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November 2019



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Compendium – November 2019

Dear Students,

With the present examination pattern of UPSC Civil Services Examination, General Studies papers require a lot of specialization with 'Current Affairs'. Moreover, following the recent trend of UPSC, almost all the questions are based on news as well as issues. CL IAS has now come up with **'JOIN THE DOTS! NOVEMBER 2019'** series which will help you pick up relevant news items of the day from various national dailies such as The Hindu, Indian Express, Business Standard, LiveMint, PIB and other important sources.

'JOIN THE DOTS! NOVEMBER 2019' series will be helpful for prelims as well as Mains Examination. We are covering every issue in a holistic manner and covered every dimension with detailed facts. This edition covers all important issues that were in news in the month of June 2019. Also, we have introduced Prelim base question for Test Your Knowledge which shall guide you for better revision. In addition, it would benefit all those who are preparing for other competitive examinations.

We have prepared this series of documents after some rigorous deliberations with Toppers and also with aspirants who have wide experience of preparations in the Civil Services Examination.

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Team CL

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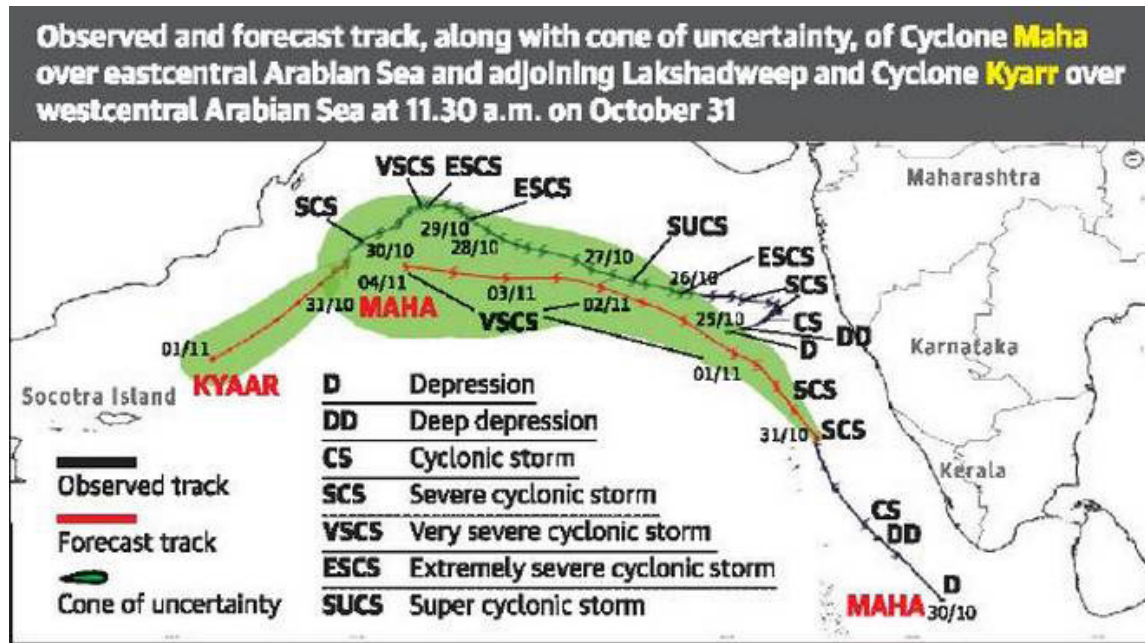
GENERAL STUDIES I

**Indian Heritage and Culture,
History and Geography of
World and Society**

Join the dots!

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Cabinet Secretary chairs NCMC meeting to review preparedness for cyclone “MAHA” over Lakshadweep area



Relevance IN – Prelims (about cyclone MAHA and about the process of naming cyclone)

What's the NEWS

- A meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary was held to review the preparations for the cyclone over the Comorin and adjoining Lakshadweep Islands.

Know! more about MAHA Cyclone

- IMD informed that the Depression that had developed in the Comorin Sea, has now intensified into a Cyclonic storm.
- It is likely to cross Lakshadweep Islands by the noon of 31st October 2019 as a Severe Cyclonic Storm and emerge thereafter into the east Central Arabian Sea.
- Heavy to extremely heavy rainfall, accompanied by winds reaching upto 90 to 100 kmph and tidal waves up to 1 mtr, are expected.
- The Cyclone MAHA has been named by Oman

Know! also about Kyarr cyclone

- Last month Cyclone Kyarr, the super cyclonic storm over the east-central Arabian Sea, and made its way to the Oman coast and has caused heavy rainfall in three states located on India's west coast — Goa, Maharashtra and the north-coastal districts in Karnataka.
- Kyarr became the first Super Cyclone in the Arabian Sea in the past 12 years

Know! about the naming of cyclones

- The name Kyaar was given by Myanmar.
- In 2000, eight countries came together to assign names to the tropical cyclones that originate in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

- It was then decided that each country will submit a set of names which will be used one by one to name the cyclones.
- The framing of the list began in September 2004 and later 64 names, eight from each country, were finalised:
- The cyclone after Kyarr will be named Maha, and then the one after that will be named Bulbul.
- The basic concept behind the names was to aid the quick identification of storms, since names are easier to remember than numbers and technical terms.

Bangladesh	Onil	Ogni	Nisha	Giri	Helen	Chapala	Ockhi	Fani
India	Agni	Akash	Bijli	Jai	Lehar	Megh	Sagar	Vayu
Maldives	Hibanu	Gonu	Aila	Keila	Madi	Roanu	Mekunu	Hikaa
Myanmar	Pyarr	Yemyin	Phyan	Thane	Nanauk	Kyant	Daye	Kyarr
Oman	Baaz	Side	Ward	Murjan	Hudhud	Nada	Luban	Maha
Pakistan	Fanoos	Nargis	Laila	Nilam	Nilofar	Vardah	Titli	Bulbul
Sri Lanka	Mala	Rashmi	Bandu	Viyaru	Ashobaa	Martha	Gaja	Pawan
Thailand	Mukda	Khai Muk	Phet	Phailin	Komen	Mora	Phethai	Amphan

Parliament passes Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial (Amendment) Bill 2019



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bill + about Jallianwala Bagh) + Mains (GS I Indian freedom struggle)

What's the NEWS

- Parliament has passed the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial (Amendment) Bill, 2019. Rajya Sabha approved the bill yesterday while Lok Sabha had passed it in the last session.

Know! more about the bill

- The Bill seeks to amend the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951.
- It has a provision to remove the President of the Congress party as a trustee and clarifies that when there is no Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the leader of the single largest Opposition party will be the trustee.
- The Bill also allows the Central government to terminate the term of a nominated trustee before the expiry of the period of his term, without assigning any reason.

What's the need

- The government's intention is to build a Memorial so that the sacrifice of martyrs is remembered by generations to come.
- This year Jalliwalan Bagh massacre has completed its 100th anniversary and after 100 years, it is necessary to build Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial as National Memorial in true sense.
- These amendments will make this Memorial a National Monument in true spirit
- The Jallianwala Bagh Trust was established in 1921 which was funded by the public.
- In the year 1951, a new trust was formed and a special person was made a trustee without holding any constitutional post.
- The government is inducting elected people into constitutional and administrative posts. No special person will be nominated.
- Also, these members will be replaced after every five years. Also, kin of the martyrs would also be included in the trust.

Know! Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

- The Rowlatt Act was enacted in the country in 1919. The Viceroy had gained a lot of strength due to the act.
- This act included suppressing freedom of the press, imprisoning any politician in jail without a warrant and arresting any person without warrant.
- People in Jallianwala Bagh were protesting against the bill. The Jallianwala Bagh had only one entrance.
- Meanwhile, Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer of the British Army reached through a narrow lane with a contingent of about 90 soldiers.
- He started firing on the people present there without any warning. Several hundreds of people died on the spot and it has become one of the biggest incidents of Indian Freedom Movement.



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 **INQUIZITIVE MINDS**

GENERAL STUDIES II

**Governance, Constitution,
Polity, Social Justice and
International relations**

Harsh Vardhan releases the 14th National Health Profile, 2019

Relevance IN – Prelims (about NHP 2019) + Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of social Sector/Services relating to health)

What's the NEWS

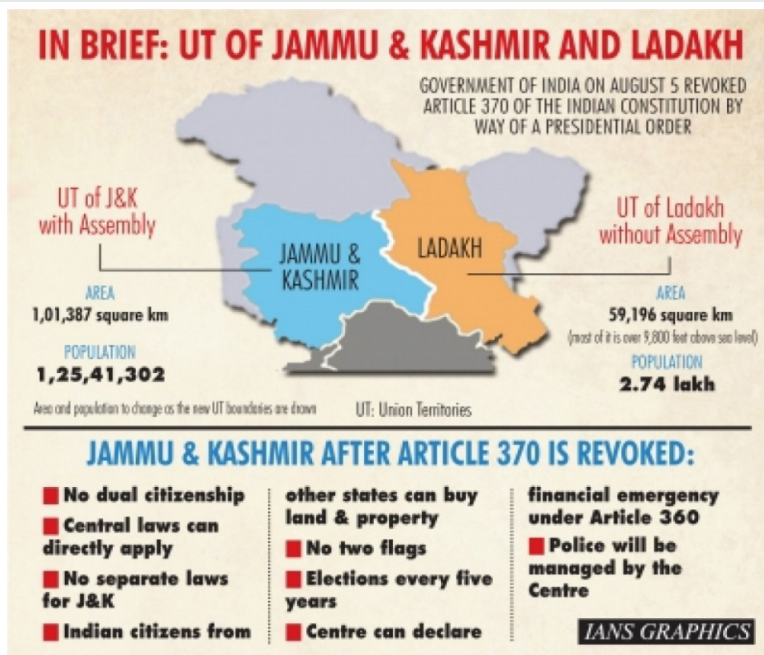
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare released the 14th National Health Profile (NHP) 2019 & its e-book (digital version)

Know! more about NHP 2019

- The NHP is prepared by the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI) and covers comprehensive information on demographic, socio-economic health status, health finance indicators, health infrastructure and health of human resources in the country.
- This 14th edition of NHP is the continuation of the publication since 2005.
- NHP is an important source of understanding the needs and issues of the population. It helps in understanding the goals, our strengths and weaknesses and is also an important means to strategize area specific interventions.
- The NHP highlights substantial health information under major indicators viz. demographic indicators (population and vital statistics), socio-economic indicators (education, employment, housing and amenities, drinking water and sanitation) and health status indicators (incidence and prevalence of common communicable and non-communicable diseases and RCH) etc.
- The health finance section provides an overview of health insurance and expenditure on health, both public and Out of Pocket Expenditure (OOP) etc.
- The section on human resources provides an overview of availability of manpower working in the health sector, while health infrastructure section provides details of Medical and Dental Colleges, AYUSH Institutes, Nursing Courses and Paramedical Courses etc.



Jammu and Kashmir bifurcated: India has one less state, gets two new Union Territories in J&K, Ladakh



Relevance IN – Prelims (facts related to the two new UT's) + Mains (GS II Government policies and interventions for the development in various sectors + Functions and responsibilities of the union and states

What's the NEWS

- Jammu and Kashmir has become a Union Territory from today and its status as a state has also ended. Now Jammu and Kashmir state is officially divided into two union territories as Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- It was announced in the Rajya Sabha, on August 5, to divide Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories.

Know! more about these events

- The Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh will be headed by Lieutenant Governors GC Murmu and RK Mathur, respectively.
- This is for the first time in the history of India that a state is being converted into two Union Territories. The total number of states in the country will now be 28, while the total UTs will go up to nine.
- With this, the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir and the Ranbir Penal Code will cease to exist
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, states that the appointed day for the two UTs is October 31 and these will come into existence in the midnight (Wednesday-Thursday).
- The announcement of abrogation of the state's special status and its bifurcation was made in Rajya Sabha on August 5.
- The UT of Jammu and Kashmir will have a legislature like Puducherry while Ladakh will be a UT without legislature like Chandigarh and both the UTs will be headed by two separate lieutenant governors (LG), as per the Act.
- The Centre will be in direct control of the police and the law and order in Jammu and Kashmir from Thursday when it becomes a UT, while the land will be under the elected government there.
- The UT of Ladakh will be under the direct control of the central government which will administer the high-altitude region through the LG.

Know! what will change in J&K

- Right to Information (RTI) was not applicable in Jammu and Kashmir, which will now come into force.
- The Right to Education (RTE) rule will also apply. At the same time, CAG which was not yet implemented will also come into force.
- Now, Comptroller and Auditor General will be able to do the scrutiny of government expenditures.
- Indians from other states of the country can own property and settle in J&K and Ladakh.
- No Sharia law will restrict any women in Jammu and Kashmir. Women will be free to work and get educational degrees.
- The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will have an assembly like Puducherry, while Ladakh will be a Union Territory with no assembly on the lines of Chandigarh.
- The centre will have direct control over the law and order and police of Jammu and Kashmir with the formation of Union Territory.

Labour Ministry Launches 3 Apps: Uan Registration, E-Inspection and DIGI Locker

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the launched apps) + Mains (GS II Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections. Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance

What's the NEWS

- The Ministry of Labour and Employment launched 3 Apps: UAN REGISTRATION, E-INSPECTION AND DIGI LOCKE, developed by Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) at its 67th Foundation Day

Know! more about these apps

- These Apps will immensely enhance the Ease of Doing Business and promote transparency in the working in the EPFO.

Online Facility for UAN generation by worker:

- Now any workers can obtain Universal Account Number (UAN) directly on EPFO website which enrolls them for PF, Pension and Life Insurance benefits and a worker need not depend on his employer alone for UAN. This is in the direction of ease of living and ensuring universal social security.

EPS Pensioner's PPO in DigiLocker website/Application (APP)

- EPFO integrates with DigiLocker of NeGD to create depository of electronic PPOs which is accessible to individual pensioners. This is a move towards paperless system and ease of living for pensioners.

e-Inspections:

- Digital interface of EPFO with employers: The E-Inspection Form would be available in user login of employers not filing ECR which enables employer to inform either closure of business or unpaid dues with proposal for payment. It will nudge employers for compliant behavior and prevent undue harassment of non-willful defaulters and eliminate inspector raj.

Know! about EPFO

- EPFO is the biggest social security organization of the world covering around six crore active members and 65 lakh pensioners and maintaining around 22 crore accounts of workers with a fund of approximately 13 lakh crore. EPFO is giving better interest rates to its subscribers which was recently enhanced upto 8.65%.
- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, is an organization tasked to assist the Central Board of Trustees, a statutory body formed by the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 and is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

India Gets a New Map: Boundary of UTs of J&K and Ladakh Declared

Relevance IN – Prelims (facts about the bifurcation)

What's the NEWS

- The government on Saturday, 2 November, issued a notification specifying the newly marked boundaries of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The notification results in a new political map of India.
- The development comes two days after the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was officially bifurcated into the two UTs.
- Following the bifurcation, India now has 28 states and nine Union Territories.
- According to the notification, the UT of Ladakh will comprise the territories of Kargil and Leh districts, while all the other districts of the erstwhile state will fall under the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The bifurcation of the state also marked the end of President's rule imposed in the undivided Jammu and Kashmir.





Know! about New Map of India

- According to the new map, Mirpur and Muzaffarabad districts of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) have been described as part of Jammu and Kashmir. There will be a total of 22 districts in Jammu and Kashmir regarding these two districts.
- Ladakh includes two districts Kargil and Leh, while the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory has 22 districts included.
- This map was prepared by the Survey General of India depicting the new Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.
- The new map of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory includes 22 districts, including areas of Muzaffarabad and Mirpur which were under the PoK in the previous map.
- Apart from this, Kupwara, Bandipora, Baramulla, Poonch, Budgam, Shopian, Kulgam, Kishtwar, Udhampur, Doda, Samba, Jammu, Kathua, Ramban, Rajouri, Anantnag, Pulwama, Srinagar, Reasi and Ganderbal districts will be a part of Jammu and Kashmir.

Bilateral Relations: India and Germany sign 17 MoUs, five joint declarations of intent exchanged

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the MoUs signed) + Manis (GS II Bilateral relations)



What's the NEWS

- Seventeen agreements have been signed between India and Germany in the fields of agriculture, maritime technology, ayurveda and yoga among others

Know! more about the agreements

- The joint declarations of intent included cooperation on strategic projects, partnership for green urban mobility, research and development on artificial intelligence and cooperation in the field of prevention of marine litter
- Agreements have been signed to promote, establish and expand scientific and technological research cooperation, academic collaboration in ayurveda, yoga and meditation
- An MoU has also been signed in the field of occupational diseases, rehabilitation and vocational training of insured persons and workers with disabilities
- Another pact was signed for cooperation in inland, coastal and maritime technology.
- Other agreements signed between the two countries include collaboration in agricultural technical and professional training, cooperation between the National Museum, the National Gallery of Modern Art, the Indian Museum, Kolkata, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation and the Stiftung Humboldt Forum in Berliner Schloss and between All India Football Federation (AIFF) and Deutscher Fußball-Bund e.V (DFB)

The Indo German Energy Forum (IGEF) 2019 meets

- The 8th meeting of the Indo – German Energy Forum concluded on 1st November, 2019 in New Delhi.

The Forum took note of the ongoing cooperation under the following four sub-groups:

- Sub Group-I : Flexibilization in Thermal Power Plants.
- Sub Group-II : Renewable Energies
- Sub Group-III : Demand side energy efficiency and low carbon growth strategies
- Sub Group-IV : Green Energy Corridors
- The Forum also finalized the roadmap for future collaboration between the two countries which, inter-alia, include Flexibilisation of existing coal fired power plants, promoting niche markets for Solar Energy, promotion of energy efficiency in buildings through ECBC, building materials and credit lines for financing corresponding measures and RE evacuation through state-of-the-art intra-state and inter-state transmission grid infrastructure.
- Ministry of Power and Ministry of New & Renewable Energy signed 8 Implementation Agreements/ MoUs with the German counterparts.

Regional Grouping: India To Inaugurate First Ever 'BIMSTEC Ports Conclave' In Vizag

Relevance IN – Prelims (about BIMSTEC and conclave) + Mains (GS II bilateral regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and affecting India's interest)

What's the NEWS

- The two-day BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal initiative multi-sector technical and economic cooperation) Conclave will be held on 7th and 8th November at Visakhapatnam.

Know! more about the conclave

- Vizag port trust is hosting the conclave first time ever since the formation of BIMSTEC in 1997.
- Seven-member countries that includes Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan are participating in the conference.
- The thrust would be to discuss and share experiences in increasing productivity,



availing investment opportunities, development of free trade zones, development of tourism and measures required for safety and security of ports

- Ease of doing business, sharing of expertise, and emulation of best practices would be few among the deliberations.
- The Ports' First Conclave of BIMSTEC nations is expected to explore the possibility of increasing economic cooperation by furthering EXIM trade and coastal shipping.
- This session aims to discuss a mechanism to encourage tourism in the region and develop industrial clusters in close proximity to a Port.
- The diverse historical and cultural heritage of the BIMSTEC nations makes it an ideal destination for tourism, in which the ports play a vital role in encouraging cruise tourism.

Space Awareness: China launches Sudan's first satellite



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Sudan's first satellite and its objective) + Mains (GS III awareness in the field of space)

What's the NEWS

- Sudan has launched its first-ever satellite in cooperation with China, in a move that highlights the strengthening ties between the two nations.

Know! more about it

- The Sudan Remote Sensing Satellite (SRSS-1), was launched from the northern Chinese province of Shanxi. It will be monitoring Sudan in a few months
- The remote-sensing satellite has been launched to conduct research in economic, military and space technology.
- The satellite was launched aboard China's Long March-4B rocket along with other Chinese satellites including Gaofen 7, Xiaoxiang-1 08, Whampoa 1 from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in northern China.
- The Sudanese satellite has been mainly designed for civil and military remote sensing over Sudan.

Objective

- The remote-sensing satellite aims to advance research in space technology. Its main objective is to acquire the required data as well as discover natural resources for the country's military needs.
- The satellite aims to generate a comprehensive, cost-effective and reliable database on the topographic, mapping and natural resources of Sudan.

Know! about Pariah status

- Sudan has been an international pariah since the US named it as a state sponsor of terrorism in 1993. The listing stuck throughout Bashir's rule. A move by the US to de-list the country in 2017 was put on hold after protests erupted.

- The new prime minister Abdallah Hamdok, a former UN staffer, has urged the West to end his country's pariah status to protect the democratic revolution and stop the economic collapse.
- But the West is not budging and Sudan is increasingly turning to authoritarian players such as China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to keep itself afloat.

Know! about Sudan's crisis

- Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir's 30-year rule was viewed as a dictatorship and it was majorly marked by genocide, oppression and human rights violations.
- Since the past few years, Sudan was battling an acute economic crisis led by a shortage in foreign currency and high rates of inflation. The major economic crisis forced the people of the nation to protest against Bashir's dictatorship.
- The protests eventually forced the army to overthrow the President in a military coup. The military officially announced that the President was overthrown in April 2019.

Good Governance: PM interacts through PRAGATI



Relevance IN – Prelims (about PRAGATI) + Mains (GS II important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability)

What's the NEWS

- Prime Minister chaired the 31st interaction through PRAGATI — the ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.
- In the previous PRAGATI meetings, a total of 265 projects with a total investment of Rs. 12.15 lakh crore, 47 programmes/ schemes and grievances related to 17 sectors (22 subjects) had been reviewed.
- PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation), as the name suggests, is aimed at starting a culture of Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation. It is also a robust system for bringing e-transparency and e-accountability with real-time presence and exchange among the key stakeholders. The platform was launched on March 25, 2015.

Know! more about PRAGATI

- It is a multi-purpose and multi-modal platform that is aimed at addressing common man's grievances, and simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Government of India as well as projects flagged by State Governments.
- The PRAGATI platform uniquely bundles three latest technologies: Digital data management, video-conferencing and geo-spatial technology.

- It also offers a unique combination in the direction of cooperative federalism since it brings on one stage the Secretaries of Government of India and the Chief Secretaries of the States.
- With this, the Prime Minister is able to discuss the issues with the concerned Central and State officials with full information and latest visuals of the ground level situation.
- It is a three-tier system (PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States)

Defence: 19th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC) meeting; Relevance IN – Prelims (about IRIGC-M&MTC outcome) + Mains (GS II bilateral relations)

What's the NEWS

- The 19th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC) meeting, co-chaired by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Russian Defence Minister General Sergey Shoigu was held in Moscow .

Know! the important outcome of this meeting

- The special and privileged strategic partnership between the two countries was further strengthened following the Vladivostok Summit in September 2019.
- Discussion were made on Inter-Governmental Agreement on manufacturing of spares, components and aggregates in India through joint ventures that would reduce cost, timelines of supply and result in progressive indigenisation. This agreement is expected to provide a major boost to the 'Make in India' initiative.
- Russian will participate in DefExpo 2020, to be held in Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow between February 5-8, 2020.
- The Russian side affirmed its readiness to operationalise the joint venture Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited for the manufacture of world class Kalashnikov AK 203 rifles in India at the earliest.
- It was agreed that the forthcoming TriService Indra Exercises will be a major milestone in Military Cooperation between the two countries.
- The Russian side affirmed its readiness to further deepen exchanges between the respective Military Training Institutions and informed that they would be deputing an officer for the prestigious National Defence College (NDC)course in New Delhi commencing 2020.

Bilateral Relations: Cabinet approves MoU signed between India and Bangladesh on withdrawal of 1.82 cusec of water from Feni River by India

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Feni River) + Mains (GS II Bilateral relations)

What's the NEWS

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has given ex-post facto approval for the MoU between India and Bangladesh on withdrawal of 1.82 cusec of water from Feni River by India for drinking water supply scheme for Sabroom town Tripura, India.

Benefits

- As on date, there is no water sharing agreement on Feni river between India and Bangladesh.
- The present supply of drinking water to Sabroom town is inadequate. The ground water in this region has high iron content. Implementation of this scheme would benefit over 7000 population of Sabroom town .

Know! about Feni River

- Feni River is a river in south eastern Bangladesh. It is a trans-boundary river with an ongoing dispute about water rights.
- The Feni River originates in South Tripura district and flows through Sabroom town and then enters Bangladesh.
- Muhuri River, also called Little Feni, from Noakhali District joins it near its mouth.



Khadi gets separate unique HS code

Relevance IN – Prelims (about HS code) + Mains (GS II government policies and interventions for development in various sectors)

What's the NEWS

- Khadi has once again come out of its customary veil, marking its presence in the exclusive HS code bracket, issued by the central government to categorize its products in export.

Know! the benefits of HS code

- In a long awaited move to make export of Khadi, exclusively categorized from the general league of textile products, the ministry of commerce and industries has allocated separate HS code for this signature fabric of India this week.
- This decision of government will open a new chapter in the field of Khadi export. Earlier, Khadi did not have its exclusive HS code.
- As a result, all the data regarding export of this signature fabric used to come as a normal fabric under the textile head.

Know! about HS Code

- HS Stands for Harmonized System and it is a six digit identification code. It was developed by the WCO (World Customs Organization) and custom officers use HS Code to clear every commodity that enters or crosses any international border.

EPCS status to KVIC

- Khadi and Village Industries products are eco-friendly and natural, and are in great demand in the International Markets.
- Recognizing its potential to generate exports and its eco-friendly importance, the Ministry of Commerce had accorded deemed Export Promotional Council Status (EPCS) to KVIC in 2006, to boost the export of Khadi products. However in the absence of separate HS code, the export of Khadi products was difficult to categorize and calculate.

Know! about EPC

- Export promotional Councils (EPC) are authorities which are basically promoting, supporting and assisting firms in entering the International markets and realising their optimum potential from given resources. They also provide guidance and assistance to the exporters.
- Presently, there are fourteen Export Promotion Councils under the administrative control of the Department of Commerce
- These Councils are registered as non-profit organizations under the Companies Act/ Societies Registration Act.
- The Councils perform both advisory and executive functions. The role and functions of these Councils are guided by the Foreign Trade Policy, 2009-14. These Councils are also the registering authorities for exporters under the Foreign Trade Policy 2009-14.

FSSAI releases draft regulations

Relevance IN – Prelims (about ‘Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and healthy diets for School Children) Regulations, 2019’. + Mains (GS II issues relating to development and management of social sectors/services relating to health and education)

What’s the NEWS

- Food regulator FSSAI issued draft regulations proposing a ban on sale as well as advertisements of junk foods in school canteens and within 50 metres around school campuses as part of its objective to ensure safe and wholesome food for children.
- The Food and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has sought comments from stakeholders within 30 days on its draft regulations titled ‘Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and healthy diets for School Children) Regulations, 2019’.

Know! more about the draft regulations

- Foods which are referred to as foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) cannot be sold to school children in school canteens or mess premises or hostel kitchens or within 50 meters of the school campus



- The food business operators (FBOs) manufacturing HFSS food products would be barred from advertising such foods in school premises or within 50 meters of the school campus,
- The school authority itself or food business operators (FBOs) contracted by it and FBOs contracted by Department of School Education for operation of the mid-day meal scheme will have to “obtain a registration or license” as applicable and comply with the requirements of sanitary and hygienic practices specified under the food safety law.
- The FSSAI has proposed that school authorities will have to adopt a comprehensive programme for promoting safe food and healthy diets among school children.
- The school campus should be converted into ‘Eat Right School’ focusing safe and healthy food, local and seasonal food and no food waste as per the specified benchmarks.
- Encourage school authorities to promote consumption of a safe and balanced diet in the school as per the guidelines issued by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)
- The school authorities would have to ensure that FBOs supplying prepared meals in the premises are on the basis of general guidance provided in the regulation and as per the direction issued by the Food Authority or the Commissioners of Food safety.
- Nutritionists, dietitians must be engaged by the school administration to assist in the preparation of menu for the children, periodically.
- The FSSAI proposes creation of a sub-committee by the State Level Advisory Committee to monitor the implementation of this regulations and to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food to school children.

Global Exhibition on Services (GES)

IEE India Ecommerce Expo | **CII** Confederation of Indian Industry | **IRE** India Retail Expo | **SWE** Startup World Expo | **SEPC** SERVICES EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

The WORLD IS ON ITS WAY TO MUMBAI !
To Forge rewarding partnerships in services

Global Exhibition on Services
The India Opportunity

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

22 SECTORS	100 COUNTRIES	25 PLUS INDIAN STATES	700 EXHIBITORS	500 OVERSEAS DELEGATES
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15, 16, 17 & 18 May 2018
Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai

Largest Services B2B Event Of India

STARTUP'S | SME'S | RETAIL | ECOMMERCE

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Relevance IN – Prelims (about GES and SEPC) + Mains (GS II government policies and interventions for development on various sectors)

What's the NEWS

- With an aim to engage industry and Governments across the world and to promote greater exchange of trade in services between India and rest of the world, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in association with Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has created a dedicated platform, the Global Exhibition on Services (GES) which is an annual event.

Know! more about GES 2019

- The 5th edition of GES 2019 is being held from 26-28 November 2019 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- It is an attempt towards escalating the Indian services bar in the global arena by exploring 12 Champion Services Sectors, encompassing participation from 100 countries and hosting sector specific knowledge sessions.
- India is looking to attract investments and partnerships in strategic areas like aviation and space programme, infrastructure, telecom projects, financial management and accounting
- Through GES the Government of India seeks to enhance strategic cooperation and develop synergies to strengthen multilateral relationships between all stake holders, tap the potential for services exports and increase FDI inflow.
- GES 2019 will host focussed knowledge sessions on key Champion Services Sectors and will cater to many B2B, B2G and B2C meetings.
- In GES 2019 SEPC is also looking to promote eSports. The eSports industry is expected to grow rapidly and in 2017 worldwide revenue generated in eSports market amounted to USD 655 million.

Know! about SEPC

- SEPC is an export promotion council set up by Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India in 2006 as an apex trade body to facilitate service exporters of India.
- SEPC actively contributes to the formulation of policies of Government of India and acts as an interface between the services industry and the Government. It has a membership base of 4800 members from the 14 service sectors.

PM inaugurates Integrated Check Post and flags off 1st batch of pilgrims at Kartarpur Sahib corridor



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the terms and conditions of Kartarpur corridor) + Mains (GS II Bilateral relations)

What's the NEWS

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Integrated Check Post and flagged off first batch of pilgrims at Kartarpur Sahib corridor in Gurdaspur.
- Integrated Check Post would facilitate, Indian Pilgrims to visit to Gurudwara Kartapur Sahib in Pakistan.
- India has signed the Agreement with Pakistan on the 24th of October 2019 on the modalities for operationalisation of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor at Zero Point, International Boundary, Dera Baba Nanak.
- It may be recalled, the Union Cabinet passed a resolution on 22 November 2018 to celebrate the historic occasion of 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji in a grand and befitting manner, throughout the country and across the globe.

- The Union Cabinet also approved the building and development of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor from Dera Baba Nanak to the International Boundary, to facilitate pilgrims from India to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, round the year, in a smooth and easy manner.

Provisions made for facilitation of Pilgrims

- The 4.2 Km four lane highway connecting Dera Baba Nanak from Amritsar – Gurdaspur Highway is constructed at a cost of Rs 120 Cr.
- The state-of-the-art Passenger Terminal Building is on 15 acres land. The fully air conditioned building akin to an airport has over 50 immigration counters for facilitating about 5000 pilgrims a day.
- It has all the necessary public amenities like kiosks, washrooms, child care, first aid medical facilities, prayer room and snacks counters inside main building.
- The Agreement signed with Pakistan on the 24th of October provides a formal framework for operationalisation of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor.

The highlights of the Agreement are: -

- Indian pilgrims of all faiths and persons of Indian origin can use the corridor;
- The travel will be Visa Free;
- Pilgrims need to carry only a valid passport;
- Persons of Indian Origin need to carry OCI card along with the passport of their country;
- The Corridor is open from dawn to dusk. Pilgrims travelling in the morning will have to return on the same day;
- The Corridor will be operational throughout the year, except on notified days, to be informed in advance;
- Pilgrims will have a choice to visit as individuals or in groups, and also to travel on foot;
- India will send the list of pilgrims to Pakistan 10 days ahead of travel date. Confirmation will be sent to pilgrims 4 days before the travel date;
- The Pakistan side has assured India on sufficient provision for ‘Langar’ and distribution of ‘Prasad’;
- The pilgrims may have to necessarily register themselves online on the portal prakashpurb550.mha.gov.in and exercise their choice to travel on any day.

International Organisations: Inaugural session of India-ASEAN Business Summit



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the inaugural session of India – ASEAN business summit) + Mains (GS II international organisations)

What's the NEWS

- The India- ASEAN Business Summit on the theme: “Today, Tomorrow, Together” is being organised to strengthen trade & investment flows with ASEAN Economies.

Know! more about the summit

- The objective of the conference is to enhance the trade trajectory between India and ASEAN nations to new highs.
- Senior government officials from India and the ASEAN Nations are interacting with the Business community of India and ASEAN for the promotion of bi-lateral trade and investments.
- The first day of the Summit is having sessions on Infrastructure and Tourism sectors, IT/ITES, E-Commerce and Fintech and Education & Skill Development, Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals and Agriculture & Food processing.
- On the second day of the summit, the B2B meetings will be organised along with session on Focus Vietnam – Growing Trade & Commerce between India & Vietnam.
- More than 60 delegates from 10 ASEAN countries and more than 200 delegates from India are participating in the summit.

Know! about ASEAN

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising ten countries in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational, and sociocultural integration among its members and other countries in Asia.
- The ASEAN Secretariat is located at Jakarta, Indonesia
- ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 with five members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. It is headquartered in Jakarta.
- Other ASEAN Members are Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam

India and ASEAN

- India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of our foreign policy and the foundation of our Act East Policy.
- The up-gradation of the relationship into a Strategic Partnership in 2012 was a natural progression to the ground covered since India became a Sectoral Partner of the ASEAN in 1992, Dialogue Partner in 1996 and Summit Level Partner in 2002.
- There are, in total, 30 Dialogue Mechanisms between India and ASEAN, cutting across various sectors.
- India could not become the member of this association due to her geographical location. India is a part of South-Asia while the ASEAN is an organisation of South-East Asian Nations. On July 23, 1996; ASEAN gave advisory status to India.

Know! about EAS (India is a member)

- The East Asia Summit is a unique Leaders-led forum of 18 countries of the Asia-Pacific region formed to further the objectives of regional peace, security and prosperity.
- It has evolved as a forum for strategic dialogue and cooperation on political, security and economic issues of common regional concern and plays an important role in the regional architecture.
- Established in 2005, EAS allows the principal players in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss issues of common interest and concern, in an open and transparent manner, at the highest level.
- The membership of EAS consists of ten ASEAN Member States (i.e. Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam), Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and the USA. EAS is an initiative of ASEAN and is based on the premise of the centrality of ASEAN.



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Indo – Pacific Oceans initiative) + Mains (GS II bilateral regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interest

What’s the NEWS

- PM Narendra Modi outlined global challenges facing the world today including rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific region and highlighted the need for working together to find out common solutions.

Know! the objective of this initiative

- The PM proposed an “Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative” for safe, secure and stable maritime domain.
- The Focus areas include creating partnerships among interested states in Enhancing maritime security; Sustainably using marine resources; Disaster prevention & management.
- India will organize a Indo-Pacific Conclave in Chennai early next year to further boost this initiative
- Japan, Australia and Thailand support the initiative already. And many more ASEAN countries are expected to express their support to the initiative in the near future.
- The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative is considered by the experts as an incremental step to the Shangri la dialogue.
- This initiative will ensure the confidence to minor players of ASEAN that their role in the region will not be diluted and will ensure freedom of navigation, freedom of overflights and the disputed are resolved as per international conventions.

Some outcomes of East Asia Summit

- East Asia Summit is a leaders-led platform, where discussions are held on various developments in the region. The agenda for this edition of the summit was to review the future direction of East Asia Summit co-operation and exchange views on regional and international issues.
- The Prime minister said that he eagerly looked forward to welcoming the Japanese prime minister in India next month for the annual India-Japan summit. The maiden India-Japan 2+2 (Foreign + Defence) Minister Dialogue will be held in Delhi later this month.

- Senior officials from India-Japan-USA-Australia (popularly known as Quad) met in Bangkok for consultations on regional and global issues of common interest.

Judicial Reforms: Office of Chief Justice of India comes under RTI Act

Relevance IN – Prelims (about RTI and facts related to judicial reforms) + Mains (GS II Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

What's the NEWS

- The Supreme Court (SC) has held that the office of the Chief Justice of India is a public authority and falls within the ambit of the Right to Information (RTI) Act.
- A five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, upheld the 2010 Delhi High Court verdict and dismissed three appeals filed by Secretary General and the Central Public Information officer of the SC.

- “Transparency and accountability should go hand-in-hand”. Increased transparency under RTI was no threat to judicial independence

Know! more about the judgement (the genesis of it)

- The move to bring the office of the CJI under the transparency law was initiated by RTI activist S C Agrawal.
- The Delhi High Court on January 10, 2010, had held that the CJI office comes within the ambit of the RTI law, saying judicial independence was not a judge’s privilege, but a responsibility cast upon him.
- The HC judgment was seen as a setback to the then CJI, K G Balakrishnan, who has been opposed to disclosure of information relating to judges under the RTI Act. The HC had dismissed a plea of the SC that contended bringing the CJI’s office within the RTI Act would “hamper” judicial independence.
- Supreme Court has upheld the decision given by the Delhi High Court in 2010. This landmark judgment arrived on petitions challenging the Delhi High Court’s decision.
- The Constitutional Bench of five judges reserved the judgment on April 4 on the appeals filed by the central public information officers against the orders of the High Court and the Central Information Commission (CIC) in 2010.
- A bench of five judges led by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi comprised Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Deepak Gupta, Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice NV Ramana, announced its verdict.
- The Supreme Court has taken this decision under Article 124 of the Constitution.
- The decision of the bench was penned by a 3:2 majority as Justice Ramana and Justice Chandrachud has given separate judgment.

Know! more about the Delhi High Court’s Judgment in 2010

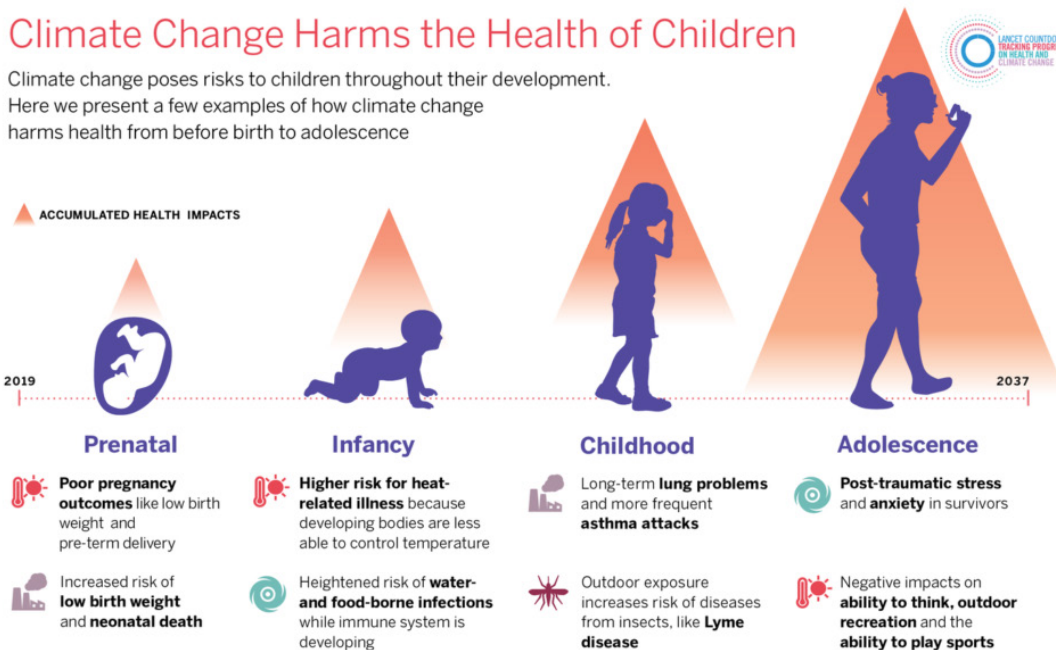
- The Delhi High Court had said in a judgment on 10 January 2010 that the office of the Chief Justice comes under the purview of the RTI Act.

- The Delhi High court said that judicial independence is not the privilege of the judge, but a responsibility on him.
- The High Court rejected the appeal of the apex court that judicial independence would be 'obstructed' by bringing the CJI office under the purview of RTI.
- The High Court rejected the plea of the apex court that judicial independence would be 'obstructed' by bringing the CJI office under the purview of RTI. The General Secretary of the Supreme Court filed a petition against the decision and now SC has announced its verdict.
- Attorney General (AG) KK Venugopal, representing the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) of the Supreme Court, had said that sharing of information related to the collegium under the CJI's office would embarrass the judges and the government and destroy judicial freedom.

Know! about RTI Act

- Right to Information (RTI) Act 2005 provides timely response to the citizens on their requests for government information.
- The major objective of the RTI Act is to promote transparency, empower the citizens and accountability in the working condition of the Government.
- An RTI can be written on a simple paper addressing Public Information Officer of the concerned department along with postal order of Rs. 20.

Health Sector: Climate change is harming health of children, says Lancet report



Sample Ways that Climate Change Harms Health

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Extreme Heat (e.g., heatwaves): Becoming more frequent and severe. <i>Health Risks:</i> deadly heatstroke, trouble thinking, increased injury risk, worsening of heart and lung disease, dehydration</p> | <p>Extreme Weather Events (e.g., hurricanes, floods): Becoming more intense and some types more frequent. <i>Health Risks:</i> injuries, drowning, water and food-borne illnesses, anxiety, depression, displacement, loss of economic opportunity, toxic stress</p> |
| <p>Poor Air Quality (e.g., particulate matter from coal burning or wildfires, ground-level ozone, increased pollen): Declining air quality resulting from carbon pollution and rising temperatures. <i>Health Risks:</i> preterm birth, low birth weight, asthma, poor school performance and school absence, seasonal allergy flares, damage to developing brains, displacement from wildfire damage</p> | <p>Tick and Mosquito-borne Disease (e.g., Lyme Disease and Dengue) Growing risk of diseases transmitted by insects, like ticks and mosquitoes, spreading to new places and remaining active longer. <i>Health Risks:</i> Lyme – heart, brain, and joint problems; Dengue – trouble breathing, bleeding, organs shutting down with severe dengue</p> |

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the key findings of the report) + Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources. Issues relating to poverty and hunger

What’s the NEWS

- Climate change is already damaging the health of the world’s children and is set to endanger the well-being of an entire generation, unless the world meets the target to limit warming to well below 2° C, according to a major new report published in The Lancet.

Know! about the findings of the Lancet report

- ‘The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change’ is a comprehensive yearly analysis tracking progress across 41 key indicators.
- The project is a collaboration between 120 experts from 35 institutions, including the World Health Organisation, the World Bank, University College London, and the Tsinghua University in Beijing.
- The report notes that as temperatures rise, infants will bear the greatest burden of malnutrition and rising food prices — average yield potential of maize and rice has declined almost 2% in India since the 1960s, with malnutrition already responsible for two-thirds of the deaths of children under five years.
- Children will suffer most from the rise in infectious diseases — with climatic suitability for the Vibrio bacteria that cause cholera rising 3% a year in India since the early 1980s, the study warns.
- Diarrhoeal infections, a major cause of child mortality, will spread into new areas, whilst deadly heat waves could soon become the norm.
- The government of India has launched many initiatives and programmes to address a variety of diseases and risk factors. But this report shows that the public health gains achieved over the past 50 years could soon be reversed by the changing climate

Human Resource Development: Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ launches UNESCO MGIEP Digital Learning draft Guidelines at the General Conference in Paris



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the draft guidelines + about MGIEP) + Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

What’s the NEWS

- On the occasion of the 40th UNESCO General Conference, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’, Union Minister, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, launched the first of its kind ‘Industry Guidelines on Digital Learning (discussion draft)’ at the Ministerial Roundtable on ‘Media and Information Literacy and Games in the Digital World’.

- The Roundtable was jointly organized by the Government of Finland and the Government of India, in partnership with UNESCO Headquarters and UNESCO's category 1 institute, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP).

Know! more about the Draft guidelines

- The Draft Guidelines were developed by UNESCO MGIEP, based in New Delhi, responding to the Vizag Declaration on Digital Learning adopted at TECH 2018, an international conference co-organized by UNESCO MGIEP and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- The Draft Guidelines were developed to help build digital learning solutions that promote active learning and build 21st century skills, including social and emotional skills. In order to keep pace with rapidly changing societal and economic needs, the Draft Guidelines serve as a working document and invite feedback from relevant stakeholders.
- Building on the neurosciences of learning, which shows that parts of the brain can be 'wired' or 'trained' in intellectual as well as emotional intelligence, the Institute promotes the whole-brain approach to learning and harnesses the power of digital technologies to enable innovative pedagogies.
- Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP), a UNESCO Category 1 institute, for harnessing the power of digital technologies to facilitate learning in students.

Know! about My Dream project

- Under the MyDream project, UNESCO MGIEP and Samsung are conducting a two-year research study at JawaharNavodayaVidyalaya (JNV) schools across India.
- This study is designed to understand how project-based learning and SEL can be used to drive learning outcomes of students as defined by their Mathematics and Science scores measured by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and also to reduce their stress levels.

Women and Child Development: WCD Ministry to announce Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK) + Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources. Issues relating to poverty and hunger

What's the NEWS

- The Union Minister of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani, will announce Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK).

Know! more about it

- The Union Government has launched Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh with the aim of reducing malnutrition in India.
- The kosh was launched by WCD Minister Smriti Irani along with Bill Gates.
- The Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh is a repository of diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones to help enable better nutritional outcomes.
- The Kosh aims to reduce malnutrition among women and children across the country, through a multi-sectoral results-based framework, including agriculture.
- The Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh aims to promote and reinforce healthy dietary practices both at the individual and community level and tackle malnutrition in a sustainable manner
- On the occasion, father of Green Revolution and eminent agricultural scientist, Dr. M. S. Swaminathan highlighted a five-point action programme to make India nutrition secure.



The five-point action programme

1. Ensure calorie rich diet for women, especially pregnant women and children.
2. Ensure protein intake in form of pulses to eradicate protein hunger among women and children.
3. Eradicate hidden hunger due to micro-nutrient deficiency such as vitamin A, vitamin B, Iron and Zinc.
4. Ensure supply of clean drinking water.
5. Spreading nutrition literacy in every village, especially among women with children less than 100 days' old. platform as farmers and civil society members to make India malnutrition free.

NITI Aayog: NITI Aayog releases Report on Building a 21st Century Health System for India

Relevance IN – Prelims (facts related to the released report) + Mains GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources)

What's the NEWS

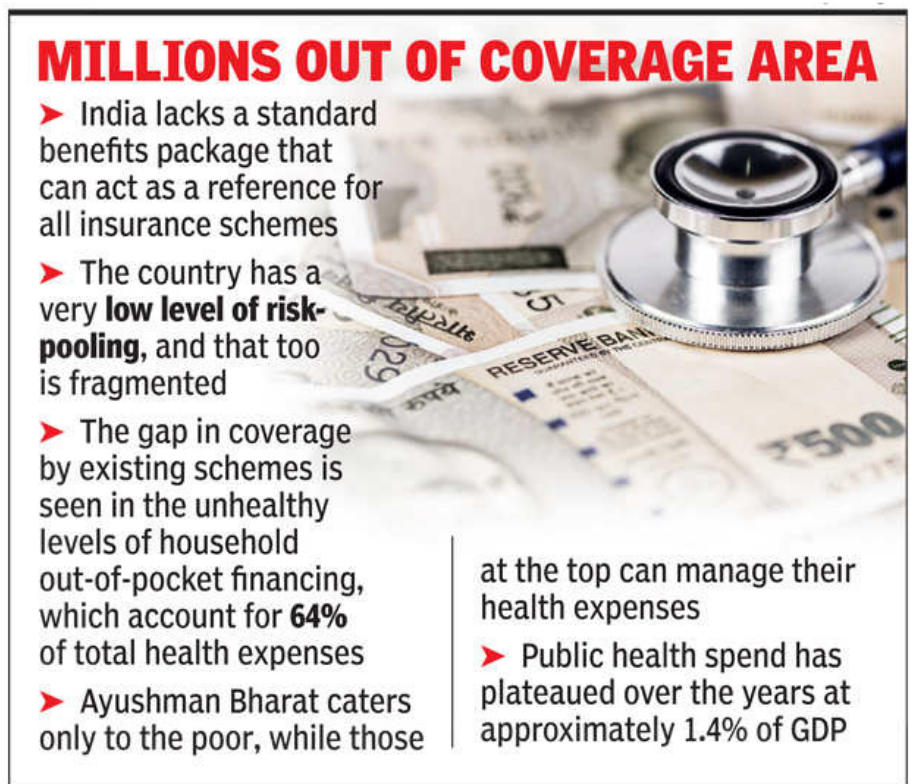
- Government think tank NITI Aayog released a report 'Health Systems for a New India: Building Blocks—Potential Pathways to Reforms.'
- The report, synthesis of one-year long exercise, was released by Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar in the presence of co-founder of Microsoft and co-chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates.
- The report has drawn from best practices of countries as diverse as Cambodia, Thailand, China, Russia, UK, US among the others for India to learn from.

Know! more about the report (challenges and suggestions)

- The report identified five focus areas of future health system - to deliver on unfinished public health agenda, change health financing away from out of pocket so spend into large insurers, integrate service delivery vertically and horizontally, empower citizens to become better buyers of health, harness the power of digital health.
- Niti Aayog has recommended that health system financing structure should be changed in such a way that predominant undesirable out-of-pocket expenditure is reduced and spending is directed towards larger risk-pools with strong strategic purchasing capabilities.

Example of Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust

- It has stressed on best practices adopted by Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust of Karnataka launched in 2010, which went on to empanel hospitals from neighbouring states, for patients living in border areas for their state health insurance scheme and are now aiming for providing the health scheme for their entire 6.4 crore population.



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- Karnataka is also looking at bringing all schemes under a single umbrella. Another example, that has been cited for its best practices is Meghalaya.

Other suggestions

- Even as the report has not out rightly suggested that Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), government's cashless health insurance scheme covering 10 crore poor families for Rs five lakh annually, should be extended to whole of India, it discretely mentioned that PM-JAY should be considered with an eye on its potential to influence the overall healthcare transformation in India, beyond its current explicit mandate.
- The vision for health over the next fifteen years is to transform the delivery of health services in a way that they improve at a much greater pace, without financially burdening its citizens.
- The analysis and insights highlight that investments in strengthening the current health system will reap tremendous social and economic dividend for India.

Social Issues: South Asia Safety Summit



Relevance IN – Prelims (about South Asia Safety Summit) + Mains (GS II Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation)

What's the NEWS

- Union Minister of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated 2nd edition of South Asia Safety Summit organized by the Ministry of WCD and FACEBOOK.

Know! more about the summit

- The South Asia Safety Summit is being organized to highlight the issue of safety while individuals and communities are connected on the digital platform.
- Participants from 125 civil society organizations, feminist groups, child safety experts, academics focused on gender and mass communication, safety practitioners, mental health and suicide prevention organizations, disabilities rights groups, and partners who have expertise in running digital literacy programmes and creating tools for social-emotional development of young people are attending the Summit.
- They are from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan.

Steps taken by the Ministry of WCD for the safety of Women

- One stop centres to service the needs of women in the
- Every district of India will have anti trafficking units which is the first ever such initiative undertaken by the Government.
- To make police stations more accessible for women and children Women's help desks are being set up in each police station across

- Along with Ministry of Home Affairs the Ministry of WCD has launched the cyber-crime portal and the Ministry of WCD is helping to strengthen this portal so that women are able to lodge complaints of cyber bullying, online shaming and online threats.
- WCD Ministry is digitally listing all sex offenders in India so that whenever background checks of employees need to be conducted its database will enable employers.

We Think Digital website launched

- This website is an online education portal with interactive tutorials aimed at helping people think critically and share thoughtfully online.
- The topics covered include privacy, safety, security, digital discourse and knowing your digital footprint.
- “We Think Digital” is a four-part course designed to empower students with the knowledge to use, understand, evaluate, communicate and create with digital technologies.
- It outlines the digital citizen’s rights and responsibilities, encourages them to think critically about their digital behaviour and interactions, communicate respectfully and be responsible digital citizens in the online world.
- The programme will focus on online safety, privacy and misinformation.

Know! the crime statics

- 3 lakh crimes registered against women are committed by husbands and relatives so the challenges to women and children safety issues lie closer to home.
- As per the NCRB data 42% of men justify domestic violence and 62% of women support domestic violence.

International (Regional grouping): India to host 1st counter-terror exercise for Quad countries

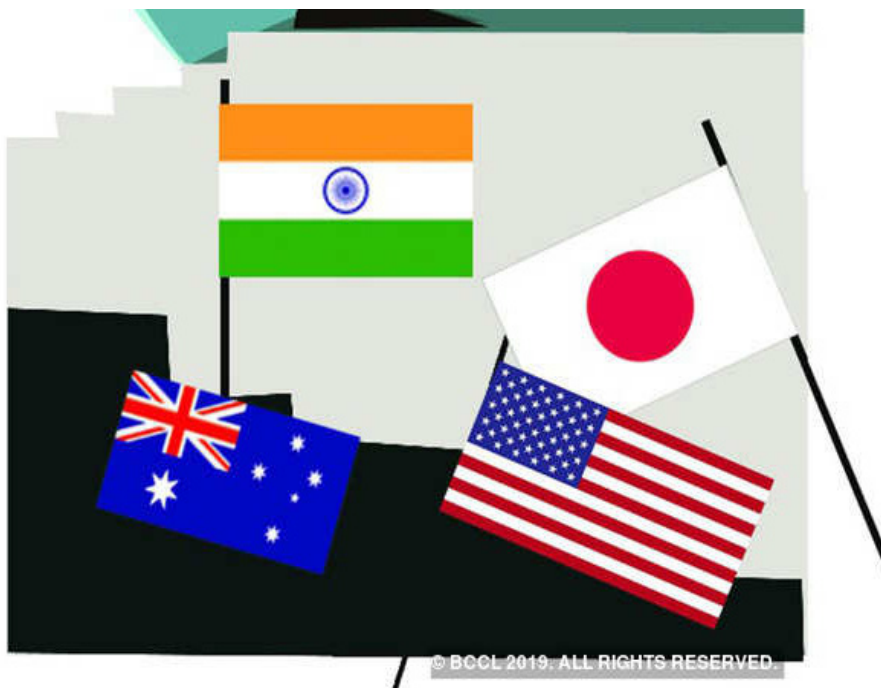
Relevance IN – Prelims (about CT-TTX) + Mains (GS II Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests)

What’s the NEWS

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) will host the first-ever counter-terrorism exercise for the Quad countries, including India, the US, Japan and Australia, here at its headquarters on November 21 and 22.

Know! more about CT-TTX

- NIA said the ‘CT-TTX’ (counter-terrorism table-top exercise) would be the first engagement among the four countries to discuss issues of common interest related to counter-terrorism.
- The purpose of the exercise is to assess and validate counter-terrorism response mechanisms in the light of emerging terrorist threats.
- The event was aimed at enabling the participating countries to understand the response systems to terror incidents that exist in other member countries.
- This will help in the recognition of best practices prevalent in the respective countries.
- The table-top exercise also aims at improving the inter-agency cooperation between different counter-terrorism and other agencies of the Quad countries.



Cabinet approves code to allow fixed-term employment

Relevance IN – Prelims (about different labour code and about fixed term contract)+ Mains (GS II Social issues - Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation)

What's the NEWS

- The Union cabinet approved the Labour Code on Industrial Relations 2019, allowing companies to hire workers on fixed-term contract of any duration.

Know! more about the code

- The code has retained the threshold on the worker count at 100 for prior government approval before retrenchment, but it has a provision for changing 'such number of employees' through notification.
- Fixed-term employment means a worker can be hired for any duration, three months or six months or a year depending on season and orders.
- The bill is expected to be tabled in the ongoing winter session of the Parliament. "While this means workers can be hired seasonally for six months or a year it also means that all workers will be treated at par with regular workers for benefits
- The code also provides setting up of a two-member tribunal (in place of one member) wherein important cases will be adjudicated jointly and the rest by a single member, resulting speedier disposal of cases.
- Besides, it has vested powers with the government officers for adjudication of disputes involving penalty as fines, thereby lessening the burden on tribunal.
- The industrial relations code is the third out of four labour codes that have got approval from the cabinet. The code will combine Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, the Trade Unions Act, 1926, and the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946.
- The Labour Code on Wages has already been approved by Parliament in August while the Labour Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions has been referred to the standing committee of labour.
- The government has already allowed fixed-term employment across all sectors last year. It has now been codified, which means that once approved by Parliament it will become a legislation to be abided by all.
- The labour ministry has decided to amalgamate 44 labour laws into four codes - on wages, industrial relations, social security, and safety, health and working conditions.

Dignity of Labour

Labour ministry pushes ahead with labour reforms

Labour code on industrial relation gets Cabinet nod

Fixed-term employment allowed across sectors

Workers to get same wages and benefits as others

Employee threshold retained at 100 for seeking govt approval for retrenchment



Two-member tribunal set up for disputes

Govt officials will have the power to resolve disputes



FOUR LABOUR CODES IN WORK

Labour code on wages notified

Labour code on occupational safety moved to standing committee

Labour code on social security is under consultation

India, Japan hold mine counter measure exercise

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bilateral exercise) + Mains (GS II bilateral relations)

What's the NEWS

- A maiden bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy and the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) on explosive ordnance disposal and mine counter measure

Know! more about the exercise

- Personnel of the Indian Navy and from the warships Bungo and Takashima of JMSDF's Minesweeper Division 3 took part in the exercise

Minesweeper

- A minesweeper is a naval ship that is deployed in removing naval mines. They do not detect them. On the other hand,
- There are three categories of minesweepers in Indian Navy. It includes Ham-class minesweepers of Indian Navy, Pondicherry-class minesweepers, mahe-class minesweepers.
- The naval ships that are designed to locate and destruct the naval mines are called MCMVs. They play the combined role of mine sweeper and mine hunter.



Minehunter

- A minehunter, detects and destroys naval mines

Naval Mines

- A Naval Mine is an explosive device that is placed under water to destroy submarines and surface ships.

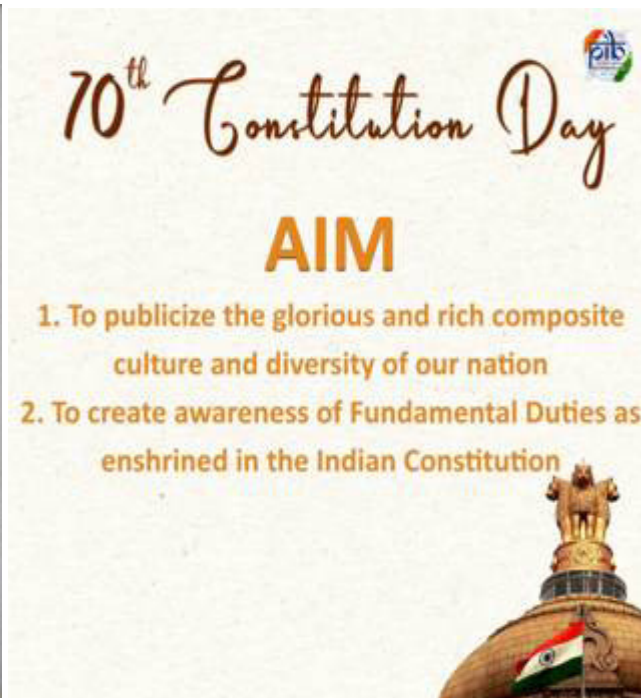
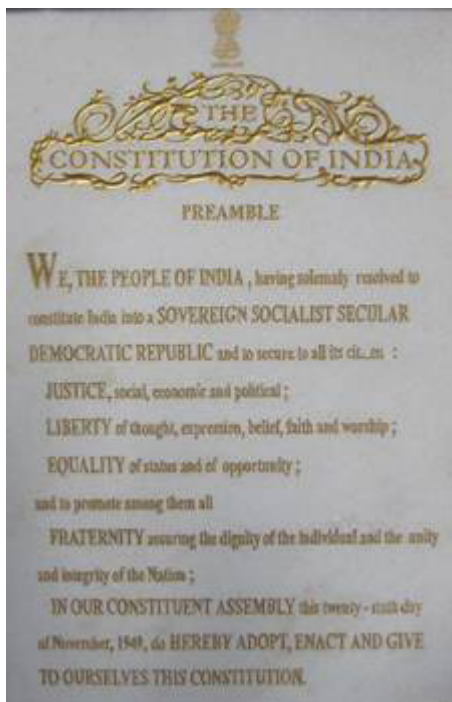
Constitution Day Relevance IN – Prelims (about Constitution day)

What's the NEWS

- The yearlong nationwide activities on Constitution Day are being launched to mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly, beginning November 26, 2019.

Know! more about it

- The day 26th November is celebrated every year as Constitution Day (also known as 'Samvidhan Divas').
- These activities aim to reiterate and reorient the citizens towards the values and principles expressed in the Indian Constitution and encouraging all Indians to play their rightful role in strengthening the Indian Democracy.



- The aim is to publicize the glorious and rich composite culture and diversity of our nation. Further, it aims to create awareness of Fundamental Duties as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

Know! more about Constitution Day

- (National Law Day), also known as Samvidhan Divas, is celebrated in India on 26 November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, and it came into effect on 26 January 1950.
- The Government of India declared 26 November as Constitution Day on 19 November 2015 by a gazette notification.
- The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi made the declaration on 11 October 2015 while laying the foundation stone of the B. R. Ambedkar's Statue of Equality memorial in Mumbai.
- Previously this day was celebrated as Law Day. 26 November was chosen to spread the importance of the constitution and to spread thoughts and ideas of Ambedkar.

Bilateral Relations: A Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT)



Relevance IN – Prelims (Know! about PIWTT and Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.)

Know! more about PIWTT

- A Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) exists between India and Bangladesh since 1972.
- Under this protocol, Inland Vessels of one country can pay on the designated Waterways routes of another country.
- There are specified inland water routes and equal number of Ports of call in each country for Exim trade through the Inland Water Transport (IWT).
- The said protocol is valid up to 05th June, 2020 with a provision of automatic renewal after 5 years.
- The North eastern States are connected with the mainland through Inland waterways of Brahmaputra (NW-2) and Barak (NW-16) with Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hoogly river system (NW-1) via Sunderbans (NW-97) through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.
- For strengthening round the year navigation on Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and Bangladesh on 8th April, 2017 for fairway development of Sirajganj-Daikhowa stretch of Jamuna river and Ashuganj-Zakiganj stretch of Kushiyara river in Bangladesh.
- The estimated cost of the project is Rs 305.84 crore on a cost sharing ratio of 80:20 between India and Bangladesh.
- Under the MoU Agreement and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Bangladesh has allowed use of its Chattogram and Mongla Ports for transit movement of our goods through waterways, rail, road or multi-modal transport in its territory.

- There are eight routes provided under the Agreement which would enable access of North East region (NER) via Bangladesh.

Social Issues: National Child Labour Project

Relevance IN – Prelims (about NCLP) + Mains (GS II welfare scheme for vulnerable sections of the population by centre and states and the performance of these schemes)

National Child Labour Project objectives are:

- Mainstreaming of children withdrawn from work-directly in regular schools (5-8yrs); bridge education in NCLP STCs (9-14 yrs)
- Withdrawal of adolescent in hazardous occupations & their skilling and integration in appropriate occupations
- Awareness generation and, tracking of child and adolescent labour

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

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Know! about NCLP

- The National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme is a Central Sector Scheme.
- Under this Scheme the District Project Societies (DPS) are set up at the district level under the Chairmanship of the Collector/District Magistrate for overseeing the implementation of the project.
- Under this Scheme, the children in the age group of 9-14 years are withdrawn from work and put into NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid-day meal, stipend, health care etc. before being mainstreamed into formal education system.
- The children in the age group of 5-8 years are directly linked to the formal education system through a close coordination with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Further, to ensure the effective enforcement of the provisions of the Child Labour Act and smooth implementation of NCLP Scheme, a dedicated online portal named PENCiL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) is developed in order to make the NCLP successful through better monitoring and implementation ensuring the timely disposal of work with transparency.
- Under this Scheme, funds are provided directly to the District Project Societies who in turn engage and allocate the funds to NGOs/Voluntary Agencies/Civil Societies Organisation etc. for running of Special Training Centres. The Grant-in-Aid released during 2018-19 under the NCLP Scheme, State-wise is given at Annexure-I.

Parliament passes Bill to protect rights of transgenders

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bill and its provisions) + Mains (GS II Social Justice - government policies and interventions for development in various sectors)

What's the NEWS

- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, seeks to provide mechanism for social, economic and educational empowerment of transgenders
- The Rajya Sabha passed a bill on the protection of rights of transgenders after a motion to refer it to a Select Committee of the Upper House was defeated. The Lok Sabha had passed the Bill on August 5 this year.

Know! more about the bill

- The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, seeks to provide a mechanism for social, economic and educational empowerment of transgenders

The changes

- A clause related to a medical examination by a panel for a district magistrate (DM) or collector to certify a person as a transgender which was earlier part of the bill, has been done away with, after reservations were expressed by members in this regard.
- However, in case of a child, his or her parents can file an application for issuance of an identification certificate.

Objective

- It is aimed at eliminating discrimination against transgenders and the government will form a national council for its implementation after the legislation is brought into effect.
- A transgender person will be able to avail the benefits of schemes offered by states as well as the Centre.

Supreme Court's Decision on this

- The Supreme Court's direction in April 2014 regarding framing transgenders has also been kept in mind.
- The Supreme Court had recognised the transgender community as a third gender along with male and female in April 2014.

Debatable provisions of the bill

- Several provisions in the bill that needed improvement. "In case a woman is raped, the culprit gets seven years to 20 years and even life imprisonment, but if a transgender is raped, the culprit [as the bill provides] shall get only six months to two years in prison
- The transgender community has also been protesting for the bill to be sent to a select committee as it fails to address the fundamental right of a transgender to determine his or her identity but rather it confers power to the District Magistrate to grant identity certificate to Transgender applicants.
- The Bill does not include a provision that states what recourse a transgender person can take in case the District Magistrate refuses to recognize a transgender or refuses to issue a certificate of identity. It was also argued that the Bill takes away the right of self-identification of gender.
- Objections were also raised on the bill's silence on provisions relating to the right to marry and inheritance of property for transgender persons.

Know! about Transgender

- The Transgender Protection Bill defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender that was assigned at birth.
- The category of people includes trans-men, trans-women, gender-queers, persons with intersex variations and persons with socio-cultural identities.

The Transgender Bill prohibits discrimination and unfair treatment against transgenders in:

- Education Employment Healthcare Access to goods, opportunities, facilities available to public Right to movement Right to rent, live or otherwise occupy property Opportunity to hold public or private office Access to government or private establishment in whose care or custody a transgender person is.

Know! more about the features of the bill

- The bill also criminalizes denial of services or denial of use of public places to transgender persons and the removal of transgenders from a village or a household.
- The Transgender Bill proposes the establishment of National Council for Transgender Persons.
- The council comprising members from various central ministries, state governments, Niti Aayog and NHRC Governments will monitor the impact of policies, legislation and projects relating to transgender persons and address their grievances.

CWRDM proposes 'Water 4 Change' with foreign aid

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the project Water for Change) + Mains (GS II Bilateral relations + government policies and interventions)

What's the NEWS

- The Centre for Water Resources Development and Management (CWRDM) with the support of six prominent institutes has come up with a new project, 'Water 4 Change', which will be piloted in a phased manner in Kozhikode city, stimulating long-term research and field-level action on urban water management systems.
- As many as six prominent organisations from The Netherlands too are part of the project, which will be considered for implementation in Bhuj, Bhopal, and Shimla.

Know! more about the project

- The core objective of the project, according to CWRDM scientists, is to provide communities and other stakeholders an integrative, fit-for-purpose and context-sensitive design framework for liveable fast-growing secondary cities in a co-creative manner.
- They said the project mainly addresses the disciplines of sanitary engineering, urban planning and governance, hydrology, ecology, informatics, economics and their applications.
- This project will address the need for an integrated systems approach for developing interrelated technological, institutional and financial solutions for sustainable urban water management.
- The project will address the complex challenges to urban water systems facing fast-growing cities like Kozhikode, Bhuj, Bhopal and Shimla, resulting from population growth, rapid urbanisation, and climate change

Human Resource Development: HRD Min launches a portal for monthly essay competition

Relevance IN – Prelims (about ‘Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan’) +Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources)

What’s the NEWS

- The Human Resource Development (HRD) ministry launched web portal for conducting national essay competitions on the Constitution of India and fundamental duties online every month as part of the nationwide ‘Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan.’

Know! more about the portal

- Launching the kartavya.ugc.ac.in portal, HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank it will also be used conduct quizzes, debates, poster making and other activities pertaining to the ‘Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan’.
- This will make them aware that rights are automatically realized when we follow our duties religiously.
- This principle will help the students channelize their talents and capabilities in the right direction.
- The competitions will be held online through the infrastructure and testing centres of the National Testing Agency and will be open for every student registered in any higher education institution in the country.
- There will be four prizes worth Rs 15000, Rs 12,000, Rs 10,000 and Rs 7500. The essays can be written in Hindi or English



Lok Sabha passes National Institute of Design (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bill provisions) + GS II (Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation)

What’s the NEWS

- The Lok Sabha on Tuesday passed the National Institute of Design (Amendment) Bill, 2019 with the objective to make the National Institute of Design (NID) in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh as the institutions of national importance.

Know! more about it

- Currently, these institutes are registered as Societies under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and do not have the power to grant degrees or diplomas.
- On being declared institutions of national importance, the four institutes will be granted the power to grant degrees and diplomas.

- The four institutes will have the standards at par with the institute in Ahmedabad. He said these institutes will impart quality education in the field of design.

National Affairs: Daman Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli Merger Bill Passed in Lok Sabha

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the merger bill) + Mains (GS II Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications)

What's the NEWS

- The Lok Sabha approved the bill providing for the merger of two union territories Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu into one union territory.
- The name of the new Union Territory which comes into existence will be Dadara and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

Know! more about it

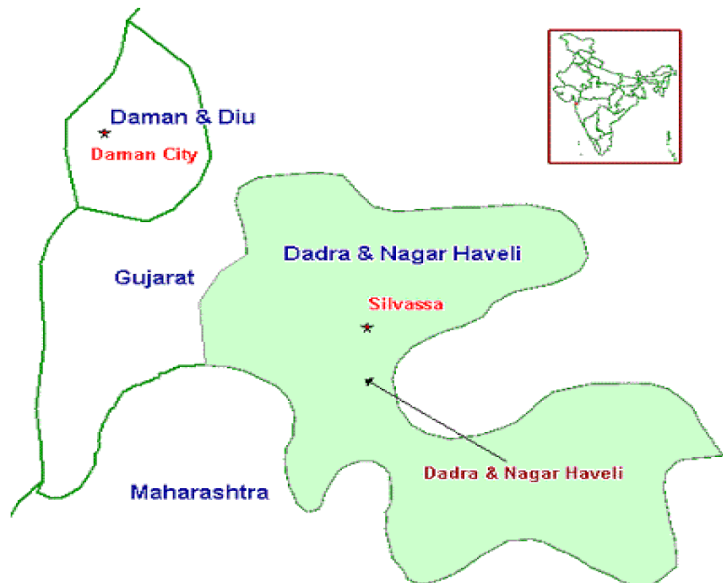
- The objective of merging the two union territories is to increase their administrative ease and ensure development.
- The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will continue to get the reservation; there will be no change in it.
- There is only a distance of 35 km between the two islands, but both have a different budget. Daman and Diu have two districts while Dadara Nagar Haveli has one district.
- It will have two Lok Sabha seats after both become a union territory. The Bombay High Court will deal with the legal cases here as before.
- Apart from this, officers of both the union territories will come in the cadre of the new Union Territory. All other employees will also be part of the United Union Territory.
- There were 9 Union Territories and 28 states in the country after Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two union territories by the central government.

Now, the number of union territories will be reduced to eight.

- List of 8 Union Territories: Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Puducherry, NCT of Delhi, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep.

Know! more about Daman Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli

- Both the union territories were ruled by the Portuguese for a long time. Daman Diu was freed from Portuguese rule in December 1961.
- Daman Diu was part of Goa Union Territory till 1987, but then it became separate when Goa became a full state. Dadara Nagar Haveli became independent on August 2, 1954. It later joined India in 1961.



Government has set up Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) to provide exposure to science and technology to students

Relevance IN – Prelims (about AIM) + Mains (GS III awareness in the field of science and technology)

What's the NEWS

- The Government of India is encouraging the schools to provide exposure to science and technology to students so that they can be acquainted with futuristic technology platforms.

Know! about AIM

- Government has setup the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) at NITI Aayog.
- The objective of establishing AIM is to create scientific temper and cultivate the spirit of curiosity and innovation among young minds.
- Towards this end, AIM is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATL) across the country for students between grade 6th to 12th, equipped with latest emerging technologies such as electronics, IoT, 3D printing, Robotics, etc.
- In schools, AIM facilitates to set up network of ATL in India.
- The vision of ATL initiative is to 'Cultivate 1 Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators'.
- The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds and inculcate skills such as design mind-set, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing, rapid calculations, measurements, etc.
- As on date, 8878 schools have been selected and 4680 schools have been given the ATL grant in aid for establishment of ATL.
- A total of Rs. 1000 crores are currently earmarked for AIM up to financial year 2019-20. There is no direct allocation of funds at a state/district level by AIM. The disbursement of the funds is directly made by AIM to the beneficiaries and administered centrally.



Social Issues: The Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2019

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bill and its benefits) + Mains (GS II SOCIAL ISSUES – government policies and interventions for development in various sector and issues arising out of their design and implementations)

What's the NEWS

- The Labour and Employment ministry introduced The Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2019 in the Lok Sabha
- The Bill aims to consolidate and amend the laws relating to trade unions, conditions of employment in industrial establishment or undertaking, investigation and settlement of industrial disputes.
- The draft code on Industrial Relations has been prepared after amalgamating, simplifying and rationalizing the relevant provisions of following three Central Labour Acts viz: The Trade Unions Act, 1926, The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 and The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.
- The Union Cabinet approved the Industrial Relations Code, 2019 on November 20, 2019.

Know! the benefits

- Setting up of two-member tribunal (in place of one member) introducing a concept that some of the important cases will be adjudicated jointly and the rest by a single member resulting speedier disposal of cases.
- To impart flexibility to the exit provisions (relating to retrenchment etc.), for which, the threshold for prior approval of appropriate Government has been kept unchanged at 100 employees, but added a provision for changing 'such number of employees' through notification.
- The re-skilling fund is to be utilised for crediting to workers in the manner to be prescribed.
- Definition of Fixed Term Employment and that it would not lead to any notice period and payment of compensation on retrenchment excluded.
- Vesting of powers with the government officers for adjudication of disputes involving penalty as fines thereby lessening the burden on tribunal.

Yuwaah Youth Skilling Initiative

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Yuwaah youth skilling Initiative)

What's the NEWS

- UNICEF has launched 'YuWaah' Generation Unlimited in India

Know! more about the initiative

- According to UNICEF, Generation Unlimited, called YuWaah in India, is a multi-stakeholder alliance which aims to facilitate youth to gain relevant skills for productive lives and the future of work.
- The target age group of YuWaah includes adolescent girls and boys and its key mission is to promote access to foundational, transferable and 21st century skills for youth inside and outside formal education systems, which includes defining foundational skills, life skills and flexible learning and identifying and scaling impactful delivery models.
- YuWaah intends to create platforms to guide youth to market opportunities (career guidance, mentorship, internships, apprenticeships) and facilitate integration of career guidance in school education.

State Specific: Project of Rs 25.58 crores approved for Development of Loktak Inland Waterways Project in Manipur

Relevance IN – Prelims (about loktak lake)

What's the NEWS

- The Ministry of Shipping have given approval for the development of Loktak Inland Waterways improvement project in Manipur under the central sector scheme.
- The estimated cost of the project is Rs 25.58 crores. The Loktak Lake is the largest fresh water lake in North east located at Moirang in Manipur.
- The project will develop the Inland water transport connectivity in North East States and give boost to the tourism sector.

Know! about Loktak Lake

- Loktak lake is the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and is famous for the phumdis (heterogeneous mass of vegetation, soil and organic matter at various stages of decomposition) floating over it.
- The lake is located at Moirang in Manipur state, India.
- Located on this phumdi, Keibul Lamjao National Park is the only floating national park in the world.
- The park is the last natural refuge of the endangered Sangai deer (state animal)



Government Schemes: Char Dham Programme

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Char Dham programme)

Know! about the programme

- The projects under Char Dham Programme include widening of existing roads along with adequate/sufficient slope protection by way of erection of retaining walls and breast walls and by deploying drapery system, netting, anchoring, reinforced wall etc. as per Detailed Project Reports.
- The projects also include mitigation measures/ stabilisation of chronic landslide & sinking spots/zones as standalone project or part of road widening projects to avoid land slide and safety of road users.

- Bio engineering methods like hydro seeding are being used for vegetative growth on fragile slopes for their stability. All these measures shall safeguard the highway and habitation against natural calamity.
- The works under Char Dham Pariyojna are being implemented on Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode of contract.
- These projects are being implemented by 3 executing agencies of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, viz, Uttarakhand State PWD, Border Road Organization (BRO) and National Highway & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).



Chardham Yatra Marg Project

Know! about EPC mode

- Under this EPC mode of contract, the contractor is directly responsible for ensuring quality of the work as well as rectification of defects and maintenance of the project stretch for a period of 4 years after completion of construction.

Know! more about the project

- Char Dham Expressway National Highway, is a proposed two-lane (in each direction) express National Highway with a minimum width of 10 metres in the state of Uttarakhand.
- Four Pilgrim-destinations namely Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath, collectively known as Char Dham
- The proposed highway will compliment the under development Char Dham Railway by connecting the four holy places in Uttarakhand states
- The project includes 900 km national highways will connect whole of Uttarakhand state
- The total cost of INR ° 12000 crores and the foundation stone of the project was laid by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi on 27 December 2016 .
- The highway will be called Char Dham Mahamarg (Char Dham Highway) and the highway construction project will be called as Char Dham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojana (Char Dham Highway Development Project) and is made to improve the connectivity to the Chota Char Dham centered in the Himalayas

India To Host Shanghai Summit's Heads Of Government Council Meet In 2020



Relevance IN – Prelims (about SCO and SCO governor council meet) + Mains (GS II bilateral regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interest

What's the NEWS

- India will host the 19th council of heads of government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation next year, the first such high level meeting of the eight-member grouping to be organised by New Delhi after its admission into the grouping in 2017

Know! more about it

- The SCO is a China-led eight-member economic and security bloc in which India and Pakistan were admitted as full members in 2017.
- Its founding members included China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- In the 18th meeting of SCO's council of heads of government that was held at Tashkent early this month the decision was taken that India will host a meeting of the heads of the government for the first time
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh represented India at the summit in Tashkent.

Know! about SCO

- The SCO has four observer states, namely Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia. It has six dialogue partners, namely Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka.
- The SCO, which has its headquarters in Beijing, holds summits of heads of states as well as heads of government meetings annually in member countries. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends the summit, the heads of the government meetings are attended by senior Cabinet Ministers.
- India's membership was strongly pushed by Russia, while Pakistan's entry into the grouping was backed by China.

Significance of SCO

- The SCO has high economic potential because 40 per cent of the world population lives in its countries, which produce an aggregate GDP of more than USD 18 trillion, that is more than the 22

Recent SCO initiatives

Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)

- In recent years, the SCO has made counter terrorism cooperation one of its main focus areas and created Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) which focussed on periodic counter terrorism exercises involving the member countries.
- A number of proposals, including the creation of the Council for the Development of Digital Economy and setting up of SCO Development Bank (SDB) and SCO Development Fund (SDF) were discussed.
- China would launch the SCO International Youth Incubator programme.

Polity/Governance: Maharashtra under President's rule for 3rd time in 59-year history

Relevance IN – Prelims (about President's rule) + Mains GS II (Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein. Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these)

What's the NEWS

- Art 356, under which Prez's rule is imposed in state, deals with failure of constitutional machinery in state.

Know! more about it

- Imposition of President's rule in Maharashtra is the first instance in the 59-year-old history of the state when Article 356 has been invoked due to inability of political parties to form a government after an assembly election.

- Overall, this is third time that Maharashtra has come under the central rule. The present-day Maharashtra came into existence on May 1, 1960.
- Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyar recommended the imposition of President's rule in Maharashtra after Shiv Sena failed to prove the majority within its given deadline and the BJP refused to form government saying it had fewer numbers.
- The recommendation file was sent by the Union Home Ministry for the President's assent. President Ram Nath Kovind approved the proposal on November 12, 2019.

Shiv Sena approached the Supreme Court

- Shiv Sena has filed a writ petition under Article 14 & 21 of the constitution of India, challenging the governor's unconstitutional and unreasonable decision to reject the request for a deadline extension to submit letters of support.

The seats statics

- In the October 21 assembly election, whose results were declared on October 24, the BJP emerged as the single largest party with 105 seats followed by the Shiv Sena 56, the NCP 54 and the Congress 44.
- Pre-poll allies BJP and the Shiv Sena had together won 161 seats, way above the 145 majority mark in the 288-member house.

Know! about the President's rule

- President's rule has been imposed in Maharashtra for the third time since the state came into existence in May 1960.
- The President's rule means direct rule of the central government and suspension of state government's rule.
- The President's rule is imposed after invoking Article 356 of the Indian constitution. It is imposed on the recommendation of Governor in two cases:
 1. In case of failure of constitutional machinery
 2. If a state legislature is unable to function according to constitutional provisions
- The President's rule is imposed for a minimum duration of six months and a maximum duration of 3 years but it has to be approved by the Parliament after every six months.
- The President's rule can be revoked whenever a party is able to prove its majority and submit letters of support.

SC allows 17 disqualified Karnataka MLAs to contest December 5 by polls

Relevance IN – Prelims (about anti -defection law and about 190) + Mains (GS II Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

What's the NEWS

- The Supreme Court upheld the disqualification of 17 Karnataka MLAs belonging to the Congress (14) and the Janata Dal-Secular (3).
- The MLAs were disqualified by the then Assembly Speaker KR Ramesh Kumar.
- The Supreme Court said that disqualified legislators should be allowed to give their opinion.
- The Supreme Court said that the decision of the then Lok Sabha Speaker is correct, but disqualification decision for the entire term of the Legislative Assembly is not correct.

Know! the genesis of this matter

- The speaker of legislative assembly Ramesh Kumar had disqualified 17 rebel MLAs before the confidence motion of the HD Kumaraswamy government in the assembly.
- In July 2019, after BJP swept the parliamentary elections, 17 MLAs of the coalition submitted resignations to the speaker.
- By-elections are being held on December 5 for 15 seats (out of these 17 seats) due to disqualification of these MLAs.
- These disqualified MLAs wanted to file nominations for these by-elections.

- These MLAs had recently filed an application in the apex court, requesting the Election Commission to postpone the by-elections for 15 seats

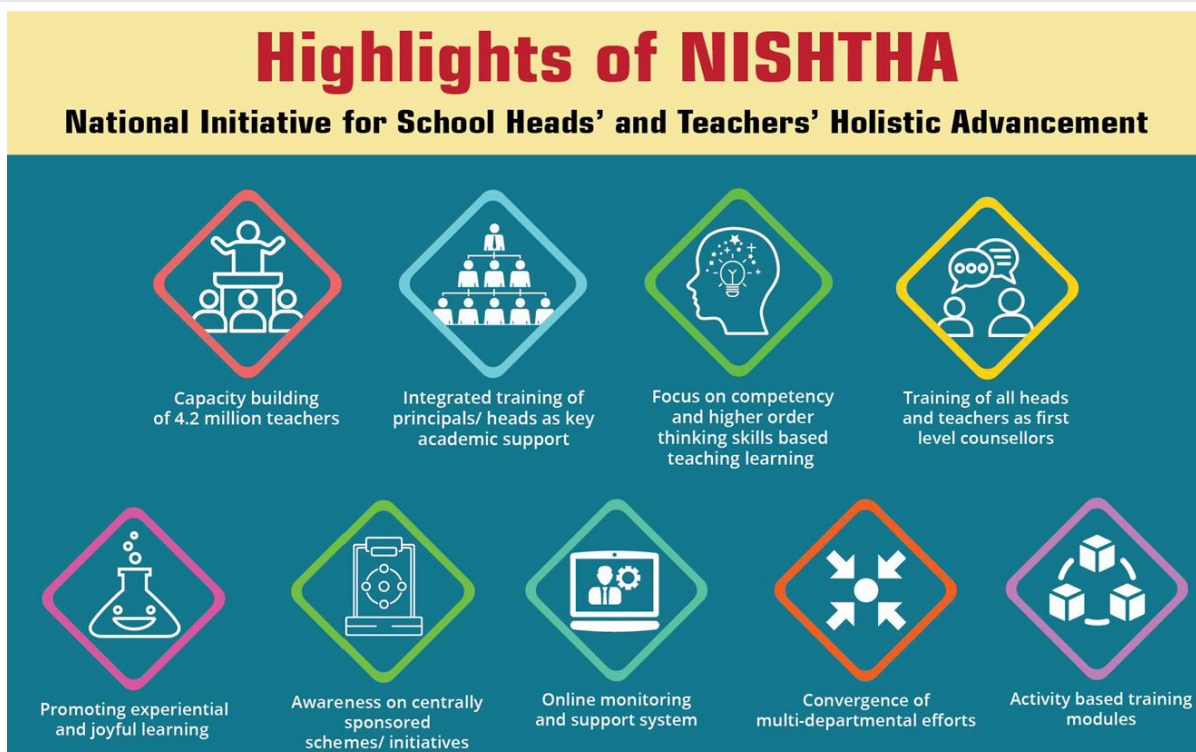
Article 190

- It explains the vacation of seats by the members of Houses of legislature of state.
- The article gives the power for the MLA to resign addressing the speaker. However, the article also gives power to the speaker the power to reject the resignation

Anti-Defection Law

- The tenth schedule of the Constitution lays down the process by which legislators can be disqualified on grounds of defection by the presiding officer of the legislature. A MLA is deemed to have been defected
 - if he voluntarily gives up his membership of the party
 - If he disobeys party leadership on a vote

National Mission 'NISHTHA' launched in J&K



Relevance IN – Prelims (about NISHTHA) + Mains (GS II Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

What's the NEWS

- NISHTHA National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) was launched in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
- The event was attended by around 300 teachers, Key Resource Persons (KRPs) and Chief Education Officers, DIET Principals and Educational Administrators.

Know! more about NISHTHA

- NISHTHA which is a National Mission aimed at improving learning outcomes at Elementary level through integrated Teacher Trainings.
- NISHTHA is a pioneer scheme being launched across the country, with a total of 86000 Elementary teachers of Government Schools being trained in J&K under the programme

- This Mission aims to build the capacities of 42 lakh participants covering all teachers and Heads of Schools at elementary level in all Government Schools across the country

National Epilepsy Day

- National Epilepsy Day is to make people aware not to panic from the disease and take proper medication. This day also educate people via seminars, lectures, etc.

Know! about Epilepsy Disease

- Epilepsy is a chronic brain disorder resulted in recurrent ‘seizures’ or ‘fits’. Seizures occur due to the sudden, excessive electrical discharges in the neurons or brain cells. This type of condition can affect people at any age and each age group suffers from different problems.
- Therefore, we can say that Epilepsy is a neurological condition in which the tendency to have seizures starts in the brain.
- According to WHO, around 50 million people in the world are suffering from epilepsy disease and out of 80%, people are living in developing countries. It is a treatable disease but three-fourth people affected by this disease in developing countries do not get proper treatment. Approximately 10 million people in India are suffering from seizures that are associated with epilepsy.
- Epilepsy is a disease in which seizures occur in brain cells or neurons. It is a treatable disease and taking proper medication, the cure of epilepsy disease is possible.

BRICS Business Council created a roadmap to achieve \$ 500 billion Intra-BRICS trade target by the next summit

Relevance IN – Prelims (about BRICS Summit) +Mains (GS II Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests

What’s the NEWS

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi along with the Heads of states of other BRICS countries participated in the Leaders dialogue with BRICS Business Council and New Development Bank.



- The BRICS Business Council created a roadmap to achieve the \$ 500 billion Intra-BRICS trade target by the next summit and identification of economic complementarities among BRICS countries would be important in this effort.

Know! more about 11th BRICS summit 2019

- The five BRICS nations account for almost 50 percent of the world's economic growth.
- The BRICS bloc comprises five major developing economies including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- PM Modi holds bilateral talks with leaders of Brazil, Russia and China

Know! the highlights of the bilateral meet on the sidelines of the 11th BRICS Summit

India -Brazil

- The Brazilian President accepted PM Modi's invitation to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day on January 26, 2020.
- The Indian Prime Minister welcomed the Brazilian President's decision to grant visa-free travel to Indian citizens.

India – China

- Xi Jinping invited PM Modi to China for the third informal summit between the two nations in 2020.
- Both leaders reviewed the ongoing preparations for the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China in 2020.

India - Russia

- The two leaders noted that the USD 25 billion bilateral trade target by 2025 has already been achieved.
- Both the leaders decided to hold the 1st bilateral regional forum between Russian Provinces and the Indian States in 2020 to do away with the trade barriers at the regional level.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin highlighted the potential of the Arctic region in natural gas and invited India to invest in the region.
- The leaders also reviewed the progress made in the Infrastructure sector especially railways including raising the speed of the Nagpur-Secunderabad sector railway line.
- Prime Minister Modi accepted the Russian President's invitation to participate in Russia's Victory Day celebrations in 2020.

Know! about BRICS

- BRICS is a group of five major developing economies. Initially, the bloc included only four nations and was termed as BRIC, as South Africa became a member of the bloc only in 2010.
- BRICS nations make up almost 42 percent of the world's population, 23 percent of the global GDP and about 17 percent of the world trade. The group also accounts for almost 50 percent of world economic growth and 26.6 percent of the world area.
- All BRICS nations are members of the G20 group. The BRICS summit has been hosted alternatively every year since 2009. The 10th BRICS Summit was hosted by South Africa in January 2018.

PM proposes first meeting of BRICS Water Ministers in India

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the Plenary session of XI BRICS Summit in Brazil . Heads of states of other BRICS countries, also addressed the Plenary session.
- The theme of this summit - "Economic growth for an innovative future" is very apt.
- The Prime Minister said that the Sustainable water management and sanitation are important challenges in urban areas and proposed to hold the first meeting of BRICS Water Ministers in India.

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GENERAL STUDIES III

**Technology, Economic Developments,
Biodiversity, Environment, Security
and Disaster management**

Union Minister Flags off E-Vehicles procured by Information & Broadcasting Ministry



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the steps taken by the government to promote e-vehicles and about FAME scheme) + Mains (GS III environment conservation)

What's the objective

- Current 5 Lakh Petrol and Diesel Cars used by government and its agencies to be replaced by E-Vehicles in a phased manner

Know! the progress done by the government in promoting e-vehicles

- The Electric-vehicles are supplied by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of state-owned NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and POWERGRID, under the Government of India.
- With this partnership, the Government of India continues to be an active participant in India's quest for reduced emissions & vehicular electrification.
- The Government of India in enabling e-mobility in the country. The Government is promoting e-mobility by taking a lead in changing the fleet of the existing petrol and diesel cars used for official purposes with electric cars.
- The current 5 lakh vehicles that are used by the government and its agencies across the country will be replaced by e-vehicles in a phased manner
- By opting for e-vehicles, which are pollution free and has no particulate matter, it is a step in the right direction towards combating air pollution.
- According to a report by NITI Aayog, India can reduce energy demand by 64% and carbon emissions by 37% with the help of connected, shared and electric passenger mobility across the country by 2030.
- EESL has aggregated demand by procuring electric vehicles in bulk to get economies of scale. These electric vehicles are being provided to Government entities by EESL on lease/outright purchase basis to replace the existing petrol and diesel vehicles taken on lease by various Government organizations.
- EESL has also started installation of Public Charging Stations from New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) area to promote Electric vehicles.

Know! about National E-Mobility Programme

- It is noteworthy to mention that the Government of India also launched the National E-Mobility Programme on March 7th, 2018.

- The objectives of the programme is to provide an impetus for Indian vehicle manufacturers, charging infrastructure companies, fleet operators, service providers, etc. to gain efficiencies of scale and drive down costs, create local manufacturing facilities, grow technical competencies for the long-term growth of the electric vehicle (EV) industry in India and to enable Indian EV manufacturers to emerge as major global players.
- Create a sustainable demand for e-vehicles to ensure manufacturing in India thereby promoting Make-In-India
- Promote Lithium-Ion Battery manufacturing in India to enable lower cost of ownership and operations of e-vehicles as batteries account for 50-60% of cost of e-vehicles
- Reduce dependence on oil imports and promote power capacity addition in India thereby enhancing energy security of the country
- Reduce GHG emissions from the transport sector.

Know! about FAME India Scheme

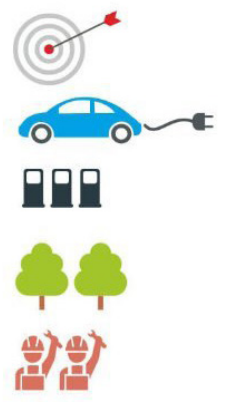
- The National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020 is a National Mission document providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country.
- As part of the NEMMP 2020, Department of Heavy Industry formulated a Scheme viz. Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme in the year 2015 to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.
- The Phase-I of this Scheme was initially launched for a period of 2 years, commencing from 1st April 2015, which was subsequently extended from time to time and the last extension was allowed up to 31st March 2019.
- The 1st Phase of FAME India Scheme was implemented through four focus areas namely (i) Demand Creation, (ii) Technology Platform, (iii) Pilot Project and (iv) Charging Infrastructure.
- Benefits from unaccounted segments like e-3W and e-rickshaws can potentially add to the results, however growth in segments like e-rickshaws was unplanned. Support to these segments to be evaluated.
- Under FAME Scheme Phase-I, the demand incentive amount was determined for each category (vehicle - technology - battery type) taking into account the principles of Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), Pay-back Period on account of fuel savings, cost of maintenance etc.

WHAT IS FAME?

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric (Hybrid) Vehicles in India is a scheme under **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP)**

Target of NEMMP - 2020

- **6-7 million** Hybrid & Electric Vehicle sale by 2020
- **9500 million** litres of estimated cumulative fuel saving
- **2 million** tonnes reduction in pollution & green house gas emissions
- **65,000** Direct & **3,00,000** Indirect jobs



Incentives on offer under phase II of FAME

- ▶ **₹10,000 per kW**
Planned incentive on the basis of battery size
- ▶ **₹20,000 per kW**
Planned incentive for electric buses
- ▶ **₹8,596 crore**
Total incentive sanctioned
- ▶ **₹1,000 crore**
Incentive for setting up charging stations

Source: Heavy industries ministry

- Based on the experience gained during Phase 1 of FAME Scheme the Department of Heavy Industry notified Phase-II of the Scheme, with the approval of Cabinet with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 Crore for a period of 3 years commencing from 1st April 2019.

Environment Conservation/Energy Security: Second International Solar Alliance Summit



Relevance IN – Prelims (about ISA) + Mains (GS III environment conservation + infrastructure development – energy)

What's the NEWS

- Ministers from 29 countries attend second International Solar Alliance Summit
- Member countries of the International Solar Alliance sought enhanced support from multi-lateral development institutions such as the World Bank to set up solar power projects in small island countries.
- This demand was stated at the second International Solar Alliance (ISA) assembly on Thursday in New Delhi.

Know! more about the summit

- Delegations from 78 countries are participating in the Assembly. Invitations were sent to all 193 United Nation member countries to participate in the ISA summit. Two countries, Eritrea and St. Kitts & Nevis signed the ISA framework agreement taking the total number of signatories to 83.

Know! the steps taken by India

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had pledged at the UN Climate Action Summit 2019 to increase the renewable energy capacity of India to 175 gigawatts (GW) by 2022 and further increase it 450 GW.
- According to the renewable energy ministry, India is moving towards achieving the 175 GW goal by 2022, as it has over 82 GW renewable capacity on the ground and around 70 GW at various stages of completion.

Know! about ISA

- The International Solar Alliance was jointly launched by India and France. It was officially launched by PM Narendra Modi at the India Africa Summit, ahead of the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in November 2015.
- The main objective of the alliance is to address key challenges to increasing the use of solar energy in the ISA member countries.
- The alliance objectives include lowering the cost of energy, increasing investment in renewable energy, training and sharing of knowledge and technology among the member nations.
- The ISA Assembly is the main decision-making body of the alliance and it decides on various administrative, financial and program-related issues.

Infrastructure Development/Disaster Management: Vice President addresses the Silver Jubilee celebrations of NIOT in Chennai

Relevance IN – Prelims (about NIOT and Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) + Mains (GS III Disaster Management)

What's the NEWS

- Silver Jubilee celebration of National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)

Objective of NIOT

- NIOT plays a vital role in the protection of coastal areas from negative impacts of climate change and also in the development of blue coastal infrastructure for the benefit of society.

Blue Economy

- NIOT has been working on six priority pillars of blue economy, including Fisheries and Aquaculture, Renewable Ocean Energy, Seaports and Shipping; Offshore Hydrocarbons, Seabed Minerals, and Marine Biotechnology.
- Blue economy includes intangible economic benefits such as carbon sequestration, coastal protection, cultural values and biodiversity.

Projects under NIOT

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and NIOT planning an upcoming project--Samudrayaan, which envisages sending aquanauts to ocean depths with their manned submersible.
- NIOT has developed technologies like desalination plant to convert sea water into portable water, he said there was a need to ensure that such technologies were cost effective.
- The Ministry of S&T is in consultation with the NITI Aayog to launch the National Mission on Desalination which can help us solve the growing problem of water that the world is facing today.

Projects Launched by NIOT

- Vice President also launched the Coastal Flood Warning System app for Chennai (CFLOWS- CHENNAI) developed by the NIOT.
- Other key projects of NIOT especially the desalination project for providing water to the Lakshadweep Island community and the Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion project in Kavaratti for power generation for desalination
- NIOT's Polar Remotely Operable Vehicle (ROV), has also been dedicated to the nation by NIOT which was used in the search operations of the sunken IAF AN-32 aircraft.
- The ROV catapulted India to the elite club of nations like the USA, Japan, France, Germany & Korea with successful development & usage of 6,000 m deep Remotely Operated Vehicle

Know! more about NIOT

- The NIOT was established in November 1993 as an autonomous society under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India by the then Department of Ocean Development.
- NIOT has established itself as one of the premier institutes in the world, working on various ocean technologies.
- NIOT has demonstrated several technologies for societal applications such as Desalination plants, Data and Tsunami Buoy Network in Indian waters for collecting real time oceanic data, sea cage culturing in open sea, shore protection.
- NIOT is also working on continuous expansion to take benefits of these technologies to the doorsteps of common citizens of country.
- NIOT has developed niche technologies to mine manganese nodules from deep sea
- NIOT will be the nodal institution for implementing the proposed Deep Ocean Mission, which encompasses all the areas of Ocean technology like development of manned submersible, offshore large scale desalination, Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC), extensive survey of the oceans, acquisition of new ships etc.

Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)

- The Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) established at Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Sciences, (INCOIS), Hyderabad, under Ministry of Earth Sciences is the national authority to issue tsunami advisories for India.

- The ITEWC functions as an approved Tsunami Service Provider of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning & Mitigation System (IOTWMS) that is an integral part of the Global Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, established and coordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.

Science and Technology: The International Science Literature Festival (IISF 2019)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about India International Science Festival) + Mains (GS III science and technology)

What's the NEWS

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the Fifth India International Science Festival through video conference
- The four-day science festival is being organized in Kolkata from November 5 to November 8, 2019.
- The prime objective of the festival is to instill scientific temper among the masses, showcase India's contribution in the field of S&T over the years and encourage translation of its benefits to people. It aims to build a strategy for inclusive advancement of Science and Technology.

Know! about IISF 2019

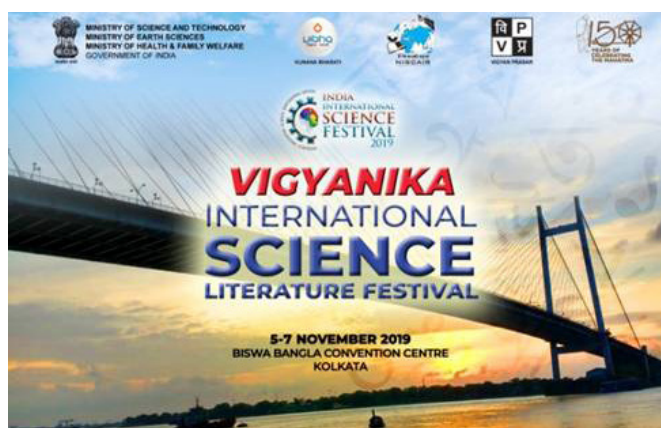
- India International Science Festival (IISF) 2019, an annual event organised jointly by science and technology related Ministries and Departments of the Government of India and Vijnana Bharati (Vibha), is being held in Kolkata this year.
- This is the fifth edition since its inception in 2015 and will take place during November 5th – 8th, 2019.
- IISF-2019 is a festival to celebrate the achievements of India's scientific and technological advancements with students, innovators, craftsmen, farmers, scientists and technocrats from India and abroad.
- Thus, the theme for this year's festival is RISEN India – Research, Innovation, and Science Empowering the Nation.
- IISF is perhaps the biggest platform in the country to bring together students, researchers, innovators, artists, and the general public to celebrate India's achievements in science and technology.
- IISF is also an attempt to encourage young minds towards the field of science and to promote networking of stakeholders working towards the propagation of science.

Know! about Vigyanika

- Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival, being organised as part of the 5th India International Science Festival (IISF) 2019 at Kolkata
- Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival is being coordinated by the CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (CSIR-NISCAIR), Vigyan Prasar and Vigyan Bharati

Know! about the Ministry of Science & Technology

- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) is a department within the Ministry of Science and Technology in India.



- It was established in May 1971 to promote new areas of science and technology and to play the role of a nodal department for organising, coordinating and promoting scientific and technological activities in the country.
- It provides funds to various approved scientific projects in India. It also supports various researchers in India to attend conferences abroad and to go for experimental works.

Know! about Vijnana Bharati

- Vijnana Bharati or VIBHA, previously known as 'Swadeshi Science Movement' is a non-profit organisation, working for science popularization & implementation of modern technology & ancient sciences in India. It was founded by the eminent scientists of Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru led by Prof. K.I. Vasu.

About Vigyan Prasar

- Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organisation of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, was set up in 1989 to take on large-scale science and technology popularisation programmes.
- Vigyan Prasar's mandate is to promote and propagate - as widely as possible - a scientific and rational outlook in society.
- Its broad objectives include undertaking, promoting and co-ordinating science popularization programmes and inculcation of scientific temper among the people.
- It's also responsible for the development of software for various media - audio, visual, audio-visual & print and different modes of communication to enable the masses to understand, appreciate and comprehend scientific principles and practices

Infrastructure Development: First ever movement of container cargo on Brahmaputra (National Waterway -2)



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the voyage and about NW1 and 2 and Inland Water Transport (IWT) + Mains (infrastructure development- ports)

What's the NEWS

- In line with Government's focus on improving connectivity to the North Eastern Region (NER), a landmark container cargo consignment will sail on inland waterways from Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) to the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) terminal at Pandu in Guwahati on 4 November, 2019.

Know! about the voyage

- The inland vessel MV Maheshwari carrying 53 TEUs (containers) of petrochemicals, edible oil and beverage etc.
- The 12-15 days voyage will be an integrated IWT movement via National Waterway-1 (river Ganga), NW-97 (Sunderbans), Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route and NW-2 (river Brahmaputra).
- This is the first ever containerised cargo movement on this Inland Water Transport (IWT) route.
- The 1425 km long movement is expected to establish the technical and commercial viability of IWT mode using these multiple waterways even as a series of pilot movements are planned on the stretch.
- The latest IWT movement is aimed at providing a fillip to North East Region's industrial development by opening up an alternate route for transportation of raw material and finished goods.
- Taking ahead the Government's vision of promoting IWT, the first consignment of containerized cargo on National Waterway-1 (Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system) was received by the Prime Minister on 12 November 2018 when he dedicated to the nation, the Multi Modal Terminal at Varanasi.

Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT)

- The Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh allows mutually beneficial arrangements for the use of their waterways for movement of goods between the two countries by vessels of both countries.
- The IBP route extends from Kolkata (India) on NW-1 to Silghat (Assam) on NW-2 (River Brahmaputra) and Karimganj (Assam) on NW-16 (River Barak).
- Two stretches of Bangladesh inland waterways viz. Sirajganj–Daikhawa & Ashuganj–Zakiganj on the IBP route are being developed at a total cost of Rs 305.84 Cr. on 80:20 cost sharing basis (80% being borne by India & 20% by Bangladesh).
- The development of these two stretches is expected to provide seamless navigation to and from North East India through waterways via the IBP route.
- An SOP to facilitate the movement of goods to and from India through Chattogram and Mongla Ports in Bangladesh has been signed by the two countries on 5th October 2019. The proximity of these two ports will reduce logistics cost and improve trade competitiveness of North East states

Jal Marg Vikas Project

- Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1 (NW-1) at a cost of Rs 5369.18 crore with the technical assistance and investment support of the World Bank. The Project is expected to be completed by March, 2023.
- One of the major problems for a commercially viable and safe navigation on NW-1 is low depth upstream of Farakka barrage due to low discharges from tributaries and difficult hydro morphological characteristics of the river Ganga.
- The project will contribute in bringing down the logistics cost in the country and will provide an alternative mode of transport which will be environment friendly and cost effective.
- It is being implemented by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (Ministry of Shipping).
- States covered under the Project are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal.

India opts out of RCEP agreement

Relevance IN – Prelims (about RCEP) + Mains (GS II Important international institutions, agencies bilateral, regional and global grouping)

What's the NEWS

- India has decided not to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) deal as negotiations failed to address New Delhi's outstanding issues and concerns.



P.M Statement

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the announcement during his speech at the RCEP Summit in Bangkok
- India's core issues would not be compromised and the latest decision has been taken in the interest of the nation.
- The RCEP agreement with China and ASEAN countries does not reflect its original intent, and the outcome is not balanced.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi took part in 16th India-ASEAN summit and 14th East Asia summit.

Know! about the RCEP trade deal

- Negotiations on the details of the RCEP have been on since 2013, and all participating countries aim to finalise and sign the deal by November.
- The purpose of RCEP is to create an “integrated market” spanning 16 countries.
- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a trade deal that is currently under negotiation among 16 countries — the 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the six countries with which the ASEAN bloc has free trade agreements (FTA).
- The ASEAN, which includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, has FTAs with India, Australia, China, South Korea, Japan and New Zealand.

Know! the outcome of various negotiation rounds

- Negotiations on the details of the RCEP have been on since 2013, and all participating countries aim to finalise and sign the deal by November.
- ASEAN says the deal will provide “a framework aimed at lowering trade barriers and securing improved market access for goods and services for businesses in the region”.
- The negotiations are focussed on areas like trade in goods and services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement, e-commerce, and small and medium enterprises.
- It is billed as the “largest” regional trading agreement ever — these countries account for almost half of the world's population, contribute over a quarter of world exports, and make up around 30% of global Gross Domestic Product (the value of all goods and services produced in a year).
- Of the 25 chapters in the deal, 21 have been finalised. Chapters on investment, e-commerce, rules of origin, and trade remedies are yet to be settled

What would have been the benefits if Indian had Joined RCEP

- Sections of Indian industry feel that being part of RCEP would allow the country to tap into a huge market, if the domestic industry becomes competitive. Pharmaceuticals and cotton yarn are confident of gains, and the services industry too, may have new opportunities.

Why India Opted Out

- Several industries feel India needs to be mindful of the amount of access it gives to its market.
- There were fear that some domestic sectors may be hit by cheaper alternatives from other RCEP countries.
- Apprehensions have been expressed that cheaper Chinese products would “flood” India.
- Critics are also not confident that India would be able to take advantage of the deal, given its poor track record of extracting benefits from the FTAs with these countries.
- India’s trade gap with these countries may widen if it signs the RCEP deal
- Industries like dairy and steel have demanded protection. The textile industry, which has already raised concerns about growing competition from neighbouring countries with cheaper and more efficient processes, fears the deal would impact it negatively.

Know! the impact

- India’s decision to not sign RCEP will benefit the Indian farmers, small businesses, MSMEs, dairy and the manufacturing sector, data security, pharmaceutical, steel & chemical industries.
- India had concerns about getting swamped by imports under the agreement, which will put the small Indian businesses and farmers at risk.

RCEP

- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between ASEAN nations and its FTA partners.
- The ten ASEAN member nations include Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, Brunei, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar and Indonesia.
- The FTA partners of the ASEAN nations included China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and India. After India’s pull out, ASEAN nations only have five FTA partners now.
- For now, the remaining 15 nations have decided to go ahead with the agreement without India. China, however, announced that India is welcome to join the RCEP whenever it is ready.
- The negotiations for the RCEP agreement were formally launched in November 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia. Top of Form

Defence: DRDO’s Igniter Complex at HEMRL, Pune inaugurated

Relevance IN – Prelims (about DRDO’S Igniter complex) + Mains (GS III Science and technology)

What’s the NEWS

- The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) Igniter Complex at High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) in Pune launched

Know! about HEMRL and the ignition phenomenon

- HEMRL is a premier laboratory of DRDO and primarily engages in developing Rocket and Gun Propellants, Pyrotechnic Devices, High Explosive Systems and synthesis of high energy molecules.
- HEMRL has created a state of the art facility for design, processing and evaluation of ignition systems.
- The facility consists of process, assembly & storage buildings and a design centre.
- Ignition is a crucial and highly critical phenomenon in the ignition chain of Rocket motor.
- HEMRL has developed various fuel /oxidizer based igniter compositions using organic binders.
- The laboratory has developed several ignition systems to ensure reliable initiation of rocket motors of various tactical as well as strategic missiles.
- Ignition system for Agni, Prithvi, Akash, Nag, Pinaka, Long Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LRSAM), etc. have been designed and developed in HEMRL.

Economic Development: Finance Minister Launches two new IT Initiatives -ICEDASH & ATITHI

Relevance IN – Prelims (ICEDASH and ATITHI) + Mains (GS III economic development)

What's the NEWS

- Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled two new IT initiatives – ICEDASH and ATITHI – for improved monitoring and pace of Customs clearance of imported goods and facilitating arriving international passengers by electronic filing of Customs baggage and currency declarations.
- ICEDASH and ATITHI would be key drivers for further improvement especially as they reduce interface and increase transparency of Customs functioning.

Know! about ICEDASH & ATITHI

- ICEDASH is an Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) monitoring dashboard of the Indian Customs helping public see the daily Customs clearance times of import cargo at various ports and airports.

ICEDASH

- With ICEDASH, Indian Customs has taken a lead globally to provide an effective tool that helps the businesses compare clearance times across ports and plan their logistics accordingly.
- This dashboard has been developed by CBIC in collaboration with NIC. ICEDASH can be accessed through the CBIC website.

ATITHI

- With ATITHI, CBIC has introduced an easy to use mobile app for international travellers to file the Customs declaration in advance.
- Passengers can use this app to file declaration of dutiable items and currency with the Indian Customs even before boarding the flight to India. ATITHI is available on both, iOS and Android.

Environment Conservation: CHILE BACKS OUT AS COP25 HOST DUE TO RIOTS; SPAIN STEPS IN AS THE NEW HOST

What is COP?

The United Nations Framework Convention (UNFCCC) is the international response to climate change. It is a treaty that establishes the basic obligations of the 196 Parties (States) plus the European Union to combat climate change. It was signed at the Earth Summit in 1992 and came into force in 1994. Chile joined that year.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. The Parties meet annually to review progress in the implementation of the Convention where other instruments that support the implementation of the Convention are proposed, evaluated and approved.

The first COP was held in Berlin in 1995. To date, 24 COPs have been held, the last one in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018.

The COP Presidency is rotating in the following 5 regions of the United Nations: Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Western Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. Now it's Chile's turn.

Relevance IN – Prelims (about COP 25) + Mains (GS III Environment conservation)

What's the NEWS

- After Chile announced that it will not be able to host the United Nations Annual Conference of Parties (COP25), Spain has stepped in and offered to host instead.
- The country's offer has been accepted by Chile and the United Nations and it confirmed that COP25 will be held in Madrid, Spain on the same dates as before, between 2-13 December

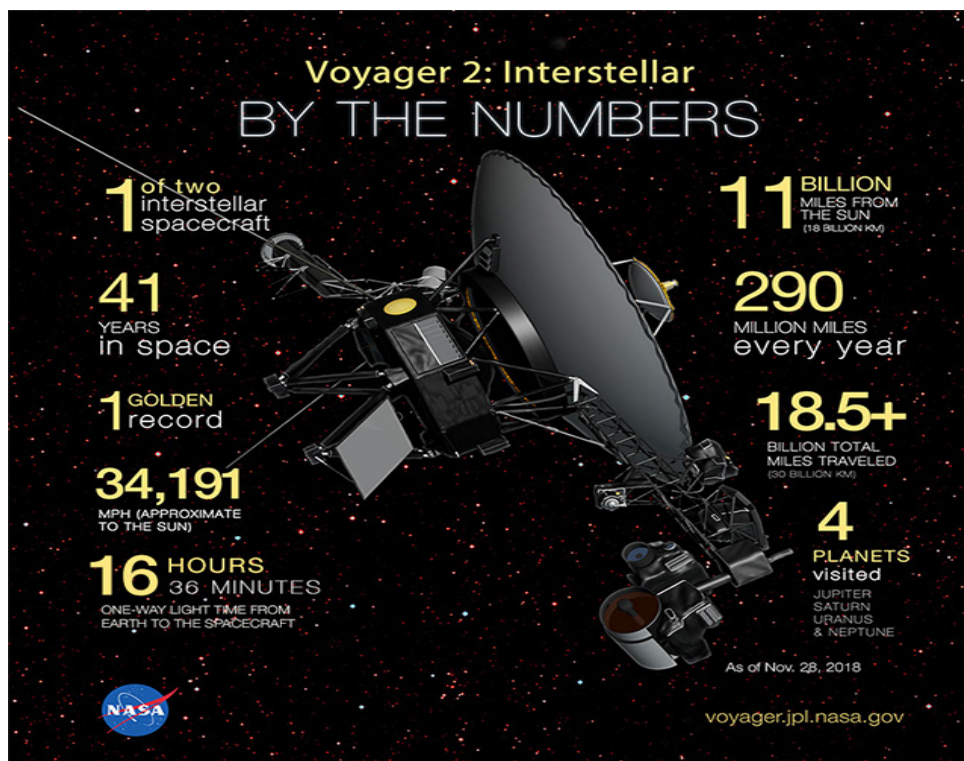
Know! more about it

- Spain had offered to host COP25 in Madrid on the same dates as the original schedule after Chile decided to pull out from hosting the event due to the ongoing national unrest against the Government of Chile.
- Chile had informed its decision of not hosting the COP25 event in the view of the unrest in the country to UNFCCC on October 30, 2019.
- Chile withdrew from hosting two major international events- COP 25 and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit due to ongoing anti-governmental protests in the nation.
- An emergency has been declared in Chile, after hundreds of people took to the roads to demand the resignation of President Sebastian Pinera after the government announced a 30 percent increase in Metro fares in October 2019.
- Though the Government of Chile in remedial measure announced a 20 percent increase in the basic pension of the citizens and allowed free electricity and some subsidies in the medical sector, the public was not satisfied. The citizens in Chile have already been reeling under the pressure of inflation.
- The citizens have been demanding economic reforms and a new government.

Know! about COP25

- COP25 means the 25th Conference of the Parties on climate change. The 2019 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) will be 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference, the 15th meeting of the parties for the Kyoto Protocol (CMP15), and the second meeting of the parties for the Paris Agreement (CMA2).

NASA's Voyager-2 reaches interstellar space



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Voyager 1 and 2) + Mains (GS III awareness in the filed of space

What's the NEWS

- NASA's Voyager 2 spacecraft has reached interstellar space.
- NASA's Voyager-2 has become the second spacecraft which has reached outside the periphery of the solar system.
- It has completed a long journey of over four decades to reach here. Earlier, only Voyager-1 of NASA reached near interstellar space.

Know! more about Voyage -2

- Voyager-2 is a second human-made object to touch solar periphery out of the Sun's influence.
- Voyager-2 has reached interstellar medium (ISM). Voyager-2 entered ISM on November 5, 2019.
- It was decided through readings based on plasma density. Plasma Wave Apparatus (PWA), mounted on the spacecraft, sent information about the atmosphere that helped the scientists to identify its actual location.
- Scientists found that the increased density of plasma is clear evidence of the spacecraft's presence in a colder and higher plasma density.
- Interstellar space is a place where warm and low-density plasma of solar winds always remains. Similar plasma density data was found from Voyager-1 when it entered ISM. Voyager-1 crossed the solar periphery in 2012.

Know! more about Voyager-2

- Voyager-2 was launched on August 20, 1977. About 16 days later, Voyager-1 was launched on September 5, 1977.
- Both vehicles were launched to study planets and space beyond Earth, with differences in purpose and path. Both the vehicles have been operating for the last 42 years.
- NASA contacts these spacecraft through Deep Space Network (DSN). Voyager-2 entered the ISM 119.7 astronomical units (AU) i.e. 11 billion miles from the Sun.
- According to NASA's website, Voyager-1 was 13.76 billion miles from Earth on November 5, 2019. At the same time, the distance of Voyager-2 was 11.38 billion miles. Voyager-1 is the farthest man-made object from the earth.

Know! more about heliosphere

- NASA's mission scientists have found that the mission has crossed the end of the heliosphere on November 5.
- It was announced by assessing the data received from various instruments mounted on the spacecraft.
- This place is called heliopause where the weak, hot solar wind meets with the cold and dense solar winds. It is also called the end of the solar system.
- The magnetic range emanating from the Sun creates a gaseous atmosphere that extends far beyond the orbits of the planets.
- This magnetic field is called the heliosphere. Its shape is like a long wind cone and moves around the Sun. It was confirmed by the scientists through instruments mounted on Voyager-2.

Environment Conservation: Stubble Burning Incidents Between October-November Down By 12 Per Cent Year On Year Shows ICAR Data

Relevance IN – Mains (environment conservation - menace of stubble burning + steps taken by the government for its mitigation)

What's the NEWS

- Latest data from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has shown a reduction of 12.01 per cent in incidents of stubble burning compared to the same period in 2018.



Know! more about the findings

- A total of 31,402 burning events were detected in the three states between 1 October 2019 and 3 November 2019 which are distributed as 25366, 4414 and 1622 in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh respectively.
- The states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab recorded a reduction of 48.2 per cent, 11.7 per cent and 8.7 per cent respectively this year till date.

Steps taken by the government

- The reduction has been the result of the Central Sector Scheme, 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue in the State of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh & NCT of Delhi' that was launched with a total outgo of Rs 1151.80 Crores for the period from 2018-19 to 2019-20 by the Government of India.
- The scheme was launched to subsidize machinery required for in-situ management of crop residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi and hence reduce stubble burning.
- Within one year of its implementation utilizing an amount of Rs 500 crore, the happy seeder/zero tillage technology was adopted in 8 lakh hectares of land in the North-Western states of India.
- During 2018-19, the funds amounting to Rs. 269.38 crores, Rs.137.84 crores and Rs. 148.60 crores have been released to the Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh respectively

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Switzerland on Technical Cooperation in the field of Climate Change and Environment

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the MoU signed) + Mains (GS III Environment conservation)

What's the NEWS

- The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Switzerland on Technical Cooperation in the field of Climate Change and Environment.

Know! the impact

- Environmental degradation falls on the socially and economically disadvantaged, more heavily than the better off sections of the society.
- Any effort at thwarting environmental degradation would lead to environmental equity in the sense of availability of sound environmental resources to all sections of the society.

Benefits:

- The MoU will enable establishment and promotion of closer and long-term cooperation between the two countries in the field of environmental protection and management of natural resources

- It will enhance public accountability by way of exchange of information and technology between the two countries.

Salient features:

- a. Capacity-building on Climate Change and Sustainable Water management;
- b. Sustainable Forest Management;
- c. Sustainable development of mountainous regions;
- d. Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development;
- e. Addressing issues of Air, land and water pollution;
- f. Focussing on Clean and Renewable Energy; and
- g. Climate change risk management.

ReSAREX- 19: Coast Guard conducts two-day rescue exercise off Goa shore



Relevance IN – Prelims (about ReSAREX 19) + Mains (GS III security challenges and their management in border areas)

What’s the NEWS

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) tested its efficiency and preparedness during the Regional Level Search and Rescue Workshop and Exercise 2019 (ReSAREX- 19) conducted off Goa coast

Know! more about ReSAREX 19

- The two-day event, organised by the Coast Guard District Headquarters-11 (Goa), comprised a search and rescue workshop and table top exercise on Tuesday, followed by a search and rescue exercise at sea
- Maritime search and rescue remains a challenge with increase in maritime and fishing activities, further complicated by frequent cyclones
- Maritime search and rescue services need to respond to every situation with utmost alacrity, displaying professional acumen and exercising full coordination with other support agencies,
- The workshop also assumes significance in the wake of the recent search and rescue operations carried out during cyclones Kyaar and Maha

Know! about Indian Coast Guard

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is an armed force that protects India’s maritime interests and enforces maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone.

- The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India as an independent Armed force of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence.
- The Coast Guard works in close cooperation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces.

India retains third spot in global unicorn list

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the report on Indian tech start up) + Mains (GS III Economic development)

What's the NEWS

- India continues to reinforce its position as the third largest startup ecosystem across the world, as it added over 1,300 start-ups in 2019, taking the total number to 8,900-9,300 in the last five years, according to the report 'Indian Tech Startup Ecosystem - Leading Tech in the 20s' by Nasscom.
- India also witnessed the addition of 7 unicorns in 2019 till August, taking the

Know! more about the report

- In the 4th edition of a new NASSCOM-Zinnov report titled "Indian Start-up Ecosystem : Approaching Escape Velocity," India has been ranked the 3rd biggest startup hub in the world

Multiple factors made India a leader of growth in the tech startup sector. Here are some highlights from the report:

- The number of advanced technology start-ups increased by 50% from 2017, with Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence and IoT witnessing the fastest adoption.
- The start-up ecosystem is becoming more global – Indian start-ups (both B2B and B2C) are expanding to other markets, and global giants are gravitating towards India.
- More Tier 2/Tier 3 cities are emerging as start-up hubs, and more experienced professionals are taking entrepreneurial route.

Namma Bengaluru is the biggest startup hub

- According to the report, Bangalore is now one of the fastest growing tech startup hubs. A total of 1,200 tech-startups were added to the list in 2018, alone! Today, the city boasts of 7,200- 7,700 registered startups.
- Bangalore, Delhi-NCR, and Mumbai are the top three cities in India that have seen tremendous growth in Startups.

Unicorn Company - A unicorn is a privately held startup company valued at over \$1 billion.

THE ISRAELI SPYWARE PEGASUS

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Pegasus Spyware) + Mains (GS III challenges to internal security through communication network, cyber security)

What's the NEWS

- Centre sought an explanation from messaging platform WhatsApp, after the Facebook-owned company confirmed that some Indian users of its app came under surveillance using an Israeli spyware.
- WhatsApp was legally bound under Section 70(B) of the IT Act, 2000 to inform the government about the details of such attacks (on Indian citizens), which they failed to.
- Indian Computer Emergency Response Team handles malware attack events like these.

Behind The Hack Attack

\$7-8 million Annual cost of licence for Pegasus spyware

500 phones can be monitored in a year

THE OPERATION

Hackers created WhatsApp accounts using phone numbers in Cyprus, Israel, Brazil, Sweden, Indonesia and the Netherlands

Reverse-engineered WhatsApp and wrote a program that copied its network traffic to target devices over the app's servers

Leased servers of Choopa, Quadranet and Amazon Web Services in different countries, including US

Know! more about the SPYWARE

- Israeli company, NSO Group developed the spyware. The Spyware exploited a vulnerability in Whatsapp's video call feature that allowed attackers to inject the spyware on to the phones simply by ringing the number of a target's device.
- However, NSO said that it sells Pegasus only to Governments and their agencies.
- The Government says, it is concerned over the breach of privacy of the citizens of India and asked WhatsApp to explain the kind of breach and what is it doing to safeguard the privacy of millions of Indian citizens.

Know! the working of PEGASUS Spyware

- Pegasus is a spyware that works by sending an exploit link, and if the target user clicks on the link, the malware or the code that allows the surveillance is installed on the user's phone.
- Once Pegasus is installed, the attacker has complete access to the target user's phone
- Pegasus delivers a chain of zero-day exploits to penetrate security features on the phone and installs Pegasus without the user's knowledge or permission.
- A "zero-day exploit" is a completely unknown vulnerability, about which even the software manufacturer is not aware, and there is, thus, no patch or fix available for it.

Environment Conservation: Indian Air quality Interactive Repository or IndAIR

Relevance IN – Prelims (about IndAIR) + Mains (GS III Environment conservation)

Photo: ANI

WHAT YOU CAN FIND IN WEB REPOSITORY

- 700** scanned materials from pre-internet era (1950-1999)
- 1,215** research articles
- 170** reports and case studies
- 2,000+** statutes

TRACKING AIR POLLUTION STUDIES IN INDIA

- First air pollution study in India was done for Bengal Smoking Nuisance Act in 1905
- Studies by SC Roy from Meteorological Office examined cloud seeding for dealing with famine-ridden areas in 1954
- In 1970, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Central Public Health Engineering Research Institute (now NEERI) and National Productivity Council were assigned task of fabricating air pollution monitoring equipment
- Prior to that, dust and Ringelmann's charts were used to study plume from stack and decide on pollution levels
- Seminars and events to discuss ills of air pollution began wholeheartedly in 1970s...
- ..But studies were done as early as 1950s by key researchers in India
- Delhi-NCR has most number of studies – **262** – on air pollution

What's the NEWS

- Indian Air quality Interactive Repository or IndAIR, CSIR-Neeri's web facility that was launched has archived approximately 700 scanned materials from pre-internet era, 1,215 research articles, 170 reports and case studies, 100 cases and over 2,000 statutes to provide the history of air pollution research and legislation in the country.

- The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) along with the CSIR has launched India's first web repository documenting air quality studies done in the last 60 years.

IndAIR

- The IndAIR has archived approximately 700 scanned materials from pre-Internet era (1950-1999), 1,215 research articles, 170 reports and case studies and 100 cases.
- It aims to provide the history of air pollution research and legislation.
- Such a repository on air pollution is one of the first in the world. IndAIR will help the academicians understand the issue better and also enable policymakers to frame legislation that encourages development.

Defence: Def-Connect



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Def-Connect) + Mains (GS III defence)

What's the NEWS

- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is organising 'Def-Connect' to showcase the accomplishments of the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) initiative and construct a strong outreach towards the potential future entrepreneurs of the defence sector.

Know! more about the iDEX

- The conference aims to bring together all stakeholders of the iDEX ecosystem i.e. MoD, iDEX selected startups, Partner Incubators, Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO), Nodal agencies (Indian Army, Navy, Airforce), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), Indian Ordnance Factories (IOFs), MSMEs and Industry associations to showcase the growth of the defence ecosystem in the country and recognise the infinite potential of the MSMEs/startups for future growth of the defence sector in the country.
- More than 350 startups & innovators working on various defence technologies are expected to participate in the event.
- The event would lead to better interaction & bridging the gap between the stakeholders and will be a precursor for Startup showcase during the forthcoming DefExpo 2020, to be held in Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow from February 5-8, 2020.

Infrastructure Development: Inaugural Conclave on “National Capital Region -2041” held in Delhi



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the inaugural conclave + about NCRPB) + Mains (GS III infrastructure development)

What's the NEWS

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs chaired the inaugural conclave on “National Capital Region -2041” organized by the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB)
- The theme of the conclave was “Planning for Tomorrow’s Greatest Capital Region”. The Conclave had participation from all NCR participating States

Know! what's the need of this planning

- The Regional Plan - 2041 should be a citizen-centric plan, with liveability as the hallmark, to ensure ease of living. He further said that only plans with crucial factors like economic ability and sustainability can succeed.
- If anything has the potential to mitigate poverty it is our cities, the Secretary stressed that the regional planning exercise presented a unique opportunity to realise these words.
- It was an interesting and challenging exercise and called for rigorous work from all stakeholders for an all-inclusive plan engaging all possible resources and tools at their disposal.
- Regional Plan would have a serious impact on the entire region as it would drive and decide the magnitude/direction in which the development will take place in the region
- Currently the Regional Plan with the horizon year 2021 was in-force and a Regional Plan with next horizon year 2041 was required to be prepared now.
- This conclave was first among many such consultations planned wherein more advanced stage of deliberations will take place.

Five technical sessions on various themes namely

- Imagining the Future
- Priorities of the States
- Land Use, Allocation & Control
- Harmonized Development and
- Financial Structuring

Evolution of Concept of National Capital Region

- Delhi has been experiencing phenomenal growth of population since 1951 recording decennial growth rate of 52.44%, 52.91%, 52.98%, 51.45% and 47.03% during 1951-61, 1961-71, 1971-81 and 1991-01 decades respectively.
- One of the main causes for this spurt in the growth of population is migration into the city not only from the

adjacent states but also from others such as Bihar.

- The growth of population of Delhi has contributed to increasing congestion and shortages of civic amenities.
- It has been felt that as Delhi grows, its problems of land, housing, transportation and management of essential infrastructure like water supply and sewerage would become more acute.

It was with this concern that the need for planning Delhi in the regional context was felt:

- 1956 Interim General Plan suggested that ‘serious consideration should be given for a planned decentralization to outer areas & even outside the Delhi region’.
- 1961 High Powered Board set up under Union Minister for Home Affairs
- 1962 Master Plan for Delhi emphasized Planning of Delhi in regional context
- 1973 High Powered Board reconstituted under Union Minister for Works & Housing
- 1985 Enactment of the National Capital Region Planning Board Act by the Union Parliament, with the concurrence of the participating States of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, NCR Planning Board was constituted.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change: Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan)

What's the NEWS

- To strive to make our beaches clean and create awareness amongst citizens about the importance of coastal ecosystems, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) are undertaking a mass cleanliness-cum-awareness drive in 50 identified beaches under the “Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan”, from 11th -17th November, 2019.

Know! more about Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan

- The identified beaches are in 10 coastal States/Union Territories (UTs)
- The cleaning drives in all beaches are being undertaken, involving school/college students of Eco-clubs, district administration, institutions, volunteers, local communities and other stakeholders.
- State Nodal Agencies for the Eco-clubs will be facilitating the week long intensive cleanliness drive in all 10 States/UTs.
- Nodal teachers from the Eco-clubs will be present at the sites during the entire cleanliness drive.
- MoEF&CC officials have also been deputed to monitor the implementation of the drive.
- The collected waste will be processed as per extant Waste Management Rules, 2016.
- Environment Education Division of the Ministry and Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the aegis of this Ministry will be responsible for the overall coordination for the drive in 50 beaches.
- The Ministry has also decided that on completion of the drive, best three beaches will be suitably awarded along with a Certificate of Appreciation for all the participating Eco-clubs.

International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about ITPGRFA + about PPV&FR) Act + Mains (GS III issues relating to farmer’s welfare)

What’s the NEWS

- The eight session of the Governing Body of International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), commenced at Rome, Italy.
- The Governing Body sessions are biennial and this year it is being held from 11th to 16th November with participation of delegates from 146 countries, international organizations, civil societies, farmers’ organizations, FAO officials and UN organizations.

PPV&FR act to protect farmer’s interest

- In Indian legislation “Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights (PPV&FR) Act” to protect Farmers’ Rights and breeder’s rights, a farmer is entitled to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act, 2001 except brand name, and our legislation is fully compliant to article 9 of the Treaty.
- Under the provisions of this Act, 138 farmers/farming communities have been awarded with Plant Genome Saviour Awards.
- India has received about 16,620 applications for Plant Variety Protection out of which 10,920 (66%) have been received from farmers alone. Also, the PPV&FR Authority has registered about 3631 plant varieties out of which 1597 (44%) belong to the farmers.

Know! about ITPGRFA

- ITPGRFA also known as Seed Treaty, is a comprehensive international agreement for ensuring food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world’s plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), as well as the fair and equitable benefit sharing arising from its use. It also recognizes farmers’ rights, subject to national laws.
- The Protection of Plant Variety and Farmers Right Act, 2001 (PPVFR Act) is an Act of the Parliament of India that was enacted to provide for the establishment of an effective system for protection of plant varieties, the rights of farmers and plant breeders, and to encourage the development and cultivation of new varieties of plants. This act received the assent of the President of India on the 30 October 2001.
- The PPV&FR Act, 2001 was enacted to grant intellectual property rights to plant breeders, researchers and farmers who have developed any new or extant plant varieties. The Intellectual Property Right granted under PPV&FR Act, 2001 is a dual right – one is for the variety and the other is for the denomination assigned to it by the breeder.

Science and Technology: NASA unveils its first electric airplane

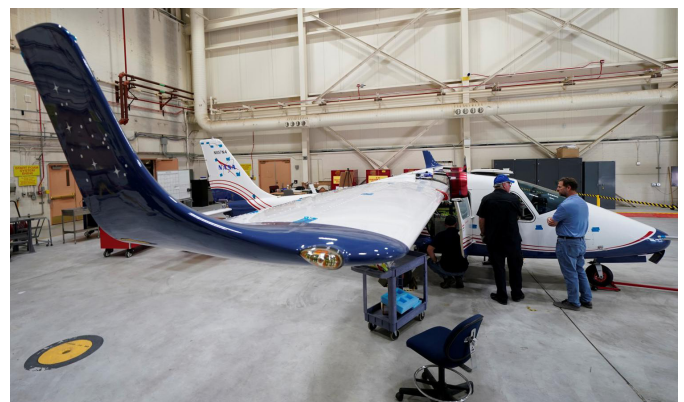
Relevance IN – Prelims (about first all-electric experimental aircraft, the X-57 “Maxwell”) + Mains (GS III Science and Technology)

What’s the NEWS

- NASA, most prominent for its many Florida-launched exploits into space, showcased an early version of its first all-electric experimental aircraft, the X-57 “Maxwell,” at its lesser-known aeronautics lab in the California desert.

Know! more about the electric plane

- Adapted from a Italian-made Tecnam P2006T twin-engine propeller plane, the X-57 has been under development since 2015 and remains at least a year away from its first test flight in the skies over Edward Air Force Base.



- But after attaching the two largest of 14 electric motors that will ultimately propel the plane - powered by specially designed lithium ion batteries - NASA deemed the Maxwell ready for its first public preview.
- NASA also showed off a newly built simulator that allows engineers, and pilots, to get the feel of what it will be like to manoeuvre the finished version of the X-57 in flight, even as the plane remains under development.
- The Maxwell will be the agency's first crewed X-plane to be developed in two decades.

Current challenges and future modifications

- The final modification, or Mod IV, of the aircraft will feature narrower, lighter-weight wings fitted with a total of 14 electric engines - six smaller "lift" props along the leading edge of each wing, plus two larger "cruise" props at the tip of each wing.
- The lift propellers will be activated for take-off and landings, but retract during the flight's cruise phase.
- Because electric motor systems are more compact with fewer moving parts than internal-combustion engines, they are simpler to maintain and weigh much less, requiring less energy to fly. They also are quieter than conventional engines.
- One challenge is improving battery technology to store more energy to extend the plane's range, with faster re-charging.
- Due to current battery limitations, the Maxwell's design is envisioned for use in short-haul flights as an air-taxi or commuter plane for a small number of passengers.

Infrastructure Development: Gujarat government gives nod for world's first CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar

Relevance IN – Prelims (about world's first CNG port terminal) + Mains (GS III infrastructure development)

What's the NEWS

- Gujarat Government has given its nod to the world's first CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar.
- The U.K. based Foresight group and Mumbai based Padmanabh Mafatlal group joint venture will invest Rs.1900 crore to set up a CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar port.
- Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board- GIDB under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has also approved this proposal.

Know! more about the port

- The proposed CNG port terminal will have annual capacity of 6 million metric tonne, which will increase the total handling capacity of the port to 9 million metric tonnes.
- Memorandum of Understanding- MoU for this project between Gujarat government arm Gujarat Maritime Board(GMB) and London based Foresight Group was signed during the 2019 Vibrant Gujarat summit.
- The new facility will be developed in the Northern side of present port, under which RoRo terminal, liquid terminal and container terminal will be developed in future.
- The consortium has proposed an investment of Rs.1,900 crore in two phases with Rs 1,300 crore in the first phase and Rs 600 crore in the second phase through the 'Swiss challenge' method.
- The GMB manages the existing port at Bhavnagar, having a capacity to handle three MMTPA cargo, and the new terminals would take the overall capacity to nine MMTPA
- To develop CNG and other terminals on the north side of the existing port would require major modifications in the existing infrastructure, including dredging in water channel of port basin, construction of two lock gates and off-shore infrastructure for CNG transportation

Environment Conservation: J&K govt sets up panel to declare Dal Lake as ESZ

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Dal lake and ESZ) + Mains (GS III environment conservation)

What's the NEWS

- The Jammu and Kashmir government has set up a ten-member committee to declare Srinagar's famous Dal Lake and its surrounding areas as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ), following concerns over its shrinking size.

What's the present status of Dal lake

- Pollution and encroachments have resulted in the Dal Lake shrinking from its original area of 22 square kilometres to about 10 square kilometres, according to an assessment by the Dredging Corporation of India (DCI) in 2017.
- The DCI also found that the world-famous lake's capacity has shrunk to about 40 per cent and that its water quality has deteriorated.
- The DCI assessment also found that intense pollution by untreated sewage and solid wastes that flow into the lake, encroachments of water channels and clogging has diminished the circulation and inflows into the lake, leading to extensive growth of the weed water hyacinth which has emerged as a health hazard.
- Further, it established that the depth of the lake has reduced at many places due to siltation and encroachment, and that continuing night soil discharge from the 800 to 900 houseboats causes extreme pollution in the water body.



Know! about the committee

- The committee shall finalize the draft notification within a period of one month,
- The committee comprises of Chief Conservator for Forests, Director of the Tourism Department, Vice-Chairman of the Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, Director of Industries Department, Commissioner of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Kashmir's Regional Wildlife Warden, Regional Director of the State Pollution Control Board, Director of the Agriculture Department, the Chief Town Planner and a representative of the Law Department

Know! about ESZ

- Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) or Ecologically Fragile Areas (EFAs) are areas notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- The purpose of declaring ESZs is to create some kind of "shock absorbers" to the protected areas by regulating and managing the activities around such areas.
- They also act as a transition zone from areas of high protection to areas involving lesser protection.

Know! about DCI

- Dredging Corporation of India Limited, or DCI, is unit engaged in the business of dredging does dredging for Indian seaports exclusively.
- It occasionally dredges at foreign seaports in countries such as Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Dubai.
- It is mainly involved in maintenance dredging. Almost all the maintenance dredging in Indian seaports is carried out by DCI due to government regulations.
- DCI is also involved in capital dredging, beach nourishment, and land reclamation.
- The main seaports in which DCI does business are Visakhapatnam Port, Haldia, Kandla, Cochin Port and Ennore Port.
- DCI is headquartered at Visakhapatnam and has project offices at many seaports in India. It reports to the Ministry of Shipping.
- Last year the Union Cabinet approved the sale of the central government's 73.47 per cent stake in DCI to a consortium of four cash-rich major port trusts — Visakhapatnam Port Trust, Paradip Port Trust, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) and Kandla Port Trust.

Know! about Dal lake

- Dal is a lake in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India. The urban lake, which is the second largest in the union territory, is integral to tourism and recreation in Kashmir and is named the “ Lake of Flowers, Jewel in the crown of Kashmir or Srinagar’s Jewel
- The lake is also an important source for commercial operations in fishing and water plant harvesting.

Roadside air purifiers have failed to combat pollution

Relevance IN – Prelims (about WAYU and about NEERI) + Mains (GS III environment conservation)

What’s the NEWS

- The NEERI air purifiers on roadsides that were meant to suck polluted air have not worked
- The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), a Nagpur-based laboratory of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), had developed WAYU to address air pollution at traffic intersections and dense traffic zones.



Know! about VAYU

- It comprises a fan that sucks in air and sieves out dust and particulate matter using three filters of varying sizes.
- The air then moves into another chamber where carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons are oxidised into the less harmful carbon dioxide using activated carbon coated with titanium dioxide.
- The purified air is then released back into the atmosphere.
- Prototypes of the device had been installed at the ITO Junction and Mukarba Chowk in north Delhi.
- WAYU was specifically made for traffic junctions
- Along with WAYU Pariyayantra was also launched last year These were a fleet of 30 buses with air filter units mounted on the roof.
- As the vehicle moves, air passes through the holes in front of the device. The filters inside the unit trap the pollutants.

The Sunderbans mangroves - Environmental experts point at constant degradation of forests

Relevance IN – Prelims (about mangroves) + Mains (GS III environment conservation)

Know! the importance of mangroves

- On November 9, 2019, when the very severe cyclone Bulbul made landfall at Sagar island in the Indian Sunderbans, number of people and tourists a took shelter in mangrove creeks, and escaped unhurt.
- The mangroves had saved the Sunderbans from the gusty winds blowing at between 110 kmph to 135 kmph.
- It would have been a disaster if the mangroves had not been there



Degradation of the mangrove forest

- Scientists, wildlife experts and local NGOs have been highlighting the constant degradation of the mangrove forest in the Sunderbans, particularly in areas that are inhabited.

- The Indian Sunderbans, considered to be an area south of the Dampier Hodges line, is spread over 9,630 sq. km., of which the mangrove forests are spread over 4,263 sq. km.
- A satellite image from the Indian Space Research Organisation pointed to a loss of 3.71% mangrove and non-mangrove forest cover along with massive erosion of the archipelago's landmass.
- The analysis, based on satellite data of February 2003 and February 2014, shows that while a 9,990-hectare landmass has been eroded, there has been an accretion of 216-hectare landmass in the Sunderbans during the period.
- Mangroves have been cut not only for aquaculture, but also for building embankments and for human settlements
- Due to dense foliage and the close proximity of trees, the mangrove roots hold soil and the vegetation becomes a shield to protect from cyclones.

Know! more about mangroves and its importance

- Mangroves are trees, shrubs and ferns that grow in the intertidal coastal zone of tropics and subtropics.
- Mangrove ecosystems are rich in biodiversity and provide a wide range of goods and services to human communities living in coastal areas including wood and non-wood forest products, fisheries, medicines, recreation, ecotourism, bio-filtration, nursery grounds, coastal protection, and carbon sequestration.
- Mangrove forests are the most productive ecosystems known with high biomass accumulation especially below ground.

Infrastructure Development: Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises launches the International Symposium on Lighting (iSoL)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about iSoL and ICAT) + Mains (GS III Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth. Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

What's the NEWS

- Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises inaugurated the International Symposium on Lighting (iSoL)
- Objective - The need to promote the Make in India initiative on the three pillars of 4th industrial revolution: Artificial Intelligence, robotics and 3-D printing technology.

Know! more about iSoL2019

- In iSoL 2019 an exhibition is being held with more than 30 stalls for automotive components with special focus on lighting components and vehicle display of more than 14 new models from 14 OEMs.
- This exhibition has provided networking opportunities to the component and equipment suppliers, manufacturers and OEMs.
- The International Symposium on Lighting (iSoL) from 2009 has grown and transformed itself into a global event.
- ICAT has been associated with the field of lighting research and testing since 2006. Taking this commitment to a greater height, iSoL-2019 is aimed at creating a knowledge sharing platform ensuring the flow of information.

Know! about ICAT

- International Centre for Automotive Technology is located at Manesar in Gurugram district of Haryana state of India.
- The Rs 1100 crore facility has facilities for vehicle homologation and also testing laboratories for noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) and passive safety.



- It also includes a powertrain laboratory, engine dynamometers, emission laboratory with Euro-V capability, a fatigue laboratory, passive safety laboratory, and vehicle test tracks.
- iCAT is also being developed as a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for component development and NVH.

Space Awareness: ISRO to launch Cartosat-3, 13 commercial nano satellites

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Cartosat -3 and PSLV XL) +Mains (GS III awareness in the field of science)

What's the NEWS

- India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C47 will launch Cartosat-3 and 13 commercial nanosatellites into Sun Synchronous orbit from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota.
- PSLV-C47 is the 21st flight of PSLV in 'XL' configuration, that is with 6 solid strap-on motors.
- This will be the 74th launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota.
- Cartosat-3 satellite is a third-generation agile advanced satellite having high-resolution imaging capability.
- The satellite will be placed in an orbit of 509 km at an inclination of 97.5 degree.
- PSLV-C47 will also carry 13 commercial nanosatellites from the United States of America as part of commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), Department of Space.



Know! about Cartosat -3

- Cartosat-3 is a advanced remote sensing satellite from ISRO, which is intended to replace the IRS series.
- It will have a panchromatic resolution of 0.25 metres and Mx of 1 metre with a high quality resolution which is a major improvement from the previous payloads in the Cartosat series.
- Potential uses include weather mapping, cartography or army defence, and strategic applications.

Know! about Orbits

Low Earth Orbit

- Lies within 200 km to 1200 km above Earth's Surface.
- The lower the satellites orbit the Earth, the stronger the gravitational pull.
- The satellites travel faster to counteract this pull.
- Most satellites, the International Space Station, the Space Shuttle, and the Hubble Space Telescope are all in Low Earth Orbit.

Geosynchronous Orbits

- It is located at 35,790 km has the same orbital period as Earth.
- It allows satellites to synchronize with the rotation of the Earth (only in time and not in direction).
- One particular form of geosynchronous orbit is known as a geostationary orbit.
- In it, the satellite rotates in the same direction as the rotation of the Earth and has an approximate 24 hour period.

Polar Orbits

- Satellites placed in polar orbits have an inclination of about 90 degrees to the equator
- The satellites travels north-south over the poles at lower altitudes.
- A satellite in the polar orbit approx. takes 90 minutes for a full rotation. As a result, a satellite can observe the entire surface in the time span of 24 hours.
- Sun Synchronous Orbit –It is a special case of Polar Orbit moving from pole to pole allowing satellite to pass over any given point of the planet's surface at roughly the same local time each day.

29th Regional Contact Points (RCP) meeting of Asia Pacific (A/P) region of the World Customs Organization (WCO)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about RCP meeting objective and outcome and about WCO) + Mains (GS III Economic development)

What's the NEWS

- The 29th Regional Contact Points (RCP) meeting of Asia Pacific (A/P) region of the World Customs Organization (WCO) is being organised by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) at Puducherry from 18th to 20th November, 2019.

Know! about WCO

- WCO is the only inter-governmental international organisation engaged in setting up and implementation of principles and standards for cross border procedures and Customs.
- It is headquartered in Brussels and has more than 180 countries as its members.
- Globally, WCO consist of six regions, each headed by a member country as Vice Chair of that region of WCO.
- India is member of Asia Pacific region of WCO and is also currently the Vice Chair since July 2018.

Know! about the RCP meeting 2019

- This is an important annual meeting in the region and is designed to address regional development in a number of areas, to discuss on various issues linked to cross border trade procedures and to enhance communication and experience sharing between the member countries.
- The three day meeting will strengthen the leadership role of our country in the region, give wider recognition to CBIC on international platform and also, help in improving bilateral ties with these countries of the Asia Pacific region.

Economic Development: Govt Approves Biggest Privatisation Drive, Will Sell Stake in BPCL and Four Other PSUs

Strategic Sale			DISINVESTMENT
BPCL* Sale of full 53.3% stake to strategic buyer (*After removing Numaligarh Refinery from its fold)	Shipping Corp Sale of entire 63.8% stake to strategic buyer	Tehri Hydro Entire 74.2% stake to NTPC	Reduction of govt stake in select PSUs to below 51%
	Concor 30.8% stake and management control to strategic buyer (Govt to retain 24% stake)	Neepco Entire 100% stake to NTPC	PSUs to be identified by officials
			Govt to retain management control on case-to-case basis

Relevance in – Prelims (facts related to recent developments) + Mains (GS III economic development)

What's the NEWS

- In the biggest privatisation drive, the Union Cabinet approved sale of the government's stake in blue-chip oil firm Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and onland cargo

mover Container Corporation of India (Concor), as well as decided to cut shareholding in select public sector firms below 51% to boost revenue collections that have been hit by slowing economy.

Know! more about the disinvestment drive of the government

Five Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)

- Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited (THDC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO), Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and Container Corporation of India (CONCOR).

BPCL

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved sale of the government's entire 53.29% stake, along with the transfer of management control in the country's second-biggest state-owned refiner BPCL, after removing the Numaligarh refinery in Assam from its fold

SCI and CONCOR

- It approved the sale of 53.75% of the government holding of 63.75% stake in SCI and 30.9% stake in Concor. The government currently holds 54.80% in the latter.

THDC India and NEEPCO

- The government will sell its entire holding in THDC India and NEEPCO to state power generator NTPC Ltd.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)

- The Cabinet has approved reducing the government's stake in select PSUs, such as Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), to below 51% while continuing to retain management control.
- The government currently holds 51.5% in IOC and another 25.9% through state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), and explorers Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL)

Numaligarh Refinery

- The Finance Minister said that the government will do strategic disinvestment in BPCL. She has also made it clear that the government will not sell a part of BPCL to Numaligarh Refinery (NRL) in Assam.
- The government will keep its stake in the refinery but BPCL will have full management control transfer.

Internal Security: NRC to cover all citizens of India: Home Minister Amit Shah

Relevance IN – Prelims (about NRC and about Citizenship Amendment Bill.) + Mains (GS III internal security)

What's the NEWS

- The Home Minister said that the NRC will cover everyone, irrespective of their religion.
- The process of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) will be carried out across the nation.
- This was announced by Home Minister Amit Shah in the Rajya Sabha on November 20, 2019.
- The Home Minister said that the NRC will cover everyone, irrespective of their religion. He said that there was no reason for anyone to be worried, as it is just a process to get everyone to come under NRC.

Citizenship Amendment Bill.

- Citizenship Amendment Bill – People of all religions including Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, Christian, Parsi refugees should get Indian citizenship.
- The refugees who are being discriminated on the basis of religion in Pakistan, Bangladesh or Afghanistan get Indian citizenship.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was passed by the Lok Sabha on January 8, 2019.
- The bill aimed to grant citizenship to non-Muslim refugees who came to India from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan before December 31, 2014.
- However, the bill lapsed due to the dissolution of the parliament for Lok Sabha Elections 2019.

Know! about NRC

- The final Assam NRC, which was published on August 31, 2019, included 3,11,21,004 people and left out a total of 19,06,657 persons.
- Most of these people are those who had not submitted the required documents to support their claim in Assam.
- Those left out of the final draft have the option of appealing at the Foreigners` Tribunals and contest their exclusion.
- No action has yet been taken against those who have been left out of the final NRC list in Assam.
- The NRC process was initiated in Assam to identify the illegal immigrants who settled in the state after March 25, 1971, when Bangladesh was formed.
- People whose name has not figured in the NRC draft list have the right to go to the tribunal.
- In Assam NRC, tribunals have been constituted across the state. In case of those who can't afford to hire a lawyer for the tribunal, the Assam government will bear the cost to hire a lawyer for them.

Science & Technology: Global Bio-India 2019

The banner for the Global Bio-India 2019 Summit features a blue and green color scheme. At the top, it includes the logos of the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, and the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC). The main headline reads "ENGAGE WITH THE GLOBAL BIOTECH INDUSTRY!" in large green letters. Below this, the event title "Global Bio-India 2019" is displayed in blue, followed by the dates "NOV 21-23, 2019" and the location "AEROCITY, NEW DELHI" in green. A dark blue bar contains the statistics: "30+ Countries | 200+ Exhibitors | 250 Startups | 3500+ Delegates". At the bottom, logos for ABLE, CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), and INVEST INDIA (National Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency) are shown. The background features a stylized DNA double helix.

Relevance IN – Prelims (about global bio – India) + Mains (GSIII biotechnology)

What's the NEWS

- Biotechnology sector is recognized as the key driver for contributing to India's USD 5 Trillion economy target by 2024. As India progresses on this transformational journey, Global Bio-India 2019, the largest Bio event, would showcase opportunities in Indian Biotechnology sector to the world.

Know! more about Global Bio-India

- Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India and its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) are organizing Global Bio-India Summit 2019, a mega international congregation of biotechnology stakeholders, including international bodies, regulatory bodies, Central and State Ministries, SMEs, large industries, bioclusters, research institutes, investors, and the startup ecosystem.

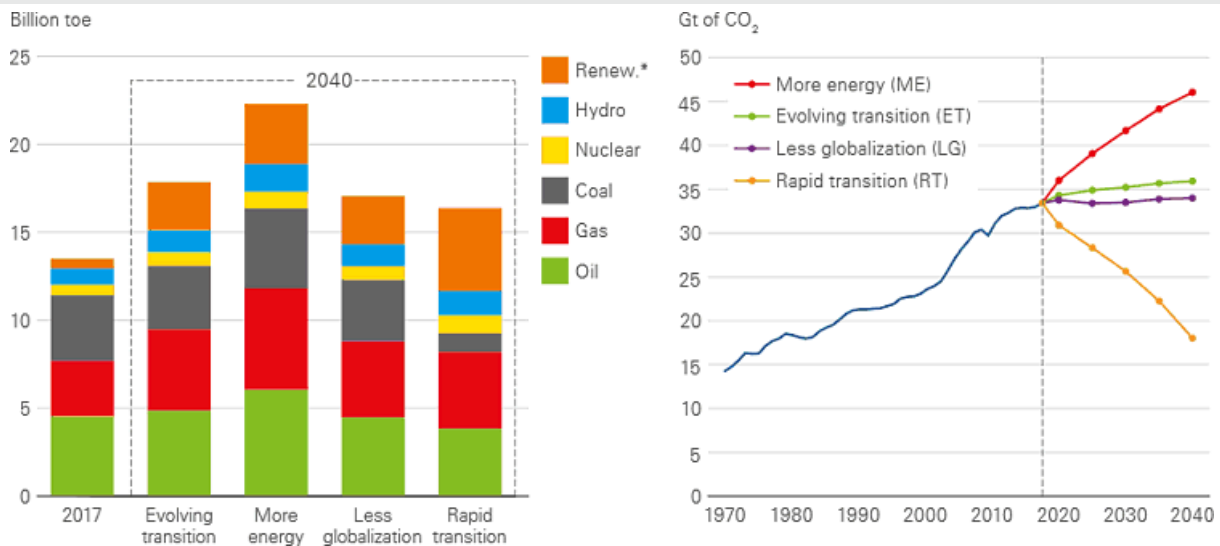
Objective

- Global Bio-India aimed to develop India as a world-class Biotechnology and Bio-manufacturing hub. India is among the top-12 destinations for biotechnology in the world, with approximately 3% share in the global Biotechnology industry.

Indian Biotechnology industry

- Indian Biotechnology industry's economy is valued at \$51 billion during 2018-19 which improved from 2017-2018.
- The Bio economy registered 6.8% change from 2016 valuation of \$41.64 billion.
- According to World Bank's Doing Business Report 2014-18, India is now ranked 1st among South-Asian countries compared to 6th rank in 2014. India was ranked 52nd according to the Global Innovation Index Report 2019.
- Recognizing the importance of this sector, Global Bio India 2019 is going to deliberate on the opportunities and key challenges in the areas of bio-manufacturing, clinical trials & drug discovery, capacity-building, creating global supply chains for achieving a growth-oriented road-map for biotechnology sector in the country.

World Energy Outlook 2019



Relevance IN – Prelims (about World energy report and its findings) + Mains (infrastructure development – energy)

What's the NEWS

- The International Energy Agency (IEA) released the 'World Energy Outlook 2019,' which provides a set of scenarios that explore different possible futures.

Know! about the report findings

- As part of the Outlook, IEA also released 'The Africa Energy Outlook 2019,' which highlights the potential for Africa's energy sector to pursue a less carbon-intensive development path that delivers full access to electricity and clean cooking facilities while also delivering on the SDGs by 2030.
- The World Energy Outlook's 'Current Policies Scenario' finds that energy demand will increase by 1.3% each year to 2040, with increasing demand for energy services and a "relentless upwards march in energy-related emissions" and growing strain on nearly all aspects of energy security.
- Energy demand is predicted to increase by 1% annually to 2030.
- Half of this growth could come from low-carbon sources, primarily solar photovoltaics (PV) and natural gas.
- In 'Stated Policies Scenario' energy demand rises by 1% annually to 2040, with oil demand flattening out in the 2030s and coal use edging lower.
- Countries with net zero aspirations "go far" but the momentum behind clean energy technologies is not sufficient to offset the growing population and expanding global economy.

Know! about International Energy Agency

- Founded in 1974, the IEA was initially designed to help countries co-ordinate a collective response to major disruptions in the supply of oil, such as the crisis of 1973.
- While this remains a key aspect of its work, the IEA has evolved and expanded significantly.

- India is not a member of IEA.
- It is at the heart of global dialogue on energy, providing authoritative analysis through a wide range of publications, including the flagship World Energy Outlook and the IEA Market Reports; data and statistics.
- The four main areas of IEA focus are: Energy Security, Economic Development Environmental Awareness: and Engagement Worldwide.

Protection of Endangered Species

Know! some Prelims Pointers about the endangered species and steps taken by the government to protect them

- Census of tiger and elephant is undertaken at the national level once every four and five years respectively.
- As per the report of the latest census carried out by the state and central government, the population of endangered species especially lions, rhinos, tigers, and elephants has increased in country.
- Recovery programme for saving of critically endangered species and habitats of the Centrally sponsored scheme 'Development of Wildlife Habitats'.
- Presently 21 critically endangered species have been identified under this programme.
- The Ministry has formulated the 3rd 'National Wildlife Action Plan' for a period of 2017 to 2031 to save wild animals in the country.
- The Plan focuses landscape approach in conservation of all wildlife irrespective of where they occur.
- It also gives special emphasis to recovery of threatened species of wildlife while conserving their habitats which includes terrestrial, inland aquatic, coastal and marine ecosystems.

The measures taken by the Government to control illegal killing and poaching of wild animals are:

- i. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for punishment for violation of its provisions. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- ii. Law enforcement authorities in the States maintain strict vigil against poaching of wild animals.
- iii. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to gather intelligence about poaching and unlawful trade in wild animals and animal articles and to achieve inter-state and trans-boundary coordination in enforcement of wildlife laws.
- iv. The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around Protected Areas.
- v. Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.
- vi. Financial assistance is provided to the State/Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant', for providing better protection to wildlife and improvement of habitat.

Govt launches Credit-linked Subsidy Services Awast Portal (CLAP)

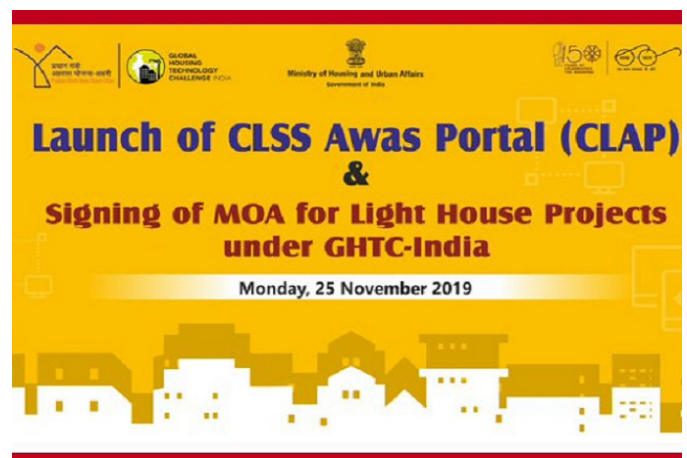
Relevance IN – Prelims (about CLAP + light house project) + Mains (GS III infrastructure development)

What's the NEWS

- Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri launched Credit-linked Subsidy Services Awast Portal, CLAP of Pradhan Mantri Awast Yojana-Housing for All (Urban)

Know! about the portal

- The portal provides a transparent and robust real-time web-based monitoring system for credit-linked Subsidy Services, CLSS, beneficiaries.



- Using the portal, a beneficiary can track his application status in real-time.
- CLAP will be quite instrumental in addressing the grievances of beneficiaries in a much comprehensive and organized manner.
- The initiative would also benefit other stakeholders to work in synergy to release subsidy to beneficiaries on time.
- The portal was launched along with the signing of agreements between the Union Housing Affairs Ministry and state governments for the construction of LightHouse projects under GHTC-India.

Know! more about CLAP portal

- The CLAP portal aims to provide a transparent and robust real-time web-based monitoring system for the beneficiaries of the Credit-linked Subsidy Services (CLSS).
- The CLAP portal will help the beneficiaries to track their application status online in real-time.
- The portal will provide a transparent real-time monitoring system for the credit-linked subsidy services.
- The portal would also benefit the other stakeholders to work in unity to release subsidy to the beneficiaries on time.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) aims to address the housing needs of the population of the Urban Economy.
- The Credit-linked Subsidy Services covers the MIG segment for the first time.
- The mission is expected to benefit young professionals having an income of up to Rs 18 lakh per annum.

Light House projects

- The Light House projects are model housing projects that are built using shortlisted alternate technology along with physical and social infrastructure facilities suitable to the geo-climate and hazard conditions of the region.

Global Housing Technology Challenge-India

- Global Housing Technology Challenge-India was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2019 as a part of Construction Technology Year.
- The challenge aims to identify and mainstream alternative and innovative technologies from across the globe through a challenge process for speedier and cost-effective construction of affordable housing projects.

LIGHT HOUSE PROJECTS

LHPs are model housing projects of houses built with shortlisted alternate technology along with physical and social infrastructure facilities suitable to the geo-climatic and hazard conditions of the region. These LHPs shall be able to demonstrate and deliver ready to live-in houses expeditiously than the normal conventional construction which are cost effective, economical, sustainable and superior with better quality of construction.



IMAC clears works worth Rs 270 crore

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the projects approved by IMAC) + Mains (GS III Major crops cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers)

What's the NEWS

- The Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee (IMAC) under the chairmanship of Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal approved projects worth Rs 271 crore under the Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities (CEFPPC) scheme
- The CEFPPC projects covered over 100 agro-climatic zones in the country

Know! more about the project

- The focus was given to projects that emphasized on linking agriculture and marketing food processing technologies.
- During allocation, startups were given priorities according to the sources of Ministry of Food Processing. Also, the projects were examined based on project cost, means of finance to avoid bankruptcy in the future.
- The aim of the scheme is to create direct employment that will help in achieving India's goal of doubling farmers income by 2022. It expected that the project would create 9000 employment.
- It will also aid in implementing PM Krishi Sampada Yojana (PMKSY). The PMKSY aims at developing agro-processing Clusters and agro-marine processing units. Under the scheme, subsidies are provided in terms of grants-in-aid that ranges between 35% and 75% according to the project.
- PMKSY is being implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing. It will work on implementing mega food parks, value-addition infrastructure, creation of backward and forward linkages, food safety and quality infrastructure.

ISRO has successfully launched Cartosat-3

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Cartosat-3) + Mains (GS III awareness in the field of space)

What's the NEWS

- ISRO has successfully launched Cartosat-3 along with 13 Nanosatellites of the US on November 27. Cartosat-3 is India's Earth observation satellite. The space agency had planned to launch Cartosat-3.

Know! more about the launch

- It is the ninth satellite of the Cartosat series which was launched from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Center at Sriharikota.
- This is the 49th flight of PSLV-C47, which is carrying Cartosat-3 and 13 small US commercial satellites.
- Cartosat-3 is the highest resolution civilian satellite.

Know! about Cartosat-3

- Cartosat-3 is a third-generation highly responsive and advanced satellite with high-resolution photo-taking capability.
- It weighs 1,625 kilograms and will help the government to large-scale city planning, rural resource and infrastructure development, coastal land use and growing consumer demand for land.
- Cartosat-3 can take clear pictures up to a height of 0.25 meters i.e. 9.84 inches of the ground from space.
- This satellite will also help in surveillance India's borders with space. It will also help in monitoring natural disasters.
- This was the 74th launch vehicle mission from Satish Dhawan Space Center at Sriharikota. Cartosat-3 will have a lifespan of five years.

Know! about the earlier Cartosat series

- Cartosat-1, the first satellite of the Cartosat series, was launched on 05 May 2005. Cartosat-2 was launched on 10 January 2007.

ISRO'S PSLV-C47 LAUNCHES CARTOSAT-3, 13 FOREIGN SATELLITES

PSLV-C47 placed country's **CARTOSAT-3** weighing **1,625kg** into a **509km** polar sun-synchronous orbit

Also launched 13 nanosatellites from US

- 12 earth observation satellites named as FLOCK-4P
- 1 communication test bed satellite called MESHBED

Part of commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (**NSIL**), ISRO's commercial wing

CARTOSAT-3 is India's earth observation satellite and will help in

- Urban planning
- Rural resource and infrastructure development
- Coastal land use
- Land cover

Crosses **300** foreign satellite launch mark

Mission life: **5 years**

PSLV-C47

49th flight of PSLV | 21st flight of PSLV XL variant

Isro's **74th** launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota

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Proposal of ISRO to transfer space-grade Li-Ion cell technology to BHEL



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Li-Ion cell and about the agreement between ISRO and BHEL) + Mains (GS III indigenization of technology and developing new technologies)

What's the NEWS

- ISRO has transferred its indigenous technology to produce space-grade Li-Ion cells to BHEL.

Know! more about the agreement

- In March 2018, BHEL signed the Technology Transfer Agreement with ISRO for acquiring the Li-Ion Cell production technology.
- This production facility is primarily targeting to meet Li-Ion Cell requirements for ISRO and other strategic sectors.
- However, BHEL can also produce and sell Li-Ion cells for meeting other national/commercial applications by suitably modifying the space-grade cell which can lead to cost reduction.
- BHEL is in the process of establishing the Li-Ion production facility near Bangalore in Karnataka.
- Various equipment (both indigenous and imported) for establishing this facility are procured and being commissioned.
- ISRO has already provided all technical documentation for establishing the production plant as well as hands-on training in various production activities for BHEL staff at ISRO's facilities.
- As per the Technology Transfer Agreement, space-grade Li-Ion cells manufactured by BHEL are meant for meeting the national requirements only. However, BHEL can also sell the space-grade Li-Ion cells to parties outside India after obtaining prior written consent from ISRO.

Know! about Lithium – ion battery

- A lithium-ion battery or Li-ion battery (abbreviated as LIB) is a type of rechargeable battery.
- Lithium-ion batteries are commonly used for portable electronics and electric vehicles and are growing in popularity for military and aerospace applications.
- In the batteries lithium ions move from the negative electrode through an electrolyte to the positive electrode during discharge, and back when charging.
- Li-ion batteries use an intercalated lithium compound as the material at the positive electrode and typically graphite at the negative electrode. The batteries have a high energy density, no memory effect (other than LFP cells) and low self-discharge.

Defence Acquisition Council, approves Capital Procurement for the Services

Relevance IN – Prelims (about DAC and the procurements of weapons) + Mains (GS III security challenges and their management in border areas)

What's the NEWS

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh approval for Capital Procurement for the Services amounting to over Rs 22,800 crore.

Know! more about DAC approvals

- To boost the 'Make in India' initiative, the DAC accorded approval for indigenous design, development and manufacturing of 'Thermal Imaging Night Sights' for Assault Rifles.
- These sights will be manufactured by the Indian private industry and used by troops deployed on the frontline.

Thermal Imaging Night Sights

- 'Thermal Imaging Night Sights' would enable troops to undertake long range accurate engagements in dark and all weather conditions thereby enhancing the night fighting capabilities.

Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C)

- As a follow up of the successful indigenous Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) programme, the DAC revalidated the Acceptance of Necessity for the procurement of additional Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) India aircraft.
- The mission system and sub-systems for these aircraft would be indigenously designed, developed and integrated onto the main platform by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- These platforms would provide on-board Command & Control and 'Early Warning' which would assist the Indian Air Force (IAF) in achieving effective air space dominance in the least possible time.
- Induction of these systems would increase the extent of coverage along our borders and greatly enhance both the Air Defence and Offensive capabilities of the IAF.

Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance (LRMR)

- The DAC also approved procurement of Long Range Maritime Reconnaissance (LRMR) Anti-Submarine Warfare P8I aircraft for the Indian Navy.
- These aircraft would greatly strengthen the Navy's capabilities for maritime coastal surveillance, Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) and Anti-Surface Vessel (ASV) strike.

Twin Engine Heavy Helicopters (TEHH)

- The DAC approved procurement of Twin Engine Heavy Helicopters (TEHH) for the Indian Coast Guard These aircraft would enable the Coast Guard to undertake missions to prevent maritime terrorism, infiltration of terrorists by sea routes as well as Search & Rescue operations.

ADB, India sign \$451 Million Loan to strengthen Power Connectivity in Tamil Nadu

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the agreement + about ABD + and about CKIC and ECEC) + Mains (GS II international organisations + GS III infrastructure development)

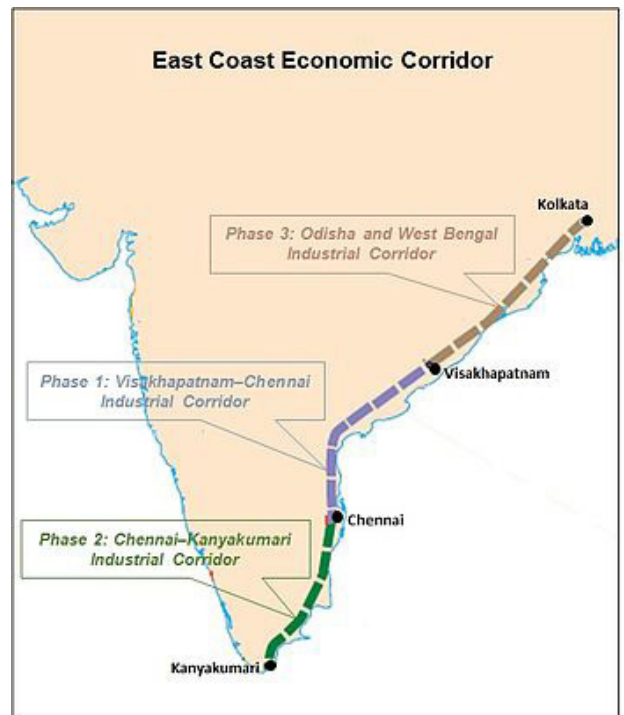
What's the NEWS

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India today signed a \$451 million loan to strengthen power connectivity between the southern and northern parts of the Chennai–Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC), which is part of the East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC), in Tamil Nadu. ADB is the lead partner of the Government of India for developing ECEC.

Know! more about the agreement

- The project will help Government of Tamil Nadu meet the increasing demand for power supply from industry and commercial enterprises in the State through transfer of power from new generation facilities, including renewable energy, in the southern CKIC to the industrial hubs in the state's northern region

- The project will provide an impetus to the industrial development of CKIC, which ADB has been assisting through strategic planning and investments in infrastructure while facilitating industrial investments.
- The state is aiming to develop the northern Chennai–Tiruchirappalli area of CKIC as a manufacturing center while targeting the relatively poor southern Madurai–Thoothukudi portion for the development of renewable energy-based power generation because of the availability of wind and solar resources.
- ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.
- In 2018, it made commitments of new loans and grants amounting to \$21.6 billion. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.



Disaster Management: Ministry of Home Affairs inaugurates 1st International Conference on “Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience-2019”



Relevance IN – Prelims (about the conference) + Mains (GS III Disaster management)

What’s the NEWS

- The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the 1st International Conference on “Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience”.

Know! more about the conference and the measures to mitigate the menace of natural disasters

- The objective of the Conference was called for developing technology to anticipate disasters like landslides and develop infrastructure to quickly respond to minimise the damage.
- The landslides have attracted global attention as they may cause huge havoc on communities, live stock, environment leading to huge loss of lives .

- On the one hand landslides effect loss of infrastructures-roads, buildings, bridges, communication systems etc, on the other, they may lead to stagnation of human activity and mobility
- Although landslides are a natural calamity but of late, our life styles, our greed and irresponsible planning along with global warming and climate change are also contributing to them and the damage there of.
- Since the adoption of the Disaster Management Act 2005, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to strengthen the resilience capacity of all the stakeholders at different levels.
- The National Institute of Disaster management (NIDM) organized the first of its kind conference in the country, called for making extensive collaborative programs involving international community and all the stakeholders at national, state and regional levels to tackle the problem.

UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2019: 1.5°C “Almost Impossible” Without Deeper and Faster Cuts, Warns UNEP Emissions Gap Report

Relevance IN – Prelims (about emission gap report findings) + Mains (GS III environment conservation)

What’s the NEWS

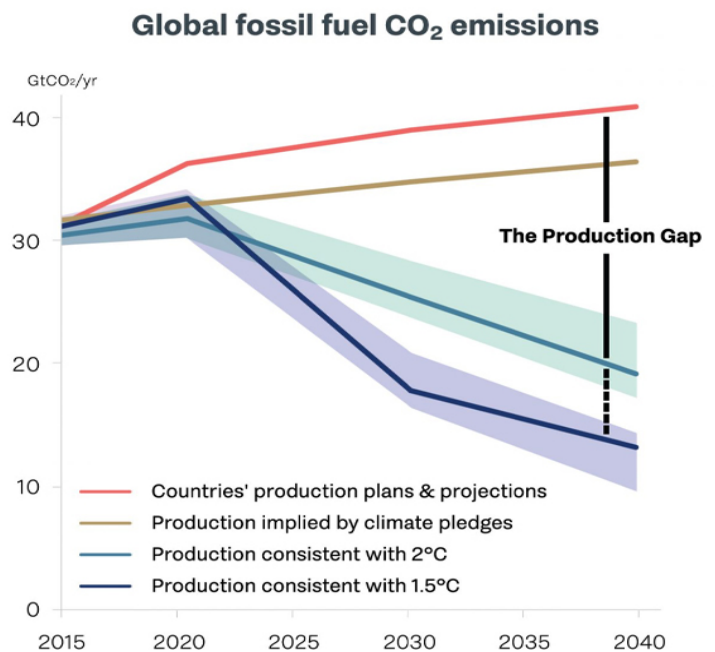
- The 2019 UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Emissions Gap Report provides the first-ever estimate of annual cuts needed to achieve the Paris Agreement on climate change, the report emphasizes that even if the current climate commitments are met, the world is on course to exceed 3°C in global temperature rise, and calls for accelerated cuts in annual global emissions of 7.6% to meet the 1.5°C goal, and 2.7% for the 2°C goal.

Know! more about the report findings

- The UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2019 highlights that China, USA, EU28 and India are the among top four greenhouse gas emitters.
- The ‘Emissions Gap Report 2019’ presents the latest data on the expected gap in 2030 for the 1.5°C and 2°C temperature targets, exploring different scenarios, from no new climate policies since 2005 to full implementation of all national commitments under the Paris Agreement.
- The report estimates that to limit temperature rise, annual emissions in 2030 need to be 15 gigatonnes of CO₂ equivalent lower than current unconditional Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) imply for the 2°C goal; and 32 gigatonnes lower for the 1.5°C goal.
- It notes that to deliver on these cuts, the levels of ambition in the NDCs must increase at least fivefold for the 1.5°C goal and threefold for the 2°C goal.
- The report’s findings correspond to conclusions by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) laid out in its 25 November 2019 Greenhouse Gas Bulletin, which finds a continuing long-term trend of record levels of heat-trapping GHGs in the atmosphere since global levels of CO₂ “crossed the symbolic and significant 400 parts per million benchmark” in 2015.
- Similar conclusions are highlighted in two recent special reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): the Climate Change and Land report examining climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and GHG fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems; and the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate report.

Suggestion given in the report

- The 2019 Emissions Gap Report identifies two critical entry points for accelerating emissions reduction: decarbonization of the energy sector through renewables and energy efficiency, which could help reduce



emissions by 12.1 Gt – or the equivalent of the annual output of nearly 2.5 million coal power stations – by 2050; and electrification of transport, which could reduce the sector’s carbon emissions by up to 72% in 2050.

Know! about the Emission Gap report

- The Emissions Gap Report is UNEP’s annual flagship report that assesses the “emissions gap” – the gap between anticipated emission levels in 2030 and levels consistent with a 2°C/1.5°C target.
- Each year, the report analyzes the potential of specific sectors to deliver emissions cuts, with the 2019 report focusing on the energy transition.
- The report also marks the tenth anniversary of the publication, which also outlines key opportunities at sector and country level to close the emissions gap.
- The publication was released ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference taking place in Madrid, Spain, from 2-13 December 2019.
- Produced annually since 2010, the UNEP flagship report assesses the gap between anticipated emission levels in 2030 and levels consistent with a 2°C/1.5°C temperature target.
- A report released prior to the United Nations Climate Conference COP-25 to be held in Spain from December 2 states that GHG emissions have increased by 1.5 per cent since the last decade. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions have reached an all-time high figure of 55.3 gigatons.

Global Cooling Prize

Relevance IN – Prelims (about global cooling prize) + Mains (GS III environment conservation – steps taken by the government to mitigate the menaces of climate change)

Global cooling prize

- For developing innovative cooling solutions which are energy efficient. and climate friendly

THE GLOBAL COOLING PRIZE
Residential Cooling Technology for All without Warming the Planet

THE PROBLEM

- By **2030** over **1/2** of the world's population will live in hot climates with increasing exposure to potentially dangerous heat conditions
- Cooling demand will boom **3x** globally and increase by **5x** in developing nations by **2050**
- At least **2.5 B** AC units will be in use globally by **2050** (compared to only 900 M today)
- Only **14%** of maximum theoretical efficiency has been reached by today's most advanced AC technology (most ACs attain less than 8%)

THE SOLUTION

- Spurs residential cooling technology that has **5x** less climate impact, uses **3.75-5x** less energy, and fulfills 7 other requirements
- Is led by a coalition of global partners that engage industry and markets to identify and scale a solution
- Awards at least **US \$3M** in prize money
- Initiates an era of transformation and global innovation in the cooling industry

THE IMPACT

- Affordable access to cooling in parts of the world where it is becoming a critical need
- Potential to mitigate **1°C** of global warming by 2100
- Up to **3,200 TWh/yr** in avoided demand, equal to the annual generation of electricity within the EU
- A cooling technology in billions of homes that has at least **5x** less climate impact

JOIN US: globalcoolingprize.org

Global Cooling Prize

Know! more about the global cooling prize

- A global coalition led by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India; Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI)— a leading global research institute; and Mission Innovation — a global initiative of 24 countries and the European Union to accelerate global clean energy innovation — launched the Global Cooling Prize in November, 2018 with the aim of spurring the development of a radically more efficient, climate-friendly residential cooling solution.
- Since its launch, the Prize has received overwhelming international participation — over 2,100 participant registrations were received from innovators, start-ups, research institute, universities, and key Air Conditioning industry manufacturers in over 95 countries.

- The winner of the Global Cooling Prize will be announced in November, 2020 and awarded more than US\$1 million in prize money.

Know! about Mission Innovation

- Mission Innovation is a global initiative to accelerate public and private clean energy innovation to address climate change, make clean energy affordable to consumers, and create green jobs and commercial opportunities.
- It was announced by Bill Gates at COP21 on 30 November 2015, on stage with President Obama, President Hollande and Prime Minister Modi.
- At the launch, 24 countries committed to double their respective clean energy research and development over the five years to 2020.

India to host the 8th International Conference on Agricultural Statistic

Relevance IN – Prelims (about ICAS) + Mains (GS III issues related to agriculture sector)

What's the NEWS

- The 8th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS-VIII) will be organized by the Ministry of Agriculture in New Delhi from 18th to 21st November 2019.
- The conference will be organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, ISI-CAS, FAO, the USDA, ADB, World Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Eurostat, AfDB and various other organizations.
- The theme of this year's ICAS is 'Statistics for Transformation of Agriculture to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'.
- This will be a learning opportunity for the statisticians, young scientists and decision makers in India to adopt modern practises in agriculture such as Big Data analysis, AI, precision farming etc.

What's the need

- Discussions are not happening in the field of statistics in the country today even if a large amount of data is available.
- The available data should be utilised effectively in agriculture sector with help of modern methods and practises taking inputs from the conference.

Know! about ICAS

- ICAS is a series of conferences that started in 1998 based on overarching need for agricultural data worldwide.
- The conference is conducted every three years based on overarching need for agricultural data worldwide and the last conference was held in Rome in 2016.
- the agenda for this conference covers domains of food and agricultural statistics, related methodologies, technologies and processes.

First ever International Buyer- Seller Meet in Arunachal Pradesh

Relevance IN – Prelims (about APEDA and about the buyer seller meet) + Mains (GS III Economic development)

What's the NEWS

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, held the first ever international buyer seller meet on Agriculture & Horticulture produce in Arunachal Pradesh on 14th November 2019.

Know! more about the meet and its benefits

- Ten International buyers from seven countries of Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, UAE, Sultanate of Oman and Greece participated in the meet and interacted with exporters.
- Growers and exporters showcased the products of Arunachal Pradesh like Mandarin oranges, kiwi, pineapple, king chilly, large cardamom, organic products, other fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers and spices.
- To promote export of agricultural products and to facilitate market linkages for agri- exports from the North Eastern Region (NER) especially Arunachal Pradesh, APEDA and Department of Agriculture & Horticulture,

Government of Arunachal Pradesh organised the Conference cum International Buyer- Seller Meet in Itanagar.

- This conference was held to provide a platform for B2B and B2G meetings of international buyers with the importers and exporters and the progressive farmers and growers from the North East Region (NER) particularly from Arunachal Pradesh to explore the opportunities and prospects of agriculture and horticulture exports.

Know! about the steps taken by APEDA

- APEDA has organised International Buyer Seller Meet in the NER to introduce the products of the North East States to the international market.
- BSM has been organized in Guwahati, Assam in March this year, followed by a Conference cum International Buyer-Seller Meet at Imphal, Manipur in June 2019 and followed by another in September 2019 at Agartala, Tripura.
- APEDA is holding promotional activities in the areas of agriculture exports, like providing support to exporters to set up infrastructure facilities like pack houses and cold storages.
- APEDA also helps exporters to exhibit their products in several national and international exhibitions. This event at Itanagar is part of the initiative of APEDA to bring the North-Eastern states of India on the export map.

Know! about APEDA

- The APEDA was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act passed by the Parliament in December 1985.
- APEDA replaced the Processed Food Export Promotion Council (PFEPCC).
- APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of promotion and development of the export of agricultural and its allied products.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates Sisseri River bridge connecting Dibang Valley and Siang in Arunachal Pradesh

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the bridge and its strategic location + about BADP and its projects) + Mains (GS III Security challenges and their management in border areas)

What's the NEWS

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates the Sisseri River bridge at Lower Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh.

Know! about the bridge

- The 200-metre long bridge between Jonai-Pasighat-Ranaghat-Roing road will provide connectivity between Dibang Valley and Siang to meet the long-pending demand of the people of Arunachal Pradesh as it would cut down the travel time from Pasighat to Roing by about five hours.
- The Sisseri River bridge would help the development of Lower Dibang Valley and East Siang, the strong infrastructure in Arunachal Pradesh would also act as bridge between India and South-East Asian countries.
- The Sisseri River bridge provides connectivity to Tinsukia via Dhola-Sadia bridge.
- It was constructed by Project Brahmanak of Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

Border Area Development Programme (BADP)

- The Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs has been implementing the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) through the State Governments as part of a comprehensive approach to Border Management.
- The programme aims to meet the special development needs of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near the international border and to saturate the border areas with the essential infrastructure through convergence of Central/State/BADP/Local schemes and participatory approach.
- The programme now covers 394 border blocks of 111 border districts in 17 States, which includes 167 border blocks in 55 districts of 8 North East, States (including Sikkim), located along the international land border.
- The State covered are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Under this programme priority is given to the areas closer to the border.

- The Government has initiated numerous infrastructure projects in the states for e.g the proposed Bhalukpong – Tenga - Tawang railway line, operationalisation of Pasighat airport, nod to Hollongi airport and approval to construct Sela Pass tunnel
- These initiatives reaffirms the Government’s commitment to establish a strong and efficient roadways, railways, airways, waterways and digital network in the region.

Projects of BRO

- There are four projects of BRO in the state namely Vartak, Arunank, Brahmank and Udayak working relentlessly to meet the strategic requirement of the nation and also immensely contributing in the socio-economic development of the region.

After Chandrayaan 2 mission, ISRO aims for Chandrayaan 3 in November 2020

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Chandrayaan 2 and Chandrayaan 3) + Mains (GS III awareness in the field of space)

What’s the NEWS

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is now planning for its next lunar mission, Chandrayaan 3.
- According to reports, the agency has started working on Chandrayaan 3 with a deadline of November 2020.
- Since the Chandrayaan 2 orbiter is functioning well, the new mission is likely to include only a lander and a rover.
- The overview committee met to review the configuration of Chandrayaan 3. It also looked into the recommendations of sub-committees on propulsion, sensors, overall engineering, navigation and guidance.
- The new mission is to strengthen the legs of the lander so that it lands with high velocity without problems.
- ISRO chief K Sivan had said that ISRO will pull all its experience, knowledge and technical prowess to set things right and demonstrate soft landing in near the future.

About Chandrayaan-2

- ISRO tried to make Chandrayaan-2 lander a soft landing on the moon in September this year.
- However, Vikram Lander lost contact because it made a hard landing. Chandrayaan-2 tried to land at the south pole of the moon, but it could not succeed.
- However, the orbiter is functioning properly and scientists say that it will continue to do its work for seven years.

Ultima Thule would now officially be named Arrokoth, a Native American word meaning “sky.”

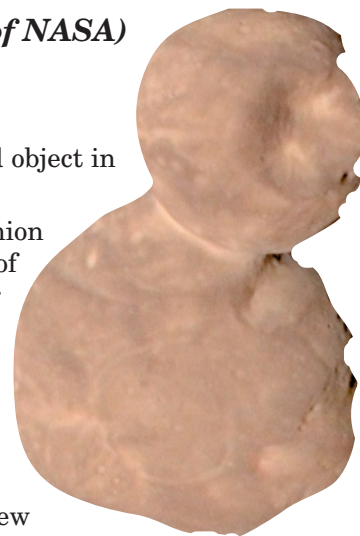
Relevance IN – Prelims (about Ultima Thule and Horizon Mission of NASA) + Mains (GS III awareness in the field space)

Ultima Thule

- Ultima Thule was the informal name NASA used for a small, snowman-shaped object in the Kuiper belt, a desolate region of deep space
- Although the name was not registered with the International Astronomical Union and Minor Planet Center, which has international authority for the naming of objects in the Kuiper belt. Its official name was the impersonal-sounding “Kuiper belt object 2014 MU69.”

Know! more about it

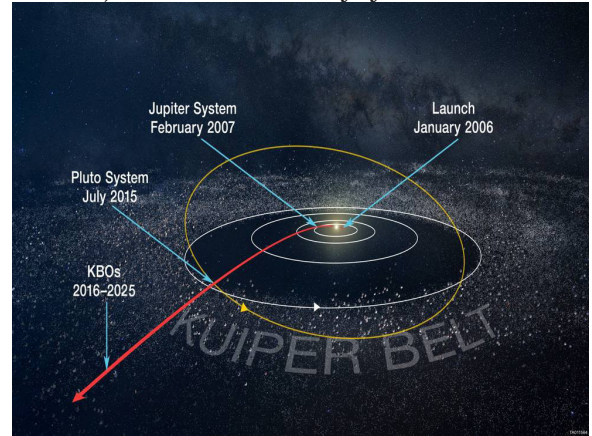
- In a fitting tribute to the farthest flyby ever conducted by spacecraft, the Kuiper Belt object 2014 MU69 has been officially named Arrokoth, a Native American term meaning “sky” in the Powhatan/Algonquian language.
- With consent from Powhatan Tribal elders and representatives, NASA’s New Horizons team – whose spacecraft performed the record-breaking reconnaissance of



Arrokoth four billion miles from Earth – proposed the name to the International Astronomical Union and Minor Planets Center, the international authority for naming Kuiper Belt objects. The name was announced at a ceremony today at NASA Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Know! about New Horizon

- New Horizons launched in January 2006; it then zipped past Jupiter for a gravity boost and scientific studies in February 2007 and conducted an historic first flight through the Pluto system on July 14, 2015.
- The spacecraft continued its unparalleled voyage on New Year's 2019 with the exploration of Arrokoth – which the team had nicknamed “Ultima Thule” -- a billion miles beyond Pluto, and the farthest flyby ever conducted.
- Arrokoth is one of the thousands of known small icy worlds in the Kuiper Belt, the vast “third zone” of the solar system beyond the inner terrestrial planets and the outer gas giant planets.
- It was discovered in 2014 by a New Horizons team using the powerful Hubble Space Telescope.
- Data from the newly-named Arrokoth, has given us clues about the formation of planets and our cosmic origins



Know! about The Kuiper Belt

- The Kuiper Belt begins near the orbit of Neptune and continues beyond Pluto.
- The belt's inner edge is about 30 Astronomical Units (AU) away from the Sun. It's outer edge is about 50 AU away from the Sun.
- There may be thousands of icy bodies larger than 100 km and an estimated trillion or more comets within the Kuiper Belt.
- The Kuiper Belt Objects (including Ultima Thule) are thought to be remnants left over from the formation of the Solar System.
- Besides Pluto, Eris, Makemake and Haumea are the other known dwarf planets in this belt.

Nasa's Mission To Ultima Thule

- The New Horizons is an interplanetary space probe launched by the US based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on January 19, 2006, with the primary mission of performing a flyby of dwarf planet Pluto in the Kuiper Belt.
- The Mission to Ultima Thule came up only in 2014.
- 3 Scientists were searching for an object in the Kuiper Belt that the spacecraft could study after Pluto and they selected Ultima Thule as it could be reached using the remaining fuel with the probe.
- New Horizons came within 3,500 km of Ultima Thule, three times closer than the spacecraft's encounter with Pluto.

UNDP Green Climate Fund: India gets 43 million USD to boost climate in 3 coastal states

Relevance IN – Prelims (about UNDP Climate Fund) + Mains (GS III Environment conservation)

What's the NEWS

- India kicked-off a USD 43 million project to boost climate resilience in three coastal states in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund, established within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to assist developing countries.



Project Objective

- The six-year project will build climate-resilient livelihoods for 1.7 million people in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha, offset 3.5 million tonnes of carbon, protect vulnerable ecosystems, and benefit another 10 million people with improved shoreline protection

What's the need

- India's coastal areas are quite vulnerable to climate change and in the last five years, we have seen increased floods and cyclones in these regions.
- This initiative will help enhance resilience and adaptability, lead to emissions reductions and support sustainable livelihoods
- The Indian government will finance an additional USD 86.8 million towards the new project to mainstream and accelerate the impacts of the Green Climate Fund grant.

Know! more about the project

- The project will work with communities in restoring ecosystems and promoting climate-resilient livelihood options, such as the sustainable farming of mud crabs.
- It establishes India as a leader on climate action, and marks an essential step for India to reach its goals outlined in the Paris Agreement and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- This initiative will particularly address India's strategic plan to achieve its nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, which focuses on adaptation efforts in vulnerable communities, it said.
- Through the project, over 3.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide will be sequestered through restored ecosystems over the next 30 years.
- The project activities will focus on restoration and conservation of over 15,000 hectares of mangroves, coral reefs, seagrasses and saltmarshes. Communities, including the local youth, will be trained to work with scientists in monitoring ecosystem health and coastal ecology.
- To strengthen climate risk-informed coastal management and infrastructure planning, the innovative project will create an online decision-support tool available via mobile phone for use by government officers, academic institutions, community members and scientists.

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Current Affairs (Prelims + Main)

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Miscellaneous/ Prelims Factoids

UNESCO has designated Mumbai as a member of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about UCCN)

What's the NEWS

- UNESCO has designated Mumbai as a member of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in the field of FILM and Hyderabad in the field of GASTRONOMY

Know! about UCCN

- UCCN, created in 2004, is a network of cities which are thriving, active centres of cultural activities in their respective countries. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network now counts a total of 246 cities.
- The member cities that form part of the Network come from all continents and regions with different income levels and populations.
- They work together towards a common mission: placing creativity and the creative economy at the core of their urban development plans to make cities safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Ministry of Culture is the nodal Ministry of Government of India for all matters in UNESCO relating to culture.



The 7 categories for recognition under UCCN are as follows-

- Crafts and Folk Arts
- Design
- Film
- Gastronomy
- Music
- Media Arts
- Literature

Previously, 3 Indian cities were recognized as members of UCCN, namely-

- Jaipur-Crafts and Folk Arts(2015)
- Varanasi-Creative city of Music (2015)
- Chennai-Creative city of Music(2017)

Curtain Raiser of the first-ever India-Uzbekistan Joint Exercise 'Dustlik 2019'



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Dustlik 2019)

What's the NEWS

- The first-ever India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise - Dustlik-2019 will begin at Chirchiq Training Area near Tashkent .

Know! more about the exercise

- The exercise, which will focused on counter-terrorism, will continue till November 13.
- During the exercise, an Indian Army contingent will train along with Uzbekistan Army.
- The exercise will enable sharing of best practices and experiences between the Armed Forces of the two countries and will lead to greater operational effectiveness.
- India and Uzbekistan have signed three Memoranda of Understanding in the fields of Military Medicine and Military Education.
- The MoUs were signed following a meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Uzbekistan counterpart in Tashkent

Indian Railway's Introduces 'Uttam Rake'

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Uttam Rake)

What's the NEWS

- Indian Railways, on the auspicious occasion of 69th Foundation Day of Western Railway on 5th November, 2019, introduced the state-of-the-art "UTTAM RAKE" in its inaugural run as Ladies Special local train from Churchgate to Virar.
- Uttam rake has improved interiors and advanced features to bring more comfort for Mumbaiikars.
- The new rake will run on its normal services from 6th November, 2019 with 10 services a day. The Uttam rake while saving energy, will feature posters about Western Railway's journey as an effective transport medium.
- Western Railways introduced world's first ever Ladies Special local train on 5th May, 1992 and India's first ever Air-Conditioned EMU train on 25th December, 2017 on Mumbai Suburban section.
- Only two Uttam rakes have been built at the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai so far, out of which the other has been given to South Central Railway.

ShalaDarpan Portal launched for NavodayaVidyalayas

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Shaala Darpan portal)

What's the NEWS

- The Human Resource Development ministry has launched Shaala Darpan portal, an E-Governance school automation and management system for Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS)

Know! about the portal

- This single integrated platform has been developed for information sharing and knowledge dissemination for the 22000 employees and over 2 lakh students across schools and offices of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti.
- Shaala Darpan is an end to end e-Governance school automation and management system.
- It has been implemented at Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti as the first major initiative to enable automation of all activities of the country's largest residential schooling system through a single umbrella - 636 schools, 8 Regional Offices, 8 NLI's and Head Quarter.

IIT Madras launches India's first standing wheelchair

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Arise)

What's the NEWS

- A 'standing wheelchair' called 'Arise', was developed at the TTK Center for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2) at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras four months ago.

Know! more about Arise

- The wheel chair, indigenously-designed at IIT-M in collaboration with Phoenix Medical Systems, with the support of the UK-based Wellcome Trust, is priced at about Rs. 15,000.
- Using Arise, a person with a disability can shift from a standing position to a sitting position and vice versa, independently or with assistance.



Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan begins in New Delhi



Relevance IN – Prelims (about Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan)

What's the NEWS

- Thousands of Sanskrit lovers from 17 countries are attending Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan, the three-day mega event that began on Saturday in New Delhi.

Know! more about it

- Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan is a three-day mega event for discussing ideas, theories and research findings in the ancient Sanskrit language
- Thousands of delegates and Sanskrit lovers from across the world are participating in this first-of-its-kind global conference.
- It was organised by Samskrita Bharati, a non-profit organisation (NGO) working for the continuing protection, development, propagation and revival of Sanskrit language.
- Sanskrit lovers from 21 countries are participating in this mega event and around one crore people have learnt this language in India and one crore people across the world are learning it.

Defence: Indo-Uzbekistan Joint Field Training exercise (FTX)-2019 Exercise Dustlik-2019



Relevance IN - Prelims (DUSTLIK – 2019)

What's the NEWS

- The inaugural Indo-Uzbekistan Joint Field Training Exercise (FTX)-2019, Exercise DUSTLIK-2019 culminated on 13 November 2019 after 10 days of joint training with Uzbekistan Army.

Know! more about the exercise

- In the joint exercise which began on 04 November 2019 training was focused on counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations in urban scenario as well as sharing of expertise on skills at arms, both combat shooting and experiences in counter insurgency and counter terrorism.
- The exercise also provided an opportunity to armies of all nations for greater cultural understanding, sharing experiences and strengthening mutual trust and cooperation.
- After intense military training, the joint exercise concluded with both Armies exhibiting their combat power and dominance over the extremist groups.

The 'Sishu Suraksha' app: Assam gets app to combat child rights violations

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the app)

What's the NEWS

- The ASCPCR is launching a mobile application, Sishu Suraksha, as a means to lodge complaints on child rights violation, and address them in timely and appropriate ways.

What's the need

- No less than 125 complaints — including those concerning child marriage, child trafficking and child sexual abuse — have been reported to the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Right (ASCPCR) since the beginning of 2019. Yet, there are many that go unreported and slip through the cracks. In a bid to remedy this, ASCPCR is launching this mobile application



Know! more about the app

- The app, available on iOS and Android platforms, can be used by anyone in the state to lodge complaints which will be then directly sent to the commission.
- This is probably the first of its kind application in the Northeast — earlier one would have to write a formal letter to the ASCPCR head office in Guwahati to file a complaint.
- The user needs to just open the app, and key in their complaint in the 'How To Lodge a Complaint' section. and the concerned authority will take immediate action.
- Lodging a complaint involves keying in details like particulars of the victim, the address, which police station they fall under and what kind of abuse it is.
- The categories the app currently has are: child labour, child marriage, child sexual abuse, violation of rights and others.
- According to the National Crime Records Bureau, Assam features among the top 10 states with maximum number of crimes against children, with a hundred percent jump between 2014 and 2016 (from 1,385 to 2,970).
- Currently Childline, the pan-India 24-hour children's helpline is in function in 11 out of 33 districts of Assam.
- With this app, anyone, in any district of Assam can use it — including the children themselves.

Prelims Factoids: English naturalist, TV presenter David Attenborough to get Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019

Relevance IN – Prelims (Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development)

What's the NEWS

- British natural historian and television presenter David Attenborough will receive the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2019

Know! more about it

- An international jury headed by former President Pranab Mukherjee selected him.
- Attenborough was selected for spending his life revealing the wonders of the natural world and tirelessly working to make human beings realise the importance of preserving and protecting the biodiversity on our planet



Know! about Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

- The Indira Gandhi Prize or the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize or the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development is the prestigious award accorded annually by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust to individuals or organisations in recognition of creative efforts toward promoting international peace, development and a new international economic order; ensuring that scientific discoveries are used for the larger good of humanity, and enlarging the scope of freedom.
- The prize carries a cash award of 2.5 million Indian rupees and a citation. A written work, in order to be eligible for consideration, should have been published.
- The panel constituted by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust consists of prominent national and international personalities including previous recipients. The recipients are chosen from a pool of national and international nominees.

Appointment of Chief of Defence Staff

Relevance IN – Prelims (about CDS and COSC)

What's the NEWS

- The Government has approved in principle the creation of a post of CDS.
- An Implementation Committee was also approved and constituted to further determine and finalize the exact responsibilities, an enabling framework for this new post and all other issues involved to ensure smooth operationalization.
- A number of Committees viz. the Kargil Review Committee, Group of Ministers (GoM) Report, Task Force on National Security and Shekatkar Committee have studied and recommended creation of the post of CDS/ Permanent Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Know! all about COSC and CDS

- The Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC), is the head of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. The most senior chief of staff is appointed to serve as a chairman until he retires.
- After the end of Kargil war, Kargil Review Committee found there was a lack of communication between the service branches, and therefore suggested to create the position of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).
- This was however rejected at that time by many members of the military, arguing that only great or imperial powers engaging in power projection needed that amount of integration.
- A compromise was created with the establishment of the COSC. The Chairman is responsible for inter-service synergy.

Know! about Integrated Defence Staff.

- The Chairman is assisted by the Integrated Defence Staff. It has been suggested that the position of chairman be made permanent, with a renewable two year term.
- The Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) is an organisation responsible for fostering coordination and enabling prioritisation across the different branches of the Indian Armed Forces.
- It is composed of representatives from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Ministry of External Affairs, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Finance.
- The IDS is headed by Chief of Integrated Defence Staff along with Deputy Chiefs of Integrated Defence Staff.
- The body advises and assists the chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. It was established on 23 November 2001 after the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee and is located at New Delhi

Recent Update

- Recently the government announced to replace the post of Chairman, COSC with a permanent Chief of the Defence Staff, who would be senior to each service chief and who would deal with India's national security with a comprehensive approach, acting as a single-point military adviser to the prime minister and defence minister.

Defence Acquisition Council

- The DAC is Defence Ministry's highest decision making body for capital acquisition proposals forwarded by the Indian armed forces.
- It was set up in 2001 as part of the post-Kargil reforms in defence sector
- It approves the long-term integrated perspective plan for the forces, accords acceptance of necessity (AON) to begin acquisition proposals, and grant's its approval to all major deals through all their important phases.
- It also has the power to approve any deviations in an acquisition, and recommends all big capital defence purchases for approval of the Cabinet committee on security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister.

Nuclear Command Authority and Strategic Forces Command

Nuclear Command Authority (NCA)

- Nuclear Command Authority is headed by the Prime Minister.
- NCA has the control of India's estimated around 100 nuclear war heads.
- In the event of a crisis, NCA orders the Strategic Forces Command to ready the arsenal.

- Organisational structure of NCA includes Political Council and Executive Council.
- Executive Council is headed by National Security Advisor and Political Council is headed by Prime Minister.
- The Executive Council gives its opinion to the Political Council, which authorises a nuclear attack when deemed necessary.
- Now, India is having nuclear triad. That means, India is in a position to launch K Series of missiles from the submarines.(INS Arihant)
- India's doctrine is "No-First use".
- India now has second strike capability. Second strike capability means the capacity to ensure retaliation, even if the rest of the arsenal is wiped out in a surprise first strike.

Strategic Forces Command (SFC)

- Sole responsibility of initiating the process of delivering Nuclear Weapons and Warheads after acquiring explicit approval from the NCA
- It is a tri service command that forms part of India's Nuclear Command Authority (NCA).
- It is created in 2003 by an executive order of Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the then Prime Minister A B Vajpayee.
- It is responsible for the management and administration of the country's tactical and strategic nuclear weapons stock pile.
- SFC is headed by Commander-in-chief of the rank of Air Marshal or its equivalent.

US approves sale of 13 Naval guns worth \$1 billion to India

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the Naval guns)

What's the NEWS

- United States has approved the sale of 13 MK45 Naval guns and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$1.0210 billion to India.

Know! more about MK-45 Gun System

- The MK-45 Gun System will provide the capability to conduct anti-surface warfare and anti-air defense missions while enhancing interoperability with the U.S. and other allied forces.
- India will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense,
- It stressed that the proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region. The principal contractor will be BAE Systems Land and Armaments, Minneapolis, Minnesota with gun manufacturing in Louisville, Kentucky.
- DSCA said that there are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Know! about DSCA

- The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), as part of the United States Department of Defense (DoD), provides financial and technical assistance, transfer of defense matériel, training and services to allies, and promotes military-to-military contacts.

Avian botulism killed 18,000 birds at Sambhar: Govt report

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Avian botulism)

What's the NEWS

- Avian botulism killed over 18,000 birds in and around Rajasthan's Sambhar lake, the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Bareilly, said in a report released on November 21, 2019.

Know! about Botulinum

- Botulinum is a natural toxin produced by a bacteria known as Clostridium botulin. It produces the toxin when it starts reproducing.
- The bacteria is commonly found in the soil, river, and sea water. There are around eight types — A, B, C₁, C₂, D, E, F, and G — of botulinum toxin and they are distinguishable when diagnosed. But all types of toxins attack

the neurons, which leads to muscle paralysis

- The report by IVRI, Bareilly, states that climatic conditions were ultimately responsible for having triggered the mass die-off
- This bacterium spreads in the body of birds by the consumption of water or worms. It causes paralysis or death of the birds.
- The infection transmits into other birds through having the same food or water.
- Botulism does not affect large birds such as flamingos and pelican. Avian Botulism is difficult to cure in migratory or non-persistent birds. Avian Botulism generally does not occur in rivers.

State Specific: Arundhati Gold Scheme; Assam govt to gift 10 gramme gold to every bride

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Arundhati gold scheme)

What's the NEWS

- The Assam government would give 'one tola' (10 gramme) of gold to every bride of the state from 2020 onward. BJP government in the state will roll out the 'Arundhati Gold Scheme' in the state from January 1, 2020.
- The move was aimed to strengthen women empowerment and reduce child marriage.

Know! more about the scheme

- The Assam government will give one tola [10gm] of gold to the bride if a marriage is solemnised and registered.
- Because, if you register a marriage then there will be a minimum age which is notified as 18 years and 21 years for the bride and bridegroom
- Now any marriage which will be registered, the bride will get Rs 30,000 from the state government to purchase gold.
- But, to have benefit from the scheme, your minimum age has to be 18 years and 21 years and you have to matriculate (Class 10 pass)

The Assam government has mentioned four conditions to avail this benefit-

1. The bride should be an adult (18 or 18 plus) and the groom should be above 21 years.
2. The bride should have studied at least till Class 10. However, the educational criteria would not be applicable to girls of tea tribes and the Adivasis.
3. The marriage of the bride must be registered.
4. Lastly, the annual income of the family of the bride has to be less than Rs 5 lakh .

Army celebrates 'Poonch Link Up Day'

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Poonch Link Up Day)

What's the NEWS

- Poonch Link Up Day, marking the Operation Easy conducted by Indian Army in 1948 to defend the border district from the invading Pakistani raiders was celebrated with traditional gaiety

Know! more about it

- Poonch withstood a siege by the Pakistanis from November 1947 till relieved by the Indian Army.
- The White Knight Corps and the Awaam (people) of Poonch celebrates the historic Poonch Link Up Day with gaiety and fervour every year
- The Poonch district is bounded by Line of Control on all three sides. In 1947-48 war, the district was divided between India and Pakistan. A part of the district went to Pakistan and the other part became a part of the then Indian state Jammu and Kashmir.



Prelims Factoids: India's Travel & Tourism competitiveness Index ranking has improved since 2013

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Travel & Tourism competitiveness Index)

What's the NEWS

- India's Travel & Tourism competitiveness Index ranking since 2013 has improved. The details are as follows:

Year	2013	2015	2017	2019
Rank	65	52	40	34

- Improvement in India's ranking in Travel & Tourism competitiveness Index is an encouragement for tourism sector in the country.

Steps taken by the Tourism Ministry to promote tourism and tourism infrastructure

- Launch of two flagship schemes: Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits and PRASHAD- Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive.
- Ministry has identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites.

The Adopt A Heritage:

- Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan - a collaborative effort by Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State/UTs Governments, envisages developing heritage sites and making them tourist friendly, to enhance tourism potential and cultural importance in a planned and phased manner.

Restricted Area Permit(RAP)

- Ministry of Home Affairs and as a result Ministry of Home Affairs has relaxed the Protected Area Permit(PAP)/ Restricted Area Permit(RAP) for a period of 5 Years i.e. till 31.12.2022 in the states of Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland and for 29 Islands of Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Know! about TTCI

- The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is produced by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and measures the factors and policies that make a country a viable place to invest within the Travel and Tourism sector.
- The TTCI provides a means to measure a country's performance, and utilizes three sub-indices and their component parts to represent the overall quality, future potential and long-term sustainability of the tourism sector within each country assessed.
- The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) analyzed 139 countries and scored each according to three sub-indices: Regulatory Framework; Business Environment and Infrastructure; and Human, Cultural and Natural Resources.

- These sub-indices are, in turn, composed of fourteen “pillars” of Travel and Tourism Competitiveness.

MoS DoNER inaugurates ‘Destination North East’ festival in Varanasi

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Destination North East Festival)

What’s the NEWS

- The 4-day North East festival will offer an opportunity for the fusion of the two rich cultures of Ganga and Brahmaputra, represented by Varanasi and North East respectively.
- This will bring India’s cultural diversities together and help people across India to understand what Northeast is all about.

Know! more about the fest

- The festival is being organised by the Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER)
- It is a 4-day event from 23rd to 26th November 2019 at IIT BHU grounds, Varanasi. The previous editions of ‘Destination North East’ were held in Delhi and Chandigarh.
- “Destination North East” 2019 is providing live experience to the audience. All the eight North Eastern States are participating in the event along with their respective handicrafts, handloom, organic products and cultural troupes.
- The festival will provide an opportunity to create awareness and the people will learn about the rich culture of North East here. He encouraged youth to participate in the festival and find opportunities for economic development.

Naval Exercise off the East Coast

Know! about Naval Exercise MILAN 2020

- Naval Exercise MILAN 2020 is scheduled to be held at Vishakhapatnam in March, 2020 in which 41 countries have been invited.

The list of countries has been given are as under:

1. Indonesia	8. France	15. Mozambique	22. Sudan	29. Israel	36. Qatar
2. Thailand	9. Malaysia	16. Australia	23. Somalia	30. Kenya	37. Egypt
3. Sri Lanka	10. Vietnam	17. Myanmar	24. New Zealand	31. USA	38. Tanzania
4. Comoros	11. Maldives	18. Brunei	25. Philippines	32. Japan	39. UK
5. Saudi Arabia	12. Oman	19. Mauritius	26. Cambodia	33. Singapore	40. South Korea
6. South Africa	13. Kuwait	20. Iran	27. Madagascar	34. Bangladesh	41. Russia
7. Djibouti	14. Eritrea	21. Bahrain	28. UAE	35. Seychelles	

- The Government pursues cooperation initiatives with friendly foreign countries including in Indian Ocean Region through structured interactions like Staff Talks, Empowered Steering Group etc.
- The areas of cooperation include Capacity Building, Marine Domain Awareness, Training, Hydrography, Technical Assistance, Operational Exercise etc.

Know! about other defence exercises

Roar of the Sea

- The Indian Navy Guided Missile Stealth Frigate INS Trikand and Patrol Aircraft P8-I recently participated in the inaugural edition of the bilateral maritime exercise, ‘Roar of the Sea’, between the Indian Navy and Qatari Emiri Naval Forces in Doha.

Tiger Triumph

- The maiden India-US joint tri-services Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise ‘Tiger Triumph’ concluded last week. The exercise aimed at developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations.

Exercise Shakti-2019

- India recently completed a joint military training Exercise Shakti-2019 with the French Army in Rajasthan, which included newly inducted HAL Rudra helicopters, the weaponised version of the Advanced Light Helicopter 'Dhruv' manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL).

Dustlik-2019

- The Indian Armed Forces were also in Uzbekistan for the first Indo-Uzbekistan joint military exercise Dustlik-2019, where training was focused on counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations in the urban scenario as well as sharing of expertise on skills at arms.

1st Indo-Qatari joint Naval Exercise Za'ir-Al-Bahr (Roar of the Sea) begins in Doha



- Named Za'ir-Al-Bahr (Roar of the sea), the five-day exercise is being carried out to strengthen co-operation and enhance interoperability between the two navies.
- The exercise will include a three-day 'harbour phase' and two-day 'sea phase'.

The President of India launches web-portal of National Youth Parliament Scheme

Relevance IN – Prelims (about National youth Parliament scheme)

What's the NEWS

- A special function on the occasion to commemorate 70th Anniversary of adoption of the Constitution of India, - "SamvidhanDiwas" was organized in the Central Hall of Parliament today.
- On this occasion, the President Shri Ram Nath Kovind launched the Web-Portal of "National Youth Parliament Scheme".

Know! about the Scheme

- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has been implementing Youth Parliament programme since 1966 in Schools under the Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi and NDMC, Kendriya Vidyalayas, JawaharNavodayaVidyalayas and Universities/ Colleges.
- So far, around 8,000 educational institutions and more than 4,00,000 students have been covered under the Youth Parliament programme of the Ministry.
- The web-portal of the National Youth Parliament Scheme is available at www.nyps.mpa.gov.in.
- The main objective of the portal is to increase the outreach of the youth parliament programme of the Ministry to hitherto untouched sections and corners of the country.

The salient features of the portal are:-

- All recognised educational institutions of the country are eligible to participate in this programme.
- The registration for participation will be done by the education institutions through the web-portal.

- E-training modules, videos, photographs and scripts are available on the portal for online self-learning of the participants.
- After successful registration, the educational institutions will be able to conduct youth parliament sittings in their respective institutions.
- Each student taking part in the sitting will get a Digital 'Certificate of Participation' and each Teacher-in-charge and Head of Institution will get a 'Certificate of Appreciation' through the web portal.

Amazon launches 'Project Zero' in India to block counterfeit goods

Relevance IN - Prelims (about Project Zero)

- In a bid to ensure that customers receive authentic goods when shopping on Amazon.

Know! more about Project Zero

- Amazon announced to bring "Project Zero" to India. "Project Zero" introduces additional proactive mechanisms and powerful tools to identify, block and remove counterfeits.
- Over 7,000 brands have already enrolled in Project Zero across US, Europe and Japan. A number of Indian brands participated in a pilot to help the company test the experience in India.
- "Project Zero" combines Amazon's advanced technology and innovation with the sophisticated knowledge that brands have of their own intellectual property and how best to detect counterfeits of their products.
- It does so through three powerful tools: Automated protections, self-service counterfeit removal tool and product serialization.
- Product serialisation is enabled by a unique code that brands apply within their manufacturing and packaging process, and it allows Amazon to individually scan and confirm the authenticity of every single purchase of a brand's enrolled products through Amazon's marketplace.

Aadi Mahotsav 2019

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Aadi Mahotsav + about Tribes India) + Mains GS II - Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

What's the NEWS

- Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the National Tribal Festival "Aadi Mahotsav" at Dilli Haat
- The theme of the 15 days' Mahotsav (16th to 30th November, 2019) is: "A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce".

Know! more about the fest

- The festival will feature exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, fabric, jewellery and much more through about 210 stalls. Over 1000 tribal artisans and artists from different States creating a Mini-India will participate in the festival.
- For the first time, this AADI MAHOTSAV will showcase a wide range of products from the tribal artisans from Leh (Ladaakh).

Know! about TRIFED/Tribes India

- TRIFED an organisation of Ministry of Tribal Affairs has started a new concept of organising "Aadi Mahotsav – National Tribal Festival" to provide direct market access to the tribal master-craftsmen and women in large metros and State capitals.
- The concept of organising Aadi Mahotsav in major cities has proved to be a boon for tribal artisans by eliminating the middle man and providing direct access to large markets, otherwise impossible to reach for them.



- The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India, (TRIFED), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, is engaged in marketing development of tribal products including art and craft items.
- TRIFED has been marketing tribal products through its own shops called “TRIBES India” and through the outlets of the state emporia on consignment basis. To access the contact details of TRIBES India stores, click here.
- TRIFED has developed a system of sourcing products of art and craft made by empanelled tribal suppliers.
- The suppliers comprise of individual tribal artisans, tribal SHGs, Organisations/ Agencies/NGOs working with tribals, who are empanelled as suppliers of TRIFED as per the guidelines for empanelment of suppliers.
- The products procured by TRIFED are then sold through its marketing platform of “Tribes India”.

Tobacco Board Receives 2019 Golden Leaf Award

Relevance IN – Prelims (about Golden leaf award + about tobacco board)



What's the NEWS

- Tobacco Board of India has been awarded the Golden Leaf Award in the Most Impressive Public Service Initiative category for the year 2019, for its efforts to initiate various sustainability (green) initiatives in Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco cultivation in India.

Know! more about the award

- The awards under this category are given to a company or institution that introduced a public service programme or educational campaign of creativity, effectiveness to date and best use of resources.
- Awards are granted on an annual basis to companies that have achieved outstanding performance in five categories - most impressive public service initiative, most promising new product introduction, most exciting newcomer to the industry, most outstanding service to the industry and the BMJ most committed to quality award.
- The Golden Leaf Awards were created to recognize professional excellence and dedication in the tobacco industry by Tobacco Reporter, an international magazine in the year 2006.
- Tobacco Board got this award for its best outstanding public service in sustainability to the industry for its initiatives on natural farming in tobacco cultivation for production of organic tobaccos
- In 2014, the Tobacco Board of India won a Golden Leaf Award in the Most Impressive Public Service Initiative category for its implementation of an electronic auction system, which has made the marketing of flue-cured tobacco in India more transparent and accountable.
- India is the world's fourth largest producer of FCV tobacco. About 88,000 FCV tobacco farmers and their families in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are dependent on this crop for their livelihood.

Know! about tobacco Board

- Tobacco Board is a statutory body established under Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The main functions of the Board include regulating the production and curing of Virginia tobacco in India, implementation of extension and developmental activities for improving the yields and quality of tobacco, facilitating sale of tobacco through e-auctions on the auction floors of the Board, undertaking various grower welfare measures and export promotion of tobacco and tobacco products.

MELPL – Visionary Indo – French Collaboration (Largest FDI Project of Railways)

Relevance IN – Prelims (about the FDI Project of Indian Railway) + Mains (GS III Economic development - Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth. Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc

What's the NEWS

- Indian Railways has entered into Procurement cum Maintenance Agreement with Madhepura Electric Locomotive Pvt. Ltd. (MELPL), a joint venture of Indian Railways and M/s Alstom.

Know! more about the FDI in Indian Railway

- As part of largest Foreign Direct Investment project of Indian Railways, Ministry of Railways and Alstom came together in 2015 to transform the heavy freight transportation landscape of the country.
- A landmark agreement worth 3.5 billion Euro was signed to manufacture 800 electric locomotives for freight service and its associated maintenance.
- M/s Alstom has delivered prototype locomotive in March 2018. Based on the test results, Alstom has redesigned the complete locomotive including bogies.
- This is the first time such High Horse Power locomotive is being tested on Broad Gauge network in the World by any Railways.



Benefits of Project

- Indian Railways have taken decision to have 12000 horse power twin Bo-Bo design Locomotive with 22.5 T (Tonnes) axle load upgradable to 25Tonnes with design speed of 120 kmph.
- This locomotive will be game changer for further movement of coal trains for Dedicated Freight Corridor.
- The project will allow faster and safer movement of heavier freight trains. It will haul 6000T trains at maximum speed of 100 kmph.
- With 100% electrification, the new locomotive will not only bring down operational cost for Railways, the locomotive will also reduce the congestion faced by Indian Railways. This will be used to haul heavier trains such as coal and iron ore.

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