



CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVER'S POINT

One-Stop solution for UPSC/APSC/SSC/Banking/AJS

AMRIT MANTHAN

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GENERAL STUDIES - I

CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVER'S POINT
Leadership through knowledge...

1. Phenome India Project

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Society

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Why in the news:

- The first phase of CSIR's Phenome India longitudinal health monitoring project has come to an end, and the project organized a special event called Phenome India Unboxing 1.0.

Concerning the 'Phenome India' Project:

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) unveiled the Phenome India-CSIR Health Cohort Knowledgebase (PI-CheCK) on December 7, 2023.

- The project's goal is to create risk prediction models for cardio-metabolic disorders, such as diabetes, liver diseases, and heart diseases, that are unique to India.



2. Rhine River:

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Geography

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Print

Why in the news:

Due to high water levels caused by recent heavy rains, a portion of the Rhine River in southern Germany was blocked to cargo transport.

It is the longest river in Western and Central Europe and the twelfth longest river overall in Europe. The names it goes by vary based on which nation it passes through.

- It is referred to as Rhein, Rijn, and so on in Germany, France, and the Netherlands. From its headwaters in the Swiss Alps, it travels more than 1,232 km (766 miles) through Switzerland. Before entering the North Sea at Rotterdam, Netherlands, it passes through six nations: Switzerland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France, and the Netherlands. Germany and France are naturally divided by the Rhine. The river drains an area of roughly 185,000 square kilometers.



3. Andaman's Onge tribe

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Issues Related to SCs & STs

Importance for: Mains

Source: TOI

Why in the news:

Andaman's Onge tribe king Totoko and queen Priya welcomed a baby boy recently, bringing the tribe's total population to 136.

About Onge Tribe:

- Onges are one of the most primitive tribes in India that belong to the Negrito racial ancestry. The southernmost island in the Andaman archipelago, Little Andaman Island, is home to them.
- They are a semi-nomadic people whose food sources are the forest and the ocean.
- They do not adhere to or believe in strict worship rituals or sacrifices, in contrast to other religions. For Onges, who views white teeth as a sign of impending death, the color of the teeth has a special meaning.
- They keep chewing on the bark to give their teeth a red hue. They use ochre and white clay to adorn their faces and bodies.



4. STEM Education

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Society

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Why in the news:

A day-long workshop on the Centrally-sponsored PMSHRI school scheme, focusing on STEM education, robotics, and artificial intelligence, was organized by Robotech Pvt. Ltd. at PMSHRI Bokial High School, promoting advanced education techniques and technologies among local schools.



STEM education workshop at Bokial High School

A CORRESPONDENT

GOLAGHAT, June 9: A day-long workshop on the Centrally-sponsored PMSHRI school scheme, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education, robotics, and artificial intelligence (AI) was organized by Robotech Pvt. Ltd. at the PMSHRI Bokial High School here. The event aimed to promote advanced education techniques and technologies among local schools.

The workshop was coordinated by Ujjal Gogoi of Robotech Pvt. Ltd. while Robotics Trainer Kaushik Saikia and Senior Robotics Trainer cum Sales Manager Shimpi Amphi led the sessions, overseeing the event and providing in-depth knowledge and hands-on experience to the participants. The participants included the Principal In-charge and teachers of PMSHRI Bokial High School along with teachers from PMSHRI Kachanhal High School. They had the opportunity to engage with cutting-edge technology and explore its applications in educational settings. The event was a significant step towards integrating modern educational practices and technologies into the local school curriculum, fostering an environment of innovation and learning.

The participants included the Principal In-charge and teachers of PMSHRI Bokial High School along with teachers from PMSHRI Kachanhal High School. They had the opportunity to engage with cutting-edge technology and explore its applications in educational settings. The event was a significant step towards integrating modern educational practices and technologies into the local school curriculum, fostering an environment of innovation and learning.

STEM education

STEM education is an acronym for four disciplines, namely -- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

- STEM education is now being made a part of the curriculum right from elementary school. STEM education is different from the regular science and mathematics.
- It talks about the application of these techniques into the real world, i.e., an integrating applied approach and cohesive learning techniques.
- Under the NEP 2020, it will be easy to integrate STEM learning and approach in the updated curricula. The pool of scientists, engineers, and mathematics will be strengthened a great deal if STEM education is introduced in stages at various levels.

5. Higher Education Mismatch: Challenges for Viksit Bharat@2047

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Social issues

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

The issue of demand-supply mismatches and systemic exclusions in India's higher education, particularly in social sciences, is in the news due to recent data from the 2021-22 All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), highlighting significant enrolment trends and challenges that impact the nation's human capital development amid the aspirations for Viksit Bharat@2047.

The social sciences, a shelter for the 'excluded' student

The general election is just over and a stable share of India's youth is scrambling for college admissions; their examinations are crucial in realising the dream of Viksit Bharat@2047.

The results of May were important for the youth of India as the results of many examinations were released, generating anxiety, worry, and heartbeats. The publication of results triggers a rush for seats in higher education institutions, and, in turn, another series of examinations to qualify for these. This transition to higher education is important as it determines the quantity and quality of human capital, which is vital for economic growth in the developing economies, including India. This transition is plagued by a mismatch between demand and supply. The extent of excess seats in some courses and institutions, and shortages in some others, determines the magnitude of exclusion in the system. Persistence of exclusion leads to a scenario of courses in some disciplines emerging as the last resort for higher education for a large number of students, contributing to the creation of a reserve of the excluded. Recent trends in India reveal that the social sciences are turning out to be one such large reserve.

The reasons
Demand-supply mismatches in higher education arise due to the incongruence between aspirations of students and parents, and the availability of one-on-one academic support, determined by market forces in private institutions and government policies in public institutions. Perpetual discrepancies in the system lead to three types of exclusions: exclusion due to excessive competition; exclusion due to financial factors; and exclusion based on



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that there are few and common high social prestige and pole position in the labour market intensifies competition to enter, resulting in focused curriculum. The second is common in the case of private institutions as fee fixation is not bound by statutory regulations and is often akin to dynamic pricing in other services. Reduction in government financial grants to public institutions has pushed these institutions to resort to self-financing through higher fees. The third line of exclusion is due to systemic issues as the availability of courses and institutions gets concentrated in some specific regions, with other regions having generic courses (with outdated topics and syllabus). The prevalence of these three types of exclusions undermines the quality of human capital in the long run.

According to the 2021-22 All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), the growth of enrolment during the period 2017-18 to 2021-22 for the undergraduate (UG) level is 4.1% and the post-graduate level, 5.9%. The Bachelor of Arts (BA) programme, which has the highest enrolment at the UG level, registered an increase of around 8% from 2017-18. There is an increase of 26.5% in the Master of Arts (MA) programmes from 2017-18 to 2021-22. The share of enrolment in the BA programme is total enrolment of BA, BSc and BCom is 54% irregular mode and 75% in distance mode, while the corresponding share for MA is 62% regular and 42% distance. The large programmes are turning out to be a generic pool, accommodating a large number of students who are excluded for a variety of reasons.

The surge of empirical orientation
There are stark differences in preferences for

orientation as employability for each graduate is perceived to be higher. Courses in economics are preferred more on this ground when compared to courses in anthropology or sociology. Second, there is an overemphasis on acquiring policy intervention skills. The expectation that social science students need to develop problem-solving skills akin to engineering students has grown overtime, resulting in narrower specialisation within the social sciences. Third, there is the emergence of private universities that promise to provide global education in India, which has generated demand from a narrow section of the affluent population. Ironically, courses which are demanded the least in public institutions, such as anthropology, sociology and political science, are in high demand in these private universities, which have emerged as enclaves of higher quality for the affluent.

Improving quality
Higher education in the social sciences – the lens for observing and understanding changes in society, economy and polity – needs an overhaul at all levels. Quality expansion to accommodate excluded aspirants of other disciplines needs to be followed up with a concerted effort for quality improvement. Tracking quality enhancement and course content needs to be accorded top priority in such a mission. An obsession with policy and empirical skills has pushed some disciplines and programmes to the periphery. Financial exclusion has resulted in the widening of inequalities and the creation of elite enclaves of education in the social sciences. The aspiration of rising demographic dividend rests on keeping a vast pool of youth studying the social sciences, which assumes significance in an era of social changes and rapid technological advancements.

Statistics and Trends According to the 2021-22 All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):

- UG enrolment growth (2017-22): 4.1% PG enrolment growth (2017-22): 5.9% BA enrolment increased by 15% at UG level; MA by 26.5% at PG level.
- BA constitutes 51% of regular and 75% of distance mode enrolments. MA has a 12% share in regular and 42% in distance mode enrolments.
- These figures indicate BA programs are becoming a generic pool for many excluded students. Improving higher education, particularly in social sciences, is vital for understanding societal changes and leveraging technological advancements. Addressing the systemic exclusions and enhancing educational quality will be crucial in realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

6. International Yoga Day

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Indian Art Forms

Importance for: Mains

Source: India Today

Why in the news:

- Assam joined the nation in celebrating International Yoga Day on Friday with several events organised across the state on the occasion.
- Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, among others, participated in yoga events held in various parts of the northeastern state since morning.



International Yoga Day is celebrated on June 21st annually as a global celebration of well-being.

- This worldwide movement recognizes the ancient Indian art of yoga and its significant effects on our mental, physical, and spiritual well-being, cutting across cultural and geographic barriers. Millions of people come together for yoga classes, workshops, and talks in peaceful mountain retreats.
- Notably, the 2024 International Yoga Day will be the 10th anniversary of the event.
- The International Yoga Day 2024 theme is "Yoga for Self and Society." This subject emphasises the double benefits of yoga practice: enhancing personal well-being and improving society at large.

7. Srinagar: World Craft City Tag by World Crafts Council

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Education

Importance for: Mains

Source: TOI

Why in the news:

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has been awarded the prestigious World Craft City tag by the World Crafts Council (WCC). This recognition is a testament to the city's rich heritage in arts and crafts and aims to empower local artisans and preserve craft traditions.

Key Proposals and Measures:

Significance of the Tag Global Recognition:

- The World Craft City tag places Srinagar among an elite group of cities recognized globally for their unique contributions to crafts.

Cultural Heritage:

- This accolade highlights the centuries-old craft traditions of Kashmir, including its renowned pashmina shawls, intricate woodwork, and exquisite papier-mâché products.
- Statements from Key Figures Saleem Beg, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Kashmir:
- Described the recognition as a significant acknowledgment of Kashmir's skilled artisans.

Srinagar's 'World Craft City' tag will promote global links

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Srinagar has earned the World Craft City tag from the World Crafts Council, a non-government organisation working to empower artisans and safeguard craft heritage globally. Saleem Beg, head of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Kashmir, described the honour as the "latest recognition of the skill base of Kashmir". "This will provide a boost to Kashmir's

listed as craft cities by the Council and, the honour for Srinagar will lead to knowledge exchange," he said. This is likely to re-open Kashmir's centuries-old linkages with craft centres in Central Asia and Iran. "The Council is the modern-day means and medium to put the focus on places that have been engaged in creativity and aesthetics for centuries. The last century saw Kashmir's traditional routes slowly closing down, the way has now been re-opened."



8. City of Literature

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Art and Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

The city of Kozhikode in Kerala was added in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (UCCN) on Wednesday. Gwalior from Madhya Pradesh was also among the 55 new cities to join the network.

Kozhikode in Kerala declared India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature'

Updated - June 24, 2024 02:08 pm IST Published - June 23, 2024 11:48 pm IST - Kozhikode

THE HINDU BUREAU

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Mayor Ilsema Philip giving a piece of cake to Minister for Tourism P.A. Mohamed Bivas during the formal announcement of the 'City of Literature'

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

- The UCCN was created in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.
- It now includes 350 cities in over a hundred countries.
- The network is aimed at leveraging the creative, social, and economic potential of cultural industries.
- It was launched to promote UNESCO's goals of cultural diversity and strengthen resilience to threats such as climate change, rising inequality, and rapid urbanization.
- It encourages a culture of creativity in urban planning and solutions to urban problem

Kozhikode's literary tradition

- Kozhikode's Literary Tradition The North Kerala city of Kozhikode is home to many prominent personalities of the state's literary and cultural world.
- The city, where several leading media houses are headquartered, has hundreds of publishing banners and several libraries enriching its literary tradition.
- The first Malayalam novel Kundalatha was born in Kozhikode in 1887.
- Appu Nedungadi authored it. Several illustrious writers like S K Pottekkatt, Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, Uroob, Thikkodiyan, NN Kakkad, P Valsala, Akbar Kakkattil, Punathil Kunjabdulla, and MT Vasudevan Nair have brought laurels for Kozhikode.
- The city has also produced many film and theatre professionals in the last half a century



9. Saipan Island

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Geography

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

On his way to a courthouse on the Pacific island of Saipan, Julian Assange is anticipated to enter a plea of guilty to a single criminal charge as part of a settlement that will allow him to go free and return to Australia.

Saipan Island

It is located in the Western Pacific Ocean. It is the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI), a US commonwealth in the western Pacific which begins roughly 70 km (44 miles) north of Guam and stretches across 14 islands.

- It was a colony of Spain, Germany and then Japan, the United States took control of the island in World War Two.
- Like territories such as Guam or Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands are part of the US without the full status of a state. In 1975 residents of this island voted to join the United States as a territory.
- The territory has a permanent delegate in the US House of Representatives, although they cannot vote. Highest point: Mount Tapochau
- Economy: Tourism is the mainstay of the economy and it is popular with Korean and Chinese tourists. It is the only part of the United States that Chinese citizens can enter without a visa.



10. Bhuvan Panchayat geoportal 4.0

Paper: GS-I

Topics: Geography

Importance for: Mains

Source: TOI

Why in the news:

On June 28 in New Delhi, the two Geoportals—Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0) and the National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)—will be unveiled by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology.

About the Geoportal 4.0 Bhuvan Panchayat:

It is an online platform for the distribution of geospatial data and services that facilitates the use and integration of space-based data into research projects and the governance of spatial planning at the Gram Panchayat level.

- Developed by: NRSC, ISRO is the company behind this WebGIS platform.
- It allows all thematic data products generated at 1:10k under the Space-based Information Support for Decentralized Planning (SISDP) project to be seen, analyzed, and shared via web map services (WMS).
- The National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM) gateway: what is it? It offers a nationwide, standard, structured, multi-scale geospatial database for situation evaluation and efficient decision-making in emergency and disaster scenarios.





GENERAL STUDIES - II

Leadership through knowledge...

1. Transforming Higher Education in Assam

Paper: GS-II

Topic: Social Justice

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Why in the news:

- Assam has embarked on a transformative journey in higher education by introducing digital innovations and inclusive access measures through the Samarth portal under the Ministry of Education.
- This initiative aims to modernize educational infrastructure, streamline admissions, and bridge the gap between urban and rural education participation.

Transforming higher education in Assam: Digital innovation and inclusive access

Dr. Mohini Mohan Borah

(He can be reached on mohini.borah@assam.gov.in)

In a significant effort to modernize its educational infrastructure and enhance access to higher education, the Government of Assam has launched the Samarth portal, a digital platform designed to streamline admissions and foster inclusive participation. This initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Education, Assam, aims to bridge the gap between urban and rural education participation, ensuring that all students have equal access to quality higher education.

The Samarth portal is a comprehensive digital platform that integrates various educational services, including admissions, examinations, and resource management. It is designed to be user-friendly and accessible to students from both urban and rural areas. The portal features a centralized database of institutions, courses, and faculty, enabling students to explore their options and apply for admission seamlessly. Additionally, the portal provides real-time updates on application status and admission criteria, ensuring transparency and fairness in the process.

One of the key features of the Samarth portal is its focus on digital innovation. By leveraging technology, the portal has eliminated the need for physical paperwork, reducing administrative burdens and promoting efficiency. Students can now access the portal from anywhere, anytime, using a smartphone or a laptop. This digital approach not only simplifies the admission process but also ensures that students from rural areas, who may face challenges with traditional paper-based systems, can participate fully in the higher education process.

Furthermore, the portal emphasizes inclusive access, ensuring that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have equal opportunities. The portal features a user-friendly interface in Assamese and English, making it accessible to a wide range of students. It also provides support services, such as online counseling and guidance, to help students navigate the admission process. By offering these services, the portal aims to empower students and ensure that they are well-informed and confident in their decisions.

The launch of the Samarth portal is a testament to the Government of Assam's commitment to modernizing its higher education system and promoting inclusive growth. It is a significant step towards creating a digital ecosystem that supports and enhances the quality of education in Assam. As the portal continues to evolve, it is expected to play a pivotal role in transforming higher education in Assam, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to pursue their dreams and achieve their potential.



Source : Google Images

- Centralized admissions process reduces paperwork, administrative burdens, and promotes transparency.
- Beneficial for students from rural areas, enabling easier access to information and application submission.
- Real-time updates on application status and admission criteria enhance transparency and fairness.
- Centralized database aids institutions in better resource management, leading to optimized infrastructure and faculty utilization.

Key features of the Samarth Portal:

- Centralized admissions process reduces paperwork, administrative burdens, and promotes transparency.
- Beneficial for students from rural areas, enabling easier access to information and application submission.
- Real-time updates on application status and admission criteria enhance transparency and fairness.
- Centralized database aids institutions in better resource management, leading to optimized infrastructure and faculty utilization.



Source : Google Images

Impact on enrollment rates and educational attainment:

- Simplified admissions process expected to boost enrollment rates, especially among marginalized groups.
- Promotes digital literacy among students and aligns with national objectives outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Future Integration and Enhancement:

- Potential integration with national educational systems like the National Academic Depository and Digilocker for streamlined processes.
- Incorporation of AI and machine learning algorithms for personalized recommendations and early identification of potential dropouts.
- Continuous feedback mechanisms to ensure user-friendly and effective functionality

Challenges and Concerns:

- Introduction of self-financed programs poses a burden on low-income families and may disrupt access to higher education.
- Increasing number of graduates facing unemployment highlights the need for alignment between education and job market demands

Recommendations for improvement:

- Enhancing the fit between the demands of the labor market and higher education.
- Putting money into research opportunities, faculty development, and infrastructure. Improving instructors' ongoing professional development and online learning environments. Using public-private partnerships (PPPs) to help with job placements, apprenticeships, and internships

Government Action and Policy Reforms:

- Creating an enabling environment for innovation, quality assurance, and equitable access to higher education.
- Updating regulatory frameworks, providing incentives for private sector involvement, and ensuring transparent funding allocation.

2. Right to property in India

Paper: GS-II

Topics: : Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Why the Right to Property is in News:

The right to property has recently been highlighted in news due to significant Supreme Court decisions and their implications for property rights in India:

Supreme Court's Kolkata Municipal Corporation Case:

The Court detailed seven facets of property rights under Article 300-A, emphasizing protections such as the right to notice, fair compensation, and acquisition for public purposes. This ruling reaffirms and strengthens the constitutional right to property.



Evolution of the Right to Property in India:

- **Original Constitutional Provision:** Right to property was a fundamental right under **Articles 19(1)(f) and 31**.
- **Bela Banerjee Case:** Supreme Court interpreted "compensation" in Article 31(2) as a just equivalent of the property value.
- **Fourth Amendment (1955):** Amended Article 31(2) to limit judicial review on compensation adequacy.
- A citizen's right to own private property is a human right. The state cannot take possession of it without following due procedure and authority of law.
- The Bench referred to an earlier verdict in State of Haryana v. Mukesh Kumar case (2011) wherein it was held that the right to property is not only a constitutional or statutory right, but also a human right.

- **Doctrine of Adverse Possession:** The state cannot trespass into the private property of a citizen and then claim ownership of the land in the name of 'adverse possession'.
- Grabbing private land and then claiming it as its own makes the state an encroacher.
- In 1967, when the government forcibly took over the land, 'right to private property was still a fundamental right' under Article 31 of the Constitution.

Procedural Sub-Rights under Right to Property:

These seven rights are foundational components of a law that is in tune with Article 300A, and the absence of one of these or some of them would render the law susceptible to challenge:

- **Right to Notice:** Individuals must be informed about the intention to acquire their property.
- **Right to Be Heard:** Affected individuals have the right to voice objections.
- **Right to a Reasoned Decision:** The government must justify the acquisition with a reasoned decision.
- **Public Purpose Justification:** Acquisitions must serve a demonstrable public purpose.
- **Right of Restitution or Fair Compensation:** Landowners are entitled to fair compensation for their property.
- **Right to An Efficient and Expeditious Process:** Acquisition procedures should be efficient and adhere to set timelines.
- **Right of Conclusion:** The process concludes with the physical transfer of property; failure to take possession renders the acquisition incomplete.

Current Legal Status:

- **Not a Fundamental Right:** The Right to Property is no longer a fundamental right, which means it cannot be directly enforced through the Supreme Court or High Court under Article 32 or Article 226. However, it remains a constitutional right.
- **Protection under Law:** Any person deprived of his property under any state enactment can approach a High Court challenging the legality of the act under Article 300A.

- **Legal Recourse:** Affected individuals have the right to legal recourse if they believe that the acquisition was not justified or that the compensation was inadequate.

3. G7

Paper: GS-II

Topics: : IR

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

G7 leaders calls on Hamas to accept Israeli proposal to end Gaza war

WASHINGTON, June 4:

The leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) on Tuesday expressed solidarity for the comprehensive Israel's deal outlined by US President Biden and called on Hamas to accept the deal, further urging the countries with influence over Hamas to help ensure that it does so.

"We, the Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7), fully endorse and will stand behind the comprehensive deal outlined by President Biden that would lead to an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all hos-

port for a credible pathway towards peace leading to a two State solution," they stated.

"We call on Hamas to accept this deal, that Israel is ready to move forward with, and we urge countries with influence over Hamas to help ensure that it does so," the G7 leaders said in the statement.

On Friday, US President Joe Biden announced that Israel has proposed a "comprehensive new proposal" that provides a roadmap to a ceasefire in the ongoing war with Hamas in Gaza and

Hamad Al Thani, to discuss how the ceasefire and hostage deal offer a concrete roadmap for ending the crisis in Gaza.

According to Biden, the proposal, transmitted by Qatar to Hamas, outlines a "roadmap" towards a ceasefire.

The initial phase, spanning six weeks, involves a "full and complete ceasefire with the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all populated areas of Gaza" and "release of a number of hostages including women, the elderly, the wounded in av-

- As the Group of 7 (G7) Presidency in 2024, **Italy** will host the G7 Summit in Puglia, Italy, in June.
- The Government of Italy selected Puglia, a city that has "acted as a bridge between East and West" and symbolizes connection between the East and West, to align with the Summit's focus on the Global South. Italy also plans to focus its Presidency on Ukraine, unity among the G7, respect for the rules of international law, economic security, energy security, migration, and cooperation with Africa.

The Group of Seven (G7): What is it?

Established in 1975, it is an intergovernmental organization.

- Every year, the bloc convenes to deliberate on matters of mutual concern, such as international security, energy policy, and global economic governance.
- The United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States make up the G7.
- India and the other G7 nations make up the G20.
- There is no official charter or secretariat for the G7. The task of establishing the agenda falls on the presidency, which is alternated annually among the participating nations. Prior to the summit, ministers, envoys, and sherpas work out policy objectives.



4. Proportional Representation

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Is it time for proportional representation? | Explained

Which are the countries which follow proportional representation in their electoral democracies? Will it work in a large and diverse country like India? What is mixed member proportional representation?

Published - June 09, 2024 11:33 pm IST

RANGARAJAN R.



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Why in News?

- With a 43.3% vote share, the ruling NDA earned 293 seats, while the opposition alliance INDIA secured 234 seats with a 41.6% vote share.
- Despite receiving 15% of the vote overall, other regional parties and independents were able to get only 16 seats.

About Proportional Representation

- Based on their share of the votes, all parties are guaranteed representation under the proportional representation (PR) system.
- The "party list PR" system is the most widely utilized one in which voters cast their ballots for the party rather than specific individuals, and the parties are then awarded seats based on the percentage of the vote they received.

First Past the Post System

- India currently uses the First Past the Post (FPTP) system, where the candidate with the most votes in a constituency wins.
- The FPTP system is simple and provides stability to the executive, but it can lead to unrepresentative governments.



5. Operation Bluestar

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Internal security

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

40th anniversary of 'Operation Bluestar': Pro-Khalistan slogans raised at Golden Temple in Amritsar

Activists of radical Sikh outfit Dal Khalsa, Sikh hardliners led by radical Sikh leader and president of Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) Simranjit Singh Mann raised slogans of 'Khalistan Zindabad' during the congregation of devotees

Published - June 06, 2024 08:58 pm IST - CHANGGARH



VIKAS VASUDEVA



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- Slogans favouring Khalistan (sovereign state for Sikhs) were raised recently in the premises of the Golden Temple complex in Punjab's Amritsar during the 40th anniversary of 'Operation Bluestar'.



About Operation Bluestar:

- Prime Minister Indira Gandhi launched an Indian military operation in June 1984 to drive away a group of violent Sikh separatists who had taken over the Sikhs' holiest place, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab.
- The group's leader was Sikh fundamentalist Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a prominent member of the then-emerging separatist Khalistan movement and the

former head of the Sikh school Damdami Taksal.

- The goal of the military operation was to minimize deaths among civilians while regaining control of the complex.
- The procedure took place between June 1 and 3, 1984. On June 1, 1984, Indian Army forces were stationed around the Golden Temple complex, signaling the start of the operation. As Bhindranwale and his supporters strongly resisted the army's advance, gunfights broke out.

6. Agnipath Scheme

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Government Policies & Interventions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Explained: What is the Agnipath scheme and the opposition to it?

The JD(U), whose support will be pivotal for the BJP to form the government, has called for a review of the contentious scheme for military recruitment. Here is why Agnipath has faced stiff opposition from the very beginning.

Written by **Amrita Nayak Dutta**
New Delhi | Updated: June 10, 2024 06:01 IST

NewsGuard

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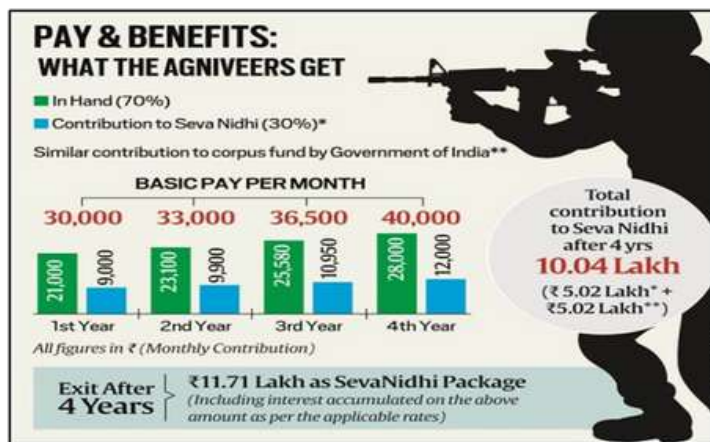
- Political parties and veterans of the armed forces have opposed the Agnipath project since its announcement in June 2022.

Agnipath scheme

- It is a central government scheme launched in 2022 for recruitment to the armed forces.
- It is a recruitment process for individuals below the rank of officer, with the goal of deploying fitter, younger troops on the front lines, many of whom will be on four-year contracts.
- The armed forces would also have the option to retain some of the best 'Agniveers.'

Eligibility

- Candidates between the age of 17.5 years to 21 years will be eligible for enrolling in the Agnipath scheme.
- Girls under the given age limit are open for the agnipath entry, while there is no such reservation for women under this scheme.
- The recruitment standards will remain the same, and recruitment will be done twice a year through rallies.



Pay & Benefits of Agniveers

- If they die on duty, their family receives a lump sum of Rs 1 crore (including the Seva Nidhi package, and full pay for the period the soldier could not serve).
- In case of disability, an Agniveer can receive up to Rs 44 lakh as compensation, depending on the percentage of disability attributed to, or aggravated by military service.

Agnipathis different from regular military service

- Unlike soldiers in regular service, Agniveers do not draw pensions post-retirement.
- Only 25% of Agniveers who are absorbed into the forces after four years will receive pension benefits, excluding their initial four years of service.
- This scheme aims to reduce the Armed Forces' permanent force levels and significantly cut the defense pension bill, a longstanding concern for governments.

Agniveers recruited so far

- In the Army, two batches of 40,000 Agniveers have completed training and are under posting.
- The third batch of 20,000 began training in November 2023.

7. International Organization of Migration (IOM)

Paper: GS-II

Topics: International Relations

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

At least 49 migrants dead, 140 missing off Yemen coast

The boat capsized on June 10 near Alghareef Point in Yemen's Shabwah governorate

Published - June 12, 2024 01:01 am IST - GENEVA

REUTERS



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At least 49 migrants died and 140 others were missing after their boat capsized off the coast of Yemen, the U.N. migration agency said on June 11.

The vessel, which departed from Somalia and was carrying 260 migrants, among them Somalis and Ethiopians, the International Organization of Migration (IOM) statement said. Earlier, a Yemeni official had given a toll of at least 38 dead.

The U.N. migration agency reported on June 11 that after their boat overturned off the coast of Yemen, at least 49 migrants had died and 140 others were reported missing.

The International Organization of Migration (IOM): An Overview

- The IOM is an intergovernmental organization that offers governments and migrants—including internally displaced people, refugees, and migrant workers—services and migration advice.
- Establishment: In 1951, IOM was founded.
- Head office: Switzerland's Geneva.
- Member nations: Eight states are observers and 175 states are members of IOM.
- Mission: To assist governments and migrants in achieving compassionate and orderly migration by offering services and guidance for the good of all.

Publications: Annual Report on Migration Health; World Migration Report.



8. 2025 to be International Year of Quantum Science and Tech

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Important International Institutions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

2025 to be International Year of Quantum Science and Tech, UN says

Next year will be a century since Werner Heisenberg published a paper in which he laid the foundation of modern quantum mechanics

Updated - June 11, 2024 04:53 pm IST Published - June 11, 2024 04:52 pm IST

THE HINDU BUREAU



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- The "International Year of Quantum Science and Technology" will take place in 2025, according to the UN. It stated that activities at all levels will be held to commemorate the global year-long campaign, which aims to raise public awareness of the significance of quantum physics and its applications.

Quantum Science and Technology:

- This multidisciplinary area integrates real-world applications with the fundamentals of quantum physics.
- The area of physics known as quantum mechanics examines how atoms and subatomic particles behave.
- The goal of quantum science and technology is to use these ideas to create new technologies and enhance ones that already exist.

Important Ideas:

- Superposition:** Until they are measured, particles can exist in several states simultaneously.
- Entanglement:** Regardless of distance, particles can be linked together in such a way that changes in one instantly affect changes in another.
- Quantum computing makes use of quantum bits, or qubits, which can do several calculations at once while they are in a superposition.

9. World Blood Donor Day

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Health

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

About the Scheme:

- Every year, **World Blood Donor Day is observed on June 14**. Every time you donate blood it saves lives.
- According to statistics, every two seconds, someone across the world requires a blood transfusion. However, earlier this year, the Red Cross announced that it was facing an emergency blood shortage as it experienced the lowest number of people giving blood in the last two decades.

World Blood Donor Day:

World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) is held on June 14 each year.

- The event was organised for the first time in 2004, by four core international organizations: the World Health Organization, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations (IFBDO) and the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products,
- World Blood Donor Day is one of 11 official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO), along with World Health Day, World Chagas Disease Day, World Tuberculosis Day, World Immunization Week, World Patient Safety Day, World Malaria Day, World No Tobacco Day, World Hepatitis Day, World Antimicrobial Awareness Week and World AIDS Day.



10. Mercy Petition and Powers of President

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Hindustan Times

Red Fort attack: President rejects mercy plea of Pakistani man

Story by Bharti Jain • 1d • 3 min read



Why in the news:

President Droupadi Murmu has rejected a mercy petition filed by Pakistani national Mohammed Arif who was sentenced to death for the December 22, 2000 terrorist attack at the Red Fort in which three people including two Army jawans were killed.

What are the President's Powers and What is a Mercy Petition?

- As per the Constitutional framework in India, mercy petition to the President is the last constitutional resort a convict can take when he is sentenced by the court of law. A convict can present a mercy petition to the President of India under Article 72 of the Constitution of India.
- The President of India may, by Article 72 of the Indian Constitution, pardon, reprieve, respite, or remit punishment.
- To commute, remit, or suspend the punishment of any individual guilty of a capital offense.
- Similarly, the governor is granted pardoning powers under Article 161, but these do not apply to death sentences.
- The Supreme Court ruled in Maru Ram v. Union of India (1981) that the President must follow the Council of Ministers' recommendation while making decisions regarding mercy petitions under Article 72.



11. Gender Gap Report 2024

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Issues Related to Women

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Down to Earth

- India dropped two spots to 129th place on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap index, while Iceland remained at the top of the list, according to its findings released on Wednesday. After Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan, India was placed fifth in South Asia, while Pakistan came in last.

Concerning Report

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2024, which emphasizes the ongoing gender imbalance that exists around the world in a number of areas.

Results

- Top-Ranking Countries: With a gender gap score of 91.2%, Iceland has remained the most gender-equal nation for the 14th year running.
- In the top five, other Nordic nations including Sweden, Finland, and Norway are also highly ranked.
- India had a slightly lower score of 129 in this year's ranking compared to the previous one.
- Economic Participation and Opportunity had a tiny improvement, while "Educational Attainment" and "Political Empowerment" saw minor reductions that account for the majority of this regression.

Southern Asia

Economy	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	99	0.689
Nepal	2	117	0.664
Sri Lanka	3	122	0.653
Bhutan	4	124	0.651
India	5	129	0.641
Maldives	6	132	0.633
Pakistan	7	145	0.570



12. POCSO

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Issues Related to Children

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

State grappling with backlog of POCSO cases

Total number of pending cases across 20 judicial districts in Assam exceeds 5,500

SANJOY RAY

GUWAHATI, June 11: Courts in Assam are grappling with a burgeoning backlog of cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, leaving victims and their families in a prolonged state of despair and uncertainty. Recent reports accessed from judicial authorities point a troubling picture, with several thousand POCSO cases remain unresolved.

As of October 2023, data accessed by *The Assam Tribune* indicates that the total number of pending POCSO cases across 20 judicial districts in Assam exceeds 5,500. Alarming, this figure continues to swell daily.

The comparison with 2019 highlights a stark increase, with pending cases skyrocketing by nearly 200 per

cent by 2024. This dramatic rise underscores what many perceive as a systemic failure to effectively address the growing backlog.

Morigaon and Nagaon districts are among the hardest hit, with over 740 and 700 pending cases, respectively. Other districts facing significant back-

logs include Dibrugarh (over 400 cases), Bongaigaon (470 cases), and Tinsukia (370 cases). Barpeta and Dhemaji each have over 300 cases awaiting resolution. In contrast, Dima Hasao has the lowest number of pending cases, with approximately 64 cases pending as on date.



Experts attribute this backlog to several factors, including inadequate infrastructure, procedural delays, witnesses turning hostile and poor investigations.

"The delay in adjudicating these cases can have severe psychological and emotional repercussions on the victims, often exacerbating their trauma," said social activist Rishi Kant.

"The prolonged legal process undermines public trust in the justice system, raising questions about its ability to swiftly address crimes against children. It is high time for all stakeholders to act in a time-bound manner. It is very important to ensure victims get access of support person as per the direction of the Supreme Court," he stated.

SEE PAGE 11

Why in the news:

- POCSO Act came into effect on 14th November 2012 which was enacted in consequence to India's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992.
- This special law aims to address offenses of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, which were either not specifically defined or adequately penalised.
- The Act defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years. The Act provides punishment as per the gravity of the offence.
- The Act was further reviewed and amended in 2019 to Introduce more stringent punishment including the death penalty for Committing sexual crimes on children, to deter the perpetrators & prevent such crimes against children.
- The Government of India has also notified the POCSO Rules, 2020.



Why in the news:

- The issue of pending POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) cases in Assam is in the news due to a significant increase in the number of these cases awaiting resolution. According to data accessed by *The Assam Tribune*, as of October 2023, there are over 5,500 pending POCSO cases across 20 judicial districts in Assam. This number represents a nearly 200 percent increase in pending cases since 2019, highlighting a dramatic rise over a five-year period.

13. Upendra Dwivedi as next Chief of Army Staff

Paper: GS-II, GS-III

Topics: Governance, Internal security

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Centre appoints Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi as next Chief of Army Staff after Manoj Pande

ET Online • Last Updated: Jun 11, 2024, 11:48:00 PM IST

Synopsis

As Manoj Pande's tenure nears its conclusion, the Centre has announced the appointment of Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi, PVSM, AVSM, currently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, as the next Chief of the Army Staff effective from the afternoon of June 30, 2024. According to the official statement, Lt Gen Dwivedi's distinguished career includes commanding roles in various capacities, such as Command of Regiment (18 Jammu & Kashmir Rifles), Brigade (26 Sector Assam Rifles), DIG of Assam Rifles (East), and 9 Corps. Additionally, he has been honored with the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM), and has received three GOC-in-C Commendation Cards.



Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi to be new Indian Army chief, set to take charge from June 30

As term of **Manoj Pande** nears end, the Centre has appointed Lt Gen **Upendra Dwivedi**, presently serving as Vice Chief, as the next Chief of the Army Staff with effect from the afternoon of June 30, 2024.

Videos



and the Chief of the Air Staff - all three positions of which are also occupied by four-star officers from the armed forces.



14. Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Internal security

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Uniform Civil Code is part of government's agenda, says Union Law Minister Meghwal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Tuesday said the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) was part of the Narendra Modi government's agenda.

Assuming charge at the Law Ministry, which he held in the earlier government as well, Mr. Meghwal rejected the allegation that there was conflict between the executive and the judiciary, and expressed hope that a solution would be found on the issue of the Memorandum of Proce-



Arjun Ram Meghwal.

er of High Court and Supreme Court judges, which is yet to be finalised because of differences between the executive and the judiciary.

"I believe that we will

Justice.

Responding to a question on the implementation of the UCC, he said that it was part of the government's agenda.

On the issue of "One Nation, One Election", Mr. Meghwal said the committee under former President Ram Nath Kovind had submitted its report, and the Law Commission was also working on the subject.

Mr. Meghwal also signed the national litigation policy document soon after taking charge. The policy document, part of the 100-day agenda of the new Narendra Modi government,

key priority of his Ministry would be faster justice in matters pending in the Supreme Court, High Courts, lower courts, tribunals, and consumer courts.

The national litigation policy has been drafted and redrafted over several years by successive governments, and aims to lay down principles for responsible litigation. A national litigation policy has been a part of the BJP's manifesto since 2014.

"There is a factor of ease of living in all the stakeholders related to litigation... All stakeholders, including litigants, advocates and

The Chief of the Army Staff:

- The Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) is a statutory office held by the professional
- Customarily held by a four-star general officer, the COAS is the senior-most operational officer of the IA,
- Tasked with the roles of overseeing the overall functioning of the force during peace and wartime, committing to the preparation-cum-maintenance of the force's operational effectiveness, and defending the nation's territorial integrity-cum-sovereignty.
- Also a permanent member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) and the National Security Council (NSC), the COAS bears the responsibility of advising the nation's civilian leadership i.e., the Government of India on all matters privy to the IA.
- Statutorily, the COAS ranks 12th overall in the Indian order of precedence and is the IA's status equivalent of the Chief of Defense Staff, the Chief of the Naval Staff

- Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Tuesday said the implementation of the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** was part of the Narendra Modi government's agenda.

What the Uniform Civil Code mean?

- A common law that governs all religious communities in private affairs, such as marriage, inheritance, divorce, adoption, and so on, is known as a Uniform Civil Code (UCC). It seeks to supersede the various personal laws that various religious communities now use to regulate private concerns.
- A UCC seeks to abolish inconsistent legal systems based on various religions and cultures to advance social harmony, gender equality, and secularism. The goal of such a code is to guarantee legal consistency both inside and between communities.

Constitutional Provisions:

- The Directive Principle of State Policies mentioned in *Article 44 of the Indian Constitution* provides that The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India. However, being a Directive Principle, it is not justiciable.

**1. Goa has a common civil code called Portuguese civil code 1867, whereby:**

- A Muslim man whose marriage is registered in the State cannot practice polygamy.
- A married couple share property equally, pre-nuptial agreements are the order of the day and assets are divided equally between the man and woman on divorce

2. The Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, implemented in Uttarakhand, applies to all individuals residing in the state except for members of scheduled tribes. Here is a breakdown of its key provisions:

Marriage and Divorce:

- **Minimum Marriageable Age:** Sets a common minimum marriageable age for all genders (18 years for women and 21 years for man), aligning with existing national legislation.
- **Registration of Marriages:** Mandates compulsory registration of all marriages with designated authorities to ensure legal recognition and transparency.
- **Grounds for Divorce:** Outlines specific grounds for obtaining divorce applicable to all communities, addressing issues like cruelty, adultery, desertion, and mental illness.
- **Alimony and Maintenance:** Provides provisions for spousal and child maintenance after divorce, ensuring financial support and upholding the welfare of dependents.



15. Narendra Modi Takes Oath for Third Term

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

72-member NDA Ministry takes charge

61 Ministers are from the BJP and 11 are from its alliance partners in the NDA | 27 Ministers are from OBCs, 10 from SCs; five each from STs, minority communities | 24 States get representation; 43 Ministers are third-term MPs, five are former CMs

**The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI**

Narendra Modi took the oath of office as Prime Minister for a third successive term on Sunday, along with 71 other members of his Council of Ministers, at a ceremony held at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.



Begin again: President Droupadi Murmu with the newly sworn in Ministers at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. (A) (AP) (AP)

The new Ministry comprises 30 Cabinet Ministers, five Ministers of State with Independent Charge and 36 Ministers of State. The team appears to be a mix of old and new. Sixty-one Ministers are from the BJP and 11 from its partners in the National Democratic Alliance.

Five leaders of the allies – former Karnataka Chief Minister and Janata Dal(S) leader H.D. Kumar Gowda, former Bihar Chief Minister and Hindustan Awam Morcha leader Jitan Ram Manjhi, Lok Janshakti Party leader Chirag Paswan, Ram Mohan Naidu of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), and Rajeev Ranjan Singh “Lalan” of the Janata Dal (U) – have been given Cabinet berths.

Jayant Chaudhary of the Rashtriya Lok Dal and Pratap Rao Jadhav of the Shiv Sena (Shinde) faction have been appointed Ministers of State (Independent Charge). Anupriya Patel of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Ram Nath Thakur of the Janata Dal (U) Chandrababhan Narmada of the TDP and Ram Das Athavale of the Republican Party of India, have been made Ministers of State. The All India Backward Classes (ABC),

including Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, Girraj Singh and Kiren Rijja. The NDA government appears to be aiming at emphasising continuity and experience, with 43 Ministers being third-term MPs, and 29 having been Union Ministers before.

Former Chief Ministers too found a good representation with Shriyaji Singh Chaudhan from Madhya Pradesh, Manohar Lal Khattar from Haryana and Sarbananda Sonowal from Assam, apart from Mr. Mahi and Mr. Kumaraswamy, being sworn in.

Community representation and the upcoming Assembly polls in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Karnataka were also kept in mind.

Veterans return
At least 10 Ministers who have been in the government for the past 10 years have made a repeat entry into the government, including Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, Girraj Singh and Kiren Rijja.

At least 10 Ministers who have been in the government for the past 10 years have made a repeat entry into the government, including Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, Girraj Singh and Kiren Rijja.

Continued on
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- In such cases, the President usually chooses the leader of the largest party or coalition in the Lok Sabha as Prime Minister and requests that they obtain a vote of confidence from the House within a month.

Article 075 (Other provisions as to Ministers)

75. Other provisions as to Ministers.

(1) The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister.

(1A) The total number of Ministers, including the Prime Minister, in the Council of Ministers shall not exceed fifteen per cent. of the total number of members of the House of the People.

(1)(1B) A member of either House of Parliament belonging to any political party who is disqualified for being a member of that House under paragraph 2 of the Tenth Schedule shall also be disqualified to be appointed as a Minister under clause (1) for duration of the period commencing from the date of his disqualification till the date on which the term of his office as such member would expire or where he contests any election to either House of Parliament before the expiry of such period, till the date on which he is declared elected, whichever is earlier.

Oath, Term, and Salary:

- Oath:** Before assuming the office of the Prime Minister, the President administers oaths of office and secrecy to the Prime Minister-Elect. As part of the oath of office, the Prime Minister takes an oath to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India, to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India, to faithfully and conscientiously discharge the duties of his office, and to do right to all manner of people by the Constitution and the law, without fear or favor, affection or ill will.
- Term:** The duration of the Prime Minister's term is not fixed, and they hold the position at the pleasure of the President. However, this does not mean the President can remove the Prime Minister at any time.
- As long as the Prime Minister maintains majority support in the Lok Sabha, He/She cannot be dismissed by the President. But, if he/she loses the confidence of the Lok Sabha, he/she must resign, or the President may dismiss him/her.
- Salary:** The Prime Minister's salary and benefits are periodically set by the Parliament and include the compensation and perks given to a member of Parliament, as well as additional perks such as a sumptuary allowance, free housing, travel allowances, and access to medical facilities.



Appointment of the Prime Minister:

The Constitution does not specify a particular process for selecting and appointing a Prime Minister.

- According to Article 75, the Prime Minister is appointed by the President. However, this does not mean the President can choose any person as Prime Minister.
- In line with the conventions of a parliamentary government system, the President typically appoints the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha as Prime Minister.
- When no party holds a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the President may use their discretion in selecting and appointing the Prime Minister.

16. UN High Sea Treaty

Paper: GS-II

Topics: International Treaties & Agreements

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

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

8 March 2023

By Esme Stallard, Climate and Science Reporter, BBC News

Shu



- On the occasion of World Oceans Day in 2024 (8 June), Grethel Aguilar, the director general of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), called on all nations "to strive for a fully functional High Seas Biodiversity Treaty."

About UN High Sea Treaty:

- Another name for it is the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement (BBNJ). The United Nations ratified this historic, legally binding agreement in June 2023.
- Nearly two thirds of the world's seas are covered by areas outside national authority, where the pact seeks to preserve and sustainably exploit marine species.
- The parts of the world's oceans that are not under national authority are known as the high seas.
- They make up a sizable portion of the oceans worldwide and are the habitat of a diverse range of wildlife. In spite of this, fewer than 2% of the world's high seas are legally protected.

- Only seven nations have accepted the agreement thus far: Belize, Chile, Mauritius, Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Palau, and the Seychelles.



17. Biopharmaceutical Alliance

Paper: GS-II

Topics: International Relations

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

India, S. Korea, US, Japan, EU launch Biopharmaceutical Alliance

The Biopharmaceutical Alliance was launched in response to the drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Updated - June 06, 2024 03:57 pm IST Published - June 06, 2024 03:51 pm IST - Singapore

PTI



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- The largest biopharmaceutical exhibition in the world, the Bio International Convention 2024, took place in San Diego recently, marking the launch of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance.

The Biopharmaceutical Alliance: An Overview:

- India, South Korea, Japan, the United States of America (USA), and the European Union have allied to work together to create a robust supply chain in the biopharmaceutical industry.
- The delegates agreed to synchronize the policies, regulations, and research and development assistance measures of their various countries and emphasized the significance of a dependable and sustainable supply chain.
- They concurred to collaborate in creating an intricate map of the pharmaceutical supply chain after realizing that the manufacturing of necessary chemicals and raw materials is concentrated in a small number of nations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic-related difficulties in the medicine supply prompted the formation of the alliance.

18. Sittwe Port

Paper: GS-II

Topics: IR

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

Myanmar junta orders evacuations around embattled State capital. *Sittwe City* is one of the few holdouts for junta troops in western Rakhine State.

The Sittwe Port, located in the Rakhine State of Myanmar, is a crucial component of the Kaladan multi-modal transit transport project.

- The deep-water port offers a significant connectivity advantage for cargo to reach from Vizag and Kolkata to the Northeastern states, bypassing Bangladesh.
- It will also reduce dependency on the Siliguri Corridor (or the chicken's neck) squeezed between Bhutan and Bangladesh.
- India's operational control over these 2 overseas ports, Chabahar and Sittwe, will strengthen India's maritime influence to counter China's String of Pearls policy with ports like Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Djibouti in Africa, etc.

Myanmar's junta orders evacuations around Sittwe

Agence France-Presse
YANGON



19. The Central Information Commission (CIC)

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Hindu

Why in the news:

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has upheld the Rashtrapati Bhavan's response to a **Right to Information (RTI) Act** query concerning former President Ram Nath Kovind's decisions during his tenure. The inquiry, initiated by Yuvan Mitran, a college student from Chennai, sought to determine if President Kovind had ever returned any decisions made by the Prime Minister or Union Council of Ministers for reconsideration.

CIC upholds response to RTI query on Presidential assent

In reply to an application asking how many times former President Kovind returned a decision taken by the PM or Council of Ministers, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said there was 'no data' available.

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has upheld the Rashtrapati Bhavan's response to a Right to Information (RTI) Act query on the number of times former President Ram Nath Kovind returned any decision taken by the Prime Minister/Union



Right information: The petitioner moved the CIC challenging the response of the Rashtrapati Bhavan. FILE PHOTO

Public Information Officer Deputy Secretary, Rashtrapati Bhavan, was that the appellant was already informed that "no such information is available".

'No records'

After hearing both sides the Chief Information Commissioner Heeralal Samariya said that appropriate response as per the provisions of the RTI Act

Central Information Commission (CIC)

- **Establishment:** The CIC was established by the Central Government in 2005, under the provisions of the Right to Information Act (2005). It is not a constitutional body.
- **Members:** It consists of a Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten Information Commissioners.
- **Appointment:** They are appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of the Prime Minister as Chairperson, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
- **Jurisdiction:** The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all Central Public Authorities.

- **Tenure:** The Chief Information Commissioner and an Information Commissioner shall hold office for such term as prescribed by the Central Government or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- They are not eligible for reappointment.



20. Lipulekh pass

Paper: GS-II

Topics: IR

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Hindustan Times

Indian traders demand resumption of border trade with China through Lipulekh pass

PTI - Last Updated: Jun 10, 2024, 03:12:00 PM IST

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Synopsis

Indian traders have been engaging in border trade with China through the Lipulekh pass in Pithoragarh district since 1992. They are now urging the central government to address the closure of the trade route due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019. The traders are concerned about their stored goods in Tibet and seek the resumption of trade.



Indian traders involved in border trade with China through the Lipulekh pass in Pithoragarh district since 1992, have requested the central government to take up the issue of resumption of border trade through this route with Beijing. The trade route

Videos

The central government has been asked to address the matter of resuming border trade via the **Lipulekh pass** by Indian traders who are active in border trade with China.

Regarding Lipulekh Pass

- It is a high-altitude mountain pass close to the intersection of China, India, and Nepal in the Kumaon area of Uttarakhand.
- It connects the Chinese region of Tibet with the Indian state of Uttarakhand.



- It is situated at a height of roughly 17,500 feet, or 5,334 meters.
- The pass is well known for its difficult topography, which consists of rocky terrain and steep ascents.
- It serves as a doorway to the upper Himalayas due to its strategic location and elevation.
- Ancient Trade Path: This path has been used for generations to carry goods between the Tibetan plateau and the Indian subcontinent.
- Religious Significance: The pass is also religiously significant because it is a crucial component of the Hindu pilgrimage known as the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

21. GREAT Scheme

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Government Policies & Interventions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: PIB

- Recently, the Empowered Programme Committee (EPC) of National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) has approved 7 startup proposals under the GREAT scheme.

Regarding the GREAT Scheme:

- To make India self-sufficient, the Grant for Research and Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT) promotes young scientists, technicians, and entrepreneurs working in technical textiles to convert their ideas into marketable technologies or products.
- It helps lone proprietors or fledgling companies with their functional prototypes or technology commercialization for technical textiles.
- **Funding: For a maximum of 18 months, a grant-in-aid of up to Rs 50 lakh would be given.**
- Important information regarding the National Technical Textiles Mission
- It was introduced to take advantage of the remarkable growth rate of the technical textile industry and raise the penetration level of technical textiles in India.
- According to the goal, India aspires to become a global leader in technical textiles.



Ministry of Textiles

Ministry of Textiles approved Startups in Technical Textiles to boost innovation:
Textiles Secretary

Strategic Funding under NTTM to promote High Performance Textiles Solutions

IIT Guwahati to introduce Geotextiles in Civil Engineering Curriculum with support from NTTM

Posted On: 13 JUN 2024 4:58PM by PIB Delhi

Ministry of Textiles approved Startups in Technical Textiles to boost innovation and sustainability and to foster transformative developments that will shape the industry's future. This was stated by Smt. Rachna Shah, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, while chairing the 7th meeting of the Empowered Programme Committee (EPC) of National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) here today.

22. Pro tem Speaker of Lok Sabha

Paper: GS-II

Topic: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Who is pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab: 7-time Cuttack MP a new BJP entrant

Story by Sujit Bisoyi • 3h • 2 min read

Seven-time Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab of the BJP has been appointed the pro-tem Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha.

"President Droupadi Murmu appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab, Member, Lok Sabha as Speaker Pro-tem under Article 95(1) of the Constitution," an official communication from the Rashtrapati Bhavan said on Thursday. The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will be held between June 24 and July 3, during which the new Speaker will be elected, most likely on June 26.

Bhartruhari Mahtab appointed *pro tem* Speaker of Lok Sabha

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu has appointed Bhartruhari Mahtab, seven-time MP from Cuttack, the *pro tem* Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Thursday.

But Opposition leaders questioned the Narendra Modi government for ignoring the convention of giving the honour to the senior-most member and eight-term MP Kodikunnil Suresh of the Congress.

"President is pleased to appoint Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, Member, Lok Sabha as Speaker Protem under Article 95(1) of the Constitution to perform the duties of Speaker till election of the Speaker," Mr. Rijiju said in a post on X.

The newly elected members of the 18th Lok Sabha will make oath or affirma-



Bhartruhari Mahtab

that by convention, the MP who had served the highest number of terms was appointed *pro tem* Speaker for the first two days when oath is administered to all newly elected MPs.

'A mistake'

"The senior-most MPs in the 18th Lok Sabha are Kodikunnil Suresh (Congress) and Virendra Kumar (BJP), both of whom are now serving their eighth term. The latter is now a Union Minister and hence it was expected that Kodikunnil

- Seven-term parliamentarian **Bhartruhari Mahtab** was on June 20 appointed **pro tem Speaker** of the Lok Sabha, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said.

Why in the news:

- President under Article 95(1) of the Constitution to perform the duties of the Lok Sabha presiding officer till the election of the Speaker.
- The Pro Tem Speaker is a temporary speaker appointed for a limited period of time.
- The need for a pro-tem speaker: The speaker of the Lok Sabha/legislative assembly vacates the office immediately before the first meeting of the newly elected house.
- The president/governor appoints the pro-tem speaker to preside over the sittings of the newly elected house. Usually, the senior most member of the house is made the pro-tem speaker.

Duties of pro tem speaker:

- The Pro-tem Speaker presides over the first sitting of the Lok Sabha, administers the oath of office to the newly elected MPs.
- To conduct the vote for the speaker and deputy speaker.
- On the election of new Speaker, the office of the pro tem speaker ceases to exist.
- He also administers the floor test.



(Veteran parliamentarian Bhartruhari Mahtab named *pro tem* Speaker for Lok Sabha's 18th session)

Source: Google images

23. National Testing Agency

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Education

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu



UGC-NET cancelled over 'irregularity'; CBI probe ordered

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Education Ministry late on Wednesday announced the cancellation of the UGC-NET held on Tuesday, after inputs from the Ministry of Home Affairs suggested that the "integrity of the exam had been compromised". The CBI would probe the issue, it said. The University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test is conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical and allied courses. The UGC-NET is conducted twice a year to determine the eligibility of candidates for the positions of Assistant Professor, Junior Research Fellowship-Assistant Professor and for Ph.D. admissions. The Ministry of Education said on social media platform X, "Government is committed to ensure the sanctity of examinations and protect the interest of

Explained: What is NEET UG result 2024 controversy? Why are students protesting?

By HT News Desk

Jun 13, 2024 01:14 PM IST

The Centre proposed that it will conduct a retest for 1,563 students on June 23, who were given grace marks in the NEET-UG 2024 exam.



Why in the news:

- The Education Ministry late on Wednesday announced the cancellation of the UGC-NET held on Tuesday after inputs from the Ministry of Home Affairs suggested that the "integrity of the exam had been compromised".

The National Testing Agency (NTA):

The National Testing Agency (NTA) is an autonomous agency under the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education of India. It was established in November 2017 to conduct entrance examination admissions and recruitment. The NTA is responsible for performing numerous national-level exams for admission and fellowship in higher educational institutions related to engineering, medicine, management, and pharmacy

- The National Testing Agency (NTA) was established as a Society registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- It is an autonomous and self-sustained testing organization that conducts entrance examinations for admission/fellowship in higher educational institutions.

Objectives:

- To conduct efficient, transparent and international standards tests in order to assess the competency of candidates for admission and recruitment purposes.



24. India-Bangladesh Cooperation: A Futuristic Vision

Paper: GS-II

Topics: IR

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

Why in the news:

India, B'desh firm up futuristic vision to boost cooperation

10 agreements signed in several key sectors

NEW DELHI, June 22: India and Bangladesh on Saturday firmed up a futuristic vision to shore up cooperation in several new areas and signed 10 agreements to boost ties in several key sectors including in maritime sphere and blue economy.

The pacts were finalised at the wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his visiting Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina.

The documents finalised included a shared vision for India-Bangladesh 'digital partnership', one on 'green partnership' and another on cooperation in the space sector. Two other significant pacts firmed up by the two sides were a memorandum of un-

derstanding on maritime cooperation and blue economy and an agreement to facilitate railway connectivity. The other agreements were in the areas of oceanography, health and medicine, disaster management and fisheries.

"Today we have prepared a futuristic vision for cooperation in new areas. The youth of both countries will benefit from the consensus reached on cooperation in areas such as green partnership, digital partnership, blue economy and space," Modi said in his statement to the media.

In her remarks, Hasina described India as Bangladesh's major neighbour and a trusted friend. "India is our major neighbour, trusted friend, and regional partner. Bangladesh

greatly values our relations with India, which were born out of the War of Liberation in 1971. I recall with gratitude the contribution of the government and the people of India to Bangladesh's independence," she said. Hasina also paid homage to the "brave fallen heroes of India" who sacrificed their lives in the 1971 war.

"Today, we discussed cooperation in areas of security, trade, connectivity, sharing of water, power and energy, and regional and multi-lateral cooperation. We agreed to collaborate with each other for the betterment of our people and countries," she added.

- On Saturday, India and Bangladesh solidified their commitment to enhance cooperation across multiple sectors through wide-ranging talks between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. This meeting resulted in the signing of 10 agreements aimed at boosting bilateral ties, particularly in the maritime sphere and blue economy.

Key Agreements:**Digital Partnership:**

- A shared vision for India-Bangladesh digital partnership was established to leverage technology for mutual benefit.

Green Partnership:

- An agreement was signed to promote sustainable development through initiatives focused on the green economy.

Space Sector Cooperation:

- Both countries agreed to collaborate in the space sector, potentially enhancing satellite communication and space research.

Maritime Cooperation and Blue Economy:

- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed to enhance maritime cooperation and the development of the blue economy, which involves the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth.

Railway Connectivity:

An agreement was reached to facilitate better railway connectivity, which will improve trade and travel between the two nations.

Oceanography, Health, and Medicine:

Agreements were also signed in the fields of oceanography, health, and medicine to foster research and improve healthcare systems.

Disaster Management and Fisheries:

Both countries agreed to cooperate in disaster management and fisheries, enhancing their capabilities to manage natural disasters and sustain fishery resources



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina during her ceremonial reception, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Saturday. – PTI

25. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024**Paper: GS-II****Topic: Issues Arising Out of Design & Implementation of Policies****Importance for: Mains/Pre****Source: Times of India****Why in the news:**

Decoded: Centre's anti paper leak law which came into effect amidst NEET and NET scam; check offences and punishments

TOI Education / Jun 24, 2024, 11:22 IST

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The UGC NET paper leak and NEET UG scam have raised concerns about compromised exam integrity. In response, the Centre has enacted the Public Examinations Bill 2024, an anti-paper leak law designed to address these ... [Read More](#)

- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, effective from June 21, establishes stiff penalties for those involved in exam irregularities. It aims to prevent unfair means in public examinations.

Key Provisions of the Bill?**Defines Public Examination:**

- Under Section 2(k), a Public Examination is defined as any examination conducted by a “public examination authority” listed in the Schedule of the Bill, or any such other authority as may be notified by the Central Government.
- The schedule lists five public examination authorities, Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), the National Testing Agency (NTA).
- NTA conducts the JEE (Main), NEET-UG, UGC-NET, the Common University Entrance Test (CUET)
- Apart from these designated public examination authorities, all “Ministries or Departments of the Central Government and their attached and subordinate offices for recruitment of staff” will also come under the purview of the new law.
- The central government can add new authorities to the schedule through a notification as and when required.

Punishments:

Section 9 of the Bill states that all offenses shall be cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable.

- In cognizable offenses, the police has a duty to investigate the case without seeking permission from the Magistrate.
- A non-compoundable offense is one in which the case cannot be withdrawn by the complainant even when the complainant and the accused have reached a compromise, and a trial must necessarily follow.
- It means that an arrest can be made **without a warrant and bail will not be a matter of right**; rather, a magistrate will determine whether the accused is fit to be released on bail.
- **Punishment for “any person or persons resorting to unfair means and offences” can be three to five years in prison, and a fine up to Rs 10 lakh.**
- If the convict fails to pay the fine, “an additional punishment of imprisonment shall be imposed, as per the provisions of the **Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023.**”



26. Assam Police to Host All India Police Sports-Judo Cluster 2024

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Govt. Polices and Intervention

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Sentinel

Why in the news:

- The Assam Police will host the 9th All India Police Sports Judo Cluster 2024 in Guwahati from June 24th to June 30th. This prestigious event, organized under the aegis of the All India Police Sports Board, will feature 40 teams from State Police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) across India, competing in various martial arts disciplines.



The Sentinel
of this land, for its people

Assam Police to host All India Police Sports-Judo Cluster 2024

GUWAHATI, June 23: The prestigious All India Police Sports Judo Cluster 2024 is being held in Guwahati. Assam Police, the host proudly announced the commencement of

martial arts disciplines.

The opening ceremony will kick off at 4:30 p.m. on June 24th at Karmabeer Nabin Ch. Bordoloi Indoor Stadium, Sarusajai, marking the start of an

event. Karmabeer Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Indoor Stadium in Sarusajai, which will host Taekwondo, Wushu, and Karate. Bhogeswari Phukanoni Indoor Stadium, Dispur, will host

Key Details:

Participants:

- Teams: 40 teams from various State Police and CAPFs.
- Participants: Over 1,500 athletes from across India.
- The Judo Cluster will showcase five key martial arts disciplines:
- Wushu, Taekwondo, Judo, Karate, Pencak Silat

Significance:

- Promoting Martial Arts: The event promotes martial arts within police forces, encouraging physical fitness, discipline, and skill development.
- Fostering Sportsmanship: With over 1,500 participants, the event embodies the true essence of sportsmanship and camaraderie among the police forces.
- Cultural Exchange: Bringing together teams from across India facilitates cultural exchange and strengthens bonds between various police and armed forces units.

Punishments:

Section 9 of the Bill states that all offenses shall be cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable.

- In cognizable offenses, the police has a duty to investigate the case without seeking permission from the Magistrate.
- A non-compoundable offense is one in which the case cannot be withdrawn by the complainant even when the complainant and the accused have reached a compromise, and a trial must necessarily follow.
- It means that an arrest can be made **without a warrant and bail will not be a matter of right**; rather, a magistrate will determine whether the accused is fit to be released on bail.
- **Punishment for “any person or persons resorting to unfair means and offences” can be three to five years in prison, and a fine up to Rs 10 lakh.**
- If the convict fails to pay the fine, “an additional punishment of imprisonment shall be imposed, as per the provisions of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**.”



27. International Sugar Organisation

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Govt Policies and Interventions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Print

Why in the news:

- The International Sugar Organization (ISO) Council Meeting, a global event in the sugar business, will be hosted by India in New Delhi from June 25–27, 2024. \

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi calls for global collaboration at ISO Council meeting on sugar and biofuels

ANI | 25 June 2024 03:47 pm IST



Concerning the International Sugar Organization:

- It is an intergovernmental organization whose sole goal is to make the global sugar market better.
- It was founded in 1968 and is a body that is associated with the UN.
- Its membership comprises over 85 nations, accounting for nearly 90% of global sugar production.
- The mission is to unite the world's leading producers, consumers, and traders of sugar in order to foster understanding and a forward-thinking approach to addressing issues related to the sugar industry.
- Additionally, it has been focusing on biofuels, particularly ethanol, as sugarcane is the second-largest global feedstock for ethanol production.

The ISO was established to oversee the globally negotiated 1992

28. National Investigation Agency (NIA)

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Linkages of Organized Crime with Terrorism

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Economic Times

NIA charge-sheets eight people allegedly involved in trafficking Rohingyas, Bangladeshis into India

PTI / Updated: Jun 24, 2024, 22:59 IST

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NEW DELHI: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday charge-sheeted eight people suspected to be a part of a transnational syndicate trafficking Rohingyas and Bangladeshis into India using forged documents. The agency has named Jalil Miah, Hanan Miah, absconder Kajal Sarkar, Adhir Das

- Eight people have been charged by the **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** for their alleged involvement in a transnational network that uses falsified documents to traffic **Rohingyas and Bangladeshis into India**.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is about:

The Central Anti-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency of India is known as NIA.

- Union Ministry of Home Affairs is the parent ministry.
- **Establishment:** The necessity for a centralized organization to fight terrorism became apparent in the wake of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.
- It was founded in accordance with the 2008 National Investigation Agency Act.
- With its main office located in New Delhi, the NIA maintains eighteen branch offices throughout the nation.
- It looks into and prosecutes crimes that impact India's sovereignty and integrity, national security, friendly ties with other nations, and our adherence to international treaties, accords, etc. from the UN and other international organizations.



29. The Indus Water Treaty (IWT)

Paper: GS-II

Topic: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Times of India

Pakistani delegation arrives in Jammu for Indus water treaty talks

TOI News Desk / TIMESOFINDIA.COM / Jun 23, 2024, 22:34 IST

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A Pakistani delegation arrived in Jammu to discuss the 1960 Indus Water Treaty signed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Ayub Khan, aiming to resolve water disputes between India and Pakistan.



Why in the news:

Recent arrivals in Jammu include a delegation from Pakistan attending continuing talks on the 1960 Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

The Indus Water Treaty (IWT):

- The use and distribution of the Indus River system are governed by a treaty that Pakistan and India signed.
- In 1960, former Pakistani President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru signed it.
- The World Bank, a signatory to the convention, mediated the agreement.
- The goal of the agreement was to equally split the water between the two nations from the Indus River and its tributaries, the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum, and Chenab.
- The treaty assigned water rights to India for the three eastern rivers, the Beas, the Ravi, and the Sutlej, and to Pakistan for the three western rivers, the Chenab, the Indus, and the Jhelum.
- Roughly 80% of the water in the Indus drainage system came from Pakistan.



30. New criminal laws

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Constitutional Amendments

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

Why in the news:

As the new criminal laws are set to be implemented from July 1, all 17,500 police stations across the country will hold special events to inform women, youth, students, senior citizens, and eminent personalities about the key features of these laws.

The three Bills are:

- The Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita Bill, 2023, which will replace the IPC, 1860
- The Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita Bill, 2023, which will replace the CrPC, 1898
- The Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023, which will replace the Evidence Act, 1872

Government prepares for rollout of new criminal laws

The Union home ministry is gearing up to roll out the three new criminal laws next week with 40 lakh grassroots functionaries trained to ensure people are aware of the legislations and the impact these will have on everyone, particularly women and children, official sources said Wednesday. Over 5.65 lakh police, prison, forensics, judicial, and prosecution officials have also been trained about the new laws. The BPR&D also conducted 250 training courses and organised webinars and seminars in which 40,317 officers and personnel have been trained.

Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860

TO BE REPLACED BY

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, 2023

- It will have 356 sections (instead of 511 sections in IPC)
- 175 sections have been amended
- 8 sections have been added, and 22 sections have been repealed

Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973

TO BE REPLACED BY

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023

- It will have 533 sections (instead of 478 sections in CrPC)
- 160 sections have been changed
- 9 sections have been added, and 9 sections have been repealed

Indian Evidence Act, 1872

TO BE REPLACED BY

Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023

- It will have 170 sections (instead of 167 sections in IEA)
- 23 sections have been changed
- 1 section has been added, and 5 sections have been repealed

"From 1860 to 2023, the country's criminal justice system functioned as per the laws made by the British. I can assure the House that these bills will transform our criminal justice system. The aim will not be to punish, it will be to provide justice."

— AMIT SHAH

WHAT NEXT

The three bills will be studied by the standing committee on home affairs, which is chaired by BJP MP Brijlal (who is a retired IPS officer).



Significance of the suggested modification

- The goal of the change is to make the complicated and antiquated criminal statutes more straightforward. The changes will reflect the evolving nature of crime, society, and technology, as well as bring the laws closer to the spirit and ethos of India.
- The harsh sedition statute under Section 124A of the IPC, which has been extensively criticized for being abused against dissenters and government critics, would be repealed as a result of the change.
- In addition, the reform would create new crimes that the current laws do not sufficiently address, like organized crime, mob lynching, terrorism, and corruption.
- Through the inclusion of men and transgender people as possible victims and perpetrators alongside women, the reform will render some sexual offenses gender neutral.
- Through the reform, forensics and electronic evidence will be used more frequently in investigations, prosecutions, and adjudications.
- By enabling residents to file a police complaint at any police station, regardless of where the crime was committed, the reform will provide them more influence. Effective protection of citizens' constitutional rights, including the rights to life, liberty, dignity, privacy, and a fair trial, will also be ensured by the change.

31. International Religious Freedom Report 2023: India's Response

Paper: GS-II**Topics:** IR**Importance for:** Mains/pre**Source:** Assam Tribune**Why in the news:**

The US State Department's International Religious Freedom (IRF) report for 2023 has been sharply criticized by India. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has rejected the report, labeling it as biased and driven by vote bank considerations.

India slams US religious freedom report

Terms it 'deeply biased,' driven by vote bank considerations

NEW DELHI, June 28: India on Friday slammed the US State Department's International Religious Freedom report for 2023, calling it a "deeply biased" document

reliance on biased sources, and a one-sided projection of issues," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs, said during the weekly MEA briefing on Friday. The report presents a one-sided projection of issues, extending even to the misrepresentation of India's Constitutional provisions and duly enacted laws, he said.

"It selectively picks incidents to advance a preconceived narrative, questioning

gets regulations that monitor the misuse of financial flows into India, suggesting that the burden of compliance is unreasonable. The US has even more stringent laws and regulations and would surely not prescribe such solutions for itself," Jaiswal said.

"We emphasise that human rights and respect for diversity are legitimate subjects of discussion between India and the US. However, such dialogues should not become a licence for fusion interference in other

- The report is described as "deeply biased" and lacking an understanding of India's social fabric.
- It is accused of using imputations, misrepresentations, and selectively chosen facts.

Projection of Issues:

- India contends that the report presents a one-sided projection of issues.
- It allegedly misrepresents India's constitutional provisions and duly enacted laws.

Narrative Construction:

- The MEA claims that the report selectively picks incidents to advance a preconceived narrative.
- The report questions the validity of laws and regulations enacted by Indian legislators.

Legal Judgments and Regulations:

- The report appears to challenge the integrity of certain legal judgments by Indian courts.

Biased, selective facts: India on religious freedom report of US

We reject it: MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal



Denouncing the US State Department's report on international religious freedom for 2023, India on Friday said it was "deeply biased" and "visibly driven" by vote bank considerations and a prescriptive outlook. Photo for representational purpose only. - (IStock photo)

32. SAARC & Currency Swap Agreement

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Important International Institutions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: *The Economic Times*

RBI revises framework on currency swap arrangement for SAARC countries

"Based on the terms and conditions of the framework, the RBI would enter into bilateral swap agreements with SAARC central banks, who want to avail swap facility," the central bank said in a circular.

By: [PII](#)
 Modified: November 26, 2019 10:25 PST

 NewsGuard

ARTICLE 10



- A new Framework on Currency Swap Arrangements for SAARC countries has been decided to be implemented by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the years 2024 to 2027.

Concerning the Currency Swap Agreement:

- A financial contract that exchanges principal and interest payments between two parties in different currencies is known as a currency swap agreement.
- Such an agreement is primarily intended to protect against currency risk or to obtain better borrowing conditions.

A currency swap agreement's characteristics include:

- **Exchange of Principal:** Based on the current exchange rate, the two parties exchange equivalent sums of various currencies at the beginning of the swap.

- A financial contract that exchanges principal and interest payments between two parties in different currencies is known as a currency swap agreement.
- Such an agreement is primarily intended to protect against currency risk or to obtain better borrowing conditions.

A currency swap agreement's characteristics include:

- **Exchange of Principal:** Based on the current exchange rate, the two parties exchange equivalent sums of various currencies at the beginning of the swap.
- **Party A may lend Party B USD, and Party B may lend Party A an equal amount in Indian Rupees.**
- **Interest Payments:** The parties swap interest payments on the borrowed sums during the term of the swap.

RBI revises framework for currency swap arrangements with Saarc countries

Under the framework, the RBI will enter into bilateral swap agreements with SAARC central banks that wish to utilise the swap facility.

Advertisement



India's Currency Swap Agreements:

- So far, the Commerce Ministry, the Government of India, has finalized arrangements with some 23 countries with whom Indians can trade in local currencies.
- In simple terms, the importer or exporter in both countries has to quote and receive settlements in their currencies.
- No third-country currency is involved, thereby eliminating the need to worry about exchange variations.
- India's emphasis has been to persuade countries to come to this arrangement, where India has substantial or sizeable trade deficit with that country.

- By doing so, the dues are still payable in rupees, thus saving the need to settle in "foreign exchange" in say, US dollars, Euros, or whatever.
- Once the Finance Ministry approves the country with whom such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial, the Commerce Ministry takes over the responsibility to start the bilateral talks to arrive at a suitable agreement.

34. Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Groupings & Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

- India has attained a significant milestone in the mutual evaluation conducted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) during 2023-24. The evaluation report, adopted at the FATF plenary in Singapore from June 26 to 28, 2024, places India in the "regular follow-up" category, a status shared by only four other G-20 countries.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- **About:** Founded in 1989 as a result of the G-7 conference of developed nations in Paris, FATF is the global watchdog on money laundering and terrorism financing.
- **Goal:** Originally, it intended to investigate and create countermeasures for money laundering.
- In 2001, following the US attacks on 9/11, the FATF broadened its mandate to include measures to counter terrorist financing.
- It increased its efforts to stop the financing of the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in April 2012.

FATF Suggestions:

- Less than a year after its founding, in April 1990, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) published a report with a series of Forty Recommendations meant to offer a comprehensive action plan required to combat money laundering.



India achieves 'outstanding outcome' in FATF evaluation

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

India has achieved an outstanding outcome in the mutual evaluation conducted during 2023-24 by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the government said on Friday.

The Mutual Evaluation Report of India, which was adopted at the FATF plenary held in Singapore from June 26 to 28, places India in the "regular follow-up" category, a distinction shared by only four other G-20 countries.

"This marks a significant milestone in the nation's efforts to combat money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF)," read a Press Infor-



The report was adopted at the FATF plenary held in Singapore.

countering the financing of terrorism (CFT), and counter-proliferation financing (CPF) regime was achieving good results, including international cooperation, access to basic and beneficial ownership information, use of financial intelligence, and depriving

needs to address delays relating to concluding ML and TF prosecutions, and to ensure that CFT measures aimed at preventing the non-profit sector from being abused for TF are implemented in line with the risk-based approach, including by conducting outreach to NPOs [Non-Profit Organisations] on their TF risks," it said.

Among other things, the FATF has recognised the efforts made by India on the issue of mitigating the risks arising from ML/TF, including the laundering of proceeds from corruption, fraud, and organised crime, and the effective measures implemented by India to transition from a cash-based to a digital eco-

35. Oath taking in Lok Sabha

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

First session of 18th Lok Sabha to begin tomorrow, PM Modi to take oath

On Monday, 280 newly-elected MPs, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Council of Ministers, will take oath, while 264 newly-elected parliamentarians will take oath the next day (June 25).



ADVERTISEMENT



- The first session of the **18th Lok Sabha** began on Monday with the oath-taking ceremony by newly elected members of the Lower House, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Earlier in the day, President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath to BJP lawmaker Bhartruhari Mahtab as the protom Speaker of the Lok Sabha

Why in the news:

- As per Section 73 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the Election Commission of India (ECI) announces the results, marking the start of a Lok Sabha MP's five-year term.
- As elected representatives, MPs are then entitled to certain rights.
- For example, they begin collecting their pay and benefits on the day that the ECI notification is sent.
- Furthermore, as of the beginning of their term, political parties have the right to ask the Speaker to remove members of Parliament for defection in accordance with the anti-defection law.

Oath of Parliament:

- The parliamentary oath is contained in the Constitution's third schedule.
- By doing this, members promise to maintain India's sovereignty and integrity, carry out their duties with faithfulness, and bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India.
- Why the Parliamentary Oath Is Important Regardless of the MP's Term Beginning
- A member of Parliament is not immediately eligible to take part in House proceedings just because they were elected and given a term.
- To participate in debates and cast votes in the Lok Sabha, an MP is required by Article 99 of the Constitution to take an oath or affirmation.
- If someone votes or participates in the process without taking the oath, they are subject to a Rs. 500 financial penalty under the Constitution (Article 104).

36. Kerala to Keralam

Paper: GS-II

Topic: Polity

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Hindu

Why in the news:

- The Kerala Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution proposing a Constitutional amendment to change the name of the State from 'Kerala' to 'Keralam'. This move, led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, aims to align the official name with the Malayalam pronunciation.

Kerala House passes resolution to rename the State 'Keralam'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Assembly, in a unanimous decision on Monday, passed a resolu-

Similar resolution passed in 2023 had been returned by the Centre citing procedural issues

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan proposed the resolution, which reads as follows: "Keralam is the name of our state. Nevertheless, our state's name in the first

- Kerala is listed in the Constitution's Schedule. In accordance with Article 3 of the Constitution, this Assembly unanimously requests that the Union Government act quickly to rename the state Keralam.

The decision

- Kerala is the English word for the Malyali Keralam. There are several theories regarding its etymological roots. The earliest mention of the word can be found in
- Emperor Ashoka's Rock Edict II, dated to 257 BCE. The edict reads: "Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods, as well as those of his frontier sovereigns, such as the Chodas [Cholas], Pandyas, Satiyaputra, Ketalaputra

Why Keralam:

- Kerala is the English word for the Malyali Keralam. There are several theories regarding its etymological roots. The earliest mention of the word can be found in
- Emperor Ashoka's Rock Edict II, dated to 257 BCE. The edict reads: "Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods, as well as those of his frontier sovereigns, such as the Chodas [Cholas], Pandyas, Satiyaputra, Ketalaputra.



- German linguist Dr Herman Gundert noted that the word 'keram' is Canarese (or Kannada) for 'cheram', which is used to refer to the coastal land between Gokarna (in Karnataka) and Kanyakumari (Tamil Nadu , India's southern tip). The origin of the term could possibly be from 'cher', which means to join in Old Tamil.

- After independence, on July 1, 1949 the two Malayalam-speaking princely states were integrated to form the state of Travancore-Cochin.
- Kerala was finally created after the State Reorganisation Commission's recommendation to create states on linguistic bases. The Commission under Syed Fazl Ali recommended the inclusion of the district of Malabar and the taluk of Kasargod to the Malayalam-speaking people's state. The state of Kerala came into being on November 1, 1956



37. NE as a gateway of Act East Policy

Paper: GS-II

Topics: Groupings & Agreements Involving India

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: Assam Tribune

Govt working to make NE gateway of 'Act East Policy': Murmu

NEW DELHI, June 27: The government is working to make the Northeast a strategic gateway under its 'Act East Policy' and has increased the allocation for the region's development by more than four times over the last 10 years, President Droupadi Murmu said on Thursday.

Addressing a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament after the constitution of the 18th Lok Sabha, Murmu said that for the first time, work on inland waterways has started in the Northeast on a large scale and it will benefit the region immensely.

"My government has increased the allocation for the development of the Northeast region by more than four times over the last 10 years. The gov-

Increased fund allocation over 10 years



ernment is working to make this region a strategic gateway under its Act East Policy," she said.

India's 'Act East Policy' focuses on the extended neighbourhood in the Indo-Pacific region with ASEAN as its core.

The objective of the 'Act East Policy' is to promote economic cooperation and cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in the Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, thereby providing enhanced connectivity in its broadest sense, including political, economic, cultural and people-to-people relations.

SEE PAGE 2

Why in the news:

- The Act East Policy has recently been in the news due to President Droupadi Murmu's address to a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament after the constitution of the 18th Lok Sabha. In her address, President Murmu highlighted the government's efforts to transform the Northeast into a strategic gateway under the Act East Policy.

Objectives:

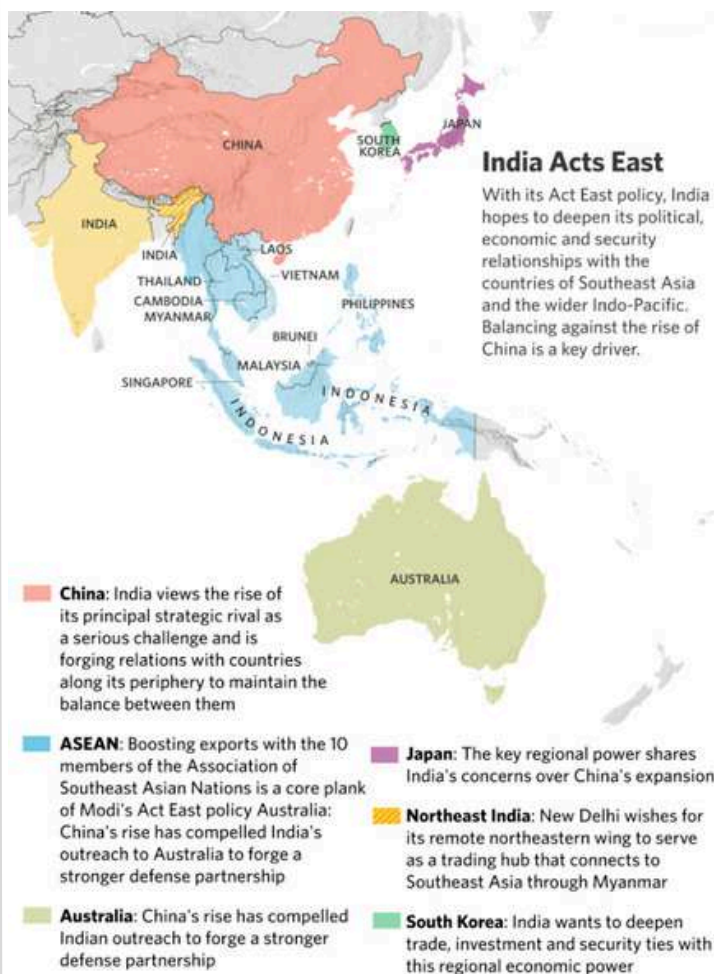
The primary objectives of the Act East Policy are:

- Economic Cooperation:** To enhance trade and investment ties with ASEAN and other countries in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Strategic Relationships:** To develop strong strategic and security partnerships to ensure regional stability.
- Cultural Ties:** To promote cultural exchange and foster people-to-people connections.
- Connectivity:** To improve connectivity in all forms, including physical (infrastructure), digital, economic, and people-to-people linkages.

Key Elements of the Policy

Economic Engagement:

- Trade and Investment:** Boosting trade with ASEAN, which is India's fourth-largest trading partner. Initiatives include negotiating and enhancing free trade agreements.



- Infrastructure Projects:** Investments in infrastructure projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project.

Strategic Partnerships:

- Defence Cooperation:** Strengthening military and defence ties through joint exercises, capacity building, and defence procurement.
- Maritime Security:** Enhancing maritime cooperation to ensure freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded commerce, and peaceful settlement of disputes by international law.

Cultural and People-to-People Ties:

- Educational Exchanges:** Scholarships and academic exchange programs for students from ASEAN countries.

Tourism Promotion: Initiatives to boost tourism between India and ASEAN countries.

Connectivity:

- **Physical Connectivity:** Development of road, rail, and air links to improve regional connectivity. Key projects include the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the proposed ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement.
- **Digital Connectivity:** Enhancing digital infrastructure to facilitate better communication and economic transactions.

The Act East Policy signifies India's commitment to enhancing its strategic, economic, and cultural ties with the Indo-Pacific region. The focus on the Northeast as a strategic gateway is pivotal for the success of this policy, fostering regional development and connectivity. Through sustained efforts and investments, the policy aims to position India as a key player in the regional dynamics of the Indo-Pacific.

38. Empowering Autonomous councils of Assam

Paper: GS-II

Topic: Government Policies & Interventions

Importance for: Mains/pre

Source: The Sentinel



The Sentinel
of this land, for its people

Autonomous Councils need legislation for effective utilization of funds: Speaker

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 27: The Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, Biswajit Daimary, opined that legislation is required that will enable the Autonomous Councils in the state to better utilize the funds provided by the state and central governments for the welfare of the people under the respective Autonomous Councils.

Biswajit Daimary, while addressing the media today, said, "There is an allegation that the Autonomous Councils do not

effectively utilize the funds provided to them. There are also allegations of corruption during the implementation of the welfare schemes by them. The funds are provided to them based on certain guidelines of the state and Centre but the Autonomous Councils do not have any bye-laws or rules for proper implementation of the schemes, which is why it is difficult to pinpoint the person responsible for any wrongdoing."

The Speaker of the Assembly also stressed that the Au-



tonomous Councils needed to increase their sources of revenue, as there are a number of departments under them. The

members of the councils, being elected representatives of the people, should also exercise their power more efficiently for the welfare of the population within their respective councils.

Daimary further said, "The administrative staff of the councils is limited in number, and they face problems in the implementation of the development schemes. All the issues should be resolved now, and the councils can avail themselves of the help of the Assam Legislative Assembly in

exercising their powers. To give thrust to the resolution of their issues, the Assam Legislative Assembly is organizing the first ever Plenary Conference of 10 Autonomous Councils of Assam to be held on June 28 and 29, 2024. The topic of the conference is 'Strengthening and Empowerment of Autonomous Councils for Effective Implementation of the Provision of the Relevant Acts, Rules, Regulations, Laws, Bye-Laws, etc.', which will enable the councils participating in the conference to

empower themselves."

He also said that 10 autonomous councils in Assam are participating in the conference. These are: Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council, Mising Autonomous Council, Tiwa Autonomous Council, Deori Autonomous Council, Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council, Moran Autonomous Council, Matak Autonomous Council, Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council, Bodo Kachari Welfare Autonomous Council, and Kamatapur Autonomous Council.

Legislation for Effective Utilization of Funds:

- **Allegations of Mismanagement:** Autonomous Councils are accused of ineffective fund utilization and corruption.
- **Need for Bye-laws:** Lack of specific bye-laws or rules hinders the proper implementation of schemes, making accountability difficult.

Empowerment of Elected Representatives:

- **Role of Council Members:** As elected representatives, council members should exercise their powers more efficiently for the welfare of their constituents.
- **Support from the Legislative Assembly:** The Assam Legislative Assembly offers assistance to Autonomous Councils in exercising their powers effectively.

Challenges Faced by Autonomous Councils:

- **Limited Administrative Staff:** Councils face implementation challenges due to inadequate administrative personnel.
- **Need for Comprehensive Solutions:** Resolving these issues is crucial for the effective administration of development schemes.

Objectives of the Conference:

- **Legislative Empowerment:** To discuss and formulate legislative measures enabling councils to effectively implement welfare schemes.

- **Capacity Building:** To enhance the administrative capacity of councils by addressing staff limitations and other operational challenges.
- **Improving Accountability:** Establishing clear bye-laws and rules to ensure accountability and transparency in fund utilization.



GENERAL STUDIES - III

Leadership through knowledge...

1. Agreement between lycee des Lumieres and Dr. Purnima Devi Barman

Paper: GS-III

Topics:

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Key Highlights

- lycee des Lumieres: A reputed educational institution located on Mayotte Island, one of the 18 regions of France.

Dr. Purnima Devi Barman:

- A conservation biologist known for her work on the conservation of the endangered greater adjutant stork (Hargila) in Assam, India.
- Hargila Army:** A grassroots community movement dominated by village women in the twin villages of Dadara and Pachariya in Kamrup district of Assam, dedicated to the conservation of the Hargila.

Purnima Devi Barman to promote Hargila conservation in France

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 31: Lycee des Lumieres, a reputed educational institution of Mayotte island of France, has signed a two-year agreement with conservation biologist Dr. Purnima Devi Barman to work together towards conservation of biodiversity in tune with the community-based model adopted by her for conservation of endangered greater adjutant stork (Hargila).

The school in Mayotte island, one of the 18 regions in France, has been immensely impressed by the Hargila conservation model driven by the grassroots community movement, Hargila Army, dominated by village women from the conservation project site in the twin villages of Dadara and Pachariya in Kamrup district of Assam.

lycee des Lumieres in Mayotte island will use Barman's knowledge and expertise to make the students ambassadors for preservation of environment



It has signed the pact with the reputed conservation biologist from NGO Aaranyak who has been in the limelight of late after being conferred with the coveted Whitley Gold Award 2024. The agreement is focused on edu-

cation and research on the community-dominant model of Hargila conservation successfully adopted by Dr. Barman, character, origin, health and diet of the stork species; discover the commitment of India women in safe-

guarding the stork; making the conservation army of the community women a mascot of lycee des Lumieres and making students of lycee des Lumieres ambassadors for the preservation of environment and biodiversity.

Lycee des Lumieres will use the knowledge and expertise of Dr. Barman, a winner of the UNEP Champion of the Earth 2022 award, and her army of women conservation workers to create an "army of students" within the school, trained to protect species and biodiversity as a whole. The Franco-based school expects that the experience and knowledge of Dr. Barman based on her experience of prolonged community-driven conservation work, will provide cultural enrichment and knowledge in terms of protecting Hargila and support the students by sharing her knowledge.

Points of the Agreement:

- Duration:** Two-year agreement.
- Objective:** To work towards the conservation of biodiversity using Dr. Barman's community-based model.

Focus: Education and research on:

- The community-dominant model of Hargila conservation.
- The biology and ecology of the greater adjutant stork.
- The role and commitment of Indian women in conservation efforts.

Implementation:

• Role of lycee des Lumieres:

- Utilize Dr. Barman's expertise to educate and empower students.
- Make students ambassadors for environmental preservation and biodiversity conservation.
- Could you integrate the community-driven conservation model into the school curriculum and activities?
- Create an "army of students" trained to protect species and biodiversity, mirroring the Hargila Army.

• Role of Dr. Purnima Devi Barman:

- Provide knowledge and cultural enrichment to the students.
- Share her extensive experience and insights from her conservation work in Assam.
- Support and guide the students in their conservation efforts.

Expected Outcomes:

- Student Involvement:** Students will gain hands-on experience in conservation practices.
- Cultural Exchange:** Students will learn about the Indian grassroots conservation model and the role of the community, particularly women, in biodiversity conservation.
- Global Impact:** Promoting a successful community-based conservation model on an international platform.

Wards and Recognition:

Dr. Purnima Devi Barman:

- Winner of the UNEP Champion of the Earth Award 2022.
- Recipient of the Whitely Gold Award 2024



2. Assam's Semiconductor Dream

Why in News ?

Assam, an under-industrialized state, aims to boost its economy through industrial ventures that promote growth and employment without harming the environment.

- The upcoming semiconductor complex at Jagiroad in Morigaon district is a significant step towards achieving this goal.



Key Highlights:

The upcoming semiconductor complex at Jagiroad in Morigaon district is a significant step towards achieving this goal.

- Assam's ambitious plan to establish a semiconductor complex in Morigaon district is generating significant attention.
- This initiative represents a major stride towards industrialization and economic development in an under-industrialized region. The project's potential impact on the local economy, employment, and environmental sustainability makes it a topic of considerable interest.

Importance of Semiconductor Industry:

- **Global Context:** The semiconductor industry is crucial for technological advancements in AI, IoT, robotics, and driverless cars.
- **National Priority:** India prioritizes semiconductor fabrication, chip design, assembly, testing, and packaging to reduce dependency on imports and strengthen the supply chain.
- **Employment Generation:** The industry is expected to create a high demand for skilled professionals, providing job opportunities for engineers, technicians, and other allied services.

Assam's semiconductor dream

KULADHAR SAIKIA

Appropriate steps need to be taken to ensure that the proposed semiconductor plant in Morigaon district does not disturb the environment in its surroundings.

In an under-industrialized state, any industrial venture that has the potential for growth and employment generation without jeopardizing the environment is a welcome step. As is being widely talked about, Assam needs private and public investment, which would add to its Young Domestic Product and create employment for a vast pool of young professionals. The state's reputation for the upcoming semiconductor complex in Jagiroad in Morigaon district deserves to be seen from this broader perspective.

This venture is a part of the country's prioritized goal of economic industry, the semiconductor fabrication, chip design, assembly, testing and packaging. As the world moves at a breakneck speed with innovative applications in the digital world, in the form of AI, IoT, robotics, driverless cars, etc., the market of chip-making and integrated circuits is ever expanding. Several developed countries today are racing up in the direction to keep the supply chain strong.

India is one of the largest importers of semiconductor chips in the global market. It is estimated that the semiconductor work force in the world should be growing by more than a million by 2035. With its vast army of unemployed engineers, technicians and computer engineers, India can hope to fill the void across the vertical and horizontal domains. Apart from critical skills like designing chip architectures, R&D, and process engineering, other jobs like testing, quality analysis, packaging, after security etc., are also in demand, depending on the nature of the plant.

The proposed Morigaon plant will provide only few facilities for a post-laboratory and pre-production phase. Under the modified scheme for semiconductor assembly, testing, marking and packaging (ATMP), where the manufacturing sector will be cut into individual chips and not to customer testing to meet the required specifications. The primary growth in the sector is expected to come from the semiconductor professionals to other allied services in the semiconductor sector. Keeping this in mind, already several initiatives have been undertaken in order to the rising demands through collaboration between corporate enterprises and universities and skill development, and accordingly, demand-based courses and workshops are in the pipeline. It is a high time for the institutions and other concerned entities in the state to take urgent steps to act to meet the need.

For imparting training for upskilling one's skills, a well-coordinated action plan needs to be taken to make them suitable for the job market by providing different skill sets in the domains concerned. Several potential issues are being raised, often in the case of setting up such capital-intensive industries when the agricultural fields are left against investment of a large quantum of capital to significantly lower the unemployment rate. In the objective, encouraging growth in several lesser-intensive medium-scale manufacturing enterprises is needed to make a more viable option in a state where the unemployment figure is awfully high. Since, as per the policy guidelines, 50 per cent cap-

ital expenditure is to come from the public exchequer for setting up the semiconductor ATMP and OSAT facilities in the country, the government of employment generation assumes significance for a whole lot of things like making provision for land, water and power offered by the state. Even a policy of employment for local skilled professionals by designating a particular percentage of jobs may be worth considering for some unskilled categories of jobs. The expected growth of the subsidiary and downstream activities, along with the birth of stable start-ups, may open up avenues for the local skill training institutions to collaborate with corporate firms and introduce courses on relevant skill development. Thus, schemes for industry-academia collaboration need to be encouraged.

Another significant issue that requires attention is that semiconductor plants not only require a consistent high-power supply they also consume vast amounts of water, often totalling millions of gallons a day. The type of water used is mostly ultra-pure water for production purposes. Huge consumption of water has been a serious problem in the semiconductor manufacturing value chain. One can point to the case in Taiwan where the government had decided to channel water from the agricultural fields to the semiconductor complex and subsidize their farmers who could not continue their farming due to the lack of water in the field. A similar situation of water scarcity occurred in Arizona in the US, where the area was facing the problem of water due to drought. The venture there is facing a lot of public resistance and protests.

To counter such problems, a well-thought-out plan should be in place by according priority to water conservation along with steps like recycling, reuse and diversification of this resource, so that the local population, especially the farming community, does not fall victim to a water crisis.

Moreover, the issue of industrial waste disposal in such plants has been widely discussed by experts all over the world, whenever such projects are getting into shape, so that sustainability, protection and preservation of the environment are adequately ensured. Besides, semiconductor ventures are expected to produce considerably high emissions coupled with chemical waste. This calls for the use of modern and innovative measures to address these environmental concerns.

The participants in the value chain in semiconductor industry are increasingly in the process of either adopting or upgrading their technologies, which would ensure the use of greener materials in the form of chemicals and materials, so that environmental impact is minimized. Transparency and accountability should be practised so that the environment-friendly industrial practices are put into place. Environmental bodies are increasingly conducting scrutiny and social audits to address growing concerns about the environmental impact of industrial activities. Appropriate actions need to be taken to ensure that the proposed semiconductor plant in Morigaon does not disturb the green environment in the surrounding area. Nearby villages must not suffer from leaching of pollutants or living on toxic land due to hazardous waste.

opportunities for Assam:

- **Economic Growth:** The semiconductor complex can contribute significantly to Assam's State Domestic Product (SOP).
- **Skill Development:** Collaboration between corporate enterprises, universities, and skilling organizations is essential for training and upskilling the local workforce.
- **Employment:** The project is expected to create various job roles, from critical skills like chip design and process engineering to roles in testing, quality analysis, and cybersecurity.

Environmental Concerns and Mitigation:

- **Water Usage:** Semiconductor plants require large amounts of ultrapure water. Steps must be taken to prioritize water conservation and recycling to prevent water scarcity for local communities, especially farmers.
- **Power Supply:** Consistent high-power supply is necessary for the plant's operations.
- **Waste Management:** Proper disposal of industrial waste and reduction of air emissions are critical. Adoption of greener materials and innovative measures to minimize environmental impact is necessary.
- **Sustainability:** Transparency and sustainable industrial practices should be prioritized. Environmental bodies need to conduct regular scrutiny and social audits.

Policy and Implementation:

- **Government Support:** 50% of the capital expenditure for setting up semiconductor ATMP and OSAT facilities is expected to come from the public exchequer.
- **Local Employment:** Policies to ensure employment for local skilled youths by designating a percentage of jobs for them should be considered.

Challenges in Establishing the Semiconductor Complex in Assam

1. **High Capital Investment:** A substantial initial investment is needed for the semiconductor manufacturing process.
2. **Infrastructure Development:** It's critical to have a strong infrastructure, which includes fabrication facilities and a power supply.
3. **Development of Skills:** To create a workforce with the necessary skills for semiconductor production, training programs are required.
4. **Water Consumption:** Due of their high water consumption, semiconductor facilities run the risk of experiencing a shortage.
5. **Waste Management:** To protect the environment, industrial waste must be disposed of properly.
6. **Community Impact:** It's critical to make sure that there are no negative consequences while local communities benefit.
7. **Regulatory Approvals:** It can be difficult and time-consuming to navigate regulatory standards.
8. **Policy Support:** Long-term success requires consistent backing from the government. Supply Chain Integration: Establishing dependable supply chains and logistics is essential.

3. India's GDP Growth Surpasses Expectations in FY24

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Indian Express

Key Highlights

- India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by a remarkable 7.8% in the January-March quarter, contributing to a full-year growth rate of 8.2% in the financial year 2023-24, marking the third consecutive year of 7%+ growth.
- National Statistical Office (NSO) data revealed that manufacturing, construction, public administration, defense, and other services sectors drove the Q4 growth, surpassing economists' highest estimates of 7.3-7.4%.
- The full-year growth rate of 8.2% exceeded both the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) projection of 7% and NSO's second advance estimate of 7.6% for 2023-24.
- Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran had previously indicated a high possibility of GDP growth touching 8% in FY24.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman hailed the robust economic growth, particularly highlighting the manufacturing sector's significant growth of 9.9% in 2023-24.
- The strong GDP growth, combined with the Rs 2.11 lakh crore RBI dividend to the Centre, is expected to help the new government maintain fiscal discipline while stimulating private sector investment.

GDP crosses 8% in FY24 as services, manufacturing power Q4 growth to 7.8%

Robust economic growth, says FM; third year of 7%-plus growth rate

4. 50th Foundation Day Celebration of the Pollution Control Board, Assam

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment

Importance for: Mains

Source: Sentinel

Key Highlights:

- The Pollution Control Board of Assam (PCBA) was constituted on June 2, 1975, under Section 4 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974.
- Significance: The PCBA has helped monitor environmental indicators and sustainable development in Assam.

50th Foundation Day Celebration:

- Date:** The Board celebrated its 50th foundation day, marking the completion of 49 years of its establishment.
- Venue:** The event was attended by prominent government representatives

State Pollution Control Board turns 50

GUWAHATI, June 2: Established on June 2, 1975, by the State government under the provisions of section 4 of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act 1974, the Pollution Control Board, Assam has completed 49 years of relentless journey in the field of environmental monitoring and sustainable development of Assam.

Today, the Board celebrated its 50th foundation day here, and a press statement.

The celebration began with the lighting of a lamp by the chief guest of the function (Dr Ravi Kanta, Chief Secretary of government of Assam), in the presence of MB Sahani, Special Chief Secretary, government of Assam; Dr Arup Kumar Moira, chairman, PCBA; Dr Shantanu Kumar Jethi, member secretary and other dignitaries from the industrial sector.

Dr Shantanu Kumar Jethi, member secretary of the Board, in his welcome address, highlighted the achievements of the Board's primary activities as well as the future road-map and thrust areas. He also threw light on the 49-year journey of the Board. He specially deliberated on the new initiatives taken by the Board in the last few years and solicited the cooperation of the civil society, corporate sector, industrial houses, etc., in performing its duties and responsibilities for the greater cause of environment and sustainable development of the State.

Special Chief Secretary MB Sahani released Ptetarak Sahani, the secretary of the Board, along with other dignitaries. He explained the responsibilities of the Board and its much-needed cooperation with the Environment and Forest department to ensure proper enforcement of the Rules and Acts.

Shankar Jyoti Mahanta, State Chief Information Commissioner in his speech, highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the Board in line with the spirit of the environmental status of the State. He also mentioned the much-needed transparency of the functioning of the Board to build the aspirations of the people, the release added.

The chief guest of the function, Dr Ravi Kanta, in his speech, mentioned the role of the Board vis-a-vis government policies, industrial growth and employment generation. While lauding the performance of the Board in the recent past, he mentioned the increasing responsibilities of the Board in the context of rising environmental crises including the climate emergency across the globe. He also emphasised the need for eco-friendly progress-building activities to enable proper implementation of the Acts and Rules. He awarded the Golden Jubilee celebration logo of PCBA.

Dr Arup Kumar Moira, PCBA chairman, spoke about the increasing responsibility of the Board and the commitment needed by every employee of the Board. While highlighting the key initiatives of the Board taken in the last three years, he spoke out the tasks ahead. He officially launched the Golden Jubilee Year of the Board.

The function was followed by a session on "Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship", organised by Mrs. Earth (NGO) in association with PCBA, where experts delivered speeches focusing on the matter of business growth and sustainability.

Dr Arup Kumar Moira, chairman, PCBA; Dr Akhila Baruah, MD, Assam Air Products; Upati Baruah, GMA; Adnan Argeri; Garibhain and Dinku Goswami, MD, RTO Guwahati, delivered the keynote addresses and highlighted the growing importance of sustainable business and much-needed entrepreneurship in the State. This was followed by the presentation of "Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship in the times of climate crisis".

The function was attended by a large number of government officials, representatives of industrial houses, associations of industries, representatives from hospitals and other service sectors and members of PCBA. The morning ended with a vote of thanks offered by Assam to British, followed by rendition of the Assam Sangeet.

Need for Pollution Control Board in Assam

1. Environmental Preservation:

- Biodiversity:** Assam is rich in biodiversity, with numerous national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves. The Pollution Control Board (PCB) helps protect these ecosystems from industrial and urban pollution.

Water Bodies: Assam has significant water bodies, including the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers. Monitoring and controlling water pollution is crucial to preserving aquatic life and ensuring clean water for human consumption and agriculture.

2. Industrial Growth Management:

- **Balancing Development and Environment:** Assam is witnessing industrial growth, particularly in sectors like oil, gas, and tea. The PCB ensures that this growth is managed sustainably, minimizing environmental degradation.
- **Pollution Monitoring:** The Board monitors emissions and effluents from industries to ensure they comply with environmental standards, thus preventing air and water pollution

3. Urbanization Challenges:

- **Waste Management:** Rapid urbanization has increased solid and liquid waste generation. The PCB plays a vital role in establishing and enforcing waste management practices.
- **Air Quality:** Urban areas face air pollution from vehicles, construction, and other activities. The PCB monitors air quality and implements measures to reduce pollution levels.

4. Public Health:

- **Preventing Health Hazards:** Pollution poses significant health risks, including respiratory and waterborne diseases. The PCB works to mitigate these risks by controlling pollution sources.
- **Awareness Programs:** The Board conducts public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about pollution control and sustainable practices.

5. Climate Change Mitigation:

- **Reducing Carbon Footprint:** Assam is vulnerable to climate change impacts like floods and changing rainfall patterns. The PCB's efforts in regulating emissions contribute to broader climate change mitigation strategies.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Promoting renewable energy and sustainable industrial practices helps in reducing the carbon footprint and adapting to climate change.

6. Legal Compliance:

- **Enforcing Laws:** The PCB ensures compliance with national and state environmental laws, including the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
- **Regulatory Framework:** It provides a regulatory framework for industries and urban bodies to follow, ensuring environmental protection through legal means.

7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation):** By controlling water pollution, the PCB contributes to ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities):** Efforts to reduce urban pollution support the goal of making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- **SDG 13 (Climate Action):** Pollution control measures help in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

8. Conservation of Natural Resources:

- **Preventing Resource Degradation:** Pollution control helps in conserving natural resources, which are crucial for the livelihoods of many communities in Assam, particularly those dependent on agriculture and fisheries.
- **Promoting Eco-friendly Practices:** The Board encourages industries and communities to adopt eco-friendly practices, ensuring long-term resource sustainability

5. The 60th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB60)

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment and Ecology

Importance for: Mains

Source: UNFCCC

Key Highlights:

The 60th conference of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) will be held in Bonn, Germany, from June 3 to 13, 2024.

• As the globe prepares for the 29th Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC later this year, the Delhi-based think tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has urged wealthy countries to meet their financial duties in the battle against climate change.



Date: 3-13 June 2024

Location: World Conference Center Bonn, Bonn, Germany

More information: <https://unfccc.int/sb60>

About the 60th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies.

The mid-year climate conference, also known as the 60th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB60), will bring together countries that have signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- National delegates and civil society representatives will make up a sizable proportion of the 6,000 people anticipated to attend the conference.

- The summit will be a critical juncture between the 28th CoP in Dubai and CoP29 in Azerbaijan, with the conclusions paving the way for the next round of global climate negotiations.

It will focus on crucial problems such as-

- Climate Finance
- Making progress towards the next round of national climate action plans (NDCs).
- Ensure timely submission of countries' first biennial.
- It will include the first Annual Global Stocktake (GST) Dialogue, which aims to encourage the sharing of effective strategies and lessons learned on how countries are incorporating GST outcomes into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), promoting collaborative learning and progress toward the Paris Agreement's objectives.

6. Can Redistribution Be Used as a Tool to Reduce Inequality?

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Inclusive Growth

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

According to researchers at the Paris School of Economics, inequality in modern India has surpassed that during colonial centuries.

- In this context, the essay examines the concept of inequality and how redistribution policies might be utilized to alleviate it

Does inequality lead to growth?

Investing in the people has been a central theme in development policy. It is widely believed that it is a virtuous circle: investment in human capital leads to growth, which in turn leads to more investment in human capital. This is the basic idea of the 'growth-through-investment' thesis.



Business Monopolies and Inequality:

- Monopolies, as the dominant players in a specific market, allow businesses to set their own prices for their goods rather than being determined by the market.

- This could lead to a process known as "greedflation," in which corporations raise prices to increase profit margins.

- Thus, the presence of monopolies might result in lower real wages, increasing economic inequality in society.

How Does Business Monopoly Lead to Inequality?

- Workers benefit from the multiplier effect, which occurs when a corporation builds a new plant and pays wages to workers.

- Workers' income is spent on purchasing things, which raises the revenue of goods merchants, who then spend their increased income on purchasing more goods.

- Thus, the total rise in revenue for workers and sellers exceeds the initial investment. This process is known as the multiplier effect, in which investment increases income by a greater proportion than the initial investment.

Could redistribution of wealth help to reduce inequality?

- Investment is based on future profit predictions, while wealth is accumulated from past earnings.

- A high tax policy discourages entrepreneurs from accumulating money, reducing investment and employment.

- Taxing billionaires and providing basic income to the poor may cause some to leave the economy, but it can also attract new entrepreneurs and stimulate start-ups.

- If monopolies are reduced, prices will fall while real wages rise, resulting in increased demand.

Argument For and Against Inequality:

- According to some experts, some types of inequality are positive since it motivates entrepreneurs to start enterprises, hence increasing employment and well-being for others.

- However, for some experts, inequality can only have negative economic and political consequences.

- For example, inequality undermines democratic processes and leads to the concentration of monopoly power among capitalists about labor.

- This may have a detrimental impact on consumption, welfare, and growth. To address the issue, they believe that wealth taxes and distribution policies could be effective.



7. Balancing Health Care Costs, Access, and Innovation in India

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Why in the News:

The Indian health care landscape is increasingly influenced by cost considerations.

- Rising health disparities and uneven access necessitate equitable and sustainable healthcare policies.
- Setting rates for medical services significantly impacts how health care is perceived, accessed, and delivered.

Challenges and Solutions in Healthcare Pricing:

1) Cost Management and Quality Concerns.

Price caps: Standardising rates may make things more affordable, but it may also reduce quality.

Price restrictions can cause patient unhappiness and stifle innovation due to financial constraints.

Alternative models: Value-based pricing, in which payments are based on health outcomes, is one possible option.

2) International Examples and Lessons

Thailand's Tiered Pricing System: Prices are adjusted based on patient income and medical necessity, aiming to balance cost and care.

Learning from foreign experiences can help India improve its tactics for effectively managing healthcare expenditures.

Role of Private Hospitals and Technology

The function of private hospitals in terms of infrastructure, innovation, and technology

Private hospitals: Innovative, specialized care facilities that make significant technological investments.

Accreditations: Hospitals with JCI and NABH accreditations use state-of-the-art technology to improve patient outcomes.

Integration of Technology

Telemedicine: Lowers expenses, boosts accessibility, and decreases hospital visits.

Wearable technology and mobile health apps can help manage chronic illnesses and enhance patient outcomes outside of hospitals.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

- **Legislative Reforms**

States like Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu advocate for robust legal frameworks to address gaps in rate fixation. Tailoring approaches to local demographic and economic conditions is essential for effective rate standardisation.

- **Public-Private Partnerships**

Collaborations can integrate advanced technologies into public hospitals, ensuring wider access to quality care

Recommendations

- **Flexible Pricing Strategies**

Reflect the complexities of medical procedures and patient-care requirements.

Engage all stakeholders, including private health-care providers, to craft effective and sustainable policies.

- **Government Subsidies and R&D**

Allocate subsidies to support research and development in private hospitals.

Foster an environment conducive to innovation while ensuring equitable access to quality health care.

- **Improving Digital Infrastructure**

Invest in infrastructure for broader Internet access and digital literacy to empower more people to benefit from health care advancements.



8. World Environment Day, 2024

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Why in News?

Theme 2024: Land restoration, desertification and drought resilience

- World Environment Day is the biggest international day for the environment. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and held annually since 1973, it has grown to be the largest global platform for environmental outreach. It is celebrated by millions of people across the world.
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host World Environment Day 2024 with a focus on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience. Land restoration is a key pillar of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, which is critical to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

9. Su-30MKI Fighter Aircraft

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Indigenization of Technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Why in News?

Tuesday saw a crash in Nashik of an Indian Air Force (IAF) SU-30MKI fighter plane.

- According to a HAL spokesperson, the aircraft was conducting a test flight from HAL Nashik in Sirsa gaon, having undergone an overhaul recently.
- The HAL pilots both ejected and reached safety. The pilots reported a technical issue.

Sukhoi fighter jet crashes in Nashik

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

An SU-30MKI fighter jet of the Indian Air Force (IAF) crashed in Nashik on Tuesday.

The aircraft was recently overhauled by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and was on a test sortie from HAL Nashik at Sirsa gaon, a HAL official said.

"Both the pilots of HAL have ejected to safety. A technical snag was reported by the pilots. The exact



Wrong landing: Remains of the Sukhoi fighter jet after it crashed in Nashik district on Tuesday. PTI

reason will only be known after detailed investigation," the official added. India has procured 272 SU-30 jets from Russia, a bulk of which have been licence-manufactured by HAL in India.

SU-30MKI FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) uses the Sukhoi Su-30MKI, a twinjet multirole air superiority fighter developed by Russian company Sukhoi and manufactured under license by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in India.
- It is a heavy, all-weather, long-range fighter that is a variation of the Sukhoi Su-30.
- In order to maintain the Su-30MKIs modern for the ensuing few decades, the IAF plans to equip them with new engines, avionics, sensors, and weaponry.
- 272 Su-30s were purchased by India from Russia; most of the aircraft were constructed by HAL, and about 11 of the aircraft were lost. According to officials, the IAF currently has 12 Su-30 squadrons, while 40–50 aircraft are at HAL undergoing maintenance repairs



10. United Nations Global Supply Chain Forum

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Why in News?

Recently, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Government of Barbados successfully concluded the first-ever United Nations Global Supply Chain Forum.

Concerning the UN Global Supply Chain Forum:

- The forum was held in Barbados from May 21 to 24, 2024, and it was its first edition.
- UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Barbados government worked together to host it.
- The urgent concerns of global disruptions, geopolitical tensions, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on international trade brought together more than a thousand individuals from all over the world.
- Key players were present, including the ministers of trade and transportation from a number of small island developing nations (SIDS).
- There were also representatives from a number of UN organizations, important ports like the Port of Seattle, and prominent figures in the shipping and logistics sectors.

The forum emphasized the opportunities and complexities in



11. Restore forest of Northeast

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Conservation

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has recently initiated a suo moto inquiry into the significant loss of forest cover in India. This action highlights the urgent environmental challenges the country faces.

- The inquiry is based on alarming data from Global Forest Watch, which indicates that India has lost a staggering 2.3 million hectares of forest cover since the year 2000

Key Findings

- The Total Forest and Tree cover is 24.62% of the geographical area of the country.
- The Total Forest cover is 7,13,789 sq km which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country.
- The Tree cover is 2.91% of the geographical area of the country.
- As compared to ISFR 2019 the current assessment shows an increase of:
 - 0.28% of forest and tree cover put together, at the national level.
 - Forest Cover: 0.22% • Tree Cover: 0.76% • The top five states in terms of increase in forest cover:



Facts for the NE states:

Among the eight states, Manipur recorded the largest loss in forest cover (249 sq km), followed by Nagaland (235 sq kms) and Mizoram (186 sq km).

- The Forest Survey Report 2021 attributes this loss in forest cover to shifting cultivation, which is practiced in many northeastern states.

- The northeastern states have been losing forest cover consistently, as the last report published in 2019 also indicated. Between 2011 and 2019, the forest cover of six states, excluding Assam, had decreased by nearly 18 percent between 2011 and 2019.

- The region lost nearly 25,012 sq km of forest cover in the preceding decade

- With the aid of a rover, the Chang'e-4 mission touched down in the area in 2019 and investigated the knowledge... the Von Karman crater on the Moon

**12. China's Chang'e-6 to the far side of the Moon**

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science & Technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

To gather samples of rock and soil from the moon's farside-which is less visited than its near side Chinese spacecraft made a landing on the moon's far side. The South Pole- Aitken Basin is a massive crater where the landing took place.

The Chang'e-6 mission

- The Chang'e-6 mission lasts for 53 days.
- When the mission's orbiter reaches the Moon's orbit, it will circle the natural satellite while the lander descends into the South Pole-Aitken basin, which spans 2,500 kilometers on the lunar surface.

Sample gathering:

- The lander will deploy an ascending vehicle to move the samples to the orbiter's service module after gathering samples by scooping and drilling. After that, this module will return to Earth.

Importance of the Chang'e-6 Project

- The only nation to successfully land a soft landing on the moon's far side is China.

13. Minuteman III

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science & Technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

The US recently conducted an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile test from the Californian Vandenberg Space Force Base.

About Minuteman III:

- The United States Air Force (USAF) initially used the solid-fueled LGM-30G Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in the 1960s.
- The S. nuclear triad's only land-based element is this one.
- Boeing Corporation was responsible for both its design and production.
- It was only meant to remain in operation for ten years or so, but since the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD), which is expected to replace it, isn't expected to be ready for use until 2029, it has been updated.
- That was the first American missile to be equipped with several MIRVs, or independently targetable reentry vehicles.

14. GREEN CREDIT PROGRAM

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Methodology for Calculating Green Credits (GC) for Tree Plantation Activity Notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) "Green Credit

About the Green Credit Program (GCP):

- This ground-breaking, market-based tool encourages environmental action on the part of various stakeholders, including businesses, philanthropies, and state and local governments.
- Voluntary engagement is the basis for involvement in the GCP.
- Goal:
 - Through grassroots participation and behavioral changes, it promotes sustainable living, environmental conservation, and eco-friendly development in line with the 'LiFE'-Lifestyle for Environment' initiative.
 - Encourage businesses, sectors, and other organizations to fulfill their voluntary duties, whether they are new or ongoing.
 - Founded by "The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986," with the MoEFCC serving as the Nodal Agency.

Governance Structure:

- An inter-ministerial Steering Committee assists with the GCP's governance structure.
- As the GCP Administrator, the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) is in charge of the administration, operation, monitoring, and execution of the program.
- To expedite Project Registration, Verification, and Green Credit Issuance, GCP has built an intuitive digital platform.

15. Exercise Red Flag 2024

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

From June 4–14, 2024, the Indian Air Force (IAF) took part in Exercise Red Flag 2024, which was held at the US Air Force's Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska.

About:

- advanced aerial combat training exercise held four times a year by the US Air Force.
- Participation of the Indian Air Force along with the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF), Royal Air Force (RAF) of the United Kingdom, Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf), German Luftwaffe, and the US Air Force (USAF).
- Red Flag is an air combat exercise featuring realistic combat scenarios. Forces are divided into Red Force (simulating Air Defence, primarily with USAF Aggressor Squadron's F-16 and F-15 aircraft) and Blue Force (simulating Offensive Composite elements).
- This year marked the debut of the Indian Air Force's Rafale aircraft in the exercise, operating alongside RSAF and USAF F-16s, F-15s, and A-10s.



16. Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

A team of scientists from Assam and Odisha in India, China, and the U.K. has developed a water-repellent catalyst that can cut the cost of producing "environmentally benign" biodiesel substantially from the current levels.

Key Highlights

- **Research Team:** Collaboration among scientists from Assam and Odisha (India), China, and the U.K.
- **Institutions Involved:** National Institute of Technology (NIT) Silchar, NIT Rourkela, University of Cambridge (U.K.), and Guizhou University (China).
- **Journal Publication:** Published in "Advanced Functional Materials," a high-impact peer-reviewed journal.

Catalyst Development

- **Catalyst Type:** Spherical superhydrophobic activated carbon catalyst.
- **Properties:** Water-repellent, robust, prevents active site poisoning by water byproducts during biodiesel production.
- **Inspiration:** Mimics natural surfaces like lotus leaves for anti-wetting properties.

Advantages and Impact

- **Cost Reduction:** The current biodiesel cost in India is about ₹100 (\$1.2) per liter. The new catalyst could reduce the cost to approximately 37 cents per liter.

Scientists from India, China, U.K. develop catalyst to produce cheaper biodiesel

Rohini Karim
(Guwahati)

A team of scientists from Assam and Odisha in India, China, and the U.K. has developed a water-repellent catalyst that can cut the cost of producing "environmentally benign" biodiesel substantially from the current levels. The process of creating a spherical superhydrophobic activated carbon catalyst to withstand water byproducts during the production of biodiesel is presented as a solution for diesel, an exhaustible fossil fuel — has been published in the latest issue of the "government" for Central Council of Technology (CCT), which is a high-impact journal of the international community science community. The authors of the study



Dr. Samrat Choudhury (left), member, one of the authors of the study, with his co-researchers, in an interview.

from Assam, Odisha, India, and Guizhou University in China, and the U.K. have developed a water-repellent catalyst that can cut the cost of producing "environmentally benign" biodiesel substantially from the current levels. The process of creating a spherical superhydrophobic activated carbon catalyst to withstand water byproducts during the production of biodiesel is presented as a solution for diesel, an exhaustible fossil fuel — has been published in the latest issue of the "government" for Central Council of Technology (CCT), which is a high-impact journal of the international community science community. The authors of the study

16 .National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH)

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Health

Importance for: Mains

Source: PTI

The National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage has been named a WHO-Collaborating Center (CC) for "Fundamental and Literary Research in Traditional Medicine" by the World Health Organization (WHO).



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WHO collaborates with Hyderabad-based NIIMH for traditional medicine research

NEW DELHI: The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated the National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage as WHO-Collaborating Centre (CC) for "Fundamental and Literary Research in Traditional Medicine".

The National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH), Hyderabad, is a unit under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), ministry of Ayush.



Kerali repeats bomb

About National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH):

The National Institute of Indian Medicine and History (NIIMH), formerly the National Center of Indian Medical Heritage (NCIMH), offers resources to researchers, scientists, and other professionals who wish to examine and record the historical background of modern medicine as well as Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy, and Sowa Rigpa (AYUSH).

- Due to its significance on a national and worldwide scale, the Department of History of Medicine was transferred from the Government of Andhra Pradesh on September 26, 1956, to the Government of India on February 14, 1969.
- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, oversees the institute's administrative operations.
- This institute is situated in Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad, and is the only one of its sort in Southeast Asia.

17. India's First Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

India's first joint doctrine for cyberspace operations was unveiled by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, who acknowledged that cyberspace has become an important and difficult arena in modern warfare.

India's First Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations: Background:

China has built major capabilities in the cyber warfare domain, including cyberweapons to degrade or destroy an adversary's military assets and strategic networks.

- India has been lagging far behind in this arena, with the government only approving the creation of a small tri-service Defence Cyber Agency in 2019 instead of the full-fledged Cyber Command that the armed forces wanted. Formulation of a new joint doctrine for cyberspace operations:
- The doctrine comes at a time when the Army is operationalizing dedicated specialised units in each of its six operational or regional commands to handle the cyberspace domain. The doctrine will guide tri-services in planning and conducting cyberspace operations in the current complex military operating environment.

In a first, CDS releases its blueprint for warfare in cyberspace

Unlike traditional domains of land, water, and air, which have territorial limits, cyberspace is a global good, with shared sovereignty; joint doctrine will guide commanders in conducting cyberspace operations

Updated - June 18, 2024 10:01 pm IST Published - June 18, 2024 06:55 pm IST - NEW DELHI

THE HINDU BUREAU



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18. Energy Transition Index

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environmental Pollution & Degradation

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

India has been ranked **63rd** on a global Energy Transition Index released on Wednesday by the World Economic Forum, which said the country has shown significant improvement across energy equity, security, and sustainability.

India ranks 63rd on Energy Transition Index; Sweden on top: WEF

NEW DELHI, June 19: India has been ranked 63rd on a global Energy Transition Index released on Wednesday by the World Economic Forum, which said the country has shown significant improvement across energy equity, security and sustainability.

European nations dominated the top ranks with Sweden topping the index, followed by Denmark, Finland, Switzerland and France in the top five. China was ranked 20th.

The improvement shown by India and some other developing countries such as China and Brazil assumes significance as 83 per cent of countries have moved backwards from last year in at least one of the three energy system performance dimensions – security, equity and sustainability.

"Taking note of various initiatives taken in India, the World Economic Forum (WEF) said the country is leading the way in creating outcomes that can be replicated elsewhere."

It said the governments can also consider creating awareness and policy interventions, such as guidelines for energy-efficient built infrastructure and incentives for retrofitting, to shape an enabling environment for accelerated adoption.

"The developing world has an opportunity to rewrite the rules and show the way to successfully transform energy demand – an example of reverse innovation is frugal, scalable innovation originating in developed countries and then scaled across the world," it added.

On the role of China and India, the WEF said that with roughly a third of the global population, these two countries will play a critical role.

"Both have experienced progress in renewable energy buildout, energy access improvements and energy security. However, the phase-down trajectory of coal will be a major driver of emissions. Additionally, these countries are in a strong position for green tech manufacturing," the WEF said.

Globally the report said the energy transition to a more equitable, secure and sustainable energy system is still progressing but has lost momentum in the face of increasing uncertainty worldwide.

While 107 of the 120 countries benchmarked in the report demonstrated progress on their energy transition journeys in the past decade, the overall pace of the transition has slowed and balancing its different facets remains a key challenge.

"While innovation growth has slowed, countries like China and India are leading in developing new energy solutions and technologies," it added.

The WEF also lauded the strides made by India in its clean energy infrastructure, with renewable energy and biomass comprising 42 per cent of its power generation capacity, making it the fourth-largest renewables market globally. With annual investments nearing USD 10 billion, India is driving the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) and the production of green hydrogen.

"However, the significant dependence on coal in both China and India continues to be a major factor in their emission intensity," it said.

Emerging and developing Asia, including populous nations like India and China, showed an 8 per cent improvement in ETI scores over the past decade, mainly in reducing energy intensity – PTI

European nations dominated the top ranks with Sweden topping the index, followed by Denmark, Finland, Switzerland and France in the top five. China was ranked 20th.

What are the factors influencing India's energy transition progress and concerns?

- Contributors: India's performance has improved with universal access to electricity, clean cooking choices, and the deployment of renewable energy.
- India's low reliance on natural gas and efficient use of existing capabilities helped it weather the recent energy crisis.

Concerns include

- Rising import dependence, global energy market volatility, and a largely carbon-intensive energy mix. The challenges include balancing economic growth and producing quality jobs for the expanding working-age population.

19. Angel tax

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in its Union Budget recommendation suggested the removal of Section 56(2)(viib) of the Income-tax Act colloquially known as the 'Angel Tax' stating that the step "would greatly aid capital formation in the country

Industry seeks removal of 'Angel Tax'; to greatly aid capital formation, says CII

Angel Tax was first introduced in 2012 to deter the generation and use of unaccounted money through the subscription of shares of a closely held company at a value that is higher than the fair market value of the firm's shares.



About Angel Tax:

Angel Tax refers to the income tax imposed on the capital raised by unlisted companies through the issuance of shares in off-market transactions.

- This tax applies when the capital is raised from an Indian investor, and the share price exceeds the fair market value of the company.
- The amount exceeding the fair market value is treated as income and is taxed accordingly. For example, if the fair market value of a startup's share is Rs 10, but it is sold to an investor for Rs 20, the Rs 10 difference is taxed as income.
- The term "Angel Tax" originates from the wealthy investors, known as "angels," who invest substantial amounts in high-risk, early-stage startups and ventures that have not yet gained widespread recognition.

20. The Great Nicobar project

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment and ecology

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

About the great Nicobar Islands:

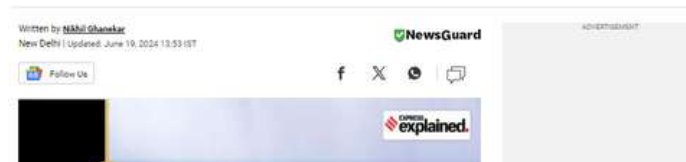
The opposition has described the proposed Rs 72,000-crore infra upgrade at the Great Nicobar Island as a "grave threat" to the island's indigenous inhabitants and fragile ecosystem, and demanded "immediate suspension of all clearances" and a "thorough, impartial review of the proposed project, including by the Parliamentary committees concerned".

Great Nicobar, the southernmost of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are a cluster of about 836 islands in the eastern Bay of Bengal. The two groups of which are separated by the 150-km wide Ten Degree Channel.
- The Andaman Islands lie to the north of the channel, and the Nicobar Islands to the south. Indira Point on the southern tip of Great Nicobar.. Island is India's southernmost point, less than 150 km from the northernmost island of the Indonesian archipelago.

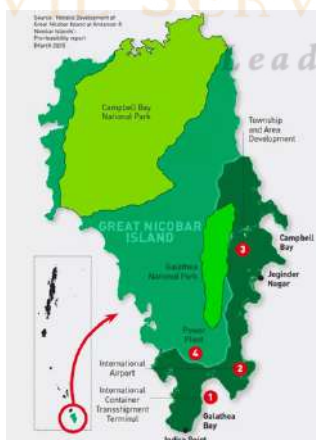
Strategic imperative and environment concern in Great Nicobar project

The proposed Rs 72,000-crore infra upgrade at the Great Nicobar Island is facing criticism from conservationists. Why does India want to develop the island, and what does the proposed project entail? We explain.



The Great Nicobar Island project, a Rs 72,000 crore multi-development project, was given environmental clearance by the Environment Ministry in November 2022.

- The project includes an international container trans-shipment terminal, a greenfield international airport, township development, and a 450 MVA gas and solar-based power plant over 16,610 hectares on the southern end of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- The Indian Navy will control the port, while the airport will have dual military-civilian functions and cater to tourism.
- The government's primary goal is to leverage the island's strategic location for economic and strategic reasons.
- The island is equidistant from Colombo to the southwest and Port Klang and Singapore to the southeast, and it is close to the East-West international shipping corridor, which allows it to become a hub for cargo ships.
- Strategic and security reasons are also important, as India is wary of China's increasing presence in the Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific.



21. New plant species found in Arunachal

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Environment

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

A team of researchers from the Arunachal Pradesh Regional Centre (APRC), Botanical Survey of India (BSI), has discovered a new plant species in the Mandala area of West Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh

New plant species found in Arunachal

CORRESPONDENT

ITANAGAR, June 20: A team of researchers from the Arunachal Pradesh Regional Centre (APRC), Botanical Survey of India (BSI), has discovered a new plant species in the Mandala area of West Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh. The team has described the new herbaceous plant species, named *Petrocosmea arunachalense*.

Belonging to the family Gesneriaceae, *Petrocosmea arunachalense* is the second known species of the genus, *Petrocosmea*, found in India. This significant discovery adds to the botanical diversity



ty and underscores the rich flora of Arunachal Pradesh.

The detailed research findings have been published in the latest issue of the *Nordic Journal of Botany*. The discovery was led by Dr Krishna Chowlu, Scientist-D, along with researchers Akshath Shenoy and Ajit Ray from APRC, Itanagar.

The team has described the new herbaceous plant species, named *Petrocosmea arunachalense*.

- Belonging to the family Gesneriaceae, *Petrocosmea arunachalense* is the second known species of the genus, *Petrocosmea*, found in India. This significant discovery adds to the botanical diversity and underscores the rich flora of Arunachal Pradesh. The detailed research findings have been published in the latest issue of the *Nordic Journal of Botany*. The discovery was led by Dr Krishna Chowlu, Scientist-D, along with researchers Akshath Shenoy and Ajit Ray from APRC, Itanagar.
- Their work highlights the ongoing efforts to explore and document the unique plant biodiversity of the region.

22. The Casimir Effect

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science and Tech

Importance for: Mains

Source: Popular Machine

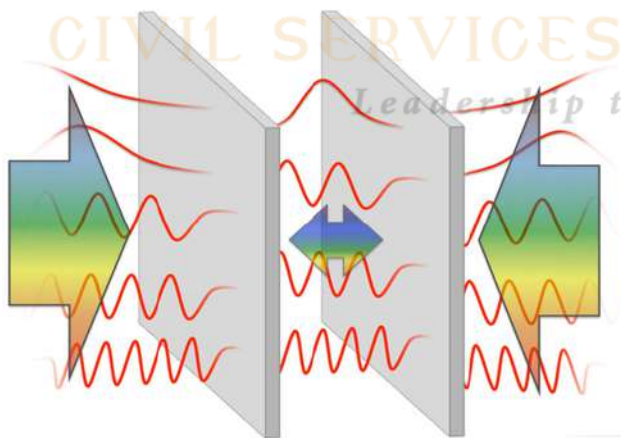
Key highlights:

Scientists recently discovered how to control the Casimir Effect and supercharge tiny machines.

About Casimir Effect:

The Casimir effect is a physical phenomenon that occurs in quantum field theory where two uncharged conducting plates, positioned very closely, experience an attractive force known as the Casimir force.

- This force arises from the quantum vacuum fluctuations of the electromagnetic field between the plates. In quantum field theory, the vacuum is not truly empty but rather filled with fleeting virtual particles and fluctuations in electromagnetic fields. Even though the space between the plates may seem empty, it's actually filled with virtual particles constantly appearing and disappearing.
- These particles influence the electromagnetic field, leading to a net attraction between the plates. The effect was first predicted in 1948 by Dutch physicist Hendrik Casimir during his research on colloidal solutions.



23. Amit Shah Proposes Large Ponds for NE Flood Control

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Infrastructure

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Key highlights:

On Sunday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah proposed a series of measures to tackle the recurring flood issues in Northeast India, particularly in relation to the Brahmaputra River. He also reviewed broader flood management strategies for the country, emphasizing the use of technology and long-term planning.

Construction of Large Ponds:

Objective:

- To divert and store the water of the Brahmaputra River. Benefits: Helps in flood control by storing excess water. Promotes agriculture, irrigation, and tourism in the region. Benefits the local economy by reducing flood damage and improving water availability.
- Utilization of ISRO Data: Satellite Imagery: Use satellite data provided by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for better flood and water management. Forecasting: Improve the forecast system for river water levels to enhance preparedness and response.

Long-term Flood Management Policy:

Comprehensive Strategy: Develop a far-reaching and integrated policy for flood mitigation.

Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF):

Review preparations to deal with potential GLOF events, which can cause sudden and severe flooding.

Addressing Soil Erosion and Siltation:

- Non-perennial Rivers: Focus on rivers that are prone to soil erosion and siltation, which exacerbates flooding.
- Upgrading Systems: Efforts to upgrade forecasting systems for better management of flood-prone rivers.

Contextual Background:**Floods in Northeast India:**

- The Brahmaputra River and its tributaries frequently cause severe flooding in the Northeast, impacting lives, property, and the economy.
- The region's topography and climate contribute to the intensity and frequency of floods.

Technological Integration:

- Utilizing ISRO's satellite data can significantly improve flood prediction and management, enabling timely and accurate responses.

Shah pitches for creation of large ponds in NE for flood control

Call for using ISRO data for flood management



Union Home Minister Amit Shah chairs a meeting to review flood preparedness in the country, in New Delhi on Sunday. – PTI

A CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, June 23: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that at least 50 large ponds in the Northeast should be constructed so that the water of the Brahmaputra river could be diverted and stored in those ponds.

"It will help in developing

agriculture, irrigation and tourism in those areas at a low cost and also help in tackling the floods, and will eventually benefit the local economy," Shah said while chairing a high-level meeting to review the preparedness of flood management in New Delhi.

Shah also reviewed long-term measures to formulate a comprehensive and far-

reaching policy to mitigate the problem of floods in the country.

Shah also reviewed the preparations to deal with the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF). He also emphasized on optimum use of satellite imagery provided by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) by various agencies for flood and water

management.

Stating that the non-perennial rivers are prone to soil erosion and siltation, resulting in floods, Shah directed that efforts should be made to upgrade the forecast system of the water level of rivers for better flood management.

SEE PAGE 2

24. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council 2024

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Concerning GST Council:

It is a constitutional body tasked with offering suggestions on matters about the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rollout in India.

According to Article 279A of the Indian Constitution, the President of India may form the GST Council, a combined forum of the Federal and State governments, with the following members:

- As chairman, the Union Finance Minister
- The Union Minister of State responsible for Finance and Revenue
- The Minister responsible for finance or taxes, or any other Minister each State Government designates



In India, it is an indirect tax that has taken the place of numerous other indirect taxes, including services tax, VAT, and excise duty.

On March 29, 2017, the GST Act was approved by Parliament and went into force on July 1st, 2017.

- The entire nation is governed by a single domestic indirect tax code.

It is a comprehensive, multi-phase, destination-based tax that is applied across the whole supply chain—from the producer to the final customer—of products and services.

The tax is imposed under the GST framework at each point of sale.

Both state and central GST are applied on intrastate sales.

The Integrated GST is applied to all interstate sales.



25. World Bank to Fund Assam's Rural Connectivity Improvement

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science and technology

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Key highlights:

The World Bank has approved a \$452 million funding proposal to enhance rural connectivity in Assam by constructing bridges across the state. The project, named the Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP), is aimed at improving infrastructure, boosting economic activity, and enhancing access to essential services for the rural population.

World Bank to provide \$452 million to Assam to improve rural connectivity

■ Dispur plans to construct 1,184 bridges in rural areas

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 25: The Assam government, through the Indian government, approached the World Bank for funding improvements in rural connectivity by constructing bridges in different parts of the state. After a long process, the World Bank has finally given its approval to the proposal and decided to provide \$452 million to Assam for this purpose.

The state government has entrusted the Public Works Road Department (PWRD), Assam (Externally-Aided Project), to implement the project dubbed



bridges across Assam, and 34 districts in the state have been divided into four areas for this purpose. World Bank sources said its Board of Executive Directors recently ap-

proved a loan of more than \$452 million within the next six years are expected against the earlier costs for people to journey to these places. The ARBPP will also connect almost 6,53,000 women-led textile and handicraft producers, living within 2 km of roads or collection points. Electronic vehicles and logistics hubs set up through the Program will help gain access to regional markets with reduced emissions. The Program will help to strengthen the Assam Public Works Road Department's financial and procurement processes using the state's own systems and provide training to improve

Key Details:

Funding and Implementation:

- Amount: \$452 million provided by the World Bank.
- Implementing Agency: Public Works Road Department (PWRD), Assam (Externally-Aided Project).
- Scope: Construction of 1,184 rural bridges across 34 districts divided into four zones.

Project Objectives:

- Resilience and Management: Strengthen the resilience and management of roads and bridges to ensure year-round connectivity.
- Beneficiaries: Improve connectivity for over 1.8 million people, particularly during extreme weather events.
- Economic Impact: Facilitate access to wholesale markets, schools, hospitals, and workplaces for residents of 1,739 villages.
- Savings: Expected savings of more than \$82 million over six years due to reduced travel costs and improved logistics.

26. Policy Approach to Conservation in India

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Conservation

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

The policy approach to conservation in India faces two primary conflicts: conservation versus resource extraction by local communities, and conservation versus economic development. This approach has often been inconsistent, influenced by the competition among national, state, and local political elites.



PESA Act 1996:

About:

- The PESA Act was enacted in 1996 “to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas”.
- Part IX, comprising Articles 243-243ZT of the Constitution, contains provisions relating to municipalities and cooperative societies.

Provisions:

- Under the Act, Scheduled Areas are those referred to in Article 244(1), which says that the provisions of the Fifth Schedule shall apply to the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in states other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.
- The Fifth Schedule provides for a range of special provisions for these areas

How the PESA has boosted forest conservation in India

The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act empowered the Scheduled Tribes as political actors, and as they needed to protect trees for their livelihoods, it made them hostile to commercial timber and mining

G. Sampath

Gulzar, Saad, Apoorva Lal, and Benjamin Pasquale (2023). 'Representation and Forest Conservation: Evidence from India's Scheduled Areas'. *American Political Science Review* (2024) 118, 2, 764-783.

The policy approach to conservation in India has long grappled with two kinds of conflicts: conservation versus resource extraction by local communities, and conservation versus 'economic development'. The state has tended to follow a piecemeal approach, at times leaning one way, at other times the other, with the direction determined by competition between sections of the political elite at the national, state, and local levels. In such a scenario, it goes without saying that greater centralisation of political power, the greater the say of the national and/or state elites, which, predictably, would foster a privileging of the interests of big capital over that of local communities. In other words, deforestation driven by mining, power projects, commercial timber, big dams etc. could prevail over conservation



27. Javelin Anti-Tank Missile

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science & Tech.

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

In order to address the needs of the Indian military, India and the US have started conversations about co-producing American javelin missiles in India.

About the Anti-Tank Missile Javelin:

- It is an antitank guided missile (ATGM) system that is man-portable. U.S. defense giants Raytheon and Lockheed Martin collaborated on its development.
- It was intended to combat military vehicles with thinner skin and heavily armored vehicles like main battle tanks.
- The weapon can also be used against various kinds of targets, such as helicopters, bunkers, and fortifications.
- In 1996, it was initially deployed by the United States military.

Features:

- It weighs 22.1 kg and has dimensions of approximately 1.2 m by 127 mm in diameter.
- One 8.4 kg tandem-charge, high-explosive antitank (HEAT) warhead is carried by the missile.
- Its maximum qualified range is 2,500.
- It employs "fire-and-forget" technology, which enables it to navigate to the target using automated infrared guidance without the need for outside commands or target designation.



28. eSakshya App

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Internal Security

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Key highlights:

The eSakshya (e-evidence) software is being tested by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in advance of the three criminal legislation going into effect.

- It is a mobile-based application to help police record the scene of crime, search and seizure in a criminal case and upload the file on the cloud-based platform.
- Working The police official must upload a selfie after the procedure is complete. Each recording could be a maximum four minutes long and several such files could be uploaded for each First Information Report (FIR).
- This mobile application developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) will be available to all police stations which register and download the App.



29. Reasi Terrorist Attack and Its Implications

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Internal Security

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Hindu

Key highlights:

The Reasi terrorist attack on June 9, According to the article Published in The Hindu, it is coinciding with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third-term oath-taking ceremony, drew parallels to a similar attack on the Consulate General of India in Herat, Afghanistan, on May 23, 2014. Both attacks aimed to disrupt significant political events and embarrass the Indian leadership.

Reasi and the 'years-old' issue of cross-border terror

The Reasi terrorist attack of June 9, the first in the region, is a stark reminder of the years-old issue of cross-border terrorism. The attack, which targeted a police station, resulted in the death of a police officer and several others. The attack is seen as a direct challenge to India's sovereignty and a test of its ability to handle such threats. The article discusses the historical context of such attacks, particularly the Herat consulate attack in 2014, and the implications for India's internal security. It highlights the need for a comprehensive strategy to deal with cross-border terrorism, including improved intelligence gathering, border security, and domestic vigilance. The article also mentions the role of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in handling such threats.

Historical Context

- Herat Attack (2014):** Similar attack occurred three days before Modi's first swearing-in, with terrorists attempting to take hostages at the Indian consulate. The alert actions of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police prevented a major crisis.
- Pattern of Attacks:** Both incidents indicate a targeted approach to undermine significant political milestones in India.
- Ongoing Terrorist Challenge in Jammu and Kashmir**
- Persistence of Terrorism:** The region has been a hotspot for terrorist activities, with the Jammu division witnessing several incidents over the past months.
- Historical Roots:** Terrorism in J&K has been a major issue for nearly 35 years, exacerbated by Pakistan's support for separatist movements inspired by the success of the Afghan Jihad.

Pakistan's Role and Strategic Intent

- **Support for Separatism:** In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Pakistani leaders like Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto backed separatist movements in J&K, using terror as a tool.
- **Dialogue and Diplomacy:** Despite periods of dialogue, such as the Composite Dialogue initiated in 1998, Pakistan has consistently avoided addressing India's terrorism concerns.

India's Counter-Terrorism Measures

- **Early 1990s:** Development of counter-insurgency strategies to manage terrorism within J&K.
- **Election of 1996:** Resumption of political activities in J&K, signaling India's confidence in controlling terrorism.
- **Diplomacy Over Force:** Successive Indian governments, including those of Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh, and Modi, prioritized diplomatic engagement over military action despite public pressure.

Military Responses to Terrorism

- **Kargil Conflict (1999):** Full-scale military response to Pakistani intrusion, differentiating between conventional warfare and terrorism.
- **Surgical Strikes and Pre-Emption:** Limited military actions post-Uri attack (2016) and Balakot aerial strike (2019) introduced the doctrine of pre-emption against imminent terrorist threats.



30. Assamese astrophysicist, colleague discover gamma-ray emitting collisional ring galaxy system 'Kathryn's Wheel'

Paper: GS-III

Topics: Science & Tech

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Key highlights:

A groundbreaking discovery has been made by Prof. Dhruba Jyoti Saikia, a leading radio astrophysicist from Assam, and Prof. Vaidehi S Paliya of the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA).

- They have identified a gamma-ray emitting collisional ring galaxy system named 'Kathryn's Wheel', located about 30 million light years from the Milky Way.

Significance of the Discovery:

First-ever identification of a collisional ring galaxy system detected in the gamma-ray band.

Highlights the importance of high-resolution, multi-wavelength observations in astrophysical research.

Discovery Details:

- The system, named 'Kathryn's Wheel', is characterized by intense star-forming activities surrounding a central spiral galaxy.
- It was identified using data from NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope, specifically the Large Area Telescope instrument.

Mechanism of Formation:

- The shock waves from the collision sweep up interstellar gas, creating star-forming regions and gas-poor galaxies.
- A well-known example of such a system is the Cartwheel galaxy.
- 'Kathryn's Wheel' is located in a crowded, low-latitude area near the galactic plane, making it difficult to identify due to dust obscuration.
- The presence of a bright nearby star, 'HD 150915', added to the observational challenges.

Implications and Applications

Astrophysical Research:

- This discovery serves as a test bed to explore the origin and transport of cosmic rays.
- It provides insights into the connection between cosmic rays and star-forming activities.

Technological Advancements:

- The use of high-resolution, multi-wavelength observational techniques is crucial for future astrophysical discoveries.

Educational and Research Opportunities:

- This discovery emphasizes the importance of collaboration among Indian research institutions and highlights the capabilities of Indian scientists in contributing to global astrophysical research.

Indian Astronomers Discover New Star Ring 'Kathryn's Wheel' 30 Million Light Years Away

The collision occurred in a star formation area, leading to the production of cosmic rays, radiation, and interstellar gas, ultimately causing gamma-ray emissions.



Moinak Pal | Updated Jun 13, 2024, 11:36 IST



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Leadership through knowledge...



GENERAL STUDIES - V

CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVER'S POINT
Leadership through knowledge...

1. Tezpur Litchi -Agricultural Expansion and Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

Paper: GS-V

Topics: Economy

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Why in the news:

- Assam, specifically Tezpur, is known for biodiversity and natural beauty.
- Tezpur Litchi, is a renowned produce with a GI tag since 2015.
- Unique taste, flavor, and attributes.
- These litchis are prized for their outstanding quality, delectable flavor, and juicy crimson pulp.
- It's important to remember that a Geographical Indication (GI) is a label applied to goods that are associated with a certain region and have characteristics or a reputation unique to that region.

Tezpur Litchi: Assam's pride and a biodiversity gem

OUR CORRESPONDENT

TEZPUR, June 3: The north-eastern state of Assam is a treasure trove of biodiversity and natural beauty. Known for its tropical rainforests, bamboo groves, and national parks, Assam also boasts a variety of indigenous agricultural and fruit crops. Among its most celebrated produce is the Tezpur Litchi.

The two-hitta litchi orchard at Litchi Park, the pride of Assam, was granted the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2015, recognizing its unique taste and flavour. This accolade confirms that these delectable fruits originate solely from the picturesque region of Tezpur, protecting them from imitations produced elsewhere.

Tezpur litchi is renowned for its distinctive size, shape, flavor, and juicy pulp unique to this area. The fruit contains 60 percent juice, 3 percent rind, 19 percent seed, and 13 percent skin. Its high pulp and juice content make it ideal for making squash and packed juice. Each bite of Tezpur litchi encapsulates the essence of Tezpur, a town nestled in the heart of Assam. The fertile soil and perfect climatic conditions in Tezpur create an ideal environment for these luscious fruits to thrive.

Tezpur litchi is grown entirely under organic con-

ditions, without the use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Notably, it is famous for its special varieties, such as those grown around Patai-Puloi and the Patai Litchi garden. Litchi cultivation is common in many households. Popular varieties of Tezpur litchi include Boshaya, Balaiali, Desi, Bachi and Piyali.

The two-hitta litchi orchard at Litchi Park was established by noted litterateur Late Padmanath Gohain Baruah between 1922 and 1934, during his tenure as chairman of the Tezpur Municipal Board. In Porvass, approximately 400 bighas of land are dedicated to litchi farming, with the Patai Litchi orchard founded by Late Surjya Prasad Shing in 1954. Litchi from Porvass are exported to cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Raipur, and Madhya Pradesh, as well as across the country.

Earlier this June, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa

Sarma flagged off a consignment of 450 kg of Tezpur Litchi to London. Since then, various Tezpur litchi varieties, including Boshaya, Balaiali, and Shuli, have garnered widespread international acclaim for their unique taste and flavour. The consignment was a landmark for Assam's produce, as it was the first time a consignment of Tezpur Litchi was sent abroad.

Tezpur Litchi is renowned for its unique taste and flavour. The consignment was a landmark for Assam's produce, as it was the first time a consignment of Tezpur Litchi was sent abroad. Tezpur Litchi is renowned for its unique taste and flavour. The consignment was a landmark for Assam's produce, as it was the first time a consignment of Tezpur Litchi was sent abroad.

Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma praised the taste of Tezpur Litchi. Speaking to *The Sentinel*, Tourism, Industrial and Social Worker Sarma expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for initiating the effort to popularize Tezpur Litchi both nationally and internationally. He expressed his hope that the GI tag would help to improve the economic condition of small and marginal farmers in Sonitpur district.

Sarma believes this endeavour will significantly improve the economic conditions of local farmers. He emphasized the importance of focusing on long-term sustainability to encourage more farmers to leverage the benefits of the GI tag granted to Tezpur Litchi.

Sarma highlighted that Tezpur Litchi is renowned for its unmatched quality, tantalizing flavour, and appealing appearance. Each bite offers a burst of juiciness, and its vibrant red hues enhance its visual appeal. The pleasant aroma and delectable tang make it an irresistible treat for fruit enthusiasts. "If you haven't tasted the litchi of Tezpur, you haven't truly experienced the fruit of its finest," he remarked.

Earlier, MP Tezpur HCP

Pulak Lochan Das, formally inaugurated the renewed Tezpur Litchi cultivation on an additional 202 bighas of land at Porvass in Tezpur. Supported by NABARD, the Sonitpur Agriculture Department, and Assam Agricultural University, Agnigarh Producer Company Ltd has been promoted to unite small and marginal farmers in an around Tezpur. This initiative aims to leverage the GI tag to maximize benefits for farmers. A comprehensive blueprint has been prepared to help these farmers expand their cultivation area by an additional 202 bighas.

Deputy Commissioner Debajyoti Mohanta stated that the expansion aims to meet the high demand in growing markets for Tezpur Litchi while making it a sustainable venture for farmers. He assured that the administration would provide all possible help and support to achieve this goal.

Economic Impact

- Export projects under the direction of Agnigarh Producer Company Ltd.
- Cooperation with government organizations such as Assam Agricultural University, APEDA, and NABARD.
- Improvement of the Sonitpur district's small and marginal farmers' economic situation.
- For farmer wellbeing, long-term sustainability is prioritized.

Promotion and Public Reception

- Initiatives to spread awareness of Tezpur Litchi both locally and beyond.
- Support of farmers' economic empowerment and sustainability.



2. Dr. Bangshi Dhar Baruah

Paper: GS-V

Topics: Personalities

Importance for: Mains

Source: Assam Tribune

Today, on his 100th birth anniversary. A formidable name in Assam's medical fraternity, Dr Bangshi Dhar Baruah was a pioneer in the field of medical education in the State.

Dr Bangshi Dhar Baruah: A centenary tribute

SIDDHANTHA BARUAH

A formidable name in Assam's medical fraternity, Dr Bangshi Dhar Baruah was a pioneer in the field of medical education in the State. Till his last days, he was engaged in the field of medical education. He completed his schooling in the Government Boys' High School and St. Xavier's College, Guwahati, before obtaining his MBBS degree from the Calcutta Medical College in 1946 with honours in Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology.

He started his professional career by joining the Assam Medical College as a Demonstrator of Pathology in 1947, the very year the college, which was the first medical college of Assam, was founded. He switched

over to Pathology and later proceeded to England for post graduate studies where he obtained his PhD degree in Pathology from the University of Sheffield in 1956. Subsequently, he obtained a post-doctoral fellowship from the British Empire Cancer Research Council, London. He also worked at the Royal Cancer Hospital, London.

Despite his flourishing career and having the rare opportunity to work with some of the pioneers in the field of Oncological Pathology, Dr Baruah chose to return to his homeland and work towards the development of medical education in the region. He established the Cancer Research Centre and worked in the Department of Pathology and Cancer Research, University of Sat-

raswati. He was a Professor of Pathology and Microbiology from 1968 till his retirement in 1982. He also held the post of Vice-Chancellor, Assam Medical College, Guwahati, from 1983 to 1987. He was a member of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and a member of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS).

Being research oriented, Dr Baruah participated and presented papers in a number of national and international seminars and conferences including WHO seminars, as well as in various national and international journals, which have been widely acknowledged. He was a member of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and a member of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS).

For research projects that would sustain the future research activities of the region, Dr Baruah played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Bangshi Dhar Baruah Research Centre at Dibrugarh. He set up the facility and developed it as a premier establishment for medical research in the region. In 1987, he was awarded the prestigious Sankar Das Gupta Award for his contribution to the field of medical research.

Today, on his 100th birth anniversary, we, the family members of the late Dr Bangshi Dhar Baruah, remember him as a remarkable individual who dedicated his life to the pursuit of knowledge and perfection in his chosen field. We are certain that his contributions have immensely benefited the people of this region and that his legacy will continue to live on through work done in the institutions that he built.

Historical and Cultural Significance

- Orchards established by notable figures: Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Surjya Prasad Shing.
- Exportation to major Indian cities and international markets.
- Recent export to London flagged off by Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Early Life and Education:

Birth: June 13, 1924, in Dibrugarh, Assam.

Schooling: Dibrugarh Government Boys High School.

Higher Education:

I.Sc from Cotton College, Guwahati.

MBBS from Calcutta Medical College (1946) with honors in Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology.

Professional Career

Initial Career:

Joined Assam Medical College in 1947 as a Demonstrator of Physiology.

Switched to Pathology.

Significance

Role in Medical Development: Instrumental in advancing medical education and research in Assam.

Inspiration: His dedication and achievements serve as an inspiration for medical professionals and researchers.

**3. Ambubachi Mela**

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Assam Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Ambubachi Mela to be held on the premises of the Kamakhya Temple in the city on June 22.

About Ambubachi Mela:

- Where: It is an annual Hindu fair held at the historic Kamakhya Temple.
- When: It is celebrated during the monsoon season that happens to fall during the Assamese month Ahaar, around the middle of June.
- Occasion: It is the celebration of the yearly menstruation course of goddess Maa Kamakhya.
- Other names: This mela is also known as Ameti or Tantric fertility festival since it is closely associated with the Tantric Shakti cult prevalent in eastern parts of India.
- The festival marks the annual menstruation of the presiding Goddess in the Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam.
- The temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the yoni (female genital) symbolized by a rock.

4. Swahid Kushal Konwar

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Assam Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Assam Tribune

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma paid homage to Swahid Kushal Konwar through a poem, highlighting the enduring spirit of bravery and selflessness that defined this stalwart of Assam's struggle for independence

About:

- Kushal Konwar was a notable figure in the Indian freedom struggle, particularly during the Quit India Movement. Born on March 21, 1905, in Chaodang Chariali of Ghiladhari Mouza, Golaghat district (then part of Shivsagar district) of Assam, Konwar hailed from a family that descended from the royal lineage of the Ahom kingdom, originally bearing the surname 'Konwar'. He later attended Bezbaruah School, where he was known for his keen intellect and deep sense of justice.

- Konwar's dedication to India's independence was unwavering. His resolve culminated in his execution on June 15, 1943, at 4:30 am in Jorhat Jail. His sacrifice was in line with Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy: "He alone can be a true satyagraha who knows the art of living and dying."
- Konwar's legacy as a freedom fighter who faced the gallows with unflinching courage continues to inspire generations. His story is a testament to the indomitable spirit of Assam and its unyielding contribution to India's independence.



Writer: Bano Kobang, Sunpahi, Mising Coneng, Axomiya Kristir Samuh Abhash, Atit Asom.

Music: Bishnu Rabha composed more than one hundred songs, which are now collectively known as Rabha Sangeet.

Director: Bishnu Rabha directed Assamese film Siraj (1948)

• Actor: Bishnu Rabha performed several times in Ban Theater, Tezpur. He also played a role in Assamese movie Era Bator Sur (1956)



5.Remembering Kalaguru

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Assam Art and Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Assam Tribune

Remembering the great cultural icon on his death anniversary. Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rava's contribution to the enrichment of Assamese music, dance, drama, painting, and literature will be remembered forever.

Bishnu Prasad Rabha (1909-1969)

Bishnu Prasad Rabha was born in Dacca, Bengal Presidency, British India on 31 January 1909. His mother's name was Gethi Mech and father's name was Raibahadur Gopal Chandra Mushahary, who was working as a police under British regime. He was born to a Bodo family, but since he was raised by a Rabha family, he adopted 'Rabha' surname .

- Bishnu Prasad was a versatile genius. His dancing prowess mesmerised the audience. He was bestowed the title Kalaguru by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan at Varanashi following a recital of the Tandava dance there.
- Bishnu Rabha passed away in 1969. He laid his life for Assam, for it's people. His contributions to the whole *Assamese society will be remembered forever. 20th June of every year is celebrated as 'Bishnu Rabha Divash'* in Assam commemorate this great personality of Assam.

6. Azan Pir Award to Anwar Hussain

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Assam Art and Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Assam Tribune

The State government conferred the 'Azan Pir Award 2023' on the noted artist and cinema producer Anwar Hussain for his contributions such as Sarapat and Lanka Dahan and more, at a function held on the occasion of the 56th death anniversary of cultural doyen Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha.

Key Highlights:

The national award carries a citation, a seleng sadar, a xorai, and Rs 3 lakh in cash.

- The State government also presented the Bishnu Prasad Rabha Award 2024 to noted artists Dharmeswar Nath and Durlabh Bhattacharya for their contributions in their respective fields.
- The Geeti Kobi Parvati Prasad Baruah Award was presented to Swaswati Bhattacharya
- The Amalprabha Das Award was given to Bandana Dutta. The Chandraprabha Saikiani Award was given to Dr Sunita Changkakati.
- The Mamoni Raisom Goswami Memorial Award was conferred on litterateur Dr. Karavi Deka Hazarika, while the Ganesh Gogoi Award was given to litterateur Anish Uuj Zaman.



The Ahmed Ali Baskandi Award was given to artist Taren Boro and the Bir Raghab Maran Award was presented to Jibeswar Mohan.

The Syed Abdul Malik Award was presented to Jayanta Madhab Borah. The State award carries a citation, a seleng sadar, a xorai, and Rs 2 lakh in cash. On occasion, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma highlighted Ra bha's relation with Tezpur and his contributions to uniting various traditions and cultures. He also touched on the humanistic dimensions of the Kalaguru.



7. Pragyan Bharti Scheme

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Schemes

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Assam Tribune

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday reviewed the working of 'Pragyan Bharti', a fee-waiver scheme for free admission in academic institutes under the state's higher education department.

Key Highlights:

According to the scheme, all students whose parental incomes are less than Rs 2 lakh per annum are eligible for free admission to pursue higher education courses in the state.

- the education department officials to launch a widespread awareness campaign about the Pragyan Bharti scheme so that a maximum number of eligible students can apply for a fee waiver under it.

CM of Assam, issued instructions that from now onwards, ration cards under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) should also be treated as supporting documents in lieu of income certificates for the Pragyan Bharti scheme



8. Cane and Bamboo Crafts of Assam

Paper: GS- V

Topics: Assam Art and Culture

Importance for: Mains

Source: The Sentinel

Assam is renowned for its rich tradition in cane and bamboo crafts. These crafts play a vital role in the cultural life and economy of the state, with raw materials being readily available. Among these crafts, the cane-fan stands out for its unique designs and historical significance.



Cultural and Historical Significance:

Integral to Culture:

- The inhabitants of Assam have traditionally used various bamboo and cane products.

The cane-fan, with its distinctive designs, is an integral part of the cultural heritage of Assam.

Historical Usage:

- Cane-fans have been a symbol of heritage and nobility.
- Historically, these fans were presented as royal gifts to Ahom kings and British rulers, signifying honor and respect.
- They are a special attraction for both native and foreign tourists.

Heritage of the Xatras:

- The Xatras of Majuli have been manufacturing cane-fans along with other handicrafts since their establishment.
- These fans are decorated with 'Hengul-Haital' and sewn with velvet fabrics, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Xatras.

Industrialization and Commercialization

Current Status:

- Despite its historical and cultural significance, the production and commercial potential of cane fans have not been fully patronized.

Workshop Initiative:

- Majulir Xahitya has initiated a workshop aimed at the industrialization and commercialization of cane fans.
- The workshop, sponsored by Oil India Limited, Duliajan, and in collaboration with Auniati Higher Secondary School, will commence on July 8.

Training and Skill Development:

- The workshop will train selected youths in the preparation and use of Hengul-Haital, making of 'Lati' and 'Nal' (handle) of the fan, and knitting and tying of the fan.
- This initiative aims to equip participants with the skills needed to produce high-quality cane-fans and explore their commercial potential.



PRELIMS FACTS

CIVIL SERVICES ACHIEVER'S POINT
Leadership through knowledge...

1. Hoolock Gibbon

The Northeast Frontier railway (NFR) has set aside funding to build canopy bridges for Hoolock Gibbon, India's lone ape, to traverse a railway track that divides its preferred habitat in eastern Assam.

About Hoolock Gibbon:

- Gibbons, the smallest and fastest of the apes, dwell in tropical and subtropical forests in Southeast Asia.
- The hoolock gibbon is one of Earth's 20 gibbon species.
- Its range in Southeast Asia includes India, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Southern China.
- It is the only ape found in India.
- It can be found in Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura, all south of the Brahmaputra River.
- The Hollongapahar Gibbon Sanctuary in Assam contains the highest concentration of hoolock gibbons.



2. KAZA Summit

The inaugural Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (TFCA) summit has brought together over 400 delegates in Livingstone, a Zambian vacation town located on the northern side of the Victoria Falls.

About the KAZA Summit:

Objectives

- To evaluate progress made in establishing and developing the KAZA-TFCA since its start.
- To assess and track the progress of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016 and the implementation of the KAZA Treaty in 2011.
- Seeks renewed commitment from the existing leaders of the member countries.
- The summit's topic was "Leveraging KAZA's natural capital and cultural heritage resources as catalysts for inclusive socio-economic development of the eco-region".



3. Gariyoshi

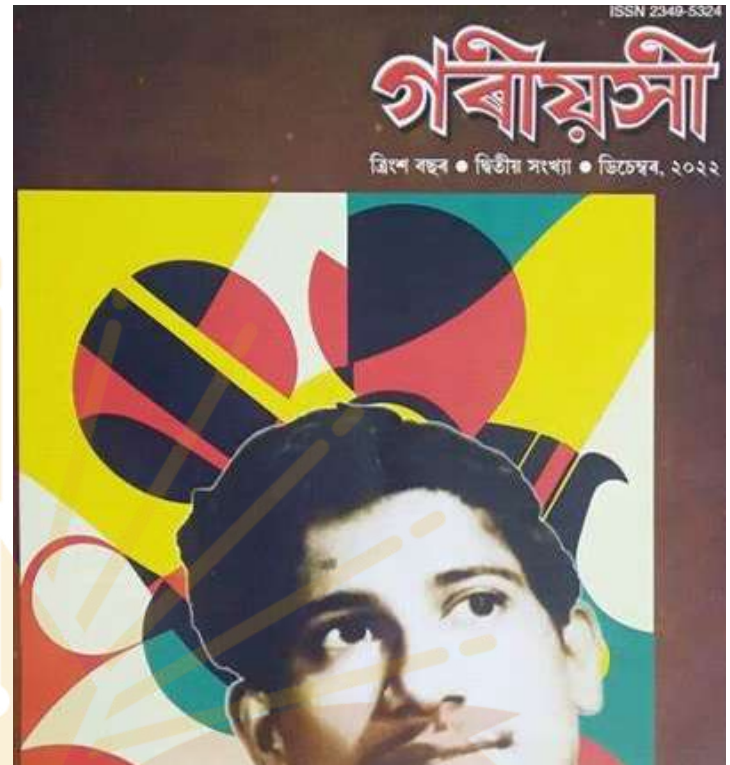
- Gariyoshi is a **monthly literary magazine founded in 1994** by Sahitya-Prakash.
- **Rita Chowdhury** currently serves as the editor
- Gariyoshi is a **monthly literary journal in Assamese**, Published by the **Sahitya-Prakash**, Tribune Building, Guwahati, .
- **Chandra Prasad Saikia** was the first editor and the founder of the company. In Every month, the magazine is published.
- **The first-ever use of QR codes was documented in the June 2024 issue of the Assamese literary journal Gariyoshi.** By introducing readers to a new method of material access, this innovative approach elevates the reading experience and brings the newspaper into the digital era.
- Gariyoshi's inclusion of QR codes not only shows that it is open to embracing new technology, but it also establishes a standard for other Assamese magazines to follow.
- This creative step promises significant developments in the way readers engage with and consume literary content in the area, opening doors to a plethora of possibilities for future issues.

Gariyoshi goes hi-tech

Monthly carries special article in QR code for the first time in an Assamese magazine

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 3: A special article in QR code (quick-response code) attached to the June 2024 is-



4. International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Gariyoshi is a monthly literary magazine founded in 1994 by Sahitya-Prakash.

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5. Ranjan Gogoi Honoured with UKILP Lifetime Achievement Award

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Ranjan Gogoi
honoured
with **UKILP**
Lifetime
Achievement
Award

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 4: Justice Ranjan Gogoi, former Chief Justice of India, was honoured with the prestigious UKILP Lifetime Achievement Award – 2024 by the UK-India Legal Partnership on May 31.

The award was presented to Justice Gogoi at UKILP's 'Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony' at the House of Lords, Palace of Westminster, London, UK.

The award comes in recognition of his Prolonged of



6. IIT Guwahati rises to 344th in QS World University Rankings 2025

QS World University Rankings 2025: IIT Guwahati bags 344th place, up 20 spots from previous year

By IIT Education Desk

Jun 05, 2024 01:06 PM IST



IIT Guwahati has bagged 344th position in QS World University Rankings 2025.



- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati has made significant strides in the global academic arena, securing the 344th position in the QS World University Rankings 2025.

QS World University Ranking 2025:

- The 2025 QS World University Rankings highlight significant improvements for Indian universities, with 61% rising in rank. IIT Bombay leads in India, climbing from 149th to 118th globally, followed by IIT Delhi and IISc Bangalore.
- Other notable advancements include IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras, and the University of Delhi. Globally, MIT remains the top institute, with Imperial College London and Harvard University tied for third. India excels in research but faces challenges in internationalization and faculty-student ratios.

7. Sunil Chhetri

- Sunil Chhetri announced his retirement from international football after India's 0-0 draw against Kuwait in their FIFA World Cup qualifier on June 6, sharing an emotional farewell message with the media.
- About Sunil Chhetri:
- Indian professional football player Sunil Chhetri was born on August 3, 1984, and currently plays forward for Bengaluru, an Indian Super League team.
- He is renowned for his leadership, goal-scoring prowess, and link-up play. In addition to being the most-capped player and the all-time leading goalscorer for the India national team, he ranks fourth among all international scorers.
- Chhetri was honored with the Padma Shri award in 2019, India's fourth-highest civilian honor, and the Arjuna Award in 2011 for his exceptional athletic achievement. He became the first football player to win India's top sporting accolade, the Khel Ratna Award, in 2021.



8. Somalia Wins Non-Permanent Seat on UN Security Council

- Being the first nation to have a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council since the 1970s, Somalia has accomplished a significant milestone.
- This development, which came to light following a vote in the 193-member UN General Assembly in which Somalia received 179 votes, represents a significant advancement in the nation's foreign policy and governance following decades of civil conflict. East Africa is supposed to hold this seat, and Somalia easily won it.

Historical Context of Somalia and UN Role :

- Following President Mohamed Siad Barre's ouster in 1991, Somalia descended into civil conflict. Leaders and clans at odds with one another fought for years. During these turbulent decades, the UN and the African Union (AU) have been instrumental in efforts to stabilize the nation and restore central administration. Al-Shabab, an Islamist terrorist organization, has also been targeted by the central government recently. These measures are becoming more effective as the foreign troops withdraw.



9. Carlos Alcaraz

- Alcaraz also became the youngest player to win all three Grand Slam titles.
- The French Open, also known as Roland-Garros, is an annual tennis tournament held over two weeks in May and June. Established in 1891 and played since 1928 on outdoor red clay courts at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France,
- The French Open is (since 1925) one of the four Grand Slam tournaments played each year, the other three being the Australian Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. Organised by the Fédération Française de Tennis (FFT), the French Open is the second of the four Grand Slam tournaments of the year to be played.
- In 1968, it was the first Grand Slam tournament to open to non-amateur players.
- Rafael Nadal holds the record for the most titles with 14. The current champion is Carlos Alcaraz, who recently won his first title.



10. Orunodoi Scheme

Assam dedicates the 10th of every month to the poverty alleviation scheme Orunodoi

It is a scheme of the Government of Assam launched on 2nd October 2020.

Under 'Orunodoi', monetary benefits have been envisaged for more than 24 lac poor households in the state.

The government of Assam will provide monthly financial assistance to the eligible beneficiaries for procuring medicines, pulses, and sugar.

On the tenth of every month, almost 17 lakh women receive a payment of Rs 1,250 apiece

Women being the primary caretakers of the family are kept as beneficiaries of the scheme.

The financial outlay for Orunodoi is ₹4,142 crore per annum.



11. Anamika Rajeev Becomes Indian Navy's First Woman Helicopter Pilot

- At INS Rajali, Arakkonam, Sub Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev created history by being the first female helicopter pilot in the Indian Navy. This significant accomplishment was made during the passing out procession last week. The 102nd course on helicopter conversion was finished.

Significance and Broader Impact

Sub Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev dispels gender preconceptions and makes it possible for other women to join the military by being the first woman to fly a helicopter. The Indian Navy has also become more inclusive and varied, as evidenced by Lieutenant Jamyang Tsewang's graduation as the first commissioned navy officer from the Union Territory of Ladakh. This incident demonstrates how the Indian Navy is committed to evolving and adapting, always enhancing its operational capabilities and generating new prospects for individuals aspiring to become pilots.



12. Mount Fuji

- It is the tallest peak in Japan, standing at 3,776 meters.
- It is situated only 100 km west of the Japanese capital city of Tokyo on Honshu Island, near the Pacific Coast.
- Unlike other famous high-elevation mountains in the world, Mt. Fuji is not part of a large mountain range.
- Even though this stratovolcano hasn't erupted since 1707, geologists still consider it to be active.
- It is made up of countless, several-meter-thick basaltic lava flows and features a noticeable summit crater.
- Its broad, spreading base and gentle slope combine to provide a stunning skyline that narrows to a majestic peak.
- There is a theory that the Pacific Plate subducting beneath the Philippine Plate is the primary driver of Mt. Fuji's volcanic activity.
- The majority of the year, Fuji's top is blanketed in snow despite being an active volcano.
- In 2013, Mount Fuji was designated as a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

Second Japan town blocks view of Mount Fuji in battle with problem tourists

Influencers blamed as unruly visitors disrupt community in their search for the perfect picture



13. Khagen Mahanta

- Rich tributes to the icon of Assamese folk music **Khagen Mahanta** on his death anniversary. His mellifluous folk songs and Bihugeets continue to rule the hearts of the people of Assam

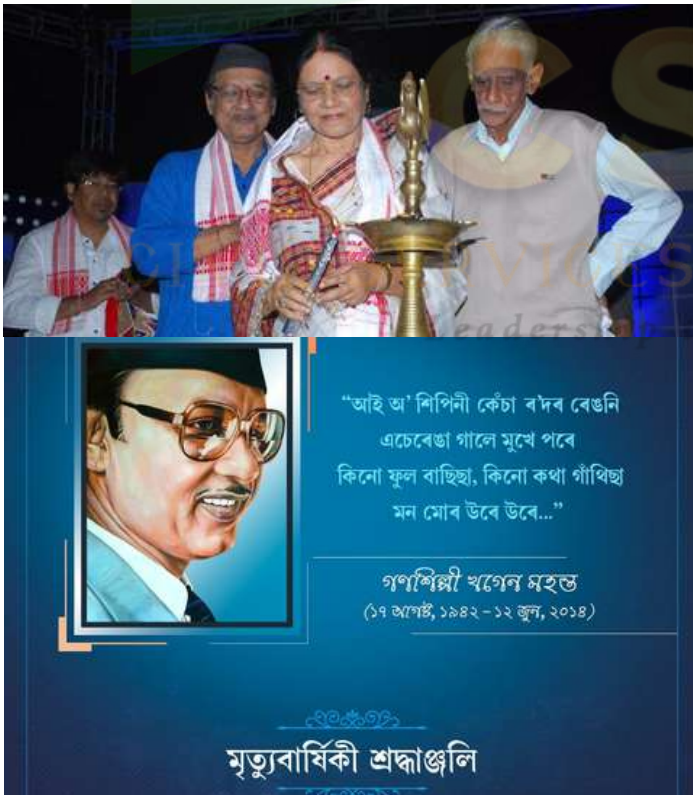
Khagen Mahanta was a singer and composer of folk and traditional music of Assam. Khagen Mahanta was a notable person in Assamese folk music and known as the "**King of Bihu**". His Bihu songs, Borgeet, and other folk songs remain popular in Assam. The artist, his wife Archana Mahanta, and son **Angaraag Mahanta**, known as Papon, represent one of the most influential families in Assamese music. **He died on 12 June 2014.**

•1988 - Film Craft Award

•1992 - Sangeet Natak Academy

•1994 - Shrimoy Award

•1999 - Sangeetacharya



14. Indian Army Launches 'Vidyut Rakshak' Monitoring System

- Vidyut Rakshak, an integrated generator tracking, protection, and control system enabled by the Internet of Things (IoT), was formally introduced by Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi, the Vice Chief of the Indian Army. The Army Design Bureau (ADB) developed the system, a significant advancement for the Indian Army during its "Year of Tech Absorption." The first Vidyut Rakshak production units were placed into operation during the inaugural ceremony.
- Technical Details and Characteristics
- Vidyut Rakshak intends to equip Indian Army engines with cutting-edge Internet of Things technology to boost their performance.
- Any type, brand, model, or age of army generator can be used with this technique. Among the most crucial advantages is the ability to monitor generator parameters in real-time, identify problems before they arise, and automate control functions to reduce the amount of manual labor required.



'Vidyut Rakshak': Indian Army officer's innovation to operate multiple generators from single system remotely

15. The Visakhapatnam Port is ranked 19th in the world for efficiency.

- According to the renowned Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) 2023, Visakhapatnam Port has risen to 19th spot alongside Mundra Port. The CPPI 2023 is a collaborative effort between S&P Global Market Intelligence and the World Bank. It assigns a grade to container ports all across the world based mostly on how long ships remain in port. This indicator, which demonstrates how productive and well-run ports are, is a crucial benchmark in the marine industry.

Port of Visakhapatnam's Performance

- Under J M Baxi Ports & Logistics's management, Visakha Container Terminal Pvt Ltd operates with remarkable efficiency. Among the most crucial performance metrics are the number of moves per crane every hour, the turnaround times, and the amount of idle time at the berth. The port's improved ranking in the CPPL 2023 can be explained by all of these factors. Its rating of 19th in the 2023 rankings indicates that it is a more efficient port than the well-known Indian port of Mundra.

20 rankings in World Bank's Container Port Performance Index

The container terminal at Visakhapatnam port is run by J M Baxi Ports & Logistics



P. Manoj • ETInfra

Updated On Jun 6, 2024 at 08:28 AM IST

4832 Industry Prof



MUMBAI: State-owned Visakhapatnam Port has broken into the top 20 rankings in the Container Port Performance Index 2023 (CPPI 2023), developed by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence.

16. Lifetime achievement award to Dr Ngangom Bijoy Kumar Singh

- In recognition of his outstanding contributions towards the popularisation and expansion of eri culture in India and abroad, the president of the Zoological Society of India (ZSI) presented a lifetime achievement award to Dr Ngangom Bijoy Kumar Singh recently.
- Dr. Singh was conferred with the award at the 35th All India Congress of Zoology and International Conference held at the Department of Zoology, School of Studies of Life Science, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh in collaboration with ZSI on June 5 to 7, stated a press release.
- Dr. Singh, former director of Central Muga Eri Research & Training Institute, Lahdoigarh, Jorhat was associated with the Silk Board for more than 35 years and contributed significantly in re search and development of eri and muga culture

Dr NBK Singh receives award



GUWAHATI, July 12: In recognition of his outstanding contributions towards the popularisation and expansion of *eri* culture in India and abroad, the president of Zoological Society of India (ZSI) presented a lifetime achievement award to Dr Ngangom Bijoy Kumar Singh recently.

17. IIT G secures 87th rank globally in SDG 9

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati has secured the 87th rank globally in SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024. The institute has also shown improvements in its rankings for SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). These rankings assess universities worldwide based on their contributions to the United Nations' Sustainable 401-600 band for 2024. dating, peace, and justice. Among these

- **IIT Guwahati has gained 87th rank among the world's top 200 universities for SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). Development Goals (SDGs).**
- The 2024 edition of the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings is the sixth of its kind, featuring 2,152 universities from 125 countries and regions. The rankings are based on indicators across four broad areas – research, stewardship, outreach, and teaching.

IIT G secures 87th rank globally in SDG 9

Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 13: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati has secured the 87th rank globally in SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024.

The institute has also

Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2024 edition of the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings is the sixth of its kind, featuring 2,152 universities from 125 countries and regions. The rankings are based on indicators across four broad areas – research, stewardship, outreach, and teaching.

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Among these, IIT Guwahati has gained 87th rank among the world's top 200 universities for SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).

Besides, the institute's rankings have improved in SDG 1 (No Poverty) to the 401-600 band from 601-800

401-600 band for 2024.

"We are thrilled with our institute's achievements in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024. The marked improvements in SDG 1, SDG 4, SDG 6, and SDG 9 reflect our steadfast commitment to providing high-quality education and promoting sustainable devel-

18. Nassau County stadium in New York

- The makeshift **Nassau County cricket ground**, which was built specifically for the T20 World Cup, is all set to be demolished after the **New York leg of the event came to an end** with India's seven-wicket victory over co-hosts USA here.
- Built-in just over 100 days, the stadium became notorious for its challenging drop-in pitches, which were sourced from Adelaide. The massive structure sat on the edge of the 930-acre Eisenhower Park in Long Island
- The dismantling of the stadium has already begun and it will take around six weeks for the process to be completed. The stadium was constructed only in 106 days and the dismantling began within only a few hours after India's win over the USA
- The stadium had 10 drop-in pitches, four for the main ground and six for the adjacent training facility in Can tiague Park.

Nassau Cricket Stadium set for demolition

NEW YORK, June 13: The makeshift Nassau County cricket ground, which was built specifically for the T20 World Cup, is all set to be demolished after the New York leg of the event came to an end with India's seven-wicket victory over co-hosts USA here.

Built in just over 100 days, the stadium became notorious for its challenging drop-in pitches, which were sourced from Adelaide. The massive structure sat on the edge of the 930-acre Eisenhower Park in Long Island here.

The stadium had 10 drop-in pitches, four for the main ground and six for the adjacent training facility in Can tiague Park.

"After the last match is held at East Meadow on June 12, the stadium will be dismantled, the name chimed back to 1 as Vegas and another golf event, and Eisenhower Park will return to normal, but with a world-class cricket pitch left behind," a New York Times report had stated a few days ago.

The stadium that "almost popped up overnight" will be dismantled over a period of six weeks. It had a capacity of 34,000 and hosted a hot-soled crowd during India's marquee clash against Pakistan on June 9 with some tickets sold at an astronomical price of USD 2500 to USD 10,000.

India played four matches at the venue, including a warm-up game against Bangladesh after the ground was thrown open on June 1.

The drop-in pitches hosted eight matches and produced unpredictable and occasionally dangerous bounce, resulting in a particularly low-scoring



Built in just over 100 days, the stadium became notorious for its challenging drop-in pitches, which were sourced from Adelaide. The massive structure sat on the edge of the 930-acre Eisenhower Park in Long Island



19. Ghaggar River

The Punjab Chief Minister recently visited flood-prone regions along the Ghaggar River to assess ground-level flood mitigation efforts before the monsoon season.

About Ghaggar River:

- It is a seasonal river that flows only during the monsoon season.

Course:

- It rises from the Shivalik Range in northwestern Himachal Pradesh.
- The river then flows about 200 miles (320 km) southwest through Haryana state to meet the River Saraswati.
- It eventually dries up in the Thar Desert in Rajasthan.
- This seasonal river feeds two irrigation canals that extend into Rajasthan.
- The Hakra, which flows in Pakistan, is the continuation of the Ghaggar River in India, and they are together called the Ghaggar-Hakra River.



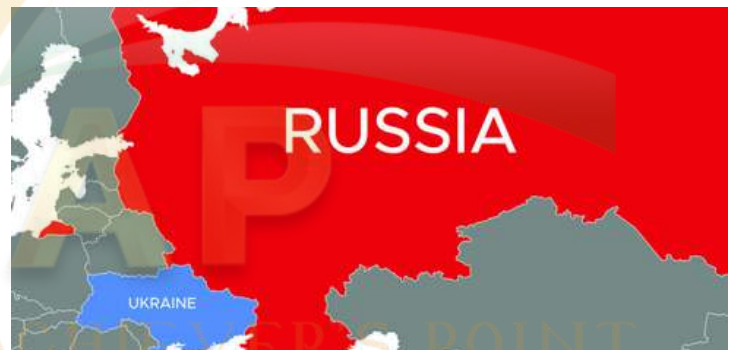
20. Joint Communiqué on a Peace Framework

Only measures acceptable to both **Russia and Ukraine** can lead to peace, India stated, as it opted to withdraw from the final agreement produced on June 16 at the end of a Peace Summit in Switzerland.

About:

- *The ongoing war in Ukraine, started by the Russian Federation, is causing immense human misery and global crises.*
- *On June 15-16, 2024, a high-level meeting was held in Switzerland to debate how to achieve a comprehensive, just, and long-lasting peace for Ukraine.*

Attendees reaffirmed their adherence to international law and the United Nations Charter, citing UN General Assembly resolutions A/RES/ES-11/1 and A/RES/ES-11/6.



India refuses to endorse Ukraine meet statement

Only proposals acceptable to both Russia and Ukraine can lead to peace, says New Delhi; communiqué calling for the protection of Ukraine's 'territorial integrity' signed by over 80 nations

Updated - June 17, 2024 06:41 am IST Published - June 16, 2024 09:15 pm IST - NEW DELHI



SUHASINI HAIDER



21. Olympic Day 2024

23 June. It is the date synonymous with Olympic Day every year.

- First made official in 1948, it is an annual celebration of sport, health, and togetherness,
- Each year a theme is coined for the commemorative day, in which people across the globe mark the founding of the International Olympic Committee, on 23 June 1894, at the Sorbonne in Paris.

International Olympic Day 2024 Theme:

- This year, the theme for International Olympic Day 2024 is 'Let's Move and Celebrate.'
- Inspired by the Olympic spirit of movement, this theme encourages people to find ways to move and celebrate the joy of movement. It emphasizes the importance of physical activity and healthy living while also highlighting the role of sports in promoting peace and development.



22. Nagastra 1

With the goal of precisely targeting enemy training camps, launch pads, and infiltrators without putting troop lives in danger, the army has acquired its first indigenous man-portable suicide drones.

Regarding:

- The first man-portable suicide drone made in India is the Nagastra 1 loitering munition, which was created by Economic Explosives Limited (EEL).
- By enhancing the army's ability to launch precise strikes against enemy training camps and infiltrators, these drones help to promote self-sufficiency in defense technology and lessen reliance on imports.
- Nagastra 1, which has the potential to be exported to friendly countries, demonstrates India's progress in creating affordable modern military systems.



23. Assam's longest MLA Phani Bhusan Choudhury resigns

Assam's longest-serving MLA for eight consecutive terms, Asom Gana Parishad's Phani Bhusan Choudhury on Tuesday won Lok Sabha elections from Barpeta constituency in Assam as a ruling alliance member.

- Choudhury, who has been an MLA from Bongaigaon legislative constituency in Assam Assembly since 1985, tasted victory in Lok Sabha elections in his second attempt. In the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, when AGP had no alliance with any other party, the MLA came fourth in Barpeta.
- A veteran leader of the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), a minor ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), ended his association with the 126-member Assam Assembly on Friday after more than 38 years. Phani Bhusan Choudhury, 72, was overcome with emotion after he submitted his resignation as a legislator from western Assam's Bongaigaon constituency to Assembly Speaker Biswajit Daimary. His election to the Lok Sabha from the Barpeta Parliamentary constituency necessitated the resignation

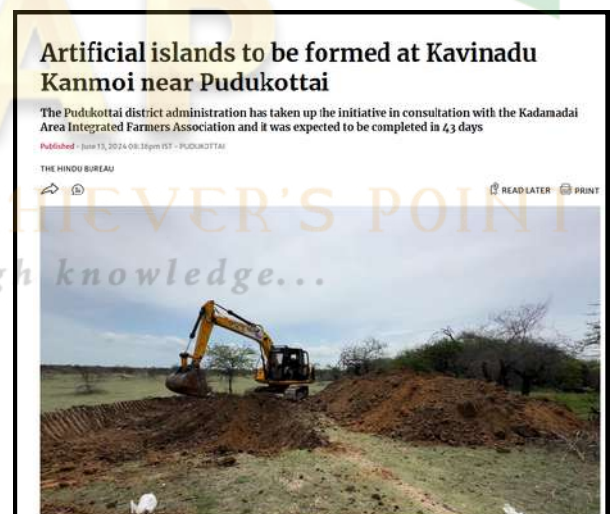


24. Artificial Islands Forming at Pudukottai's Kavinadu Kanmoi

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- By enhancing the army's ability to launch precise strikes against enemy training camps and infiltrators, these drones help to promote self-sufficiency in defense technology and lessen reliance on imports.
- Nagastra 1, which has the potential to be exported to friendly countries, demonstrates India's progress in creating affordable modern military systems.

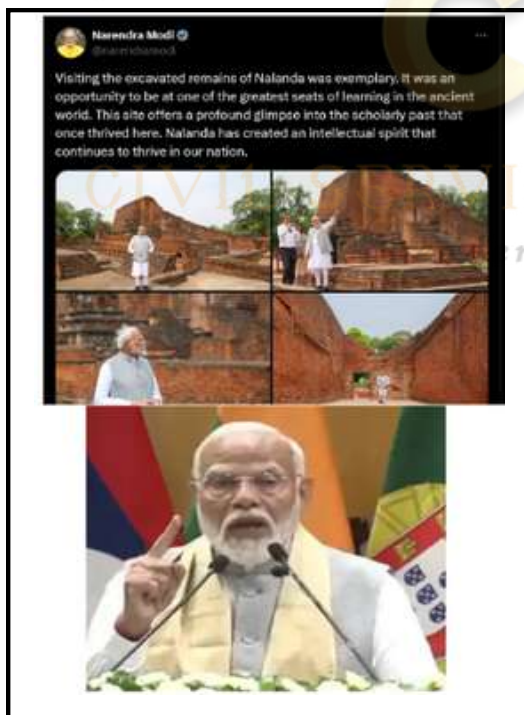


25. The new campus of Nalanda University in Bihar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University in Bihar, marking a significant milestone for the educational sector as it is located near the historic ruins of the ancient university in Rajgir.

About Nalanda University

- Nalanda University is a central research university located in Nalanda district's Rajgir in the state of Bihar, India. Designated as an Institute of National Importance (INI) and excellence, it is the flagship project of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, and the successor of the famed Nalanda monastery located in the same city.
- It is an international university supported by 18 member countries of the East Asia Summit and was initially proposed by the former President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, and Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen who served as the first Chancellor of the university. Nālandā University is solely a postgraduate institute, offering only Master's and PhD degrees across multiple departments.



26. Rupkonwar Memorial Award presented to Hemaprabha Chutia

In commemoration of the 121st birth anniversary of Rupkonwar Jyotiprasad Agrawala, one of the State's greatest artists of all time, the All Dibrugarh District Students' Union (ADDSU) today gave away the Rupkonwar Memorial Award to noted handloom weaver and artist Hemaprabha Chutia, a Padma Shri awardee.

Hemaprabha Chutia:

Hemaprabha Chutia (born September 22, 1955, is an Indian handloom weaver and artist based in Dibrugarh, Assam who has crafted a variety of creations using diverse fabrics such as cotton, silk, wool, and intricately cut bamboo.

·2023: Awarded the Padma Shri in New Delhi by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu in the field of Art.

·2021: Received the Assam Gaurav Award, one of the highest civilian awards presented by the Government of Assam.

·2018-2020: Received the Aai Kanaklata Award, Bakul Bon Award, state government's Hand-loom and textile award for her weaving.

Award presented to Hemaprabha Chutia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, June 17: In commemoration of the 121st birth anniversary of Rupkonwar Jyotiprasad Agrawala, one of the State's greatest artists of all time, the All Dibrugarh District Students' Union (ADDSU) today gave away the Rupkonwar Memorial Award

ADDSU had announced to annually present this award to Assam's artists, folk culture enthusiasts and other social scientists, who have made significant contributions to society in the fields of education, literature and culture, etc. The programme was presided over by ADDSU president Aban



27. Thailand Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage – First in Southeast Asia

The Marriage Equality Bill was recently approved by the Thai Senate on June 18, and if it passes, Thailand may become the first nation in Southeast Asia to legalize same-gender unions. This landmark decision resulted from the lower house's unanimous approval of the legislation on March 26. As of right now, it is believed that King Rama X will support the bill.

Worldwide Contexts

In 36 nations worldwide, same-sex unions are legal. The legal landscape around the world reflects a diversity of legal perspectives on LGBTQ+ rights and marriage equality, ranging from lax regulations to robust ones. Regarding LGBTQ+ rights, Thailand's proactive action marks a sea change in Asian politics and society. It provides a positive model for neighboring countries.



28. INS Sunayna

With the goal of advancing the friendship and collaboration between the Indian Navy and the Seychelles Coast Guard in accordance with the SAGAR (Security & Growth for All in the Region) vision, INS Sunayna arrived in Port Victoria, Seychelles, on June 15, 24. The ship was accompanied by the Seychelles Coast Guard Ship (SCGS) Zoroaster.

Features

The warship's functions include escort services, monitoring of offshore assets and Sea Lines of Communications, patrolling both coastally and offshore, and fleet support missions.

It is capable of 25 knots of speed.

An automated power management system is also on board the ship.

The most recent electronic support, navigation, and communication systems are installed.

The INS Sumitra and INS Sumedha are two more classes of Sarayu.



29. Barda Wildlife Sanctuary

Gujarat's Forest Department has begun moving spotted deer and sambars from Gir Forest to the Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, a major step that is anticipated to improve the long-term protection of Asiatic lions.

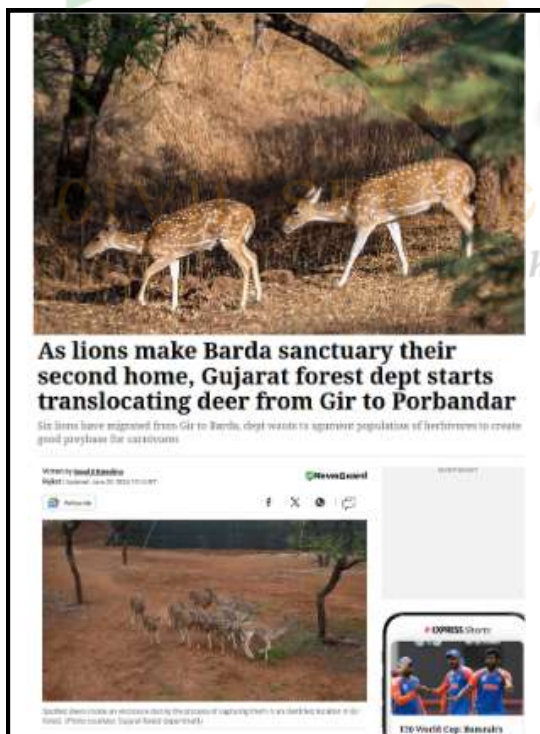
About the Wildlife Sanctuary of Barda:

- Gujarat is the state in which it is situated.

Rivers: The Bileshvary and Joghri rivers are two bodies of water, and the Khambala and Fodara dams are two dams.

This region is home to ethnic races like Rabaris, Gadhis, Bharvads, and Maldharis.

- The 'Gir-Barda Project' was launched by the state government in 1979 to develop Barda as the Asiatic lion's second habitat.
- Flora: There is a notable diversity of flowers here, including a fair number of medicinal species.
- There are over 650 plant species in the sanctuary, including Rayan, Babul, Ber, Jamun, Amli, Gorad, Bamboo, Dhav, Dhudhlo, and others.
- Animals: Blue bull, spotted eagle, crested hawk eagle, uncommon and endangered spotted eagle, wild boar, wolf, jackal, and leopard



30. Reusable Launch Vehicle 'Pushpak'

ISRO successfully conducted the third Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) Landing Experiment (LEX) with its winged vehicle 'Pushpak' at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) in Chitradurga, Karnataka.

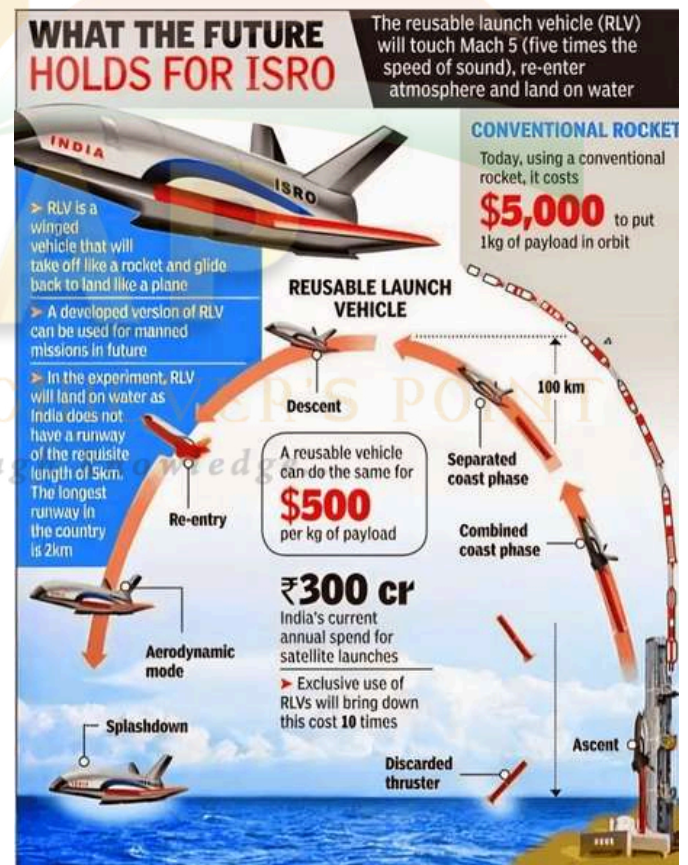
Primarily, launch vehicles comprise three or four stages apart from the payload, which needs to be launched into a polar or a geosynchronous orbit, depending on a mission's requirements.

The RLV that ISRO is building has only two stages to propel the vehicle into orbit.

Once the fuel in the first stage has been expended, the vehicle will shed it and carry on with the second stage.

The first stage will re-enter the atmosphere and land in an autonomous fashion at a predetermined location.

After some maintenance, it will be available for reuse.



31. World's First Asian King Vulture Center – Uttar Pradesh

In Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh, work is underway to construct the first center in the world dedicated to preserving and rehabilitating the Asian king vulture, commonly known as the red-headed vulture. The center is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre, where 24x7 monitoring of the vultures is being done.

Due to its extreme risk, the species has been listed on the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature since 2007.

It was the project's goal to save it.

The birds at the centre are fed twice a week and each has a diet of around three kilo meat at a time. The centre aims to ensure good health of growing vultures, provide them with a pair. Once a female lays egg, the pair will be left free in their natural environment.

World's first Asian King vulture conservation centre in Uttar Pradesh

The centre is named Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre, where 24x7 monitoring of the vultures is being done



In Uttar Pradesh, the red-headed vultures are rarely seen (photo: IANS)

32. The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

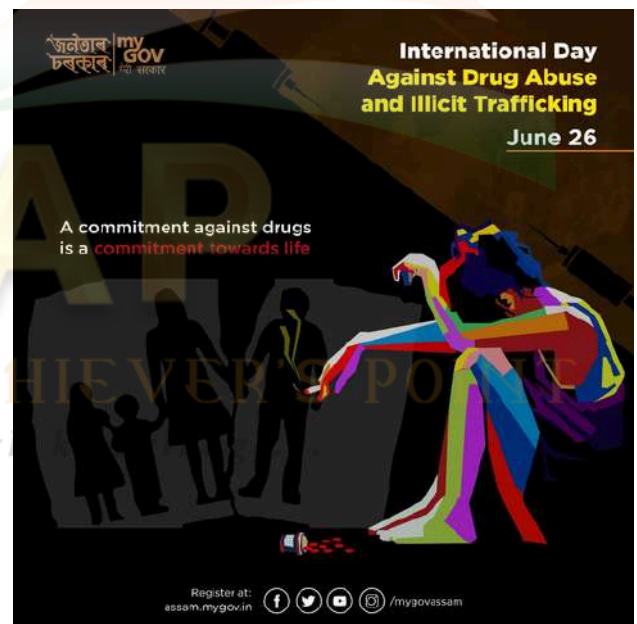
The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is commemorated every year on June 26 and aims to increase action in achieving a drug-free world.

This year's campaign recognizes that "effective drug policies must be rooted in science, research, full respect for human rights, compassion, and a deep understanding of the social, economic, and health implications of drug use."

History:

On 7th December 1987, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe 26th June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

It did so to strengthen their efforts to achieve the goal of making society free of drug abuse.



33. Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP)

At the Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP), the first and largest leopard safari in South India was just opened.

About Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP):

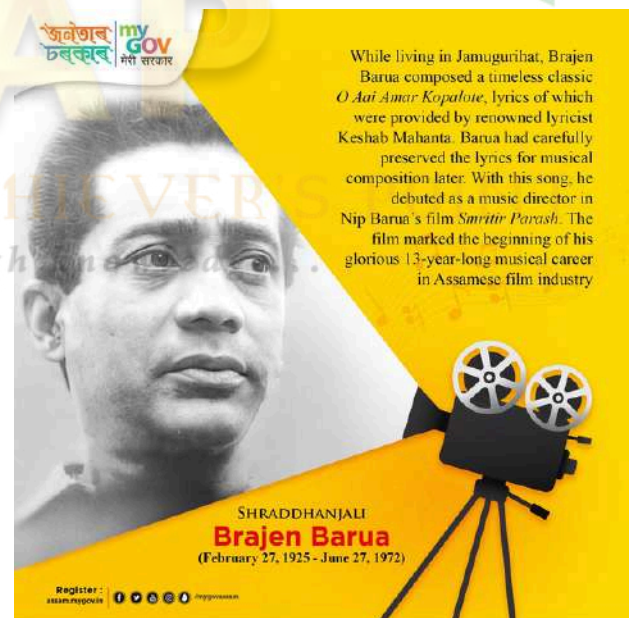
- It was incorporated into Bannerghatta National Park and became a separate entity in 2002.
- A biological park was established, initially encompassing 545.00ha of forest from the National Park, and then expanded to 731.88ha, in response to the increasing need for eco-recreation, eco-tourism, and conservation.
- It is roughly 22 kilometers south of Bengaluru, the capital of Karnataka.
- It consists of several divisions, including the Rescue Center (Animal Conservation), Zoo, Safari, and Butterfly Park.
- It is the first biological park in India featuring an elephant sanctuary surrounded by trees.



34. Brajen Barua

Brajen Barua, an icon of the Assamese cinema industry, is remembered for his transformative 1969 hit film "Dr. Bezbarua," which served as an inspiration to both enthusiasts and directors. Yesterday marked his death anniversary.

Brajen Baruah was an actor and director. He was well-known for "Dr. Bezbarua" and was born in 1925. His other notable films are "Lalita," "Opaja Sonor Mati," "Sito Bahuto," and "Mukuta." His younger brothers, Ramen Baruah and Nip Baruah, are renowned composers and directors, respectively. The Indian Assamese thriller film "Dr. Bezbarua" starred Brajen as both director and actor. He put himself in two different roles. In Nip Barua's film "Smitir Parash," he made his feature film debut as music director. An iconic figure in the Assamese film industry was Baruah. In 1972, he passed away. For the films "Upaja Sonar Maati" and "Dr. Bezbarua," Baruah won prizes for Best Feature Film in Assamese and a Certificate of Merit for Second Best Feature Film.



35. Rhisotope Project

As part of the Rhisotope Project, scientists from South Africa recently put radioactive material into the horns of live rhinoceroses to prevent poaching.

About the Project Rhisotope:

- It began in South Africa in 2021.
- It seeks to render rhinoceros horns unfit for human eating and make them simpler to identify at border posts.
- Twenty rhinos will have two little radioactive chips inserted into their horns as part of the study.
- Without endangering wildlife or the environment, the low-dose radioactive substance is made to be detectable by radiation sensors at international borders.
- Compared to dehorning every 18 months, the radioactive material on the horn is predicted to last five years, making it a more economical solution. For additional identification, the group sprayed 11,000 microdots on each treated horn.



36. Paraguay joins the International Solar Alliance as its 100th member.

The 100th nation to formally join the International Solar Alliance is Paraguay. An official event commemorating this significant milestone in ISA's development was held in New Delhi. The Instrument of Ratification was presented to India by Paraguay's envoy, Raul Duarte. The occasion demonstrates Paraguay's commitment to advancing sustainable energy.

ISA's Goals and Effects

By 2030, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) aims to raise over USD 1 trillion in capital for solar technologies and applications, enabling widespread deployment. It provides a means for member governments to collaborate and aids them in establishing policies and practices that promote the expansion of solar energy. Due to its support for sustainable and renewable energy, the ISA is critical to mitigating climate change and ensuring that the world has adequate energy.

