CURRENT AFFAIRS SYNOPSIS

NOVEMBER 2019

A complete source of knowledge on regional, national and international issues

More than 50 sample UPSC prelims questions with answer keys

INDIA CELEBRATES “SAMVIDHAN DIVAS”

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (MMR) OF INDIA, DECLINES

INDIA JUSTICE REPORT 2019

NEW WATER POLICY

INDIA RANKED 78TH IN THE GLOBAL BRIBERY RISK INDEX
I would like to thank my outstanding and brilliant team members who have given their valuable support, cooperation, suggestions and expert advice from time to time in successfully completing this magazine and encourage me throughout this work.

DATE: 09/DECEMBER/2019  A. SIDHARTH
M.A., PH.D IN GEOGRAPHY
# TOPICS

## 1. National and International events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Asean Summit</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 First Containerised Cargo From Haldia (Nw-1) To Pandu (Nw-2)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Agreement on Reciprocal Logistics Support (ARLS)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 China launches Sudan’s first ever satellite</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 First ever “BIMSTEC Ports” Conclave in Vishakhapatnam</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 SPG, NSG and other security forces — How India protects its VIPs</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 BHIM UPI goes international</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Pakistan becomes first country to introduce new vaccine to combat typhoid</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 Prestigious Italian award for sand art</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11 Dhaka International Folk Festival</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 Kimberley Process</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13 World Conference on Access to Medical Products</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.14 Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15 Budapest Convention on cyber security</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.16 India-Chile double taxation avoidance treaty</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17 U.S. Minimises its Share in NATO Budget</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.18 EU declares climate emergency</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.19 The dispute between Britain and Mauritius over Chagos islands</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2. National and International Institutions/Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 BRICS Summit</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Tobacco Board of India received the 2019 Golden Leaf Award</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Child Abuse Prevention and Investigation Unit National Agrochemicals Congress</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 3. Indian Defence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Women to be inducted in Army by end-2021</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 DRDO conducted the first night trial of Agni 2 successfully

4. Indian Polity, Governance, Constitution, Security and Justice

4.1 India Celebrates “Samvidhan Divas”
4.2 Gujarat Anti-Terror Bill
4.3 India Justice Report 2019
4.4 President’s Rule In Maharashtra
4.5 Jharkhand Foundation Day
4.6 National Register of Citizens (NRC)
4.7 The trends of Central Information Commission (CIC) Annual Report 2018-19
4.8 Kuki and Zomi groups
4.9 What is the “Bodoland dispute”
4.10 Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill
4.11 State Party Status by Election Commission of India

5. Political System

5.1 250th Session of Rajya Sabha
5.2 Legislative Council
5.3 Private member’s Bill
5.4 Lokpal- LOGO
5.5 starred questions in Parliamentary proceeding


6.1 Radio channel to guide farmers on climate change
6.2 E-NAM
6.3 Zero Budget Natural Farming

7. Social Justice: Women Empowerment /Child Rights

7.1 Arundhati Swarna Yojana
7.2 Surrogacy Bill
7.3 One Stop Centre Scheme

8. Social Life: Art, Culture, Languages, Heritages And Religion

8.1 Centuries-old tradition “Khoj-e-Digar” not allowed for the first time in Srinagar
8.2 Suranga Bawadi
8.3 550 Birth Anniversary celebration of shree Guru Nanak Dev
8.4 Sabarimala case........................................................................................................................................115

9. Social Development: Health Sector/Education Reforms

9.1 National Health Profile, 2019..................................................................................................................117
9.2 National Registry of Voluntary Organ Donors.....................................................................................118
9.3 Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of India, declines............................................................................120
9.4 Pneumonia, diarrhoea still a big threat.................................................................................................121
9.5 NISHTHA launched in Jammu and Kashmir............................................................................................122
9.6 Sixth National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices and Innovations................................................123

10. Indian Economy

10.1 India’s unemployment rate rises, highest in over 3 years: CMIE................................................................124
10.2 Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)......................................................................................................125
10.3 Moody’s ratings....................................................................................................................................127
10.4 India ranked 78th in the Global Bribery Risk Index.............................................................................128
10.5 Rules notified to bring financial firms under IBC................................................................................130
10.6 Exchange Traded Funds.......................................................................................................................131
10.7 Chit Funds (Amendment) Bill, 2019......................................................................................................132

11. General Science/Technology

11.1 IIT Hyderabad developed the world’s first-ever Indian Brain Atlas......................................................133
11.2 GAGAN – GPS aided geo-augmented navigation................................................................................134
11.3 Red Atlas Action Plan Map’ atlas and CFLOWS-Chennai.....................................................................135
11.4 NavIC.....................................................................................................................................................136
11.5 Starlink network....................................................................................................................................137

12. Industrialization and Infrastructure

12.1 Steel Scrap Recycling Policy issued....................................................................................................138
12.2 Cabinet approved the “Introduction of the Industrial Relations Code”, 2019........................................139

13. Biodiversity and Climate Change

13.1 Visibly elusive’ Bengal tree frog gets recorded as new species............................................................140
13.2 Punjab Preservation of Subsoil Water Act, 2009..................................................................................142
13.3 Vietnam mouse-deer..............................................................................................................................143
13.4 India’s first elephant memorial............................................................................................................145
13.5 Pamba-Achankovil-Vaippar river link project......................................................................................146
13.6 Climate change is damaging health of children, says Lancet report.................................................147
13.7 Avian botulism.....................................................................................................................................148
13.8 Ken-Betwa river interlinking project....................................................................................................149
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>Panna tiger reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>“Sumatran rhino” is now extinct in Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td><strong>Sustainable Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>International Conference on Sustainable Water Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>Gujarat government approved CNG terminal in Bhavnagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>Plastic Parks in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td><strong>Renewable Energies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>Etalin Hydroelectric Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td><strong>Social Sector/Government Initiatives and General Issues on Environmental Ecology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>New water policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>SWACHH – NIRMAL TAT ABHIYAAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td><strong>Indian and World Geography-Physical, Social and Economic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Geochemical Baseline Atlas of India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>50 Sample UPSC Prelims Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Answer key</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the 16th ASEAN-India Summit in Bangkok, Thailand.

HIGHLIGHTS

- India is willing to increase cooperation and partnership in areas mutually beneficial to India and ASEAN and expressed readiness to improve partnership and capacity building in the areas of agriculture, research, engineering, science and ICT.
- The discussions were held to promote India-ASEAN strategic partnership along with cooperation in the field of maritime security and blue economy, trade and investment, connectivity, science and technology, and innovation.
- On the socio-cultural front, the focus was made on enhancing people-to-people connectivity, cultural exchanges, humanitarian aid, and tourism.
- The Prime Minister also talked about the mutual coordination between India's vision of the Indo-Pacific region and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Outlook for maintaining strategic balance in the region, which has been witnessing growing Chinese assertiveness.
- At the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Summit, a trade negotiation deal is yet to be finalized after considering all issues that concern Indian interests in trade in goods, services, and investments.

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.
- ASEAN also regularly engages other countries in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.
- A major partner of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, ASEAN maintains a global network of alliances and dialogue partners and is considered by many as a global powerhouse, the central union for cooperation in Asia-Pacific, and a prominent and influential organization.
- It is involved in numerous international affairs, and hosts diplomatic missions throughout the world.
ESTABLISHMENT

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam then joined on 7 January 1984, Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN.

OVERVIEW

Motto: “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.

Headquarters: Jakarta, Indonesia

Founded: 8 August 1967

Founders: Narciso Ramos, Abdul Razak Hussein, Adam Malik, S. Rajaratnam, Thanat Khoman

Members: Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Laos

AIMS AND PURPOSES

- To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;
- To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
- To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
- To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilisation of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
- To promote Southeast Asian studies; and To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES
In their relations with one another, the ASEAN Member States have adopted the following fundamental principles, as contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) of 1976:

- Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all nations;
- The right of every State to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion;
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of one another;
- Settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful manner;
- Renunciation of the threat or use of force; and
- Effective cooperation among themselves.

**ASEAN MEMBER STATES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viet Nam</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Vietnamese Flag" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Singapore Flag" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State: Nguyen Phu Trong</td>
<td>Head of State: President Halimah Yacob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Government: Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc</td>
<td>Head of Government: Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital: Ha Noi</td>
<td>Capital: Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language: Vietnamese</td>
<td>Language(s): English, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency: Dong</td>
<td>Currency: $ (Singapore Dollar)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Thai Flag" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Philippine Flag" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State: His Majesty King Maha</td>
<td>Head of State: President Rodrigo Roa Duterte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun</td>
<td>Bangkok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Government : Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State : U Win Myint</td>
<td>Nay Pyi Taw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Government : Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Kuala Lumpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State : His Majesty Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertuan Agong XV Sultan Muhammad V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Government : The Honourable Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State : President Bounnhang Vorachith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Government : Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of State : President Joko Widodo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital : Manila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language(s) : Filipino, English, Spanish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency : Peso</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Capital : Vientiane  
Language : Lao  
Currency : Kip

Cambodia

Head of State : His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni  
Head of Government : Prime Minister Hun Sen  
Capital : Phnom Penh  
Language : Khmer  
Currency : Riel

Brunei Darussalam

Head of State : His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah  
Capital : Bandar Seri Begawan  
Language(s) : Malay, English  
Currency : B$ (Brunei Dollar)

IS INDIA A PART OF ASEAN?

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.

“LOOK EAST POLICY” AND ACT EAST POLICY”

- Look East Policy of India was launched by the former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1991.
- The main focus of this policy was to shift the country’s trading focus from the west and neighbours to the booming S.E. Asian countries.
- The new NDA government in the centre upgraded this policy as the “Act East Policy” at the East Asia Summit held in Myanmar in November 2014.
The key differences between “Look East Policy” and “Act East Policy” is as follows:

The focus of the “Look East Policy” was to increase economic integration with the South East Asian countries and the area was just confined to South East Asia only. On the other hand the focus of the “Act East Policy” is economic and security integration and focused area increased to South East Asia plus East Asia.

THE OBJECTIVES OF "ACT EAST POLICY":

- Promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationship with countries in the Asia-Pacific region through continuous engagement at regional, bilateral and multilateral levels.
- To increase the interaction of the North-Eastern Indian states with other neighbouring countries.
- To find out the alternatives of the traditional business partners like; more focus on the Pacific countries in addition to the South East Asian countries.

Is India in the position to boycott Chinese products?

- To curb the increasing impact of China in the ASEAN region. Two-way trade between India and ASEAN moved up to $71.6 billion in 2016-17 from $2 billion in the early ’90s. In contrast, two-way trade between China and ASEAN stood at $452.31 billion in 2016.
- Experts say that under the “Act East Policy” the government is relying on the 3 C’s (Culture, Connectivity and Commerce) to develop better relations with ASEAN nations.
- In order to ensure the success of the policy, NDA government is putting steady efforts to develop and strengthen connectivity of Northeast Indian states with the ASEAN region.
through people-to-people contacts, trade, culture and physical infrastructure (airport, road, power, telecommunication etc.). Some of the major projects include Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project, Border Haats and Rhi-Tiddim Road Project, etc.

**INDIA-ASEAN FUTURE AHEAD:**

- India and ASEAN have very good bilateral trade of US$76.52 billion USD in 2014-15 and US$ 71.6 in 2016-17. The share of bilateral trade with ASEAN is almost 10% of India’s total trade.
- ASEAN is a very strong economic bloc which has combined population of 644 million, combined GDP of $2.7 trillion and Per Capita Income $4,200.
- If we combine India and ASEAN, they have a $5 trillion economy, third largest in the world after the China and USA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>42.88</td>
<td>29.88</td>
<td>627.85</td>
<td>286.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>105.06</td>
<td>64.15</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>29.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>3488.12</td>
<td>1982.48</td>
<td>13,427.99</td>
<td>9,402.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>25.72</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>207.38</td>
<td>125.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>5,244.86</td>
<td>2,788.34</td>
<td>8,933.59</td>
<td>5,211.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>1,107.89</td>
<td>511.19</td>
<td>1,067.25</td>
<td>540.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1,482.52</td>
<td>900.85</td>
<td>494.62</td>
<td>465.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>9,564.48</td>
<td>5,623.90</td>
<td>7,086.57</td>
<td>4,038.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>3,133.44</td>
<td>1,978.47</td>
<td>5,415.40</td>
<td>3,916.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>6,786.56</td>
<td>4,236.23</td>
<td>3,320.56</td>
<td>2,573.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30,961</td>
<td>18,126.72</td>
<td>40,617.31</td>
<td>26,588.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India’s Total</td>
<td>275,851.71</td>
<td>166,469.58</td>
<td>384,355.55</td>
<td>257,527.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% share</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>10.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In order to harness the benefits of the “Act East Policy”, India has upgraded its relations to strategic partnership with JAPAN, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Republic of Korea (ROK) and forged close ties with all countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Further, apart from ASEAN, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asia Summit (EAS), India has also been actively engaged in regional forum such as Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC).

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**
For prelims and mains: India-Asean relations and trade

**Sources:** the Hindu.

**FIRST CONTAINERISED CARGO FROM HALDIA (NW-1) TO PANDU (NW-2)**

**CONTEXT:**

The first ever containerised cargo movement on National Waterway-1 (river Ganga), NW-97 (Sunderbans), Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route and NW-2 (river Brahmaputra).

**AIM:**

The latest, inland water transport (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.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Tracie (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 1425km 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.
ALTERNATIVE WATER ROUTE TO THE NORTH-EAST WILL BOOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

- A protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) exists between India and Bangladesh since 1972.
- The two countries signed the agreement for movement of passenger and cruise services or trade and tourism services.
- To bring about significant reduction in logistics cost and faster delivery of Bangladesh export cargo, Indian side raised the point regarding permitting ‘Third country’ EXIM Trade under Coastal Shipping Agreement and PIWTT by allowing transhipment through ports on the East Coast of India.
- The protocol is valid up to 05th June 2020 with a provision of automatic renewal after five years.
- The Northeastern States are connected with the mainland through Inland waterways of Brahmaputra (NW-2) and Barak (NW-16) with the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hoogly river system (NW-1) via Sunderbans (NW-97) through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.
- The estimated cost of the project is Rs 305.84 crore on a cost-sharing ratio of 80:20 between India and Bangladesh.
The number of Ports of call in each country for Exim trade through the Inland Water Transport (IWT).

The protocol is valid up to 05th June 2020 with a provision of automatic renewal after five years.

The Northeastern States are connected with the mainland through Inland waterways of Brahmaputra (NW-2) and Barak (NW-16) with the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hoogly river system (NW-1) via Sunderbans (NW-97) through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) 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.

Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit & Trade exists between India and Bangladesh under which inland vessels of one country can transit through the specified routes of the other country.

**THE EXISTING PROTOCOL ROUTES:**

- Kolkata-Pandu-Kolkata
- Kolkata-Karimganj - Kolkata
- Rajshahi-Dhulian-Rajshahi
- Pandu-Karimganj-Pandu

For inter-country trade, certain ports of call have been designated in each country.
These Ports of call generally act as an intermediate stops for a ship on its scheduled journey for unloading and loading of cargo or taking on supplies or fuel and maintenance and refurbishing is carried out.

**THESE ARE:**

**India**
- Haldia (West Bengal)
- Kolkata (West Bengal)
- Pandu (Assam)
- Karimganj (Assam)
- Silghat (Assam)

**Bangladesh**
- Narayanganj
- Khulna
- Mongla
- Sirajganj
- Ashuganj

**DO YOU KNOW?**
The term "inland waterway" refers to navigable rivers and canals designed to be used by inland waterway craft only, implicitly of much smaller dimensions than seagoing ships.

**HOW MANY WATERWAYS ARE IN INDIA?**

There are 111 officially notified Inland National Waterways (NWs) in India identified for the purposes of inland water transport, as per The National Waterways Act, 2016. Out of the 111 NWs, 106 were created in 2016. The NW network covers around 20,275.5 km. NW-1, 2, & 3 are already operational.

**WHY IS WATER TRANSPORT THE CHEAPEST MODE OF TRANSPORT?**

Waterways can transport the large amount materials with consumption of low fuel rather than airways and landways. As the ships and boats are very easy example of the cheapest waterways as they consumed low energy or fuel and runs with the help of water.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** India Bangladesh River Protocol Route, Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (Piwtt)

**Sources:** the Hindu.
**AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL LOGISTICS SUPPORT (ARLS)**

**CONTEXT:**

India and Russia are finalising a defence agreement that will simplify interoperability and enable military platforms to receive support and supplies across bases in both nations - Agreement on Reciprocal Logistics Support (ARLS).

**WHAT IS AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL LOGISTICS SUPPORT (ARLS)?**

It is an arrangement that will allow access to India and Russia, to each other’s military facilities for supplies and fuel, expanding the logistics support and operational turnaround of the Indian military.

**BENEFITS AND MUTUAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

- This will be beneficial for the Indian Navy, which has a large number of Russian origin ships that will get access to Russian ports for supplies and refueling. It would be crucial for joint exercises.
- The air force too will benefit by finding it easier to deploy aircraft for the same purpose.
- This access will also be for ports in the Russian part of the Arctic, allowing access to energy resources there.
- Russia, on the other hand, will be able to access Indian ports and air bases.
- Russia has also assured India access to energy resources in the vast Arctic region.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Agreement on Reciprocal Logistics Support (ARLS)

**Sources:** the Hindu.
CHINA LAUNCHES SUDAN’S FIRST EVER SATELLITE

CONTEXT:

Sudan’s first ever satellite for conducting research in military, economic and space technology has been launched by China.

LAUNCHED ON:

November 3, 2019

LAUNCHED FROM:

North China’s Shanxi Province

AIM:

“The satellite aims to develop research in space technology, acquire data as well as discover natural resources for the country’s military needs,“

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Sudan, which is battling an economic crisis, has been involved in a national space programme for decades covering activities such as remote sensing and geoinformatics.
- In a few months the satellite would be monitored from Sudan...China launched the satellite as it is a partner in this project.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Sudan’s first satellite

Sources: the Hindu.
**FIRST EVER “BIMSTEC PORTS” CONCLAVE IN VISHAKHAPATNAM**

**CONTEXT:**

The first ever “BIMSTEC Ports” Conclave at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh to be held on 7-8 November 2019

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The Ports’ First Conclave of BIMSTEC nations are expected to explore the possibility of increasing economic cooperation by furthering EXIM trade and coastal shipping.
- To discuss mechanism to encourage tourism in the region and develop industrial clusters in close proximity to a Port.
- ‘Emergent Roles of Ports in the Global Supply Chain’, aims to discuss the emergent role of ports and terminals in the backdrop of the expanding supply chains and the solutions available.

**‘Safe and Secure Ports’;**

Aims to discuss the emerging threats and the safe guards against security threats, as ports are not only of vital commercial interest, but also a nation’s strategic assets.

**Ports Services;**

Delivering Value will provide a platform for discussion on various steps undertaken for improving the ease of doing business.

**‘Green Port Operations’;**

Aims to discuss the process, the technologies and solutions available to adopt ‘Green Port Operations’

**ABOUT BIMSTEC:**

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an International Organization involving a group of countries in the South Asia and South East Asia namely, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal.
- Delegates from the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Thailand.
- These BIMSTEC Countries will be a part of conclave and will present their country perspective on BIMSTEC and regional ports.

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objective of BIMSTEC alliance was to harness trade and accelerated growth with mutual cooperation in different areas of common interest by utilising the regional resources and geographical advantage.

**BIMSTEC**

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW**

Stands for The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

Founded in 1997 through Bangkok Declaration

7 MEMBER COUNTRIES

India

Bangladesh

Myanmar

Sri Lanka

Bhutan

Nepal

Thailand

First summit held in Thailand

Sri Lanka is the current Chair

Importance of BIMSTEC

- Accounts for 22% of the world’s population
- Combined GDP of $2.7 trillion
- One-fourth of the world’s traded goods cross the Bay every year
- Six focus areas - trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: BIMSTEC
Sources: the Hindu.

***************************

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

CONTEXT:

15th governing council meeting (GCM) of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) has been organized in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 15TH GCM OF SACEP:

- The Minister discussed India’s efforts to put forward the demand for clean technology at affordable cost. He also discussed the liberal financing to the developing countries from developed countries during the forthcoming 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid, Spain.
- Issues of plastic waste management, biodiversity, and other issues related to the environment were discussed among south Asian Member countries.
- The meeting reaffirmed the commitment given at Paris on issues like emission intensity reduction, the share of renewable power in India’s power mix, and other issues such as increasing the forest cover.
- Discussion to provide clean technology at affordable cost price to spread the new technology was held.
- The ministers sought aid from the developed countries to the developing world that suffers from climatic change as promised.

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL (GC)

- The Governing Council is responsible for determining policy and programmes of SACEP and it oversees these activates by meeting regularly to review the ongoing programmes and to endorse new recommendations put forward by the Secretariat.
- It consists of one representative from each member states who will be of Ministerial rank.
- Since becoming a legal entity in 1982, SACEP held Thirteen Governing Councils Meetings and the following table indicates the important initiatives and decisions taken at these meetings.

www.iasupsc.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GC Meetings</th>
<th>Date &amp; Venue</th>
<th>Important Initiatives and Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| GC1         | 27-29 January 1983, Colombo, Sri Lanka | ▪ Adoption of Resolution calling for the Establishment of a Trust fund for SACEP  
▪ Approval of 12 projects formulated by SACEP and lay down of criteria for project selection  
▪ Designation of the year 1988 as the Year of Trees for South Asia |
| GC2         | 17-18 April 1985, Dhaka, Bangladesh | ▪ The adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the Governing Council  
▪ Approval of the Modalities of Focal Points of SACEP  
▪ Recommended that SACEP should continue to formulate the South Asian Seas Action Plan and its implementation in close collaboration with Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Centre of UNEP.  
▪ Recommended the creation of an efficient planning & monitoring unit within the SACEP Secretariat. |
| GC3         | 12-13 January 1987, New Delhi, India | ▪ Development of a new formula for sharing the expenditure to make SACEP a viable self-supporting institution.  
▪ The meeting sought for the continuing support of SACEP by UN and other International Organizations.  
▪ Recommended that member states should seriously examine the appropriateness of their Subject Area Focal Points. |
| GC4        | 25-26 April 1988, Kabul, Afghanistan | ▪ Approval of Rules and Regulations of SACEP Secretariat  
▪ The establishment of a fund for financing projects and programmes of SACEP on the basis of voluntary contribution by member states and other donors.  
▪ Approved the Terms of Reference for a Panel of Experts from within the region to review SACEP’s current projects and programmes and to formulate a Plan of Action for next five years.  
▪ UNESCO was requested to prepare an Inter-country Environmental Education Project for South Asia. |
| GC5        | 27 September 1992, Sri Lanka         | ▪ Approval of the creation of project preparation, planning and monitoring cell within the SACEP secretariat.  
▪ Approved the SACEP Plan of Action 1992-1996  
▪ Working closely with the SAARC Secretariat was stressed. |
| GC6        | 1 September 1994, Islamabad, Pakistan | ▪ Recommended implementation of UNEP/ESCAP/SACEP/ Projects on ‘Capacity building in the field of Planning & Management of the Coastal areas in the South Asian seas region, which was approved during the 1994 Intergovernmental Meeting held in India.  
▪ Recommended to support the need of the additional space and staff as proposed by the SACEP secretariat. |
Endorsed the recommendation made by the Meeting of Senior Officials on National Focal Points in assisting the Secretariat in its activities.

Recommended that efforts of SACEP should be publicized more.

Agreed that the relationship between SAARC and SACEP should be such that the scarce resources available in the region should be utilized prudently and that there should not be any duplication of efforts.

- Endorsement of a revised list of priority subject areas (SSP2) for South Asia, which are in accordance with Agenda 21.
- Adoption of Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia.
- Requested the Director General of SACEP to prepare a portfolio outlining in detail the aims and activities of SACEP and make it available to possible donor/funding agencies.
- Agreed to ensure that SAARC is informed of SACEP’s experience in the field of environment and its wish to collaborate and complement work of SAARC in that area.

| GC7 | 22nd April 1998, Malé, Maldives |
### GC8

**28-29 September 2001, Colombo, Sri Lanka**

- Recommended that the present system of Focal Points should remain, but mechanisms for intra-country co-ordination need to be stimulated and strengthened.
- Agreed that SACEP Secretariat should be strengthened in terms of staff and other requirements.
- Recommended the use of the State of Environment Reports prepared by the member countries as the basis in formulating new programme activities.
- Recommended to select few priority issues related to the whole region and develop programme activities to be implemented during a specific time period.
- Recommended SACEP Secretariat to take measures to collect, collate and disseminate all information on environment, so that SACEP should become the storehouse of knowledge in the region and
- Recommended the invitation of major donors to the SACEP programmes, as observers at SACEP GC Meetings.

### GC9

**26 August 2005, Thimphu, Bhutan**

- The Director General shall complete the detailed work programme for circulation and approval by the Chairman of the 9th Governing Council by December 2005
- The support from UNEP to the ongoing activities to be recognized and UNEP is requested to continue its support to SACEP through the SENRIC project implementation.
- The Governing Council approved
additional allocation of US Dollars
One hundred thousand only (US $ 100,000) for core programme
development from recovered 
arrears.

- The Secretariat to maintain one
  single fund for the purpose of Trust
  fund / Reserve / Program 
development and by laws for the
  fund to be framed to permit proper 
  utilization of such funds.
- The Advisory Body for SACEP 
  proposed was decided, may not be 
  necessary as it will create another 
  layer of bureaucracy.

| GC10       | 25 January 2007, Kathmandu, Nepal | • Agreed for establishment of Basel Convention Regional Centre for South Asia to be hosted at SACEP Secretariat
|            |                                  | • Endorsed the resolution for Adoption of SAICM for South Asia Region
|            |                                  | • Agreed in principle to establish a regional Biodiversity CHM in SACEP. Noted that except for one country none of the other countries had developed National CHMs and it will be beneficial to develop national CHMs in close coordination with the Regional CHM.
|            |                                  | • The GC decided that SACEP should incorporate Combating illegal trading in wildlife to the Work Programme which helps to strengthen the enforcement of CITES in the region and in controlling illegal domestic and international trading wild Fauna and Flora |

| GC11       | 22 May 2008, Jaipur, India       | • Endorsed the Statement on South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative as the ‘South Asia Initiative for Combating
Illegal Trade in Wildlife’, and unanimously adopted it as the “JAIPUR DECLARATION”.

- The Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP endorsed the Proposal on Waste Management
- The Meeting appreciated the proposed initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) in collaboration with UNCRD
- The Meeting appreciated the collaboration developed between SACEP and SAARC for development of the State of Environment Report for South Asia

| GC12       | 3 November 2011, Colombo, Sri Lanka | • The Meeting agreed on the principle of rotation to be followed to appoint the Director General of SACEP  
• Agreed upon the Declaration on Cleaner Fuel and Vehicles prepared by the SACEP Secretariat  
• The meeting adopted the Ministerial Statement on ‘South Asia’s Biodiversity beyond 2010’.  
• To Strengthen the linkage between SACEP and SAARC |

| GC13       | 5 December 2013, Islamabad, Pakistan | • Government of Pakistan to nominate a suitable candidate as DG-SACEP in accordance with the approved Criteria to assume duties by 15th April 2015.  
• To develop a Regional Clearing House Mechanism (CHM)  
• SACEP to come up with concrete proposals through which the concept |
of Sustainable Consumption and Production can comfortably be dovetailed within the policy making mechanisms of member countries

- Preparation of South Asia position paper to reflect the post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability (e.g. green economy, energy, water and sanitation etc.)

| GC14 | 26 – 28 March 2018 Colombo, Sri Lanka, | RRB ntpc/ssc cgl |

---

**SACEP**

- The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was established in 1982 by the South Asian governments.
- The programme aims to promote and support the protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the South Asian region.

**MEMBER NATIONS**

1. Afghanistan
2. Bangladesh
3. Bhutan
4. India
5. Maldives
6. Nepal
7. Pakistan
8. Sri Lanka
VISION

- The SACEP was created to fulfill a vision based on the following three assumptions:
  - Recognition of environmental degradation caused by factors like poverty, over population, over consumption and wasteful production threatening economic development and human survival,
  - Integration of environment and development as essential prerequisites to Sustainable Development, and
  - Importance of co-operative action in the South Asian region where many ecological and development problems transcend national and administrative boundaries.

MISSION

- To promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human in the context of sustainable development and on issues of economic and social development which are impinging on the environment and vice versa;
- To support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all national, regional, and international institutions, governmental and non-governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts.

AN OVERVIEW OF SOUTH ASIA IN CONTEXT TO SACEP

- South Asia is one of the most diverse regions in the world. Bordered to the north by the Himalayas and to the south by the Indian Ocean, covers a diversity of ecosystems from lush tropical forest to harsh, dry desert.
- It is also one of the most populous regions, with over 1 billion people living in India alone. Although never remounted as a single country, the movements of peoples over thousands of years have resulted in strong commonalities between cultures.
- Yet there remains a huge diversity of languages, religions and outlooks across the sub-continent.
- Most of the South Asian nations share many similar environmental problems, stemming from poverty and its consequences on natural resources. According to the World Bank, during the past decade, South Asia has been the second fastest economically growing region in the world, and their efforts at increased production have put increasing pressure on natural resources and the environment.
- Significant natural resource concerns of the region include depletion of water quality and quantity, dwindling forests and coastal resources, and soil degradation resulting from nutrient depletion and salinization.
- Many countries of the region have taken actions for the protection and management of the environment.
They are also party to many multilateral environmental agreements requiring them to work cooperatively for the mitigation of concern issues.

SACEP supports national government’s efforts for environmental protection and sustainable development.

Since its creation, SACEP has implemented a number of projects and programmes in the areas of environment education, environment legislation, biodiversity, air pollution, and the protection and management of the coastal environment.

SACEP is also secretariat for the South Asian Seas Programme.

The Malé Declaration on control and prevention of air pollution and its likely transboundary effects for South Asia is another significant efforts which encourages intergovernmental cooperation to combat the transboundary air pollution problem.

SOME OF THE SALIENT ATTRIBUTES OF SOUTH ASIA ARE AS FOLLOWS:

The region covers almost one twentieth of the earth’s surface and provides a home for about one fifth of the world population.

The degree of urbanization in 1999 ranged from 7 percent in Bhutan to 33 percent in Pakistan. Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi, Karachi and Dhaka are fast growing cities with population more than 10 million.

Over 30 percent of the population earns less than one dollar per day and the per capita GNP for 1998 ranged from US$ 210 to 130. It is US$ 210 in Nepal to 1,130 in Maldives.

Although the economies of the countries are primarily agricultural, industrialization has increased during the past decade.

South Asia is home to 14 percent of the world’s remaining mangrove forests and the Sundarbans found between Bangladesh and India is one of the largest continuous mangrove stretch in the world.

6 percent of the world’s coral reefs are in the South Asian seas. The atolls of Maldives and Lakshadweep islands of the region are biodiversity rich marine habitats.

Hindu Kush Himalayan belt is home to over 25,000 major plant species, comprising 10 percent of the world’s flora.

The region is prone to natural disasters such as cyclones, floods and landslides. From 1990-1999, the region accounted for over 60 percent of disaster-related deaths worldwide.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Important Initiatives and Decisions taken by SACEP
The Union government is expected to take away the security cover by Special Protection Group (SPG) being provided at present to Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi. They will, however, continue to get a Z+ security cover, where they will be provided commandos belonging to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

HOW ARE SECURITY LEVELS DECIDED?

- The Union Home Ministry takes this call after evaluating the inputs from all the intelligence agencies such as the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
- However, since none of the intelligence agencies is accountable to any external statutory body, barring internal oversight by ministries of Home and Foreign Affairs, the issue of security cover is open to manipulation.

GENESIS OF SPG:

- In March 1985, following the recommendations of a committee set up by the Home Ministry, a special unit was created for this purpose under the Cabinet Secretariat. This unit, initially called the Special Protection Unit, was renamed as Special Protection Group in April 1985.
- Subsequently, the Parliament passed The Special Protection Group (SPG) Act, which was notified in June 1988 “to provide for the constitution and regulation of an armed force of the Union for providing proximate security to the Prime Minister of India and for matters connected therewith”.

Sources: the Hindu.
The SPG Act defined “proximate security” as “protection provided from close quarters, during journey by road, rail, aircraft, watercraft or on foot or any other means of transport” and to “include the places of functions, engagements, residence or halt”.

Coverage: SPG protection was extended, apart from the Prime Minister, to “former Prime Ministers of India and members of their immediate families” through an amendment in the Act in the aftermath of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991.

CATEGORIES OF SECURITY:

Besides the SPG, VIPs in India are protected by other security forces as well. The levels of security cover are determined by the threat perception around the individual.

- The highest level of security cover is the Z-plus category, followed by Z, Y, and X categories.
- The higher the level of cover, the larger the number of personnel protecting the individual.
- Roughly 24-36 personnel with automatic weapons are deployed for Z-plus category protectees and 16-20 personnel guard Z-category protectees.
- The elite ‘Black Cat’ commandos of the NSG are deployed to protect VIPs for whom the threat perception is the highest.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: How India protects its VIPs?

Sources: Indian Express.

HOW IT WORKS:

BHIM app has gone international with a pilot demo of BHIM UPI QR-based payments beginning at the ongoing Singapore FinTech Festival 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- This is the first time that BHIM app has gone international.
- This QR code-based system would allow anyone with a BHIM app to scan the SGQR at NETS terminals for payments in Singapore.
The project is being jointly developed by NPCI and NETS of Singapore. It is targeted to go live by Feb 2020. This is another achievement for fintech (financial technology) cooperation between India and Singapore, after the launch of RuPay International card and SBI remittance app, last year.

**WHAT IS BHIM?**

Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is a UPI based payment interface.

- Developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- Allows real time fund transfer.
- Launched in December, 2016.

**WHAT IS UPI?**

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood.
- It also caters to the “Peer to Peer” collect request which can be scheduled and paid as per requirement and convenience.
- Each Bank provides its own UPI App for Android, Windows and iOS mobile platforms.

**BENEFITS FOR BANKS (REGARDING UPI):**

- Universal Application for transaction.
- Leveraging existing infrastructure.
- Safer, Secured and Innovative.
- Payment basis Single/ Unique Identifier.
- Enable seamless merchant transactions.

**BENEFITS FOR END CUSTOMERS (REGARDING UPI):**

- Round the clock availability.
- Single Application for accessing different bank accounts.
- Use of Virtual ID is more secure, no credential sharing.
- Single click authentication.
- Raise Complaint from Mobile App directly.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: benefits of bhim

**Sources:** the Hindu.
Pakistan becomes the first country in the world to introduce a new typhoid vaccine in an effort to combat a drug-resistant strain of the potentially fatal disease in the Sindh province.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) is a one-dose vaccine, injected intramuscularly, that is lower in cost and has higher efficacy. It is expected to provide long lasting immunity in adults, children and infants older than 9 months of age.
- The government introduced the vaccine in Sindh province in a response to an outbreak of typhoid since November 2016 which affected a large number of children.
- The typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2018, will initially be used during a two-week immunisation campaign staring from November 18 to November 30 in the urban areas of Sindh.
- Later, the government would expand it to the rest of the country on the basis of a phased national introduction strategy.
- Phased national introduction plan for TCV will ensure that the vaccine will reach the children most at risk first.
- Later on the vaccine will be administered on nine-month-old babies across the province as part of routine immunization programme.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: combat typhoid

**Sources:** the Hindu.
Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has been conferred the Italian Golden Sand Art Award, 2019 at a ceremony in Rome.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Sudarsan Pattnaik Becomes the first Indian to win the prestigious award for his contribution to sand art.
- Representing India at the International Scorrano Sand Nativity event held in Lecce from November 13 to 17, in Rome.
- Mr. Pattnaik created a 10-foot high sand sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi along with Russian artist Pavel Minilkov.
- Mr. Pattnaik has participated in more than 60 international sand art festivals and championships around the world and has won many prizes for India.
- There were eight sculptors from different countries who participated in this festival.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Indian art and culture

**Sources:** the Hindu.
More than 200 artistes from 6 countries performed in the largest folk festival in Asia.

**EDITION:**
Fifth

**HELD AT:**
Bangladesh Army Stadium, Bangladesh

**HELD FROM:**
14-16 November 2019

**DHAKA INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL:**

- The event included performances of artistes of Bhabna Nrityadal, a prominent dance troupe from Bangladesh.
- Daler Mehendi from India, Shah Alam Sarkar from Bangladesh, and Georgian folk band Chveneburebi performed on the programme.
- The three-day festival witnessed the participation of a large number of popular and renowned artistes from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Russia, and other countries.
- Among the notable ones Junoon and Hina Nasrullah from Pakistan and Sattuma from Russia performed in the three-day-long event.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: DHAKA INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

**Sources:** the Hindu.

***************************

**CONTEXT:**

**KIMBERLEY PROCESS**
The Plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) is being hosted by India.

India is the present Kimberley Process (KP) Chair. The plenary is being hosted in New Delhi in November 2019.

**WHAT IS THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS?**

- The Kimberley Process is an international certification scheme that regulates trade in rough diamonds.
- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) outlines the rules that govern the trade in rough diamonds.

**AIM OF THE PROCESS:**

It aims to prevent the flow of conflict diamonds, while helping to protect legitimate trade in rough diamonds.

**WHO IS INVOLVED?**

- The Kimberley Process (KP) is open to all countries that are willing and able to implement its requirements.
- The KP has 55 participants, representing 82 countries, including the European Union and its Member States counting as a single participant.
- KP members account for approximately 99.8% of the global production of rough diamonds.
- In addition, the World Diamond Council, representing the international diamond industry, and civil society organisations, such as Partnership-Africa Canada, participate in the KP and have played a major role since its outset.

**HOW DOES THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS WORK?**

1. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) imposes extensive requirements on its members to enable them to certify shipments of rough diamonds as ‘conflict-free’ and prevent conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate trade.
2. Under the terms of the KPCS, participating states must put in place national legislation and institutions; export, import and internal controls; and also commit to transparency and the exchange of statistical data.
3. Participants can only legally trade with other participants who have also met the minimum requirements of the scheme, and international shipments of rough diamonds must be accompanied by a KP certificate guaranteeing that they are conflict-free.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**
The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)

Sources: the Hindu.

---

The 2019 World Conference on Access to Medical Products, Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 was convened from 19th-21st November in New Delhi.

ORGANIZED BY:

the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the World Health Organization in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), and Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI).

BACKGROUND:

The 2019 Conference was the third such gathering after the 2017 and 2018 World Conference on Access to Medical Products organized in November 2017 and October 2018 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

OBJECTIVES:

1. **UHC and Innovation:**
   
   Explore new approaches in the innovation landscape in medical products for achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the SDG 2030 goals.

2. **Regulation of medical products and access:**
   
   Identify regulatory mechanisms for improved access to quality and safe medical products.

3. **Legal landscape and trade-related aspects:**
Discuss the role of intellectual property and current trade agreements to promote access to medical products.

4. To track the progress of recommendations from the 2018 World Conference:

On Access to Medical Products for achieving UHC in the context of SDGs

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: health related initiatives taken by govt. of India

Sources: the Hindu.

********************

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN GRAMEEN
AWARDS 2019

CONTEXT:

Recently, the Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019 were conferred upon top-ranked states, Union Territories (UTs), and districts in the various categories by the Ministry of Jal Shakti in New Delhi.

BACKGROUND:

- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti had commissioned Swachh Survekshan Grameen-2019 (SSG 2019) through an independent survey agency.
- It aimed to develop rankings of all districts of India on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhta) parameters.

RANKINGS:

- Top 3 States- 1) Tamil Nadu, 2) Haryana, 3) Gujarat
- Top 3 Districts- 1) Peddapalli (Telangana), 2) Faridabad (Haryana), 3) Rewari (Haryana)

DO YOU KNOW?

It marked the occasion of World Toilet Day, which is observed every year on November 19.
State with Maximum Citizen Participation—Uttar Pradesh
- Corporates Felicitated: Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA), Hindustan Unilever Limited and AMUL for their contribution under the Swachhta Hi Seva campaign-2019 towards effective plastic waste management.

KEY POINTS:

- According to SSG 2019 survey findings,
  - 97.5% of people surveyed were aware of SSG 2019,
  - 81.3% of respondents credited Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) for the substantial improvement in cleanliness level,
  - Respondents reported sufficient arrangements in their village to manage liquid waste (83%), and solid waste (84.1%).
- The rankings were done based on a comprehensive set of parameters including surveys of public places like schools, Anganwadis, Haat/Bazaars, Panchayat, and citizen’s perception of Swachhta.
- The survey agency used maps and simple handheld device/recording formats to record their observations and findings along with photographs/videos, wherever necessary.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards

Sources: pib

BUDAPEST CONVENTION ON CYBER SECURITY

CONTEXT:

A UN committee has passed a Russian-led resolution on a global cybercrime treaty, despite reservations that it could be used to justify shutting down civil society in repressive countries.

HIGHLIGHTS:
The resolution was sponsored by China, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Syria, among others, and will up an “Open Ended Working Group” to examine cybercrime.

The proposed treaty has been framed to serve as an alternative to the US-led Budapest Convention.

**WHAT IS BUDAPEST CONVENTION?**

- The Convention on Cybercrime, also known as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime or the Budapest Convention, is the first international treaty seeking to address Internet and computer crime by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and increasing cooperation among nations.
- It was drawn up by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, with the active participation of the Council of Europe’s observer states Canada, Japan, South Africa and the United States.
- It is open for ratification even to states that are not members of the Council of Europe.
- As of September 2019, 64 states have ratified the convention.

**WHAT IT DOES?**

The Budapest Convention provides for the criminalisation of conduct, ranging from illegal access, data and systems interference to computer-related fraud and child pornography, procedural law tools to make investigation of cybercrime and securing of e-evidence in relation to any crime more effective, and international police and judicial cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: cyber-crime and security

Sources: the Hindu.

---

**INDIA-CHILE DOUBLE TAXATION AVOIDANCE TREATY**

**CONTEXT:**

The Union Cabinet has approved the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and Chile.
HIGHLIGHTS:

- The tax agreement helps tax-payers in these countries avoid being taxed twice for the same income.
- This will help in elimination of double taxation as well as prevention of fiscal evasion and avoidance with respect to taxes on income.
- A DTAA applies in cases where a tax-payer resides in one country and earns income in another.
- Clear allocation of taxing rights between contracting states through these type of agreement will provide tax certainty to investors and businesses of both countries, thus attracting foreign investment.
- The agreement will implement minimum standards and other recommendations of G-20/OECD Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project

ABOUT BEPS:

- Base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) refers to tax planning strategies used by multinational enterprises that exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules to avoid paying tax.
- Developing countries’ higher reliance on corporate income tax means they suffer from BEPS disproportionately. BEPS practices cost countries USD 100-240 billion in lost revenue annually.
- Working together within OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS, over 130 countries and jurisdictions are collaborating on the implementation of 15 measures to tackle tax avoidance, improve the coherence of international tax rules and ensure a more transparent tax environment.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: DTAA

Sources: the Hindu.

U.S. MINIMISES ITS SHARE IN NATO BUDGET

CONTEXT:
The U.S. contribution to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation’s (NATO) operating budget has been cut down at the cost of an increase in Germany’s payments to the alliance. This move comes after repeated criticism of European members of the organisation by the U.S.

**KEY POINTS:**

- Under the new agreement, the U.S. will cut its contribution to 16.35% of the total NATO’s budget while Germany and other allies’ contributions will go up.
- U.S. currently pays 22.1% of the NATO budget and Germany pays 14.8%, under a formula based on each country’s gross national income.
- France has refused to accept the new arrangement and will keep its contribution the same at 10.5%.
- All allies have agreed on a new cost-sharing formula under which cost shares attributed to most European allies and Canada will go up, while the US share will come down.

**BACKGROUND:**

- Earlier at the 2014 summit, NATO allies had agreed to spend 2% of their GDP on defence. However, the US suggested that countries not only meet their commitment of 2% expenditure on defence but also increase it to 4% immediately.
- Till 2019, only eight of 29 members are able to spend 2% of their GDP on defence. Germany has also failed to meet this target.
- Poor coordination between Europe and the U.S. and Turkey’s military operation against the Kurds in northern Syria led to the deteriorating condition of NATO functioning so this is an important move to redefine the dynamics.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

*For prelims and mains: NATO and the new agreement of nato allies about the budget*

**Sources:** the Hindu.
European Union (EU) has become the first multilateral bloc to declare climate emergency. A resolution in this regard was recently passed.

IMPLICATIONS:

- The symbolic move is expected to pressurise countries to act ahead of the United Nations summit on climate change that starts on December 2 in Spain.
- The resolution will have more symbolic effect than practical impact, and is designed to pressure EU governments to adopt a commitment for all of the EU to reduce emissions to net zero.

WHO ELSE HAVE DECLARED CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

Similar climate emergency declarations have already been made in several EU member states, including Spain, France and the United Kingdom. Outside Europe only Canada, Argentina and Bangladesh have declared a climate emergency.

WHAT IS CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

- There is no single definition of what that means but many local areas say they want to be carbon-neutral by 2030.
- It varies. For example, for UK government it is to reduce carbon emissions by 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050.

WHY DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?

1. The United Nations says we could have just 11 years left to limit a climate change catastrophe.
2. It’s not just about reducing carbon emissions on a local scale, but also raising awareness about climate change.

WHAT DOES THE PARIS AGREEMENT SAY?

- With the planet to experience further warming from the heat held by the oceans, there is increasing international focus on meeting the United Nation’s Paris Agreement which was signed by 197 countries in 2016.
- The agreement has the ambitious global aim of preventing global temperatures from reaching 2°C above pre-industrial levels (the late nineteenth century) by 2100, and ideally should be no more than 1.5°C.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?
For prelims and mains: climate emergency and THE PARIS AGREEMENT

Sources: the Hindu.

THE DISPUTE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND MAURITIUS OVER CHAGOS ISLANDS

CONTEXT:

Mauritius called the UK an “illegal colonial occupier”, after it ignored a UN mandated deadline to return the Chagos Islands, a small archipelago in the Indian Ocean, to Mauritius. The sovereignty of the Chagos Archipelago is disputed between the United Kingdom, Mauritius and the Maldives.

BACKGROUND:

The United Nations had given UK six months to process the transfer, a move the UK and the US have bitterly resisted.

WHAT’S THE ISSUE?

- Britain detached the Chagos Islands from Mauritius in 1965, three years before Mauritian independence.
- From 1967 to 1973, some 1,500 Chagos islanders were gradually forced to leave their homes so that the largest island, Diego Garcia, could be leased to the US for a strategic airbase. Today, Diego Garcia hosts a major US military base.
- In 2016, after several judicial challenges, Britain extended Diego Garcia’s lease until 2036 and declared that the expelled islanders would not be allowed to go back.
- In 2017, Mauritius successfully petitioned the United Nations to seek an ICJ advisory opinion on the legality of the separation.
Mauritius claims it was forced to give up the islands – now a British overseas territory – in 1965 in exchange for independence, which it gained in 1968.

WHAT THE ICJ SAID?

The UK should end its control of the Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean as rapidly as possible. The islands are not lawfully separated from the former colony of Mauritius.

ARGUMENTS BY MAURITIUS:

Britain has illegally occupied this region and only Mauritius has sovereignty over the archipelago.

AGAINST THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION:

- The separation of the islands from Mauritius was in clear breach of UN resolution 1514, also known as the Colonial Declaration.
- Passed in 1960, it enshrined the right of self-determination for colonial peoples and specifically banned the breakup of colonies prior to independence.
- This was intended to keep borders stable, and to prevent colonial powers from simply absorbing colonial territory into their overseas territory so as to retain their sovereignty.
- Yet in spite of this resolution, a number of states (including France and the UK) kept possession of parts of their former colonies following the decolonization process.

CHAGOS ISLANDS

DISCOVERY:

Portuguese explorers were the first Europeans to discover the archipelago. Although Portuguese navigator Pedro de Mascarenhas (1470 – 23 June 1555) is credited with having discovered the islands during his voyage of 1512–13

HISTORY

- The islands of the Chagos Archipelago were uninhabited until the late 18th century, when the French established copra plantations using slave labour in 1793.
- The islands have been British territory since 1814 when they were ceded to Britain with Mauritius (which then included the Seychelles).
- For administrative convenience, and following the French practice, the islands were administered from Mauritius.
- The islands were constituted as the British Indian Ocean Territory in 1965 by an Order in Council under the Royal Prerogative.
- This comprises all the islands of the Chagos Archipelago and until June 1976 also included the islands of Aldabra, Desroches and Farquhar which were then ceded to the Seychelles, of which they are now part.
The Order in Council also provided for the appointment of a Commissioner for the Territory. In 1967 the BIOT Administration acquired the land and the commercial interests of the company operating the copra plantations on the island. In 1971, the plantation on Diego Garcia was closed when the island was needed for defence purposes. The people affected by these closures were the Mauritian and Seychellois contract workers and their families, who were then given the choice of returning to Mauritius or Seychelles. The majority chose Mauritius where they had close ties and were moved between 1968 and 1973.

**GEOGRAPHY:**

**PHYSIOGRAPHY:**
The Chagos Archipelago or Chagos Islands, later the (Oil Islands) are a group of seven atolls comprising more than 60 individual tropical islands in the Indian Ocean about 500 kilometres (310 mi) south of the Maldives archipelago.

This chain of islands is the southernmost archipelago of the Chagos-Laccadive Ridge, a long submarine mountain range in the Indian Ocean.

The land area of the islands is 56.13 km² (21.7 sq. miles), the largest island, Diego Garcia, having an area of 32.5 km².

The total area, including lagoons within atolls, is more than 15,000 km², of which 12,642 km² are accounted by the Great Chagos Bank, the largest acknowledged atoll structure of the world (the completely submerged Saya de Malha Bank is larger, but its status as an atoll is uncertain).

The shelf area is 20,607 km², and the Exclusive Economic Zone, which borders the corresponding zone of the Maldives Islands in the north, has an area of 639,611 km² (including territorial waters).

The Chagos contain the world's largest coral atoll.

DO YOU KNOW?

- The Chagos Archipelago is a hotspot of biodiversity in the Indian Ocean.
- Salomon Atoll is one of the many above water features of the Chagos Archipelago.
- The brain coral Ctenella chagius is endemic to the reefs of the Chagos.
The Chagos Archipelago has a tropical oceanic climate; hot and humid but moderated by trade winds.

RESOURCES:

- The main natural resources of the area are coconuts and fish.
- There are currently no industrial or agricultural activities on the islands. All the water, food and other essentials of daily life are ship.
- All economic activity is concentrated on the largest island of Diego Garcia, where joint UK–US military facilities are located to the island.

ECOLOGY:

The biodiversity of the Chagos archipelago and its surrounding waters is one of the main reasons it is so special. As of 2010, 76 species that call Chagos home were listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Out to the 200 nautical mile limit, include an exceptional diversity of undersea geological features (such as 6000 m deep trenches, oceanic ridges, and sea mounts).

Coral:

The reefs host at least 371 species of corals.

Fish:

The reefs are also home to at least 784 species of fish that stay near to the shores of the islands including the endemic Chagos clownfish, manta rays (Manta birostris), whale sharks, normal sharks, and tuna.

Birds:

Seabirds nesting on South Brother island in the Chagos Archipelago Seventeen species of breeding seabirds can be found nesting in huge colonies on many of the islands in the archipelago, and 10 of the islands have received formal designation as Important Bird Areas, by BirdLife International. Like sooty terns brown, lesser noddies, wedge-tailed shearwaters and red-footed boobies.

Mammals

three populations of blue whales and toothed whales (sperm, pilot, orca, pseudo-orca, risso's and other dolphins such as spinners, and the Sea Cow Island was named after the presences of the species.

Turtles

The remote islands make perfect undisturbed nursery sites for nests of green (Chelonia mydas) and hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata) turtles.
Crustaceans:

The coconut crab (Birgus latro) is the world's largest terrestrial arthropod,[55] reaching over one metre in leg span and 3.5-4 kilos in weight.

Plants:

Forty-one species of flowering plants and four ferns as well as a wide variety of mosses, liverworts, fungi and cyanobacteria

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Chagos Islands and disputes between UK and Mauritius over it.

Sources: the Hindu.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in Brazil for the 11th Brics Summit which has the theme ‘Economic Growth for an Innovative Future’.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- PM Modi’s secondly visited to Brazil and his first visit after the new administration led by the President Bolsonaro assumed office on January 1, 2019.
- Modi will hold talks with Bolsonaro on ways to deepen the India-Brazil strategic partnership
- Brazil may push India for opening its market for agricultural and meat products.
- Brazil’s decision to allow visa-free travel to Indian tourists and businesspersons may also figure prominently in the meeting at which Mr. Modi is expected to invite Mr. Bolsonaro as the chief guest at the Republic Day parade in January 2020.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

In this year’s summit, discussions will primarily revolve around “economic growth for an innovative future” and focus on “cooperation on digital economy” and “fight against transnational crime”.
SIGNIFICANCE FOR INDIA

- This year's summit is significant for India as the joint working group on counter-terrorism has decided to constitute five sub-working groups on counterterrorism in areas like terrorist financing, use of the internet for terrorist purposes, countering radicalisation, issue of foreign terrorist fighters and capacity-building.
- A Brics memorandum of understanding between trade and investment promotion agencies is expected to be signed.

BRICS

- BRICS is the acronym coined for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- Originally the first four were grouped as “BRIC”, before the induction of South Africa in 2010.
- Its member states cover an area of over 39,000,000 square kilometers, which is approximately 27% of the world's land surface.
- The BRICS members are known for their significant influence on regional affairs; all are members of G20.
- Since 2009, the BRICS nations have met annually at formal summits.
- China hosted the 9th BRICS summit in Xiamen on September 2017, while Brazil hosted the most recent 11th BRICS summit on 13-14 November 2019.

OVERVIEW

Founded: June 2006
Formation: 2009
Predecessor: BRIC
Founders: India, China, Brazil, Russia
Leaders: Jair Bolsonaro, Vladimir Putin, Narendra Modi, Xi Jinping
Type: Economic, political, regional cooperative organisation, military

BRICS SUMMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Host country</th>
<th>Host leader</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>16 June 2009</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Dmitry Medvedev</td>
<td>Yekaterinburg (Sevastianov's House)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>15 April 2010</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva</td>
<td>Brasilia (Itamaraty Palace)</td>
<td>Guests: Jacob Zuma (President of South Africa) and Riyad al-Maliki (Foreign Minister of the Palestinian National Authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>14 April 2011</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Hu Jintao</td>
<td>Sanya (Sheraton Sanya Resort)</td>
<td>First summit to include South Africa alongside the original BRIC countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>29 March 2012</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Manmohan Singh</td>
<td>New Delhi (Taj Mahal Hotel)</td>
<td>The BRICS Cable announced an optical fibre submarine communications cable system that carries telecommunications between the BRICS countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>26–27 March 2013</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Jacob Zuma</td>
<td>Durban (Durban ICC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>8–9 July 2015</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Vladimir Putin</td>
<td>Ufa (Congress Hall)</td>
<td>Joint summit with SCO-EAEU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>15–16 October 2016</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Narendra Modi</td>
<td>Benaulim (Taj Exotica)</td>
<td>Joint summit with BIMSTEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>3–5 September 2017</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Xi Jinping</td>
<td>Xiamen (Xiamen International Conference Center)</td>
<td>Joint summit with EMDCD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>25–27 July 2018</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Cyril Ramaphosa</td>
<td>Johannesburg (Sandton Convention Centre)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>13–14 November 2019</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Jair Bolsonaro</td>
<td>Brasilia (Itamaraty Palace)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>July 2020</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Vladimir Putin</td>
<td>Saint Petersburg</td>
<td>Joint summit with SCO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: important BRICS summit

**Sources:** the Hindu.

----------

**TOBACCO BOARD OF INDIA RECEIVED THE 2019 GOLDEN LEAF AWARD**

**CONTEXT:**

Tobacco Board of India was awarded the Golden Leaf Award in the Most Impressive Public Service Initiative category for the year 2019. The award recognized the Tobacco Board’s efforts to initiate various sustainability green initiatives in Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco cultivation in India.
GOLDEN LEAF AWARDS:

The Golden Leaf Awards were established to recognize professional excellence and dedication in the tobacco industry by Tobacco Reporter, an international magazine in the year 2006. The Golden Leaf Award under Most Impressive Public Service Initiative category is 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.

The Golden Leaf Award is granted every year to companies that have achieved outstanding performance in five categories, namely:

1) Most impressive public service initiative
2) most committed to quality
3) most exciting newcomer to the industry
4) most promising new product introduction
5) most outstanding service to the industry

TOBACCO BOARD’S MEASURES:

- Tobacco Board included various initiatives on natural farming in tobacco cultivation for the production of organic tobaccos.
- It also took initiatives to improve the soil health through green manuring, introduced 365 days green cover in tobacco cultivation, promoted advanced nursery technologies like Green Tech nurseries, elimination of Non-Tobacco Related Material (NTRM).
- It also took efforts to eliminate the pesticide residues in tobacco by encouraging residue-free tobacco cultivation, energy conservation initiatives that resulted in energy savings of 25%.
- The Board also developed greenery through mandatory planting of trees by tobacco farmers and tobacco trade.
- It educated and guided farmers on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).
- To improve soil health, the Tobacco Board has promoted green manuring. In the 2019-2020 crop seasons, an area of 8,200 hectares was covered under green manure crops in Andhra Pradesh after a special drive.
- The Board introduced natural farming techniques for the production of organic and residue-free tobaccos.
- Tobacco Board has also supplied 6,50,000 saplings through the forest department to the tobacco farmers for greenery development in tobacco-producing areas.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: GOLDEN LEAF AWARDS
The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has set up an Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention/Investigation Unit at its headquartering in New Delhi.

**ABOUT THE UNIT**

- The unit will function under the CBI’s Special Crime Zone.
- The unit’s territorial jurisdiction would be throughout the country.

**FUNCTIONS OF THE UNIT:**

- It will probe offences covered under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Information Technology (IT) Act, apart from other relevant laws.
- It will collect and disseminate information on online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

**BACKGROUND:**

- The incidence of online child sexual abuse and exploitation generally transcends international borders.
- Numerous references related to dissemination of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) have been received from the Interpol and other national/international organisations.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: OCSAE
The first-ever National Agrochemicals Congress was held at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi from 13th–16th November 2019. It will be conducted every three years.

THEME OF THE CONGRESS:
‘Country’s Status on Various Fronts of Agrochemicals’

HIGHLIGHTS:
- Agrochemicals imply chemicals used in agriculture, such as a pesticide or fertilizer.
- The Congress was conducted in view of the role chemical pesticides still continue to play in pest management as more and more target-specific and environment-friendly products are being introduced.
- It was conducted by the Society of Pesticide Science India, headquartered at Division of Agricultural Chemicals, IARI, New Delhi.

NEED
- The growing world population is estimated to reach 9.1 billion by the year 2050.
- This increased population density is projected to increase demand for food production by 70% in developing countries.
- The availability of additional agricultural land and resources are limited. The reduction of current yield losses caused by pests is a major challenge.
- Chemical pesticides will continue to play a role in pest management as more and more target specific and environment friendly products are being introduced. The benefits of pesticide use are high relative to their risks.
- New concepts in crops, human health, resource management, nanotechnology, smart formulations and related sciences are likely to boost agricultural productivity.
- Current status of agrochemicals on various fronts will be collated for researchers and policy makers.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Labelling of pesticide indicating the mode of action.
- To rethink on restrictive banning of pesticides in view of risk-based considerations.
- Policy regarding data protection of imported technical pesticides.
- Policy for the introduction of safe nano-formulations and empowerment of farmers through training and extension.

SOCIETY OF PESTICIDE SCIENCE INDIA

Society of Pesticide Science India (SPS India) was formed as a national Society on 25th September, 1987 with its Headquarters at the Division of Agricultural Chemicals, ICAR – Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi and formally launched and inaugurated on November 16, 1989.

OBJECTIVES OF SOCIETY OF PESTICIDE SCIENCE INDIA:

The objective of the society is to provide a forum to scientists for expressing critical views based on scientific knowledge and rational thinking on important national policies and programmes related to pesticides, allied agrochemicals and related fields and to create awareness among masses on the role of pesticides and allied agrochemicals in agriculture, public health and human welfare.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: National Agrochemicals Congress and society of pesticide science India

Sources: the Hindu.

**************

WOMEN TO BE INDUCTED IN ARMY

BY END-2021

CONTEXT:
The first batch of 100 women will start training for the Corps of Military Police (CMP) in December and will be inducted by end-2021.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Women will be inducted in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20 per cent of total Corps of Military Police and their role will range from probing crime cases to assisting the army in field operations wherever required.
- So far, women were being inducted only as officers and this is the first time they would be joining the Army as the soldiers or “personnel below officer rank”
- The Army plans to induct 1700 women Military Police over 17 years
- Inducting women in combat roles came up in 2015 after Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the government has taken a “historic” decision to induct women in the Military Police with an aim to enhance their representation in the three services.
- According to government data, the Army has 3.80 per cent of its workforce as women, the Air Force has 13.09 per cent and the Navy six per cent.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: women empowerment and role of women in Indian defence workforce

Sources: the Hindu.

DRDO CONDUCTED THE FIRST NIGHT TRIAL OF AGNI 2 SUCCESSFULLY

CONTEXT:

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the first night trial of Agni-II from Dr. Abdul Kalam Island successfully off Odisha coast.

SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTIC:
The missile had a strike range of 2000 km. It was blasted off from a mobile launcher at the Launch Complex-4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR).

**TEST TRIAL:**

- The entire trajectory/path of the trial was tracked by telemetry observation stations, a battery of sophisticated radars, electro-optic instruments, and two naval ships located near the impact point in the downrange area of Bay of Bengal.
- The test trial was carried out by the Indian Army’s specially formed Strategic Forces Command (SFC) with logistic support from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

**ABOUT AGNI-II:**

- Agni-II is a versatile surface-to-surface medium-range nuclear-capable missile
- Agni-II is an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) with two solid-fuel stages, and a Post Boost Vehicle (PBV) integrated into the missile’s Re-entry Vehicle (RV).
- The strike range of the missile is 2,000 to 3,500 km
- Agni-II has been already inducted into the armed forces
- The two-stage missile is equipped with advanced high accuracy navigation system.
- It was guided by a new method of command and control system
- Agni-II missile was developed by Advanced Systems Laboratory along with DRDO laboratories. The missile was integrated by Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad.

---

**DR. ABDUL KALAM ISLAND**

Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of Odisha, India, approximately 150 kilometres east of the state capital Bhubaneshwar. The Integrated Test Range missile testing facility is located on the island.

**OVERVIEW**

- **Location:** Bay of Bengal
- **District:** Bhadrak district
- **Area:** 390 acres (160 ha)
- **Length:** 2 km (1.2 mi)
INTEGRATED TEST RANGE

The Integrated Test Range, sometimes referred to as the Interim Test Range, is a missile testing facility composed of two complexes - Launch Complex-IV (LC-IV) located on Abdul Kalam Island and Launch Complex-III (LC-III) located at Chandipur.

SEARCH FOR A SUITABLE MISSILE TEST RANGE

The India government began searching for a suitable location to construct a dedicated military missile test range and begin development of the Agni series of missiles in the early 1980s.

The Odisha government allotted Abdul Kalam Island to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in 1993, following A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's request for land to build a missile testing facility.

Kalam referred to the island as his "Theatre of Action".

In 1995, the Government abandoned the plan to move the test range from Chandipur to Baliaop, and instead built a new test site known as Launch Complex-IV at Wheeler Island.

entry to Abdul Kalam Island is restricted for the general public, and only DRDO personnel and Defence Ministry officials are permitted to travel to the island.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: INTEGRATED TEST RANGE INDIA

Sources: the Hindu.

India celebrates “Samvidhan Divas”

CONTEXT:

Constitution Day is celebrated in India on November 26 every year.

WHAT IS SAMVIDHAN DIVAS?
On this day, the Constituent Assembly of India formally adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect on January 26, 1950. It is known as National Law Day or Samvidhan Divas. The draft of the constitution was prepared by the drafting committee under BR Ambedkar’s aegis. According to the government notification, the Constitution Day was also a tribute to Ambedkar.

AIM:

- To reorienting the citizens towards the values and principles expressed in the Constitution and encouraging all Indians to play their rightful role in strengthening the Indian Democracy.
- To create awareness of Fundamental Duties as enshrined in the Constitution.

HISTORY OF CONSTITUTION DAY:

- The day announced as the Constitution Day November 19, 2015, by the Indian Government.
- The announcement came after the foundation stone of the B. R. Ambedkar’s Statue of Equality memorial in Mumbai.
- The year 2015 celebrated the 125th birth anniversary of Ambedkar.
- According to the government notification, Constitution Day was also a tribute to Ambedkar.
- Constitution Day is celebrated at various departments of the Government of India.
- This resolution was passed by the Supreme Court Bar Association, a lawyer’s body, in 1979.

OUR CONSTITUTION AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

OUR CONSTITUTION

WHAT IS CONSTITUTION?

A constitution is a set of rules that guides how a country, state, or other political organization works. The constitution may tell what the branches of the government are, what powers they have, and how they work. It may also state the rights of citizens.
The Constitution of India

- The constitution declares India a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens justice, equality and liberty, and endeavours to promote fraternity.
- The original 1950 constitution is preserved in a helium-filled case at the Parliament House in New Delhi. The words "secular" and "socialist" were added to the preamble in 1976 during the emergency.
- The constitution replaced the Government of India Act, 1935 as the country's fundamental governing document, and the Dominion of India became the Republic of India.
- It is the longest written constitution of any country on earth.

Who Wrote the Constitution of India?

- B.R. Ambedkar was the architect of the constitution.
- The original constitution is hand-written, with each page decorated by artists from Shantiniketan including Beohar Rammanohar Sinha and Nandalal Bose.
- Its calligrapher was Prem Behari Narain Raizada.
- The constitution was published in Dehradun and photolithographed by the Survey of India. Production of the original constitution took nearly five years.

Structure of the Indian Constitution:

- The Indian constitution is the world’s longest for a sovereign nation. At its enactment, it had 395 articles in 22 parts and 8 schedules (about 145,000 words)
Now the constitution has a preamble and 448 articles, which are grouped into 25 parts With 12 schedules and five appendices, it has been amended 103 times; the latest amendment became effective on 14 January 2019.

PREAMBLE OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION:

Preamble

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a [SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC] and to secure to all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity;

and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.

THE SCHEDULES OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

The Schedules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedules</th>
<th>Subject Matter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Schedule</td>
<td>1. Names of the States and their territorial jurisdiction.  2. Names of the Union Territories and their extent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Second Schedule

Provisions relating to the emoluments, allowances, privileges and so on of:
1. The President of India
2. The Governors of States
3. The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha
4. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha
5. The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the states
6. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council in the states
7. The Judges of the Supreme Court
8. The Judges of the High Courts
9. The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India

### Third Schedule

Forms of Oaths or Affirmations for:
1. The Union ministers
2. The candidates for election to the Parliament
3. The members of Parliament
4. The judges of the Supreme Court
5. The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India
6. The state ministers
7. The candidates for election to the state legislature
8. The members of the state legislature
9. The judges of the High Courts

### Fourth Schedule

Allocation of seats in the Rajya Sabha to the states and the union territories.

### Fifth Schedule

Provisions relating to the administration and control of scheduled areas and scheduled tribes.

### Sixth Schedule

Provisions relating to the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

### Seventh Schedule

Division of powers between the Union and the States in terms of List I (Union List), List II (State List) and List III (Concurrent List). Presently, the Union List contains 100 subjects (originally 97), the state list contains 61 subjects (originally 66) and the concurrent list contains 52 subjects (originally 47).

### Eighth Schedule

Languages recognized by the Constitution. Originally, it had 14 languages but presently there are 22 languages. They are: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri (Dongri), Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Mathili (Maithili), Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. Sindhi was added by the 21st Amendment Act of 1967; Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added by the 71st Amendment Act of 1992; and Bodo, Dongri, Maithili and Santhali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

### Ninth Schedule

Acts and Regulations (originally 13 but presently 282) 19 of the state legislatures dealing with land reforms and abolition of the zamindari system and of the Parliament dealing with other matters. This schedule was added by the 1st Amendment (1951) to protect the laws included in it from judicial scrutiny on the ground of violation of fundamental rights. However, in 2007, the Supreme Court ruled
that the laws included in this schedule after April 24, 1973, are now open to judicial review.

Tenth Schedule Provisions relating to disqualification of the members of Parliament and State Legislatures on the ground of defection. This schedule was added by the 52nd Amendment Act of 1985, also known as Anti-defection Law.

Eleventh Schedule Specifies the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats. It has 29 matters. This schedule was added by the 73rd Amendment Act of 1992.

Twelfth Schedule Specifies the powers, authority and responsibilities of Municipalities. It has 18 matters. This schedule was added by the 74th Amendment Act of 1992.

APPENDICES OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION:

APPENDICES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II</td>
<td>Re-statement, referring to the constitution's present text, of exceptions and modifications applicable to the state of Jammu and Kashmir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III</td>
<td>Extracts from the Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Act, 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix IV</td>
<td>The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix V</td>
<td>The Constitution (Eighty-eighth Amendment) Act, 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARTS AND IMPORTANT ARTICLES OF OUR CONSTITUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTS</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>ARTICLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART I</td>
<td>THE UNION AND ITS TERRITORY</td>
<td>Article (1-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Name and territory of the union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Admission or establishment of new States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2A. [Repealed.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Formation of new States and alteration of areas, boundaries or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
names of existing States.
4. Laws made under article 2 and 3 to provide for the amendment of the First and the Fourth Schedules and supplemental incidental and consequential matters.

**PART II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (5-11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Rights of citizenship of certain persons who have migrated to India from Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rights of citizenship of certain migrants to Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Rights of citizenship of certain persons of Indian origin residing outside India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Persons voluntarily acquiring citizenship of a foreign State not to be citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Continuance of the rights of citizenship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Parliament to regulate the right of citizenship by law.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (12-35)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Laws of inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Right to Equality**

15. Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
17. Abolition of Untouchability
18. Abolition of titles.

**Right to Freedom**

19. Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc.
20. Protection in respect of conviction for offences.
22. Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases.

**Right against Exploitation**

23. Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.
24. Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.

**Right to Freedom of Religion**

25. Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
26. Freedom to manage religious affairs.
27. Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion.
28. Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain education institutions.

**Cultural and Educational Rights**

29. Protection of interests of minorities.
30. Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.
31. [Repealed.]

**Saving of Certain Laws**
### PART IV

**DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (36-51)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36. Definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Application of the principles contained in this Part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. State to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Certain principles of policy to be followed by the State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39A. Equal justice and free legal aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Organisation of village panchayats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Right to work, to education and to public assistance in certain cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Living wage, etc., for workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43A. Participation of workers in management of industries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Uniform civil code for the citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Provision for free and compulsory education for children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48A. Protection and improvement of environment and safeguarding of forests and wild life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Protection of monuments and places and objects of national importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Separation of judiciary from executive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Promotion of international peace and security.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART IVA

**FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (51A)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
(g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures;
(h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
(i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
(j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement.

**PART V**

**THE UNION**

**Article (52-151)**

**The Union Executives**
The President and Vice President ...Art.(52-73)
Council of Ministers ...Art.(74-75)
The Attorney-General for India...Art.(76)
Conduct of Government Business...Art.(77-78)

**Parliament**
General...Art.(79-88)
Officers of Parliament...Art.(89-98)
Conduct of Business ...Art.(99-100)
Disqualifications of members...Art.(101-104)
Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and its Members...Art.(105-106)
Legislative Procedure...Art.(107-111)
Procedure in Financial Matters...Art.(112-117)
Procedure Generally...Art.(118-122)

**Legislative Powers Of The President**
Art.(123)

**The Union Judiciary**
Art.(124-147)

**Comptroller And Auditor-General Of India**
Art.(148-151)

**PART VI**

**THE STATES**

**Article(152-237)**
152. Definition.

**Executives**
The Governor ...Art.(153-162)
Council of Ministers ...Art.(163-164)
The Advocate-General for the State ...Art.(165)
Conduct of Government Buiseness ...Art.(166-167)

**The State Legislature**
General ...Art.(168-177)
Officers of the State Legislature ...Art.(178-187)
Conduct of Business ...Art.(188-189)
Disqualifications of Members ...Art.(190-193)
Powers, Privileges, Immunities of State Legislature and thier Members ...Art.(194-195)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART VII</th>
<th>THE STATES IN PART B OF THE FIRST SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article (238)</td>
<td>[Repealed.] by the Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956, s. 29 and Sch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART VIII</th>
<th>THE UNION TERRITORIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article (239-243)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239. Administration of Union territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239A. Creation of local Legislatures or Council of Ministers or both for certain Union territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239AA. Special provisions with respect to Delhi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239AB. Provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239B. Power of administrator to promulgate Ordinances during recess of Legislature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240. Power of President to make regulation for certain Union territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>241. High Courts for Union territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>242. [Repealed.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART IX</th>
<th>PANCHAYATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article (243-243zg)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243. Definitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243A. Gram Sabha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243B. Constitution of Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243C. Composition of panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243D. Reservation of seats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243E. Duration of Panchayats etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243F. Disqualifications for membership.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243G. Powers authority and responsibilities of Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243H. Powers to impose taxes by, and funds of, the Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243I. Constitution of finance Commissions to review financial position.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243J. Audit of accounts of Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243K. Elections to the Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243L. Application to Union territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243M. Part not to apply to certain areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243N. Continuance of existing laws and Panchayats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243O. Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART IXA</th>
<th>MUNICIPALITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article (243-243zg)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243P. Definitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243Q. Constitution of Municipalities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243R. Composition of Municipalities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243S. Constitution and composition of wards Committees, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243T. Reservation of seats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART X</td>
<td>THE SCHEDULED AND TRIBAL AREAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>244.</strong> Administration of Scheduled Areas and Tribal Areas.</td>
<td>Article (244-244A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>244A.</strong> Formation of an autonomous State comprising certain tribal areas in Assam and creation of local Legislation or Council of Ministers or both therefor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XI</th>
<th>RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNION AND THE STATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>245.</strong> Extent of laws made by Parliament and by the Legislatures of States.</td>
<td>Article (245-263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>246.</strong> Subject-matter of laws made by Parliament and by the Legislatures of States.</td>
<td>Administrative Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>247.</strong> Power of Parliament to provide for the establishment of certain additional courts.</td>
<td>General ...Art.(256-261)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>248.</strong> Residuary powers of legislation.</td>
<td>Disputes relating to Waters ...Art.(262)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>249.</strong> Power of parliament to legislate with respect to a matter in the State List in the national interest.</td>
<td>Co-ordination between States ...Art.(263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>250.</strong> Power of Parliament with respect to any matter in the State List if a Proclamation of Emergency is in operation.</td>
<td>Legislative Relations: Distribution of Legislative Powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>251.</strong> Inconsistency between laws made by parliament under articles 249 and 250 and laws made by the Legislatures of States.</td>
<td>245. Extent of laws made by Parliament and by the Legislatures of States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>252.</strong> Power of Parliament to legislate for two or more States by consent and adoption of such legislation by any other State.</td>
<td>246. Subject-matter of laws made by Parliament and by the Legislatures of States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>253.</strong> Legislation for giving effect to international agreements.</td>
<td>247. Power of Parliament to provide for the establishment of certain additional courts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>254.</strong> Inconsistency between laws made by Parliament and laws made by the Legislatures of States.</td>
<td>248. Residuary powers of legislation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>255.</strong> Requirements as to recommendations and previous sanctions to be regarded as matters of procedure only.</td>
<td>249. Power of parliament to legislate with respect to a matter in the State List in the national interest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XII</th>
<th>FINANCE, PROPERTY, CONTRACTS AND SUITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>264.</strong> Finance</td>
<td>Article (264-300A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>265.</strong> Distribution of Revenues between the Union and the States</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>266.</strong> Miscellaneous Financial Provisions</td>
<td>General ...Art.(264-267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>267.</strong></td>
<td>Distribution of Revenues between the Union and the States ...Art.(268-281)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>268.</strong></td>
<td>Miscellaneous Financial Provisions ...Art.(282-291)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART XIII</td>
<td>TRADE, COMMERCE AND INTERCOURSE WITHIN THE TERRITORY OF INDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article(301-307)</td>
<td>301. Freedom of trade commerce and intercourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>302. Power of Parliament to impose restrictions on trade, commerce and intercourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>303. Restrictions on the legislative powers of the Union and of the States with regard to trade and commerce.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304. Restriction on trade, commerce and intercourse among States.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305. Saving of existing laws and laws providing for State monopolies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306. [Repealed.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307. Appointment of authority for carrying out the purposes of articles 301 to 304.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XIV</th>
<th>SERVICES UNDER THE UNION AND THE STATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article(308-323)</td>
<td>SERVICES Art. 308-314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS Art 315-323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XIV A</th>
<th>TRIBUNALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article(323A-323B)</td>
<td>323A. Administrative tribunals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>323B. Tribunals for other matters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XV</th>
<th>ELECTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article(324-329A)</td>
<td>324. Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325. No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326. Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327. Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>328. Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>329. Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>329A. [Repealed.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART XVI</th>
<th>SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO CERTAIN CLASSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article(330-342)</td>
<td>330. Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>331. Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the House of the People.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>332. Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>333. Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>334. Reservation of seats and special representation to cease after [fifty years]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

**Article (343-351)**

**Language Of The Union**
- 343. Official language of the Union.

**Regional Languages**
- 345. Official language or languages of a State.
- 346. Official language for communication between one State and another or between a State and the Union.
- 347. Special provision relating to language spoken by a section of the population of State.

**Language Of The Supreme Court, Highcourts, Etc.**
- 348. Language to be used in the supreme Court and in the High Courts and for Acts, Bills, etc.
- 349. Special procedure for enactment of certain laws relating to language.

**Special Directives**
- 350. Language to be used in representations for redress of grievances.
- 350A. Facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage.
- 350B. Special Officer for linguistic minorities.
- 351. Directive for development of the Hindi language.

### EMERGENCY PROVISIONS

**Article (352-360)**
- 352. Proclamation of Emergency.
- 353. Effect of proclamation of Emergency.
- 354. Application of provisions relating to distribution of revenues while a Proclamation of Emergency is in operation.
- 355. Duty of the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance.
- 357. Exercise of legislative powers under Proclamation issued under article 356.
- 358. Suspension of provisions of article 19 during emergencies.
- 359. Suspension of the enforcement of the rights conferred by Part III during emergencies.
- 359A. [Repealed.]
| Article(361-367) | 361. Protection of President and Governors and Rajpramukhs.  
361A. Protection of publication and Proceedings of parliament and State legislatures  
362. [Repealed.]  
363. Bar to interference by courts in disputes arising out of certain treaties, agreements, etc.  
363A. Recognition granted to Rulers of Indian States to cease and privy purses to be abolished.  
364. Special provisions as to major ports and aerodromes.  
365. Effect of failure to comply with, or to give effect to directions given by the Union.  
366. Definition.  
367. Interpretation. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article(368)</td>
<td>Power of Parliament to amend the Constitution and procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Article(369-392) | 369. Temporary power to Parliament to make laws with respect to certain matters in the State List as if they were matters in the Concurrent List.  
371. Special provision with respect to the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat.  
371A. Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland  
371B. Special provision with respect to the State of Assam  
371C. Special provision with respect to the State of Manipur  
371D. Special provisions with respect to the State of Andhra Pradesh.  
371E. Establishment of Central University in Andhra Pradesh  
371F. Special provisions with respect to the State of Sikkim  
371G. Special provision with respect to the State of Mizoram.  
371H. Special provision with respect to the State of Arunachal Pradesh.  
371I. Special provision with respect to the State of Goa.  
372. Continuance in force of existing laws and their adaptation.  
372A. Power of the President to adapt laws.  
373. Power of President to make order in respect of persons under preventive detention in certain cases.  
374. Provisions as to Judges of the Federal Court and proceedings pending in the Federal Court or before His Majesty in Council.  
375. Courts, authorities and officers to continue to function subject to the provisions of the Constitution.  
376. Provisions as to Judges of High Courts.  
377. Provisions as to Comptroller and Auditor-General of India.  
378. Provisions as to Public Service Commissions.  
378A. Special provision as to duration of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.  
379-391. [Repealed.]  
392. Power of the President to remove difficulties. |
**IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS AT A GLANCE**

The article 368 provides that the parliament can amend any provision of the constitution by following the given procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMENDMENTS</th>
<th>ARTICLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st amendment, 1951</td>
<td>It amended articles 15, 19, 85, 87, 174, 176, 341, 342, 372 and 376. Articles 31A, 31B and Schedule 9 were inserted. Its purpose was to remove difficulties in enforcement of Zamindari related laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th amendment, 1956</td>
<td>Main purpose was reorganization of states and introduction of Union Territories and had provisions related to centre-state relations such as high courts, legislative councils etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The category A, B and C of states were abolished. Article 1 and schedule 1 were revised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Abolition of group C states and establishment of Union Territories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. One person can be appointed as governor of more than one state at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. The president can appoint as many judges in the high court as he deems fit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th amendment, 1971</td>
<td>It amended articles 13 and 368. It provided parliament the power to amend any part of the constitution including Fundamental rights. It also changed the language of article 368. It made it compulsory for the president to give his assent to the constitutional amendment bills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th amendment, 1972</td>
<td>It amended article 31 and inserted article 31C. It provided that no property shall be compulsorily acquired except for public purpose. Article 31C provides that any law made to implement the provisions of DPSP under article 39 (b) and (c) shall not be declared void for violation of fundamental rights under articles 14, 19 and 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42nd amendment, 1976:</td>
<td>It was called as Mini constitution of India and was brought during national emergency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Preamble: It inserted words Socialist, Secular and Integrity in the preamble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Legislature: Life of Lok Sabha and state assemblies was extended from 5 to 6 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. President: Article 74 was amended as president shall act in accordance with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43rd amendment, 1977</td>
<td>It was brought after end of National emergency. Some of the provisions of 43rd amendment were repeated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44th amendment, 1978</td>
<td>It undid most of the distortions introduced into the Constitution by the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. It restored the status quo ante by reducing the life of Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies again to five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. It cancelled 39th Amendment which deprived the Supreme Court from its jurisdiction to decide disputes concerning election of the President and the Vice-President.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. A new provision was added to Article 74(1) where the President could consider advice of council of ministers and should Act in accordance with the advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Article 257A was omitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. An Emergency can be proclaimed only on the basis of written advice tendered to the President by the cabinet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Right to property was taken out from the list of Fundamental Rights and was declared a legal right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52nd amendment, 1985</td>
<td>The defection of members elected on a party ticket to other party was made illegal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61st amendment, 1989</td>
<td>It reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 by amending article 326.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73rd amendment, 1993</td>
<td>It inserted part IX containing articles 243 to 243 O. It included the provisions for Panchayati raj Institutions and inserted schedule eleven in the constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74th amendment, 1993</td>
<td>It made provisions for Urban local government. It added part IXA containing articles 243 P to 243 ZG. It also inserted schedule 12th.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
86th amendment, 2002

It made the provision for free and compulsory education between 6 to 14 years of age. The Act inserted article 21A in fundamental rights. It amended articles 45 and 51A.

91st amendment, 2004

It restricted the size of council of minister to 15% of the total size of the house.

LANDMARK CASES IN INDIA

The issues involved were whether Amendment is a “law” under the meaning of Article 13(3)(a), and whether Fundamental Rights can be amended or not.

Golaknath v. State Of Punjab (24th Amendment, 1971)

- The Golaknath case, was a 1967 Indian Supreme Court case, in which the Court ruled that Parliament could not curtail any of the Fundamental Rights in the Constitution.
- Parliament passed the 24th Amendment in 1971 to abrogate the Supreme Court judgement.
- It amended the Constitution to provide expressly that Parliament has the power to amend any part of the Constitution including the provisions relating to Fundamental Rights.
- This was done by amending articles 13 and 368 to exclude amendments made under article 368, from article 13’s prohibition of any law abridging or taking away any of the Fundamental Rights.


- The Kesavananda Bharati judgement or His Holiness Kesavananda Bharati Sripadagalvaru and Ors. v. State of Kerala 1973, 39th amendment act is a landmark decision of the Supreme Court of India that outlined the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution.
- The Parliament under the Indian Constitution is not supreme, in that it cannot change the basic structure of the constitution.
- It also declared that in certain circumstances, the amendment of fundamental rights would affect the basic structure and therefore, would be void.

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA: FEATURES TAKEN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES/ACT

- The Indian Constitution is unique in its contents and spirit. Although it had picked up many best features from other constitutions of the world. The constitution of India has several salient features that distinguish it from the constitutions of other countries.
- Many people criticise that the Indian Constitution is a bag of borrowings or just a paper and scissor work.
- It is true that it had borrowed some features but drafted according to the Historical perspective, Geographical diversity and Cultural and traditional characteristics of India.
### OTHER COUNTRIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries/Act</th>
<th>Borrowed Features Of The Constitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Government of India Act of 1935 | 1. Federal Scheme  
2. Office of governor  
3. Judiciary  
4. Public Service Commissions  
5. Emergency provisions  
6. Administrative details |
| Britain                        | 1. Parliamentary government  
2. Rule of Law  
3. Legislative procedure  
4. Single citizenship  
5. Cabinet system  
6. Prerogative writs  
7. Parliamentary privileges  
8. Bicameralism |
| Ireland                        | 1. Directive Principles of State Policy  
2. Method of Election of the president  
3. Members nomination to the Rajya Sabha by the President |
| Unites States of America       | 1. Impeachment of the president  
2. Functions of president and vice-president  
3. Removal of Supreme Court and High court judges  
4. Fundamental Rights  
5. Judicial review  
6. Independence of judiciary  
7. Preamble of the constitution |
| Canada                         | 1. Centrifugal form of federalism where the centre is stronger than the states.  
2. Residuary powers vest with the centre  
3. Centre appoints the Governors at the states  
4. Advisory jurisdiction of the supreme court |
| Australia                      | 1. Concept of Concurrent list  
2. Article 108 i.e. Joint sitting of the two houses  
3. Freedom of trade and commerce |
| USSR (Now Russia)              | 1. Fundamental duties  
2. The ideals of justice (social, economic and political), expressed in the Preamble. |
| France                         | 1. Concept of “Republic”  
2. Ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity(contained in the Preamble) |
| Germany                        | 1. Fundamental Rights are suspended during Emergency |
| South Africa                   | 1. Election of members of the Rajya Sabha |
WHAT WE CONCLUDE?

- As we know our constitution is the lengthiest written constitution, one factor contributing to it having been drawn from many different sources.
- The constituent assembly assessed many constitutions and drafted one taking all the provisions that best applied to India’s diversity.
- Dr B R Ambedkar rightly claimed it to be framed after “ransacking” the known constitution.

SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR CONSTITUTION

- The Constitution of India was originally written in Hindi and English, so, both Hindi and English are its 'original' languages.
- The Constitution of Yugoslavia briefly held this position from 1974 until it split up in 1990.
- Although the last article of the constitution is Article 395, the total number in March 2013 was 465.
- New articles added through amendments have been inserted in the relevant location of the original constitution.
- To not disturb the original numbering, new articles are inserted alphanumerically; Article 21A, pertaining to the right to education, was inserted by the 86th Amendment Act.
- The Constitution was in 22 Parts originally. Part VII & IX (older) was repealed in 1956, whereas newly added Part IVA, IXA, IXB & XIVA by Amendments to the Constitution in different times (lastly added IXB by the 97th Amendment).
- By 73rd & 74th Amendment, the lists of administrative subjects of Panchayat raj & Municipality included in the Constitution as Schedule 11 & 12 respectively in the year 1993.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

WHAT IS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY?

A constituent assembly is a body of representatives which is composed for drafting a constitution. Drafting the constitution is the only function of a constituent assembly. Once the constitution is ready and adopted; the assembly is dissolved.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA:

The Constituent Assembly of India was elected to write the Constitution of India, its members served as the nation’s first Parliament.
IDEA OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY:

Proposed by M. N. Roy in 1934, a pioneer of the Communist movement in India and an advocate of radical democracy, it became an official demand of the Indian National Congress in 1935. C. Rajagopalachari voiced the demand for a Constituent Assembly on 15 November 1939 based on adult franchise, and was accepted by the British in August 1940.

OVERVIEW

Founded: 9 December 1946
Disbanded: 24 January 1950
President: Dr. Rajendra Prasad, INC
Vice Presidents: Harendra Coomar Mookerjee, V. T. Krishnamachari
Chairman of the drafting committee: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, SCF

ELECTIONS OF MEMBERS OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY:

Indirectly elected by the members of the provincial assemblies by method of single transferable vote system of proportional representations

STRUCTURE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political groups</th>
<th>INC</th>
<th>others</th>
<th>AIML</th>
<th>Princely states</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Seats</td>
<td>389 (Dec. 1946-June 1947)</td>
<td>299 (after partition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229 province</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Basis of divisions of seats was “population” roughly in 1:10 Lakh ratio.
*There were total nine women members also.
DIFFERENT COMMITTEES AND THEIR HEAD OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

DIFFERENT COMMITTEES OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMITTEES</th>
<th>HEAD OF THE COMMITTEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drafting committee</td>
<td>Dr. B R Ambedkar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The six other members were as follow:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. N Gopalaswamy Ayyangar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dr K M Munshi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Syed Mohammad Saadullah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. N Madhava Rau,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. T T Krishnamachari</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Constitution Committee, Union Powers Committee and States Committee</td>
<td>Jawaharlal Nehru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on the Rules of Procedure Committee; Steering Committee, Finance</td>
<td>Rajendra Prasad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Staff Committee and Ad hoc Committee on the National Flag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Constitution Committee and Advisory Committee on Fundamental</td>
<td>Sardar Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights, Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on the Functions of the Constituent Assembly</td>
<td>G.V. Mavalankar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order of Business Committee</td>
<td>Dr. K.M. Munshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Committee</td>
<td>B. Pattabhi S Sitaramayya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Committee to Examine the Draft Constitution, Credentials Committee</td>
<td>Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FORMATION OF "THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA" AT A GLANCE:

TIME LINE OF FORMATION OF "THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 December 1946</td>
<td>Formation of the Constitution Assembly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 December 1946</td>
<td>The first meeting was held in the constitution hall (now the Central Hall of Parliament House).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 December 1946</td>
<td>President Appointed - Rajendra Prasad, vice-Chairman Harendra Coomar Mookerjee and constitutional legal adviser B. N. Rau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 December 1946</td>
<td>*Temporary president Appointed - Sachchidananda Sinha. (Demanding a separate state, the Muslim League boycotted the meeting.) An 'Objective Resolution' was presented by Jawaharlal Nehru, laying down the underlying principles of the constitution. *later became the Preamble of the constitution. *Objective resolution unanimously adopted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 July 1947</td>
<td>National flag adopted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 August 1947</td>
<td>Achieved independence. India Split into Dominion of India and Dominion of Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 August 1947</td>
<td>Drafting Committee appointed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 July 1948</td>
<td>Along with Harendra Coomar Mookerjee V. T. Krishnamachari was also elected as second vice-president of Constituent Assembly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 November 1949</td>
<td>'Constitution of India' passed and adopted by the assembly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 January 1950</td>
<td>Last meeting of Constituent Assembly. 'Constitution of India' all signed and accepted. (with 395 Articles, 8 Schedules, 22 Parts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 January 1950</td>
<td>'Constitution of India' came in to force.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*It Took 2 Years, 11 Months, 18 Days (eleven sessions over a 165-day period) at a total expenditure of ₹6.4 million to finish.

*Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar was the first speaker when meeting the assembly of Lok Sabha, after turning republic.

**THE LAST SESSION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY:**
The assembly's final session convened on 24 January 1950. Each member signed two copies of the constitution, one in Hindi and the other in English.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**
GUJARAT ANTI-TERROR BILL

CONTEXT:
The President of India gave assent to the Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organized Crime (GCTOC) Bill, an anti-terror legislation passed by Gujarat in 2015.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BILL:

- It defines a ‘terrorist act’, as an act committed with the intention to disturb law and order or threaten the unity, integrity, and security of the state.
- The investigating agencies can intercept telephonic conversations and submit them as legitimate evidence in court.
- The confessions made before a police officer will also be considered as evidence. However, the confessions made to an officer of the rank of Superintendent of Police (SP) or above would only be admissible in court.
- It provides 180 days’ time for authorities to file a charge sheet instead of the usual 90 days and also proposes stricter conditions for bail.
- It also provides for the creation of a special court as well as the appointment of special public prosecutors.

ADVANTAGES OF THE BILL:

- Gujarat shares a border with Pakistan, and hence, such legislation is required for better safety and security, especially in a coastal and border state.
- It will give sufficient power to police officials and enhance the security of the state.
- It will also help control cybercrime and narco-terrorism fuelled by terrorist outfits from across the border.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: anti-terror Bill
India Justice Report 2019 has been released. This is the first-ever ranking of Indian states on justice delivery.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT:

- Maharashtra has topped the list of 18 large-medium States in the overall first-ever ranking of Indian States on justice delivery.
- Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are at the bottom.
- While among the list of seven smaller States, Goa leads the group.
- Report brings to light key issues across four pillars: police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.
- It highlights the fact that even the best performing States scored less than 60% in their performance on capacity across the police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.
WHO PREPARES THE REPORT?

It has been prepared by Tata Trusts in collaboration with Centre for social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Daksh, TISS-Prayas and Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.

HOWS THE REPORT PREPARES:

The report has been prepared based on publicly available data of different government entities on the four pillars of justice delivery — police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: India Justice Report 2019

Sources: the Hindu.

***************************

CONTEXT:

President Ram Nath Kovind has approved a proclamation imposing President’s Rule in Maharashtra under Article 356(1) of the Constitution, following a recommendation from Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The state of Maharashtra has been placed under the President’s Rule amid a stalemate over government formation after the assembly polls in October 2019.
- The Union Cabinet recommended the President’s rule in the state after Governor of the state submitted a report regarding the same.
In his report, the Governor said a situation has arisen that a stable government is not possible and the government could not be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

The President signed a proclamation imposing President’s rule in Maharashtra under Article 356(1). The Assembly has been kept in suspended animation.

**PRESIDENT’S RULE:**

- President’s Rule implies the suspension of a state government and the imposition of direct rule of the Centre.
- It is also known as ‘State Emergency’ or ‘Constitutional Emergency’.

**CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS: ARTICLE 356**

- The President’s Rule is imposed through the invocation of Article 356 of the Constitution by the President on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers.
- Under Article 356, President’s Rule is imposed if the President, upon receipt of the report from the Governor of the State or otherwise, is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

**PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL AND DURATION:**

- A proclamation imposing President’s Rule must be approved by both the Houses of Parliament within two months from the date of its issue.
- The approval takes place through simple majority in either House, that is, a majority of the members of the House present and voting.
- Initially valid for six months, the President’s Rule can be extended for a maximum period of three years with the approval of the Parliament, every six months.

**CONSEQUENCES OF PRESIDENT’S RULE:**

- The state governor, on behalf of the President, carries on the state administration with the help of the chief secretary of the state or the advisors appointed by the President.
- The President can declare that the powers of the state legislature are to be exercised by the Parliament.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** Constitutional Provisions, Article 356, President’s Rule
On November 15, the State of Jharkhand celebrated its foundation day. The state was carved out of Bihar in 2000 after the Parliament passed the Bihar Reorganization Act, 2000.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

The day coincided with the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda also known as Bhagwan Birsa.

ABOUT BIRSA MUNDA:

- Born in 1875 in the Munda tribe.
- He is often referred to as ‘Dharti Abba’ or the Earth Father.
- He led the rebellion that came to be known as Ulgulan (revolt) or the Munda rebellion against the British government-imposed feudal state system.
- He awakened the masses and sowed the seeds of revolt in them against the landlord as well as the Britishers.
- He organized masses to stop paying debts/interest to moneylenders and taxes to the British.
- By this, he led a revolt to bring an end to Victorian rule and the establishment of Munda Rule in Jharkhand (erstwhile Bengal Presidency region).
- He formed two military units- one for military training and armed struggle, the other for propaganda.
- He combined religion with politics and traveled across villages giving discourses and building a politico-military organization.
- His struggle against the exploitation and discrimination against tribals led to the passing of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908 which restricted the passing of land from the tribal people to non-tribals.
MUNDA TRIBE IN INDIA

PLACES THEY INHABIT:

Munda tribe mainly inhabit in the region of Jharkhand, Although they are well spread in the states of West Bengal, Chhatisgarh, Orissa and Bihar. Munda generally means headman of the village.

LANGUAGE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Mundas speak Mundari language, which belongs to the family of Austro-Asiatic.
- The complexion of Mundas is blackish. They have short curly hair. With the passage of time some of the Mundas resembles same features as that of the Bengali’s.

OVERVIEW

- Population: 3,637,000
- Main Language: Mundari
- Largest Religion: Hinduism (61.95%)
- Christian: 20.43% *

Progress:
- Common surnames: Topno, Barla, Aind, Hemrom, Guria, Herenge, Surin, Horo, Sanga and Samad.

MUNDA-TRIBE HISTORY:

- Mundas are the tribal communities from the south East Asia.
- There are some evidences of the Mundas kingdom in the Pre British times. For example the Ho/Munda kingdom of Chota Nagpur, and the Bhumij states, especially Barabhum.

RELIGION:

- Christianity is the main religion followed among the Mundas. Apart from that Mundas have their own religion known as Sarna.
- Sarna stress on the belief of one God. Mundas believe in the supreme being known as the Singbonga, which means the Sun God.
- According to the Mundas, he saves them from the external enemies and troubles of life. They say Singbonga punishes them if they break the law of marrying in their ones tribe.
Mundas are of the belief that Singbonga is not the jealous God and gives his people the right to worship any celestial being.

In Sarna the Mundas worship the nature.

The Mundas are highly superstitious people. The Sarna people do not have any written code of moral laws.

The idea of what is right and wrong is the adopted from their traditions and cultures. Some of the Mundas also worship Lord Shiva.

**DISTRIBUTION OF THE MUNDAS:**

![Distribution Map of the Mundas](image)

**15 LARGEST STATES INHABITED BY MUNDA TRIBE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>1,422,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>363,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>1,227,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andaman and Nicobar</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>552,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>5,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUBGROUPS OF MUNDA TRIBE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup Name</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haro Kili</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munda Kili</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nag Kili</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soi Kili</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagbansi</td>
<td>29,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagpuria Munda</td>
<td>27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolhani Munda</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lohara Munda</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamadia Munda</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santali Munda</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OCCUPATION OF THE MUNDAS:

- Mundas have remained haunters for centuries. But now they have been converted into the settled agriculturist.
- Most of the then do not have land of their own. They are largely dependent on the labour work in the fields to earn their livelihood.

FOOD AND CLOTHING OF MUNDAS:

- Mundas have been the animal eaters for the long time.
- They usually eat frogs, snakes, rats, earthworms, shells and snails.
- They prefer having Tari and Haria wine on the various occasions.
- As the Mundas are in close touch with the Hindu society. Munda men usually wear pant and shirts.
- While the Munda Women are seen wearing the cotton saris with the cholis or blouse.

FESTIVALS:

Mage, Phagu, Karam, Sarhul, and Sohrai are the few festivals celebrated among the Munda tribes.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?
Union home minister Amit Shah has said that India shall soon introduce a nationwide National Register of Citizens (NRC).

**HOW IT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT?**

Details of how such an exercise will be carried out are not yet known. In the case of Assam, there was a cut-off date — March 25, 1971 — after which all foreigners as per the Assam Accord were to be “detected, deleted and expelled in accordance with law”.

Presumably, the Centre will come out with a cut-off for the nationwide NRC, but it will be an arbitrary one.

**WHY THIS IS WORRISOME?**

Assam's example: This is an exercise fraught with risks, as the example of Assam shows. The process in the state has been mired in inaccuracies, with low but worrying odds of legal citizens being declared illegal residents in their own country.

**WHAT IS NRC?**

The NRC is the list of Indian citizens and was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951. The process of NRC update was taken up in Assam as per a Supreme Court order in 2013.

**WHAT'S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: NRC
CONTEXT:

Annual report of the Central Information Commission (CIC) was tabled in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 20th and 21st November 2019 respectively.

THE TRENDS OF ANNUAL REPORT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- During the reporting year 2018-19, 13.70 lakh RTI applications were received by the registered Central Public Authorities (PAs). This is higher by 1,36,922 or 11% than what was reported during 2017-18.
- The Central PAs rejected 4.70% (64,344) of the RTI applications processed during 2018-19 showing a downward trend in rejections which have come down by 0.43% from the 5.13% reported in 2017-18.
- Highest percentage of RTI applications rejected was reported by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (26.54%) and Ministry of Home Affairs (16.41%).
- During the reporting year 2018-19, 9.29% (1,51,481) First Appeals (with respect to RTI Application) were received by the Central PAs in comparison to 9.72% (1,40,810) of the previous year.
- The CIC disposed of 17,188 Second Appeals and Complaints cases in 2018-19.
- A total of 22,736 cases were registered during the same period. At the end of the year the Commission had 29,655 cases pending before it.
- All 2,145, Public Authorities registered with the Commission have submitted Annual Returns which is 100% submission.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: HIGHLIGHTS of the report
The Government of India is looking at concluding peace talks with the 23 Kuki and Zomi groups in Manipur.

**BACKGROUND:**

- Manipur was a princely state before merging with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949. It has been inhabited by ethnic communities including Nagas, Kukis and Meiteis.
- Merger of Manipur and the delay in the conferring of full fledged statehood (granted in 1972) to it was greatly resented by the people of Manipur.
- Separate aspirations and perceived insecurity regarding overlapping claims over natural resources led various ethnic communities move apart.

**FORMATION OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS OR ARMY**

- Following ethnic clashes between the Nagas and Kukis in the early 1990s, a number of Kuki outfits were formed as a means to counter Naga hegemony and assertion. Consequently, Kuki National Front (KNF) was formed in 1998.
- The areas in Manipur which National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Issac Muivah – NSCN – IM (formed in 1988) is demanding be merged with Nagaland as part of greater Nagalim included large areas of Kuki inhabitancy.
- Meanwhile, Zomi Reunification Army (ZRA) was formed in 1997 whose objective is to protect the interests of the Paite community from the ‘onslaught of any community or group’.
- However in 2008, 20 militant groups related to Kukis and Zomis under two umbrella organizations, Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People’s Front (UPF) signed Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Government of India and Government of Manipur.
- The agreement aims to discuss demands put forward by the extremist groups and brings peace in Manipur.

**ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN MANIPUR:**
The people of Manipur are grouped into three main ethnic communities – Meiteis those inhabiting the valley and 29 major tribes in the hills dividing into two main ethno-denominations, namely Nagas and Kuki-Chins.

- The Naga group consists of Zeliangrong, Tangkhul, Mao, Maram, Maring and Tarao.
- The term Chin is used for the people in the neighboring Chin state of Myanmar whereas Chins are called Kukis in the Indian side. Other groups like Paite, Zou, Gangte, and Vaiphei identify themselves as Zomi and have distanced themselves from the name, Kuki.
- It should be noted that all the different ethnic groups are of the same Mongoloid group, and have very close similarities in their culture and traditional habits.
- However, Meiteis differ culturally from the surrounding hill tribes by following Hindu customs.
- The legend of all tribes including Meiteis claim that they originated somewhere in the north from a cave.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** Ethnic Communities and Formation of Different Ethnic Groups

**Sources:** the Hindu.

***************************

**WHAT IS THE “BODOLAND DISPUTE”?**

**CONTEXT:**

The Home Ministry has declared the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) along with all its groups, factions, and front organizations as an “unlawful association” under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The ban has been extended by five more years for its involvement in a series of violent activities including killings and extortion, and for joining hands with anti-India forces.

**WHO ARE THE NDFB?**

- Alongside political movements, armed groups have also sought to create a separate Bodo state.
- In October 1986, the prominent group Bodo Security Force (BdSF) was formed by Ranjan Daimary.
The BdSF subsequently renamed itself as the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), an organisation that is known to be involved in attacks, killings, and extortions.

WHO ARE BODOS?

- Bodos are the single largest tribal community in Assam, making up over 5-6 per cent of the state’s population.
- They have controlled large parts of Assam in the past.
- The four districts in Assam — Kokrajhar, Baksa, Udalguri and Chirang — that constitute the Bodo Territorial Area District (BTAD), are home to several ethnic groups.

![Map of Bodoland territories](image)

Figure 6 Bodoland territorial districts

THE BODOLAND DISPUTE:

- In 1966-67, the demand for a separate state called Bodoland was raised under the banner of the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA), a political outfit.
- In 1987, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) renewed the demand. “Divide Assam fifty-fifty”, was a call given by the ABSU’s then leader, Upendra Nath Brahma.
- The unrest was a fallout of the Assam Movement (1979-85), whose culmination — the Assam Accord — addressed the demands of protection and safeguards for the “Assamese people”, leading the Bodos to launch a movement to protect their own identity.

WHY THE DEMAND FOR SEPARATE BODOLAND?

- For centuries, they survived sanskritisation without giving up their original ethnic identity.
- However in the 20th century, they had to tackle a series of issues such as illegal immigration, encroachment of their lands, forced assimilation, loss of language and culture.
- The 20th century also witnessed the emergence of Bodos as a leading tribe in Assam which pioneered the movements for safeguarding the rights of the tribal communities in the area.
From then on, they have been consistently deprived of the political and socio-economic rights by successive state and central governments.

The Bodos have not only become an ethnic minority in their own ancestral land but have also been struggling for their existence and status as an ethnic community.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: bodo tribe and the demand for a separate state by them

**Sources:** the Hindu.

**DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU (MERGER OF UNION TERRITORIES) BILL**

**CONTEXT:**

Recently, a Bill to merge the Union Territories (UTs) of Daman and Diu (D&D) and Dadra and Nagar Haveli (DNH) has been introduced in the Lok Sabha. It seeks to provide better delivery of services to the citizens of both Union Territories by improving efficiency and reducing paperwork.

**KEY POINTS:**

- Both UTs have two separate constitutional and administrative bodies which lead to a lot of duplicacy, inefficiency and wasteful expenditure.
- The merger will help in achieving the government’s goal to have Minimum Government, Maximum Governance.
- Both of them have small population and limited geographical area so the merger will not be challenging and the services of officers will be used efficiently.
MINIMUM GOVERNMENT, MAXIMUM GOVERNANCE

- It is the motto of the central government to achieve a citizen-friendly and accountable administration.
- It aims to bring Government closer to citizens so that they become active participants in the governance process and reduce their time and efforts.
- An important step for Good Governance is the simplification of procedures and processes in the Government so as to make the entire system transparent and faster.
- Identification and repeal of obsolete laws and rules, identification and shortening of various official forms, leveraging technology to bring in transparency in public interface and a robust public grievance redress system are other aspects of it.

PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION:

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu is to be administered as a union territory of India by virtue of Article 240 (2) of the Constitution of India. The President of India appoints an administrator to administer the territory on behalf of the central Government of India. The central government may appoint advisors to assist the administrators with their duties.

The proposed union territory will be made up of three districts:

1. Dadra and Nagar Haveli District
2. Daman District
3. Diu District

SOME FACTS ABOUT DAMAN AND DIU, DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI:

- These two UTs are located in the western region of India.
- Daman and Diu are two widely separated districts situated on the southern side of Gujarat. Daman is an enclave on Gujarat’s southern coast and Diu encompasses an island off the southern coast of Gujarat’s Kathiawar Peninsula. It is in close proximity of the UT of DNH.
- Dadra and Nagar Haveli consists of two separate parts. Dadra is surrounded by the state of Gujarat and Nagar Haveli lies on the borders of Maharashtra and Gujarat.
- Both were colonised by the Portuguese and were liberated in December 1961.
- In 1987, when Goa got statehood, Daman and Diu were made a separate Union Territory from the previous Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu.

INDIAN UNION TERRITORIES WITH THEIR CAPITALS AND GOVERNING BODIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.NO</th>
<th>Union territory (in alphabetical)</th>
<th>Capital City</th>
<th>Minister/Governor – Political party</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Lt. Governors &amp; Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

www.iasupsc.com 96 volume: 5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Union Territory</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>(if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andaman and Nicobar Islands</td>
<td>Port Blair</td>
<td>Bhishnu Pada Ray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BJP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Devendra Kumar Joshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>Mayor – Asha Kumari Jaswal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V. P. Singh Badnore (Ex-officio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dadra and Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>Silvassa</td>
<td>Natu Bhai G Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Praful Khoda Patel (Administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Daman and Diu</td>
<td>Daman</td>
<td>Lalu Bhai Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Praful Khoda Patel (Administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lakshadweep</td>
<td>Kavaratti</td>
<td>Mo. Fazal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(NCP) Dineshwar Sharma (Administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Delhi – National Capital Territory</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Arvind Kejriwal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(AAP) Anil Baijal (Lieutenant Governor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Puducherry (Pondicherry)</td>
<td>Pondicherry</td>
<td>V. Narayanasamy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(INC) Kiran Bedi (Lieutenant Governor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ladakh</td>
<td>Leh and Kargil</td>
<td>Jamyang Tsering Namgyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(BJP) Radha Krishna Mathur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>Srinagar (May–</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>October) Jammu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Nov-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Merger of Union Territories Bill

Sources: the Hindu.

-------------------------------------

STATE PARTY STATUS BY ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

CONTEXT:

Recently, the Jannayak Janta Party of Haryana has been granted the status of a recognised State party and has been allotted the symbol of “key” by Election Commission of India.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Political parties are registered by the election commission for the purpose of elections and granted recognition as national or state parties on the basis of their poll performance.
- The other parties are simply declared as registered-unrecognised parties.
- The recognition determines their right to certain privileges like allocation of the party symbols, provision of time for political broadcasts on television and radio stations and access to electoral rolls.
- Every national party and every state party is allotted a symbol exclusively reserved for its use throughout the country and the states respectively. In other words, the Commission specifies certain symbols as ‘reserved symbols’ which are meant for the candidates set up by the recognised parties.

CONDITIONS FOR RECOGNITION AS A STATE PARTY:

A party is recognised as a state party in a state if any of the following conditions is fulfilled:
If it secures 6% of the valid votes polled in the state at a general election to the legislative assembly of the state concerned and in addition, it wins 2 seats in the assembly of the state concerned or
If it secures 6% of the valid votes polled in the state at a general election to the Lok Sabha from the state concerned and in addition, it wins 1 seat in the Lok Sabha from the state concerned or
If it wins 3% of seats in the legislative assembly at a general election to the legislative assembly of the state concerned or 3 seats in the assembly, whichever is more or
If it wins 1 seat in the Lok Sabha for every 25 seats or any fraction thereof allotted to the state at a general election to the Lok Sabha from the state concerned or
If it secures 8% of the total valid votes polled in the state at a General Election to the Lok Sabha from the state or to the legislative assembly of the state. This condition was added in 2011.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: State Party Status

**Sources:** the Hindu.

***************

**250TH SESSION OF RAJYA SABHA**

**CONTEXT:**

The Rajya Sabha secretariat has released the first-ever analysis of its legislative work, “Rajya Sabha: The Journey since 1952” on the occasion of the 250th session of Rajya Sabha.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The Rajya Sabha has passed 3,817 Bills till the end of its 249th session (Monsoon Session, 2019).
- The recent monsoon session of Rajya Sabha (2019) has been reported as the most productive session (103%).
- Productivity signifies the number of hours the House actually functioned compared to the number of hours officially earmarked for it to work.
- The representation of women in Rajya Sabha increased from 15 (6.94%) in 1952 to 31 (12.76%) in 2014 but decreased to 26 (10.83%) in 2019.
SOME UNIQUE EVENTS RELATED TO RAJYA SABHA:

1. **Casting vote by Chairman:**

   The first and the only time when a Presiding Officer of Rajya Sabha cast his vote was for the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 1991. The Chairman cannot vote in the first instance; he can only exercise a casting vote in the case of a tie.

2. **President Rule approved only by Rajya Sabha:**

   It has happened only twice for extension of President Rule in Tamil Nadu (1977) and in Haryana (1991) when Lok Sabha was dissolved.

3. **Bills passed at the joint sittings of both the Houses of Parliament:**

   The joint sitting has passed only three bills, namely:

Joint sitting is extraordinary machinery provided by the Constitution to resolve a deadlock between the two Houses over the passage of a bill.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Session of Rajya Sabha, How does a bill get passed in parliament?

Sources: the Hindu.

***************************

CONTEXT:

There is a resolution by Odisha Legislative Assembly for the formation of a second chamber — the State Legislative Council. However, the resolution is pending with the Central Government.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

Base For Formation:

India has a bicameral system of legislature. Just as Parliament has two Houses, the states can also have a Legislative Council in addition to the Legislative Assembly through Article 169 of the Constitution.

Six States having a Legislative Council:

Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka.

Abolished LC of the Jammu & Kashmir:

Legislative Council has been abolished through the J&K Reorganisation Bill, 2019, which reduced the State of J&K to the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.

ABOLITION OR CREATION – ARTICLE 169

- The Parliament can abolish a legislative council (where it already exists) or create it (where it does not exist) by a simple majority, that is, a majority of the members of each House present and voting, if the legislative assembly of the concerned state, by a special majority, passes a resolution to that effect.
- Special majority implies
  - A majority of the total membership of the assembly and
  - A majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of the assembly present and voting.

COMPOSITION

Under Article 171 of the Constitution, the Legislative Council of a state shall not have more than one-third of the total strength of the State Assembly, and not less than 40 members.

Like the Rajya Sabha, the legislative council is a continuing chamber, that is, it is a permanent body and is not subject to dissolution. The tenure of a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) is six years, with one-third of the members retiring every two years.

MANNER OF ELECTION

- One-third of the MLCs are elected by the state’s MLAs,
- Another 1/3rd by a special electorate comprising sitting members of local governments such as municipalities and district boards,
- 1/12th by an electorate of teachers and another 1/12th by registered graduates.
- The remaining members are appointed by the Governor for distinguished services in various fields namely, literature, science, art, cooperative movement and social service.

LC VIS-À-VIS RAJYA SABHA
The legislative power of the Councils are limited. Unlike Rajya Sabha which has substantial powers to shape non-financial legislation, Legislative Councils lack a constitutional mandate to do so.

- Assemblies can override suggestions/amendments made to legislation by the Council.
- Again, unlike Rajya Sabha MPs, MLCs cannot vote in elections for the President and Vice President. The Vice President is the Rajya Sabha Chairperson while a member from the Council itself is chosen as the Council Chairperson.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR

- A Legislative Council can help check hasty actions by the directly elected House.
- The Legislative Council also enables non-elected individuals to contribute to the legislative process.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST

- Legislative Council can delay legislation.
- It can also be used to park leaders who have not been able to win an election.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Abolition or Creation of Legislative Council

Sources: the Hindu.

PRIVATE MEMBER’S BILL

CONTEXT:

28 private member’s Bills introduced in Lok Sabha.

WHO IS A PRIVATE MEMBER?

Any MP who is not a Minister is referred to as a private member.

ADMISSIBILITY OF A PRIVATE MEMBER’S BILL:

The admissibility is decided by the Chairman for Rajya Sabha and Speaker in the case of Lok Sabha.
THE PROCEDURE IS ROUGHLY THE SAME FOR BOTH HOUSES:

1. The Member must give at least a month’s notice before the Bill can be listed for introduction.
2. The House secretariat examines it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation before listing.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: about the Bill

Sources: the Hindu.

LOKPAL- LOGO

CONTEXT:

Recently, a new logo and a new moto were launched for Lokpal, the apex anti-corruption ombudsman.

LOGO

- It includes the shapes of the ombudsman (Judges’ Bench), the people (three human figures), vigilance (an Ashoka Chakra forming an eye), the law (a shape of book) and the judicial (two tri-colour hands placed below, forming a unique balance).
- It is designed by Prashant Mishra, a resident of Prayagraj, U.P.

MOTTO

- “Ma Gridhah Kasyasvidhanam (Do not be greedy for anyone’s wealth)”.
- Lokpal has decided its motto/slogan based on their own inputs and discussions.

LOKPAL AND LOKAYUKTA:

- The Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013 provided for the establishment of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States.
- These institutions are statutory bodies without any constitutional status.
They perform the function of an “ombudsman” and inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for related matters.

In India, the concept of constitutional ombudsman was first proposed by the then law minister Ashok Kumar Sen in parliament in the early 1960s.

The term Lokpal and Lokayukta were coined by Dr L. M. Singhvi.

The Bill was passed in 2013 in both the Houses of Parliament and came into force on 16 January 2014.

SIGNIFICANCE:

- To tackle the issues of maladministration and corruption.
- Most of the anti-corruption agencies are advisory in nature, hardly independent and do not have effective powers.
- There is no separate and effective mechanism to check the problems of internal transparency and accountability.
- In this context, the independent institutions of Lokpal and Lokayukta have been a landmark move in the history of Indian polity which offers a solution to the corruption and administrative problems.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: significant role of LOKPAL AND LOKAYUKTA

Sources: the Hindu.

***********************

STARRED QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDING

CONTEXT:

As many as 20 starred questions were taken up during Question Hour in one day, a record since 1972.

BACKGROUND:

The number of starred questions was fixed at 20 per Question Hour from the fourth session of the fifth Lok Sabha in 1972.
TYPE OF QUESTIONS:

Members have a right to ask questions to elicit information on matters of public importance within the special cognizance of the Ministers concerned.

The questions are of four types:

1. **STARRED QUESTIONS:**

A Starred Question is one to which a member desires an oral answer from the Minister in the House and is required to be distinguished by him/her with an asterisk. Answer to such a question may be followed by supplementary questions by members.

2. **UNSTARRED QUESTIONS:**

An Unstarred Question is one to which written answer is desired by the member and is deemed to be laid on the Table of the House by Minister. Thus it is not called for oral answer in the House and no supplementary question can be asked thereon.

3. **SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS:**

A member may give a notice of question on a matter of public importance and of urgent character for oral answer at a notice less than 10 days prescribed as the minimum period of notice for asking a question in ordinary course. Such a question is known as ‘Short Notice Question’.

4. **QUESTIONS TO PRIVATE MEMBERS:**

A Question may also be addressed to a Private Member (Under Rule 40 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha), provided that the subject matter of the question relates to some Bill, Resolution or other matter connected with the business of the House for which that Member is responsible. The procedure in regard to such questions is same as that followed in the case of questions addressed to a Minister with such variations as the Speaker may consider necessary.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: What is starred questions in Parliamentary proceeding?

Sources: the Hindu.
The Maharashtra State Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices is planning to start a dedicated community radio channel to inform farmers about climate change and help resolve their problems.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The radio station will be based at Lodaga village in Latur district.
- Climate change is a major problem for the agriculture sector in Maharashtra as well as in the country.
- Maharashtra has experienced a moody climate in past few months, where it saw heavy monsoon rains in Satara and Sangli and the post-monsoon showers damaged crops in Marathwada region.
- To address the issues of cultivators, the commission will form a committee of five to six members, comprising experts from KrishiVigyan Kendras, the State agriculture department and private companies working in the field of agriculture and technology.

KRSIHIVIGYAN KENDRA (KVK)

- They are agricultural extension centres created by ICAR (Indian Council for Agricultural Research) and its affiliated institutions at district level to provide various types of farm support to the agricultural sector.
- The first KVK was established during 1974 (Pondichery).
- The mandate of KVK is Technology Assessment and Demonstration for its Application and Capacity Development of farmers.
- KVK would produce quality technological products (seed, planting material, bio-agents, and livestock) and make it available to farmers, organize frontline extension activities, identify and document selected farm innovations and converge with ongoing schemes and programmes, so as to improve agricultural productivity.

INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (ICAR)
It is an autonomous organisation under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

Formerly known as Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, it was established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 in pursuance of the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture.

The ICAR has its headquarters at New Delhi.

The Council is the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: benefits of radio channel to farmers

**Sources:** the Hindu.

---

**CONTEXT:**

States were being “cajoled to reject” the agricultural produce marketing committee (APMC) system in favour of E-NAM i.e. National Agriculture Market which is a pan-India electronic trading (e-trading) portal.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- It seeks to network the existing physical regulated wholesale market (known as APMC market) through a virtual platform to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- Only 1.6 crore farmers have registered on the portal so far, from among the almost 12 crore cultivators in the country but only about half of those registered have benefited from the platform.
- Out of almost 2,500 APMCs, 585 in 18 States have been connected to the e-NAM portal so far.
- Interstate trade, which has the potential to give farmers wider market access and better prices, has 21 APMC mandi participants in 8 States so far.
- NABARD is now ready to operationalise a ₹2,000 crore agri-market infrastructure fund aimed at upgrading 585 APMCs and 10,000 gramin agricultural markets

**AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKETING COMMITTEE**
It is a statutory market committee constituted by a State Government in respect of trade in certain notified agricultural or horticultural or livestock products, under the APMC Act issued by that state government.

The whole geographical area in the State is divided and each one is declared as a market area which is managed by the Market Committee (APMC) constituted by the State Government.

Once a particular area is declared as a market area and falls under the jurisdiction of a Market Committee, no person or agency is allowed to freely carry on wholesale marketing activities.

APMC Acts provide that first sale in the notified agricultural commodities produced in the region such as cereals, pulses, edible oilseed, fruits, vegetables etc., can be conducted only under the aegis of the APMC, through its licensed commission agents.

The producers of agricultural products are thus forced to do their first sale in these markets which in reality works as cartel deny fair price discovery of agricultural produce.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** agricultural produce marketing committee and a pan-India electronic trading (e-trading) portal

**Sources:** the Hindu.

---

**ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING**

**CONTEXT:**

The ICAR-Indian Institute of Farming Systems Research initiated a study on Evaluation of Zero Budget Natural Farming practices in Basmati/ coarse rice-wheat system from Rabi 2017 at 4 locations namely Modipuram, Pantnagar, Ludhiana, Kurukshetra.

**STATES PRACTICING ZBNF ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Karnataka – has initiated implementation of ZBNF on pilot basis in an area of 2000 ha in each of the 10 Agro Climatic Zones of the State through the respective State Agriculture/ horticulture Universities as demonstrations/ Scientific experimental trials in farmer’s fields and in the research stations of the concerned universities.

2. Himachal Pradesh – is implementing State funded scheme ‘Prakritik Kheti Khushal Kisan’ since May, 2018, the details of which are as: 2018-19- 2669 farmers, Area: 357 ha.,2019-20- 19936 Farmers, Area: 1155 ha.
3. Kerala – only awareness programmes, trainings and workshops to draw interest of farmers towards ZBNF has been imparted.

4. Andhra Pradesh – launched ZBNF in September 2015 under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh is conducting experiments to generate the scientific evidence of the ZBNF in collaboration with University of Reading, UK World Agro forestry Centre, Nairobi, FAO & resource NGOs/Civil Society Organizations like Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Hyderabad.

5. Himachal Pradesh: The findings of studies conducted by the state indicated that ZBNF practice showed an improvement in soil quality within a single cropping season and incidence of Invasive leaf miner was significantly less in ZBNF system as compared to the organic farming and conventional farming.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: benefits of zero budget natural farming to our farmers

Sources: pib

ARUNDHATI SWARNA YOJANA

CONTEXT:

The Assam government has announced the launch of ‘Arundhati Swarna Yojana’.

KEY FEATURES OF THE SCHEME:

- Under the scheme, the state government will offer 10 grams of gold as a gift to every adult bride who has completed at least 10th standard and has registered her marriage.
- The government will not give the gold directly but Rs. 30,000 to purchase 10 gms of gold.

ELIGIBILITY:

- The annual income of the bride’s family must be less than five lakh rupees to avail the scheme.
- Minimum age should be 18 years and 21 years for the bride and bridegroom respectively.
- The family has to register their marriage under the Special Marriage (Assam) Rules, 1954.
- Minimum education should be 10th standard. However, minimum educational qualification criteria have been relaxed for the tribes and workers of tea gardens.
The eligible bride and bridegroom must apply for the scheme before the date of their wedding.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: about the scheme

**Sources:** the Hindu.

-----------------------------

**SURROGACY BILL**

**CONTEXT:**

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019, was referred to a select committee of the Upper House, after several MPs raised concerns over several provisions of the legislation, including making it mandatory for a surrogate to be a close relative.

**BACKGROUND:**

- It provides for constitution of surrogacy boards at the national as well as state levels to ensure effective regulation.
- It seeks to allow ethical altruistic surrogacy to the intending infertile Indian married couple between the age of 23-50 years for female and 26-55 years for male.
- Only Indian couples who have been legally married for at least 5 years would be allowed to opt for surrogacy.
- It makes it mandatory for the couple to obtain a certificate of essentiality and also a certificate of eligibility before going ahead with surrogacy.
- It also provides that intending couples should not abandon the child born out of surrogacy under any condition.
- On the legal status of a surrogate child, the Bill states that any child born out of a surrogacy procedure shall be the biological child of the intending couple.
- The new born child shall be entitled to all rights and privileges that are available to a natural child.
- The Bill also seeks to regulate functioning of surrogacy clinics. All surrogacy clinics in the country need to be registered by the appropriate authority in order to undertake surrogacy or its related procedures.
- The Bill provides for various safeguards for surrogate mothers. One of them is insurance coverage for sometime to cover not only the period of pregnancy but after that also.
It also specifies that no sex selection can be done when it comes to surrogacy.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERION FOR THE SURROGATE MOTHER:**

1. The surrogate must be a close relative of the intending couple and be a married woman having a child of her own.
2. She should be between the age of 25-35 years, not have been surrogate earlier and must be certifiably mentally and physically fit.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Surrogacy Bill

**Sources:** the Hindu.

***************

**ONE STOP CENTRE SCHEME**

**CONTEXT:**

The Government of India is implementing One Stop Centre (OSC) scheme for setting up One Stop Centre since 1st April 2015 to support women affected by violence.

**ABOUT THE SCHEME:**

- Popularity known as Sakhi, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has formulated this Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- It is a sub – scheme of Umbrella Scheme for National Mission for Empowerment of women including Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana.
- Under the scheme, One Stop Centres are being established across the country to provide integrated support and assistance under one roof to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces in phased manner.

**TARGET GROUP:**

The OSC will support all women including girls below 18 years of age affected by violence, irrespective of caste, class, religion, region, sexual orientation or marital status.
SERVICES:

The Centres will be integrated with a Women Helpline to facilitate access to following services:

1. Emergency response and rescue services.
2. Medical assistance.
3. Assistance to women in lodging the FIR.
4. Psycho-social support and counselling.
5. Legal aid and counselling.
6. Shelter.
7. Video conferencing facility.

FUNDS:

The Scheme will be funded through Nirbhaya Fund. The Central Government will provide 100% financial assistance to the State Government /UT Administrations under the Scheme.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: One Stop Centre Scheme and nirbhaya fund

Sources: the Hindu.

CENTURIES-OLD TRADITION “KHOJ-E-DIGAR” NOT ALLOWED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SRINAGAR

CONTEXT:

It was for the first time that Khoj-e-Digar, which is a centuries-old tradition specific to Kashmiri Muslims, was not been offered.

WHAT IS “KHOJ-E-DIGAR”: 
Khoj-e-Digar is the special evening prayer which is being practised specifically by Kashmiri Muslims from centuries.

**WHY IT IS IN NEWS?**

- Khoj-e-Digar — the special evening prayer held at Naqashband Sahib shrine here — was not allowed.
- Friday prayers were not allowed in the historic Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta area for 13th week after the removal of Article 370.
- Normal life remained affected for 90th day in Kashmir following the abrogation of provisions of Article 370.
- No restrictions on movement of people in any part of the valley. Normal activities are being witnessed across Kashmir.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** Khoj-e-Digar

**Sources:** the Hindu.

---

**SURANGA BAWADI**

**CONTEXT:**

Suranga Bawadi has entered the World Monuments Watch List under the Ancient Water System of the Deccan Plateau of the World Monument Funds.

**SURANGA BAWADI:**

- Suranga Bawadi was built in the 16th century by Adil Shah-I of the Adilshahi dynasty of Bijapur.
- Suranga Bawadi is an integral part of the ancient Karez System of supplying water through subterranean tunnels.
- The system was aimed to supply water to Vijaypura in Karnataka.

**WHAT IS KAREZ SYSTEM?**
Karez System is a method to harness water in which groundwater is brought to the surface by a tunnel.

- No mechanical pump or lift is used in the system.
- The water from the underground source was brought by gravity alone.
- The technology originated in Persia and Iran. This technology was widely used during the medieval period.

WORLD MONUMENT WATCH:

- The World Monuments Watch is a biennial selection program of ‘at-risk cultural heritage sites’ that combine great historical significance with contemporary social impact.
- It is a nomination-based program that uses cultural heritage conservation to empower communities and improve human well-being.
- It was launched in 1995 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of World Monuments Fund to identify imperiled cultural heritage sites and provide direct financial and technical support for their preservation.
- The program also seeks to improve the resilience of communities, enhance social inclusion, and build new capacities in the heritage conservation field and beyond.
- Anyone can nominate a site to the World Monuments Watch, including private individuals and representatives of civil society organizations, community groups, government agencies, educational institutions, or other entities.

WORLD MONUMENT FUND:

World Monuments Fund is a private nonprofit organization founded in 1965 by individuals concerned about the accelerating destruction of important artistic treasures throughout the world.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: WHAT IS KAREZ SYSTEM? Water conservation

Sources: the Hindu.

550 BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF SHREE GURU NANAK DEV
Recently, the Prime Minister of India participated in the special event organised at Dera Baba Nanak to inaugurate the Integrated Check Post (ICP) and the Kartarpur Corridor. He also released commemorative coin celebrating 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

ABOUT GURU NANAK DEV:

- Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti is observed to celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539), who is first of the 10 Sikh Gurus and the founder of Sikhism.
- He advocated the ‘Nirguna’ (devotion to and worship of formless divine) form of bhakti.
- He rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities and the scriptures of both Hindus and Muslims.
- He organised his followers into a community. He set up rules for congregational worship (Sangat) involving collective recitation.
- The fifth preceptor, Guru Arjan Dev, compiled Guru Nanak Dev’s hymns along with those of his four successors and other religious poets like Baba Farid, Ravidas (also known as Raidas) and Kabir in the Adi Granth Sahib.
- These hymns, called ‘Gurbani’, are composed in many languages.
- In the late seventeenth century the tenth preceptor, Guru Gobind Singh, included the compositions of the ninth guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and this scripture was called the Guru Granth Sahib.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Indian culture and religion

Sources: pib

SABARIMALA CASE

CONTEXT:

The Supreme Court has referred to a 7 judge-bench a clutch of review petitions challenging its September 2018
verdict allowing entry of women of all age groups into the Sabarimala temple.

**BACKGROUND:**

- The verdict was given by a 5-judge bench.
- In 3:2 majority verdict, two judges stuck to their earlier stand of quashing the custom which barred entry of women between the ages of 10 and 50 years.
- The split decision came on 65 petitions – 56 review petitions, four fresh writ petitions and five transfer pleas – which were filed after the apex court verdict of September 28, 2018 sparked violent protests in Kerala.

**OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE COURT:**

1. Restrictions on women in religious places are not limited to Sabarimala alone and are prevalent in other religions too. The issue of entry of women into mosques and Agiyari could also be taken by the larger bench.
2. Both sections of the same religious group have a right to freely profess, practise and propagate their religious beliefs as being integral part of their religion by virtue of Article 25 of the Constitution of India.
In Sabarimala, the deity is worshipped in the form of Naishthika Brahmachari, a celibate, as pointed out by the Kerala High Court.

**THE SUPPORTERS OF TEMPLE BAN SAY THAT:**

1. This particular deity system is Tantric in nature and not Vedic.
2. In the Tantric system, the temple is not a prayer hall but an energy centre; the deity is not God who is omnipresent, but a source of energy (chaithanya) in a particular spiritual space.
3. Uniqueness is the soul of every temple. Lakhs of women congregate in Sabarimala every year. There is only one limitation: they should not be between 10 and 50, because of the specific nature of the Prathishta(idol) and the vow celibacy associated with the idol.
4. The restriction finds its source in the legend that the Sabarimala temple deity – Swami Ayyappa – is a ‘Naishtika Brahmachari’ – and should not be disturbed.

**WHY DOES PREVENTING WOMEN’S ENTRY TO THE TEMPLE DISCRIMINATORY IN NATURE?**

Preventing women’s entry to the Sabarimala temple with an irrational and obsolete notion of “purity” clearly offends the equality clauses in the Constitution. In any civilised society, gender equality is to be treated as one of the core values.

- It denotes a patriarchal and partisan approach.
- The entry prohibition takes away the woman’s right against discrimination guaranteed under Article 15(1) of the Constitution.
- It curtails her religious freedom assured by Article 25(1).
- Prohibition of women’s entry to the shrine solely on the basis of womanhood and the biological features associated with womanhood is derogatory to women, which Article 51A (e) aims to renounce.
- The classification based on age is an act of discrimination based on sex.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Gender Equality, sabarimala temple

Sources: the Hindu.

***********************

**NATIONAL HEALTH PROFILE, 2019**

**CONTEXT:**

The 14th edition of National Health Profile and its e-book (digital version) has been released by the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI).

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objective of this publication is to create a versatile database of health information of India and making it available to all stakeholders in the healthcare sector.
WHAT DOES IT COVERS:

It covers comprehensive information on demographic, socio-economic health status, health finance indicators, health infrastructure and health of human resources in the country.

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.
- Health status indicators: incidence and prevalence of common communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- Health finance indicators: health insurance and expenditure on health.
- Health of human resources: availability of manpower working in the health sector.
- Health infrastructure: details of Medical and Dental Colleges, AYUSH Institutes, Nursing Courses and Paramedical Courses.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: National Health Profile

Sources: the Hindu.

***************************

CONTEXT:

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has directed the Centre and the states of Punjab and Haryana, as well as the Union Territory of Chandigarh, to implement ‘The Transplant of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994’ in letter and spirit, and to also consider the recommendations of an Expert Committee set
up to give suggestions for an effective implementation of the law.

BACKGROUND:

- The 1994 Act governs the transplantation of human organs and tissues in India, including the donation of organs after death.
- In May 2019, the PGIMER was asked to constitute a committee of doctors for deliberations over the subject, and to submit a report containing measures to promote cadaver donations.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE:

1. Create a National Registry of Donors, and a biometrics-based authentication of donors and recipients.
2. A database of all surgeons and medical experts sanctioned for the transplantation should also be maintained.
3. It recommended that the identity of the donor and the recipient be verified through a biometric system of authentication to prevent fabrication of identity or other fraud in the process.
4. All hospitals engaged in transplantation procedures must invest in a biometric system linked to the national database of Aadhaar and PAN numbers.
5. Mandatory informed consent should be taken in case of live donors after explaining to them the risks involved in donation surgery.
6. A right be given to the donor to withdraw consent any time before the surgery.
7. It has suggested a ‘wait period’ or cooling period to allow rethinking on the part of the live donor.
8. A lumpsum monetary reimbursement should be given to the donor towards expenses related to the transplantation, and suggested a payment of at least Rs 50,000 at the time of discharge.
9. It has also called for a system to provide for medical insurance of the donor, and also for their post surgical needs.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: The Transplant of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994

Sources: the Hindu.

********************

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (MMR) OF INDIA, DECLINES
“Maternal Mortality Ratio” (MMR) of India has declined by 8 points in one year as per the latest Special Bulletin on MMR released by the Registrar General of India.

WHAT IS MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO?

The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 100,000 live births during the same time period.

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO INDIA:

India’s Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has seen a decline from 130 per 1 lakh live births in 2014-2016 to 122 per 1 lakh live births in 2015-2017.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- With this Persistent decline, nearly 2000 additional pregnant women saved annually.
- This has been possible in view of the gains made in institutional deliveries and focused approach towards High Priority Districts and inter-sectoral action to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable population.
- Focus on quality and coverage of health services through public health initiatives under the National Health Mission such as Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram and Janani Suraksha Yojana have contributed to this decline,
- New initiatives in the form of LaQshya, POSHAN Abhiyan and SUMAN (Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Initiative) will help to ensure that all pregnant women receive quality maternal care with dignity and that no mother or newborn dies due to a preventable cause.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: what is Maternal Mortality Ratio?

Sources: the Hindu.

PNEUMONIA, DIARRHOEA STILL A BIG THREAT
The 10th Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report was released by the International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

KEY POINTS OF THE REPORTS:

- This report analyses how effectively countries are delivering 10 key interventions, including breastfeeding, vaccination, access to care, use of antibiotics, ORS, and zinc supplementation.
- In India, Pneumonia killed more than 1.27 lakh children under five—accounting for 14% of child deaths.
- India’s has high breastfeeding rate, at 55%, however, the proportion of children receiving important treatments remains below targets. Half of the children with diarrhoea receive ORS (oral rehydration solution) and 20% receive zinc supplementation — to help protect against, prevent and treat pneumonia and diarrhoea.
- Rollout of rotavirus vaccines, beginning in 2016, and the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, beginning in 2017, helped India’s improve on these parameters.
- In 2017, the highest risk factors for child pneumonia death in India were: 53% caused by child wasting, 27% by outdoor air pollution, and 22% caused by indoor air pollution from solid fuels.
- Globally, pneumonia and diarrhoea led to nearly one of every four deaths in children under five years of age in 2017.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report 2019

Sources: the Hindu.

***********

NISHTHA LAUNCHED IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

CONTEXT:
National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) was launched in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

**PARTICIPANTS:**
Around 300 teachers, Key Resource Persons (KRP) and Chief Education Officers, District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) Principals and Educational Administrators participated in the event.

**ABOUT NISHTHA:**
- NISHTHA is a National Mission that aims to improve learning outcomes at Elementary level through integrated Teacher Training.
- It is a pioneering scheme being launched across the country, with a total of 86000 Elementary teachers of Government Schools being trained in J&K under the programme.
- It aims to build the capacities of 42 lakh participants covering all teachers and Heads of Schools at the elementary level in all Government Schools across the country, faculty members of SIEs/SCERTs, DIETs, etc

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** about the initiative NISHTHA

**Sources:** the Hindu.

**SIXTH NATIONAL SUMMIT ON GOOD, REPLICABLE PRACTICES AND INNOVATIONS**

**CONTEXT:**
The Sixth National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices and Innovations were held in New Delhi on 16 November 2019.
NATIONAL SUMMIT ON GOOD, REPLICABLE PRACTICES, AND INNOVATIONS:

- The summit creates a platform to share the knowledge within the districts. It aims to transmit the knowledge and ideas to the district’s level health workers, functionaries.
- It highlighted the achievements in the health sector during the past few years, such as Ayushman Bharat, Telemedicine, NHP 2017, Medical Education, and Health Systems Strengthening.
- It provided a valuable platform for sharing knowledge and experiences, which will immensely contribute to meeting the health outcomes.

SAANS CAMPAIGN:

- SAANS campaign was launched in the summit.
- Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS) has been launched to control Pneumonia.
- This campaign will mobilize people for protecting and preventing children from pneumonia and health personnel, governments, and other stakeholders to prioritize treatment towards the control of Pneumonia.
- It is one of the fatal childhood illnesses.
  The initiative aims to create mass awareness about the most effective solutions for pneumonia prevention like breastfeeding, age-appropriate complementary feeding, immunization, good quality air, etc.
- Under the SAANS campaign, new interventions have been included like a child suffering from Pneumonia will be treated with pre-referral dose of Amoxicillin by ASHA, Pulse Oximeter will be used at the Health and Wellness Centre for identification of low oxygen levels in the blood and if required treated by use of Oxygen.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: about the summit and SAANS CAMPAIGN

Sources: the Hindu.
INDIA’S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RISES, HIGHEST IN OVER 3 YEARS:

CMIE

CONTEXT:

India’s unemployment rate in October rose to 8.5%, the highest since August 2016, and up from 7.2% in September, according to data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), reflecting the impact of a slowdown in the economy.

KEY FINDINGS:

- India’s unemployment rate in October rose to 8.5%, the highest level since August 2016.
- Urban unemployment rate at 8.9%, is more than the rural unemployment rate of 8.3%.
- Highest unemployment rate in Tripura and Haryana, at more than 20%.
- Lowest in Tamil Nadu at 1.1%.
- Rajasthan saw its unemployment rate double between September and October 2019.

WHY THIS IS A CAUSE FOR CONCERN?

- CMIE findings are in line with the findings of the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey, which had estimated an unemployment rate of 6.1% between July 2017 and June 2018, the worst in 45 years.
- The data also comes on the back of other indicators showing a downturn in the economy, including the core sector output in September posting its worst contraction in at least 14 years.
- Earlier, August’s industrial output shrank at its fastest rate in more than six years.
- Another research estimates that between 2011-12 and 2017-18, employment declined by an unprecedented nine million jobs (a 2% drop), with agricultural employment declining by 11.5%. In the same period, employment in the service sector increased by 13.4%, while manufacturing employment dipped by 5.7%.
- While employment has been declining, the number of working age people who are “Not in Labour Force, Education and Training” has continued to increase — from about 84 million in 2011-12, it has now crossed 100 million.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?
For prelims and mains: unemployment issue in context to India

Sources: the Hindu.

*****************************************

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT FUNDS (AIFs)

CONTEXT:

The Union Cabinet has approved the creation of an Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) of Rs. 25,000 crore to provide last-mile funding for stalled affordable and middle-income housing projects across the country.

KEY FEATURES:

- The fund size will initially be Rs. 25,000 crore with the government providing Rs. 10,000 crore and the State Bank of India and the Life Insurance Corporation providing the balance.
- The funds will be set up as Category-II Alternative Investment Fund registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India and will be managed by SBICAP Ventures Limited.
- The open-ended fund is expected to swell over time. The government is also in talks with sovereign bonds and pension funds to put in money in AIF further.
- The Cabinet also approved the establishment of a ‘Special Window’ to provide priority debt financing for completion of stalled housing projects in the affordable and middle-income housing sector.

WHAT ARE AIFS?

- As defined in Securities and Exchange Board of India (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012, AIFs refer to any privately pooled investment fund, (whether from Indian or foreign sources), in the form of a trust or a company or a body corporate or a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP).
- AIF does not include funds covered under the SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996, SEBI (Collective Investment Schemes) Regulations, 1999 or any other regulations of the Board to regulate fund management activities.
Hence, in India, AIFs are private funds which are otherwise not coming under the jurisdiction of any regulatory agency in India.

**CATEGORIES:**

As per SEBI (AIF) Regulations, 2012, AIFs shall seek registration in one of the three categories:

1. **CATEGORY I:**
   
   Mainly invests in start-ups, SME’s or any other sector which Govt. considers economically and socially viable.

2. **CATEGORY II:**
   
   These include Alternative Investment Funds such as private equity funds or debt funds for which no specific incentives or concessions are given by the government or any other Regulator.

3. **CATEGORY III:**
   
   Alternative Investment Funds such as hedge funds or funds which trade with a view to make short term returns or such other funds which are open ended and for which no specific incentives or concessions are given by the government or any other Regulator.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Establishment of AIFS

**Sources:** the Hindu.

---

**MOODY’S RATINGS**

**CONTEXT:**

Global ratings agency Moody’s Investors Service has cut its outlook on the Government of India’s ratings to negative from
stable, but affirmed the Baa2 foreign-currency and local-currency long-term issuer ratings.

Moody’s also affirmed India’s Baa2 local-currency senior unsecured rating and its P-2 other short-term local-currency rating.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR INDIA?

- The decision to change the outlook to negative reflects increasing risks that economic growth will remain materially lower than in the past, partly reflecting lower government and policy effectiveness at addressing long-standing economic and institutional weaknesses than Moody’s had previously estimated, leading to a gradual rise in the debt burden from already high levels.
- Reduction in outlook is the first step towards an investment downgrade, as India is now just a notch above the investment grade country rating. An actual downgrade in country ratings can lead to massive foreign fund outflows.

WHY HAS MOODY’S CUT RATING?

1. Moody’s projected fiscal deficit of 3.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the year through March 2020, a breach of the government’s target of 3.3 per cent, as slower growth and a surprise corporate-tax cut curbs revenue.
2. India’s growth outlook has deteriorated sharply this year, with a crunch that started out in the non-banking financial institutions (NBFIs) spreading to retail businesses, car makers, home sales and heavy industries.
3. Moody’s said the outlook partly reflects government and policy ineffectiveness in addressing economic weakness, which led to an increase in debt burden which is already at high levels.
4. India’s economy grew by 5 per cent between April and June, its weakest pace since 2013, as consumer demand and government spending slowed amid global trade frictions.

WHAT ARE DIFFERENT GENERAL CREDIT RATINGS?

1. **AAA**: Highest credit quality that denotes the lowest expectations of default risk.
2. **AA+/AA/AA-**: Very high credit quality. ‘AA’ ratings denote expectations of very low default risk. They indicate very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments.
3. **A+/A/A-**: High credit quality that denotes expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong, however, vulnerability to adverse business or economic conditions exists.
4. **BBB+/BBB/BBB-**: Good credit quality that indicates that expectations of default risk are currently low. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.
5. **BB+/BB/BB-**: This rating indicates an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time; however, business or financial flexibility exists that supports the servicing of financial commitments.

6. **B+/B/B-**: This rating indicates that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.

7. **CCC+/CCC/CCC-**: Substantial credit risk exists in this rating, where the default is a real possibility.

8. **CC**: This rating shows a very high level of credit risk with a possibility of defaults.

9. **C**: This rating shows that a default or default-like process has begun, or the issuer is in a standstill.

10. **DDD/RD/SD/DD/D**: This indicates that the issuer has entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation or other formal winding-up procedure or has ceased business.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** Moody’s Credit Ratings

**Sources:** Indian Express.

**************************************************

**INDIA RANKED 78TH IN THE GLOBAL BRIBERY RISK INDEX**

**CONTEXT:**

India ranked 78th in the Global Bribery Risk Index out of 178 countries, the index was released by Trace Bribery Risk Matrix. India scored with a total risk score of 48.

**WHO MEASURES BUSINESS BRIBERY RISK?**

TRACE MATRIX provides a score from 1 to 100 to each country for each domain. If a country gets a higher score it means it is at a higher risk of business bribery.

**INDEX HIGHLIGHTS:**
The Matrix identified as the country with the highest risk terms of bribery threats in South Asia.
Bangladesh scored 72 out of 100 in 2019, which is two points higher than its score in 2018.
The global average score is 51.
According to the list, the 5 countries with the lowest bribery risk in the world are New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland.
The countries with the highest risk are Venezuela, Yemen, North Korea, South Sudan, and Somalia.
Afghanistan ranked 168 and Pakistan ranked 153 are the South Asian countries with a high bribery risk rate. Bhutan ranked 52 and has the least risk of bribery among the South Asian countries.

TRACE MATRIX:
- TRACE Matrix is headquartered in the United States and registered in Canada.
- It is a globally recognized anti-bribery business association.
- TRACE Matrix will provide multidimensional, actionable insights that the business bribery risk will be used by companies to develop a more targeted compliance procedure.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Trace Matrix and the Global Bribery Risk Index

Sources: the Hindu.
The Centre has issued rules that provide a framework for bringing ‘systemically important financial service providers’ under the purview of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency and Liquidation Proceedings of Financial Service Providers and Application to Adjudicating Authority) Rules, 2019.
- These rules aim to provide a generic framework for insolvency and liquidation proceedings of systemically important FSPs other than banks.

BACKGROUND:

Section 227 of the [Insolvency and Bankruptcy] Code enables the Central government to notify, in consultation with the financial sector regulators, financial service providers (FSPs) or categories of FSPs for the purpose of insolvency and liquidation proceedings, in such manner as may be prescribed.

THE NEW RULES:

- As per the new rules, only a regulator will be allowed to refer a non-bank lender or housing financier to a bankruptcy tribunal, unlike in the case of companies that can approach a tribunal on their own, or can be dragged into one either by lenders or operational creditors such as material suppliers.
- The bankruptcy tribunal will appoint an administrator who will try to stitch together a turnaround plan.
- The administrator will be nominated by the regulator, such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in the case of non-bank lenders and housing financiers.
- The registration or the licence of the financial services provider will not be suspended or cancelled during the bankruptcy resolution process.
- In case a turnaround of the financial institution is not possible, before deciding to liquidate it, the tribunal will listen to the views of the regulator.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The introduction of an interim framework for resolution of financial service providers under the IBC is a timely and important step for resolution of financial service providers permitting interplay between regulators, creditors and the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) for appropriate actions.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: significance of the new rules regarding financial firms
The Centre is planning to launch India’s first fixed income Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) comprising debt securities of large central public sector enterprises (PSUs).

**FEATURES AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

- The ETF is expected to have a size of Rs 15,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore.
- The fund will comprise only AAA-rated papers of the PSU companies.
- It provides a new option to conservative investors to own securities of government-owned companies along with the facility of overnight liquidity as ETF units will be listed on exchanges.
- Compared with bank fixed deposits that generate a post-tax return of around 5.5 per cent, this product could generate a return of over 7 per cent for the investors.
- It can comprise corporate debt securities in the form of bonds, credit-linked note, debentures, and promissory notes as underlying instruments.

**WHAT ARE ETFS?**

- Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) are mutual funds listed and traded on stock exchanges like shares.
- Typically, an ETF mirrors a particular index, which means the group of stocks in the ETF would be similar to those in the index that it is benchmarked to.
- Usually, ETFs are passive funds where the fund manager doesn’t select stocks on your behalf. Instead, the ETF simply copies an index and endeavours to accurately reflect its performance.
- In an ETF, one can buy and sell units at prevailing market price on a real time basis during market hours.

**BENEFITS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ETFS:**

1. ETFs are cost efficient. Given that they don’t make any stock (or security choices), they don’t use services of star fund managers.
2. They allow investors to avoid the risk of poor security selection by the fund manager, while offering a diversified investment portfolio.

Sources: the Hindu.
3. The stocks in the indices are carefully selected by index providers and are rebalanced periodically.
4. They offer anytime liquidity through the exchanges.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: FEATURES AND SIGNIFICANCE of ETFs

Sources: the Hindu.

CHIT FUNDS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

CONTEXT:

The Rajya Sabha passed the Chit Funds (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on 28 November 2019. The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 20 November 2019. The Bill will amend the Chit Funds Act, 1982.

PROVISIONS OF THE BILL:

- The Bill will facilitate the orderly growth of the chit fund sector and enable greater financial access to people.
- Under a chit fund, people pay a certain amount from time to time into a fund.
- Periodically, one subscriber will be chosen by drawing a chit to receive the prize amount from the fund.
- The Bill will regulate chit funds and ensure timely returns of money.
- The Bill proposed to increase the maximum amount of chit funds. The individuals can collect from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.3 lakh and Firms can collect from Rs.6 lakh to Rs.18 lakh.
- The Bill recognizes chit funds under various names, including fraternity fund, Kuri, credit institution, rotating savings, etc.
- It conditioned that at least two subscribers should be present, either physically or via video-conferencing while a chit is drawn.

NEED OF AMENDMENT:
To Protect Investor Interest: It highlights the crucial role chit funds play in India’s rural economy, providing people with access to funds and investment opportunities, especially in regions where banks and financial institutions do not have a presence.

To Check Fraud: The Chit Funds Act of 1982 was amended to incorporate stringent measures to stop alleged fraud.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: Provisions of the Chit Fund Amendment Bill

Sources: the Hindu.

---------

IIT HYDERABAD DEVELOPED THE WORLD’S FIRST-EVER INDIAN BRAIN ATLAS

**CONTEXT:**

Researchers at IIT Hyderabad developed the world’s first-ever Indian Brain Atlas. It defines a template for the brains of people living in the Indian subcontinent.

**WHATS RESEARCHERS REVEALED:**

The study revealed that the Indian brain is smaller in size, width, and volume when compared to the brain from the Western and Eastern populations.

**INDIAN BRAINS DIFFER FROM MNI’S TEMPLATE:**

- Indian brains are smaller in size as compared to the Montreal Neurological Institute and Hospital (MNI) template.
- The difference in the size of the brain in scans looks alarming and lead to misdiagnosis.
- The study is desirable in order to build a larger atlas as it is important to understand structurally what is normal.
- This would help to find several brain conditions in the early stage.
The team under Jayanthi Sivaswamy created India-specific templates by taking data from 50 individuals that are balanced perfectly between males and females.

The MRI scans of the brains of the subjects were taken at 3 different hospitals in three different scanners to nullify variations in the scanning machines.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: researches about Indian Brain and Indian Brain Atlas

Sources: the Hindu.

GAGAN—GPS AIDED GEO-AUGMENTED NAVIGATION

CONTEXT:

About 500 passenger locomotives of the South Central Railway (SCR) have been fitted with the newly developed Real-time Train Information System (RTIS) to monitor precise speeds and movement throughout the journey.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- It has been developed by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CIRE) with the help of GAGAN system
- The new system has facilitated automatic transmission of details on speed and movement of trains to the central control office.

ABOUT GAGAN

- GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation (GAGAN), developed by ISRO and Airports Authority of India (AAI) is a regional Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS).
- The GAGAN’s goal is to provide a navigation system to assist aircraft in accurate landing over the Indian airspace and in the adjoining area and applicable to safety-to-life civil operations.
- GAGAN is inter-operable with other international SBAS systems.
- GAGAN covers the area from Africa to Australia and has expansion capability for seamless navigation services across the region.
GAGAN makes airline operations more efficient and effective, increase air safety, and fuel efficiency.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: GAGAN and GPS Navigation System

**Sources:** the Hindu.

---

**‘RED ATLAS ACTION PLAN MAP’ ATLAS AND CFLOWS-CHENNAI**

**CONTEXT:**


**WHAT IS RED ATLAS ACTION PLAN MAP?**

- It is a first of its kind ready reckoner map, prepared by Union Ministry of Earth Sciences to aid state government of Tamil Nadu in effective flood mitigation in Chennai which witnessed the worst deluge in 2015.
- The atlas is aimed at flood mitigation, preparedness, operations and management aspects.
- The manual besides showcasing the probable scenarios for different rainfall periods also provides information on corporation wards that are likely to be affected due to flooding, and the areas that may need evacuation in Chennai by taking into account all historical datasets.

**COASTAL FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM APP FOR CHENNAI (CFLOWS-CHENNAI):**

- Launched by NIOT.
- It is India’s first integrated coastal flood warning system.
- It is an integrated GIS-based decision support system to provide forecast on potential inundation 10 days in advance.
• It will be hosted and made operational at National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) with meteorological data inputs from India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).
• The system can simulate the scenario and predict what will happen in a particular area.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: RED ATLAS ACTION PLAN MAP and COASTAL FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM

Sources: the Hindu.

***********************

CONTEXT:

ISRO and its commercial arm Antrix Corporation Ltd. are poised to commercialize India’s regional navigation satellite system, NavIC.

HIGHLIGHTS:

• Antrix has recently floated two separate tenders to identify industries that can develop dedicated NavIC-based hardware and systems.
• NavIC (Navigation in Indian Constellation) is the Indian system of eight satellites that is aimed at telling business and individual users where they are, or how their products and services are moving.
• The indigenous positioning or location based service (LBS) works just like the established and popular U.S. Global Positioning System or GPS, but within a 1,500-km radius over the subcontinent.
• The early set of commercial NavIC users would potentially be transporters of resources such as mined ore, coal and sand in various States, who are presently using GPS system.
• In 2018, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways mandated that all national-permit vehicles must have such tracking devices. As a pilot, many fishing boats have been fitted with these devices that have a unique texting facility.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?
For prelims and mains: commercialization of regional navigation satellite system

Sources: the Hindu.

****************************

STARLINK NETWORK

CONTEXT:

SpaceX, the world’s leading private company in space technology, fired a spray of 60 satellites into low earth orbit, the first operational batch of what is intended to eventually evolve into a constellation of nearly 12,000 satellites aimed at providing low-cost and reliable space-based Internet services to the world.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Internet has now become a part of humanity’s basic infrastructure and an important means of delivering a wide variety of public services to the world’s peoples.
- Currently, about 4 billion people, more than half the world’s population, do not have access to reliable Internet networks.
- And that is because the traditional ways to deliver the Internet — fibre-optic cables or wireless networks — cannot take it everywhere on Earth. In many remote areas, or places with difficult terrain, it is not feasible or viable to set up cables or mobile towers.
- Signals from satellites in space can overcome this obstacle easily.
- In space-based networks, data requests travel from the user to the satellite, and are then directed to data centres on the ground.

CRITICISM TO THE PROJECT:

- Increased space debris
- Increased risk of collisions and
- The concern of astronomers that these constellations of space Internet satellites will make it difficult to observe other space objects, and to detect their signals.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: About the Project
Ministry of Steel has issued the Steel Scrap Recycling Policy.

THE POLICY AIMS TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

- To promote circular economy in the steel sector.
- To promote a formal and scientific collection, dismantling and processing activities for end of life products that are sources of recyclable (ferrous, non-ferrous and other non-metallic) scraps which will lead to resource conservation and energy savings and setting up of an environmentally sound management system for handling ferrous scrap.
- Processing and recycling of products in an organized, safe and environment friendly manner.
- To evolve a responsive ecosystem by involving all stakeholders.
- To produce high quality ferrous scrap for quality steel production thus minimizing the dependency on imports.
- To decongest the Indian cities from ELVs and reuse of ferrous scrap.
- To create a mechanism for treating waste streams and residues produced from dismantling and shredding facilities in compliance to Hazardous & Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016 issued by MoEF & CC.
- To promote 6Rs principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, Redesign and Remanufacture through scientific handling, processing and disposal of all types of recyclable scraps including non-ferrous scraps, through authorized centers / facility.

WORKING MODEL:

- The increased production of vehicles and increased use of consumer durable white goods in the last two decades and their rapid obsolescence shall generate large quantities of end of life products.
- This shall result in generation of continuous flow of large ferrous scrap for recycling in steel production.
- To address the issue of collecting such end of life products for increasing scrap generation in India and also to structure the informal recycling sector based on environmental and scientific fronts, a hub and the spoke model is promulgated.
WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Processing and recycling of Scrap products in scientific manners and setting up of an environmentally sound management system.

Sources: the Hindu.

***************************


CONTEXT:

The Union Cabinet approved the introduction of the Industrial Relations Code, 2019, in the Parliament.

THE DRAFT CODE:

The draft code on Industrial Relations was prepared after amalgamating, simplifying, and rationalizing the relevant provisions of following three Central Labour Acts namely:

♦ The Trade Unions Act, 1926
♦ The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946
♦ The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947

BENEFITS OF THE BILL:

❖ The Bill will set up of two-member tribunal instead of one member and introduce a concept that some important cases will be adjudicated jointly and the rest by a single member resulting in speedier disposal of cases.
❖ The Bill will let the re-skilling fund to be utilized for crediting to workers in the manner to be prescribed.
❖ Fixed Term Employment would not lead to any notice period, and payment of compensation on retrenchment excluded.
❖ It will empower the government officers to adjudicate disputes involving penalty as fines, thereby lessening the burden on the tribunal.
WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: benefits of the bill

Sources: the Hindu.

***************

VISIBLY ELUSIVE “BENGAL TREE FROG” GETS RECORDED AS NEW SPECIES

CONTEXT:

A new species of tree frog, discovered in West Bengal, has been named Brown Blotched Bengal Tree Frog (Polypedates bengalensis) due to a series of six to nine dark brown blotches present on its body.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- This frog is a classic case of an amphibian being elusive while in plain human sight for ages.
- Specimens of this frog were not discovered from deep jungles but from residential areas in two districts of West Bengal.
- Polypedates is a genus of tree frog found throughout South and Southeast Asia.
- It is a mid-sized tree frog and is the 26th species under the genus Polypedates.

WHY TREE FROGS ARE CALLED TREE FROGS?

The feature that unites them has to do with their feet, the last bone in their toes (called the terminal phalanx) is shaped like a claw. Tree frogs also have toe pads to help them climb.
and many have extra skeletal structures in their toes.

**SPECIES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES OF TREE FROG</th>
<th>SCIENTIFIC NAME</th>
<th>KNOWN AS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Polypedates assamensis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Polypedates bengalensis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Polypedates braueri</td>
<td>White-lipped tree frog or Java tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Polypedates chlorophthalmus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Polypedates colletti</td>
<td>whipping frog, black-spotted tree frog, or Collett’s tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Polypedates cruciger</td>
<td>Sri Lanka whipping frog or common hour-glass tree-frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Polypedates hecticus</td>
<td>Samara flying frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Polypedates impresus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Polypedates insularis</td>
<td>Nicobarese tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Polypedates iskandari Riyanto,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Polypedates leucomystax</td>
<td>common tree frog, four-lined tree frog, striped tree frog, &quot;white-lipped tree frog&quot; (formerly often in P. maculatus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Polypedates maculatus</td>
<td>common Indian tree frog, Chunam tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Polypedates macrotis</td>
<td>Bongao tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Polypedates megacephalus</td>
<td>spot-legged tree frog, Hong Kong whipping frog, &quot;brown tree frog&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Polypedates mutus)</td>
<td>northern treefrog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Polypedates occidentalis</td>
<td>western tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Polypedates otilophus</td>
<td>file-eared tree frog, Borneo eared frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Polypedates pseudocruciger</td>
<td>false hour-glass tree frog or yellow tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Polypedates pseudotilophus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Polypedates ranwellai</td>
<td>Ranwella's spined tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Polypedates taeniatus</td>
<td>Bengal whipping Frog, Bengal whipping tree frog, or Terai tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Polypedates subansiriensis</td>
<td>Subansiri's tree frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Polypedates bijui</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Polypedates zed</td>
<td>Nepalese tree frog or Narayanghat whipping frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Polypedates teraiensis</td>
<td>common tree frog, six-lined tree frog, Terai tree frog, or Perching frog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Bengal tree frog

Sources: the Hindu.

PUNJAB PRESERVATION OF SUBSOIL WATER ACT, 2009

CONTEXT:

The Punjab Preservation of Subsoil Water Act, 2009 is being blamed for contributing to the air pollution over Delhi and surrounding areas.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The law led to the sowing and transplantation of the summer paddy crop to be delayed by about a fortnight, and moved the harvesting season to end-October and early November — a time when the moist air and largely inactive wind systems cause particulate matter and gases from burning paddy stubble to hang in the atmosphere. This air is carried by northwesterly winds towards Delhi, which lies to the southeast of Punjab.

WHAT IS THE PUNJAB PRESERVATION OF SUBSOIL WATER ACT, 2009?

- The law aimed at conserving groundwater by mandatorily delaying the transplanting of paddy to beyond June 10, when the most severe phase of evapotranspiration (transfer of water from land to the atmosphere through evaporation from the soil and plant transpiration) is over.
- Farmers were forbidden from sowing paddy before May 10, and transplanting it before June 10.

WHY WAS THE LAW ENACTED?
There has been serious concern over the drastic fall in the water table in Punjab and the cultivation of paddy leads to over-exploitation of underground aquifers, as a very large number of tubewells (more than 14 lakh in 2015-16) running on free power pump out virtually endless amounts of water.

**WHAT IS THE LAW’S LINK WITH AIR POLLUTION?**

- Farmers’ organisations say late sowing and transplanting delays the harvesting as well (it is end-October by the time operations end), and they are left with a very small window to prepare their fields for the next (wheat) crop.
- In this situation, setting the stubble ablaze is a quick-fix solution. By this time, temperatures have started to fall, and a combination of atmospheric and meteorological conditions ensure that the smoke cannot disperse easily.
- A part of the smoke from the farm fires is carried by westerly winds towards the NCR and further down the Indo-Gangetic plain.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** THE PUNJAB PRESERVATION OF SUBSOIL WATER ACT 2009 and how it’s related with air pollution over Delhi

**Sources:** Indian Express.

*********************

**VIETNAM MOUSE-DEER**

**CONTEXT:**

Global Wildlife Conservation said that Vietnamese mouse deer was not seen by scientists for nearly 30 years, had been photographed in a forest in southern Vietnam.

**VIETNAM MOUSE-DEER:**

- Vietnam mouse-deer is also known as the silver-backed chevrotain.
- Vietnamese mouse deer is the rabbit-sized animal that is not a deer or a mouse but is the world’s smallest hoofed mammal.
- These animals are shy and solitary.
- They have two tiny fangs and appear to walk on the tips of their hooves, and have a silver sheen.
• It is treated as a subspecies of the greater mouse-deer.
• The animal is present only in Vietnam.
• Vietnam mouse-deer is among the 25 most wanted lost species that are focused on the Global Wildlife Conservation’s Search for Lost Species initiative.

**DISCOVERY:**

The Vietnam mouse-deer (scientifically Tragulus versicolor) first described in 1910 by Thomas, Michael Rogers Oldfield Thomas FRS FZS was a British zoologist.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: wildlife conservation, Lost Species initiative by the Global Wildlife Conservation’s Search

**Sources:** the Hindu.

***************************

**CONTEXT:**

Wildlife SOS, India-based conservation charity, unveiled India’s first elephant memorial in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

• The memorial is a unique way to honor elephants that lost their lives to illegal trafficking, abuse, and cruelty.
• Most elephants used in tourist rides and circuses suffer intense torture all through their lives.
• The memorial has stone boulders and black granite plaques with the names of some elephants, who suffered this fate, engraved on them.
The memorial will be a constant reminder that elephants belong in the wild, and they must be protected and conserved there. 
No wild animal deserves a life of brutality, such as that suffered by captive elephants in India.

WILDLIFE SOS:

- Established in: 1995
- Founder: Kartick Satyanarayan and Geeta Seshamani
- Objective of Wildlife SOS: To protect and preserve India's wildlife
- Type: Non-profit organization
- Services: Rehabilitation and rescue centres for wildlife conserve habitats for the animals

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: wildlife conservation

Sources: the Hindu.

PAMBA-ACHANKOVIL-VAIPPAR RIVER LINK PROJECT

CONTEXT:

The Kerala State government is saying that it is taking all precautions to prevent the implementation of the Pamba-Achankovil-Vaippar river link project.

ISSUE:

Kerala is not allowing Pamba-Achankovil to be connected with the Vaippar river in Tamil Nadu under the inter-linking of rivers project. Kerala asserts that there is no excess water in rivers in the state.

ABOUT PROJECT:

- The project was envisaged in 1995 for producing 500 MW of power for Kerala and irrigating the lands in Tamil Nadu.
• The river link proposal envisages the diversion of water from the Pamba and Achankovil rivers in Kerala to the Vaippar basin in Tamil Nadu.

BENEFITS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERLINKING RIVERS:

☐ Enhances water and food security of the country and it is essential for providing water to drought prone and water deficit areas.
☐ River interlinking projects envisage that the surplus water available in Himalayan Rivers is transferred to the areas where water supply is not adequate in the Peninsular India.
☐ The main occupation of rural India is agriculture and if monsoon fails in a year, then agricultural activities come to a standstill and this will aggravate rural poverty.
☐ The Ganga Basin, Brahmaputra basin sees floods almost every year. In order to avoid this, the water from these areas has to be diverted to other areas where there is scarcity of water. This can be achieved by linking the rivers.
☐ There is a two way advantage with this – floods will be controlled and scarcity of water will be reduced.
☐ Interlinking of rivers will also have commercial importance on a longer run. This can be used as inland waterways and which helps in faster movement of goods from one place to other.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: significance and drawbacks of river linking projects in India and how does it affect our environment?

Sources: the Hindu.

*******************************************************************************

CLIMATE CHANGE IS DAMAGING HEALTH OF CHILDREN, SAYS LANCET REPORT

CONTEXT:

Lancet Countdown Report 2019 on Health and Climate Change has been released on November 13, 2019.
KEY FINDINGS:

- Climate change in India may further append malnutrition levels and exacerbate infections caused due to cholera, stated the Lancet Countdown Report 2019 on Health and Climate Change.
- 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 under-5 deaths.
- With its huge population and high rates of healthcare inequality, poverty and malnutrition, few countries are likely to suffer from the health effects of climate change as much as India.
- Diarrhoeal infections, a major cause of child mortality, will spread into new areas, whilst deadly heatwaves, similar to the one in 2015 that killed thousands of people in India, could soon become the norm.
- Dangerous levels of outdoor fine particulate air pollution (PM 2.5) contributed to over 529,500 premature deaths in the country in 2016. More than 97,400 of these were from coal.

WARMING OCEANS:

The report, from research by 35 global institutions, listed a number of ways climate change threatens fisheries and aquaculture:

- Sea-surface temperature rise
- More intense and frequent extreme-weather events
- Sea-level rise
- Ocean acidification

Fish provided a fifth of animal protein to 5.2 billion people, especially those in low-income and middle-income countries.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Climate change effects and global warming, Lancet Countdown Report 2019

Sources: the Hindu.

AVIAN BOTULISM

CONTEXT:
Avian botulism is said to be the reason behind the deaths of 18,000 birds in and around Rajasthan’s Sambhar Lake.

WHAT HAPPENED AT SAMBHAR?

- As per the report, the avian botulism in Sambhar was caused by the climate.
- Fluctuating Water levels: Fluctuated throughout the year.
- Due to a good monsoon this year, the water level reached the lake bed after a gap of 20 years.

FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR BACTERIA:

The good monsoon provided a favorable environment for the bacteria to spread. The bacteria needs anaerobic (absence of oxygen) conditions and does not grow in acidic conditions.

NUTRIENT-RICH SUBSTRATE:

The lake also provided a nutrient-rich substrate, like areas with large amounts of decaying plant or animal materials. The monsoon brought with it a large population of crustaceans (like shrimps, crabs, and prawns), invertebrates (snails) and plankton (like algae), which are capable of hosting the bacteria for a long period of time.

WHAT HAPPENED NOW?

There are two theories:

1. The bacteria are also found in the gills and digestive tracts of healthy fish. It reproduces through spores and these spores remain dormant for years. They are resistant to temperature changes and drying. Under favourable conditions, the spores are activated. After the monsoon, when the water levels receded, there might have been an increase in salinity levels which could have led to the death of these living organisms. At this point in time, the spores could have been activated.
2. ‘A bird-to-bird cycle’ could also have led to the tragedy. In such an event, maggots feeding on dead birds can concentrate the toxin. Birds feeding on dead birds can get affected. This was observed in Sambhar too as researchers found only insectivorous and omnivorous birds affected and not herbivores.

WHAT NEED TO BE DONE?

The government should pass legislation in the Assembly to create a Sambhar Lake Development and Conservation Authority. This authority should be handed A to Z responsibility of Sambhar Lake.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Avian botulism
The government has said it is pushing Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh to make progress on the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project.

**WHAT’S THE ISSUE?**

The ₹18,000-crore project has been mired in several hurdles. The most recent one is a disagreement between the States on the share of water. There are outstanding environmental obstructions too. It involves deforesting a portion of the Panna Tiger Reserve.
ABOUT KEN- BETWA PROJECT:

- Conceived as a two-part project, this is the country’s first river interlinking project. It is perceived as a model plan for similar interstate river transfer missions.
- The project aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken river in MP to Betwa in UP to irrigate the drought-prone Bundelkhand region spread across the districts of two states mainly Jhansi, Banda, Lalitpur and Mahoba districts of UP and Tikamgarh, Panna and Chhatarpur districts of MP.

KEY FACTS:

- Ken and Betwa rivers originate in MP and are the tributaries of Yamuna.
- Ken meets with Yamuna in Banda district of UP and with Betwa in Hamirpur district of UP.
- Rajghat, Paricha and Matatila dams are over Betwa River.
- Ken River passes through Panna tiger reserve.

BENEFITS OF INTERLINKING:

1. Enhances water and food security.
2. Proper utilisation of water.
3. Boost to agriculture.
4. Disaster mitigation.
5. Boost to transportation.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: significance and drawbacks of river linking projects in India and how does it affect our environment?

Sources: the Hindu.

CONTEXT:

The tiger reintroduction project in Panna tiger reserve has completed a decade making it one of the best models of conservation in the world.
**PANNA TIGER AND BIOSPHERE RESERVE:**

- The Panna tiger reserve is situated in the Vindhyā mountain range in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh.
- Panna National Park is a national park located in Panna and Chhatarpur districts of Madhya Pradesh in India.
- It has an area of 542.67 km² (209.53 sq mi).
- It was declared in 1993 as the twenty second Tiger reserve of India and the fifth in Madhya Pradesh.
- It was designated as Biosphere Reserve on 25 August 2011.
- Panna was given the Award of Excellence in 2007 as the best maintained national park of India by the Ministry of Tourism of India.
- It is notable that by 2009, the entire tiger population had been eliminated by poaching with the collusion of forest department officials.
- Sal, crocodile bark, Arjun, jamun, etc are trees present here.

**BIOME:**

- Panna National Park and the surrounding territorial forest area of North and South Panna forest division is the only large chunk of wildlife habitat remaining in North Madhya Pradesh in the otherwise deciduous fragmented forest landscape of the region.
- The National Park is situated at a point where the continuity of the Tropical and subtropical dry broadleaf forests belt, which starts from Cape Comorin in South India, is broken and beyond this the Upper Gangetic Plains moist deciduous forests of the great Indo-Gangetic Plain begins.
- This area is the northernmost tip of the natural teak forests and the easternmost tip of the natural 'Kardhai' Anogeissus pendula forests.
- The forests of Panna National Park along with Ken Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary and adjoining territorial divisions form a significant part of the catchment area of the 406 km (252 mi) Ken River which runs northeast for about 72 km (45 mi) through the park.

**FLORA AND FAUNA:**

A biome is a community of plants and animals that have common characteristics for the environment they exist in. They can be found over a range of continents. Biomes are distinct biological communities that have formed in response to a shared physical climate.
The reserve has dry and short grass habitat with extensive open woodlands. Along the major seasonal streams and in the Ken river valley, lush vegetation can be seen. The tree species Acacia catachu dominates the dry steep slopes of the plateaus here. These habitats make for a heterogeneous landscape.

This Protected Area is very important because it links the eastern and western populations of wild animals through the Vindhyan ranges that run from north-east to south-west. Among the animals found here are the tiger, leopard, chital, chinkara, nilgai, sambhar and sloth bear.

The park is home to more than 200 species of birds including the bar-headed goose, honey buzzard, king vulture, blossom-headed parakeet, changeable hawk-eagle and Indian vulture.

**EFFECT OF KEN BETWA RIVER LINKING PROJECT:**

- Flowing from the south to the north through the reserve is the River Ken.
- These forests along with Ken Gharial Sanctuary form a significant part of the catchment area of this river.
- This river is one of the sixteen perennial rivers of Madhya Pradesh. It is the lifeline of this reserve and is the least polluted of Yamuna’s tributaries. The path of the meandering Ken offers some spectacular scenery.
- The Government of India along with Government of Madhya Pradesh and Government of Uttar Pradesh have planned to link the Ken River with Betwa River.
- This involves construction of 283m long Daudhan Dam.
- The project aims to transfer excess water from Ken basin to Betwa basin thus provide water access to the drought prone region of Bundelkhand.
- This construction will cause inundation of 400 hectares of land of 4300 hectare Panna Tiger reserve.
- Environmentalist is afraid that this will adversely affect the population of tigers in the region.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**
For prelims and mains: wildlife conservation, national parks and biosphere reserves of India

Sources: the Hindu.

“SUMATRAN RHINO” IS NOW EXTINCT IN MALAYSIA

CONTEXT:

The last Sumatran female rhinoceros, named Iman, in Malaysia died. With this, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Environment announced that Sumatran rhinoceros is now extinct in Malaysia.

ABOUT IMAN:

- Iman was captured in 2014 from the Danum Valley in the Malaysian state of Sabah, in the Malaysian-administered part of Borneo island.
- Since then, she had been living at the Borneo Rhino Sanctuary in the Tabin Wildlife Reserve, according to the Borneo Rhino Alliance.
- Iman’s death came just six months after the last male Sumatran rhino in Malaysia, Tam, died, also at the Borneo Rhino Sanctuary in Tabin Wildlife Reserve.

SUMATRAN RHINOCEROS:

- Sumatran rhinoceros also known as hairy rhinoceros, Asian two-horned rhinoceros is the smallest rhinoceros.
- The weight ranges from 500 to 1,000 kg. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has placed it in the critically endangered category of its red list.
- This species is inhabited in rainforests and cloud forests in India, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and China.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: wildlife conservation, rainforest
The 2nd International Conference on Sustainable Water Management was held in Pune on 6 November 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- India extracts half of the total groundwater used by the entire world. A study says that groundwater usage in India is more than the combined groundwater usage of the USA and China. The study of India’s groundwater aquifers is expected to be completed in the next two years.
- The conference highlighted the need for the states to work towards seamless data transfer on water.
- 89% of the water that is available in the country is used by the agriculture sector.
- The meeting suggested that saving about 5% to 10% of the water used by agriculture can help to meet the drinking water requirement of the country for the next 50 years.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: water conservation and Sustainable Water Management

Sources: the Hindu.
GUJARAT GOVERNMENT APPROVED
CNG TERMINAL IN BHAVNAGAR

CONTEXT:

The Gujarat government gave its approval for a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) terminal in Bhavnagar, Gujarat. It is expected that it would be the world’s first CNG port terminal.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CNG TERMINAL:

- The terminal will be developed jointly by Mumbai-based Padmanab Mafatlal Group and the UK-headquartered Foresight Group.
- The Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) signed an MOU with Foresight Group for the setting up of the port terminal at Bhavnagar in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit.
- The summit was held in January 2019.

CNG FACILITY:

- The investors also plan to develop a Ro-Ro terminal, liquid cargo terminal, and container terminal at Bhavnagar port.
- The proposed CNG port terminal will have a capacity to handle 1.5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA).
- The existing port at Bhavnagar has the capacity to handle three MMTPA cargo, and the new terminals will have the overall capacity to handle nine MMTPA.

FUND:

The consortium will invest Rs.1,300 crore in the first phase and Rs.600 crore in the second phase. For the implementation of CNG and other terminals on the north side of the existing port, the existing infrastructure is to be majorly restructured, including the construction of two lock gates, dredging in the water channel of the port basin, and off-shore infrastructure for CNG transportation.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Govt. initiative to protect our environment
PLASTIC PARKS IN INDIA

CONTEXT:

Odisha has become the first state to start working on developing a ‘Plastic Park’, located in Jagatsinghpur district.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- India’s domestic production meets only 50% of its demand for plastic, which is increasing with the growth of construction and infrastructure sector.
- Many construction companies are using plastic materials. The components used include everything from plastic screws and hinges to bigger plastic parts that are used in decoration, electric wiring, flooring, wall covering, waterproofing and so on.
- To reduce imports, the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers (MOCF), had formulated a scheme for setting up of four Plastic Parks in Assam (Tinsukia), Madhya Pradesh (Raisen), Odisha (Jagatsinghpur) and Tamil Nadu (Thiruvallur).
- Two plastic parks in the States of Jharkhand (Deogarh) and Madhya Pradesh (Bilaua) have also been given ‘final approval’ in 2018-19.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Plastic Parks in India, Govt. initiative to protect our environment

Sources: the Hindu.

************************************

ETALIN HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

CONTEXT:

The Centre has recommended a biodiversity study of the proposed 3,097 MW Etaliln Hydroelectric Project in Arunachal Pradesh
Pradesh by a credible international institute since the current environmental impact assessment was found to be “completely inadequate”.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- It involves diversion of 1,165.66 hectares of forest land for the construction of the mega project in the State’s Dibang Valley district
- The project, estimated to cost ₹25,296.95 crore, is proposed to be completed in seven years but would entail felling 2,80,677 trees
- The project threatens the existence of six globally-endangered mammal species. The area also has 680 species of birds, which is about 56% of the total avian species found in India.
- The project area falls under the “richest bio-geographical province of the Himalayan zone” and would be located at the junction of the Palaearctic, Indo-Chinese and Indo-Malayan bio-geographic regions.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: about the project

Sources: the Hindu.

NEW WATER POLICY

CONTEXT:

The government has finalized a committee to draft a new National Water Policy (NWP). The committee is expected to produce a report within six months.

WHY NEED NEW POLICY:

- There have been a lot of changes which need to be addressed and the prioritization of the water usage needs to be defined.
- Spring sets in Himalayas have been decreasing without any active step by the government.
- Revitalization of rivers needs to be brought in focus because many of our rivers and rivulets are drying and the policy parameters need to be set up accordingly.
• Technological innovations like censors, geographic information systems (GIS) and satellite imagery need to be introduced to modulate the water and track the flow.
• Budgeting needs to be done in a way that it covers all levels from the basin to sub basin.

NATIONAL WATER POLICY 2012:

❖ The NWP currently in force was drafted in 2012 and is the third such policy since 1987.
❖ Among the major policy innovations in the 2012 policy was the concept of an Integrated Water Resources Management approach that took the “river basin/ sub-basin” as a unit for planning, development and management of water resources.
❖ Minimum levels: It also proposed that a portion of river flows ought to be kept aside to meet ecological needs. Such an approach led to the government, in 2018, requiring minimum water levels to be maintained in the Ganga all through the year and hydropower projects, therefore, to refrain from hoarding water beyond a point.
❖ The policy also stressed for a minimum quantity of potable water for essential health and hygiene to all its citizens to be made available within easy reach of households.
❖ The policy also noted that inter-basin transfers of water should be considered on the basis of merits of each case after evaluating the environmental, economic and social impacts of such transfers.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: NATIONAL WATER POLICY 2012

Sources: the Hindu.

***************

SWACHH-NIRMAL TAT ABHIYAAN

CONTEXT:

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is undertaking a mass cleanliness-cum-awareness drive in 50 identified beaches under the “Swachh-Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan”, from 11th - 17th November, 2019

OBJECTIVE:

To make beaches clean and create awareness amongst about the importance of coastal ecosystems.
Environment Education Division of the Ministry and Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the aegis of MOEF&CC will be responsible for the overall coordination for the drive in 50 beaches.

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.

Collected waste will be processed as per extant Waste Management Rules, 2016.

The identified beaches are in 10 coastal States/Union Territories (UTs) namely Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: NATIONAL WATER POLICY 2012

Sources: the Hindu.

SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE TOWARDS AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION (SATAT) INITIATIVE

CONTEXT:

SATAT initiative has the potential of addressing environmental problems arising from stubble burning. The viability is based on techno commercial factors.

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE:
The initiative is aimed at providing a Sustainable Alternative towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) as a developmental effort that would benefit vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.

Compressed Bio-Gas plants are proposed to be set up mainly through independent entrepreneurs.

**HOW IT WORKS?**

- CBG produced at these plants will be transported through cascades of cylinders to the fuel station networks of OMCs for marketing as a green transport fuel alternative.
- The entrepreneurs would be able to separately market the other by-products from these plants, including bio-manure, carbon-dioxide, etc., to enhance returns on investment.
- This initiative is expected to generate direct employment for 75,000 people and produce 50 million tonnes of bio-manure for crops.

**There are multiple benefits from converting agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste into CBG on a commercial scale:**

1. Responsible waste management, reduction in carbon emissions and pollution.
2. Additional revenue source for farmers.
3. Boost to entrepreneurship, rural economy and employment.
4. Support to national commitments in achieving climate change goals.
5. Reduction in import of natural gas and crude oil.

**WHAT IS BIO-GAS?**

- Bio-gas is produced naturally through a process of anaerobic decomposition from waste / bio-mass sources like agriculture residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste, sewage treatment plant waste, etc.
- After purification, it is compressed and called CBG, which has pure methane content of over 95%.

**WHAT IS CBG?**

Compressed Bio-Gas is exactly similar to the commercially available natural gas in its composition and energy potential. With calorific value (~52,000 KJ/kg) and other properties similar to CNG, Compressed Bio-Gas can be used as an alternative, renewable automotive fuel.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

For prelims and mains: BIO-GAS and SATAT initiatives
CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) has released the first ‘Geochemical Baseline Atlas of India’ for environmental management.

AIM:
- The atlas aims to document the concentration and distribution of the chemical elements in the soils of India.
- It consists of 44 maps of metals, oxides, and elements present in top and bottom soils across India.

SIGNIFICANCE:
- Both human activities and natural processes are continuously modifying the chemical composition of our environment. Hence, it will help to assess the chemical compositional changes on the Earth’s surface.
- It will help the country to assess the presence of toxic chemicals in soil and how it varies from place to place. It also helps in identifying how soil pollution is contributing to groundwater contamination.
- Further, the map will also support in choosing the right soil that’s rich in certain micronutrient elements required for each plant growth.
- The geochemical data presented in these maps will be a part of the global map to be prepared by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGC).

WHAT’S IMPORTANT?

For prelims and mains: Geochemical Baseline Atlas of India, environmental management

Sources: the Hindu.
According to study, Global warming has altered a key weather system and that may be whetting cyclones in the Bay of Bengal, decreasing winter rain in north India and altering global rainfall patterns.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO) can be defined as an eastward moving ‘pulse’ of clouds, rainfall, winds and pressure near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days.
- MJO is a moving band of rain clouds that travels around the globe spanning 12,000–20,000 km across the tropical oceans.
- In its journey, it interacts with surface waters of the Indo-Pacific Ocean, the largest pool of warm water in the globe, and due to this the lifecycle of the MJO gets affected.
- The MJO clouds on average are spending only 15 days, instead of 19, over the Indian Ocean. This is affecting the global climate and thus rainfall over India.

**PHASES OF MADDEN–JULIAN OSCILLATION**

The MJO consists of two parts or phases.

**Enhanced rainfall (or convective) phase:**

Winds at the surface converge, and the air is pushed up throughout the atmosphere. At the top of the atmosphere, the winds reverse. Such rising air motion in the atmosphere tends to increase condensation and rainfall.

**Suppressed rainfall phase:**

Winds converge at the top of the atmosphere, forcing air to sink and, later, to diverge at the surface. As air sinks from high altitudes, it warms and dries, which suppresses rainfall.
It is this entire dipole structure that moves west to east with time in the Tropics, causing more cloudiness, rainfall, and even storminess in the enhanced convective phase, and more sunshine and dryness in the suppressed convective phase.

**IMPACT ON INDIAN MONSOONS**

- When it is over the Indian Ocean during the Monsoon season, it brings good rainfall over the Indian subcontinent.
- On the other hand, when it witnesses a longer cycle and stays over the Pacific Ocean, MJO brings bad news for the Indian Monsoon.

**WHAT’S IMPORTANT?**

**For prelims and mains:** The Madden–Julian Oscillation (MJO)

**Sources:** the Hindu.
Q1. Consider the following statements

1. Saudi Arabia is the largest supplier of crude oil to India
2. India aims to bring down its oil import to less than 50% by 2022 by replacing it with local Exploration, renewable energy and indigenous ethanol fuel.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 are correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding "sardar vallabhbhai patel"

1. In 1928– When the lands of farmers were seized after they refused to pay the extra tax to the Government, Patel helped the farmers by striking a deal between the government and farmers’ representatives.
2. Patel was also compelled to use coercion by launching ‘Operation Polo’ to liberate and integrate Hyderabad after the Nizam of Hyderabad entertained false hopes of either joining Pakistan or remaining independent.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q3. Consider the following statements about Fugitive Economic Offender.

1. A person is declared a Fugitive Economic Offender by a ‘Special Court’ set up under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), 2002
2. The property of a fugitive economic offender, including benami property, can be confiscated once he is declared so by the Special Court.
3. Properties abroad are not liable for confiscation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 2, 3
Q4. Consider the following statements regarding "Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)"

1. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region between the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.
2. India has denied joining the mega Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement as RCEP failed to address the negotiations raised by India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q5. Sudan’s first ever satellite for conducting research in military, economic and space technology has been launched by

A. China
B. Sudan
C. Russia
D. India

Q6. Consider the following statements

1. The first ever “BIMSTEC Ports” Conclave held at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, India.
2. The objective of BIMSTEC alliance was to harness trade and accelerated growth with mutual cooperation in different areas of common interest by utilising the regional resources and geographical advantage.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Both are correct.
C. None of the above.

Q7. In context to "India Justice Report 2019", Consider the following statements

1. It has been prepared by Tata Trusts in collaboration with Centre for social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Daksh, TISS-Prayas and Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.
2. Maharashtra has topped the list of 18 large-medium States in the overall first-ever ranking of Indian States on justice delivery.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q8. Consider the following statements regarding "kartarpur sahib corridor".

1. Indian pilgrims of all faiths and persons of Indian origin can use the corridor.
2. The travel will be Visa Free, Pilgrims need to carry only a valid passport.
3. The Corridor is open from dawn to dusk. Pilgrims travelling in the morning will have to return on the same day.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

A. 1,2
B. 2,3
C. 1,3
D. 1,2,3

Q9. CHAVANG KUT is a festival celebrated predominantly in which regions/state of India?

A. Jammu & Kashmir
B. Manipur
C. Rajasthan
D. None of the above

Q10. Consider the following statements regarding Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2019.

1. Ministry of Culture organised the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat initiative.
2. Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav is organized with intent to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Country in all its rich and varied dimensions, viz Handicrafts, Cuisine, Painting, Sculpture and Performing Arts—all in one place.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q11. Which of the following are the member states of Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO)?

1. Kazakhstan
Q12. Consider the following statements about **International Labour Organization** (ILO).

1. ILO is the only tripartite U.N. agency since 1919 that brings together governments, employers and workers of its member States.
2. India has ratified more than half of the ILO conventions.
3. ILO is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019.
4. Future of Work initiative was launched by ILO.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2, 3
B. 2, 3, 4
C. 1, 2, 3, 4
D. 1, 3, 4

Q13. Consider the following statements regarding **'One Nation One FASTag'** scheme.

1. FASTags use RFID technology to enable digital, contactless payment of tolls without having to stop at toll gates.
2. The scheme will be implemented on national and state highways throughout the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above

Q14. **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** is conducted by which body/organization?

A. NITI Aayog
B. CMIE (Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy)
C. NSSO (National Sample Survey Office)
D. None of the above

Q15. **National Health Profile** is released which body/organisation?
A. NITI Aayog  
B. WHO in collaboration with Ministry of Statistics & Programme implementation  
C. Central Bureau of Health Intelligence  
D. None of the above

Q16. **Dharma Guardian** is military exercise conducted between India and which other country?

A. UAE  
B. Sri Lanka  
C. Japan  
D. None of the above

Q17. Consider the following statements

1. Suranga Bawadi was built in the 16th century by Adil Shah-I of the Adilshahi dynasty of Bijapur.  
2. Suranga Bawadi is an integral part of the ancient Karez System of supplying water through subterranean tunnels.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.  
B. Only 2 is correct.  
C. Both are correct.  
D. None of the above.

Q18. Consider the following statements regarding **National Genomic Grid**.

1. National Genomic Grid will study genomic data of Tuberculosis (TB) patients from India.  
2. It will collect samples from Tuberculosis (TB) patients, through a network of pan-India collection centres by bringing all TB treatment institutions on board.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.  
B. Only 2 is correct.  
C. Both are correct.  
D. None of the above.

Q19. Consider the following statements regarding **LOTUS-HR programme**.

1. LOTUS-HR is an Indo-Israel partnership that aims for waste water management approach that will produce clean water which can be reused for various purposes.  
2. The second phase of LOTUS-HR programme will now treat 10,000 litres per day of sewage water in the Barapullah drain.  
3. It is supported by the department of biotechnology, ministry of science and technology, Government of India.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1,2  
B. 2,3  
C. 1,3  
D. 1,2,3

Q20. Consider the following statements regarding **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**.

1. IIP is estimated and published biannually by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO).
2. It is a composite indicator that measures the short-term changes in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to that in a chosen base period.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.  
B. Only 2 is correct.  
C. Both are correct.  
D. None of the above.

Q21. Consider the following statements about **Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS)**.

1. Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) are declared as per the provisions of Biological Diversity Act 2002.
2. Areas with High endemism and presence of keystone species can be declared as Biodiversity Heritage Sites.
3. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) will notify areas of biodiversity importance as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1,2  
B. 2,3  
C. 1,3  
D. 1,2,3

Q22. **DUSTLIK** is join military exercise conducted between India and

A. Kazakhstan  
B. Turkmenistan  
C. Uzbekistan  
D. Mongolia

Q23. **New Arrangement to Borrow (NAB)**, a funding mechanism, recently seen in news is related to which bank

A.  
B.  
C.  
D.  
A. World Bank
B. Asian Development Bank
C. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
D. International Monetary Fund

Q24. Consider the following statements regarding **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana**.

1. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan-Dhan Yojana (PM-KMY) is an old age pension scheme for all Farmers in the country.
2. It is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme for the entry age group of 18 to 40 years.
3. The farmers, who are also beneficiaries of PM-Kisan Scheme, will have the option to allow their contribution debited from the benefit of that Scheme directly.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 1, 3
C. 2, 3
D. 1, 2, 3

Q25. Consider the following statements about **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**.

1. It is a sister organization of the IMF.
2. It is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries.
3. Its goals are to increase sustainable agriculture opportunities, improve healthcare and education.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 1, 3
C. 2, 3
D. 1, 2, 3

Q26. Consider the following statements about **Ethanol**.

1. In India, ethanol is produced from sugarcane only.
2. It allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel.
3. Ethanol is considered as non-renewable fuel.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 2 only
C. 2, 3
D. 1, 2, 3
Q27. **Shirui Lily Festival**, recently seen in news is the state festival of

A. Manipur  
B. Tripura  
C. Assam  
D. Nagaland

Q28. India’s first **“Elephant Memorial”** is based in which state.

A. Madhya Pradesh  
B. Uttar Pradesh  
C. Assam  
D. Arunachal Pradesh

Q29. Consider the following statements about **“BHIM UPI”**

1. BHIM app has gone international with a pilot demo of BHIM UPI QR-based payments beginning at the ongoing Singapore FinTech Festival 2019.  
2. Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is Developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.  
B. Only 2 is correct.  
C. Both are correct.  
D. None of the above.

Q30. Consider the following statements about **“SWACHH – NIRMAL TAT ABHIYAAN”**

1. It aims to revive lakes in cities and create awareness amongst citizens about the importance of lakes in urban areas.  
2. It is launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).  
3. School/college students of Eco-clubs, district administration, institutions, volunteers and local communities are involved.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2  
B. 1, 3  
C. 2, 3  
D. 1, 2, 3

Q31. Consider the following statements regarding **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).**
1. The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the UN organization consisting of national parliaments.
2. The IPU facilitates parliamentary diplomacy and empowers parliaments and parliamentarians to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development around the world.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q32. Consider the following statements regarding 6th Schedule of Constitution of India.

1. It deals with the administration of the tribal areas in the states of Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram.
2. The governor is empowered to organise and re-organise the autonomous districts.
3. The Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019 seeks to increase the financial and executive powers of the Autonomous Councils in the Sixth Schedule areas.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 3 only
C. 1, 3
D. 2, 3

Q33. "Nadu-Nedu" programme has been launched to transform government schools into vibrant and competitive institutions, in which state.

A. Uttar pradesh
B. Andhra pradesh
C. Uttarakhand
D. Madhya pradesh

Q34. Consider the following statements regarding Green Crackers.

1. Green crackers contain fewer amounts of chemicals such as lithium, arsenic, barium and lead compared to regular crackers.
2. Green crackers release water vapour and don't allow the dust particles to rise.
3. In India, green crackers are researched and developed by scientists at DRDO.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2
B. 2 only
Q35. Consider the following statements regarding \textbf{Eurasian economic union}.

1. It is an international organization for regional economic integration.
2. It has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.
3. Russia, Belarus, Armenia and Uzbekistan are the Member-States of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 3
B. 1, 2
C. 2, 3
D. 1, 2, 3

Q36. Consider the following statements regarding \textbf{Marawah Island}, recently seen in news.

1. Marawah Island is located off the coast of Abu Dhabi.
2. The oldest known natural pearl in the world has been discovered on Marawah Island.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q37. Consider the following statements about \textbf{Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)}

1. It is established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
2. Recently it has proposed that foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) cannot be sold to children in school canteens/mess premises/hostel kitchens or within 50 m of the school campus.
3. Ministry of Food processing is the administrative Ministry of FSSAI.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below

A. 1, 2
B. 2, 3
C. 1, 3
D. All of the above
Q38. Consider the following statements about Alzheimer Disease

1. It is a progressive brain disorder whereby a person loses the ability to perform day-to-day activities.
2. India has approved the first home-grown drug “Oligomannate (GV-971)” for the treatment of “mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease (AD).

Select the correct statements

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q39. Consider the following statements

1. India’s per capita emissions were about 40% of the global average and contributed 7% to the global carbon dioxide burden.
2. India has promised to reduce the emission intensity of its economy by 33-35% by 2030, compared to 1991 levels.

Select the correct statements

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q40. Consider the following statements about Special 301 Report.

1. It is prepared annually by the World Bank.
2. The Report includes a list of “Priority Foreign Countries”, “Priority Watch List” and a “Watch List” countries which are judged on the basis of intellectual property laws.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q41. Consider the following statements about South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

1. It is an inter-governmental organization established in 1982 by South Asian Countries.
2. SACEP also acts as the Secretariat for the South Asian Seas Programme, which comes under the purview of UNEP’s Regional Seas Programme.
Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q42. Consider the following statements about National Green Tribunal

1. It is established under Environment Protection Act, 1986
2. It has the power of enforcement of any legal right relating to environment
Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

A. Only 1 is correct.
B. Only 2 is correct.
C. Both are correct.
D. None of the above.

Q43. Which of the following objectives is a part of Paris Climate Deal 2015?

1. To keep global temperatures “well below” 2.0C (3.6F) above pre-industrial times and “endeavour to limit” them even more, to 1.5C
2. To review each country’s contribution to cutting emissions every five years so they scale up to the challenge
3. For rich countries to help poorer nations by providing “climate finance” to adapt to climate change and switch to renewable energy.
Select the correct answer from codes given below

A. 1,2
B. 2,3
C. 1,3
D. 1,2,3

Q44. Consider the following statements regarding US-India Defence Technology and Trade Initiative.

1. It is a mechanism to make sure that senior leaders from both countries are engaged consistently to strengthen the opportunities in the field of defence.
2. It aims to strengthen India’s defence industrial base, exploring new areas of technological development and expanding U.S.-India business ties.
Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
Q45. Consider the following statements regarding Eco-sensitive zones.

1. Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) are areas notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
2. They act as a transition zone from areas of high protection to areas involving lesser protection.
3. Eco-Sensitive Zones are defined and mentioned in Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 3  
B. 2, 3  
C. 1, 2  
D. 1, 2, 3

Q46. Which country becomes the first in the world to introduce a new typhoid vaccine in an effort to combat a drug-resistant strain of the potentially fatal disease?

A. Pakistan  
B. India  
C. Bangladesh  
D. Myanmar

Q47. Consider the following statements about International Maritime Organization (IMO).

1. It is independent to United Nations.
2. It is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping.
3. India was re-elected as Member to the Council of the International Maritime Organization for two years (2018-19).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1, 2  
B. 2, 3  
C. 1, 3  
D. 1, 2, 3

Q48. Consider the following statements regarding TechSagar.
1. TechSagar is a consolidated and comprehensive repository of India’s cyber tech capabilities.
2. The National Cyber Security Coordinator’s office in partnership with Data Security Council (DSCI) of India launched TechSagar.
3. Data Security Council (DSCI) is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A. 1,2  
B. 2,3  
C. 1,3  
D. 1,2,3

Q49. Consider the following statements about India Justice Report

1. It is released by NITI Aayog
2. The report is based on publicly available data from different government entities on the four pillars of justice delivery — police, judiciary, prisons and legal aid.
3. Maharashtra has topped the list of 18 large-medium States in the overall ranking of Indian States on justice delivery.

Which of the above statements is/ are correct?

A. 1, 3  
B. 2, 3  
C. 1, 2  
D. 1, 2, 3

Q50. Which of the following countries are member countries of BIMSTEC?

1. Sri Lanka  
2. Malaysia  
3. Nepal  
4. Bangladesh  
5. China

Select the correct answer from codes given below

A. 1, 2,3 and 4 Only  
B. 1,3 and 4 Only  
C. 1,2 and 3 Only  
D. 1,2,3,4 and 5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION'S NUMBERS</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Nigeria is the largest supplier of crude oil to India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>When the lands of farmers were seized after they refused to pay the extra tax to the Government, Patel helped the farmers by striking a deal between the government and farmers’ representatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A person is declared a Fugitive Economic Offender by a ‘Special Court’ set up under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region between the ten member states of the Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>CHINA launched Sudan’s first ever satellite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>None of the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>India Justice Report 2019 Prepared By Tata Trusts In WHICH Maharashtra has been Topped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Kartarpur Sahib corridor connects Indian pilgrim with Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara situated in Pakistan without Visa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Chavang Kut or Kut festival is one of the most celebrated festivals of Manipur. It is also celebrated in Mizoram and Assam. The festival is celebrated by the tribes of Kuki-Chin-Mizo communities. Chavang Stands for 'autumn' and Kut mean 'harvest'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav organized by Ministry of culture with intent to showcase the rich cultural of India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Russia are the member states of Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>ILO celebrated 100th anniversary in 2019 by launching Future of Work initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Both are correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation conducted the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The 14th edition of National Health Profile and its e-book (digital version) has been released by the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Japan and India jointly conducted Dharma Guardian Military exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Suranga Bawadi was an example of Karez system built by Adil shah-I in 16th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>National Genomic Grid will study genomic data of cancer patients from India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>This program focuses on the reclamation of urban sewage water for multiple use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index which shows the growth rates in different industry groups of the economy in a stipulated period of time. The IIP index is computed and published by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) on a monthly basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) are well defined areas that are unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems – terrestrial, coastal and inland waters and, marine having rich biodiversity comprising of any one or more of the following components: richness of wild as well as domesticated species or intra-specific categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>DUSTLIK is joint military exercise conducted between India and Uzbekistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>NAB is related to International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana pension scheme for the entry age group of 18 to 40 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation (IFC) is the largest global development institution focused to increase sustainable agriculture opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Ethanol allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Shirui Lily Festival is celebrated in Manipur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Wildlife SOS, India-based conservation charity, unveiled India’s first elephant memorial in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>BHIM UPI, QR Based payment goes to FinTech Festival 2019, Singapore Developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 30 | C | "SWACHH – NIRMAL TAT ABHIYAAN" launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to involve...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Only 2 is correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>6th Schedule of Constitution of India is related with Autonomous Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Nadu-Nedu” programme has been launched in Andhra Pradesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Green crackers release water vapour and don’t allow the dust particles to rise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Eurasian economic union is an international organization for regional economic integration established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Marawah, the pearl Island is located off the coast of Abu Dhabi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>FSSAI is established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 proposed that food high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) cannot be sold within the 50 m of school campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Alzheimer Disease is a progressive brain disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Only 1 is correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Special 301 Report includes a list of “Priority Foreign Countries”, “Priority Watch List” and a “Watch List “countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is an inter-governmental organization also acts as the Secretariat for the South Asian Seas Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>National Green Tribunal has the power of enforcement of any legal right relating to environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>All are correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Both are correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) are areas notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Pakistan becomes the first in the world to introduce a new typhoid vaccine in an effort to combat a drug-resistant strain of the potentially fatal disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>IMO is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>All are correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Only 2 and 3 are correct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Nepal are member countries of BIMSTEC.