SLBMs)**

► **INS Arighat** to be commissioned this year. 2 more (called **S-4 & S-4***) being built at Vizag. Over **13,000-tonne S-5 class SSBNs** to be built later

► Developmental trials of **3,500-km K-4 missiles** over. Induction some distance away



Agni-V missile

SIPRI Year Book 2021

👉 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

- ◎ It is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- ◎ It was established in 1966 at Stockholm (Sweden).
- ◎ It provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

Prelims 2015

With reference to Agni-IV Missile, which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

1. It is surface-to-surface missile.
2. It is fuelled by liquid propellant only.
3. It can deliver one tonne nuclear warhead about 7500 km away.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Prelims 2014

Answer (a)

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Operation Olivia



Recently, the Indian Coast Guard has pressed into service an aircraft for 'Operation Olivia' to protect Olive Ridley turtles.

👉 About Operation Olivia

- © Operation Olivia was launched by the Indian Coast Guard in the early 1980s.
- © Purpose → The operation aims to protect Olive Ridley turtles when they arrive at the Odisha coast for breeding and nesting from November to December.



Operation Olivia

- ◎ Indian Coast Guards(**ICGs**) execute this operation. As part of the operation, ICGs conducts round-the-clock surveillance. Assets of Indian Coast Guards such as fast patrol vessels, interceptor craft, and Dornier aircraft are used in this operation to enforce laws near the rookeries (colony of breeding animals).

👉 **Olive Ridley Turtles:**

◎ Features →

- The Olive ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.
- These turtles are carnivores and get their name from their olive colored carapace.



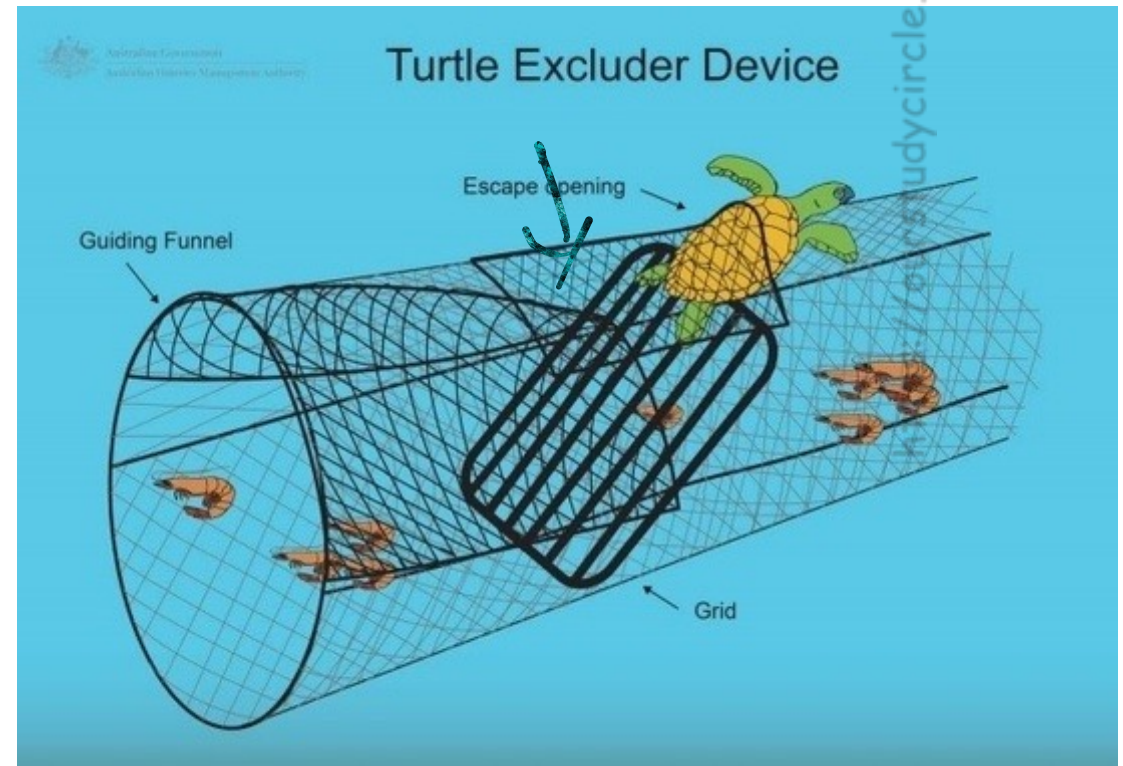
Operation Olivia

- They migrate thousands of kilometers between feeding and mating grounds in the course of a year.
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called Arribada, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- ◎ Habitat →
 - They are found in warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.
 - The Odisha's Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is known as the world's largest rookery of sea turtles.
- ◎ Protection Status →
 - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable
 - CITES: Appendix I
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I.

Operation Olivia

👉 Other Initiatives

- 🕒 To reduce accidental killing in India, the Odisha government has made it mandatory for trawls to use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), a net specially designed with an exit cover which allows the turtles to escape while retaining the catch.



Prelims 2015

Q. Which one of the following is the national aquatic animal of India?

- a) Saltwater crocodile
- b) Olive ridley turtle
- c) Gangetic dolphin
- d) Gharial

Prelims 2015

Answer (c

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

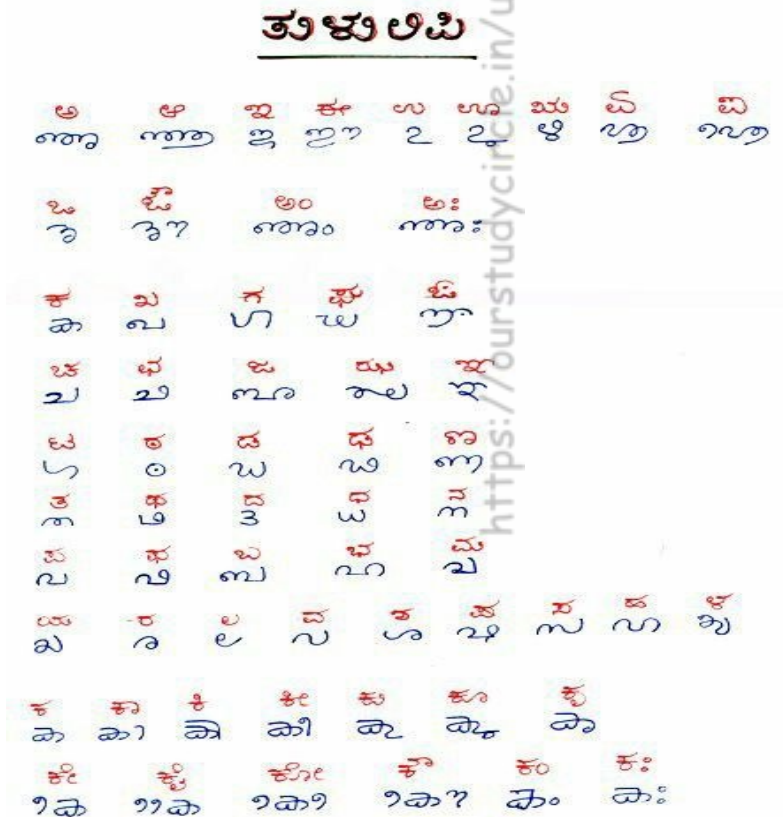
Tulu Language

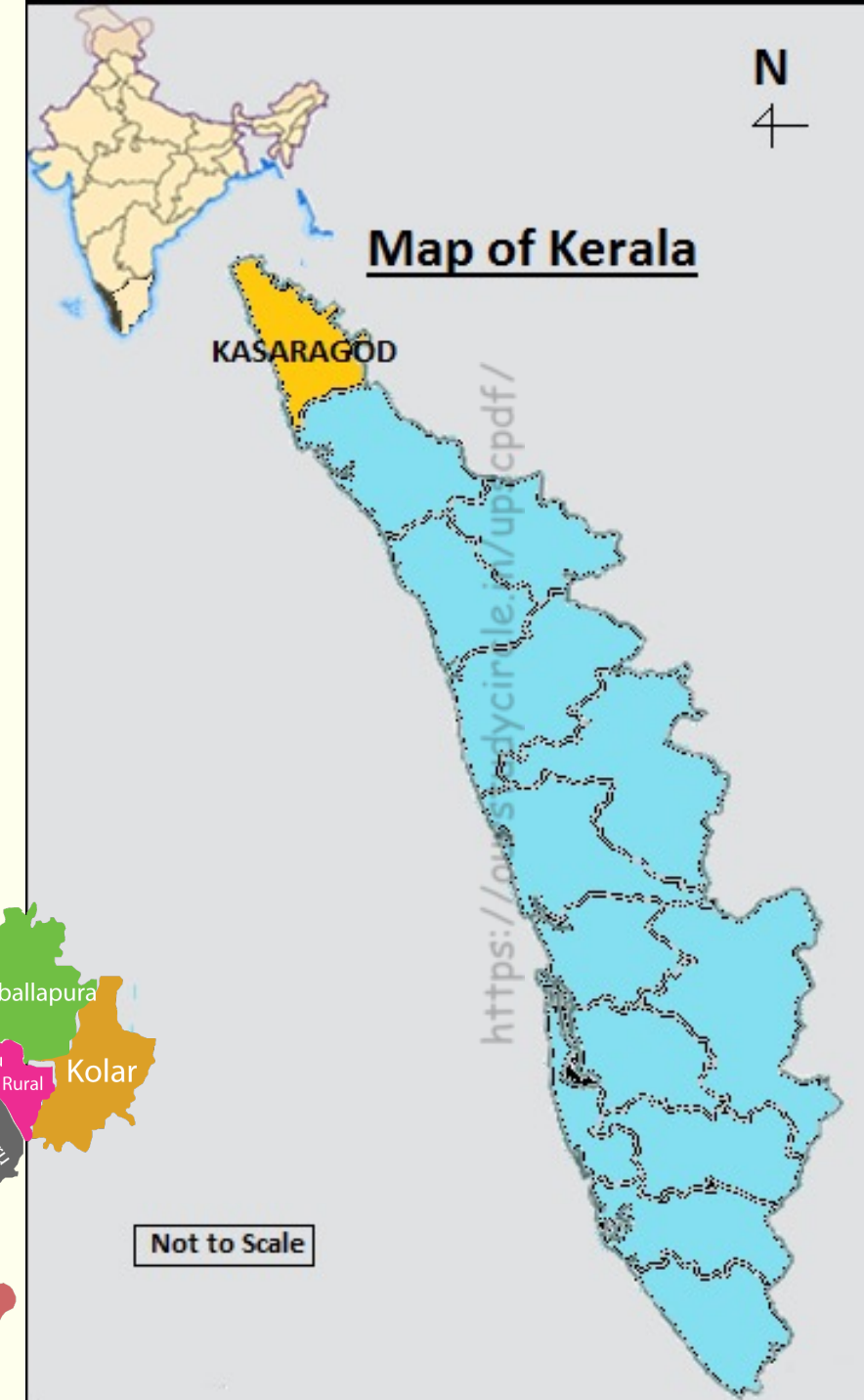


The Tulu speakers, mainly in Karnataka and Kerala, have been requesting the governments to give it official language status and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution.

👉 About Tulu Language

- © Tulu is a Dravidian language. It is mainly spoken in two coastal districts, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi of Karnataka and Kasaragod district of Kerala.
- © Kasaragod district is called the 'Sapta bhasha Samgama Bhumi (the confluence of seven languages)' and Tulu is one among the seven.





Tulu Language

- ⦿ Thus, the Tulu speakers mainly from Karnataka and Kerala are requesting an official language status for Tulu by its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution.
- ⦿ Tulu Art and Culture:
 - Tulu has a rich oral literature tradition with folk-song forms like paddana and traditional folk theatre yakshagana.
 - Tulu also has an active tradition of cinema, with around 5 to 7 Tulu language movies produced a year.
 - Moreover, Tulu films are screened every day in Mangalore and Udupi in at least one theatre.

👉 Advantages of including Tulu in Eight Schedule

- ⦿ Recognition from the Sahitya Akademi.

Tulu Language

- **Translation of Tulu literary** works into other languages.
- **Members of Parliament (MP) and Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) could speak Tulu in Parliament and State Assemblies, respectively.**
- Option to **take competitive exams in Tulu** including all-India competitive examinations like the Civil Services exam.

Tulu Language

👉 Eighth Schedule of the Constitution

- ⦿ The Constitutional provisions relating to the Eighth Schedule occur in Article 344 (1) and 351 of the Constitution.
- ⦿ The languages listed under Eighth Schedule are:
 - (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.
- ⦿ Languages are added through Constitutional Amendments.

Prelims 2015

Q. Which one of the following was given classical language status recently?

- a) Odia**
- b) Konkani**
- c) Bhojpuri**
- d) Assamese**

Prelims 2015

Answer (a)

Odia language on **March 11, 2014** became the **sixth language** of the country to get “**classical language**” status after the Union Cabinet conceded a long-pending demand for putting it in the same league as **Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam**.

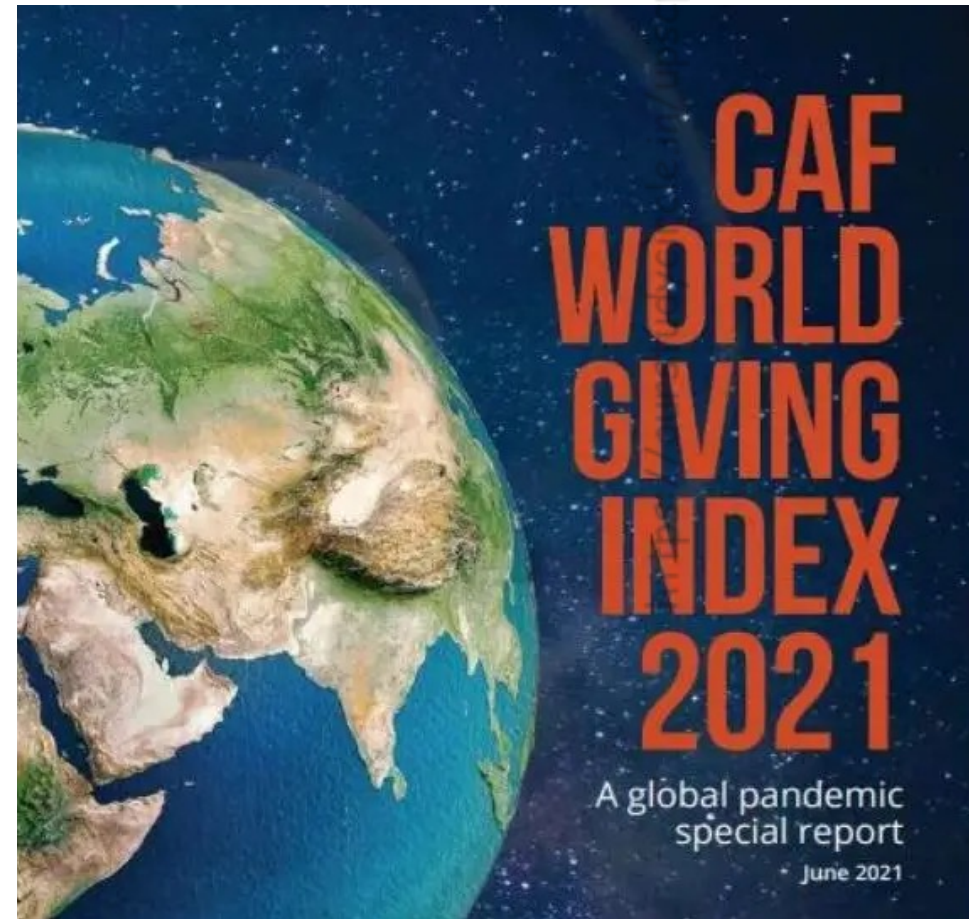
World Giving Index

NEWS

India is now ranked as the 14th most charitable country in the world as per a report released by the World Giving Index 2021 (WGI).

👉 About

- © The World Giving Index (WGI) is an annual report published by the Charities Aid Foundation and ranks over 140 countries in the world according to how charitable they are.
- © The first edition was released in September 2010.



World Giving Index

- ◎ The WGI is a global survey, which asks people three questions: In the last month have you...
 - Helped a stranger, or someone you didn't know who needed help?
 - Donated money to a charity?
 - Volunteered your time to an organisation?
- ◎ The index measures countries by proportion of population giving rather than how much they give.

👉 Charities Aid Foundation

- ◎ The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) is a leading international charity registered in the United Kingdom.
- ◎ It was founded in 1974.

World Giving Index

THE WORLD'S MOST GENEROUS COUNTRIES



Ranking	COUNTRY	Index Score
1	 Indonesia	69%
2	 Kenya	58%
3	 Nigeria	52%
4	 Myanmar	51%
5	 Australia	49%
6	 Ghana	47%
7	 New Zealand	47%
8	 Uganda	46%

Ranking	COUNTRY	Index Score
9	 Kosovo	46%
10	 Thailand	46%
11	 Tajikistan	45%
12	 Bahrain	45%
13	 United Arab Emirates	44%
14	 India	44%
15	 Ethiopia	44%

Source: CAF world giving index report

Prelims 2018

Q. "Rule of Law Index" is released by which of the following?

- (a) Amnesty International
- (b) International Court of Justice
- (c) The office of UN Commissioner for Human Rights
- (d) World Justice Project

Prelims 2018

Answer (d

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Rosewood (शीशम)

NEWS

Recently, steep demand in the international market for musical instruments and furniture fashioned out of rosewood has increased its widespread illegal felling.

👉 About

- © Scientific Name → Dalbergia latifolia.
- © Habitat and Distribution →
 - It occurs in evergreen or deciduous tropical or subtropical forests with deep, well-drained and moist soils, within an elevational range of 300 to 1,000 m above sea level.
 - It is native to India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Java and Indonesia.



Rosewood

⦿ Features →

- It is a large hardwood tree that can grow up to 40 meter tall.
- It is highly utilised as a timber species and is renowned for the colour and fragrance of its wood.
- It is particularly prized for making musical instruments (e.g. guitars), furniture, flooring, plywood, carvings, and moulding.

⦿ Conservation Efforts →

- It is protected under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 with the export of logs or sawn (काटना) timber being banned.
- The Kerala Restriction on Cutting and Destruction of Valuable Trees Rules, 1974, does not allow cutting of rosewood that has not attained a girth at breast height (GBH) of 2.5 metres.

Rosewood

⊙ Protection Status →

- IUCN Red List: Vulnerable
- CITES: Appendix II

⊙ Threats →

- Timber is of high commercial value and wild subpopulations are widely overexploited.
- Continued deforestation across its range due to human settlement and agriculture.

NATO Summit

NEWS

NATO Summit was held recently in Brussels. It brought together the leaders of all 30 Allied nations.

👉 About NATO

- © Origin → The alliance is based on the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed in 1949. It was formed as an alliance of European and North American countries after World War II as a bulwark against Russian aggression.
- © HQ → Brussels, Belgium.



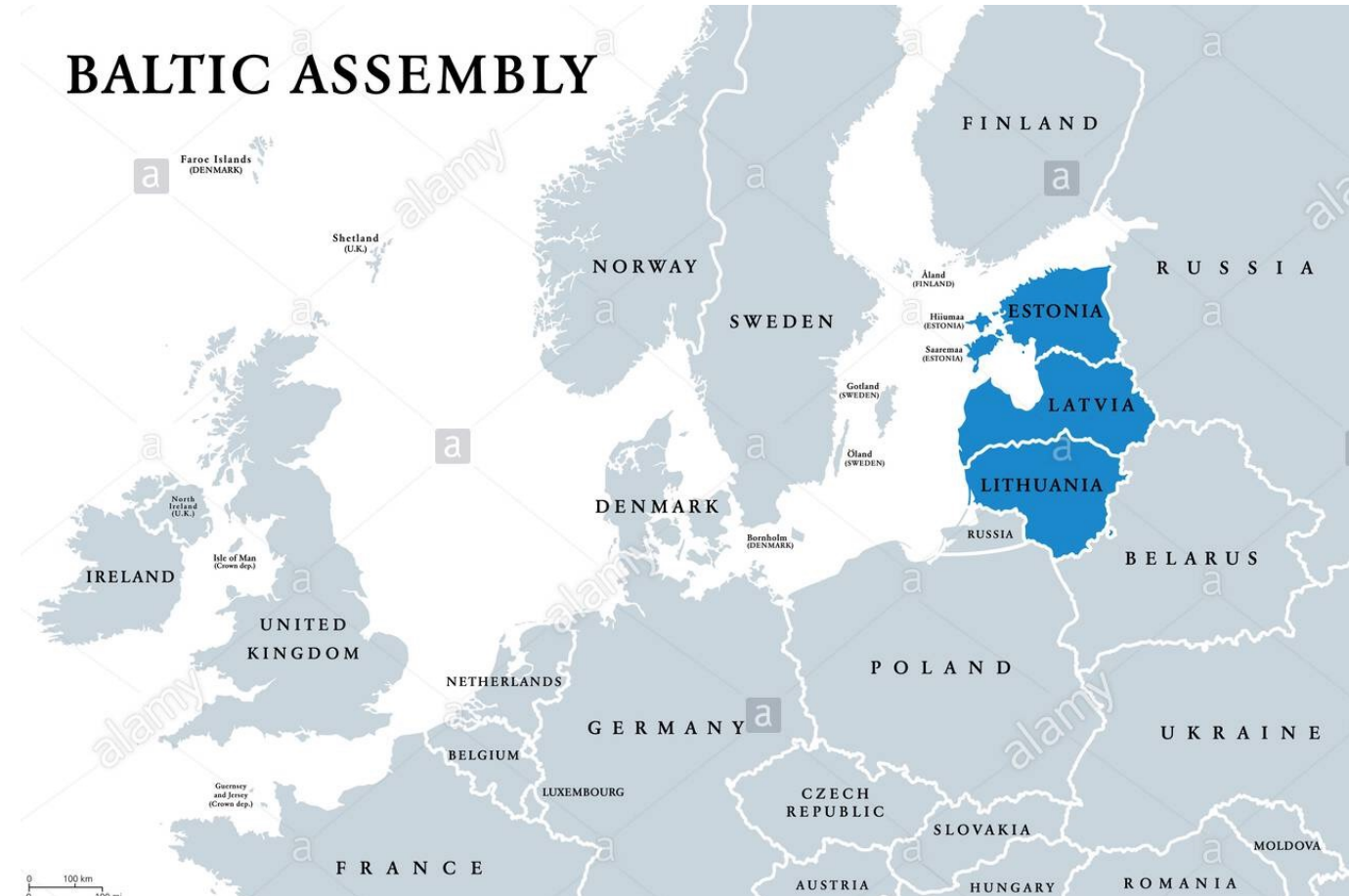


NATO Summit

- ◎ Objective → It is an intergovernmental military alliance between North American and European countries. It constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.
- ◎ Member Countries →
 - It consists of 30 members. Montenegro joined it in 2017 and North Macedonia in 2020.
 - Of the 30 member countries, two are located in North America (Canada and the United States), 28 are in Europe, one of which (Turkey) is in both Europe and Asia.

NATO Summit

- Three former Soviet states (**Estonia**, **Latvia** and **Lithuania**) are members of NATO.



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Operation Olivia -> launched by the Indian Coast Guard aims to protect Olive Ridley turtles.	
2.	Tulu Language -> listed under Eighth Schedule.	
3.	World Giving Index -> released by Amnesty International.	
4.	Rosewood -> IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.	
5.	NATO -> HQ: Washington, D.C..	

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

17-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

New Shephard Rocket System

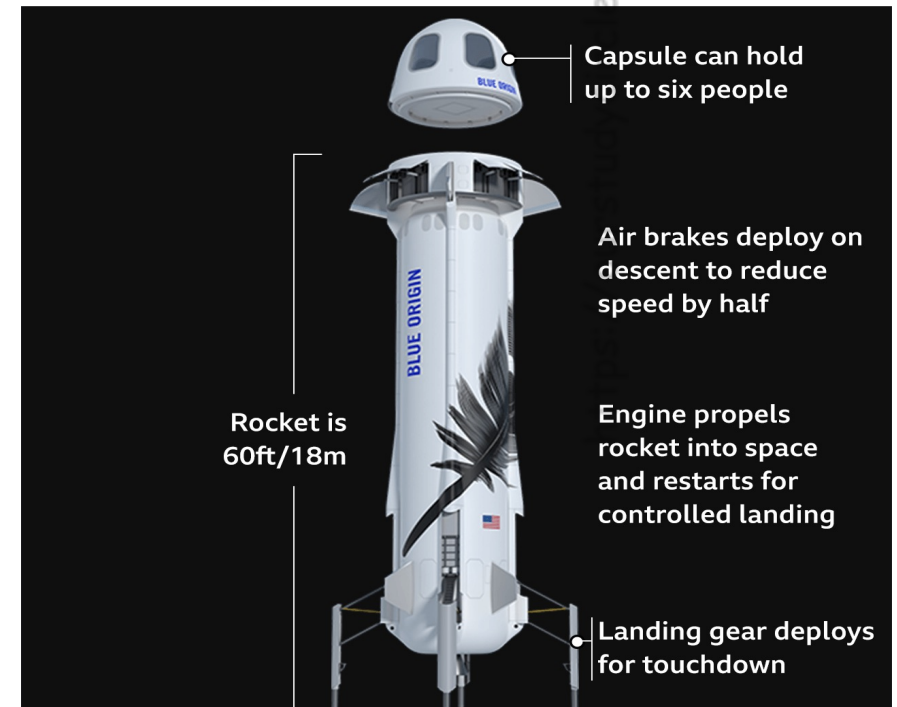
NEWS

Amazon founder and billionaire Jeff Bezos's space company called Blue Origin recently concluded the online auction for the first seat on New Shephard, a rocket system meant to take tourists to space.

👉 About

- © New Shephard is a reusable rocket system that has been designed to take astronauts and research payloads past the Karman line – the internationally recognized boundary of space.
- © Built by ➔ The rocket system has been built by Blue Origin, space company of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

New Shepard: Reusable rocket designed to take passengers into space



Source: Blue Origin

BBC

New Shephard Rocket System

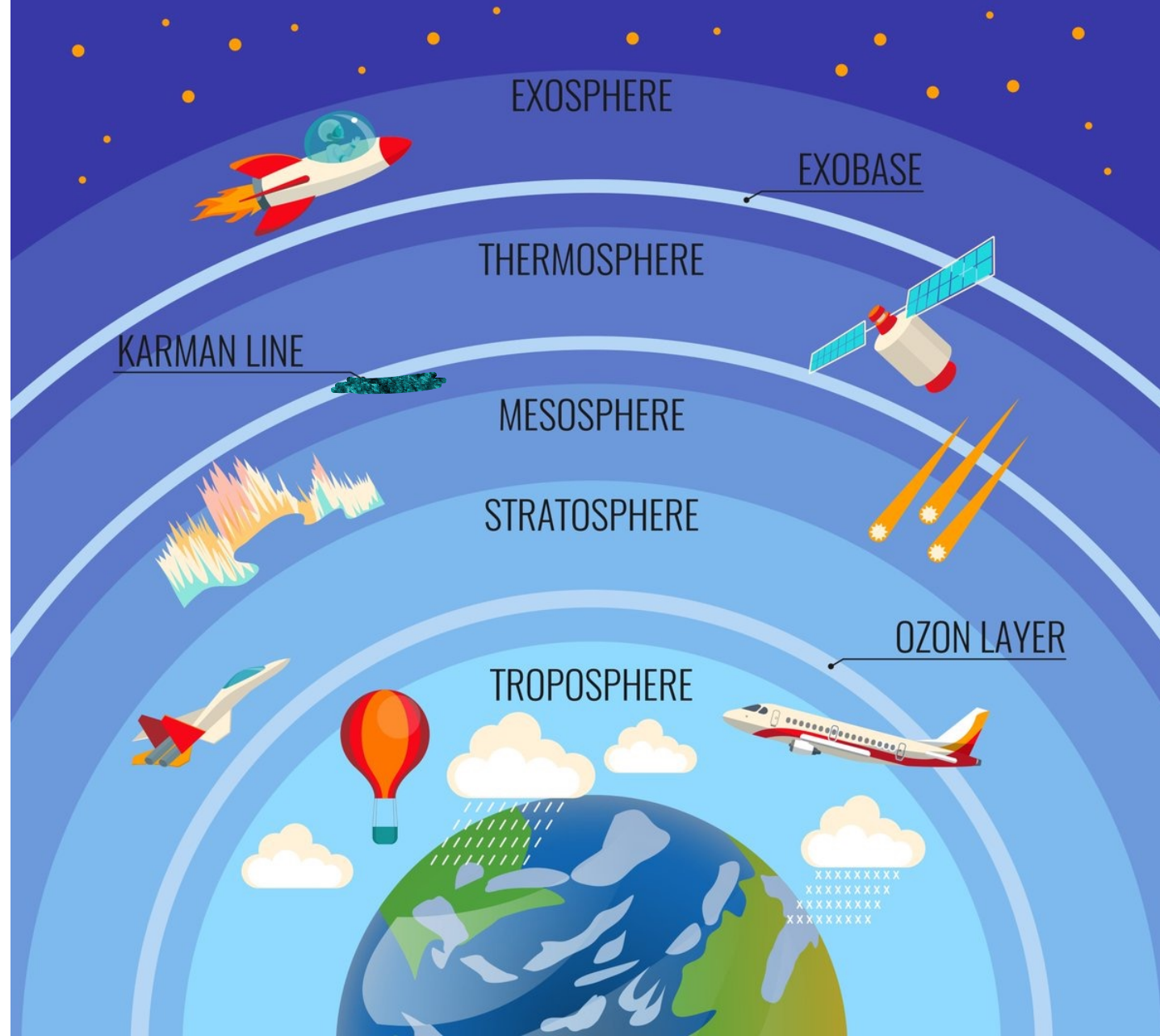
- ⊙ Named after → The rocket system has been named after astronaut Alan Shepard – the first American to go to space.
- ⊙ Significance → The idea is to provide easier and more cost-effective access to space meant for purposes such as academic research, corporate technology development and entrepreneurial ventures among others.
- ⊙ Moreover, apart from academic and research-oriented goals, the rocket will also allow space tourists to experience microgravity by taking them 100 km above the Earth.
 - Microgravity is the condition in which people or objects appear to be weightless. The effects of microgravity can be seen when astronauts and objects float in space.

New Shephard Rocket System

👉 Karman Line

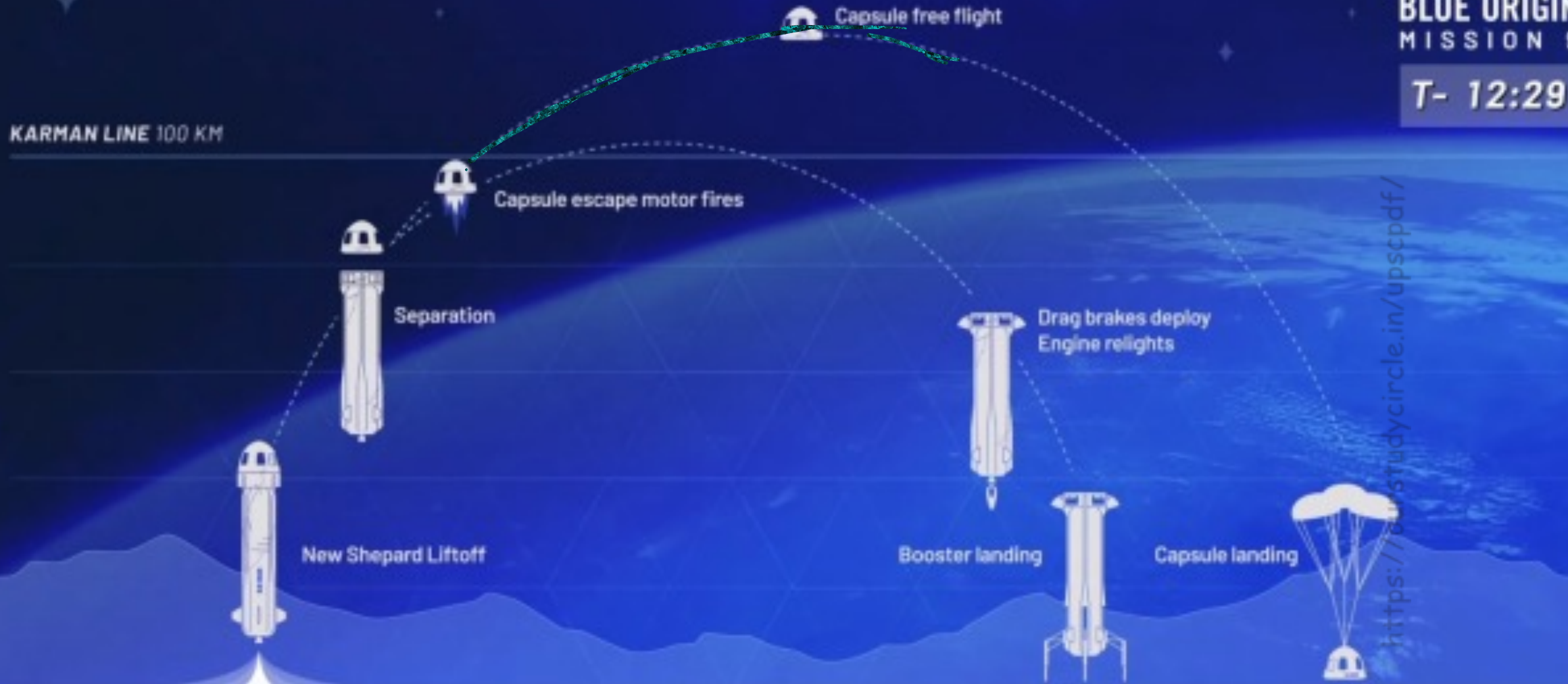
- ◎ The Karman line is the internationally recognized boundary of space.
- ◎ The line is named after Theodore von Kármán, a Hungarian American engineer and physicist.
- ◎ He was the first person to determine the altitude at which the atmosphere becomes too thin.
- ◎ The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) defines the Kármán line as the altitude of 100 kilometres (62 miles) above Earth's mean sea level.
 - FAI is an international standard-setting and record-keeping body for aeronautics and astronautics.

THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE



BLUE ORIGIN
MISSION 9

T- 12:29



KARMAN LINE 100 KM

Capsule escape motor fires

Capsule free flight

Separation

Drag brakes deploy
Engine relights

New Shepard Liftoff

Booster landing

Capsule landing

WEST TEXAS LAUNCH SITE 3,700 FT ABOVE MSL

MISSION 9 FLIGHT PROFILE

<https://www.studycircle.in/upscpdf/>

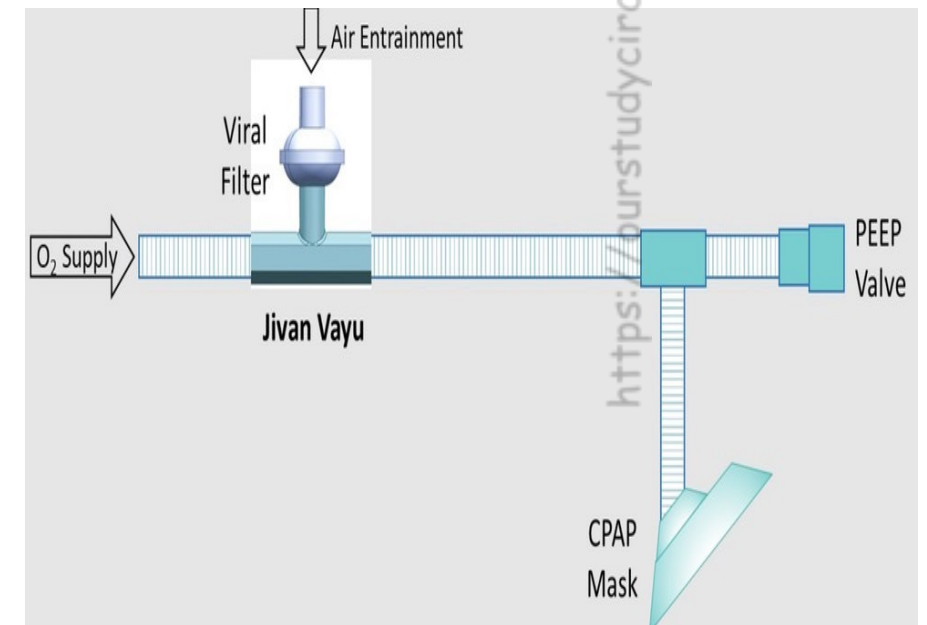
Jivan Vayu

NEWS

IIT Ropar has developed nation's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'. This substitute of CPAP machine can function even without electricity.

👉 About

- ◎ It is India's first such device which functions even without electricity.
- ◎ It is adapted to both kinds of oxygen generation units like O₂ cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- ◎ It is a leak-proof, low-cost CPAP delivery system. It can deliver high flow oxygen (20–60 LPM).



Jivan Vayu

👉 What is CPAP?

- ⦿ The Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is a treatment method for patients having breathing problems during sleep called sleep apnea.
- ⦿ The machine uses mild air pressure to keep the airways open for easy breathing.
- ⦿ It is also used to treat infants whose lungs have not fully developed.
- ⦿ The treatment is all the more necessary during early stages of the Covid-19 infection.
- ⦿ It reduces lung damage and allows patients to recover from the inflammatory effects.

UN High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought



The Prime Minister of India has delivered a keynote address at the United Nations (UN) High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation, and Drought.

👉 About

- © The dialogue has been organized by the President of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.
- © Aim → It aims to focus the international community's attention on land issues. So that it can generate political will for implementing land solutions within COVID-19 adaptation and recovery strategies.



UN High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought

- ◎ The dialogue encourages all Member States to adopt and implement Land Degradation Neutrality targets and National Drought Plans.
 - Indian Prime Minister(PM) presided over the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in **September 2019**. Thus, he spoke at the opening segment of the dialogue, which is part of UNCCD.

👉 UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification)

- ◎ Established in 1994.
- ◎ It is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.
- ◎ It is the only convention stemming from a direct recommendation of the Rio Conference's Agenda 21 (comprehensive plan of action).

UN High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought

👉 14th Session of COP-14 of UNCCD:

- ☉ India had for the first time hosted the 14th session of the Conference of Parties(COP-14) of the UNCCD at Greater Noida in 2019.
- ☉ The theme of the Conference was 'Restore land, Sustain future'.
- ☉ During the conference, the Delhi Declaration was issued. The declaration called for better access over land and emphasised gender-sensitive transformative projects.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

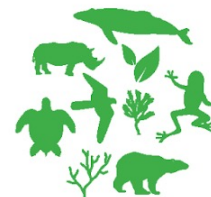
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

BEFORE COVID-19

THE WORLD IS FALLING SHORT ON 2020 TARGETS TO HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS



OVER 31,000 SPECIES ARE THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION

WHICH IS

27% OF OVER 116,000 ASSESSED SPECIES IN THE IUCN RED LIST



FOREST AREAS CONTINUE TO DECLINE AT AN ALARMING RATE, DRIVEN MAINLY BY AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION

EACH YEAR, 10 MILLION HECTARES OF FOREST ARE DESTROYED (2015-2020)

COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING DISRUPTS ECOSYSTEMS AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES



PANGOLINS ARE POSSIBLY THE INTERMEDIARY ANIMAL THAT TRANSFERRED THE CORONAVIRUS

THE EQUIVALENT OF 370,000 PANGOLINS WERE SEIZED GLOBALLY (2014-2018)



TWO BILLION HECTARES OF LAND ON EARTH ARE DEGRADED, AFFECTING SOME 3.2 BILLION PEOPLE, DRIVING SPECIES TO EXTINCTION AND INTENSIFYING CLIMATE CHANGE



ONLY A THIRD OF 113 COUNTRIES WERE ON TRACK TO ACHIEVE THEIR NATIONAL TARGET TO INTEGRATE BIODIVERSITY INTO NATIONAL PLANNING

Prelims: 2016

- © **What is/are the importance/importances of the 'United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification'?**
1. It aims to promote effective action through innovative national programmes and supportive international partnerships.
 2. It has a special/particular focus on South Asia and North Africa regions, and its Secretariat facilitates the allocation of major portion of financial resources to these regions.
 3. It is committed to bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people in combating the desertification.
- © **Select the correct answer using the code given below.**
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) 1, 2 and 3

Prelims: 2016

- ⦿ Answer: (c)
- ⦿ **2nd is wrong as secretariat helps in compiling information and reports, not in allocating finances Further south Asia not in focus.**

Prelims: 2016

© **With reference to 'Agenda 21', sometimes seen in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a global action plan for sustainable development.
2. It originated in the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002.

© **Which of the statements given above is / are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Prelims: 2016

⦿ **Answer: (a)**

SilverLine Project

NEWS

Last week, the Kerala cabinet gave the green light to begin acquiring land for SilverLine, its flagship semi high-speed railway project.

👉 About

- © SilverLine Project is Kerala's semi high-speed railway project.
- © Aims → to reduce travel time between Kerala's northern and southern ends.
- © Distance → The railway line will be around 529 kms long, covering 11 districts through 11 stations.



SilverLine Project

- ◎ It will link the southern end and state capital Thiruvananthapuram with its northern end of Kasaragod.
- ◎ Implementation → The Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited(KRDCL) will execute this project.
 - KRDCL is a joint venture between the Kerala government and the Union Ministry of Railways.
- ◎ Significance of the Project → Once the project is completed, one can travel from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram in less than four hours on trains traveling at 200 km/hr. The current travel time on the existing Indian Railways network is 12 hours.
- ◎ Duration of the Project → The deadline for the project is 2025.

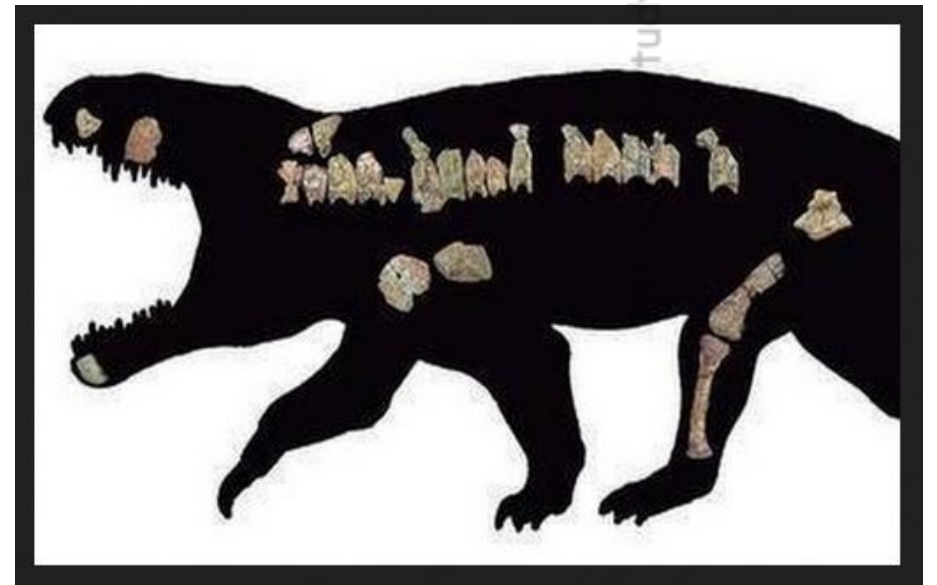
Bharitalasuchus tapani

NEWS

In the mid 20th century, researchers from the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, carried out extensive studies on rocks of the Yerrapalli Formation in what is now Telangana, uncovering several fossils.

👉 About

- © By studying some of these specimens stored at the Institute, an international team has now thrown light on a carnivorous reptile (सरीसृप) that **lived 240 million years ago.**
- © They named it **Bharitalasuchus tapani.** reptile belonged to a family of extinct reptiles named Erythrosuchidae.



Bharitalasuchus tapani

- ◎ In the Telugu language, Bhari means huge, Tala means head, and Suchus is the name of the Egyptian crocodile-headed deity.
- ◎ Named after → The species is named after paleontologist (who studies the history of life on Earth through the fossil record) Tapan Roy Chowdhury in honour of his extensive work.
- ◎ Key Features →
 - Bharitalasuchus tapani were robust animals with big heads and large teeth, and these probably predated other smaller reptiles.
 - They were approximately the size of an adult male lion and might have been the largest predators in their ecosystems.

Bharitalasuchus tapani

👉 Yerrapalli Formation

- 🕒 Yerrapalli Formation is located primarily in the Pranhita–Godavari Basin in Telangana.
- 🕒 It is a Triassic (geologic period - 50.6 million years) rock formation consisting primarily of red mudstones.



Dagmara Hydro-Electric Project

NEWS

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between NHPC Limited and Bihar State Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (BSHPC) for Implementation of the Dagmara Hydro-Electric Project over the Kosi River in Supaul district.

👉 About

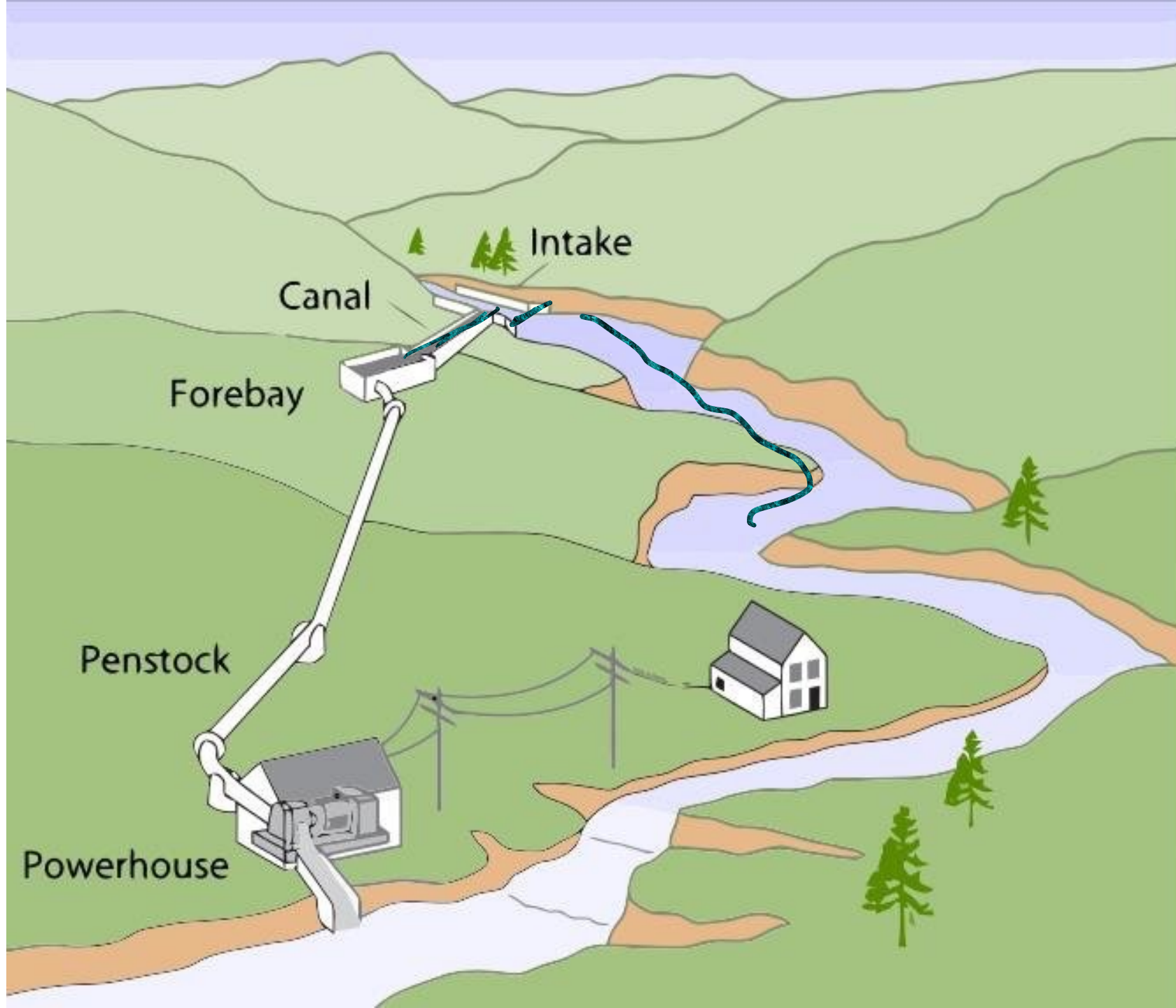
- © The project is located near village Dagmara on Kosi river.
- © It is a Run-of-the-River scheme. Run-of-river hydro projects use the natural downward flow of rivers and micro turbine generators to capture the kinetic energy carried by water.





Dagmara Hydro-Electric Project

- Typically water is taken from the river at a high point and diverted to a channel, pipeline, or pressurised pipeline.
- ◎ The project will have the total capacity of generating 130 MW energy.
- ◎ The estimated cost of construction of this project is at Rs. 2478.24 crore.
- ◎ Significance →
 - It will be a landmark project in the power sector scenario of Bihar as far as green power is concerned.
 - Apart from generating clean and green power, the execution will boost the socio-economic and infrastructure development in the area and shall also create employment opportunities.



Dagmara Hydro-Electric Project

👉 Kosi River

- ◎ The Kosi is a trans-boundary river which flows through Tibet, Nepal and India.
- ◎ It has its source in Tibet.
- ◎ Major tributaries → Sun Kosi, Arun and Tamur.
- ◎ Its unstable nature causes course changes.
- ◎ The Kosi carries the maximum amount of silt and sand after the Brahmaputra in India.
- ◎ It is also known as the “Sorrow of Bihar” due to the extreme flooding that it causes.



Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	New Shephard Rocket System -> is a reusable rocket system. built by SpaceX.	
2.	Karman Line -> determine the altitude at which the atmosphere becomes too thin.	
3.	UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) -> is the sole non-legally binding international agreement.	
4.	SilverLine Project -> The Indian Navy aims to procure new nuclear-powered attack submarines under this Project.	
5.	Bharitalasuchus tapani -> reptile belonged to a family of extinct reptiles named Erythrosuchidae.	

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	New Shephard Rocket System -> is a reusable rocket system. built by SpaceX.	False
2.	Karman Line -> determine the altitude at which the atmosphere becomes too thin to support aeronautical flight.	True
3.	UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) -> is the sole non-legally binding international agreement.	False
4.	SilverLine Project -> The Indian Navy aims to procure new nuclear-powered attack submarines under this Project.	False
5.	Bharitalasuchus tapani -> reptile belonged to a family of extinct reptiles named Erythrosuchidae.	True

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

18-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Shenzhou-12

NEWS

China has launched the Long March 2F rocket transporting the Shenzhou-12 or Divine Vessel.

👉 About

- © What is it? → Shenzhou-12 is a manned mission.
- © It is the third of the 11 missions that needed to complete China's first Permanent space station, named Tiangong Space Station. Among these missions, four will be manned missions.



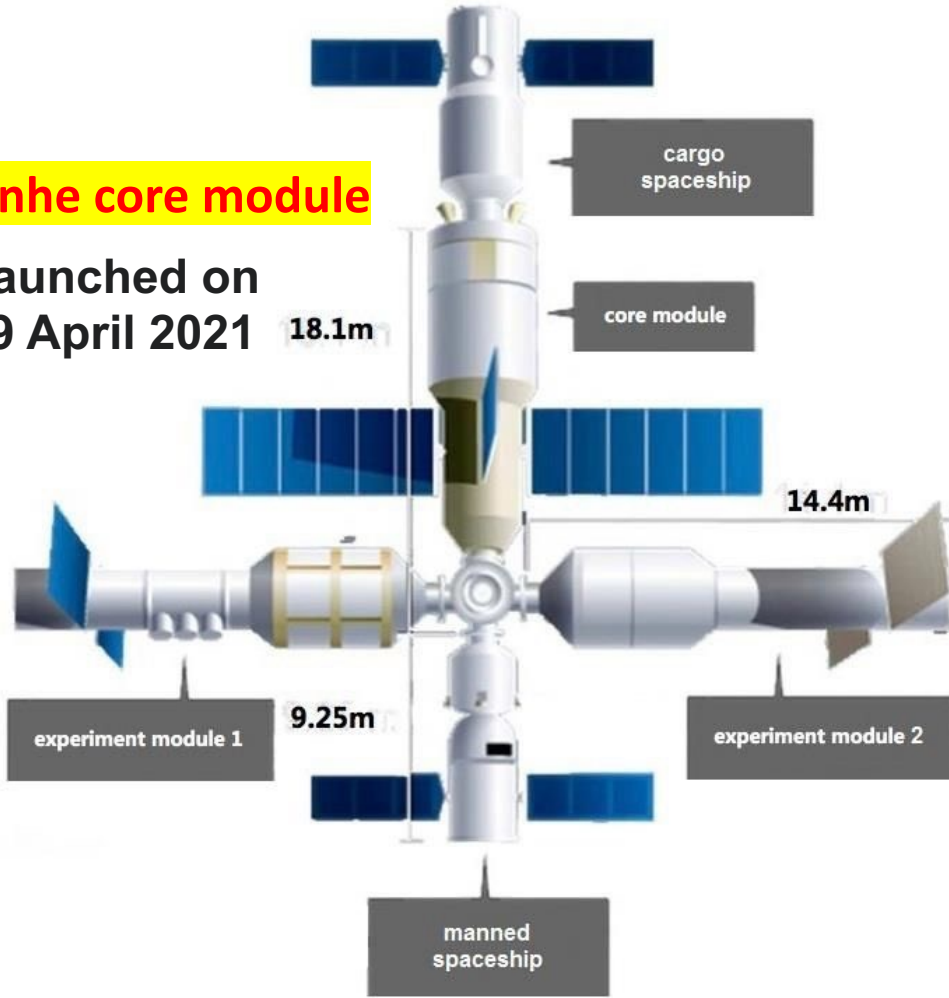
Tiangong- 1: 2011 to 2018

Tiangong- 2: 2016 to 2019

पुराना किस्सा

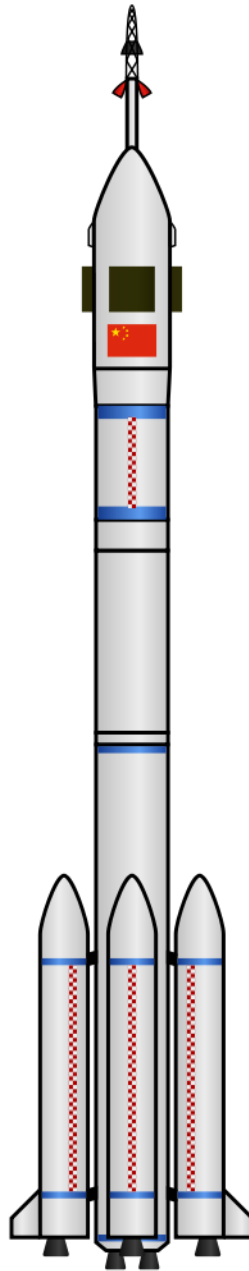
Tianhe core module

Launched on
29 April 2021

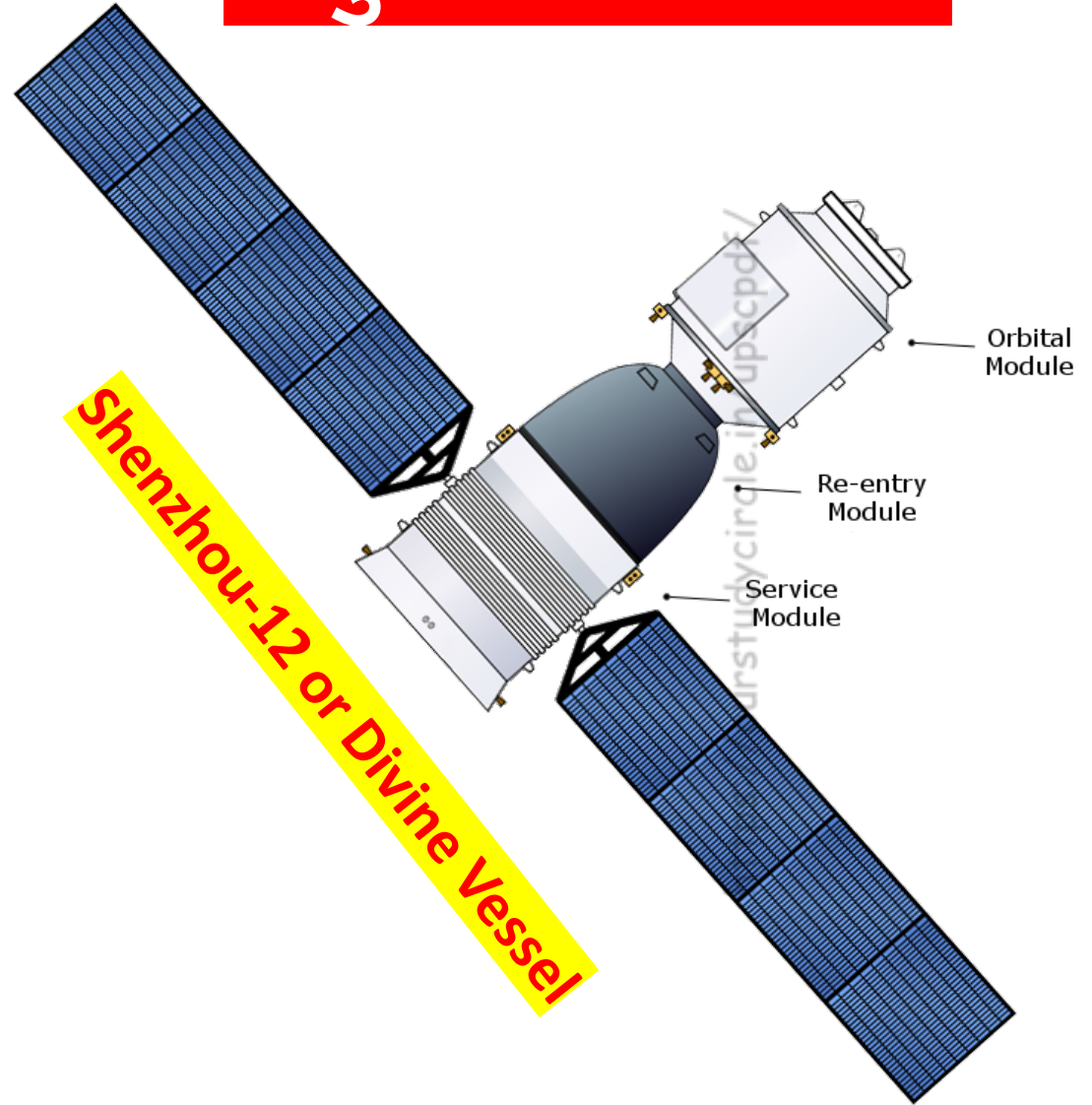


Tiangong Space station

In low Earth orbit between 340 and 450 km



Long March 2F rocket



Shenzhou-12 or Divine Vessel

Background: ISS

- ◎ The International Space Station (ISS) is a space station, or a **habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit.**
- ◎ Its **first component launched into orbit in 1998.**
- ◎ Five different space agencies involved: **NASA, Russia's Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities (Roscosmos), the European Space Agency, the Canadian Space Agency and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.**
- ◎ The ISS has been described as the most expensive single item ever constructed.
- ◎ **South Korean and Indian in 2009:** they wish to join the ISS program.



ISRO chairman K. Sivan announced in 2019 that India will not join the International Space Station programme and will instead build a 20 tonne space station on its own.

ISS and China

- ◎ **China is not an ISS partner**, and **no Chinese nationals** have been aboard.
- ◎ **Shenzhou 5** was the first human spaceflight mission of the Chinese space program, **launched in 2003**.
- ◎ **In 2007**: China would like to participate in the ISS.
- ◎ **In 2010**, **ESA** stated his agency was ready But other 4 should also be ready.
- ◎ **US** concerns over the transfer of technology that could be used for military purposes.
- ◎ **2011 new American legislation**: further strengthened legal barriers - preventing NASA co-operation with China or Chinese owned companies.

Why:

1. 2007: Use of an anti-satellite weapon
2. The hacking of Jet Propulsion Laboratory intellectual property

Shenzhou-12

⊙ Working →

- Shenzhou-12 is made up of three sections—an orbiter module, a return module and a propelling module.
- It will carry three astronauts to the orbiting Tianhe core module (Part of Tiangong Space station). The astronauts will test the module's technologies, including its life-support system.
- Moreover, the men will also be monitored for how they fare in space physically and psychologically for an extended period of time.

⊙ Significance → Shenzhou-12 is China's seventh manned mission to space and the first during the construction of China's space station.

⊙ It is also the first in nearly five years after China's manned mission in 2016.

Shenzhou-12

👉 Tiangong Space Station

- ◎ Tiangong is a planned Chinese Permanent space station to be placed in Low Earth orbit.
- ◎ The operations of the station will be controlled by the Beijing Aerospace Command and Control Center in China.
- ◎ Significance → The Space Station roughly will be one-fifth the mass of the International Space Station.

Q. What is 'Greased Lightning-10 (GL-10)', recently in the news?

- (a) Electric plane tested by NASA
- (b) Solar-powered two-seater aircraft designed by Japan
- (c) Space observatory launched by China
- (d) Reusable rocket designed by ISRO

Prelims 2014

⦿ **Correct option is (a)**

Public Accounts Committee



The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament has decided its agenda for the following year.

👉 About PAC

- © Origin → Public Accounts Committee was introduced in 1921 after its first mention in the Government of India Act, 1919 also called Montford Reforms.
- © The PAC is formed every year with a strength of not more than 22 members of which 15 are from Lok Sabha and 7 from Rajya Sabha.



Public Accounts Committee

- ⊙ The term of office of the members is one year.
- ⊙ Chairman → The Chairman is appointed by the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Since 1967, the chairman of the committee is selected from the opposition.
- ⊙ Function → Its chief function is to examine the audit report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) after it is laid in the Parliament.
- ⊙ Limitations of the Public Accounts Committee:
 - Broadly, it cannot intervene in the questions of policy.
 - It can keep a tab on the expenses only after they are incurred. It has no power to limit expenses.

Public Accounts Committee

- It **cannot intervene** in **matters of day-to-day administration**.
- Any recommendation that the committee makes is **only advisory**. They can be ignored by the ministries.
- It is **not** vested with the **power of disallowance of expenditures** by the departments.
- Being **only an executive body**; it cannot issue an order. Only the Parliament can take a final decision on its findings.

Prelims 2014

Q. Which one of the following is the largest Committee of the Parliament?

- a) The Committee on Public Accounts**
- b) The Committee on Estimates**
- c) The Committee on Public Undertakings**
- d) The Committee on Petitions**

Prelims 2014

- ⦿ Correct option is B
- ⦿ Estimates Committee
- ⦿ The Estimates Committee is the largest committee of the parliament. It **consists of 30 members**, all are appointed from the Lok Sabha. The function of this committee is to report on expenditures and economy and suggest measures to boost the economy and related policies. It works continuously throughout the year.

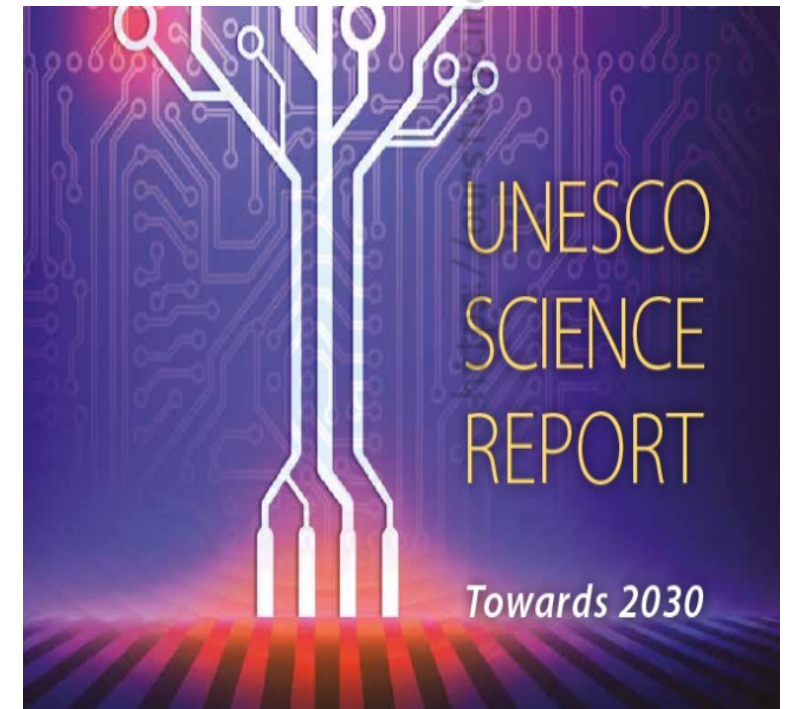
UNESCO Science Report



Latest edition of **UNESCO Science Report (USR)** was published on June 11, 2021 which is entitled as “**race against time for smarter development**”.

👉 About

- © What is it? → UNESCO Science Report is a global monitoring report.
- © It is published every five years by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- © Objective → The report monitors trends in science governance worldwide to identify which development path countries are following.



UNESCO Science Report

🕒 Latest Report → The latest edition was published with the title 'The race against time for smarter development'. The report has an exclusive chapter on India.

👉 Key outcomes

🕒 India's Investment in Research → The gross domestic expenditure on research (GERD) has been stagnant at 0.7% of the GDP for years. However, in absolute terms, the research expenditure has increased.

🕒 Density of Scientists and Engineers → In 1990, the density of scientists/engineers engaged in R&D in India per 10,000 of the labour force stood at 10. This has now marginally increased to just 11 in 2018.

UNESCO Science Report

- ◎ R&D by Government and Private Sector → R&D in the government sector has been declining steadily since 2015. On the other hand, the share of private business enterprises in R&D has increased to 42%.

ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)



Recently, the defence minister addressed the 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus. It is being hosted by Brunei as it is the chair of the ASEAN grouping this year.

👉 About

- © Consistent with the ADMM guiding principles of open and outward looking, the 2nd ADMM in Singapore in 2007 adopted the Concept Paper to establish the ADMM-Plus.
- © The ADMM-Plus is a platform for ASEAN and its eight Dialogue Partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation for peace, stability, and development in the region.



ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)

- ⊙ Membership → Eight Dialogue Partners are Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA (collectively referred to as the “Plus Countries”).
- ⊙ Aim → It aims to promote mutual trust and confidence between defence establishments through greater dialogue and transparency.
- ⊙ Agreed five areas of practical cooperation under this mechanism are:
 - Maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations and military medicine.
 - In 2013, a new priority area of humanitarian mine action was agreed.

Corporatisation of OFB (Ordnance Factory Board)

NEWS

Addressing a long-pending reform, the Union Cabinet has approved a plan to corporatize the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).

👉 About

- © Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) will be dissolved. It will be replaced by seven new Defense Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). Each undertaking will have a specific manufacturing role.
- © The 41 factories under the OFB will be subsumed under one or the other of the seven new companies.



Corporatisation of OFB (Ordnance Factory Board)

- ⊙ These all will be 100% government-owned public sector undertakings(PSU).
- ⊙ There would be no change in the service conditions of the OFB employees.
- ⊙ Significance of Corporatization of OFBs → The restructuring of OFBs is aimed at achieving the following objectives:
 - Making it a productive and profitable asset;
 - deepen specialisation in the product range;
 - enhance competitiveness;
 - improve quality and cost-efficiency

Corporatisation of OFB (Ordnance Factory Board)

👉 Ordnance Factory Board(OFB)

- ⦿ Ordnance Factory Board(OFB) is an umbrella body of 41 Ordnance Factories.
- ⦿ Origin → In 1775, British authorities accepted the establishment of the Board of Ordnance (तोपें) in Fort William, Kolkata. This marked the official beginning of the Army Ordnance in India.
- ⦿ Nodal Ministry → It is currently a subordinate office of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- ⦿ Mandate → It provides a major chunk of the weapon, ammunition, and supplies for Indian armed forces, paramilitary forces, and police forces.
- ⦿ Headquarters → Kolkata, West Bengal

Ekambaranathar Temple

NEWS

Recently, the Ekambaranathar temple in Kancheepuram (Tamil Nadu) has taken control of the Seetha Kingston School, located on the temple's property in Poonamallee High Road.

👉 About

- © It is a Hindu temple dedicated to the deity Shiva, located in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu.
- © It is significant to the Hindu sect of Saivism as one of the temples associated with the five elements, the Pancha Bhoota Stalas, and specifically the element of Earth, or Prithvi.



Ekambaranathar Temple

- ◎ Shiva is worshiped as Ekambareswarar or Ekambaranathar, and is represented by the lingam, with his idol referred to as Prithvi lingam.
- ◎ The present masonry structure was built during the Chola dynasty in the 9th century, while later expansions are attributed to Vijayanagar rulers.
- ◎ It is maintained and administered by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Shenzhou-12 -> China's manned mission .	
2.	Public Accounts Committee -> strength of not more than 30 members of which 22 are from Lok Sabha and 8 from Rajya Sabha.	
3.	ADMM-Plus -> Platform for ASEAN and its eight Dialogue Partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation.	
4.	Ordnance Factory Board -> currently a subordinate office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.	

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Shenzhou-12 -> China's manned mission .	True
2.	Public Accounts Committee -> strength of not more than 30 members of which 22 are from Lok Sabha and 8 from Rajya Sabha.	False
3.	ADMM-Plus -> Platform for ASEAN and its eight Dialogue Partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation.	True
4.	Ordnance Factory Board -> currently a subordinate office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.	False



[Prelim Booster News Discussion]

[19-June-2021]

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

World Competitiveness Index 2021

NEWS

According to the World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY), India maintained 43rd rank on the annual World Competitiveness Index.

👉 About

- © Published by → WCY was first published in 1989 and is compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD).
- © The World Competitiveness Index is a comprehensive annual report and worldwide reference point on the competitiveness of countries.



World Competitiveness Index 2021

- ⦿ Factors → It measures the prosperity and competitiveness of countries by examining **four factors** (334 competitiveness criteria):
- Economic performance
 - Government efficiency
 - **Business efficiency**
 - Infrastructure.

👉 Key finding





- ⦿ The European countries display regional strength in world competitiveness ranking with Switzerland (1st), Sweden (2nd), Denmark (3rd), the Netherlands (4th).
- ⦿ The top-performing Asian economies are, in order, Singapore (5th), Hong Kong (7th), Taiwan (8th) and China (16th).

World Competitiveness Index 2021

⦿ In Comparison to BRICS Nations → Among the BRICS nations, **India ranked second (43rd)** after China (16th), followed by Russia (45th), Brazil (57th) and South Africa (62nd).



Top 10

Overall			 Economic Performance	 Government Efficiency	 Business Efficiency	 Infrastructure
1	Switzerland		7	2	5	1
2	Sweden		16	9	2	2
3	Denmark		17	7	1	3
4	Netherlands		2	12	4	7
5	Singapore		1	5	9	11
6	Norway		25	4	6	4
7	Hong Kong SAR		30	1	3	16
8	Taiwan, China		6	8	7	14
9	UAE		9	3	8	28
10	USA		5	28	10	6

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Prelims 2012

Q. The Multi-dimensional Poverty Index developed by Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative with UNDP support covers which of the following?

1. Deprivation of education, health, assets and services at household level
2. Purchasing power parity at national level
3. Extent of budget deficit and GDP growth rate at national level

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Prelims 2012

⊙ Answer (a) 1 only

- It was first developed in 2010 by **Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and United Nations Development Programme.**
- It uses three dimensions and ten indicators which are-
 - Education- Years of schooling and child enrollment
 - Health - Child Mortality and Nutrition Standards
 - Standard of Living - Electricity, flooring, drinking water, sanitation, cooking fuel and assets.
 - **Hence only statement 1 is correct.**

Neutrinos

NEWS

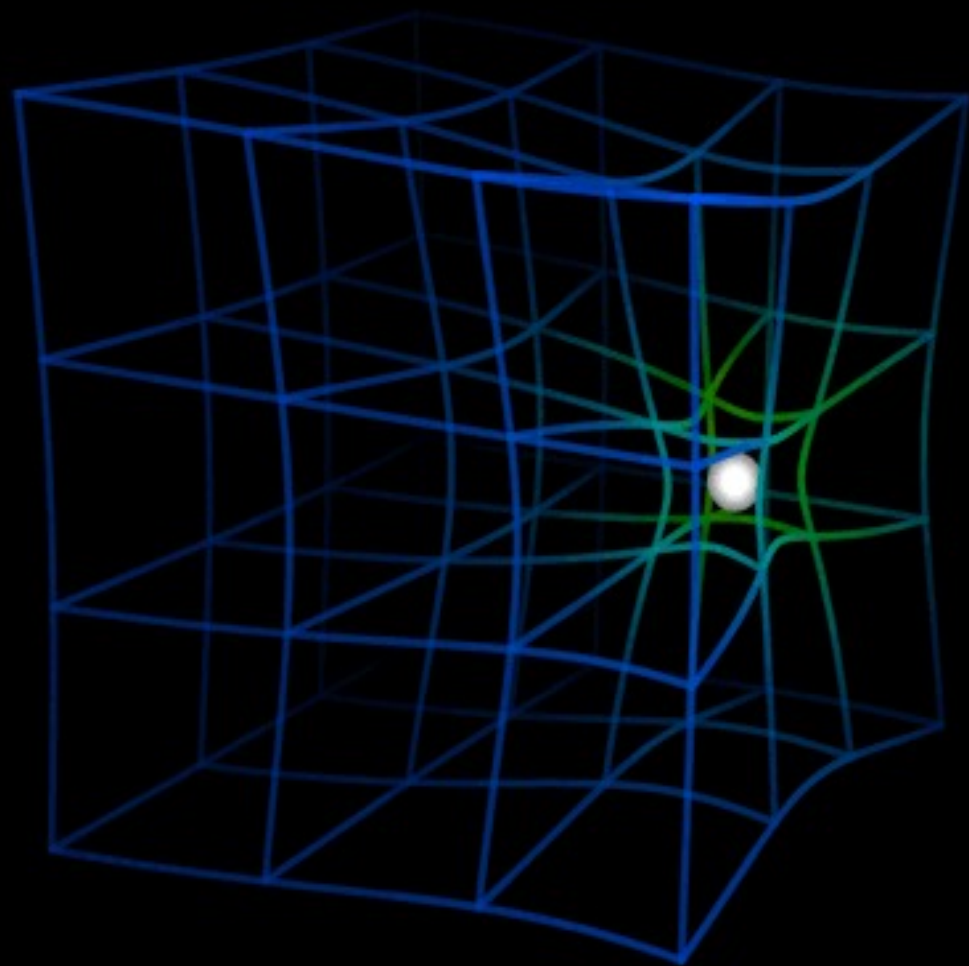
Scientists have shown that the geometry of space-time can cause neutrinos to oscillate.

👉 About

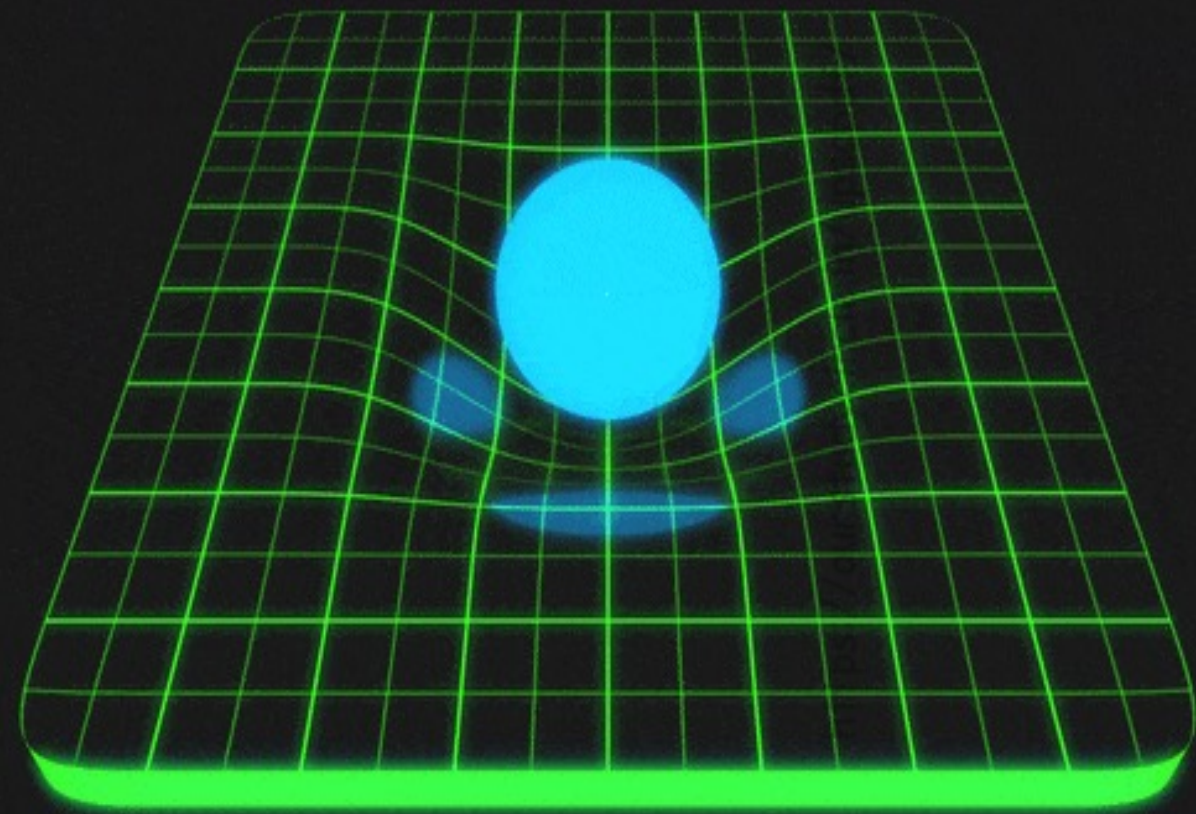
- © There are three types of neutrino, electron-neutrino, muon-neutrino, and tau-neutrino.
- © Detected for the first time in 1959, neutrinos are the second most abundant particles in the world, after photons, or the light particle.
- © Neutrinos are mysterious particles, produced copiously in nuclear reactions in the Sun, stars, and elsewhere.



circle.in/upscpdf/



YOU BEND MY



SPACE-TIME

Neutrinos

- ⊙ They also “oscillate”– meaning that different types of neutrinos change into one another.
- ⊙ Probing of oscillations of neutrinos and their relations with mass are crucial in studying the origin of the universe.
- ⊙ Sources → Neutrinos are created by various radioactive decays; during a supernova, by cosmic rays striking atoms etc.
- ⊙ Features of neutrinos →
 - Neutrinos interact very weakly with everything else – trillions of them pass through every human being every second without anyone noticing.
 - It is now generally believed that the phenomenon of neutrino oscillations require neutrinos to have tiny masses.

Q. What is the purpose of 'evolved Laser Interferometer Space Antenna' (eLISA) project?

- (a) To detect neutrinos
- (b) To detect gravitational waves
- (c) To detect the effectiveness of missile defence system
- (d) To study the effect of solar flares on our communication systems

Prelims 2017

⦿ **Answer (b)** To detect gravitational waves

Juneteenth

NEWS

US President Joe Biden is soon expected to sign a law making June 19, or “Juneteenth”, a national holiday recognised by the federal government, commemorating the end of slavery after the American Civil War (1861-65).

👉 About

- © The day is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the US and is observed on June 19.
- © It is also known as Emancipation Day or Juneteenth Independence Day.



Juneteenth

- ◎ Background → On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas and announced the end of both the Civil War and slavery. Since then, Juneteenth has become a largely symbolic date representing freedom for African Americans.

Deep Ocean Mission



Recently, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) on the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM).

👉 About

- © Deep Ocean Mission aims to explore the deep ocean for resources. Also, for sustainable use of ocean resources, it aims to develop deep-sea technologies.
- © Nodal Ministry → Ministry of Earth Sciences(MoES) will be the nodal Ministry for implementing this mission.



Deep Ocean Mission

- ⊙ Duration of the mission → The mission will be implemented over a period of **5 years** in a **phased manner**. Its 1st phase will be of 3 years.
- ⊙ Key Components of the mission →
 - A **manned submersible** will be developed to **carry three people** to a depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean with a suite of **scientific sensors and tools**. An **Integrated Mining System** will be developed for mining polymetallic nodules at those depths in the central Indian Ocean.
 - Development of **Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services**.
 - Development of a **component for searching deep sea flora and fauna**, including microbes, and studying ways to sustainably utilise them.
 - It has a component for **studying and preparing detailed engineering design** for offshore Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (**OTEC**) powered desalination plants.

Deep Ocean Mission

- The final component is aimed at grooming experts in the field of ocean biology and engineering. This component aims to translate research into industrial applications and product development through on-site business incubator facilities.
- ◎ Significance →
 - The mission will give a boost to efforts to explore India's vast Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf.
 - The plan will enable India to develop capabilities to exploit resources in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB).

Deep Ocean Mission

👉 PMN

- ⦿ Polymetallic nodules (also known as manganese nodules) are potato-shaped, largely porous nodules found in abundance carpeting the sea floor of world oceans in deep sea.
- ⦿ Composition → Besides manganese and iron, they contain nickel, copper, cobalt, lead, molybdenum, cadmium, vanadium, titanium, of which nickel, cobalt and copper are considered to be of economic and strategic importance.



Deep Ocean Mission

👉 Also Remember

- ◎ The United Nations(UN) has declared the decade 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
- ◎ The Government of India's Vision of New India by 2030 announced in 2019 highlighted the Blue Economy as one of the ten core dimensions of growth.

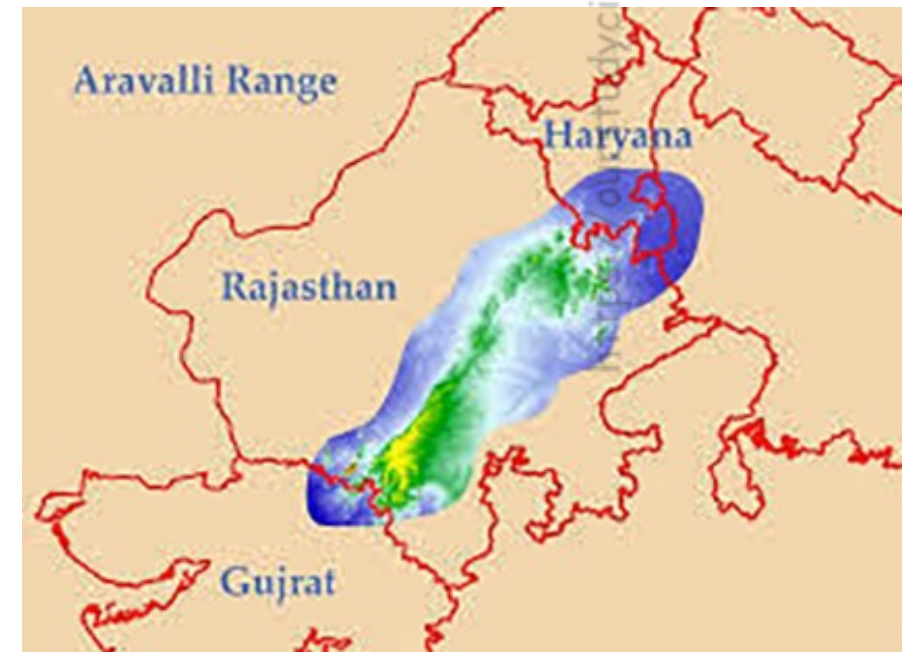
Aravalli Range

NEWS

The Supreme Court of India has refused to stop the demolition of over 10,000 settlements encroaching on forests in the Aravalli range in Haryana's Faridabad district.

👉 About Aravalli Range

- © Location → They stretch for a distance of about 720 km from Himmatnagar in Gujarat to Delhi, spanning Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Delhi.
- © Formation → The Aravallis date back to millions of years when a pre-Indian subcontinent collided with the mainland Eurasian Plate.





Aravalli Range

- ⊙ Aravalli Range is the oldest mountain range in India and one of the oldest mountain systems in the world.
- ⊙ Age → Carbon dating has shown that copper and other metals mined in the ranges date back to at least the 5th century BC.
- ⊙ Rivers → The three major rivers and their tributaries flow from the Aravalli. Namely Banas and Sahibi rivers which are tributaries of Yamuna, as well as Luni River which flows into the Rann of Kutch.
- ⊙ Highest Peak → Guru Shikhar Peak on Mount Abu is the highest peak in the Aravalli Range (1,722 m).

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	World Competitiveness Index 2021 -> Published by World Economic Forum.	
2.	Neutrinos -> second most abundant particles in the world, after photons, or the light particle.	
3.	Polymetallic nodules -> found only in Indian Ocean.	
4.	Deep Ocean Mission -> Ministry of Science and Technology will be the nodal Ministry for implementing this mission.	
5.	Aravalli Range -> Guru Shikhar Peak on Mount Abu is the highest peak.	

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Prelim Booster News Discussion

22-June-2021

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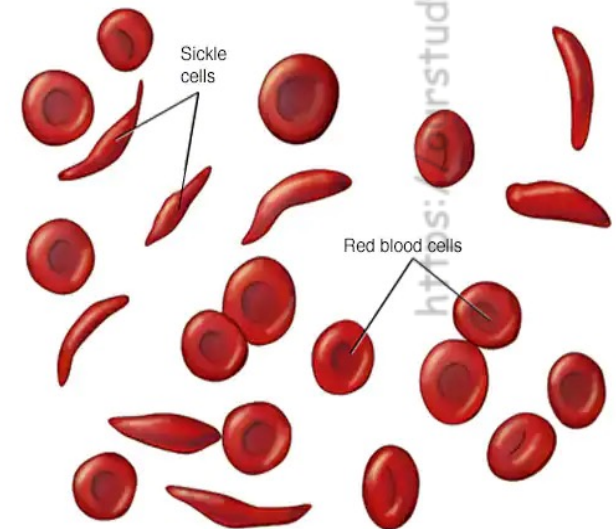
Sickle cell disease

NEWS

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs flagged off **mobile vans** under the **Unmukt project** for strengthening screening and timely management of **Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)** in Khunti district of **Jharkhand** and Kanker in **Chhattisgarh**.

👉 About

- © What is it? → It is an inherited blood disease which is most common among people of African, Arabian and Indian origin.
- © It is a group of disorders that affects hemoglobin, the protein molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen to cells throughout the body.



Sickle cell disease

- ⊙ People with this disease have distorted red blood cells as a sickle, or crescent shape.
 - This blocks blood flow and oxygen from reaching all parts of the body.
- ⊙ Symptoms →
 - It can cause severe pain, referred to as sickle cell crises.
 - Over time, people with sickle cell disorders can experience damage to organs including the liver, kidney, lungs and heart. Death can also result from complications of the disorder.
- ⊙ Treatment → Medication, blood transfusions and rarely a bone-marrow transplant.

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Sickle cell disease

👉 World Sickle Cell Day

- ◎ It is recognised by the United Nations and celebrated every year on June 19.
- ◎ The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution recognising sickle cell disease as a public health problem on December 22, 2008.
- ◎ AIM → It aims to increase awareness of sickle cell disorders at the national and international level.

Black Softshell Turtle

NEWS

The Hayagriva Madhava Temple Committee in Assam has signed an MoU with Turtle Survival Alliance India, Help Earth, and Assam Forests Department to conserve the Black Softshell Turtle.

👉 About Black Softshell Turtle

- © Scientific Name → Nilssonia nigricans.
- © Features → They look almost the same as the Indian peacock softshell turtle (*Nilssonia hurum*), which is classified as Endangered in the IUCN Red List.





<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Black Softshell Turtle

◎ Habitat →

- A freshwater species and there are 29 species of freshwater turtles and tortoises found in India.
- They are found in ponds of temples in northeastern India and Bangladesh. Its distribution range also includes the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries.

◎ Protection Status →

- IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered
- CITES: Appendix I
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: No legal protection.

◎ Threats → Consumption of turtle meat and eggs, silt mining, encroachment of wetlands and change in flooding pattern.

Black Softshell Turtle

👉 Sea Turtles of Indian Waters:

- ⦿ There are five species in Indian waters i.e. Olive Ridley, Green turtle, Loggerhead, Hawksbill, Leatherback.
 - The Olive Ridley, Leatherback and Loggerhead are listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
 - The Hawksbill turtle is listed as 'Critically Endangered' and Green Turtle is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
 - They are protected in Indian Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, under Schedule I.

Black Softshell Turtle

👉 About Hayagriva Madhava temple

- ◎ The Hayagriva Madhava temple exists in a hilly place which is located at Hajo nearby Guwahati, Assam. The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu.
- ◎ Built by → The present temple structure was constructed by King Raghudeva Narayan in 1583.
 - According to Historians, the temple was built during the Pala period of 10th-12th century A. D.
- ◎ Significance → The temple is revered by Buddhists also, as they believe that Hayagriva Madhava temple is the place where Buddha attained Nirvana. Thus, the temple becomes an ancient pilgrimage center for both Hindus and Buddhists.

Consider the following pairs

☉ Wildlife	Naturally found in
1. Blue-finned Mahseer	Cauvery River
2. Irrawaddy Dolphin	Chambal River
3. Rusty-spotted Cat	Eastern Ghats

Which of the pairs given correctly matched?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) **1 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Integrated Power Development Scheme



A 50 kWp Solar roof top was recently inaugurated in Solan, Himachal Pradesh under the Integrated power development scheme of the Ministry of Power, Government of India.

👉 About

- © Launched in → 2014 by Ministry of Power.
- © Nodal agency → Power Finance Corporation(PFC) is the Nodal agency for implementation of the scheme.
- © Objectives of →
 - Strengthening of sub-transmission and distribution network in the urban areas.



Integrated Power Development Scheme

- Metering of distribution transformers / feeders / consumers in the urban areas.
- IT enablement of distribution sector and strengthening of distribution network.
- ◎ Significance of the scheme → The scheme will help in reduction in (Aggregate Technical & Commercial) AT&C losses; establishment of IT enabled energy accounting / auditing system, improvement in billed energy based on metered consumption and improvement in collection efficiency.

National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)



Recently, the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) had celebrated its 18th Foundation Day.

👉 About NXI

- © It is a not for profit Organization under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013.
- © Nodal Ministry → It is under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).
- © Purpose → It was set up for peering of ISPs among themselves for the purpose of routing the domestic traffic within the country.



National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)

- ◎ It is working since 2003 for spreading the internet technology to the citizens of India .
- ◎ Objectives →
 - To Promote Internet
 - To set up, when needed, in select location(s)/parts/regions of India Internet Exchanges/Peering Points
 - To enable effective and efficient routing, peering, transit and exchange of the Internet traffic within India.

An **Internet exchange** point (IX or IXP) is the physical infrastructure through which **Internet** service providers (ISPs) and content delivery networks (CDNs) **exchange Internet** traffic among their networks

Global Peace Index



The 15th edition of Global Peace Index 2021 has been released.

👉 About

- © Released by → the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), an international think tank.
- © Aim → The index presents the most comprehensive analysis of trends in peace.
- © It ranks countries according to their levels of peacefulness and identifies potential determinants of peace.



Global Peace Index

- ⦿ Coverage → The index measures the peacefulness of 163 countries and territories. It covers 99.7% of the world's population.
- ⦿ Parameters → The index is composed of 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources. These indicators are grouped into three key domains:
 - ongoing conflict
 - safety and security and
 - Militarization.

👉 Key Highlights

- ⦿ Iceland has topped the peace index. It was followed by New Zealand, Denmark, and Portugal.
- ⦿ India has been ranked 135th in the 2021 Global Peace Index.

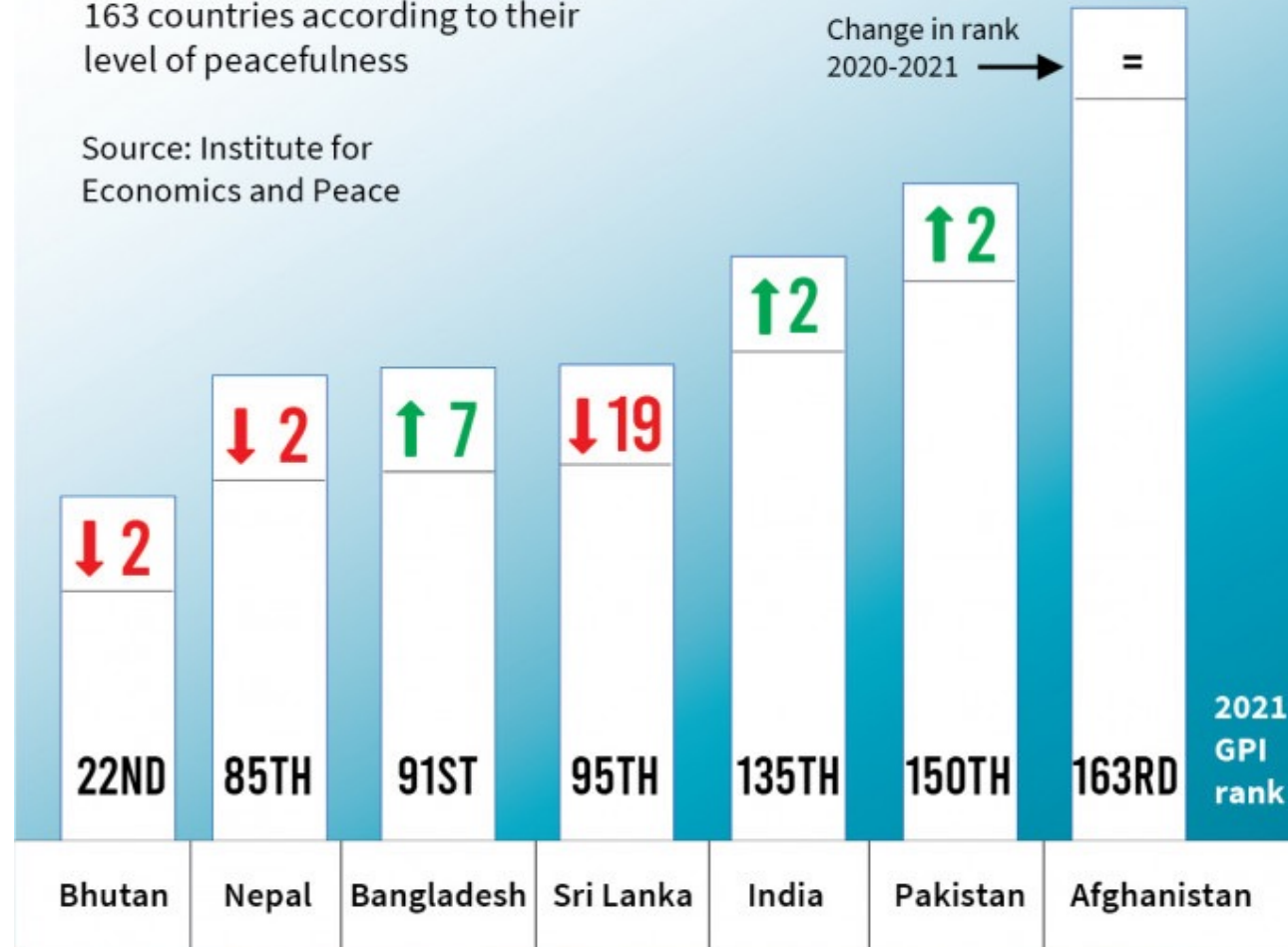
Global Peace Index

PEACE RANKING OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES



Global Peace Index (GPI) 2021 ranks
163 countries according to their
level of peacefulness

Source: Institute for
Economics and Peace



<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Sickle cell disease -> is a group of disorders that affects hemoglobin, the molecule in white blood cells.	
2.	Black Softshell Turtle -> IUCN Red List: Endangered.	
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Prelim Booster News Discussion

23-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Gain-of-function Research

NEWS

The Wuhan Institute of Virology was said to have conducted **gain-of-function research on coronaviruses** which may possibly have caused the lab-leak origin of the SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19 pandemic).

👉 About

- © 'Gain of function' is a field of research focused on growing generations of microorganisms, under conditions that cause mutations in a virus.
- © These experiments are termed 'gain of function' because they involve manipulating pathogens in a way that they gain an advantage in or through a function, such as increased transmissibility.



Gain-of-function Research

- ◎ Such experiments allow scientists to better predict emerging infectious diseases, and to develop vaccines and therapeutics.
- ◎ How is it carried out? →
 - It involves deliberately altering an organism in the lab, altering a gene, or introducing a mutation in a pathogen to study its transmissibility and immunogenicity.
 - This is done by genetically engineering the virus and by allowing them to grow in different growth mediums, a technique called serial passage.
- ◎ Issues related to the research →
 - Gain-of-function research involves manipulations that make certain pathogenic microbes more deadly or more transmissible.

Gain-of-function Research

- Gain-of-function research reportedly carries inherent biosafety and biosecurity risks and is thus referred to as 'dual-use research of concern' (DURC).
- ◎ Serial passaging involves allowing the pathogen to grow under different circumstances and then observing the changes.

Gain-of-function Research

👉 Situation in India

- ⦿ All activities related to genetically engineered organisms or cells and hazardous microorganisms and products are regulated as per the “Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells Rules, 1989”.
- ⦿ In 2020, the Department of Biotechnology issued guidelines for the establishment of containment facilities, called ‘Biosafety labs’.
 - The notification provides operational guidance on the containment of biohazards and levels of biosafety that all institutions involved in research, development and handling of these microorganisms must comply with.

Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates

NEWS

The keel (जहाज) of the second frigate, of additional **Krivak class stealth ships**, being built with technology transfer from **Russia** by the Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) was laid.

👉 About

- © Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates are a series of frigates and guard ships (patrol boats) built in the Soviet Union, primarily for the Soviet Navy since 1970.
- © Purpose → They are primarily used to accomplish a wide variety of naval missions. Such as finding and eliminating enemy submarines and large surface ships.



Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates

- ◎ Indian Navy currently operates six Krivak class frigates weighing around 4,000 tonnes in two different batches. Such as
 - The Talwar class
 - The upgraded Teg class.

👉 **New Procurement of Krivak class stealth Frigates:**

- ◎ In 2016, India and Russia had signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement(IGA) for four Krivak or Talwar stealth ships.
- ◎ Among four, two are to be procured directly from Russia and the other two will be built by the Goa Shipyard Ltd(GSL). ✓
- ◎ Features → The four ships to be built will weigh 300 tonnes more than the earlier ones. Apart from that, it will also be armed with BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles.

Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates

👉 Russia's Military Equipment Deployed by India:

- 🕒 Navy → The Navy's only active aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya is from Russia. A nuclear attack submarine Chakra II is also in service.
- 🕒 Army →
 - Army's T-90 and T-72 main battle tanks.
 - S-400 Triumph missile system.
- 🕒 Air Force → IAF's Su30 MKI fighter.

Nipah virus

NEWS

A recent survey has found the presence of antibodies against the Nipah virus (NiV) in some bat species from a cave in Mahabaleshwar, a popular hill station in Maharashtra.

👉 About

- © What is it? → It is a zoonotic virus (it is transmitted from animals to humans).
- © Caused by → The organism which causes Nipah Virus encephalitis is an RNA or Ribonucleic acid virus of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus, and is closely related to Hendra virus.

What is Nipah virus? TOI

NIPAH VIRUS (NiV) INFECTION IS A NEWLY EMERGING ZOOONOSIS THAT CAUSES SEVERE DISEASE IN BOTH ANIMALS AND HUMANS

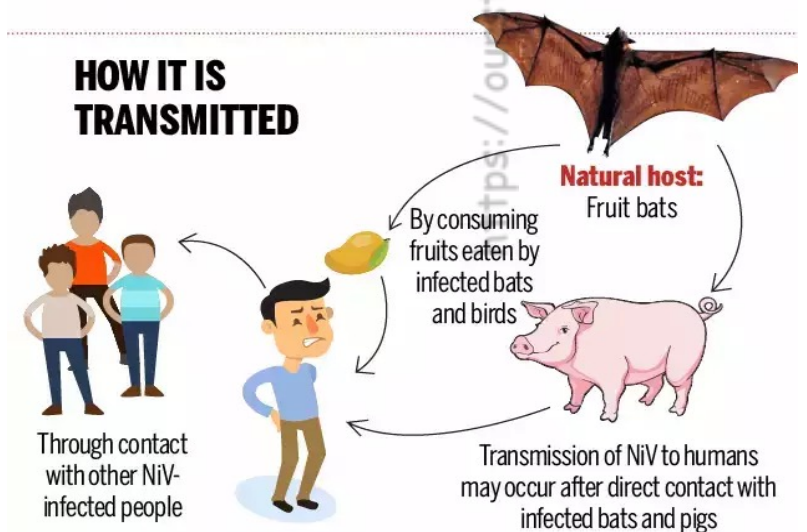


NiV first identified in 1998 during an outbreak in Malaysia



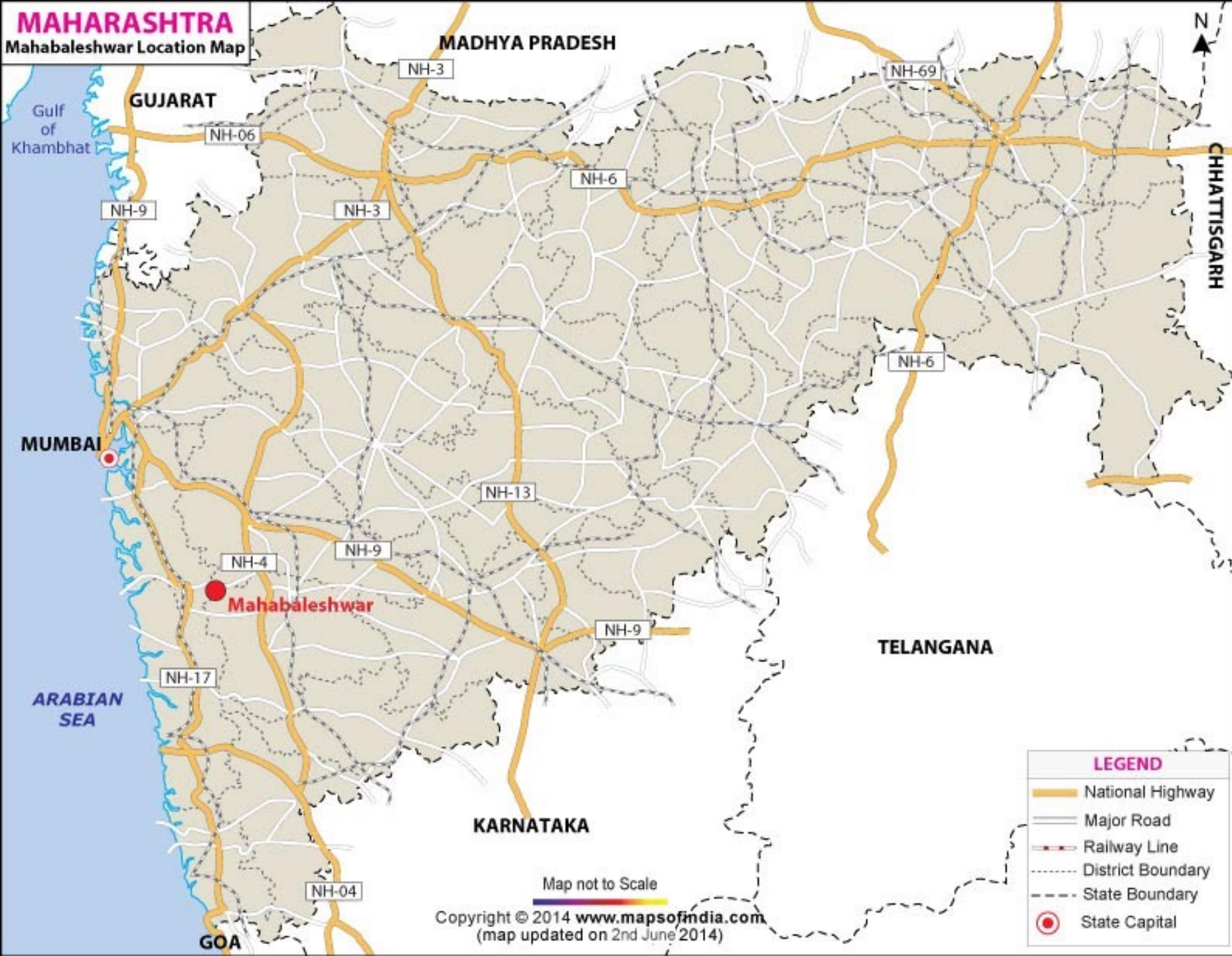
Fruit bats are natural hosts of NiV

HOW IT IS TRANSMITTED



MAHARASHTRA

Mahabaleshwar Location Map



Nipah virus

- Hendra virus (HeV) infection is a rare emerging zoonosis that causes severe and often fatal disease in both infected horses and humans.
- ◎ It first broke out in Malaysia and Singapore in 1998 and 1999.
- ◎ It first appeared in domestic pigs and has been found among several species of domestic animals including dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep.
- ◎ Transmission →
 - The disease spreads through fruit bats or 'flying foxes,' who are natural reservoir hosts of the Nipah and Hendra viruses.
 - The virus is present in bat urine and potentially, bat faeces, saliva, and birthing fluids.



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Nipah virus

- ⊙ Symptoms → The human infection presents as an **encephalitic syndrome** marked by fever, headache, drowsiness, mental confusion, coma, and potentially death.
- ⊙ Prevention → Currently, there are **no vaccines** for both humans and animals. Intensive supportive care is given to humans infected by Nipah virus.

World Investment Report 2021



As per UN report, India received USD 64 billion in foreign direct investments (FDI) in 2020.

👉 About

- © Released by → United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- © Focus → The World Investment Report focuses on trends in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) worldwide, at the regional and country levels and emerging measures to improve its contribution to development.



World Investment Report 2021

👉 Key Points

🕒 India →

- The report says that India is the fifth largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the world.
- In India, the FDI increased 27% to USD 64 billion (2020) from USD 51 billion (2019).

🕒 Global →

- The global FDI flows have been severely hit by the pandemic and they plunged by 35% in 2020 to USD 1 trillion.
- COVID-19 led lockdowns around the world slowed down existing investment projects and prospects of a recession led multinational enterprises (MNEs) to reassess new projects.

CSP 2015

Q. Which one of the following issues the 'Global Economic Prospects' report periodically?

- (a) The Asian Development Bank
- (b) The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- (c) The US Federal Reserve Bank
- (d) The World Bank**

CSP 2016

Q. 'Global Financial Stability Report' is prepared by the

(a) European Central Bank

(b) International Monetary Fund

(c) International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

(d) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

NISHTHA Programme

NEWS

Ministry of Tribal Affairs and NCERT come together on a joint mission for NISHTHA Capacity Building Programme for Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) Teachers and Principals.

👉 About

- © What is it? → National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) is a national mission to improve learning outcomes at the elementary level.
- © This is done through integrated teacher training.
- © It is the largest teachers' training programme of its kind in the world.



NISHTHA Programme

- ◎ It has been launched under the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** of **Samagra Shiksha** in 2019-20.
- ◎ Objective → To **motivate and equip teachers** to encourage and foster critical thinking in students and also teachers will get awareness and develop their skills on various aspects.
- ◎ Implementation → Training will be **conducted directly by 33120 Key Resource Persons (KRPs)** and **State Resource Persons (SRP)** identified by the State and UTs, who will in turn be **trained by 120 National Resource Persons** identified from National Council of Educational Research and Training (**NCERT**), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (**NIEPA**).

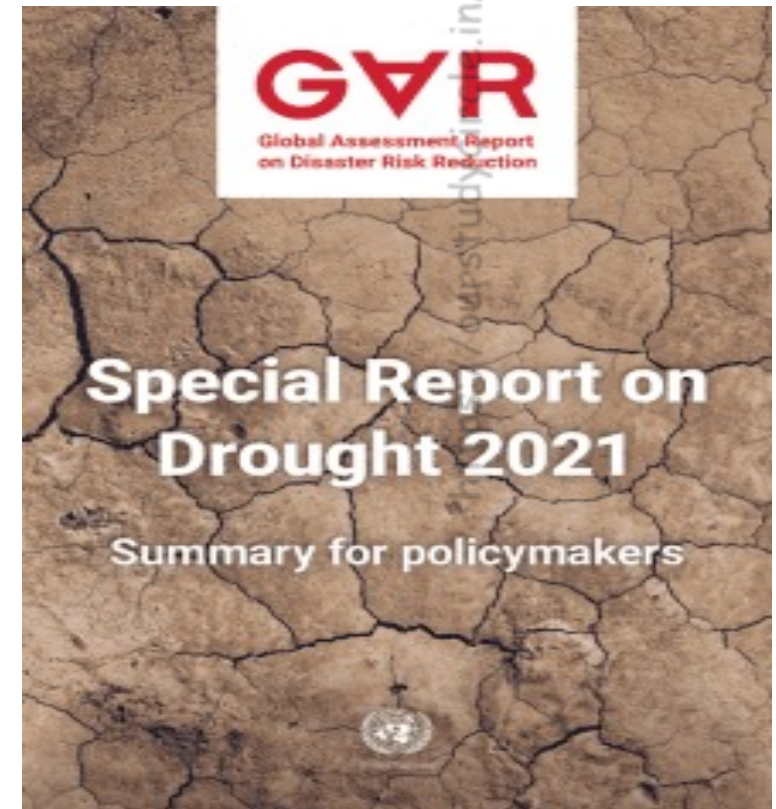
Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Drought 2021

NEWS

The **UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction(UNDRR)** has released a report titled “Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Drought 2021”.

👉 About

- © Released by → UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction(**UNDRR**).
- © Objective → The report explores the systemic nature of drought and its impacts on the achievement of the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015)**, the SDGs, and human and ecosystem, health and wellbeing.



Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Drought 2021

👉 Key Findings

🌐 Globally →

- Around **700 million people** are **at risk** of being displaced as a result of drought by 2030.
- Two-third of the world will be under water-stressed conditions by 2025.

🌐 India →

- The effect of severe droughts on India's gross domestic product (**GDP**) is **estimated at 2-5%**.
- The **Deccan region** sees the **highest frequency** of **severe droughts** in all of India

Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Drought 2021

👉 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

- ⦿ The UNISDR was established in 1999 as a dedicated secretariat to facilitate the implementation of the **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)**.
- ⦿ Headquartered → Geneva, Switzerland.
- ⦿ Mandate → It is mandated to serve as the focal point in the United Nations system for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure **synergies among the disaster reduction activities**.
- ⦿ It is an organisational unit of the UN Secretariat and is led by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRSG).

Land for Life Award

NEWS

Recently, **Shyam Sundar Jyani**, a **Rajasthan-based climate activist**, has won the prestigious **United Nations' Land for Life Award** for his environment conservation concept, **Familial Forestry**.

👉 About award

- © Background → The Land for Life Award was launched in 2011 at the UNCCD Conference of Parties (COP)10 in the Republic of Korea.
- © Organizes by → Every two years, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) organizes the Land for Life Award.



Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates -> series of frigates and guard ships (patrol boats) built in the Soviet Union.	
2.	Nipah virus -> caused by the variola virus.	
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4.	World Investment Report -> released by World Economic Forum.	
5.	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction -> established in 1999. HQ: Paris, France.	

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3.	Land for Life Award -> launched in 2011 at the UNCCD COP10 in the Republic of Korea as part of the Changwon Initiative.	True
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<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

24-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Recusal of Judges

NEWS

Recently, two Supreme Court judges have recused themselves from hearing cases relating to West Bengal.

👉 About

- © When there is a conflict of interest, a judge can withdraw from hearing a case to prevent creating a perception that s/he carried a bias while deciding the case.
- © The practice stems from the cardinal principle of due process of law that nobody can be a judge in his/her own case.



Recusal of Judges

- ⊙ Another instance for recusal is when an appeal is filed in the Supreme Court against a judgement of a High Court that may have been delivered by the SC judge when she was in the HC.
- ⊙ Process for recusal →
 - The decision to recuse generally comes from the judge herself as it rests on the conscience and discretion of the judge to disclose any potential conflict of interest.
 - In some circumstances, lawyers or parties in the case bring it up before the judge. If a judge recuses, the case is listed before the Chief Justice for allotment to a fresh Bench.
- ⊙ Rules →
 - There are no formal rules governing recusals, although several Supreme Court judgments have dealt with the issue.

Recusal of Judges

- In Ranjit Thakur v Union of India (1987), the Supreme Court held that the tests of the likelihood of bias are the reasonableness of the apprehension in the mind of the party.
- The 1999 charter 'Restatement of Values in Judicial Life' is a code of ethics adopted by the Supreme Court.
- It states, "A Judge shall not hear and decide a matter in a company in which he holds shares, unless he has disclosed his interest and no objection to his hearing and deciding the matter is raised."
- ◎ Decision → Once a request is made for recusal, the decision to recuse or not rests with the judge.
- The judges can recuse even if they do not see a conflict but only because such an apprehension was cast. They can refuse to withdraw from a case.

Recusal of Judges

- ◎ Record → Since there are no formal rules governing the process, it is often left to individual judges to record reasons for recusal.
 - Some judges disclose the reasons in open court; in some cases, the reasons are apparent.

CSE 2012

Q. What is the provision to safeguard the autonomy of the Supreme Court of India?

- 1. While appointing the Supreme Court Judges, the President of India has to consult the Chief Justice of India.**
- 2. The Supreme Court Judges can be removed by the Chief Justice of India only.**
- 3. The salaries of the Judges are charged on the Consolidated Fund of India to which the legislature does not have to vote.**
- 4. All appointments of officers and staffs of the Supreme Court of India are made by the Government only after consulting the Chief Justice of India.**

© Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only**
- b) 3 and 4 only**
- c) 4 only**
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4**

Answer (a

Pygmy Hog



Release of captive-bred pygmy hogs into Manas National Park of western Assam.

👉 About

- © Scientific Name → Porcula Salvania.
- © It is one of the very few mammals that build its own home, or nest, complete with a 'roof'.
- © It is also an indicator species. Its presence reflects the health of its primary habitat, the tall, wet grasslands of the region.



Pygmy Hog

⦿ Habitat →

- It thrives in wet grassland.
- Once found along a narrow strip of tall and wet grassland plains on the Himalayan foothills – from Uttar Pradesh to Assam, through Nepal's terai areas and Bengal's duars. Today found mainly in a small population in Assam.

⦿ Protection Status →

- IUCN Red List: Endangered
- CITES: Appendix I
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I.

⦿ Threats → Habitat (grassland) loss and degradation, and illegal hunting.

Q. Consider the following:

- 1. Star tortoise**
- 2. Monitor lizard**
- 3. Pygmy hog**
- 4. Spider monkey**

Which of the above are naturally found in India?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only**
- b) 2 and 3 only**
- c) 1 and 4 only**
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4**

Solution (a)

Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary

NEWS

Rajasthan is poised to get its fourth tiger reserve after Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary received a nod from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)'s technical committee.

👉 About

- © Location → This Sanctuary is located at a distance of 45 Km from Bundi City, Rajasthan.
- © Established → It was notified in the Year 1982 and is spread over an area of 252.79 Sq. Km.





Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary

⊙ Biodiversity →

- Its flora consists of Dhok, Khair, Salar, Khirni trees with some Mango and Ber trees.
- The Fauna consists of birds and animals like Leopard, Sambhar, Wild boar, Chinkara, Sloth bear, Indian Wolf, Hyena, Jackal, Fox, deer and Crocodile.

⊙ Other Three Tiger Reserves → Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (RTR) in Sawai Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve (STR) in Alwar, and Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve (MHTR) in Kota.

Other Protected Areas in Rajasthan:

- ⊙ Desert National Park, Jaisalmer

Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary

- ⊙ Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur
- ⊙ Sajjangarh wildlife sanctuary, Udaipur
- ⊙ National Chambal Sanctuary (on tri-junction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh).

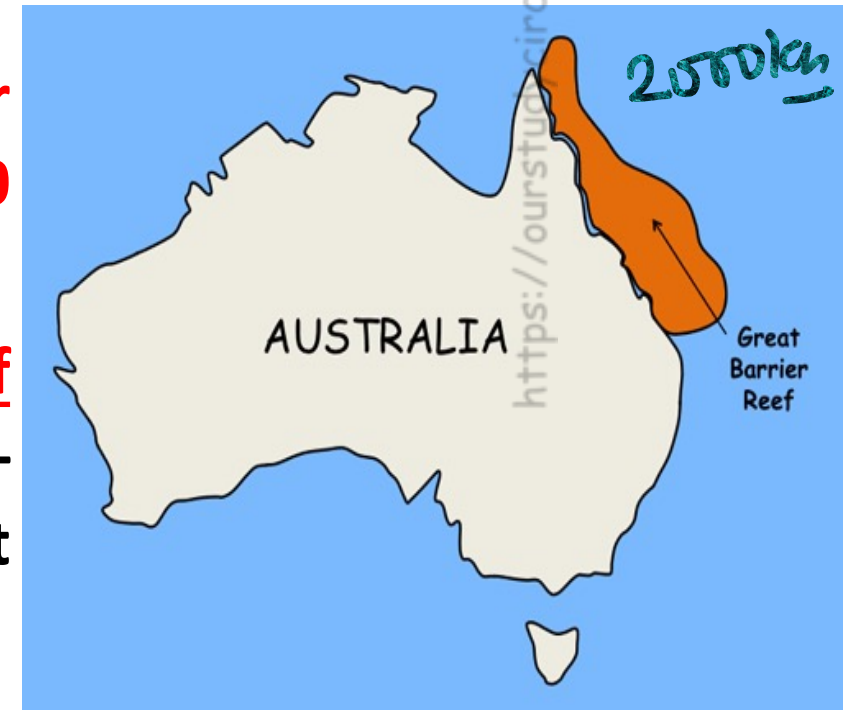
Great Barrier Reef



Recently, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has recommended that the Australia's Great Barrier Reef should be added to a list of "in danger" World Heritage Sites.

👉 About Great Barrier Reef

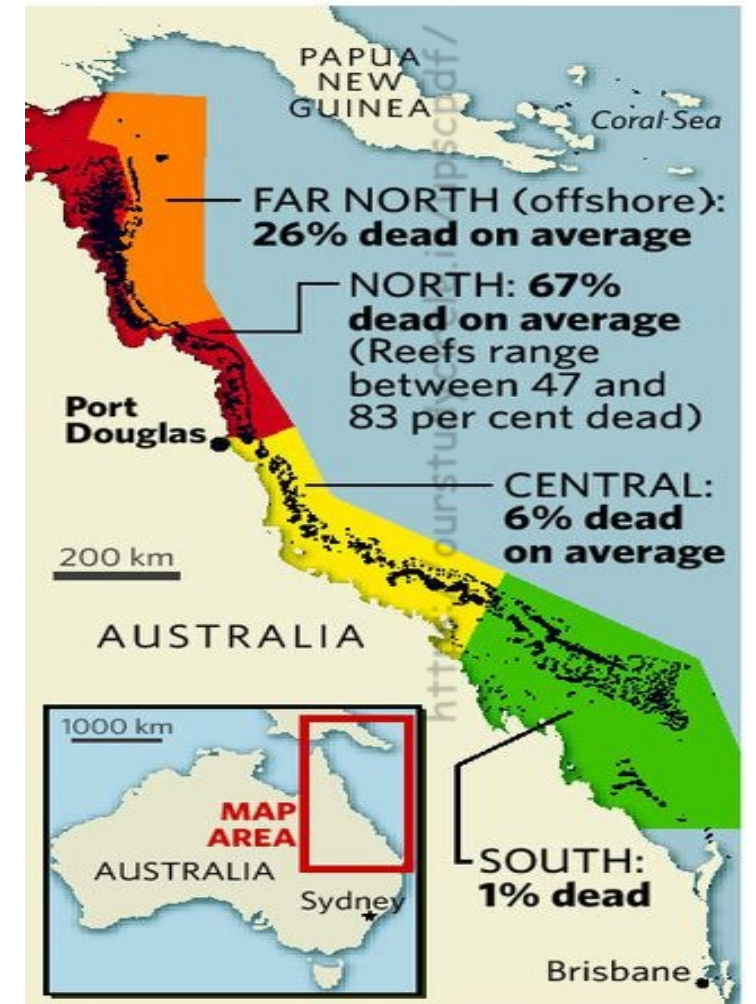
- ◎ It is the world's **most extensive and spectacular coral reef ecosystem** composed of over **2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands**.
- ◎ Within this vast expanse are a unique range of ecological communities, habitats and species – all of which make the Reef one of the most complex natural ecosystems in the world.



Great Barrier Reef

- ◎ The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia.
- ◎ It was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981.
- ◎ It can be **seen from outer space** and is the **world's biggest single structure** made by living organisms.
- ◎ This reef structure is composed of and built by **billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps**.

Coral death in Australia's Great Barrier Reef



TORONTO STAR GRAPHIC

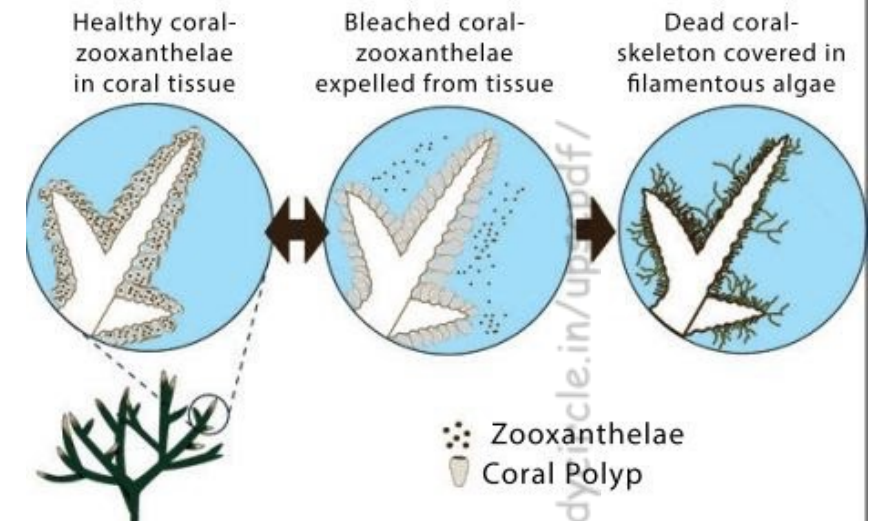
Great Barrier Reef

👉 Coral Reefs

- ⦿ A coral reef is an underwater ecosystem characterized by reef-building corals.
- ⦿ Reefs are formed of colonies of coral polyps held together by calcium carbonate.
- ⦿ The coral polyps live in an endosymbiotic relationship with algae. Algae provides up to 90 percent of the coral's energy.
- ⦿ Temperature →
 - The temperature of the water should not be below 20°C.
 - The most favourable temperature for the growth of the coral reefs is between 23°C to 25°C.
 - The temperature should not exceed 35°C.

Great Barrier Reef

- Salinity → Corals can survive only under saline conditions with an average salinity between 27% to 40%.
- Shallow Water → Coral reefs grow better in shallow water having a depth less than 50 m. The depth of the water should not exceed 200m.



Coral Reef Areas in India → India has four coral reef areas: Gulf of Mannar, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep islands and the Gulf of Kutch.

More than one-third of the world's coral reefs are located in the territories of Australia, Indonesia and Philippines.

Benefits →

Protect humanity from natural calamities.

Provide revenue and employment through tourism and recreation.

Provide habitats for fishes, starfish and sea anemones.

CSE 2018

© **Consider the following statements:**

1. Most of the world's coral reefs are in tropical waters.
2. More than one-third of the world's coral reefs are located in the territories of Australia, Indonesia and Philippines.
3. Coral reefs host far more number of animal phyla than those hosted by tropical rainforests.

© **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

⦿ **Answer (d)**

World's First GM Rubber Sapling

NEWS

Recently, the world's first Genetically Modified (GM) rubber sapling has been planted in Guwahati, Assam.

👉 About

- ◎ It has been tailored for the climatic conditions in the Northeast.
- ◎ It was developed at the Kerala-based Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII).
- ◎ Natural rubber is a native of warm humid Amazon forests and is not naturally suited for the colder conditions in the Northeast, which is one of the largest producers of rubber in India.



World's First GM Rubber Sapling

- ⊙ Growth of young rubber plants remains suspended during the winter months. This is the reason for the long immaturity period of this crop in the region.
- ⊙ **It has additional copies of the gene MnSOD.** The MnSOD gene has the ability to protect plants from the adverse effects of severe environmental stresses such as cold and drought. The plant is thus expected to establish well and grow fast in the region.
- ⊙ The planting had been done at an experimental level following all mandatory biosafety measures applicable to field trials involving GM crops.
- ⊙ There was no risk of genes flowing from the GM rubber into any other native species, a concern often raised by environmental groups against GM plants.

Yellow Gold 48



Recently, Bayer (German agrochemicals major) has launched the first-ever yellow watermelon variety Yellow Gold 48 under Seminis brand in India.

👉 About

- © It is best suited for cultivation from October to February and for harvest from April onwards and will be available in the market until mid-July.
- © It has been commercially introduced in India following two years of local trials.



Yellow Gold 48

- ◎ The company is also creating market linkages for growers by connecting them directly to large buyers and food retail stores.
- ◎ Significance →
 - It has high yield and income potential and will empower watermelon growers to diversify into new categories and meet the growing demand for exotic fruits.
 - Watermelon growers can benefit from enhanced yield potential, better disease and pest tolerance, and higher returns.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Recusal of Judges -> There are formal rules governing recusals.	
2.	Pygmy Hog -> an indicator species. IUCN Red List: Endangered.	
3.	Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary -> Chhattisgarh.	
4.	Coral Reefs -> survive only under Fresh water conditions.	
5.	World's First GM Rubber Sapling -> developed at the Kerala-based Rubber Research Institute of India. has additional copies of the gene MnSOD.	

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Recusal of Judges -> There are formal rules governing recusals.	False
2.	Pygmy Hog -> an indicator species. IUCN Red List: Endangered.	True
3.	Ramgarh Vishdhari wildlife sanctuary -> Chhattisgarh.	False
4.	Coral Reefs -> survive only under Fresh water conditions.	False
5.	World's First GM Rubber Sapling -> developed at the Kerala-based Rubber Research Institute of India. has additional copies of the gene MnSOD.	True



Prelim Booster News Discussion

25-June-2021

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Peter Pan Syndrome



A special court in Mumbai has granted bail to a 23-year-old accused of sexually assaulting a minor. The accused had told the court he suffered from “Peter Pan Syndrome”.

👉 About

- © What is it? → PPS is a psychological condition that is used to describe an adult who is socially immature.
- © People who develop similar behaviours of living life carefree, finding responsibilities challenging in adulthood, and basically never growing up suffer from PPS.



Peter Pan Syndrome

- ◎ Term coined by → The term was coined by psychologist Dan Kiley to explain the behaviour of such men who 'refuse to grow' and behave their age in 1983.
 - Dan Kiley got the idea of PPS after noticing Peter Pan, a fictional character created by Scottish novelist James Matthew Barrie.
 - Peter Pan was a care-free young boy, who never grew up.
- ◎ While the WHO (World Health Organization) does not recognise Peter Pan Syndrome as a health disorder, many experts believe it is a mental health condition that can affect one's quality of life.
- ◎ The symptoms and impact →
 - As Peter Pan Syndrome hasn't officially been diagnosed as a health disorder, there aren't clearly defined symptoms or characteristics or even reasons which cause it.

Peter Pan Syndrome

- But it could affect one's daily routine, relationships, work ethic, and result in attitudinal changes.

👉 Wendy Syndrome

- ◎ The Psychologist who defined PPS also used the term Wendy Syndrome (WS) to describe women who act like mothers with their partners or people close to them.
- ◎ People suffering from WS are often seen making decisions, tidying up messes, and offering one-sided emotional support.

THE SYNDROME

➤ Peter Pan is a fictional character from a mythical place called Never-Never Land where children never grow up



➤ In recent decades, psychologists have noted a rise in Peter Pan Syndrome in which adults exhibit emotionally immature behaviour and are unable to take on adult responsibilities or have relationships

➤ American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic scale DSM doesn't recognise the syndrome. Nor does World Health Organisation's ICD scale for diagnosing mental disorders



➤ But ICD-10 refers to immature personality disorder that refers to behaving like a child. When things don't go their way, they get upset; rely on others for financial responsibilities

Suez Canal

NEWS

The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) had **demande**d \$916 million in **compensation** from the owners of the giant Ever Given vessel that had got stuck in the Suez Canal earlier this year. Now Suez Canal Authority have publicly **lowered the compensation to \$550 million**.

👉 About

- © The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.
- © The canal separates the African continent from Asia.



STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE SUEZ CANAL



Suez Canal

- ⊙ Constructed by the Suez Canal Company between 1859 and 1869, it officially opened on 17 November 1869.
- ⊙ The canal is owned and maintained by the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) of Egypt.
- ⊙ Under the Convention of Constantinople, it may be used "in time of war as in time of peace, by every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag".
- ⊙ Significance →
 - It provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans.
 - It is one of the world's most heavily used shipping lanes, carrying over 12% of world trade by volume.

Q. Turkey is located between

- a) Black Sea and Caspian Sea**
- b) Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea**
- c) Gulf of Suez and Mediterranean Sea**
- d) Gulf of Aqaba and Dead Sea**

Answer (b)

Tax Inspectors Without Borders

NEWS

Bhutan's Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) programme launched in partnership with India.

👉 About

- © Agency involved → It is a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
- © Objective → The objective of the TIWB Initiative is to enable sharing of tax audit knowledge and skills with tax administrations in developing countries through a targeted, real time “learning by doing” approach.



Tax Inspectors Without Borders

- ⊙ Focused on → TIWB is focused on promoting hands-on assistance by sending Experts to build audit and audit-related skills pertaining to specific international tax matters and the development of general audit skills within developing tax administrations.
- ⊙ Expected Duration → 24 months.
- ⊙ Benefits of the programme → Through this India in collaboration with the UNDP and the TIWB Secretariat aims to aid Bhutan in strengthening its tax administration by transferring technical know-how and skills to its tax auditors, and through sharing of best audit practices.

CSE 2016

Q. 'Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres)', often in the news, is

- (a) a division of World Health Organization**
- (b) a non-governmental international organization**
- (c) an inter-governmental agency sponsored by European Union**
- (d) a specialized agency of the United Nations**

Answer (b)

Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region

NEWS

The United Kingdom has appointed a liaison (संपर्क) officer to the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), which is meant for maritime domain awareness.

👉 About

- © Set up in → 2018.
- © Purpose → To coordinate with regional countries on maritime issues and act as a regional repository of maritime data.
- © Partner countries → It presently has linkages with 21 partner countries and 22 multi-national agencies across the globe.
- © Located in → Gurugram, India.



Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region

⊙ Working →

- Through this Centre, information on “white shipping”, or commercial shipping, will be exchanged with countries in the region to improve maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean.
- It will also impart training in maritime information collection and sharing.
- At present, data will be shared by virtual means – telephone calls, Faxes, emails and video conferencing. The centre will in future host liaison officers from foreign countries for quicker analysis of information and timely inputs.

⊙ Significance → The IFC-IOR will strengthen maritime security in the region and beyond by building a common coherent maritime situation picture.

Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region

- ◎ Roles and functions of a liaison officer →
 - The liaison officer will be based full-time at the centre, working directly with the Indian armed forces and fellow liaison officers from partner nations to enhance maritime domain awareness in the region.
 - International Liaison Officers (ILO) from 13 countries have been invited, and ILOs from countries had joined earlier- Australia, France, Japan and the U.S.. The U.K. is the 5th country to post an ILO.

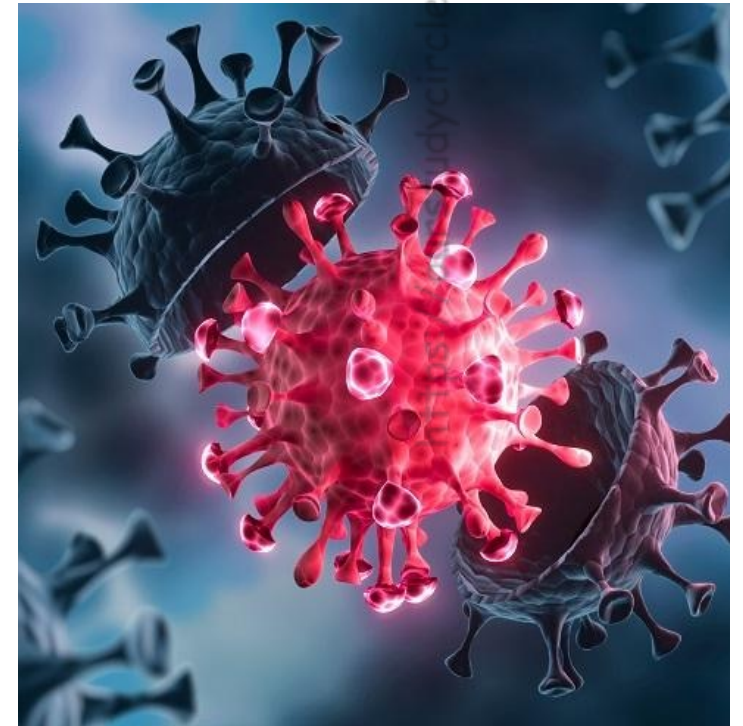
Delta Plus variant

NEWS

The Health Ministry has categorised Delta Plus variant of coronavirus as a 'variant of concern'. It has been detected in many states.

👉 About

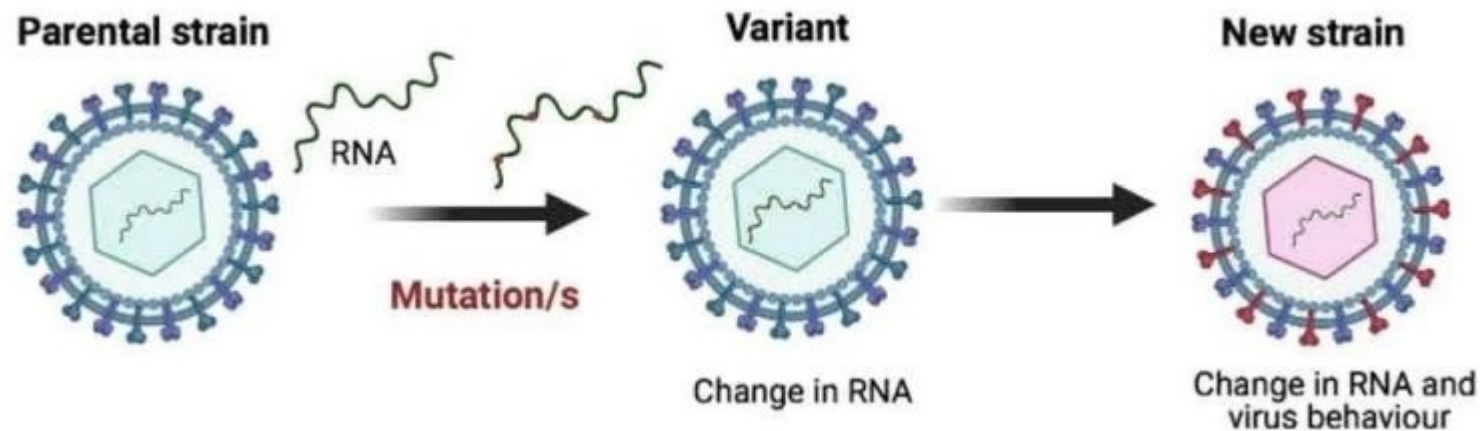
- © The Delta variant formerly known as B.1.617.2 is believed to be the most transmissible variant of Covid -19 yet. It has been initially detected in India.
- © The Delta plus variant (B.1.617.2.1 or AY.1) has been formed due to a mutation in the Delta variant.



Delta Plus variant

How do variants of a virus emerge and why?

- ⊙ Variants of a virus have one or more mutations that differentiate it from the other variants that are in circulation.
- ⊙ Essentially, the goal of the virus is to reach a stage where it can cohabitate with humans because it needs a host to survive.
- ⊙ Errors in the viral RNA are called mutations, and viruses with these mutations are called variants. Variants could differ by a single or many mutations.



Delta Plus variant

What is a Variant of Concern (VOC)?

- ◎ WHO (World Health Organisation) classifies a variant as a VOC when it is associated with:
 - An increase in transmissibility or detrimental change in Covid-19 epidemiology
 - Increase in virulence (Ability to cause severe/life-threatening disease)
 - Decrease in the effectiveness of public health measures or available diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics.

Full Ship Shock Trial (FSST)

NEWS

The US Navy Friday carried out a ‘full ship shock trial’ on its newest and most advanced nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to ensure its hardness was capable of withstanding battle conditions.

👉 About

- © During World War II, American warships suffered severe damage from enemy mines and torpedoes that had actually missed their target, but exploded underwater in close proximity.
- © The US Navy has since worked to improve the shockproofing of their ship systems to minimize damage from such “near miss” explosions.



Full Ship Shock Trial (FSST)

- ⊙ In FSSTs, an underwater explosive charge is set off near an operational ship, and system and component failures are documented.
- ⊙ The FSST probes whether the components survive shock in their environment on the ship; it probes the possibilities of system failures, and large components that could not be otherwise tested.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

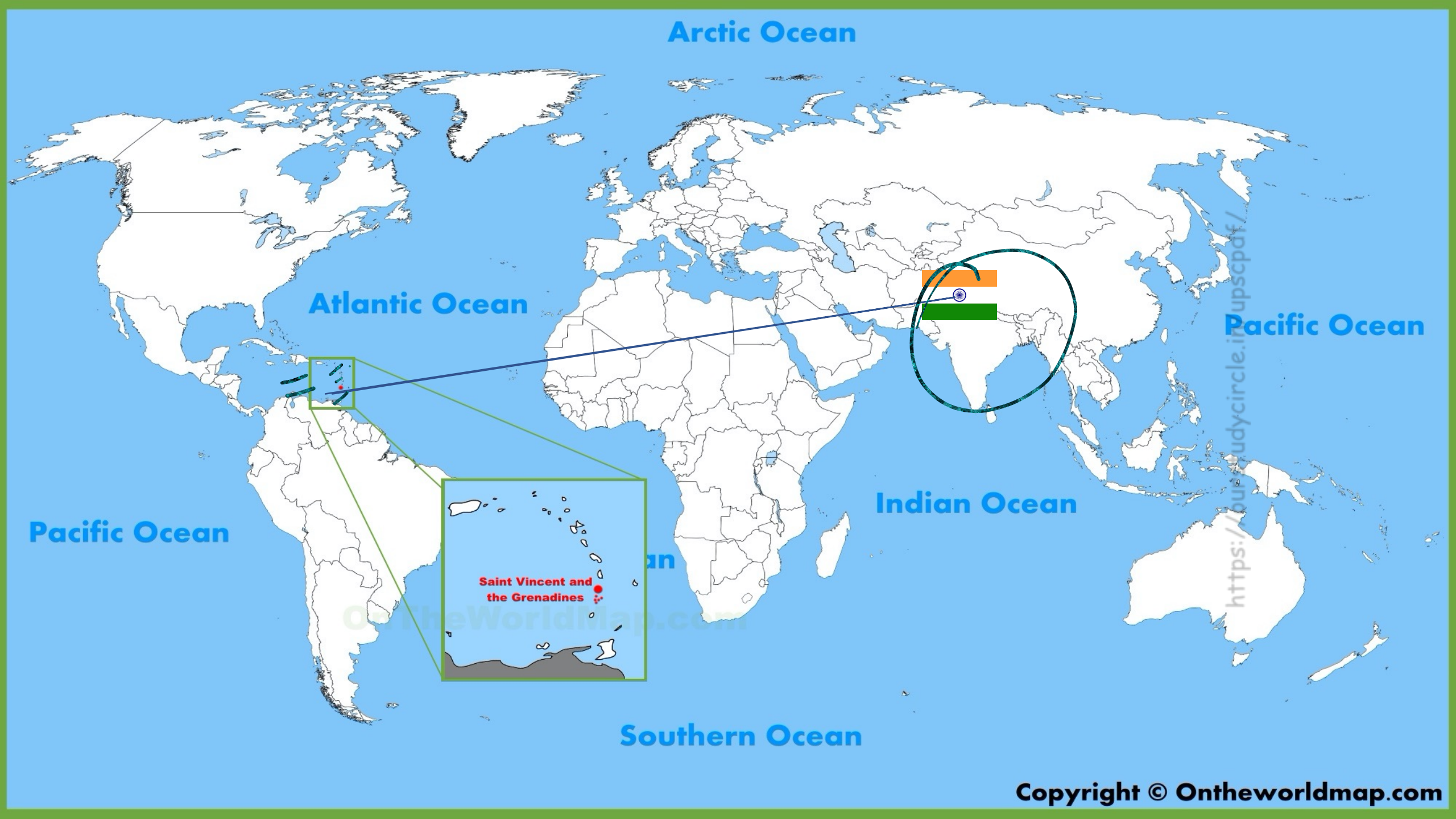
NEWS

Cabinet approved the agreement between India and Saint Vincent and The Grenadines for the Exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection with respect to Taxes.

👉 About

- ◎ It is an island country in the Caribbean.
- ◎ It lie in the West Indies at the southern end of the eastern border of the Caribbean Sea where the latter meets the Atlantic Ocean.





Arctic Ocean

Atlantic Ocean

Pacific Ocean

Pacific Ocean

Indian Ocean

Southern Ocean

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

OnTheWorldMap.com

<https://onstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

👉 Details of the Agreement:

- ⦿ It mainly proposes to facilitate exchange of information between the two countries and to provide assistance to each other in collection of tax claims.
- ⦿ Benefits → The Agreement will help in facilitating the exchange of information between the two countries including sharing of information held by the banks and other financial institutions encompassing the information regarding the legal and beneficial ownership.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Peter Pan Syndrome -> is a psychological condition that is used to describe an adult who is socially immature.	
2.	Suez Canal -> connect the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea.	
3.	Tax Inspectors Without Borders -> is a joint initiative of UNDP and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).	
4.	Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region -> Located in Gurugram. To coordinate with regional countries on maritime issues.	
5.	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines -> an island country in the Indian Ocean.	

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Quick revision (True/False)

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1.	Peter Pan Syndrome -> is a psychological condition that is used to describe an adult who is socially immature.	True
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4.	Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region -> Located in Gurugram. To coordinate with regional countries on maritime issues.	True
5.	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines -> an island country in the Indian Ocean.	False

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>



Prelim Booster News Discussion

26-June-2021

<https://ourstudycircle.in/upscpdf/>

Black Sea

NEWS

In a recent event, Russia alleged that the British warship had breached its territorial waters in Black Sea which Britain and most of the world say belong to Ukraine.

👉 About

- © Location → Black Sea is an inland sea located between far-southeastern Europe and the far-western edges of the continent of Asia and the country of Turkey.
- © Bordering Countries → Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, and Turkey.





Black Sea

- ⊙ It is surrounded by the Pontic, Caucasus, and Crimean Mountains in the south, east and north respectively.
- ⊙ The Turkish straits system - the Dardanelles, Bosporus and Marmara Sea - forms a transitional zone between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.
- ⊙ The Black Sea is also connected to the Sea of Azov by the Strait of Kerch.
- ⊙ There is a significant absence of oxygen in the water.
- ⊙ The Black Sea happens to be the largest water body with a meromictic basin, which means the movement of water between the lower and upper layers of the sea is a rare phenomenon to find anywhere in the world.

Q. Mediterranean Sea is a border of which of the following countries?

1. Jordan
2. Iraq
3. Lebanon
4. Syria

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 3 and 4 only

Answer (c) 3 and 4 only

Which one of the following countries of South-West Asia does not open out to the Mediterranean Sea?

- (a) Syria
- (b) Jordan
- (c) Lebanon
- (d) Israel

Answer (b) Jordan

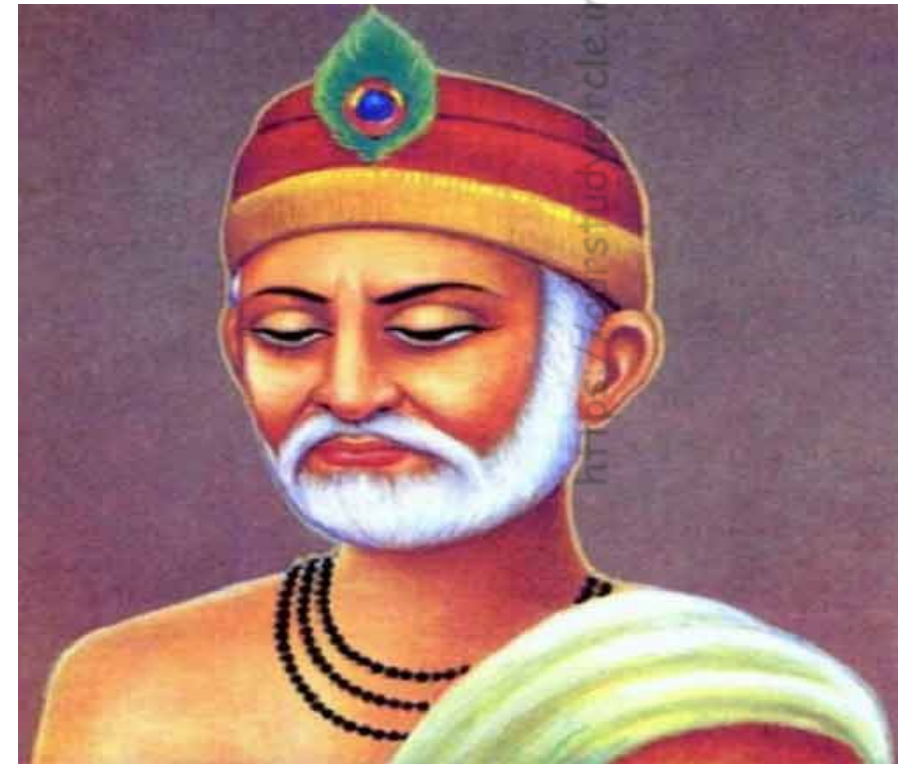
Sant Kabirdas

NEWS

Recently, the Prime Minister has paid tribute to Sant Kabir Das ji on his Jayanti on 24th June.

👉 About

- © He was a 15th-century Indian mystic, social reformer, poet and saint who had a significant role among the people in India.
 - He was one of the most influential saints.
- © He was brought up in a family of Muslim julahas orweavers settled in or near the city of Benares (Varanasi).



Sant Kabirdas

- ⦿ He was best known for his two-line couplets, known as 'Kabir Ke Dohe'.
- ⦿ He is a widely revered poet whose works had a tremendous influence on the Bhakti movement.
- ⦿ Kabir's legacy is still going on through a sect known as Panth of Kabir, a religious community that considers him as the founder.
- ⦿ His Teaching →
 - Kabir's teachings were based on a complete rejection of the major religious traditions.
 - His teachings openly ridiculed all forms of external worship of both Brahmanical Hinduism and Islam, the pre-eminence of the priestly classes and the caste system.
 - The language of his poetry was a form of spoken Hindi widely understood by ordinary people.

Sant Kabirdas

- Kabir believed in a formless Supreme God and preached that the only path to salvation was through bhakti or devotion. Kabir drew his followers from among both Hindus and Muslims
 - According to him every life has a relationship with two spiritual principles (Jivatma and Paramatma). His view about the moksha is that it is the process of uniting these two divine principles.
 - His popular verses and dohas continue to inspire generations even in the 21st century.
- © Writings/Works →
- Kabir Granthawali, Anurag Sagar, Bijak, and Sakhi Granth, Panch Vani.
 - The major part of his work was collected by the fifth Sikh guru--Guru Arjan Dev.
 - He fought against social evils and taught the lesson of humanity and love to the world.

Q. Consider the following Bhakti Saints:

1. Dadu Dayal
2. Guru Nanak
3. Tyagaraja

Who among the above was/were preaching when the Lodi dynasty fell and Babur took over?

- (a) 1 and 3
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) 1 and 2

Answer (b) 2 only

Toycathon 2021



Recently, the Prime Minister of India urged people to be “vocal for local toys”, while interacting with the participants at the Toycathon 2021.

👉 About

- © Joint initiative of → the Ministry of Education, WCD (Women and Child Development) Ministry, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Textile Ministry, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and All India Council for Technical Education.
- © Background → It was launched on 5th January 2021 to crowd-source innovative toys and games ideas.



Toycathon 2021

◎ Focus on →

- It was focused on conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate positive behaviour and good value among the children.
- To promote India as a global toy manufacturing hub (Atmanirbhar Bharat).

◎ Key Features →

- Based on → Indian culture and ethos, local folklore and heroes, and Indian value systems.
- Themes → Nine themes, including fitness and sport and rediscovering traditional Indian toys.
- Participants → Students, teachers, start-ups and toy experts.
- Prize → Participants can get prizes upto Rs. 50 lakhs.

Toycathon 2021

◎ Significance →

- Toys can play a big role in highlighting India's capabilities, art and culture and society to the world.
- Toycathon can prove to be effective in making India a Production Hub of Toys and hence can be the creation of 'Toyoconomy'.

Antarctic Treaty



The 1959 Antarctic Treaty celebrates its 60th anniversary. This Treaty is the only example of a single treaty that governs a whole continent.

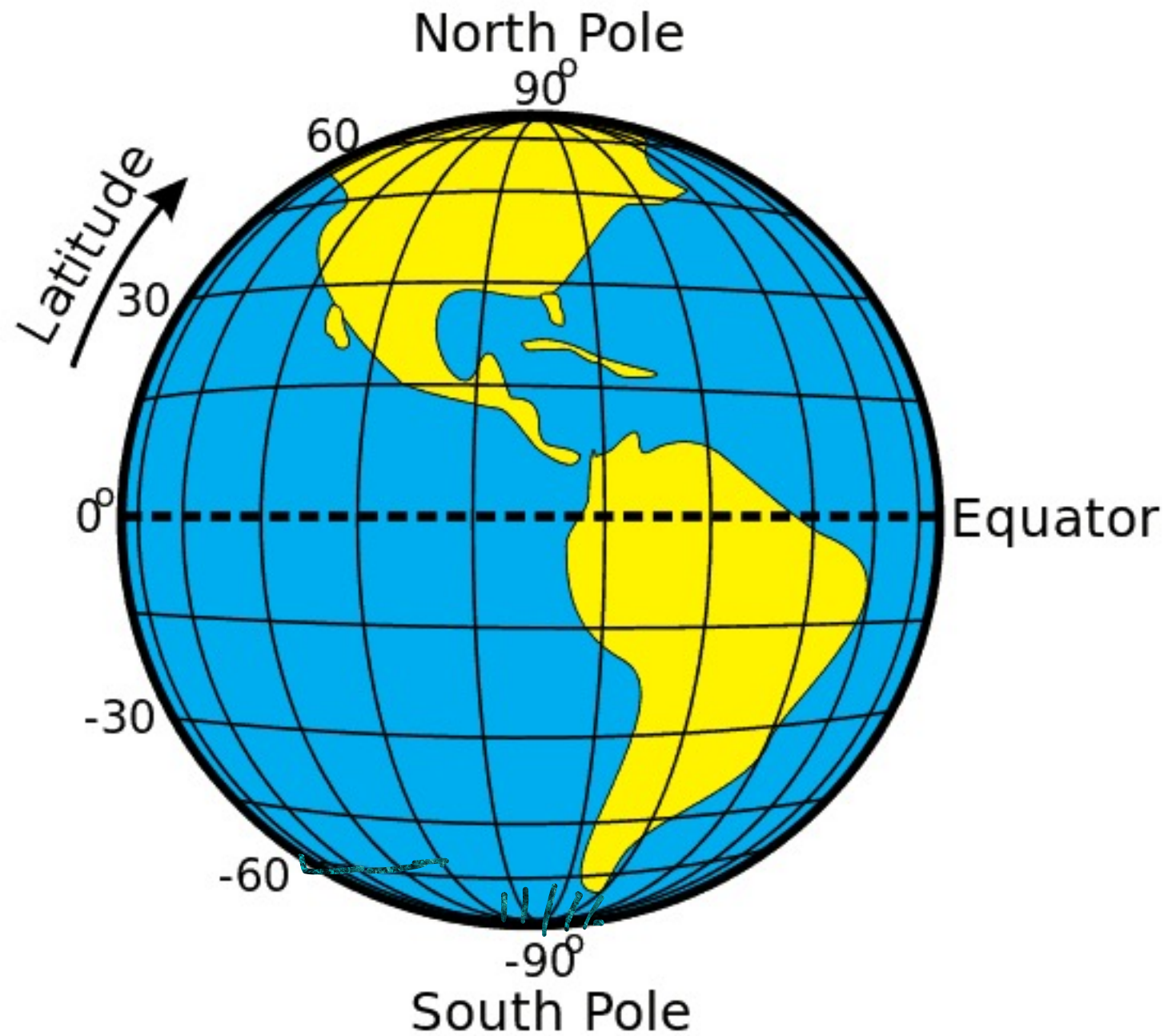
👉 About

- © The Antarctic Treaty was signed between 12 countries in Washington on 1st December 1959 for making the Antarctic Continent a demilitarized zone to be preserved for scientific research only.
- © Headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, it entered into force in 1961 and has since been acceded (स्वीकार) by many other nations.



Antarctic Treaty

- ⊙ Members → Twelve original signatories are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the UK and the US.
- ⊙ Currently, the treaty has 54 parties. India became a member in 1983.
- ⊙ Definition → Antarctica is defined as all of the land and ice shelves south of 60°S latitude.
- ⊙ Some important provisions of the Treaty are →
 - Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only
 - Freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica and cooperation toward that end... shall continue
 - Scientific observations and results from Antarctica shall be exchanged and made freely available



Antarctic Treaty

- Prohibition of military activities, nuclear tests and the disposal of radioactive waste.
- Neutralising territorial sovereignty, this means a limit was placed on making any new claim or enlargement of an existing claim.
- ◎ It put a freeze on any disputes between claimants over their territories on the continent.

👉 Antarctic Treaty System:

- ◎ As disputes have arisen over the years, many have been addressed through the expansion of the treaty framework with these agreements. This framework is now referred to as the “Antarctic Treaty System”.
- ◎ The Antarctic Treaty system is made up of four major international agreements →

Antarctic Treaty

- **The 1959 Antarctic Treaty.**
- **The 1972 Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals.**
- **The 1980 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.**
- **The 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.**

Antarctic Treaty

1 - No military use

2 - Freedom of scientific investigation

3 - Free exchange of scientific plans and data

4 - Any territorial claims put on hold

5 - Nuclear free zone

6 - Applies to land but not seas

7 - All stations open to inspection by other nations

8 - National laws apply to citizens not to areas

9 - The treaty may be modified at any time, requires unanimous agreement of treaty nations

10 - All treaty nations to ensure no-one carries out acts against the treaty

The Antarctic Treaty
Main Points



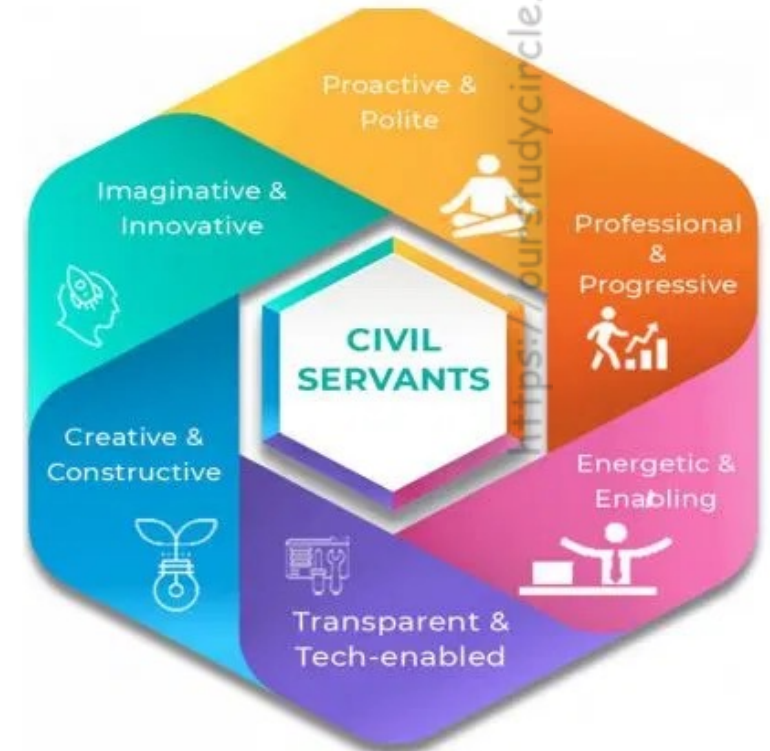
Task force for Mission Karmayogi

NEWS

Recently, a **three-member task force** has been formed to help the government in bringing major bureaucratic reforms through its ambitious “Mission Karmayogi”.

👉 About

- © Chairperson → Former Infosys CEO S D Shibu Lal has been appointed chairperson of a three-member task force.
- © The task force has been constituted to draw a clear road map for the guidance and operationalisation of the ‘Karmayogi Bharat’ and the constitution of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).



Task force for Mission Karmayogi

👉 Mission Karmayogi

🕒 Aim and Objectives →

- It is aimed at building a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge, aligned to the vision of New India.
- It aims to prepare Indian civil servants for the future by making them more creative, constructive, imaginative, proactive, innovative, progressive, professional, energetic, transparent, and technology-enabled.
- 🕒 The core guiding principles of the Programme will be →
 - To emphasize on 'on-site learning' to complement the 'off-site learning,
 - To create an ecosystem of shared training infrastructure including that of learning materials, institutions and personnel,

Task force for Mission Karmayogi

- To calibrate (ठीक करना) all Civil Service positions to a **Framework of Roles, Activities and Competencies (FRACs) approach** and to create and deliver learning content relevant to the identified FRACs in every Government entity.
- To make available to all civil servants, an **opportunity to continuously build and strengthen** their Behavioral, Functional and Domain Competencies in their **self-driven** and **mandated learning paths**.
- ◎ Institutional framework and implementation of the programme →
 - PM led **Public Human Resources (HR) Council** to approve and monitor Civil Service Capacity Building Plans.
 - **Capacity Building Commission** to harmonize training standards, create shared faculty and resources, and have supervisory role over all Central Training Institutions.

Task force for Mission Karmayogi

- Wholly owned **Special Purpose Vehicle** to own and operate the online learning platform and facilitate world-class learning content marketplace.
- **Coordination Unit** headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

Delimitation

NEWS

Delimitation of constituencies is being carried out in union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Recently, Prime Minister of India chaired a meeting with political parties of Jammu and Kashmir.

👉 About

- © Delimitation is the act of fixing or redrawing the limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies (Assembly or Lok Sabha seat) in a country or a province having a legislative body, as per the Election Commission.
- © Conducted by → The Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act under Article 82 of the Constitution and an independent high-powered panel known as the Delimitation Commission is constituted by the President of India to carry out the exercise.

MAP OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND UT OF LADAKH



Delimitation

- ⊙ **Composition** → Retired Supreme Court judge, Chief Election Commissioner and Respective State Election Commissioners.
- ⊙ **Associate members** → Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies of states for which the Delimitation Commission is set up, are nominated as associate members to help the commission in its task.
- ⊙ **Powers** → The Delimitation Commission is a high power body whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called in question before any court.

Delimitation in Jammu and Kashmir

- ⊙ The delimitation exercise in J&K in the past has been slightly different from those in the rest of the country because of the region's special status.

Delimitation

- ⊙ The delimitation of Lok Sabha seats was then governed by the Indian Constitution in J&K, but the delimitation of Assembly seats was governed separately by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution and Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act, 1957.
- ⊙ However, Jammu and Kashmir lost its special status and was divided into two Union Territories (J&K and Ladakh) after the abrogation of its special status under Article 370, on 5th August, 2019.
- ⊙ Following this, a special delimitation commission was constituted on 6th March, 2020 to carve out Assembly and Parliament seats in the UT.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Black Sea -> Bordering Countries: Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, and Turkey.	
2.	Antarctic Treaty -> Headquartered in Washington, it entered into force in 2001.	
3.	Sant Kabirdas -> teachings openly ridiculed all forms of external worship of both Brahmanical Hinduism and Islam.	
4.	Mission Karmayogi -> is a program under Women and Child Development Ministry to eradicate malnutrition.	
5.	Delimitation Commission -> whose orders have the force of law and can be called in question before any court.	

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Ambergris

NEWS

In the past few weeks, there have been two cases where the Mumbai Police has arrested five persons trying to sell Ambergris or whale vomit.

👉 About

- © Ambergris, French for grey amber, is generally referred to as whale vomit.
- © It is a solid waxy substance that floats around the surface of the water body and at times settles on the coast.
- © A sperm whale eats several thousand squid (एक प्रकार का घोंघा) beaks a day.



Ambergris

- ⊙ Occasionally, a beak makes its way to the whale's stomach and into its looping convoluted (घुमावदार) intestines where it becomes ambergris through a complex process, and may ultimately be excreted by the whale.
- ⊙ Chemically, ambergris contains alkaloids, acids, and a specific compound called ambreine, which is similar to cholesterol.
- ⊙ Is it Ambergris valuable? →
 - This excretion is so valuable it is referred to as floating gold.
 - As per the latest estimates given by Mumbai Police, 1 kg of ambergris is worth Rs 1 crore in the international market.
 - The reason for its high cost is its use in the perfume market, especially to create fragrances like musk (कस्तूरी).
 - It is believed to be in high demand in countries like Dubai that have a large perfume market. Ancient Egyptians used it as incense (sweet smell when burnt). It is also believed to be used in some traditional medicines.

Ambergris

👉 Sperm Whale

- ◎ Sperm whale also called cachalot, the largest of the toothed whales, easily recognized by its enormous square head and narrow lower jaw.
- ◎ The sperm whale is dark blue-gray or brownish, with white patches on the belly. It is thickset and has small paddle-like flippers.
- ◎ Habitat → They are found in temperate and tropical waters throughout the world.
- ◎ Protection Status →
 - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable
 - CITES: Appendix I
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: schedule I.



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Homo longi

NEWS

Chinese researchers have unveiled an ancient skull that could belong to a completely new species of human.

👉 About

- © Name → The researchers have named the new species Homo longi. It has been nicknamed "Dragon Man" for the Dragon River region of northeast China where the skull was found.
- © History → The skull was discovered in 1933 but only came to the attention recently after a labourer came across it at a construction site in China.



Homo longi

⊙ Characteristics →

- The Dragon man is at least 140,000 years old but no older than 309,000 years.
- It belonged to a mature male who had a huge brain, deep set eyes and a bulbous nose.
- The skull is huge compared with the average skulls belonging to other human species including our own. Its brain was comparable in size to those from our species.

⊙ Importance of this discovery →

- The discovery of Dragon Man has the potential to rewrite the history of Human Evolution.
- It is said that Homo longi could replace Neanderthals as the closest relative to our own species, Homo sapiens.



**Australopithecus
robustus**

Homo habilis

Homo erectus

**Homo sapiens
neanderthalensis**

**Homo sapiens
sapiens**

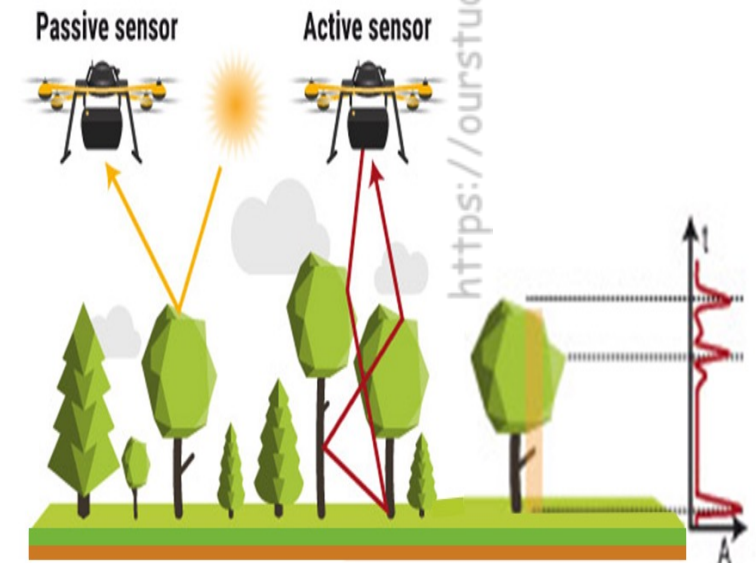
LiDAR Based Survey of Forest Areas

NEWS

Recently, the Union Environment Minister in a virtual event released the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) based survey of forest areas in ten states.

👉 About Survey

- © Conducted by → The project was awarded to WAPCOS in July 2020 at a cost of over Rs. 18 crore for implementation in 26 states over 261897 hectares.
- © WAPCOS is a Mini Ratna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Jal Shakti Ministry.



LiDAR Based Survey of Forest Areas

- ◎ Coverage → The 10 mapped states are Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura.
- ◎ Method → The survey has used the LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology to create 3-D images of the forest areas to recommend soil and water conservation structures.
 - These structures will help in catching the rain water and prevent stream run off which will help in recharging of Groundwater.
- ◎ Implementation of Projects by States → The Government of India will provide funds from Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority(CAMPA) to states so that they can enhance water resources within the forests to meet the needs of flora and fauna as well as fodder augmentation.

LiDAR Based Survey of Forest Areas

👉 LiDAR

- ◎ It is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges & variable distances.
- ◎ These light pulses—combined with other data recorded by the airborne system— generate precise, three-dimensional information about the shape of the Earth and its surface characteristics.
- ◎ A LiDAR instrument principally consists of a laser, a scanner, and a specialized Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver.
 - Airplanes and helicopters are the most commonly used platforms for acquiring LiDAR data over broad areas.
- ◎ LiDAR follows a simple principle — throw laser light at an object on the earth surface and calculate the time it takes to return to the LiDAR source.

CSE 2018

Q. In which of the following areas can GPS technology be used?

- 1. Mobile phone operations**
- 2. Banking operations**
- 3. Controlling the power grids**

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only**
- b) 2 and 3 only**
- c) 1 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2 and 3**

Answer (d

Enforcement Directorate

NEWS

The Enforcement Directorate has transferred assets worth ₹8,441.50 crore to public sector banks that suffered losses to the tune of ₹22,585.83 crore due to frauds committed allegedly by Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi.

👉 About

- © History → The origin of this Directorate goes back to 1st May, 1956, when an 'Enforcement Unit' was formed, in the Department of Economic Affairs, for handling Exchange Control Laws violations under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947 (FERA '47).
- © In the year 1957, this Unit was renamed as 'Enforcement Directorate'.



Enforcement Directorate

- ⊙ Presently, it is part of the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- ⊙ Mandate → The Organization is mandated with the task of enforcing the provisions of two special fiscal laws – Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) and Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).
- ⊙ Composition → Besides directly recruiting personnel, the Directorate also draws officers from different Investigating Agencies, viz., Customs & Central Excise, Income Tax, Police, etc. on deputation.
- ⊙ Other functions →
 - Processing cases of fugitive/s from India under Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.

International Labour Organisation



India's term as chair of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) ended recently (October 2020- June 2021).

👉 About ILO

- © It is the United Nations agency for the world of work. It is also a member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDP).
- © Mandate → It sets international labour standards, promotes rights at work and encourages decent employment opportunities, the enhancement of social protection and the strengthening of dialogue on work-related issues.



International Labour Organisation

◎ Structure →

- It is the only tripartite U.N. agency, that brings together governments, employers and workers' representatives of 187-member States.
- The 187-member states of ILO comprise 186 of the 193 UN member states plus the Cook Islands are members of the ILO.
- India is one of the founding members of ILO.

◎ HQ → Geneva, Switzerland.

◎ Parent organization → Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

◎ History →

- It was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice.

International Labour Organisation

- In 1946, the ILO became a specialized agency of the newly formed United Nations.
- The Organization won the Nobel Peace Prize on its 50th anniversary in 1969.
- ◎ **Governing Body →** It is the apex executive body of the ILO which decides policies, programmes, agenda, budget and elects the Director-General. It meets in Geneva.
- ◎ **Key reports →**
 - World Employment and Social Outlook.
 - Global Wage Report.

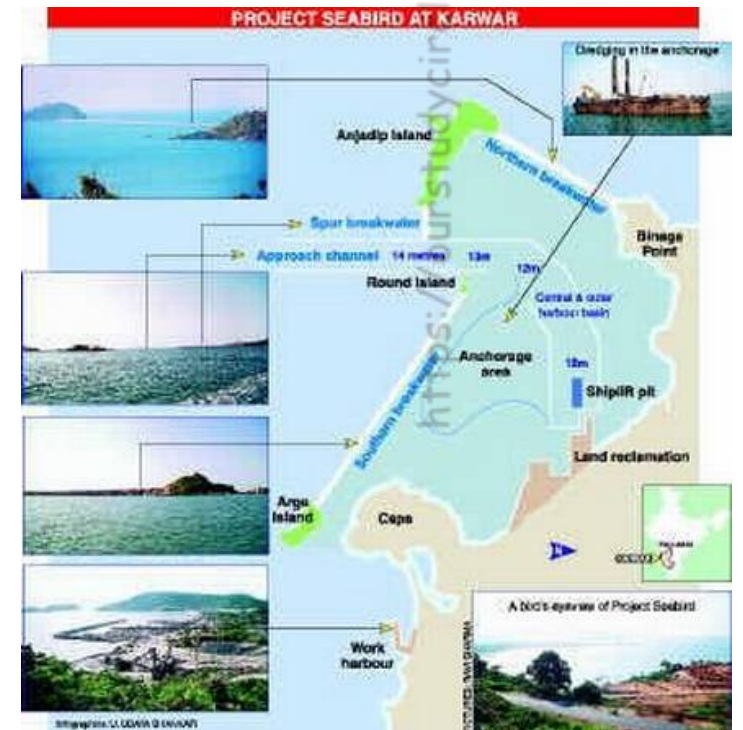
Project Seabird

NEWS

The Union Defence Minister has reviewed the status of the Indian Navy's Project Seabird at the Karwar Naval Base.

👉 About

- ◎ Project Seabird is the largest naval infrastructure project at Karwar, Karnataka.
- ◎ The project involves creation of a naval base at Karwar on the west coast of India.
- ◎ Upon completion, the project will provide the Indian Navy with its largest naval base on the west coast and also the largest naval base east of the Suez Canal.



Project Seabird

- ◎ Benefits → This would further bolster the operational readiness of the Armed Forces and help in augmenting trade, economy & humanitarian aid operations.

Financial Action Task Force



The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has decided to keep Pakistan in its “grey list”.

👉 About FATF

- © What is it? → It is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris.
- © The FATF assesses the strength of a country's anti-money laundering and anti-terror financing frameworks, however it does not go by individual cases.



Financial Action Task Force

- ◎ Objectives → To set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
- ◎ Headquarters → Its Secretariat is located at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.
- ◎ Member Countries → The FATF currently has 39 members including two regional organisations — the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council.
 - India is a member of the FATF.
- ◎ Sessions → The FATF Plenary is the decision making body of the FATF. It meets three times per year.

Financial Action Task Force

👉 Listing by FATF

- ◎ Grey List (**Jurisdictions under increased monitoring**) → Countries that are considered a safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the grey list.
 - This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.
 - The greylisting carries no legal sanctions. But it attracts economic sanctions and restricts a country's access to international loans
- ◎ Black List (**Call for action**) → Countries known as Non-Cooperative are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Ambergris -> referred to as floating gold. use in the perfume market.	
2.	Homo longi -> discovered in 1933. from north east region of Nigeria.	
3.	Enforcement Directorate -> Under Ministry of Home Affairs.	
4.	International Labour Organisation -> created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles.	
5.	Financial Action Task Force -> India is not a member of the FATF.	

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India Smart Cities Awards 2020

NEWS

The Union ministry of housing and urban affairs has released the list of India smart cities awards (ISCA) 2020.

👉 About

- © ISAC 2020 awards were presented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- © The awards were announced on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of Smart Cities Mission(SCM), Atal Mission for Urban Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation(AMRUT) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U).



India Smart Cities Awards 2020

- ⦿ Parameters: The rankings were announced on the basis of several parameters such as social aspects, governance, culture, urban environment, sanitation, economy, built environment, water and urban mobility.
- ⦿ For the year of the pandemic, additional parameters of sustainable business model of Integrated Command and Control Centres and innovation in Covid-19 management were also counted.

👉 Performance of various States and cities:

- ⦿ Uttar Pradesh emerged on the top among all states, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

India Smart Cities Awards 2020

- ◎ Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Surat (Gujarat) won the award jointly for their overall development.
- ◎ Ahmedabad bagged the 'Smart Cities Leadership Award' and Chandigarh, the award for union territories, while Indore won the "Innovative Idea Award".

India Smart Cities Awards 2020

👉 Smart Cities mission

- ◎ GoI launched the smart cities mission in **2015**.
- ◎ The objective is to **integrate city functions**, utilize scarce resources more efficiently, and improve the quality of life of citizens.
- ◎ It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.
- ◎ Smart city is envisaged to have **four pillars**:
 - Social Infrastructure.
 - Physical Infrastructure.
 - Institutional Infrastructure (including Governance).
 - Economic Infrastructure.

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay



Indian Prime Minister paid homage to Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay on his Jayanti on 27th June.

👉 About

- © He was one of the greatest novelists and poets of India.
- © He composed the song Vande Mataram in Sanskrit, which was a source of inspiration to the people in their freedom struggle.
- © He was in Government service for thirty-two years and retired in 1891.



Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay

- ⊙ His epic Novel Anandamath - set in the background of the Sanyasi Rebellion (1770-1820), when Bengal was facing a famine too - made Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay an influential figure on the Bengali renaissance.
- ⊙ He also founded a monthly literary magazine, Bangadarshan, in 1872, through which Bankim is credited with influencing the emergence of a Bengali identity and nationalism.
- ⊙ He had studied Sanskrit and was very interested in the subject, but later took on the responsibility to make Bengali the language of the masses. However, his first published work - a novel - was in English.
- ⊙ His famous novels include Kapalkundala (1866), Debi Choudhurani, Bishabriksha (The Poison Tree), Chandrasekhar (1877), Rajmohan's wife and Krishnakanter Will.

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay

👉 Sanyasi Rebellion

- ⦿ The Sanyasi Uprisings took place in Bengal between the periods of 1770-1820s.
- ⦿ The Sanyasis rose in rebellion after the great famine of 1770 in Bengal which caused acute chaos and misery.
- ⦿ However, the immediate cause of the rebellion was the restrictions imposed by the British upon pilgrims visiting holy places among both Hindus and Muslims.

CSE 2018

Q. Which among the following events happened earliest?

- a) Swami Dayanand established Arya Samaj.**
- b) Dinabandhu Mitra wrote Neel Darpan.**
- c) Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay wrote Anandmath.**
- d) Satyendranath Tagore became the first Indian to succeed in the Indian Civil Services Examination.**

Answer (d

Digital Millennium Copyright Act



The union minister for Electronics and Information Technology was locked out of his Twitter account for an hour allegedly over a notice received for violation of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).

👉 About DMCA

- © It is a law passed in the US and is among the world's first laws recognising Intellectual Property (IP) on the internet.
- © The DMCA oversees the implementation of two 1996 treaties signed by World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) member nations.



Digital Millennium Copyright Act

- ◎ Which are those two treaties of WIPO?
 - In 1996, WIPO member countries agreed upon two treaties namely the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.
 - Both the treaties require member nations and signatories to provide in their respective jurisdictions, protection to intellectual property that may have been created by citizens of different nations who are also co-signatories to the treaty.
 - The said protection accorded by each member state must not be any less in any way than the one being given to a domestic copyright holder.
 - Further, the signatory countries should ensure ways to prevent circumvention of the technical measures used to protect copyrighted work.

Digital Millennium Copyright Act

👉 World Intellectual Property Organization(WIPO)

- ⦿ World Intellectual Property Organization(WIPO) is one of the 15 specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN).
- ⦿ Purpose → It was created to promote and protect intellectual property (IP) across the world by cooperating with countries as well as international organizations.
- ⦿ WIPO Convention → It's mandate of governing bodies and procedures are set out in the WIPO Convention which had established WIPO in 1967.
- ⦿ Headquarters → Geneva, Switzerland.
- ⦿ Members → As of date, 193 nations across the world, including India, are members of WIPO.

INS Tabar

NEWS

INS Tabar deployed to participate in joint exercises with friendly navies in Africa and Europe.

👉 About INS Tabar

- © INS Tabar is a Talwar-class stealth Frigate built for Indian Navy in Russia.
- © The ship is equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors and is among the earliest stealth frigates of the Indian Navy.
- © The ship is part of the Indian Navy's Western Fleet which is based at Mumbai under Western Naval Command.



INS Tabar

👉 What will INS Tabar do?

- ◎ INS Tabar will transit across the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, Suez Canal, Mediterranean Sea, North Sea and Baltic Sea.
- ◎ During port visits, the ship is scheduled to participate in bilateral exercises like
 - Exercise Konkan with the UK Royal Navy
 - Exercise Varuna with French Navy and
 - Exercise Indra with Russian Federation Navy.
- ◎ These engagements are aimed to further strengthen maritime security in the region and to consolidate combined operations against maritime threats.

CSE 2016

Q. Which one of the following is the best description of 'INS Astradharini', that was in the news recently?

- a) Amphibious warfare ship**
- b) Nuclear-powered submarine**
- c) Torpedo launch and recovery vessel**
- d) Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier**

Answer (c)

World's Fifth Ocean

NEWS

The National Geographic magazine has recognised the 'Southern Ocean' as the world's fifth ocean hoping others will soon follow suit.

👉 About

- © Usually, the magazine has followed the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) on marine names.
- © The change in name is in alignment with the National Geographic Society's initiative to conserve the world's oceans.





2 Arctic Ocean

3 Atlantic Ocean

4 Indian Ocean

1 Pacific Ocean

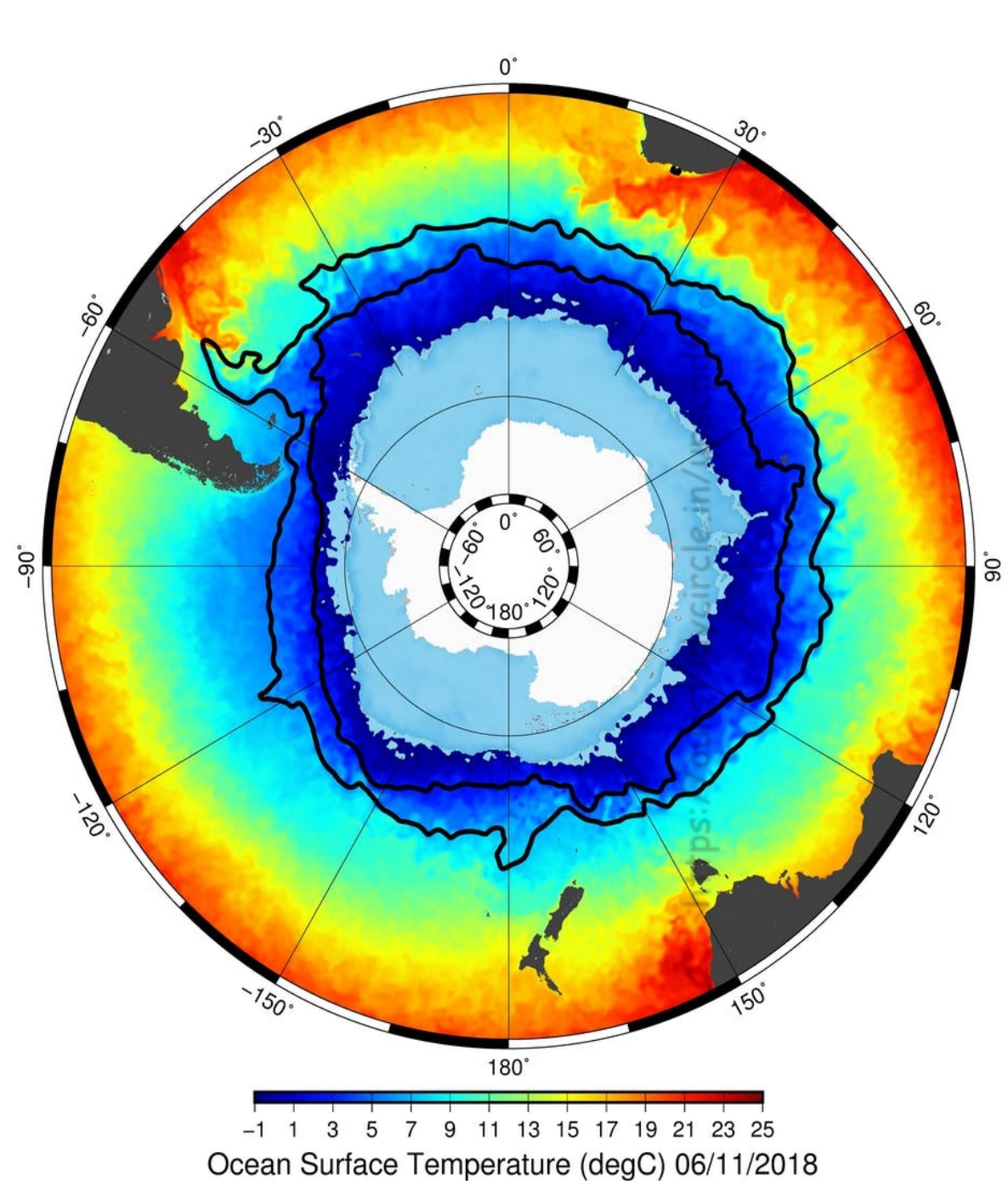
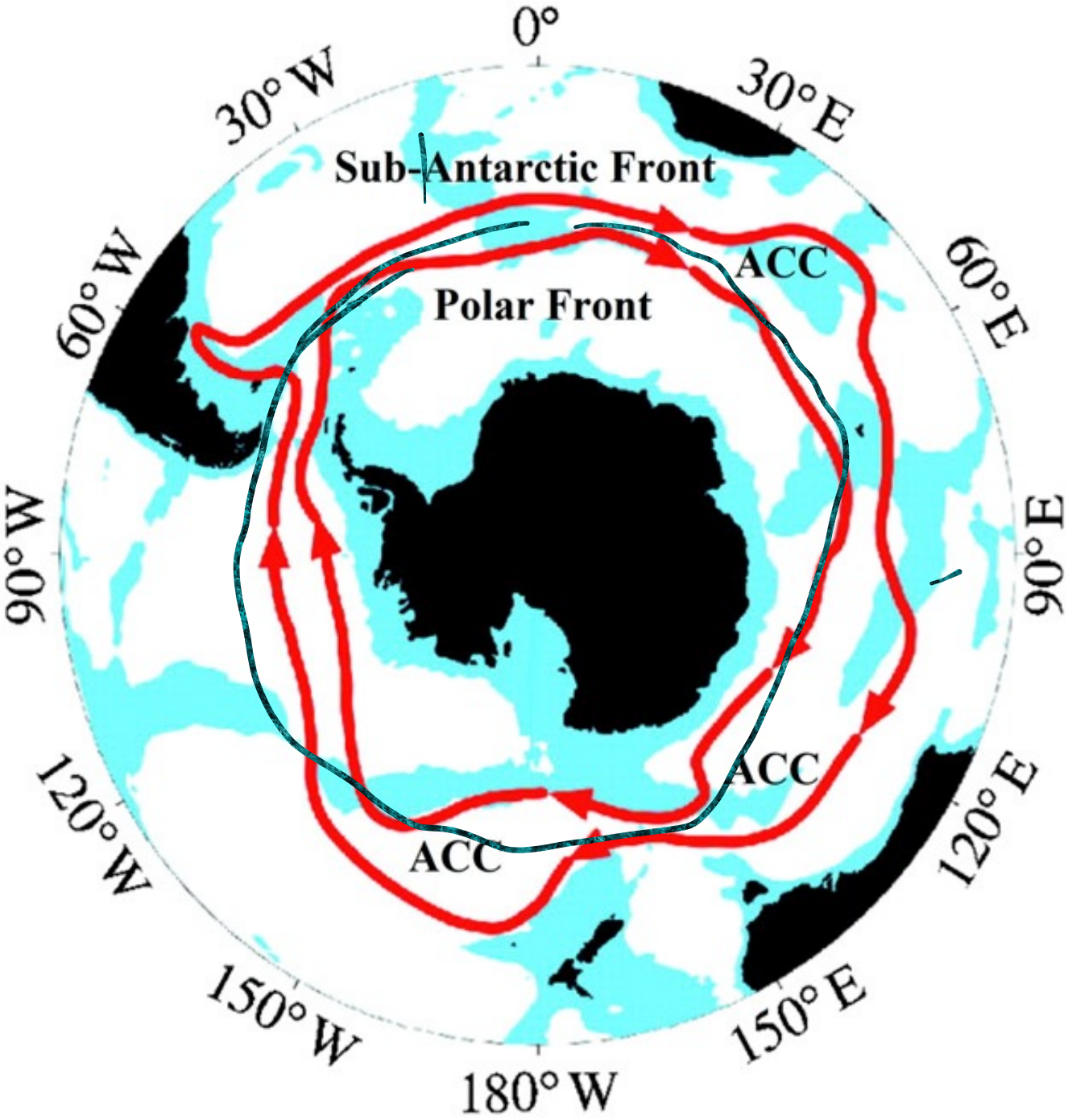
5 Southern Ocean

World's Fifth Ocean

- ◎ The Southern Ocean is the only ocean to touch three other oceans and to completely embrace a continent rather than being embraced by them.
- ◎ Its northern limit is a latitude of 60 degrees south. It is also defined by its Antarctic Circumpolar Current that was formed 34 million years ago. The current flows from west to east around Antarctica.
- ◎ By officially changing the name of the waterbody, the National Geographic hoped to draw attention to the following issues,
 - Rapid warming of the Southern Ocean due to global warming,
 - Industrial fishing on species like krill and Patagonian toothfish.
- ◎ Recognition →
 - The IHO too had recognised 'Southern Ocean' as a distinct body of water surrounding Antarctica in 1937 but had repealed the same in 1953.



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World's Fifth Ocean

- However, the US Board on Geographic Names and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recognize the term 'Southern Ocean'.

👉 International Hydrographic Organization

- ◎ It is an intergovernmental organization that works to ensure all the world's seas, oceans and navigable waters are surveyed and charted.
- ◎ Established in 1921, it coordinates the activities of national hydrographic offices and promotes uniformity in nautical charts and documents.
- ◎ It issues survey best practices, provides guidelines to maximize the use of hydrographic survey data and develops hydrographic capabilities in Member States.
- ◎ India is also a member of IHO.

CSE 2012

Q. The acidification of oceans is increasing. Why is this phenomenon a cause of concern?

- 1. The growth and survival of calcareous phytoplankton will be adversely affected.**
- 2. The growth and survival of coral reefs will be adversely affected.**
- 3. The survival of some animals that have phytoplanktonic larvae will be adversely affected.**
- 4. The cloud seeding and formation of clouds will be adversely affected.**

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only**
- b) 2 only**
- c) 1 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4**

Answer (d

Bengal Monitor Lizard

NEWS

The forest department of Odisha has recently busted an organized trafficking racket and seized seven Bengal monitor lizards.

👉 About

- © The Bengal monitor or common Indian monitor (*Varanus bengalensis*) is a large lizard that is mainly terrestrial.
- © The monitors are carnivorous and non-poisonous.
- © The monitor lizard is protected under Schedule I of WPA but is regularly killed for its meat, blood and oil.



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Bengal Monitor Lizard

- ⦿ The species is listed under the 'Least Concern' category on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.
- ⦿ Threat → Its population is dwindling due to rampant poaching.

Quick revision (True/False)

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2.	Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay -> He composed the song Amar Sonar Bangla.	
3.	World Intellectual Property Organization -> specialized agencies of the United Nations.	
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Agni P Missile

NEWS

Recently, a new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-P (Prime) was successfully test-fired by DRDO from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha, Balasore.

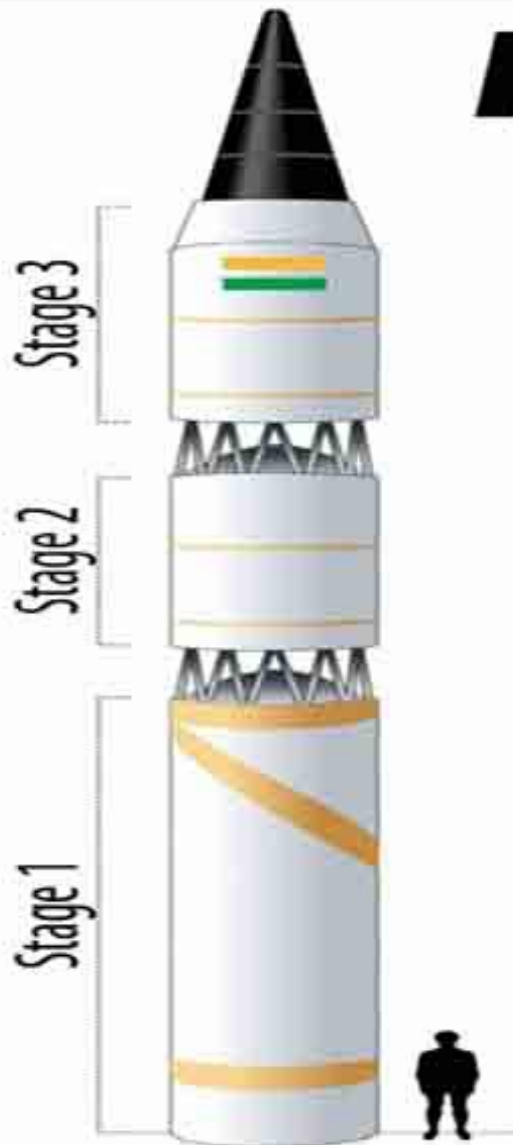
👉 About

- © Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class (under IGMDP - Integrated Guided Missile Development Program).
- © Canister Based Missile → Agni P is a canisters based missile. Canisterisation of missiles reduces the time required to launch the missile while improving its storage and mobility,



AGNI 5 Missile

Nuclear-capable
Inter-continental ballistic
Surface-to-surface



- Operational range
5500-5800 km
- Weight
50000 kg
- Length
17.5 m
- Diameter
2 m
- Speed
24 Mach
- Engine
3 stage solid
- Warhead
Nuclear
Weight
1500 kg



**Successfully
test-fired from
Abdul Kalam
Island off
Odisha coast
on Dec 26,
2016**

**TESTS
CONDUCTED**
RANGE

Agni-1
Apr 19, 2012
700 km

Agni-2
Sep 15, 2013
2000 km

Agni-3
Jan 31, 2015
2500 km to more than 3,500

Agni-1
Nov 9, 2015
2500 km to more than 3,500

Agni P Missile

- ⊙ This means that it can be launched from rail and road and stored for a longer period. It can also be transported across the length and breadth of the country.
- ⊙ Weight → The missile weighs 50% less than Agni III and has new guidance and a new generation of propulsion.
- ⊙ Range → The missile has a range between 1000km to 2000km. It has been developed specifically to strike targets in Pakistan. Its range is too short to reach targets in the Chinese mainland.
- ⊙ Replaced by → The Agni-P will replace the Prithvi, Agni-1 and Agni-2 missiles that were built two decades ago with technologies that are now considered outdated.

Agni P Missile

👉 About Agni Missiles

- ◎ Agni Missiles trace their origins back to the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme(IGMDP).
- ◎ IGMDP was conceived by APJ. Abdul Kalam in the 1980s to enable India to attain self-sufficiency in the field of missile technology.
- ◎ The 5 missiles (P-A-T-N-A) developed under this program are:
 - Prithvi: Short range surface to surface ballistic missile.
 - Agni: Ballistic missiles with different ranges, i.e. Agni (1,2,3,4,5)
 - Trishul: Short range low level surface to air missile.
 - Nag: 3rd generation anti-tank missile.
 - Akash: Medium range surface to air missile..

CSE 2014

Q. With reference to Agni-IV Missile, which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

- 1. It is surface-to-surface missile.**
- 2. It is fuelled by liquid propellant only.**
- 3. It can deliver one tonne nuclear warhead about 7500 km away.**

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- a) 1 only**
- b) 2 and 3 only**
- c) 1 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2 and 3**

Answer (a

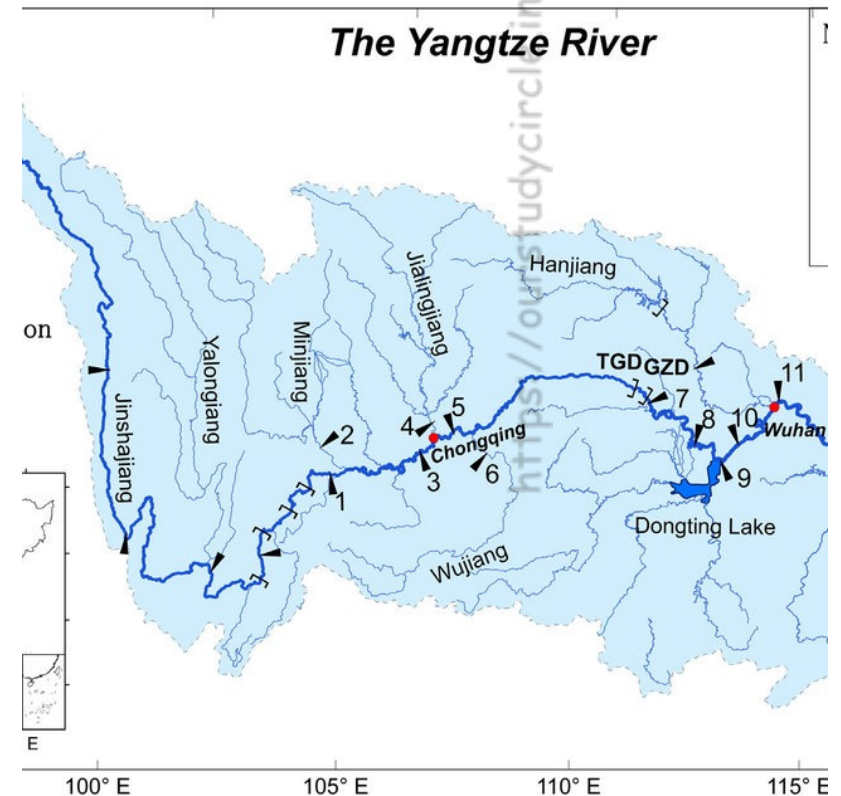
Baihetan Dam

NEWS

China operationalises Baihetan hydro project. world's largest power station in terms of installed capacity of 22,500 MW or 22.5 GW.

👉 About

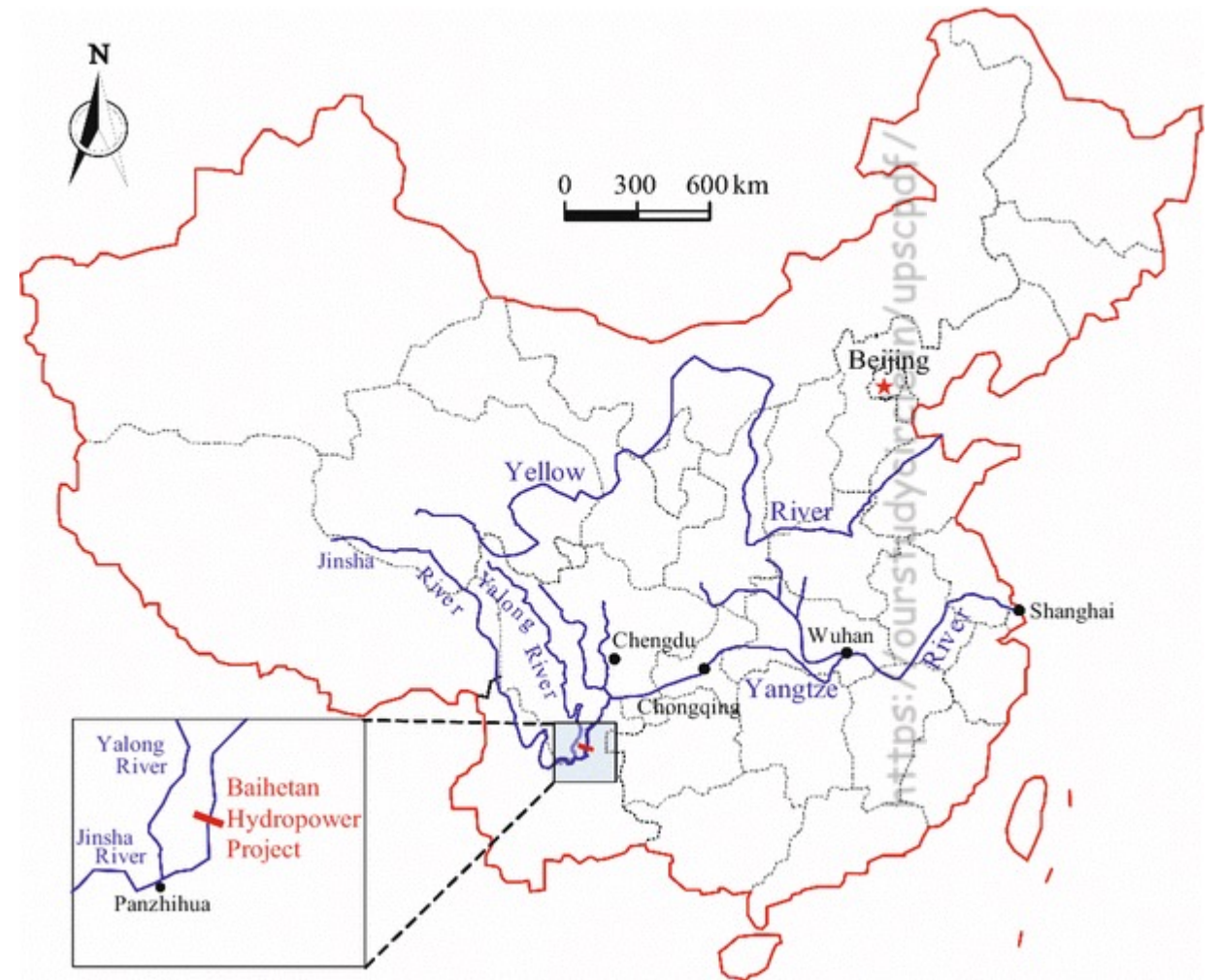
- ◎ Location → Border of southwestern provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan.
- ◎ Constructed on → Jinsha, the upstream section of the Yangtze river.
 - Yangtze is the longest in Asia and the third-longest river in the world.
 - It rises in the northern part of the Tibetan Plateau and flows in a generally easterly direction to the East China Sea.





Baihetan Dam

- ◎ It is also a hydroelectric gravity dam that spans the Yangtze River.



Attorney General Of India



The tenure of Attorney General K.K. Venugopal is extended by the the government for a period of one more year with effect from July 1.

👉 About

- © S/he is the top legal officer in the country & part of Union Executive.
- © S/he is not considered as a government servant.
- © Assisted by 2 Solicitor Generals & 4 Additional Solicitor Generals.
- © Under the Constitution of India, Article 76 deals with for Attorney General of India & Article 165 for Advocate General of States.



Attorney General Of India

- ⊙ Eligibility → Qualified to be appointed as Supreme Court judge, Citizen of India, Judge of High Court (HC) for 5 years/advocate HC for 10 years/eminent jurist President's opinion.
- ⊙ Tenure → Not fixed.
- ⊙ Appointment → By President on Government advice.
- ⊙ Functions →
 - Advise Government on legal matters.
 - Perform legal duties assigned by President.
 - Appear on behalf of Government in all cases in SC or HC.
 - Represent Government under Article 143 (Power of President to consult SC).
 - Discharge functions conferred by Constitution or law.

Attorney General Of India

⊙ Rights →

- Right to Speak & take part in proceedings of both Houses of Parliament/joint sitting/any committee of Parliament of which he/she may be named a member.
- Enjoys privileges & immunities of a member of Parliament.
- Not a Government servant & not debarred from private legal practice.

⊙ Limitations →

- No Right to Vote in House proceedings/committees.
- Should not advise against or hold a brief against Government.
- Should not defend accused persons in criminal prosecutions without the permission of the Government of India.
- Should not accept appointment as a director in any company or corporation without the permission of the Government of India.

Attorney General Of India

⦿ Removal →

- Holds office during President's pleasure & can be removed by President at any time.
- No grounds for removal or procedure mentioned in Constitution.

Q. Consider the following statements:

Attorney General of India can

1. Take part in the proceedings of the Lok Sabha
2. Be a member of a committee of the Lok Sabha
3. Speak in the Lok Sabha
4. Vote in the Lok Sabha

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 4 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3 only
- d) 1 and 3 only

Answer (c)

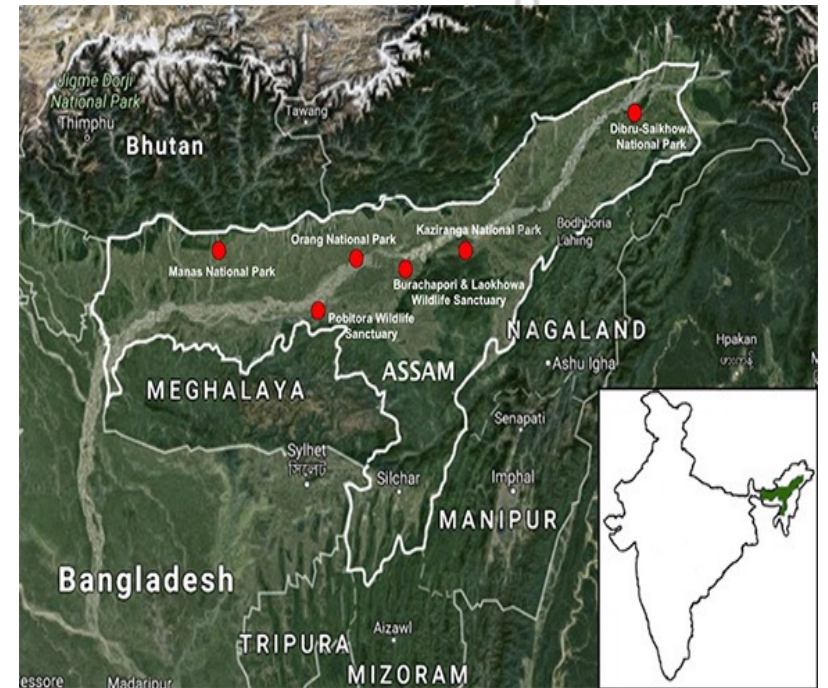
Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary

NEWS

Recently, the World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF) found a few tigers inhabiting the Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam.

👉 About

- ◎ Location → Northern Assam's Baksa and Udalguri districts bordering Bhutan.
- ◎ The Sanctuary is bordered by the Barnadi river and Nalapara river to the west and east respectively.
- ◎ Status → It was affirmed as the WS in 1980 by the Government of Assam.



Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary

- ◎ Barnadi was established specifically to protect the Pygmy Hog and Hispid Hare .
- ◎ Biodiversity →
 - This is important for threatened species such as the Asian Elephant and Tiger.
 - About 60% of the BWS is reported to be grassland, most of it is now grassy woodland.
 - The main Forest types are Tropical Moist Deciduous along the northern edge of the Sanctuary, and mixed scrub and grassland in the southern part with few trees.
- ◎ Vegetation →
 - The vegetation has been drastically modified by human activity. Most of the natural vegetation has been cleared and replaced by commercial plantations.

Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary

Other Protected Areas in Assam →

- Dibru-Saikhowa National Park,
- Manas National Park,
- Nameri National Park,
- Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park.
- Kaziranga National Park.

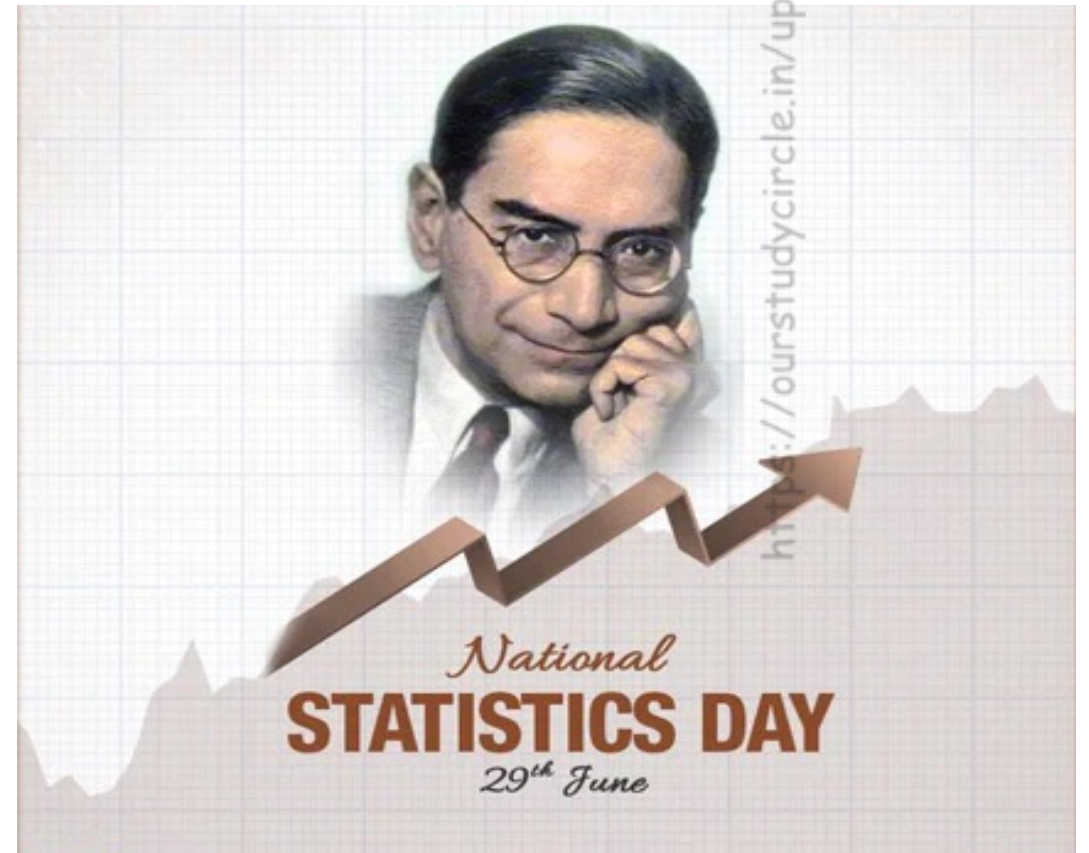
National Statistics Day



Every year, the Statistics Day is celebrated on 29th June, the birth anniversary of Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, to recognise his invaluable contribution in establishing the National Statistical System.

👉 About

- © Aim → To popularise the use of statistics in everyday life and sensitise the public as to how statistics help in shaping and framing policies.



National Statistics Day

👉 PC Mahalanobis

- ⦿ He is referred to as the chief architect of Indian statistical system as well as father of statistical science in India.
- ⦿ He established the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in 1931 in Kolkata. The institute founded the journal Sankhya, along the lines of Karl Pearson's Biometrika. In 1959 it was made an autonomous body of Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.
- ⦿ He also helped in the establishment of Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the National Sample Survey (NSS) and the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI).

National Statistics Day

- ⊙ He introduced three key concepts to the theory and practice of sample surveys which are: Pilot surveys, Optimum survey design and Inter Penetrating Network of sub-samples technique (IPNS).
- ⊙ The Mahalanobis model, was employed in the Second Five Year Plan, which worked towards the rapid industrialisation of India.

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Agni P Missile -> range between 4000km to 5000km.	
2.	Baihetan Dam -> Constructed on Jinsha, the upstream section of the Yangtze river.	
3.	Attorney General Of India -> is the top legal officer in the country & not a part of Union Executive.	
4.	Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary -> Madhya Pradesh.	
5.	PC Mahalanobis -> established the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in 1931 in Kolkata.	

Quick revision (True/False)

	Question	True / False
1.	Agni P Missile -> range between 4000km to 5000km.	False
2.	Baihetan Dam -> Constructed on Jinsha, the upstream section of the Yangtze river.	True
3.	Attorney General Of India -> is the top legal officer in the country & not a part of Union Executive.	False
4.	Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary -> Madhya Pradesh.	False
5.	PC Mahalanobis -> established the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in 1931 in Kolkata.	True

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