

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

**MONTH OF  
JULY-2019**



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CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UPSC IAS PREPARATION

01.07.2019

1. PUNCH Mission

- Dipankar Banerjee, an Indian solar physicist from Indian Institute of Astrophysics has been selected as a Co-Investigator of PUNCH mission by NASA.

## Related Information

PUNCH (Polarimeter to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere) Mission

- It will consist of a 'constellation' of four suitcase-sized microsats that will orbit the Earth in the formation and study how the corona, which is the atmosphere of the Sun, connects with the interplanetary medium.
- The objective of the mission is to image regions beyond the Sun's outer corona.
- It will help to track the solar wind and also the coronal mass ejections – which are huge masses of plasma that get thrown out of the Sun's atmosphere.
- The coronal mass ejections can affect and drive space weather events near the Earth.
- The mission is expected to be launched in 2022.

Note: India is planning to send up its own satellite Aditya-L1, a mission to study the Sun's corona.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- Indian Express

2. Dragonfly Mission

- US space agency NASA has announced that it will send a multi-rotor vehicle called 'Dragonfly' to Saturn moon Titan (Saturn's largest moon).
- The Dragonfly will fly to different locations on Titan looking for prebiotic chemical processes common to both Earth and Titan.

## About Titan

- The Titan is the largest moon of Saturn which is the solar system's second largest moon.
- The first largest moon being Jupiter's Ganymede.
- Titan has a nitrogen-based atmosphere like Earth. However, unlike Earth, Titan has clouds and rain of methane.
- The surface temperature at Titan is - 179 degrees Celsius. Further, its surface pressure is 50% higher than that of Earth's.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

3. HRD ministry releases EQUIP, a five-year vision plan to transform higher education

- HRD Ministry has finalized and released a five-year vision plan named Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP).
- This was done in accordance with the decision of the Prime Minister for finalizing a five-year vision plan for each Ministry.

## Goals of the Programme

It has the following goals for the higher education sector –

- Double the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education and resolve the geographically and socially skewed access to higher education institutions in India.
- Upgrade the quality of education to global standards.
- Position at least 50 Indian institutions among the top-1000 global universities
- Introduce governance reforms in higher education for well-administered campuses

- Accreditation of all institutions as an assurance of quality
- Promote Research & Innovation ecosystems for positioning India in the Top-3 countries in the world in matters of knowledge creation
- Double the employability of the students passing out of higher education
- Harness education technology for expanding the reach and improving pedagogy
- Promote India as a global study destination
- Achieve a quantum increase in investment in higher education

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-PIB

4. First Resilient Kerala Program

- Government of India, the Government of Kerala and the World Bank signed a Loan Agreement of USD 250 million for the First Resilient Kerala Program.
- In 2018 floods and landslides in Kerala led to severe impact on property, infrastructure, and lives and livelihoods of people.
- One-sixth of the State's population - about 5.4 million people - were affected while 1.4 million were displaced from their homes.

About the Program

- This program is part of the Government of India's support to Kerala's 'Rebuild Kerala Development Programme' aimed at building a green and resilient Kerala.
- The objective of the program is to enhance the State's resilience against the impacts of natural disasters and climate change.
- The aims of the program to support the State with –
  - Improved river basin planning and water infrastructure operations management, water supply and sanitation services, resilient and sustainable

agriculture, enhanced agriculture risk insurance etc.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-PIB

5. Tamil yeoman is now T.N.'s 'State Butterfly'

- Tamil Nadu government has now officially announced 'Tamil yeoman' or the 'Tamizh Maravan' as a State Butterfly.

Others state symbol of Tamil Nadu is

- State Tree - Palm
- State Bird - Emerald Dove
- State Flower - Gloriosa
- State animal - Nilgiri Tahr

Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

6. L 98-59b: A new planet discovered by NASA mission

- NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) has discovered the smallest planet called L 98-59b.
- The planet is between the sizes of Mars and Earth orbiting a bright, cool, nearby stars which are the tiniest of Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) finds so far.

About the New Planet

- L 98-59b is around 80% of Earth's size and about 10% smaller than the previous smallest planet discovered by TESS.
- The two other planets in the system namely L 98-59c and L 98-59d are around 1.4 and 1.6 times Earth's size respectively.

NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)

- It was launched in 2018 which is an all-sky survey mission that seeks to discover exoplanets around nearby bright stars.
- It had aboard through a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- The Hindu

7. India signs a Loan Agreement worth US\$ 400 Million with the World Bank to help Treat and Eliminate TB from India

- World Bank and the Government of India signed a Loan Agreement of \$400 Million to expand the coverage and the quality of interventions for the control of Tuberculosis (TB).
- The World Bank supported program will cover nine States of India.
- It will support the Government of India's National Strategic Plan to end TB in India by 2025.
- The global target for eliminating TB is 2030.

India's Step to eliminate Tuberculosis

- In 1993, the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) was launched, offering free diagnosis and treatment for patients, rescuing them from otherwise sure death.
- Tamil Nadu, an erstwhile global leader in TB research during the 1960s through the 1990s, will now become the global leader in TB control.
- World TB Day is observed on March 24 and the theme of World TB Day 2019 – 'It's time' – puts the accent on the urgency to act on the commitments made by global leaders to:
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has also launched a joint initiative "Find. Treat. All. #EndTB" with the Global Fund and Stop TB Partnership.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-Live Mint

8. RBI allows ARCs to buy financial assets from peers

- RBI has allowed asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) to buy financial assets from other such entities in which all such transactions have to settle in cash.

Related Information

Asset Reconstruction Company

- It is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad assets from banks and financial institutions so that the latter can clean up their balance sheet.

- Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 enacted in December 2002 provides the legal basis for the setting up ARCs in India.
- In view of the amendment to the SARFAESI Act, 2002, it has been decided to permit ARCs to acquire financial assets from other ARCs.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Financial Institutions  
 Source- The Hindu

9. China tests new ballistic missile

- China has successfully tested its latest submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), the JL-3.

JL-3 Ballistic Missile

- It has a range of around 14,000 kilometres, with a capacity to carry 10 independent guided nuclear warheads.

Ballistic missile

- A ballistic missile follows a ballistic trajectory to deliver one or more warheads on a predetermined target.
- These weapons are only guided during relatively brief periods of flight—most of their trajectory is unpowered, being governed by gravity and air resistance if in the atmosphere.
- Shorter range ballistic missiles stay within the Earth's atmosphere, while longer-ranged intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), are launched on a sub-orbital flight trajectory and spend most of their flight out of the atmosphere.
- These missiles are distinct category from cruise missiles, which are aerodynamically guided in powered flight.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence

Source- AIR

10. 'SHE Team' on the patrol in Odisha

- To ensure safety and security of young girls and women Odisha's Gajapati district police in Paralakhemundi has started a pilot project called the 'SHE Team'.

- SHE stands for 'Safety, Health and Environment'.
- This project is modelled on the lines of Hyderabad 'SHE Team'.
- It is headed by a lady sub-inspector and includes mobile patrolling teams.
- 'SHE Team' also seeks to prevent harassment of working women at workplaces and public places where they move for their job.
- It will also self-defence and cyberspace safety to young girls and children.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

02.07.2019

### 1. UGC approves new initiative STRIDE to boost research culture

- UGC has approved a new initiative - Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy (STRIDE) to boost research culture in the country.

Related Information

About the Scheme

- The scheme will strengthen research culture and innovation in colleges and Universities.
- STRIDE will help students and faculty to contribute towards India's developing economy with the help of collaborative research.
- The initiative will provide support to research projects that are socially relevant, locally need-based, nationally important and globally significant.
- STRIDE will also support research capacity building as well as basic, applied and transformational action research that can contribute to national priorities with a focus on inclusive human development.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Important Scheme

Source- AIR

### 2. Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN)

- Nagaland government has decided to set up a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN) with the aim of preventing fake indigenous inhabitant's certificates.
- The RIIN will be the master list of all indigenous inhabitants of the state which is based on the NRC which has been done in Assam.
- The preparation of the list will start from July 10, 2019, and the whole process will be completed within 60 days.

What will the unique identity look like?

- Based on the adjudication and verification, a list of indigenous inhabitants will be finalised and each person will be given a unique ID.
- The final list or the RIIN will be created and its copies will be placed in all villages and ward.
- All indigenous inhabitants of the state would be issued a barcoded and numbered Indigenous Inhabitant Certificate.
- The process will be conducted across Nagaland and will be done as part of the online system of Inner Line Permit (ILP), which is already in force in Nagaland.

How will the RIIN be updated?

- Once the RIIN is finalised, no fresh indigenous inhabitant certificates will be issued except to newborn babies born to the indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland.

Inner Line Permit (ILP)

- It is an official travel document required by Indian citizens residing outside certain "protected" states while entering them.
- It is issued by the Government of India and is obligatory for all those who reside outside the protected states.

- With the ILP, the government aims to regulate movement to certain areas located near the international border of India.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

### 3. Abu Dhabi to host first ISA's joint security exercise ISALFX19

- Representatives of 50 law enforcement agencies of the International Security Alliance are taking part in the first joint security exercise in Abu Dhabi.
- The exercise will simulate a real-life security threat in a virtual context to test the readiness of the different teams and to evaluate the tools, strategies and procedures developed jointly between member countries since the launch of the Alliance in 2017.

Related Information

International Security Alliance

- It is an international working group to confront organised, transnational and extremist crimes which have been launched in 2017 in Abu Dhabi.
- The alliance now comprises nine countries, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, France, Italy, Spain, Senegal, Singapore, and the Slovak Republic.
- The participants include representatives from tactical teams, rapid intervention units, communications, civil defence, and explosive ordnance disposal, teams.

Topic-GS Paper 3–International Organisation

Source- The Hindu

### 4. India signs 200 crore anti-tank missile deal with Russia

- India has signed a deal with Russia for buying 'Strum Ataka' anti-tank missiles for its fleet of Mi-35 attack helicopters.
- The deal for acquiring 'Strum Ataka' anti-tank missiles was signed with Russia under the emergency clauses.

Related Information

- The IAF has earlier acquired the Spice 2000 guided bombs and various other

bombs & missiles under these provisions to equip itself with sudden war.

- The Army is also acquiring the Spike-LR Anti-Tank Missiles from Israel and Iglu-S Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORAD) from Russia under the same provisions.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- Indian Express

### 5. DASTAK CAMPAIGN

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister launched the DASTAK campaign to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease.
- The campaign will run from 1st to 31st July.
- Under this state-wide campaign, teams will go door to door in every village of the 75 districts of the state to create awareness about the communicable diseases as well as Acute Encephalitis Syndrome and Japanese Encephalitis.

Related Information

Japanese Encephalitis

- It is a mosquito-borne viral infection.
- It is the leading cause of viral encephalitis in Asia.
- Migratory birds along with pigs in the community play an important role in the transmission of JE from one area to another.
- It does not spread from one person to another.
- There is no cure for the disease and the treatment is focused on relieving severe clinical signs and supporting the patient to overcome the infection.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Governance

Source- TOI

### 6. WHO launches its first guidelines on self-care interventions for health

- WHO has launched its first guidelines on self-care interventions for health.
- The guideline is formed in response to an estimate that by 2035 the world will face a shortage of nearly 13

million healthcare workers and the fact that currently, at least 400 million people worldwide lack access to the most essential health services.

- In its first volume, the guidelines focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Some of the interventions include
  - (a) Self-sampling for human papillomavirus (HPV) and sexually transmitted infections
  - (b) Self-injectable contraceptives
  - (c) Home-based ovulation predictor kits
  - (d) Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) self-testing
  - (e) Self-management of medical abortion.
- These guidelines look at the scientific evidence for health benefits of certain interventions that can be done outside the conventional sector, although sometimes with the support of a health-care provider.
- They do not replace high-quality health services nor are they a shortcut to achieving universal health coverage.
- The WHO has noted that supporting self-care interventions has the potential to
  - a) strengthen national institutions to maximize efficient use of domestic resources for health
  - b) create health sector innovations by digital and m-health approaches
  - c) improve access to medicines and interventions through optimal interfacing between health systems and sites of health care delivery.

Topic-GS Paper 3–International Organisation  
 Source- Down to Earth

7. Government plans a cow circuit to boost tourism
  - Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog has decided to promote a cow-based tourism economy which will wind through places in the country which breed indigenous cows.

- The board has identified states like Haryana, UP, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Goa for this circuit.
- At these places, the importance of indigenous cows will also be propagated to attract researchers.
- Further, the tourist places will also sell cow-based products which will help boost the cow-based economy.

Related Information

Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog

- It was announced during interim budget in February 2019 for Conservation protection and development of cows & their progeny.
- It works under Department of Animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries.

Functions of the Aayog:

- Provide the policy framework and direction to the cow conservation and development programmes
- Ensure proper implementation of laws with respect to the welfare of cows.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- TOI

8. An app that will track your carbon footprint

- Maharashtra Chief Minister announced that the State government will soon launch an application which will track citizens' carbon footprint and reward those who achieve an emission neutral status.
- The aim of the application is to reduce pollution and carbon emission in Maharashtra.
- The footprints of an individual, as per the app, will include his use of electricity, air conditioning, kitchen activities among others.

Related Information

India Steps to reduce the Carbon footprint

- India has promised international organisations to bring India's pollution levels to 2005 levels by 2030.

- India's aim to generate 175 GW (gigawatt) of renewable energy by 2022, of which 100 GW is to be solar.
- India has, as part of the Paris Summit, promised to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 20% to 25%.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

9. Japan Resumes Commercial whaling

- Japan has resumed its commercial whaling after 30 years.
- Japan has now withdrawn from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) so is no longer subject to its rules.

Related Information

International Whaling Commission

- It is an international body set up by the terms of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW).
- It provides for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus makes possible the orderly development of the whaling industry".
- The IWC allows non-zero whaling quotas for aboriginal subsistence and also member nations may issue 'Scientific Permits' to their citizens.
- The main duty of the IWC is to keep under review and revise as necessary the measures laid down in the Schedule to the Convention which governs the conduct of whaling throughout the world.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –International Organisation

Source- The Hindu

10. Need to reduce centrally sponsored schemes to improve spending: N K Singh

- Fifteenth Finance Commission Chairman N K Singh has said the number of centrally sponsored schemes currently exceeds 150 that need to be reduced for better spending, as revenue buoyancy in indirect taxes remains weak.

Related Information

Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Scheme

- Central sector schemes are 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the Central Government machinery.
- Central sector schemes are mainly formulated on subjects from the Union List.
- They account for 11% of the Central Government's expenditure.
- In Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) a certain percentage of the funding is borne by the States and the implementation is by the State Governments.
- Centrally Sponsored Schemes are formulated in subjects from the State List to encourage States to prioritize in areas that require more attention.
- They account for 10% of Central governments expenditure.
- Usually, Centrally Sponsored Schemes are revisited at the end of each five year plan period.
- However, after the discontinuation of the Five Year Plan, it has been decided that the sunset date will be coterminous with Finance Commission Cycles.
- All the 28 centrally sponsored schemes have Sunset clauses except MGNREGA under Ministry of Rural Development.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

11. Centre constitutes chief ministers' panel for agriculture reforms

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis will be the convenor of the committee, while the chief ministers of Karnataka, Haryana, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have been included as members.

- Union Agriculture, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister will also be a member of the committee.
- Besides, NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand has been named the Member Secretary.
- The Committee will discuss measures for the transformation of agriculture and raising farmers' income.
- It will suggest the modalities for adoption and time-bound implementation of agriculture sector reforms.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Agriculture

Source- AIR

03.07.2019

1. India, Russia abstain UN resolution on torture

- India joined ranks with Russia and 42 other nations to abstain from voting on a General Assembly resolution aimed at examining options to end the trade in goods used for capital punishment and torture.
- The 193-member UN General Assembly adopted the resolution Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards.
- India abstained from voting on the resolution.

Related Information

United Nations Convention against Torture

- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment is an international human rights treaty, under the review of the United Nations.
- It aims to prevent torture and other acts of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment around the world.

- The Convention requires states to take effective measures to prevent torture in any territory under their jurisdiction and forbids states to transport people to any country where there is a reason to believe they will be tortured.

Topic-GS Paper 2–Important Convention

Source-PIB

2. U.S. Senate Bill grants India NATO ally-like status

- The U.S. Senate has passed a legislative provision that brings India at par with America's NATO allies and countries such as Israel and South Korea for increasing defence cooperation.
- The National Defense Authorisation Act, or NDAA, for the fiscal year 2020, which contained such a proposal, was passed by the U.S. Senate.

What does it mean for India-US relations?

- The amendment provides for increased US-India defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean in the areas of humanitarian assistance, counterterrorism, counter-piracy and maritime security.
- The "upgrade" will also smoothen the passage of sales to India of high-end US military hardware with New Delhi signing foundational compatibility, logistical, and security and secrecy agreements required by Washington for such transactions.
- The US has already given India Strategic Trade Authorization-1(STA Tier-1) status, a move that facilitates the exchange of high technology and strengthens defence collaboration.
- The proposed legislation follows the NDAA, which, when taken together, would reflect the long way that India-US relations have come since the Cold War.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- It is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.
- NATO constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.
- NATO's Headquarters are located in Haren, Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium.
- NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) maintains foreign relations with many non-member countries across the globe.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –International Organisation

Source- Economics Times

### 3. Classical status for Marathi being considered

- Union Minister of State (independent charge) Culture and Tourism said that the proposal for granting Marathi the status of a classical language was under "active consideration."

Related Information

Classical Languages

- In 2004, the Government of India declared that languages that met certain requirements could be accorded the status of a "Classical Language in India".
- Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia are the six languages so far considers as the classical language.

Classical Languages of India Criteria

- High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500–2000 years.
- A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.
- The literary tradition should be original and not borrowed from another speech community.
- The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there

may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

### 4. Europe heatwave: What caused record temperatures, why it is a concern

- Gallargues-le-Montueux in southern France hit an all-time high of 45.9°C during the last week which has recorded its all-time hottest temperature amid a European heat wave.

Heat waves

- According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the heatwave in Europe is a result of warm air masses from Africa.
- The heatwave is consistent with climate scenarios which predict more frequent, drawn out and intense heat events as greenhouse gas concentrations lead to a rise in global temperatures.
- There is no universally accepted definition of a heat wave, due to variations in climate conditions in different world regions.
- Generally, a heat wave is defined as a period of abnormally high temperatures-more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs during the summer season.
- Indian Metrological Department considers heat wave when the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C or more for Plains, 37°C or more for coastal stations and at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions.

How the Indian Metrological Department define Heat waves?

- Where the normal maximum is 40°C or less, the heatwave departure from normal is 5°C to 6°C and the severe heatwave departure is 7°C or more.
- Where the normal maximum is more than 40°C, the heatwave departure from normal is 4°C to 5°C while the

severe heatwave departure is 6°C or more.

- In places where the maximum temperature reaches 45°C or more, the IMD declares a heatwave irrespective of the normal.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

5. A grassroots movement against drugs: 'Vimukthi'

- Kerala excise department implemented a project under the department's initiative 'Vimukthi', Kerala State Mission for De-addiction.
- It will conduct awareness campaigns against alcoholism and drug abuse.
- The process of enlisting willing and young volunteers aged between 18 and 40 years who are not into any kind of intoxicants is now underway at the ward-level.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

6. Centre ratifies the convention to curb company profit shifting

- The government ratified the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty to curb base erosion and profits shifting (BEPS).
- It helps to stop companies from moving their profits out of the country and depriving the government of tax revenue.
- The convention measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (multilateral instruments (MLI)), which was signed by the Finance Minister in Paris in 2017.
- Base erosion and profit shifting refer to the phenomenon where companies shift their profits to other tax jurisdictions, which usually have lower rates, thereby eroding the tax base in India.

Background:

- The Convention is one of the outcomes of the OECD/G20 project, of which India is a member, to tackle base erosion and profit shifting.

- The Convention enables countries to implement the tax treaty related changes to achieve anti-abuse BEPS outcomes through the multilateral route without the need to bilaterally re-negotiate each such agreement which is burdensome and time-consuming.
- The Convention will modify India's treaties in order to curb revenue loss through treaty abuse and base erosion and profit shifting strategies by ensuring that profits are taxed where substantive economic activities generating the profits are carried out and where value is created.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics

Source- Economics Times

7. Korean Demilitarized Zone

- US President Donald Trump became the first sitting U.S. president to set foot in North Korea when he met its leader, Kim Jong Un, in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas and agreed to resume stalled nuclear talks.

Related Information

Korean Demilitarized Zone

- The Korean Demilitarized Zone dividing the Korean Peninsula into North Korea and South Korea.
- The Korean Demilitarized Zone is a strip of land running across the Korean Peninsula which is 4 km wide and 240 km long.
- It is established by the provisions of the Korean Armistice Agreement to serve as a buffer zone between North Korea and South Korea.
- It was created by agreement between North Korea, China and the United Nations Command in 1953.
- Within the DMZ is a meeting point between the two nations in the small Joint Security Area (JSA) near the western end of the zone, where negotiations take place.

04.07.2019

- There have been various incidents in and around the DMZ, with military and civilian casualties on both sides.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- TOI

8. UP govt orders shifting 17 OBCs to SC list 'unconstitutional': Centre

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment said that the Uttar Pradesh government's move to shift 17 Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to the Schedule Caste list is unconstitutional.
- Under Article 341(2) of the Constitution, the power to make changes in the SC list lies only with Parliament.

Related Information

Article 341

- Article 341 of the Constitution provides certain privileges and concessions to the members of Scheduled Castes.
- Under the provision of Article 341, the first list of SCs in relation to a states/UT is to be issued by a notified Order of the President after consulting concerned state Government.
- But the clause (2) of Article 341 envisages that any subsequent inclusion in or exclusion from the list of Scheduled Castes can be effected through an Act of Parliament.
- So far, Six Presidential Orders were issued between 1950 and 1978 for specifying Scheduled Castes in respect of various States/Union territories.
- These Orders have been amended from time to time by Acts of Parliament enacted as per Article 341(2) of the Constitution between 1956 and 2016.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

1. NASA tests the launch-abort system for moon mission

- NASA carried out a successful test of a launch-abort system for the Orion capsule designed to take U.S. astronauts to the Moon.

Related Information

About Orion

- NASA's Orion spacecraft is built to take humans farther than they've ever gone before.
- Orion will serve as the exploration vehicle that will carry the crew to space, provide emergency abort capability, sustain the crew during the space travel, and provide safe re-entry from deep space return velocities.
- Orion will launch on NASA's new heavy-lift rocket, the Space Launch System.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- The Hindu

2. Benefits of Kisan Credit Card extended to fishermen

- The government announced that the benefits of Kisan Credit card extended to inland fisheries as well as marine fisheries to meet their short-term requirements under the revised Kisan Credit Card Scheme.

Related Information

Kisan Credit Card (KCC)

- It was introduced in 1998-99 to fulfil the financial requirements of the farmers at various stages of farming through institutional credit.
- The KCC scheme is being implemented by the all Co-operative banks, Regional Rural Banks and public sector banks throughout the country.
- NABARD monitors the scheme in terms of the Cooperative Banks & RRBs and RBI in respect of Commercial Banks.
- The scheme was prepared on the recommendation of R.V Gupta committee.

Objectives of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme;

1. To provide institutional credit to the farmers at the cheap rate of interest
2. To provide credit at the time of requirement
3. To support Post-harvest expenses
4. Working capital for maintenance of farm assets and activities allied to agriculture
5. Investment credit requirement for agriculture and allied activities (land development, pump sets, plantation, drip irrigation etc.)
6. Consumption requirements of farmers

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- India Today

### 3. Non-Communicable Diseases In India

- Indian Council of Medical Research released the report entitled "India: Health of the Nation's States", Contribution of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)
- According to the report, total death in the Country due to NCDs was 61.8% in 2016, as compared to 37.9% in 1990.

Related Information

Non-communicable diseases

- These are a group of diseases that affect individuals over an extended period of time causing socio-economic burden to the nation.
- There are five types of primarily Noncommunicable diseases -
  - (a) Cancer,
  - (b) Chronic respiratory disease,
  - (c) Stroke
  - (d) Cardiovascular diseases and
  - (e) Diabetes
- Diabetes is responsible for a majority of morbidity and mortality in the country.
- Mental health and injuries also have a considerable burden.
- NCDs cause 61% of deaths in India states WHO report
- Cardiovascular diseases are at the top, in 2016 a staggering 28.1% of all deaths in India were caused by heart conditions.

Government initiatives to Curb Non-communicable disease

- India has shown commitment towards Preventing Non-communicable Diseases as it became the first country to adopt the WHO's Global Monitoring Framework on Non-communicable Diseases.

NPCDCS

- National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) under the National Health Mission (NHM) is an effort by Central Government which supplements State Governments effort.
- The objectives of the programme include health promotion activities and opportunistic screening for common NCDs including cancer.

AMRIT STORE

- Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) Deendayal outlets have been opened different Institutions/Hospitals.
- Its objective is to make available Cancer and Cardiovascular Diseases drugs and implants at discounted prices to the patients.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

### 4. Economic Survey 2018-19 Highlights

- GDP growth in the country has averaged 7.5 percent over the past five years.
- The growth rate of FY20 GDP is estimated at 7%. This could assist the nation to regain the label of the fastest-growing major economy in the world, as this growth rate will assist India to overtake China.
- General fiscal deficit was 5.8 percent in FY19 (was estimated at 3.4 %) vs. 6.4 percent in FY18.
- To attain the goal of becoming a USD 5 trillion economy, India must maintain an average growth rate of 8 percent.

Topic- GS-3- Indian Economy

Source-PIB

5. World Skills India "International Cloud Computing Challenge"

- The first ever International Cloud computing challenge called the "World Skills India"-International Cloud Computing Challenge, 2019 is being held in India.
- The completion is being hosted under the aegis of NASSCOM and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- Along with India 9 other countries New Zealand, Belgium, Japan, China, South Korea, -Singapore, Russia, Oman and Ireland are participating in the cloud computing competition.
- Cloud computing is the delivery of different services through the Internet.
- The services are broadly divided into three categories:
  - Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS),
  - Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS)
  - Software-as-a-Service (SaaS).

Related information

"World Skills India"

- It is an initiative launched by National Skill Development Corporation by in 2011.

- It seeks to provide a platform to the youth, along with industries and educators to compete, experience, learn and develop key professional skill sets required for Industry 4.0

National Skill Development Corporation

- It is a not-for-profit public limited company.
- NSDC was set up by the Ministry of Finance as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.
- It aims to promote skill development by catalysing the creation of large, quality and for-profit vocational institutions.
- The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) holds 49% of the share capital of NSDC, while the private sector has the balance of 51% of the share capital.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

6. Heat stress sings India most: ILO Report

- India's workforce has been the worst-affected by heat stress, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- The rise in body heat from working and environmental conditions will lead to a productivity loss of 2.2 per cent of total working hours around the world by 2030.
- Due to heat stress, Indian is projected to lose 5.8 per cent of working hours in 2030.
- Working on a Warmer Planet India will be felt in the agricultural sector; more and more working hours are expected to be lost in the construction sector.

Heat stress

- It is defined as heat in excess of what the body can tolerate without suffering physiological impairment.
- It generally occurs at temperatures above 35°C, in high humidity.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- Down to Earth

05.07.2019

7. Six Himalayan glaciers receding in the range of 13 to 33 mm per year: Govt
- NCPOR has recently monitored six Himalayan glaciers which have been retreating in the range of 13 to 33 millimetres per year.
  - These six glaciers are- Sutri Dhaka, Batal, Bara Shigri, Samudra Tapu, Gepang Gath and Kunzum are monitored for mass, energy and hydrological balance.

NCPOR studies on Himalayan glaciers

- The NCPOR under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has undertaken studies in the Western Himalaya in Chandra basin in Lahaul-Spiti (Himachal Pradesh) since 2013.
- The studies carried out by NCPOR in Chandra basin indicates varying rates of retreat of these glaciers in the range 13 to 33 mm per year.
- The rate of melting varies from glacier to glacier depending on topography and climatic variability of the region.

National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)

- Formerly known as the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research is an Indian research and development institution, situated in Vasco, Goa.
- It is an autonomous Institution of the Department of Ocean Development (DOD), Government of India which is responsible for administering the Indian Antarctic Programme and maintains the Indian government's Antarctic research station, Maitri.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- Down to Earth

1. Key Highlights of Budget 2019-20

2. Scheme of Fund for Upgradation and Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)

- The government aims to set up more Common Facility Centres (CFCs) under the Scheme SFURTI.
- Presenting the Union Budget 2019-20 in the Lok Sabha, Finance Minister said this will facilitate cluster-based development to make the traditional industries more productive, profitable and capable for generating sustained employment opportunities.
- The focused sectors are Bamboo, Honey and Khadi clusters.
- SFURTI envisions setting up of 100 new clusters during 2019-20 to enable 50,000 artisans to join the economic value chain.

Topic- GS-2- Government Schemes

Source-PIB

3. Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industry and Entrepreneurship' (ASPIRE)

- The Scheme has been consolidated for setting up of Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) and Technology Business Incubators (TBIs).
- The Scheme contemplates setting up 80 Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) and 20 Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) in 2019-20 to develop 75,000 skilled entrepreneurs in agro-rural industry sectors.

Topic- GS-2- Government Schemes

Source-PIB

4. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- The Department of Fisheries will establish a robust fisheries management framework.
- This will address critical gaps in strengthening the value chain, including infrastructure, modernization, traceability, production, productivity, post-harvest management, and quality control.

Topic- GS-2- Government Schemes

Source-PIB

5. Indo-French Joint Air Exercise Garuda-VI

- It is a bilateral air exercise between India and France which is taking place at Mont de Marsan in France.
- The last edition of a joint exercise between IAF-FAF was held in June 2014 at Air Force Station Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- The aim of the exercise to enhancing interoperability level of French and Indian crews in air defence and ground attack missions.

Other Bilateral Exercise between India and France

- Varuna 2018 - India-France Joint Naval Exercise
- SHAKTI - It's a joint military exercise.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- Indian Express

6. State Of The Education Report For India-2019: Children With Disabilities

- UNESCO and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) released State Of The Education Report For India-2019.

Highlights of the Report

- The report highlighting accomplishments and challenges with regards to the right to education of children with disabilities.
- The report is citing Census 2011 data which showed that there are more than 78 lakh children with disabilities in the country between 5-19 years.
- 27% of children with disabilities between ages 5 and 19 in India have never attended any educational institution, while around 75% of five-year-olds with disabilities are not in school.
- The report also reveals that there are fewer girls with disabilities in school than boys.
- The report attributes the low numbers of such children in schools due to the lack of accessible physical infrastructure, school processes, assistive technologies, information and communication technology and devices.
- The report also recommended amending the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 to make it align with the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Important Reports

Source- Indian Express

7. Longest Electrified Railway Tunnel

- South Central Railway commissioned the longest electrified tunnel in Indian Railways.
- The tunnel is measuring 6.6 kilometres is situated between Cherlopalli and Rapuru stations.
- The electrified tunnel is constructed on the basis of the New Australian Tunnelling Method.

- The new line would facilitate direct and viable connectivity between the South Coast and West Coast Railway and improve freight revenue of the zone.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Geography (Infrastructure)

Source- The Hindu

8. Bangladesh declares its rivers 'legal persons'

- Bangladesh's high court has granted the country's rivers the rights and status of "living entities" in a bid to save them from encroachment.
- Bangladesh became the fourth nation after Colombia, India and New Zealand to honour its waterways with such status.
- The court appointed the country's River Conservation Commission as the legal guardian of all waterways and directed other state agencies to fully assist them.
- Most of Bangladesh's rivers are branches and tributaries of two main Himalayan rivers -- the Ganges and the Brahmaputra which flow through Bangladesh before reaching the Bay of Bengal.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- TOI

08.07.2019

1. Jaipur gets UNESCO World Heritage tag
  - The Walled City of Jaipur made its entry into the UNESCO World Heritage Site list at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, underway at Baku (Azerbaijan).
  - India has now 38th UNESCO World Heritage Site (that include 30 Cultural properties, 7 Natural properties and 1 mixed site).
  - The list of World Heritage sites is maintained by World Heritage Programme which is administered by

the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

- Criteria for Selection of World Heritage Sites are explained in the World Heritage Convention, 1972.

Related Information

Pink City Jaipur

- The historic walled city of Jaipur in Rajasthan was founded in 1727 AD under the patronage of Sawai Jai Singh II.
- It serves as the capital city of the culturally-rich state of Rajasthan.
- The City of Jaipur is an exceptional urban example in indigenous city planning and construction in South Asia.
- Its iconic monuments such as the Govind Dev temple, City Palace, Jantar Mantar and Hawa Mahal excel in artistic and architectural craftsmanship of the period.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

2. Deep-CEE: an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tool

- Researchers have developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered tool that has been trained to "look" at colour images and identify galaxy clusters quickly.
- The "Deep-CEE" (Deep Learning for Galaxy Cluster Extraction and Evaluation) model is based on neural networks, which are designed to mimic the way a human brain learns to recognize objects by activating specific neurons when visualizing distinctive patterns & colours.
- Galaxy clusters represent the most extreme environments that galaxies can live in and studying them can help us better understand dark matter and dark energy.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Science daily

3. New Space India Ltd. incorporated as a new commercial arm of D/o Space

- In Union Budget 2019-20, the government announced a Public Sector Enterprise viz. New Space India Limited (NSIL) as a new commercial arm of Department of Space.

Related Information

New Space India Limited

- It is a Public Sector Enterprise - incorporated as a new commercial arm of Department of Space to tap the benefits of R & D carried out by ISRO.
- It helps to harness India's space power commercially.
- It also spearheads commercialization of space products including the production of launch vehicles, transfers to technologies and marketing of space products.
- NSIL will act in the presence of another commercial arm of ISRO, "Antrix", which has been carrying out all the commercial business of the ISRO.
- India is currently processing its 'Space Activities Bill' to align its liability in outer space with international standard.
- This means that in case any Indian space objects cause damage to another (natural or man-made) object in space, India will have a financial plan in place

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source-PIB

4. India's 10- point 'Vision for the Decade' flagged in Budget 2019-20

- In Union Budget 2019-20, the Finance Minister said that Indian economy will become a 3 trillion dollar economy in the current year and is on the path of achieving the Prime Minister's vision of a 5 trillion dollar economy by 2024-25.

Related Information

10- point Vision for the decade:

1. Building physical and social infrastructure;
2. Digital India reaching every sector of the economy;
3. Pollution free India with green Mother Earth and Blue Skies;
4. Make in India with particular emphasis on MSMEs, Start-ups, Defence manufacturing, automobiles, electronics, fabs and batteries, and medical devices;
5. Water, water management, clean Rivers;
6. Blue Economy;
7. Space programmes. Gaganyaan, Chandrayan and Satellite programmes;
8. Self-sufficiency and export of food-grains, pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables;
9. Healthy society – Ayushman Bharat, well-nourished women & children. Safety of citizens;
10. Team India with Jan Bhagidari. Minimum Government Maximum Governance.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics

Source-PIB

5. Immunocontraceptives \_\_\_\_\_ for wildlife population management

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) has launched a project for undertaking 'immunocontraceptive measures' for population management of four species of wild animals.
- The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and National the Institute of Immunology (NII) have developed a protocol of immunocontraception.
- The aim of the project to control the population of four species of wild animals — elephant, wild boar, monkey and blue bull (Nilgai).
- The project will begin in Uttarakhand and then be extended to other States.

Related Information

Immunocontraception

- It is a technology that uses a female animal's immune system to build a protein around the egg that prevents it from fertilising.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- TOI

6. Indian Haj Information System (Haj App)
  - Indian Haj mission in Saudi Arabia has adopted digital technology to reach out to a large number of pilgrims as part of the Government of India's initiative of Digital India.
  - This application has been developed to receive feedback, a grievance from Hajis.
  - The app also connects with the pilgrims to Haj service coordinators known as Qadimul Hajjaj of their respective states.
  - Qadimul Hajjaj is government employees who are deputed to assist pilgrims during Haj season.

Related Information

e-MASIHA

- Health status and medical history of visiting pilgrims are being stored at online "e-MASIHA" (Medical Assistance System for Indian Hajis Abroad).
- E-MASIHA would retrieve pilgrims' health information to apply appropriate treatment whenever he or she visits Indian medical facilities during Haj.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

7. EDUCATION BUDGET 2019-20
  - Union Minister of Finance announced in Union Budget 2019-20 for setting up of a National Research Foundation (NRF) to achieve the objectives of research and innovation.
  - An amount of Rs. 400 crore has been provided for FY 2019-20 to create "World Class Institutions" in the field of education which is more than three

times the revised estimates for the previous year.

- The Government will also bring in a "New National Education Policy" to transform India's higher education system to one of the global best education systems.

Related Information

National Research Foundation

- It will be set up to fund, coordinate and promote research in the country.
- It will also focus to identify thrust areas relevant to our national priorities and towards basic science without duplication of effort and expenditure.
- The 'Study in India' programme was announced that will focus on bringing foreign students to study in our higher educational institutions.
- Draft legislation for setting up the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) would be presented in the year ahead.
- This will help to comprehensively reform the regulatory system of higher education to promote greater autonomy and focus on better academic outcomes.
- National Sports Education Board for Development of Sportspersons would be set up under Khelo India Scheme to popularize sports at all levels.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics

Source- PIB

8. Losharik (AS-12 or AS-31): Russian Submarine

- Recently the 14 Russian Sailors Killed in Fire on Nuclear Submarine named Losharik (AS-12 or AS-31) within the Russian territorial waters.

About Submarine

- It is a highly advanced nuclear-powered submarine of Russia.
- It is a deep-diving special mission's ship, operated by the Russian Navy.

- It is capable of withstanding high pressures at great depths, enabling it to survey the ocean floor.
- It is generally carried under the hull of a larger submarine and is capable of releasing a smaller submarine itself.
- According to the Russian military, the submarine was carrying out 'bathymetric measurements' or underwater mapping.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- LiveMint

9. Scientists find evidence cosmic rays influence Earth's climate

- According to scientists the High-energy radiation from space, known as galactic cosmic rays, can affect Earth's climate by increasing cloud cover and causing an "umbrella effect.
- Influence of galactic cosmic rays (GCRs) on cloud formation is suggested to be an important part of the mechanism of solar activity influence on weather and climate.
- Besides atmospheric temperature and the amount of water vapour in the air, cosmic rays beaming down through space also contribute towards cloud formation.
- This is particular during Earth's geomagnetic reversal — a phenomenon where the planet's overall magnetic field flips.
- The rays can enhance the formation of low-lying clouds or increase the global cloud cover ultimately leading to the cooling of Earth's atmosphere.

Related Information

Cosmic Rays

- Cosmic rays are a form of high-energy radiation, mainly originating outside the Solar System and even from distant galaxies.
- It composed primarily of high-energy protons and atomic nuclei, they are originated either from the sun or from outside of our solar system.

- A significant fraction of primary cosmic rays originate from the supernova explosions of stars.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

09.07.2019

1. RBI board finalises 'Utkarsh 2022'
  - RBI board has finalised a three- year roadmap to improve regulation and supervision, among other functions of the central bank.
  - "Utkarsh 2022" is in line with the global central banks' plan to strengthen the regulatory and supervisory mechanism.
  - It is a three-year road map for medium-term objective to be achieved for improving regulation, supervision of the central bank.
  - Deputy Governor Viral Acharya was anchored to identify issues that needed to be addressed over the next three years.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics (Financial Institution)

Source- The Hindu

2. Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship launches 'Kaushal Yuva Samwaad'
  - The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship has announced the launch of "Kaushal Yuva Samwaad" (A Youth Dialogue) on World Youth Skills Day July 15, 2019.
  - The United Nations General Assembly commemorates July 15th every year, as World Youth Skills Day to raise awareness about the importance of investing in youth skills development.
  - Kaushal Yuva Samwaad aimed at creating an open dialogue with the youth across all skill training centres to hear their views, ideas, opportunities and recommendations.

- It could help the Ministry in scaling the existing programs and improve the overall efficiency of its projects.
- It is intended to identify and rectify the gaps so that all skill development programs are aligned to the current demands and help in creating a skilled workforce for the future.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source-PI B

3. MP government to privatise India's first cow sanctuary

- Madhya Pradesh government will be privatising India's first cow sanctuary set-up in September 2017.
- The decision of privatisation is due to the financial crisis.

Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya

- The sanctuary is in Agar Malwa, 190 km north west of Bhopal, was developed by the MP Gau Samvardhan Board by spending about Rs 32 crore.
- It mainly has cows which are old and sick or have stopped producing milk.
- Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya is the initiative of MP Gau Samvardhan Board.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- TOI

4. African leaders set to sign landmark trade deal at AU Summit

- African leaders will meet in Niger for the African Union (AU) summit, to sign a landmark African Continental Free Trade agreement.
- The goal of the new free trade area is to significantly increase trade within Africa.
- Currently, African countries conduct only 16% of their trade with each other, compared to 65% among European countries.

Related Information

African Union

- It is a continental union consisting of 55 member states located on the continent of Africa, with the exception

of various territories of European possessions located in Africa.

- The African Union was announced in the Sirte Declaration in Sirte, Libya on 9 September 1999, calling for the establishment of the African Union.
- The intention of the African Union is to replace the Organisation of African Unity.
- The AU's secretariat, the African Union Commission, is based in Addis Ababa.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –International Organization

Source- Indian Express

5. Italy's Prosecco hills join UNESCO Heritage list

- Italy's Prosecco hills which are known for its famous Prosecco wine recently added in UNESCO Heritage List.
- It also added eight buildings designed by architect Frank Lloyd Wright, including Guggenheim Museum in New York to the list.

Related Information

World Heritage Site

- It is listed by the 'United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization'.
- This is embodied in an international treaty called the 'Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage', adopted by UNESCO in 1972.
- The site should have an Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) for World Heritage nomination.
- To determine OUV for World Heritage nomination, there are 10 enlisted criteria.
- The proposed nomination must satisfy at least one of these ten criteria.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

6. BSF launches operation 'Sudarshan' to fortify Pakistan border in Punjab and Jammu

- Border Security Force (BSF) has launched a massive exercise, code

named 'Sudarshan', to fortify the 'anti-infiltration grid' along the Pakistan border in Punjab & Jammu.

- The exercise will see the entire BSF's senior field brass, thousands of troops and machinery being deployed in these forward areas.
- The operation was launched on July 1 and will cover the entire over the 1,000-km length of the India-Pakistan International Border.
- While Jammu shares about 485-km of the border with Pakistan, about 553-km of the front is in Punjab.
- The BSF is the primary force guarding this frontier as the 'first line of defence'.

Topic- GS-3- Defence

Source- New Indian Express

7. 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme: Uttarakhand among best performing states

- Uttarakhand has been adjudged as one of the country's five best performing states in 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', a central scheme aimed at addressing declining child sex ratio and issues of women empowerment.
- The state will be felicitated, along with the other selected states, in recognition of its consistent performance in respect of sex ratio at birth.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

- Launched by the PM on January 22, 2015, at Panipat, Haryana.
- Objective- Improve Child Sex Ratio, Protection, and education of girl child.
- Three ministries are involved which are -Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.
- Initially, it was focussed on 100 districts with low Child Sex Ratio.
- The key elements of the scheme include nation-wide awareness and advocacy campaign and multisectoral action.

- Multi-sectoral action includes effective enforcement of Pre Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC&PNDT) Act, Pre-Natal/ Post Natal care of the mother, improve enrolment of girls in schools, community engagement/ training/ awareness generation etc.

Topic-GS Paper 2–Government Schemes  
Source- Economic Times

8. Plan for district environment impact assessment panels under fire

- Government has released a draft law on Environment Impact Assessment Notification (EIA), 2019 which aim to be an update of the Environment Impact Assessment 2006.
- The proposed Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2019, makes the District Magistrate (DM) the chairperson of expert authority, or the District Environment Impact Assessment Authority (DEIAA).
- They will help to accord environment clearance for "minor" mining projects.
- Minor mining broadly refers to sand and stone mining in plots smaller than 25 hectares.
- Making District Magistrates head District Environment Impact Assessment Authority causes 'conflict of interest'.
- However, the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) has objected to the draft law.

Related Information

Environment Impact Assessment

- It is a process which studies all aspects of the environment and seeks to anticipate the impact (positive and/or negative) of a proposed project or development on the environment.
- It is mandatory under the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986 for 29 categories of developmental activities involving investments of Rs. 50 crores and above.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

10.07.2019

### 1. Operation Milap

- The Delhi Police Crime Branch has rescued 333 children from the capital city under Operation Milap.

Related Information

Operation Milap

- The operation Milap under which children are rescued was launched in December 2014.
- Under this project, the Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Delhi Police develops information, rescues the trafficked or kidnapped person and arrests the kidnappers.
- The rescued children are counselled and also given requisite medical attention.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Social Issues

Source- TOI

### 2. Haryana launches 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' portal for farmers

- The Haryana government announced the launch of 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' portal.

Related Information

'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' portal

- The portal will help the farmers by availing the benefits of several government schemes directly after uploading their crop-related details.
- The portal has brought the departments of agriculture and farmer's welfare, revenue, food civil supplies and consumer affairs and science and technology on a single platform for the betterment of the farmers.
- The farmers will be required to upload information like the name of crop sown, the area under cultivation, cropping month, bank account number and mobile number.
- This system would also make crop damage assessment during natural calamities & disbursement of relief easier.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

### 3. Buyback tax: Budget 2019

- Union Budget 2019 has proposed to tax buyback of shares by companies at 20 Percent.
- Currently, buyback tax is applicable only for unlisted companies.
- A buyback essentially is a scheme by which a company repurchases a certain amount of its outstanding shares.
- Once taken back, these shares are extinguished by the company.
- It was felt that many companies were avoiding dividend payouts because of the dividend distribution tax.
- Instead, the companies were returning cash to shareholders through share buybacks.
- The proposed tax on share buybacks is aimed at plugging this loophole.

Related Information

Dividend Distribution Tax (DDT)

- The dividend distribution tax (DDT) was introduced in Union Budget 2007.
- Investors who receive the dividend do not have to pay tax, but the companies giving the dividend have to pay DDT to the government.
- The rate of DDT is 15 Percent. Inclusive of cess and surcharge, the figure is about 20 Percent.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics

Source- Economics Times

### 4. Indian Army to buy American howitzer ammo for long-range accurate strikes

- Indian Army is in the process of acquiring Excalibur guided long-range artillery ammunition which can strike targets more than 50 km away.
- The Indian Army is planning to acquire the Excalibur artillery ammunition from the Americans under the emergency procurement procedures.
- The ammunition can be busted in the air as well as after its penetration into

bunker-type structures by using its different fuses.

- Long-range artillery ammunition uses the GPS system to hit targets at ranges more than 50 km.
- The Excalibur ammunition was developed in the US for improving the accuracy of the artillery shells in the war in Afghanistan which the Americans have been fighting for almost two decades now.

**Related Information**

- The Army has also started inducting the US-made M-777 ultra-light howitzers (US) which can be used for firing the Excalibur ammunition.
- The Army has also gone ahead with the purchase of the Spike anti-tank guided missiles (Israel) which can be used against the enemy armoured columns.
- The acquisition by the Air Force includes the Balakot airstrike-fame Spice 2000 bombs, made by Israel, including the version which can penetrate & destroy fortified structures.
- The IAF has also acquired the Strum Ataka anti-tank (Russia) guided missiles for its Mi-35 attack helicopters (Russia).

**Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence**

Source- Economics Times

**5. Palkhi procession**

- Every year, around 10 lakh pilgrims or Warkaris across Maharashtra join the Palkhi procession from Alandi and Dehu to Pandharpur.

**Related Information**

**Palkhi Procession**

- It is a 333-year-old glorious tradition of Maharashtra, observed across the state.
- Palakhis carrying the paduka (foot prints) of various saints - most notably Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram from the Varkari (Warkari) sect (which venerates Vithoba), are taken from their respective shrines to Pandharpur.

- The Vithoba is a Hindu god.
- While the Dnyaneshwar procession leaves from Alandi, Tukaram's procession begins at Dehu.
- Upon reaching Pandharpur on Ashadhi Ekadashi, these devotees take a holy dip in the sacred Chandrabhaga River before proceeding to visit the Vitthal temple.
- The journey takes 21 days.

Topic- GS Paper 1 - Art and Culture

Source- AIR

**6. SEBI gets teeth to probe new-age cases**

- The Finance Bill, 2019 has given the SEBI new powers to act against entities that tamper or destroy electronic databases or fail to furnish information when sought by the capital markets regulator.
- The bill has introduced section 15HAA in the SEBI Act.
- The section states that if a person tampers with information to obstruct or influence an investigation, destroys regulatory data or tries to access data in an unauthorized manner then the entity could be penalised up to 10 crore or three times the unlawful gains, whichever is higher.
- It can now impose penalties of up to 1 crore on brokers for certain violations.
- These new powers assume significance as it is already probing the leak of sensitive data through WhatsApp and also recently passed fresh orders on the National Stock Exchange co-location matter.

**Related Information**

SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India)

- It is the regulator for the securities market in India.
- It was established in 1988 and given statutory powers in 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Important Organization

Source- The Hindu

7. Odisha Government implements the Centre's Witness Protection Scheme

- The Odisha government has come up with a special 'Witness Protection Scheme' to provide security to witnesses facing threat during the course of a legal battle.

Related Information

Witness Protection Scheme

- The Witness Protection Scheme aims to ensure that investigation, prosecution and trial of criminal offences are not prejudiced because witnesses are intimidated or frightened to give evidence without protection from other criminal forces.
- The scheme includes three categories of witnesses as per threat perception: Category A- It consists of those cases where threat extends to the life of witness or family members during an investigation, trial or thereafter. Category B. It consists of those cases where the threat extends to safety, reputation or property of the witness or family members during the investigation or trial falls. Category C: It will consist of those cases where the threat is moderate and extends to harassment or intimidation of the witness or family members, reputation or property during investigation, trial or thereafter.
- The important features of the scheme include protective measures like ensuring that the witness and accused do not come face to face during probe, protection and change of identity, relocation of witnesses, confidentiality and preservation of records and recovery of expenses among others.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

8. DRDO carries out three successful Nag missile tests in one day in Pokhran

Related Information

Nag Missile

- The Nag missile is an Indian third generation "fire-and-forget" anti-tank guided missile.
- It is an all-weather, top attack missile with a range of 3 to 7 km.
- It is regarded as one of the best anti-tank guided missiles.
- Nag was one of the first five strategic missiles planned to be developed under the Integrated Missile Development Programme initiated in the 1980s.
- The other missiles developed under the project include the Agni, Prithvi and Akash and all three of them have been successfully developed and inducted into the armed forces.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- Indian Express

11.07.2019

1. Single tribunal Inter-State water disputes

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 that will help adjudicate disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers and river valleys.

Highlights of the bill

- It amended the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956 to streamline the adjudication of inter-State river water disputes.
- It will be headed by a retired Supreme Court judge
- A key feature of the Bill is the constitution of a single tribunal with different Benches, and the setting of strict timelines for adjudication.
- The Bill also proposes a Dispute Resolution Committee set up by the Central Government for amicably resolving inter-State water disputes within 18 months.
- The Dispute Resolution Committee will be comprising experts and

policymakers. It is proposed to handle disputes prior to the tribunal.

- The Union Government will set up a DRC whenever a state will request. Most of the disputes will be resolved at the Dispute Resolution Committee's level itself.
- But if a State is not satisfied, it can approach the tribunal.
- The dispute so referred to the tribunal shall be assigned by the chairperson of the tribunal to a Bench of the tribunal for adjudication.

#### Related Information

##### Interstate River Water Disputes Act 1956

- It was enacted by the parliament of India under Article 262 of Constitution.
- Its purpose is to resolve the water disputes that would arise in the use, control and distribution of an interstate river or river valley.

##### Some Water Tribunal and their concerned states

- Ravi & Beas Water Tribunal - Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan
- Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II - Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra
- Vansadhara Water Disputes Tribunal- Andhra Pradesh & Odisha
- Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal- Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra
- Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal - Odisha and Chhattisgarh

##### Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

##### 2. Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)

- It is a sub-component of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- The primary objective of MKSP is to empower women by enhancing their participation in agriculture and to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for them.

- Funding support to the tune of up to 60% (90% for the North Eastern States) for such projects is provided by the Government of India.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Important Scheme

Source-PIB

##### 3. Plan Bee wins 'Best Innovation Award'

- A unique strategy adopted by the Northeast Frontier Railway to keep wild elephants away from train tracks has won the 'Best Innovation Award'.

Related Information

##### Plan Bee

- It was launched in 2017 under which 46 devices were installed at several level crossings in Assam.
- It plays the sound of buzzing honey bees to drive away elephants from the rail tracks.
- This device is designed to generate the sound of honey bees from a distance of about 700-800 m.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

##### 4. Indian scientists developed a new material 'black gold'

- Indian scientists have developed a new material called "black gold" by using gold nanoparticles.
- Black gold can potentially be used for applications ranging from solar energy harvesting to desalinating seawater.
- Black gold has the ability to absorb the entire visible and near-infrared region of solar light.
- It does so because of inter-particle plasmonic coupling as well as heterogeneity in nanoparticle size.
- Black gold could also act as a catalyst and could convert CO<sub>2</sub> into methane at atmospheric pressure and temperature using solar energy.
- The material can also be used as a nano-heater to convert seawater into potable water with good efficiency.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & technology

Source- Down to Earth

5. India can repeal Article 370 at will: Centre

- The government informed Parliament that “no foreign government or organisation has any locus standi” in repealing Article 370 in J&K as matters relating to the Constitution were internal and only for the Indian Parliament to deal with.

Related Information

Article 370

- Article 370 of the Indian Constitution is a ‘temporary provision’ which grants special autonomous status to Jammu & Kashmir.
- Under Part XXI of the Constitution of India, which deals with “Temporary, Transitional and Special provisions”, the state of Jammu & Kashmir has been accorded special status under Article 370.
- All the provisions of the Constitution which are applicable to other states are not applicable to J&K.

Important provisions under article 370

- According to this article, except for defence, foreign affairs finance and communications, Parliament needs the state government’s concurrence for applying all other laws.
- Thus the state’s residents live under a separate set of laws, including those related to citizenship, ownership of property, and fundamental rights, as compared to other Indians.
- Indian citizens from other states cannot purchase land or property in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Under Article 370, the Centre has no power to declare financial emergency under Article 360 in the state.
- It can declare an emergency in the state only in case of war or external aggression.
- The Union government can therefore not declare emergency on grounds of internal disturbance or imminent danger unless it is made at the request or with the concurrence of the state government.

- Under Article 370 the Indian Parliament cannot increase or reduce the borders of the state.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

6. Sri Lanka is measles-free: WHO

- World Health Organisation has recently declared Sri Lanka free of the highly infectious disease known as Measles.
- It became the fifth country in the WHO Southeast Asia region to eliminate measles.

Related Information

Measles

- Measles is a highly contagious viral disease.
- It remains an important cause of death among young children globally, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.
- Under the Global Vaccine Action Plan, measles and rubella are targeted for elimination in five WHO Regions by 2020.
- WHO is the lead technical agency responsible for the coordination of immunization and surveillance activities supporting all countries to achieve this goal.
- Measles is transmitted via droplets from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and technology

Source- Indian Express

7. India’s first elephant rehabilitation centre in the works at Kerala’s Kottor

- Kerala government is working to set up the country’s first elephant rehabilitation centre in Kottor, an ecotourism village near the state capital Thiruvananthapuram.
- According to the last elephant census, the state has 507 captive elephants. The Sree Krishna temple in Guruvayur town has 59 elephants.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- Hindustan Times

8. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

- The CCEA approved the third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-III) under which 1.25 lakh km of roads in rural areas will be upgraded by 2024-25.

Related Information

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme was introduced in 2000.
- It is a nationwide plan in India to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages.
- The programme envisages connecting all eligible unconnected habitations with :
  - (a) A population of 500 persons and above in plain areas.
  - (b) 250 persons and above in Hill States, Tribal (Schedule-V) areas, the Desert Areas (as identified in Desert Development Programme).
  - (c) 82 Selected Tribal and Backward Districts under Integrated Action Plan as identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs/Planning Commission.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source-PI B

9. Maritime Anti-Corruption Network starts port integrity campaign in India

- Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN), a global business network of over 110 companies working to tackle corruption in the maritime industry, has announced the launch of a Port Integrity Campaign in India.
- The campaign, which aims to reduce and (in the long term) eliminate integrity issues and bottlenecks to trade during operations in Indian ports, is a collective action of MACN, the Government of India, international organizations, and local industry stakeholders.
- The pilot of the campaign will take place in Mumbai ports (MbPT and JNPT) and will run until October this year.

- The main activities of the campaign include the implementation of integrity training for port officials and the establishment of clear escalation and reporting processes.
- Following the pilot, MACN plans to expand the program to other Indian ports.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Infrastructure

Source-The Hindu

12.07.2019

1. Locust Control and Research scheme

- Agriculture Minister has told that there has been an incursion of desert locusts in Rajasthan and Gujarat from areas bordering Pakistan.

Related Information

Locust Control and Research scheme

- Locusts are large herbivorous insects that can be serious pests of agriculture due to their ability to form dense and highly mobile swarms.
- They are species of short-horned grasshoppers.
- The Locust Control and Research scheme responsible for the control of desert locusts.
- It is implemented through the Locust Warning Organisation (LWO).
- LWO, based in Jodhpur, was established in 1939.
- LWO is responsible to monitor and control the locust situation in Scheduled Desert Area (SDA) mainly in the States of Rajasthan and Gujarat by way of intensive survey, surveillance, monitoring and control operations.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Important Institution

Source- The Hindu

2. International Cooperation Scheme

- Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is implementing International Cooperation (IC) Scheme.

- The objective of the scheme is to enhancing the competency of MSMEs, capturing new markets for their products, exploring new technologies for improving manufacturing capacity, etc.
- Financial assistance is provided under the Scheme on a reimbursement basis to the eligible body associated with the promotion and development of MSME sector.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-PIB

3. RPF launched "Operation Thirst"

- To curb the menace of unauthorized PDW (PACKAGED DRINKING WATER) in Railway premises, an all India drive named "Operation Thirst" was launched by Railway Protection Force.
- Almost all major stations over Indian Railway were covered during this operation.

Related Information

- Recently the Union Cabinet has approved Grant of Organised Group 'A' status to Indian Railway Protection Force (RPF).
- The Grant of the status of Organized Group 'A' service to RPF will end stagnation, improve career progression of the officers and keep up their motivational level.

Railway Protection Force

- Railway Security Force (RSF) was established in The Railway Protection Force Act, 1957 renamed RSF to Railway Protection Force (RPF) which is a statutory body.
- It is under the control of Ministry of Railways and headed by the Director General (DG).
- It has the primary duty of protection of railway property, passenger area, and passengers.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-PIB

4. IAF to adopt ASRAAM missile across its fighter fleet

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is looking to adopt a new European visual range Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile across its fighter fleet.

Related Information

Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM)

- It has been developed by European missile-maker MBDA.
- It is currently in service in UK's Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Australian Air Force.
- It is a high speed, extremely manoeuvrable, heat-seeking, an air-to-air missile which is designed as a "fire-and-forget" missile
- It is widely used as a Within Visual Range (WVR) air dominance missile with a range of over 25km.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Defence

Source- The Hindu

4. Govt approves changes in POCSO Act 2012

- The Union Cabinet approved an amendment to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 to make punishment more stringent for sexual crimes against children.

Important Fact of Amendment

- The amendment provides for stringent punishment, including death penalty, for sexual assault of children.
- The amendments provide for levy of fines and imprisonment to curb child pornography.
- The amendments are also proposed to protect children from sexual offences in times of natural calamities.
- These amendments help to discourage the trend of child sexual abuse by acting as a deterrent due to strong penal provisions incorporated in the Act.
- It will also protect the interest of vulnerable children in times of distress and ensures their safety and dignity.

Related Information

About POSCO act 2012

- It was enacted to protect the children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.
- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age which is a gender neutral.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

5. Anti-defection law: What can disqualify a legislator

When was the anti-defection law instituted and what was the trigger?

- The anti-defection law is contained in the 10th Schedule of the Constitution.
- It was introduced by the 52nd Amendment in 1985.
- Legislators used to change parties frequently, bringing about chaos in the legislatures as governments fell.
- In sum, they often brought about political instability.

What is the purpose of the anti-defection law? What are the grounds of disqualification?

- To curb political defection by the legislators.

There are two grounds on which a member of a legislature can be disqualified.

- One, if the member voluntarily gives up the membership of the party, he shall be disqualified. Voluntarily giving up the membership is not the same as resigning from a party. Even without resigning, a legislator can be disqualified if by his conduct the Speaker/Chairman of the concerned House draws a reasonable inference that the member has voluntarily given up the membership of his party.
- Second, if a legislator votes in the House against the direction of his party and his action is not condoned by his party, he can be disqualified.
- However, there is an exception that was provided in the law to protect the legislators from disqualification. The 10th Schedule says that if there is a merger between two political parties

and two-thirds of the members of a legislature party agree to the merger, they will not be disqualified.

Has the law changed since inception, and if so, how?

- Earlier, there was a provision under which if there occurs a split in the original political party and as a result of which one-third of the legislators of that party forms a separate group, they shall not be disqualified.
- The 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003, changed this. So now at least two-thirds of the members of a party have to be in favour of a "merger".

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Indian Polity

Source- Indian Express

6. India's Chandrayaan-2

- On July 15, India's lunar exploratory mission — Chandrayaan-2 — will take off to eject a rover on the Moon's southernmost region, a first for any country till now.
- India attempting to become the fourth country to land on the moon after the former Soviet Union, US and China, to cement its place among the world's space-faring nations.
- The orbiter with lander and rover will be launched onboard our advanced heavy rocket (GSLV Mark III) from the Sriharikota spaceport to inject it in the earth's elliptical orbit at 170km perigee (nearest to earth) and 30,000km apogee (farthest from the earth) for cruising towards the moon over the next 16 days.
- Isro has named the lander "Vikram", after India's space pioneer Vikram Sarabhai (1919-1971) and rover 'Pragyan', which in Sanskrit means wisdom.
- The rocket will place the orbiter in the geo-transfer orbit for its passage to the lunar orbit, covering 385,000km from earth to moon in 50 days for the lander to have a soft landing near its south pole," said Sivan.

- The lander will separate from the orbiter through manoeuvres, when it is at 150km periloon (nearest the moon's surface) and 18,000 apoloon (farthest from lunar surface) and land on the moon in 4 days after it (orbiter) enters the lunar orbit at 100km from its surface and descends slowly up to 30km for soft landing.

#### Related Information

- The US is preparing for a return to manned-mission to the moon. In 2024, American astronauts will land on the Moon.
- The US astronauts will land on the same South Polar Region of the Moon.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science & Technology

Source- Business Standards

#### 7. Setting up of Neutrino Observatory

- Government of India has approved a project to build the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) at Pottipuram in the Theni District of Tamil Nadu.

#### Related Information

##### Neutrino Observatory

- The observatory is to be built jointly with the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Science and Technology.
- The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research is the nodal institution.
- The project aims to set up a 51000 ton Iron Calorimeter (ICAL) detector to observe naturally occurring atmospheric neutrinos in a cavern at the end of an approximately 2 km long tunnel in a mountain.
- This will help to reduce the noise from cosmic rays that are ever present over-ground and which would outnumber the rare neutrino interactions even in a detector as large as ICAL.
- The project does not release any radiation, as it does not have any radioactive substance.
- It measures cosmic rays.

Note: Neutrinos are the smallest particles that form the universe.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source-PIB

#### 8. Chronic immune thrombocytopenia

- Intas Pharmaceuticals a drug maker company launched an affordable drug for chronic immune thrombocytopenia (ITP) patients under the name Romy.
- The currently available care therapy for chronic ITP costs approximately Rs. 60,000 per month, while Romy has brought it down to Rs. 12,000.

#### Related Information

##### Immune thrombocytopenia

- Immune thrombocytopenia (ITP) is a bleeding disorder which leads to low platelet counts also called thrombocytopenia.
- Thrombocytopenia often occurs as a result of a separate disorder, such as leukaemia or an immune system problem.
- Platelets are tiny blood cell fragments that help your body form clots to stop bleeding.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu Business Line

#### 9. Kharchi Pooja

- The festival has started at Chaturdas Devta Temple in Old Agartala, Tripura which is a century old traditional festival of Tripura.
- The uniqueness of the fest lies in offering Puja to the head-images of 14 God and Goddesses, who live in a locked room throughout the year and it is
- The head images of 14 God and Goddesses symbolize with Hindu Gods like Hara, Uma, Hari, Vani, Kartik etc due to the beliefs of the festival, Tripura is also known as the land of fourteen gods.

Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

Source- AIR

15.07.2019

### 1. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched 'LaQshya'

- Government of India has launched "LaQshya" (Labour room Quality improvement Initiative) to improve the quality of care in the labour room and maternity operation theatres in public health facilities.
- It's a multipronged approach focused on Intrapartum and the immediate postpartum period.
- It aims is to reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in the Labour room and Maternity Operation Theatre and ensure respectful maternity care.
- Following types of healthcare facilities have been identified for implementation of Laqshya program
  - (a) Government medical college hospitals.
  - (b) District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities.
  - (c) Designated FRUs and high caseload CHCs with over 100 deliveries/month (60 in hills and desert areas)

#### Objectives of the scheme

- To reduce maternal and newborn mortality & morbidity due to hemorrhage, retained placenta, preterm, preeclampsia and eclampsia, obstructed labour, puerperal sepsis, newborn asphyxia, & newborn sepsis, etc.
- To improve Quality of care during the delivery and immediate post-partum care, stabilization of complications and ensure timely referrals, and enable an effective two-way follow-up system.

- To enhance the satisfaction of beneficiaries visiting the health facilities and provide Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) to all pregnant women attending the public health facilities.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Important Scheme

Source- The Hindu Business Line

2. Meghalaya is the first state in India to ensure water conservation
  - The Meghalaya became the first state to approve a draft water policy to address water issues, conservation, and protection of water sources in the state.
  - The policy aims to recognize water resources as a common pool resource which provide safe and hygienic water for drinking.
  - The policy intends to achieve sustainable development which will be implemented through active participation of the community by constituting a Water Sanitation Village Council at the village level.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

3. Russia Launches Spektr-RG, a New X-Ray Observatory, into Space
  - Russia launched Spektr-RG, a space telescope from the cosmodrome in Baikonur, Kazakhstan, which is a joint project with Germany.

Related Information

Spektr-RG

- It is a space observatory intended to observe black holes, neutron stars and magnetic fields.
- It has been developed by Russia with Germany.
- The observatory includes two X-ray mirror telescopes:
  - A German-built eROSITA (Extended Roentgen Survey with an Imaging Telescope Array).
  - A Russian-built ART-XC (Astronomical Roentgen Telescope X-ray Concentrator)

- The Spektr-RG intends to replace the Spektr-R, known as the “Russian Hubble”, which Roskosmos lost control of in January.
- Spektr-R was launched in 2011 to observe black holes, neutron stars and magnetic fields. Its successor will take up similar duties.

Topic- GS Paper 3–Science & Technology  
 Source-Live mint

4. U.S. will consider ‘301 probe’ on India

- The U.S. will consider a “301 investigation”, against India if the trade issues between the two countries are not resolved quickly.

Related Information

301 Probes (United States)

- It is a probe employed as a precursor to tariffs and other trade measures against a country.
- A Special 301 Report is prepared annually by the Deputy U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)
- Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act (1974) was also used to authorise a 2017 probe that resulted in tariffs on Chinese exports to the U.S. from July 2018.
- Recently the USTR announced a 301 probe against France on a digital services tax.

Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act of 1974

- Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act of 1974 authorizes the President to take all appropriate action to obtain the removal of any act or practice of a foreign government that burden or restricts U.S. commerce.
- Section 301 cases can be self-initiated by the United States Trade Representative (USTR) or as the result of a petition filed by a firm or industry group.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economics

Source- TOI

5. HRD ministry launches ‘Study in India’ programme to attract students for higher education in India

- The programme focuses on attracting International students from select 30 plus countries across South-East Asia, the Middle East and Africa.
- The programme envisages participation of select reputed Indian institutes/universities by way of offering seats for the International students at affordable rates, along with fee waivers to meritorious foreign students ranging from 100% to 25%.
- The programme helps the domestic students shall be exposed to a more diverse peer group.
- They also get greater International exposure culminating in the enhanced interest of Indian students to study in the country.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source-PIB

6. Agent Smith’ malware

- Agent Smith," a new variant of mobile malware, has quietly infected around 25 million Android devices globally, including 15 million mobile devices in India.
- The malware exploits vulnerabilities within the Android operating system to automatically replace installed apps with a malicious version without the user realising.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

7. Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Scheme

- Delhi Chief Minister has flagged off the first train under the Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra scheme.

Related Information

Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra

- This is a religious pilgrimage scheme which is fully funded by the Delhi government.

- The government will bear the entire expenditure for all 'yatris', including air-conditioned train travel, accommodation, meals, boarding and lodging and other arrangements.
- 1,000 senior citizens from each Assembly Constituency per year will be able to undertake free pilgrimages.
- The pilgrimage duration will be for three days and two nights.

#### Criteria for selection

- Any resident of Delhi above 60 years of age will be eligible for the scheme.
- The applicant should not have an income of above Rs 3 lakh/ annum and should not be an employee of Central/state/local government or autonomous bodies.

#### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

##### Source-Live Mint

8. India abstains from voting for LGBTQ rights at the UN Human Rights Council
  - Despite India decriminalising homosexuality, it again abstained from voting in favour of LGBTQ rights at the United Nations Human Rights Council.
  - In 2016, India had abstained vote on the appointment of the Independent Expert.
  - A resolution moved by Latin American states seeking to renew the mandate of the independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI).

##### Related Information

- Recently the Supreme Court struck down Section 377, decriminalising homosexuality.

##### Sec 377 of Indian Penal Code

- It came into force in 1862 and deals with consensual private sexual acts between adults.

- Section 377 criminalised voluntary carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal.
- The 172nd report of the Law Commission of India recommended the deletion of Section 377 but no action was taken.

##### Note :

- LGBT (or GLBT) is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender

##### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

##### Source- Indian Express

9. 2nd India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue
  - The 2nd India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue (IRSED) was held in New Delhi.
  - The Second meeting of the IRSED focussed on six core areas of cooperation,
    - (a) Development of Transport Infrastructure and Technologies;
    - (b) Development of Agriculture and Agro-Processing sector;
    - (c) Small and Medium Business support;
    - (d) Digital Transformation and Frontier Technologies;
    - (e) Finance,
    - (f) Tourism & Connectivity

##### Related Information

##### India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue

- It was established following a bilateral MoU signed between NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia during the 19th edition of the Annual India-Russia Bilateral Summit held in 2018 in New Delhi.
- The First India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue was held in St. Petersburg in 2018.

##### Topic-GS Paper 2–International Relation

##### Source- The Hindu

10. France passes GAFA law to tax digital giants

- France became the first major economy to impose a tax on digital giants, with parliament passing the legislation in defiance of a probe ordered by President Donald Trump that could trigger reprisal tariffs.
- The new law aims at plugging a taxation gap that has seen some internet heavyweights paying next to nothing in countries where they make huge profits.
- The legislation is dubbed as the GAFA tax -an acronym for Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Economy

Source- Times of India

11. India is home to 1,256 species of orchid: First comprehensive census of orchids of India

- The Botanical Survey of India has recently come up with the first comprehensive census of orchids of India putting the total number of orchid species or taxa to 1,256.

Related Information

Orchids

- Orchids can be broadly categorised into three life forms:
  - (a) Epiphytic (plants growing on another plant including those growing on rock boulders & often termed lithophyte),
  - (b) Terrestrial (plants growing on land and climbers)
  - (c) Mycoheterotrophic (plants which derive nutrients from mycorrhizal fungi that are attached to the roots of a vascular plant).
- Orchids are decorative flowering plants.
- They grow in regions with moderate climatic conditions [Sub-tropics with decent rainfall]
- They are typical to North-Eastern states.
- Great demand for these decorative flowering plants exists in the South-East Asian region.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

Source- The Hindu

12. Elektorornis chenguangi: A bird with extremely long toe

- Elektorornis chenguangi is an extinct bird with an extra long toe has been described in a study published in the journal Current Biology.
- The amber the foot was found in, measuring 3.5 centimetres long and weighing 5.5 grams, was discovered around 2014 in the Hukawng Valley of Myanmar which is about 99 million years ago.
- The most abundant type of this bird known from the Mesozoic era.
- It is thought that Enantiornithines became extinct during the Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event about 66 million years ago, along with dinosaurs.
- They have no living descendants.

Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

16.07.2019

1. Panel calls for upgrading the e-learning platform to virtual university

- A panel of experts has recommended upgrading the HRD ministry's free e-learning SWAYAM platform to a virtual university to meet the growing demand for quality education.
- The proposal is part of the ministry's five-year vision plan called Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme.
- The panel has proposed reconstituting Swayam into a separate autonomous board is driven organisation under the ministry to facilitate a more focused effort.
- The panel's recommendations have come as the HRD ministry is preparing the next phase of Swayam and degree-granting mechanism could be one of its ingredients.

Related Information

Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)

- It is a programme initiated by the Government of India and designed to achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy namely access, equity and quality.
- The objective of this effort is to take the best teaching-learning resources to all including the most disadvantaged.
- It seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy.
- This is done through an indigenous developed IT platform that facilitates the hosting of all the courses taught in classrooms to be accessed by anyone, anywhere at any time.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

2. 12 Indian beaches in the race to crest the 'Blue Flag' challenge

- The Union Environment Ministry has selected 12 beaches in India to vie for a 'Blue Flag' certification.
- It is an international recognition conferred on beaches that meet certain criteria of cleanliness and environmental propriety.
- These beaches are at Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Bhogave (Maharashtra), Ghoghla (Diu), Miramar (Goa), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Eden (Puducherry), Mamallapuram (Tamil Nadu), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha), and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).

Related Information

Blue Flag programme

- It is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education).
- It started in France in 1985 and has been implemented in Europe since 1987.

- There are nearly 33 criteria that must be met to qualify for a Blue Flag certification, such as the water meets certain standards such as waste disposal facilities, disabled-friendly facilities etc.
- Some criteria are voluntary and some compulsory.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

Source- The Hindu

3. Investigation Tracking System For Sexual Offences

- According to ITSO data investigation into nearly half the sexual offences cases are not being completed within the stipulated 60-day period.
- According to the ITSSO analysis of crime data in the 7 States — Haryana, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand — an investigation into nearly half the sexual offences cases are not being completed within the stipulated 60-day period.

Related Information

Investigation Tracking System For Sexual Offences

- It is an analytics tool to monitor and track a time-bound investigation.
- It is part of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and System (CCTNS) that connects over 15,000 police stations across the country.
- It will aid in the effective implementation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2018 mandates completion of investigation and trials in rape cases within two months.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Women Empowerment

Source- The Hindu

4. Kartarpur Gurudwara

- Pakistan has agreed to give year-long visa-free access for Indian pilgrims to the holy Gurdwara of Kartarpur Sahib.
- It was agreed to allow visa-free travel for the Indian passport-holders and OCI card-holders seven days a week.

- Throughout the year, 5,000 pilgrims will be allowed to visit the Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara per day.
- The pilgrims will be allowed to travel as individuals or in groups and also on foot.
- There will be provision for a permit system for the pilgrims travelling through the religious corridor.

#### Related Information

##### Kartarpur Sahib

- Gurdwara Sahib is located at Kartarpur in Pakistan's Narowal district.
- It stands on the bank of the River Ravi, about 120 km northeast of Lahore.
- The First Sikh Guru (Nanak Dev) assembled a Sikh community here and lived for 18 years until his death in 1539 which is the final resting place of Guru Nanak.

#### Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture

##### Source- Indian Express

##### 5. Law Commission to be formed soon

- The Law Ministry has initiated the process of setting up the 22nd Law Commission which gives advice to the government on complex legal issues.
- The Cabinet approves reconstitution of the law panel for a period of three years.
- The three-year term of the 21st Law Commission under Justice B.S. Chauhan had ended on August 31, 2018.

#### Related Information

##### Law Commission

- It is an executive body established by an order of the Government of India.
- Its major function is to work for legal reform.
- Its membership primarily comprises legal experts, who are entrusted a mandate by the Government.
- It is usually headed by a former Supreme Court judge or a former Chief Justice of a High Court.

- The Commission is established for a fixed tenure ( generally three years ) and works as an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice

#### Background

- The first Law Commission was established during the British Raj era in 1834 by the Charter Act of 1833 which was presided by Lord Macaulay.
- The first Law Commission of independent India was established in 1955 for a three-year term.

#### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

##### Source- The Hindu

##### 6. National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019

- The National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was passed by Lok Sabha.
- The NIA was set up in 2009 in the wake of the Mumbai terror attack.

#### Highlights of the bill

- There are three major amendments to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act of 2008.
- Under the existing Act, the NIA can investigate offences under Acts such as the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967.
- Now the NIA has additionally investigated offences related to human trafficking, counterfeit currency, manufacture or sale of prohibited arms, cyber-terrorism, and offences under the Explosive Substances Act, 1908.
- By designating special courts, the cases would be expedited and transfers or delay in appointments of judges would not delay them.
- The agency will be able to investigate terrorist acts against Indian embassies and assets abroad and take up cases of drug, arms and women trafficking apart from cyber-terrorism.

#### Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

##### Source-PIB

7. Jalyukta Shivar programme of the Maharashtra government to make 5,000 villages free of water scarcity

- Jalyukta Shivar is the flagship programme of the Maharashtra government launched in December 2014.
- It aims to make 5,000 villages free of water scarcity.
- The scheme targeted drought-prone areas by improving water conservation measures in order to make them more water sustainable.
- The scheme envisaged to arrest maximum run-off water, especially during the monsoon months, in village areas known to receive less rainfall, annually.
- Under the scheme, decentralised water bodies were installed at various locations within villages to enhance the groundwater recharge.
- Besides, it also proposed to strengthen and rejuvenate water storage capacity and percolation of tanks and other sources of storage.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Government Schemes  
Source-Indian Express

17.07.2019

1. Google India's 'Internet Saathi' programme

- Google India's 'Internet Saathi' programme has now added two more states Punjab and Odisha.

Related Information

'Internet Saathi' programme'

- It is launched as a pilot project in 2015, along with Tata Trusts.
- The programme aimed to empower rural women on how to use the Internet which will now cover 20 states including Punjab and Odisha.
- This programme also helps in implying driving awareness for issues like girl child education, menstrual hygiene and more.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- AIR

2. Seva Bhoj Yojana

- It is a Central Sector Scheme for providing reimbursement of CGST and Central Government's share of IGST paid by charitable/religious institutions on purchase of specific raw food items for serving free food to public/devotees.
- The specific raw food items covered under the Scheme are (i) Ghee (ii) Edible Oil (iii) Sugar/Burra/Jaggery (iv) Rice (v) Atta/Maida/Rava/Flour and (vi) Pulses.
- Under the scheme of Seva Bhoj Yojna, the financial assistance will be provided for free 'prasad' or free food or free 'langar' / 'Bhandara' (community kitchen) offered by charitable/religious institutions like Gurudwara, Temples, Dharmik Ashram, Mosques, Dargah, Church, Math, Monasteries etc.

Criteria For Financial Assistance

- These Charitable Religious Institutions should have been distributing free food in the form of 'prasad', 'langar'/bhandara (community kitchen) to at least 5000 persons in a calendar month for at least past 3 years.
- Financial Assistance under the scheme shall be given only to those institutions which are not in receipt of any Financial Assistance from the Central/State Government for the purpose of distributing free food.
- The Institution/Organization blacklisted under the provisions of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act or under the provisions of any Act/Rules of the Central/State shall not be eligible for financial assistance under the scheme.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Scheme  
Source- PIB

3. Extinction of Great Indian Bustard, Lesser Florican

- The Supreme Court has constituted a high powered committee to urgently frame and implement an emergency

response plan for the protection of two Indian birds, Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican.

#### Related Information

##### Lesser Florican

- The lesser florican, also known as the likh or kharmore, is the smallest in bustard family.
- It is endemic to the Indian Subcontinent where it is found in tall grasslands.
- It is listed as endangered as per IUCN Red List.

##### Great Indian Bustard

- The population Great Indian Bustard is confined mostly to Rajasthan and Gujarat and small population also occur in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- It is the state bird of Rajasthan.
- Conservation status: Listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Appendix I of CITES
- IUCN status: Critically Endangered

#### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Environment

Source- Indian Express

#### 4. The State Of Food Security And Nutrition In The World: UN Report

- According to the recent UN report, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World", the number of people going hungry has risen for the third year running to more than 820 million.
- The report was produced by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other UN agencies including the World Health Organization.

#### Highlights of the report

- The number of people going hungry has risen for the third year running to more than 820 million.
- The report said, after decades of decline, malnutrition began to increase in 2015, mainly because of climate change and war.

- Africa and Asia account for more than nine out of ten of the world's stunted children, at 39.5% and 54.9% respectively.
- At the same time, obesity and excess weight are both on the rise in all regions, with school-age children and adults particularly affected.

#### Indian scenario:

- The number of obese adults in India has risen by a fourth in four years, from 24.1 million in 2012 to 32.8 million in 2016.
- India's undernourished population has dropped by roughly the same fraction in 12 years, from 253.9 million in 2004-06 to 194.4 million in 2016-18.
- The report has a section on economic growth in China and India, and its effect on poverty.
- Between 1990 and 2017, the two countries had an average GDP per capita growth rate of 8.6 % and 4.5 % respectively, the report said, citing World Bank figures.
- In both countries, the increase in GDP per capita has been accompanied by poverty reduction.

#### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Important Report

Source- TOI

#### 5. RBI slaps Rs 7 crore fine on SBI for violating IRAC norms

- RBI has slapped a penalty of Rs 7 crore on the country's largest bank SBI for non-compliance with norms related to NPA identification and fraud risk management, among others under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- These are
  - Income Recognition and Asset Classification (IRAC) norms and
  - Code of conduct for opening and operating current accounts and reporting of data on the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC).

#### Related Information

- Income Recognition and Asset Classification norms are rules that prescribe when a loan should be declared as a non-performing asset (NPA).
- Central Repository of Information on Large Credits helps to collect, store, and disseminate credit data to lenders.
- Hence, banks will have to furnish credit information to CRILC on all their borrowers having aggregate fund-based and non-fund based exposure of Rs.5 crores and above.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Economics

Source- The Hindu

#### 6. Thirty Meter Telescope Set to Begin Construction

- Four years after protests halted construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope atop Mauna Kea, Hawaii, Govt has announced that construction will resume.
- The Thirty Meter Telescope is a proposed astronomical observatory with an extremely large telescope that has become the source of controversy over its planned location on Mauna Kea on the island of Hawaii in the US state of Hawaii.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- CNN

#### 7. Ursula von der Leyen Confirmed as First Female President of the European Commission

- Ursula von der Leyen was confirmed as the European Commission president, becoming the first woman to hold one of the most prestigious positions in the European Union.

Related Information

European Union

- It is a political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe.
- The EU and European citizenship were established when the Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993.

- The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states in those matters, and only those matters, where members have agreed to act as one.
- The policies aim to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the internal market.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important organisation

Source- The Hindu

18.07.2019

#### 1. Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) – A 7-Pronged Scheme to Fight Cyber Crime

- Ministry of home affairs has rolled out a scheme 'Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)' for the period 2018-2020, to combat cybercrime in the country.
- The scheme has the following seven components:
  - (i) National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit.
  - (ii) National Cybercrime Reporting Portal.
  - (iii) A platform for Joint Cybercrime Investigation Team.
  - (iv) National Cybercrime Forensic Laboratory Ecosystem.
  - (v) National Cybercrime Training Centre.
  - (vi) Cybercrime Ecosystem Management Unit.
  - (vii) National Cyber Research and Innovation Centre.

Related Information

Other steps have taken by Govt to tackle Cybercrime

- Establishment of National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) for protection of critical information infrastructure in the country.
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis

Centre) has been launched for providing detection of malicious programmes and free tools to remove such programmes.

- Formulation of the Crisis Management Plan for countering cyber attacks and cyber-terrorism.

Note: Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- PIB

### 2. Govt's "Find the Incredible You" campaign wins PATA award

- The "Find the Incredible You" campaign of the Tourism Ministry, has won the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Award, 2019.
- The campaign focuses on digital and social media and the promotion of niche tourism products of the country.
- The campaign won the award under the "Marketing - Primary Government Destination" category.
- To take the campaigns to the next level, the 'Incredible India 2.0' campaign was launched in September 2017.
- The campaign strategy was to shift the focus from the external experience of tourist destinations to the internal experience of travellers themselves.
- PATA Gold Awards are given to tourism industry organizations and individuals making an outstanding contribution towards the successful promotion of the travel industry throughout the Asia Pacific Region.

Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art & Culture

Source- AIR

### 3. Schools turn nutrition gardens in Mizoram district

- Kan Sikul, Kan Huan (My School, My Farm) is an initiative of District Administration of Lawngtlai, Mizoram.
- The aim of the initiative to make every school, Anganwadi, childcare institution and hostel in Lawngtlai

self-sufficient in the local variety of fruits and vegetables by March 2020.

- It will also help in to reduce malnutrition and stuntedness among children
- The strategy is blending the Centre's Poshan Abhiyan with regular activities of departments such as Agriculture and Horticulture.

Related Information

Poshan Abhiyan

- POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The objective of POSHAN Abhiyaan to reduce stunting in identified Districts of India with the highest malnutrition burden by improving utilization of key Anganwadi Services and improving the quality of Anganwadi Services delivery.
- Its aim to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children in a time-bound manner during the next three years beginning 2017-18.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Important Scheme

Source- The Hindu

### 4. Cabinet approved the hydel project in Dibang

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave the green light to the 2,880 megawatts (MW) Dibang hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Project is located on river Dibang, in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh which is the largest ever Hydro Electric Project to be constructed in India.
- The project envisages construction of Concrete Gravity Dam.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

### 5. Ploonets

- A new study suggests that the moons of gas-giant exoplanets may break away into their own orbits, called "ploonets."
- Researchers reveal that ploonets can form when gas giants like Jupiter are

forced to migrate closer to their star, causing a transfer of angular momentum to their moons.

- This phenomenon is believed to explain the existence of so-called 'Hot Jupiters', gas giants similar to their namesake in the solar system but that lie far closer to their host star

#### Related Information

##### About the Ploonets

- Ploonets form when moons orbiting a planet escape their orbit.
- They are flung into a wider orbit around their star.
- Exomoons around gas giants like Jupiter that are migrating towards their star have around a 50 per cent chance of becoming a ploonet, else they get ejected into space or collide with their planet.
- No longer shielded by the magnetic field of their original host, however, ploonets are fated for doom — as they are gradually eroded away in the glare of stellar radiation.

#### Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- Science Daily

##### 6. Scientists create Ramanujan Machine

- Israel Institute of Technology has developed a concept they have named the Ramanujan Machine, after the Indian mathematician.
- It is not really a machine but an algorithm and performs a very unconventional function.
- The purpose of the machine is to come up with conjectures (in the form of mathematical formulas) that humans can analyze and hopefully prove to be true mathematically.
- Conjectures are a major step in the process of making new discoveries in any branch of science, particularly mathematics.

#### Topic- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

##### 7. Ebola outbreak a global health emergency: WHO

- WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo a "public health emergency of international concern," a rare designation only used for the gravest epidemics.

#### Related Information

##### Ebola

- Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal illness in humans.
- The Ebola virus causes an acute, serious illness which is often fatal if untreated.
- There are currently no licensed Ebola vaccines.

##### Transmission of Ebola

- The fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are natural Ebola Virus hosts.
- Ebola is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected animals such as chimpanzees, gorillas, fruit bats, monkeys, forest antelope and porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest.
- It spreads through human-to-human transmission via direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people, and with surfaces and materials (e.g. bedding, clothing) contaminated with these fluids.

#### Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- TOI

##### 8. Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2019

- The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2019 has been passed by both the Houses of Parliament.

##### Highlights of the Bills

- The Bill seeks to amend the Central Universities Act, 2009, which

establishes universities for teaching and research in various states.

- The Bill provides for the establishment of two central universities in Andhra Pradesh which is
- 1. The Central University of Andhra Pradesh and
- 2. The Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh.
- The tribal university will take additional measures to provide higher education and research facilities in tribal art, culture, and customs to the tribal population of India.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- PIB

19.07.2019

1. 'Paramarsh

- HRD Ministry has launched 'Paramarsh' a scheme for Mentoring National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) Accreditation Aspirant Institutions.
- University Grants Commission is the implementing agency of Paramarsh Scheme.
- The scheme aims to promote Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
- This scheme will target 1000 Higher Education Institutions for mentoring with a specific focus on quality as enumerated in the UGC "Quality Mandate".
- The Scheme will be operationalized through a "Hub & Spoke" model.
- The Mentor Institution called the "Hub" is centralized and will have the responsibility of guiding the Mentee institution through the secondary branches the "Spoke" through the services provided to the mentee for self-improvement.
- This allows centralized control over operational efficiency, resource utilization to attain overall development of the mentee institution.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- PIB

2. Motihari- Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline

- Indian Ambassador has said Motihari-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline has been successfully completed by India.

Related Information

About pipeline

- It is 69-kilometre long petroleum pipeline which runs from Motihari in Bihar to Amelkhgunj in Nepal.
- It will ensure smooth, cost-effective and environment-friendly supply of petroleum products to Nepal.
- It will also help in tackling the oil storage problem in Nepal and doing away with the transportation of petroleum products through tankers.

Topic- GS Paper 1– Geography

Source- AIR

3. Ethanol biorefinery to come up in Vidarbha

- BPCL will set up Maharashtra's first-ever ethanol biorefinery in Vidarbha's Bhandara district.
- The plant will manufacture ethanol from rice straw.

Related Information

National Policy on Biofuels, 2018

- It aims to increase the percentage of ethanol in petrol and diesel.
- Currently, it is at nearly 2% on petrol, while in diesel, biofuel is less than 0.1%.
- An indicative target of 20% of ethanol in petrol and 5% of biodiesel in diesel is proposed by 2030.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Geography

Source- The Hindu

4. Govt to increase coal production to one billion tones by 2022-23

- The government planned to increase the total production of coal in the country to one billion tones by 2022-23.
- All India raw coal production has increased its production from over

462 Metric tonnes in 2013-14 to around 730 metric tonnes in 2018-19.

- 14 dedicated corridors are being developed for the transportation of coal and plans are being made to improve transportation of coal through conveyor belts.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Geography

Source- AIR

5. What's a 'whip', and what does it do?

What is a whip?

- A whip in parliamentary parlance is a written order that party members be present for an important vote, or that they vote only in a particular way.
- The term is derived from the old British practice of "whipping in" lawmakers to follow the party line.
- In India, all parties can issue a whip to their members.
- Parties appoint a senior member from among their House contingents to issue whips — this member is called a Chief Whip, and he/she is assisted by additional Whips.

Kinds of Whips

- The importance of a whip can be inferred from the number of times an order is underlined.
- A one-line whip, underlined once, is usually issued to inform party members of a vote, and allows them to abstain in case they decide not to follow the party line.
- A two-line whip directs them to be present during the vote.
- A three-line whip is the strongest, employed on important occasions such as the second reading of a Bill or a no-confidence motion, and places an obligation on members to toe the party line.

Defiance of Whip

- The penalty for defying a whip varies from country to country.
- In the UK, MPs can lose membership of the party, but can keep their House seats as Independents;

- In India, rebelling against a three-line whip can put a lawmaker's membership of the House at risk.
- The anti-defection law allows the Speaker/Chairperson to disqualify such a member; the only exception is when more than a third of legislators to vote against a directive, effectively splitting the party.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Indian Polity

Source- Indian Express

6. Broadband Readiness Index for Indian States and Union Territories 2019-2022

- The Department of Telecom (DoT) and the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) signed an MoU to develop a Broadband Readiness Index (BRI) for Indian States and Union Territories (UT).
- This index was recommended by the National Digital Communication Policy (NDCP), 2018.
- The first BRI estimate will be made in 2019 and subsequently every year until 2022.
- This index will appraise the condition of the underlying digital infrastructure and related factors at the State/UT level.
- It will provide useful insights into strategic choices made by the States for investment allocations in ICT programmes.
- The BRI consists of two parts. (a) Part I will focus on infrastructure development based on the measurement of nine parameters. (b) Part II consists of demand-side parameters which will be captured through primary surveys.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- PIB

7. The panel of Chief Ministers mulls move to tie State farm reforms to funds

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra the chairman of panel on agriculture committee has come with the

following recommendation or reform which help in the agriculture sector.

- These recommendations are:
  - (a) Scrapping of the Essential Commodities Act for the food sector
  - (b) Review Of agriculture subsidies
  - (c) Dismantling of market monopolies
  - (d) Steps to increase private investment and investment credit in the sector
  - (e) Ways to ensure fair prices and end manipulative monopolies in the local markets
  - (f) Obstacles to the implementation of the digital e-NAM system to be removed
  - (g) Central grants and the Finance Commission allocations should be linked with the agriculture reforms implemented by the States

Note: Agriculture is a State subject.

Topic- GS Paper 2 – Governance

Source- The Hindu

8. Bimal Jalan panel: to review the economic capital framework of the RBI

- It was constituted in December 2018 to review the economic capital framework of the RBI.

Recommendation of the Panel

- The Bimal Jalan panel has decided to recommend transfer of surplus reserves to the government in a staggered manner over three-five years.
- The transfer of surplus capital may help the government meet its fiscal deficit target.
- The budget deficit target for the current fiscal to 3.3% of the gross domestic product in July from 3.4% set in February's interim budget.
- The Jalan panel's recommendation for transfer of excess reserves includes both contingency and revaluation funds.
- They also recommended for periodic review of the economic capital framework of RBI.

Topic- GS Paper 3 – Important Committee

Source- The Hindu

9. INS Sagardhwani Embarks on Sagar Maitri Mission-2

- Oceanographic research vessel of DRDO, INS Sagardhwani, embarked on a two-month-long SAGAR MAITRI (SM) Mission-2.

Related Information'

SAGAR MAITRI

- It is a unique initiative of DRDO which aligns with the broad objective of Prime Minister policy declaration "Safety And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).
- The prime objectives of the Sagar Maitri Mission are
  - (a) data collection from the entire North Indian Ocean,
  - (b) Focussing on the Andaman Sea and adjoining seas
  - (c) Establishing long-term collaboration with eight IOR countries in the field of ocean research and development

INS Sagardhwani

- It has been designed and developed by Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL), Kochi, a premier systems laboratory of DRDO.
- It conducts ocean research experiments in the Indian waters and spearheads NPOL's at-sea data collection activities

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- PIB

22.07.2019

1. Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2019 introduced in Lok Sabha

- The Government of India introduced the Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2019 in Lok Sabha to amend the Right to Information Act, 2005.

Amendments in the Bill

- The Bill changes the terms and conditions of service of the CIC and Information Commissioners at the centre and in states.
- In RTI Act, 2005: The Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) and Information Commissioners (ICs) (at the central and state level) will hold office for a term of five years now the central government will notify the term of office for the CIC and the ICs.
- The salary of the CIC and ICs (at the central level) will be equivalent to the salary paid to the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, respectively in the RTI Act, 2005 now the salaries, allowances, and other terms and conditions of service of the central and state CIC and ICs will be determined by the central government.
- At the time of the appointment of the CIC and ICs (at the central and state level), if they are receiving pension or any other retirement benefits for previous government service, their salaries will be reduced by an amount equal to the pension in RTI Act, 2005, RTI (Amendment) Bill, 2019 will remove these provisions.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

### 2. Upliftment of Women of Backward Communities

- Ministry of State for Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Lok Sabha about the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC).
- The ministry runs two women-specific schemes for targeted women whose annual family income is less than Rs. 3.00 lakh per annum:
  - (i) Mahila Samridhi Yojana:
    - To provide Micro Finance to women entrepreneurs of Backward Classes.
  - (ii) New Swarnima Scheme for Women:

- It provides term loan to inculcate the spirit of self-dependence among the women of Backward Classes

NBCFDC

- It is a non-profit company under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It aims to improve and develop the economic activities for the members of Backward Classes who are living below the poverty line

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Women Empowerment

Source- PIB

### 3. Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) facility

- Union Minister of Science and Technology has inaugurated Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) facility at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology a CSIR lab in Hyderabad.
- It can sequence 30 human genomes a day.
- It is the fourth such facility in the country.

Related Information

Next-Generation Sequencing

- Genome sequencing means to figure out the order of DNA nucleotides, or bases, in a genome—the order of As, Cs, Gs, and Ts that make up an organism's DNA.
- The human genome is made up of over 3 billion of these genetic letters.
- Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) allows parallel sequencing, resulting in the generation of Giga bases of data in a short amount of time.
- It also helped the scientists across the campus and India to sequence genomes from a range of organisms.
- It aims to provide reliable sequencing data with better quality, rapid turnaround time, cost-effectively and assist researchers in achieving their sequencing related research goals.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

4. Colistin banned in the animal food industry

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued an order prohibiting the manufacture, sale and distribution of colistin and its formulations for food-producing animals, poultry, aqua farming and animal feed supplements.

Related Information

Colistin

- It is also known as polymyxin E, is an antibiotic used to treat certain bacterial infections.
- Colistin is a valuable, last-resort antibiotic that saves lives in critical care units.
- In recent years, medical professionals have been alarmed by the number of patients who have exhibited resistance to the drug.
- Therefore, any move to ensure that arbitrary use of colistin in the food industry, particularly as growth supplements used in animals, poultry, aqua farms, would likely reduce the antimicrobial resistance within the country.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- TOI

5. Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga Project

- Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas informed about Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga Project in the Rajya Sabha about the Government various policy initiatives to increase the domestic production of crude oil and natural gas.

Related Information

Urja Ganga Project

- It is the highly ambitious gas pipeline project in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh which is being implemented by state-run gas utility Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL).
- The gas pipeline project aims to provide piped cooking (PNG) gas to

residents of the eastern region of the country and CNG gas for the vehicles.

- The government estimates that around 5 lakh gas cylinders will be sent at rural areas annually.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

6. UGC may allow multiple degrees simultaneously

- The University Grant Commission has set up a panel headed by its Vice Chairman Bhushan Patwardhan for Students for studying the feasibility of the idea which may allow multiple degrees simultaneously.

Related Information

University Grant Commission

- It is a statutory body set up by the Indian Union government in accordance with the UGC Act 1956 under Ministry of HRD.
- It is charged with coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of higher education.
- It provides recognition to universities in India and disburses funds to such recognised universities and colleges.
- Its headquarters is in New Delhi, and six regional centres in Pune, Bhopal, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Guwahati and Bangalore.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

7. Chandrayaan-2 mission takes off

- India's quest to land its first spacecraft on the moon got off to a smooth start on the 22nd July afternoon, with the successful launch of the country's most powerful rocket, GSLV MK-III.
- The launch vehicle lifted off from Sriharikota.
- The mission would see the lander and rover modules of the spacecraft make a soft-landing on the moon's surface 48 days from 22nd July, on September 7.
- Both of them will be 'alive' there for 14 days, during which they will carry

out various experiments and collect data.

#### Related Information

- India became the fourth country to land on the moon after the former Soviet Union, US and China, to cement its place among the world's space-faring nations.
- The orbiter with lander and rover launched onboard our advanced heavy rocket (GSLV Mark III) from the Sriharikota spaceport to inject it in the earth's elliptical orbit at 170km perigee (nearest to earth) and 30,000km apogee (farthest from the earth).
- Isro has named the lander "Vikram", after India's space pioneer Vikram Sarabhai (1919-1971) and rover 'Pragyan', which in Sanskrit means wisdom.
- The rocket will place the orbiter in the geo-transfer orbit for its passage to the lunar orbit, covering 385,000km from earth to moon in 50 days for the lander to have a soft landing near its south pole," said Sivan.
- The lander will separate from the orbiter through manoeuvres, when it is at 150km periloon (nearest the moon's surface) and 18,000 apoloon (farthest from lunar surface) and land on the moon in 4 days after it (orbiter) enters the lunar orbit at 100km from its surface and descends slowly up to 30km for soft landing.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science & Technology

Source- Indian Express

8. Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS)
  - It is Election Commission of India flagship IT Program known as - Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS).
  - With the motto of "no voter to be left behind", Election Commission of India's ETPBS has empowered and ensured all eligible service electors

with their constitutional power to vote while performing their duty for the nation.

#### Related Information

##### About ETPBS

- It is used for persons working in Central Forces under Arms Act and Government officials deployed in Embassies outside the country are classified as Service Voters and are provisioned for online enrolment.
- It is a fully secured system, having two security layers.
- Secrecy of voting is maintained through the use of OTP and PIN and no duplication of casted.
- Through this system the service voters cast their vote on an electronically received postal ballot, from anywhere outside their constituency, thus reducing the chances of losing the voting opportunity.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

23.07.2019

#### 1. India enters the 37-year period of demographic dividend

- According to studies, India has entered a 37 years period of demographic dividend since 2018.
- United Nations Population Fund defined the 'demographic dividend', as the growth potential that results from shifts in a population's age structure.

##### Highlights of the report

- Since 2018, India's working-age population (people between 15 and 64 years of age) has grown larger than the dependant population — children aged 14 or below as well as people above 65 years of age.
- This bulge in the working-age population is going to last till 2055.
- This transition happens largely because of a decrease in the total

fertility rate after the increase in life expectancy gets stabilised.

- The Total Fertility rate is defined as the number of births per women.
- Japan was among the first major economies to experience rapid growth because of the changing population structure.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Social Issue

Source- Indian Express

2. Odisha renews the effort to revive gharial population

- Odisha has renewed its effort to revive the population of gharials in their natural habitat by releasing into the Satkosia gorge of Mahanadi.
- Satkosia gorge of Mahanadi is the southernmost limit of gharials' home range in India.

Related Information

Gharials

- The Gharial or fish-eating crocodile is native to the Indian subcontinent.
- It is listed as a Critically Endangered by IUCN Red List.
- In India, it is found in India: Girwa River, Chambal River, Ken River, Son River, Mahanadi River, and Ramganga River.
- Saltwater crocodile, Gharial (Or freshwater crocodile) and Muggar crocodile are the three species of crocodilians found in India
- Odisha is the only state in India having all three species — gharial, muggar and saltwater crocodile.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

3. Bhabha Kavach: "India's lightest bullet-proof jacket"

- Bhabha Kavach billed as "India's lightest bullet-proof jacket", was launched at the International Police Expo 2019 in New Delhi.
- It is developed jointly by the Ordnance Factories Board and the public sector metals and metal alloys manufacturer MIDHANI.

- It can withstand bullets from an AK-47 assault rifle and the INSAS rifle.
- The jacket "is powered with nanotechnology from Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- Indian Express

4. The panel suggests banning of private cryptocurrencies in India

- The government constituted the Inter-Ministerial Committee in 2017, under the Chairmanship of Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg.
- The committee set up to look into the legality of cryptocurrencies and blockchain has submitted its report to the Finance Ministry and recommended that private cryptocurrencies be banned in India.
- It has drafted a law, the "Banning of Cryptocurrency & Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2019", which mandates a fine and imprisonment of up to 10 years for offences
- The panel said that cryptocurrencies do not have any intrinsic value of their own and lack any of the attributes of a currency.
- They neither act as a store of value nor are they a medium of exchange in themselves.

Related Information

Cryptocurrency

- A cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that uses cryptography for security.
- It uses decentralized technology to let users make secure payments and store money without the need to use their name or go through a bank.
- They run on a distributed public ledger called blockchain, which is a record of all transactions updated and held by currency holders.
- The most common cryptocurrencies are Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple, and Litecoina and recently facebook

released its cryptocurrency called Libra.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

5. JATAN: Virtual Museum software
- Human Centres Design and Computing Group have developed JATAN: Virtual Museum software as per the agreement with Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
  - It is used for creating the digital collections in various museums and digital archival tools that are used in the background for managing the National Portal and Digital Repository for Indian Museums.

Related Information

- There are 48 (forty-eight) Archaeological Site Museums under Archaeological Survey of India.
- Two Archaeological Site Museums, namely-Velha Goa; & Nagarjunakonda, have been digitised during the first phase through JATAN.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

6. Parliament Passes the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019

- The Rajya Sabha passed the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019 unanimously after a fervent appeal from the Union Minister for Home Affairs.

Highlights of the bill

The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019, inter alia, provides

- that a person who has been a Judge of the Supreme Court is also made eligible to be appointed as Chairperson of the Commission in addition to the person who has been the Chief Justice of India;
- to increase the Members of the Commission from two to three of which, one shall be a woman;
- to include Chairperson of the National Commission for Backward Classes, Chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child

Rights and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities as deemed Members of the Commission;

- to reduce the term of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission and the State Commissions from five to three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment;
- to provide that a person who has been a Judge of a High Court is also made eligible to be appointed as Chairperson of the State Commission in addition to the person who has been the Chief Justice of the High Court; and,
- to confer upon State Commissions, the functions relating to human rights being discharged by the Union territories, other than the Union territory of Delhi, which will be dealt with by the Commission.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

7. In the processing of solid waste, Chhattisgarh, Telangana lead

- Chhattisgarh and Telangana processed the largest percentage of solid waste they generated in 2018.
- Chhattisgarh generated a total 601,885 MTPA (metric tonne per annum) of waste, and was able to process 84% of it.
- The corresponding numbers for Telangana were 2,690,415 MTPA and 73%.
- Among the larger states, West Bengal and Jammu & Kashmir were those that had processed the smallest percentage of the total waste they generated — 5% and 8% respectively.
- Maharashtra generated the largest quantum of solid waste — 8,22,38,050 MTPA — and processed 44% of it.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- Indian Express

8. Endocrine disruptors: An eco-friendly process to remove pollutants from water

- Researchers developed a wastewater treatment process that uses a common agricultural byproduct to effectively remove pollutants and environmental hormones, known as endocrine disruptors.
- These environmental hormones are also known as endocrine disruptors.
- The sewage and wastewater that are inevitably produced at any industrial worksite often contain large quantities of pollutants and environmental hormones (endocrine disruptors).
- The environmental hormones do not break down easily and can affect not only the environment but also the human body.

Environmental hormones

- These are chemical compounds that resemble endocrine hormones.
- They may be either of natural or of synthetic origin. eg Bisphenol A (BPA)

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Down to Earth

9. Hand-in-Hand Military Exercise

- India and China hold their annual military exercise called 'Hand-in-Hand' in Meghalaya.
- This is the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of Military exercise between China and India.
- The exercise was suspended in 2017 amid heightened tensions between the two countries following the disengagement of a standoff between their armed forces on the Doklam plateau.
- Doklam Plateau is a piece of territory claimed by India-aligned Bhutan that is also claimed by China.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- TOI

10. Kerala to set up nation's first Space Systems Park

- The Kerala government will set up what is touted to be the country's first Space Systems Park at the up-and-coming Knowledge City.

Space Systems Park

- The park will help to attract global start-ups working in the space sector and also make it as a major manufacturing hub for space-related technology, research and development.
- Space Park will make the Kerala capital a key hub of space technology in the country.
- The Space Park will also house the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Knowledge Centre and Space Museum being developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) as a memorial to the former President and top space scientist.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

24.07.2019

1. Madhya Pradesh government to declare Ratapani sanctuary a tiger reserve

- The Madhya Pradesh government has recently decided to declare the Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary a tiger reserve.
- The state had received approval for the same from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) 11 years ago.

Related Information

National Tiger Conservation Authority

- It is a statutory body under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change.
- It was provided statutory status by wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- It addresses the administrative as well as ecological concerns for conserving tigers, by providing a statutory basis for the protection of tiger reserves.
- It also provides strengthened institutional mechanisms for the

protection of ecologically sensitive areas and endangered species.

- It ensures enforcing of guidelines for tiger conservation and monitoring compliance of the same.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

2. Mission Shakti: A hunt for talented athletes in remote areas

- The Maharashtra Government has decided to launch 'Mission Shakti' to speed up its programme to spot Olympic talent in remote tribal regions of the State.
- It aims to groom the tribal student for an Olympic medal by 2024.
- The programme, for now, is being implemented in Chandrapur and Gadchiroli districts and will be extended to the rest of the State soon

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

3. Sonali: low-cost bio-degradable cellulose sheets

- Scientists in Bangladesh have developed a method to convert Jute fibre into low-cost bio-degradable cellulose sheets named 'Sonali' which can be used as wrapping material and carrying bag.
- The jute poly bags made up of Sonali can be used in garments and food packaging work and they are not harmful to human health.
- The main challenge in the large scale adoption of Sonali sheet is the relatively high cost of production which almost doubles that of polythene.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- AIR

4. Gujarat tops India in rooftop solar capacity

- Gujarat has emerged as the state with the most rooftop solar panels installed.

- Gujarat has an installed rooftop solar power capacity of 261.97MW, against 1,700.54MW for all of India.

- Gujarat is followed by Maharashtra (198.52MW) and Tamil Nadu (151.62MW) in terms of installed rooftop capacity.

- As part of the grid-connected rooftop solar programme, the Union government-provided financial assistance and incentives worth Rs 678.01 crore in the financial year 2016-17 and Rs 446.7 crore in 2018-19.

- The Union government aims to install rooftop solar capacity of 40,000MW by 2022.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Energy

Source- TOI

5. India becomes the second-fastest-growing gas market

- India has become the second-fastest growing natural gas market globally as a result of a sustained policy push by the government that is aided by firm investment plans to the tune of a whopping \$30 billion for production, import and distribution infrastructure.
- The country has five new terminals under construction with 25.5 million tonnes per annum of capacity that is likely to be completed by 2020.
- The report also pointed out that despite significant growth, India is still a decade behind China – the fastest-growing gas market.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Infrastructure

Source- TOI

6. South Africa's carbon tax: Aim to ensure zero waste to landfill

- South Africa's recently introduced carbon tax will ensure zero waste to landfill, reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as boost investments for low carbon alternatives.
- The carbon tax aims to reduce 34 per cent carbon emissions by 2020 and 42 per cent emissions by 2025.

Related Information

Carbon Tax

- A carbon tax is a tax levied on the carbon content of fuels and, like carbon emissions trading, is a form of carbon pricing.
- Carbon taxes are a type of Pigovian tax.
- Pigovian tax is a tax on any market activity that generates negative externalities (costs not included in the market price).
- It is because when a hydrocarbon fuel such as coal, petroleum, or natural gas is burnt, its carbon is converted to CO<sub>2</sub> and other compounds of carbon which generate greenhouse gas which causes global warming, which damages the environment and human health which show negative externalities of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- Down to Earth

7. All lanes at toll plazas to be 'FASTag lanes'

- The government has decided to declare all lanes at toll fee plaza on national highways as 'FASTag lanes' from December 1.
- This will help to ensure seamless traffic and prevent congestion at toll plazas.
- However, among all lanes, one 'hybrid lane' will be allowed at every toll plaza to facilitate and monitor over-dimensional or oversized vehicles, where FASTag and other modes of payment will be accepted.

Related Information

FASTag lanes'

- It is an electronic toll collection device which is installed in vehicle mostly attached to the windscreen to help drivers drive through toll plazas without having to stop.
- It uses radio frequency identification (RFID) technology to enable direct toll payments while the vehicle is moving.

- The toll fare is deducted directly from prepaid of saving bank account linked to FASTag.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

8. Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme

About the Scheme

- The scheme is aimed at attracting the talent pool of the country to doctoral (Ph.D.) programmes of Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISERs) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) for carrying out research in cutting edge science and technology domains, with focus on national priorities.
- Maximum of 3000 Fellows would be selected in three year period, beginning 2018-19.
- Selected students through selection process laid down in PMRF Guidelines will be offered a monthly fellowship of Rs.70, 000 for first two years, Rs.75, 000 for the 3rd year and Rs.80, 000 in 4th and 5th years.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

9. Direct Sale of Biodiesel (B100)

- The Government has allowed the direct sale of biodiesel (B100) for blending with high-speed diesel to all consumers, in accordance with the specified blending limits and the standards specified by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

Related Information

National Policy on Biofuels-2018

- It has been approved by the Government envisages an indicative target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of biodiesel in a diesel by 2030.

Salient Features:

- The Policy categorises biofuels as "Basic Biofuels" viz. First Generation (1G) bioethanol & biodiesel and "Advanced Biofuels" - Second

Generation (2G) ethanol, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to drop-in fuels, Third Generation (3G) biofuels, bio-CNG etc.

- The Policy expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production by allowing the use of Sugarcane Juice, Sugar containing materials like Sugar Beet, Sweet Sorghum, Starch containing materials like Corn, Cassava.
- It also included damaged food grains like wheat, broken rice, Rotten Potatoes, unfit for human consumption for ethanol production.
- The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds, Used Cooking Oil, short gestation crops.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

25.07.2019

1. India moves up five ranks to become 52nd most innovative country

- The Global Innovation Index 2019 was launched by Commerce and Industry Minister in New Delhi.
- This is for the first time that the GII was launched in an emerging economy.
- The theme this year is Creating Healthy Lives - The Future of Medical Innovation, which aims to explore the role of medical innovation as it shapes the future of healthcare.

Highlights of the Index

- Switzerland is the world's most-innovative country followed by Sweden, the United States of America (U.S.), the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (U.K.)
- India improved its rank in the Global Innovation Index to 52nd, in 2019, making a significant jump of 5 places in a year.

- It was at 57th position in 2018.

Related Information

Global Innovation Index (GII)

- The GII global ranking is published by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) – a specialized agency of the United Nations in association with Cornell University and graduate business school INSEAD.
- It published annually since 2007 and is considered leading benchmarking tool for business executives, policymakers and others seeking insight into the state of innovation around the world.
- The Index ranks innovative performances of 129 economies around the world on 80 indicators including political environment, education, infrastructure and business sophistication.
- India's Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is one of the knowledge partners which assist the GII team in bringing out the annual ranking.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Economic Development

Source- AIR

2. Pradhan Mantri Laghu Vyapari Maan-Dhan Yojana 2019: A pension scheme for small traders

- The Centre's pension scheme for small traders has been notified and is being introduced on a trial basis according to Union Labour and Employment Ministry.
- The scheme, which is an extension of the PM Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana, will make all beneficiaries eligible for a monthly pension of Rs 3000 after the age of 60 at a minuscule monthly contribution.

Eligibility

- Under the scheme, those who are self-employed and working as shop-owners, traders, rice mill owners, oil mill owners, commission agents, real estate brokers, small hotel owners

and other small traders will be eligible for a pension.

- All shopkeepers and self-employed persons, as well as retail traders with GST turnover below Rs 1.5 crore and aged between 18-40 years, can enrol for the scheme.
- The government will establish a pension fund to run the scheme which is managed by Life Insurance Corporation of India.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Important Scheme

Source- PIB

3. National Miners' health body merged with the National Institute of Occupational Health Institute

- The Union Cabinet has approved to dissolve National Institute of Miners' Health and merge/amalgamate with ICMR-National Institute of Occupational Health National.
- Institute of Miners' Health (NIMH) is an autonomous Institute under Ministry of Mines (MoM) and ICMR-National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH) is working under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW).

Impact:

- The merger/amalgamation of NIMH with NIOH will prove beneficial to both the Institutes in term of enhanced expertise in the field of occupational health besides the efficient management of public money.

Related Information

National Institute of Miners' Health

- It was set up by Government of India in 1990 and registered as a Society under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act, 1960.
- The Institute conducts applied research in occupational health and hygiene and specializes in providing technical support services to mining and mineral-based industry with special reference to a metalliferous sector.

- The focus areas of NIOH include a vast array of areas related to occupational health which also includes occupational medicine and occupational hygiene.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- AIR

4. Ocean snail is the first animal to be officially endangered by deep-sea mining

- A rare snail called Chrysomallon squamiferum is found at only three spots in the Indian Ocean has become the first species to be officially declared threatened due to deep-sea mining.
- The scaly-foot snail is found at three hydrothermal vents in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar.
- Two of the vents where the snail is found could be mined in the near future for precious minerals
- It was added by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to its updated Red List of Endangered Species on July 18, 2019.

About hydrothermal vent

- It is 'a fissure on the seafloor from which geothermally heated water issues'.
- When this happens, the hot water mixes with the cold seawater, in turn, depositing minerals such as copper and manganese on the ocean floor.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment and Biodiversity

Source- Down to Earth

5. ISRO now looks to solar mission Aditya-L1

- ISRO has planned to launch the solar mission "Aditya-L1" during the first half of 2020.
- Aditya-L1 is meant to observe the Sun's corona.
- It will image and study the sun from the First Lagrange point also known as L1 Lagrange point.
- L1 point is 1.5 million kilometres away from the Earth.

- Aditya-L1 is a fully indigenous effort with the participation of national institutions.

#### Lagrangian points

- In celestial mechanics, the Lagrange points mark positions where the combined gravitational pull of the two large masses provides precisely the centripetal force required to orbit with them.
- There are five such points, labelled L1 to L5, all in the orbital plane of the two large bodies.
- The first three are on the line connecting the two large bodies; the last two, L4 and L5, each form an equilateral triangle with the two large bodies.
- The two latter points are stable, which implies that objects can orbit around them in a rotating coordinate system tied to the two large bodies.

#### Atmosphere of the Sun

Above the surface of the sun is its atmosphere, which consists of three parts-

- Photosphere- The innermost part of the sun's atmosphere and the only part we can see.
- Chromosphere- The area between the photosphere and the corona. It is hotter than the photosphere.
- Corona- The extremely hot outermost layer, extending outward several million miles from the chromosphere.

Topic-GS Paper 3 –Science & Technology

Source- The Hindu

#### 6. What is Tiangong-2?

- Tiangong-2 was a manned Chinese space station that was destroyed upon its controlled re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere over the Pacific Ocean on July 19.
- Tiangong-2 was retired from service after it had completed its experiments in space.
- It was launched in 2016 and hosted two Chinese astronauts for 30 days in what was China's longest manned space mission so far.

- The recently decommissioned space lab followed the Tiangong-1, China's first space station, which crashed into the southern Pacific Ocean on April 1, 2018, after Chinese scientists lost control of the spacecraft in March 2016.
- Recently China expects to complete its space station, Tianhe, which will be able to host three astronauts for long durations, around 2022.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

#### 7. India's first dragon blood-oozing tree

- Researchers discover *Dracaena Cambodian* in West Karbi Anglong district of Assam which is first time reported in India.
- *Dracaena cambodiana* is an important medicinal plant as well as an ornamental tree.
- The plant that yields dragon's blood — a bright red resin used since ancient times as a medicine, body oil, varnish, incense and dye.
- It is a major source of dragon's blood, a precious traditional medicine in China.
- Several antifungal and antibacterial compounds, antioxidants, flavonoids, etc., have been extracted from various parts of the plant.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment and Biodiversity

Source- The Hindu

26.07.2019

#### 1. National Data Quality Forum

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)'s National Institute for Medical Statistics (ICMR-NIMS), in partnership with Population Council, launched the National Data Quality Forum (NDQF).
- It will integrate learnings from scientific and evidence-based

initiatives and guide actions through periodic workshops and conferences.

- Its activities will help establish protocols and good practices of data collection, storage, use and dissemination that can be applied to health and demographic data, as well as replicated across industries and sectors noted a release issued by ICMR.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

2. Preventive steps taken to check Marine Pollution

- India is a signatory to MARPOL (International Convention on Prevention of Marine Pollution).
- Prevention of Marine Pollution is also dealt with by Merchant Shipping Rules, 2009 framed under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.
- A steering committee with stakeholders from all the concerned Ministers and Departments has been constituted by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to tackle the issues of marine plastic littering in 2009.

Related Information

MARPOL.

- India has, since 1978, been a signatory and enthusiastic implementer of MARPOL 73/78, the international convention for the prevention of pollution from ships.
- It aimed at preventing and minimizing pollution from ships - both accidental pollution and that from routine operations.
- The convention rules that ships cannot discharge oil, petroleum products or even bilge water, which is water used as engine coolant (which picks up residue from the ship's engine), anywhere within the exclusive economic zone, which is 200 nautical miles from the coast.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- PIB

3. Lightning

- Recently 29 people have been killed by lightning over the past 36 hours in Bihar.

Related Information

About Lightning

- Lightning is a giant spark of electricity in the atmosphere between clouds, the air, or the ground.
- In the early stages of development, air acts as an insulator between the positive and negative charges in the cloud and between the cloud and the ground.
- When the opposite charges build up enough, this insulating capacity of the air breaks down and there is a rapid discharge of electricity that we know as lightning.
- The flash of lightning temporarily equalizes the charged regions in the atmosphere until the opposite charges build up again.
- Lightning can occur between opposite charges within the thunderstorm cloud (intra-cloud lightning) or between opposite charges in the cloud and on the ground (cloud-to-ground lightning).
- It can be seen in volcanic eruptions, extremely intense forest fires, surface nuclear detonations, heavy snowstorms, in large hurricanes, and obviously, thunderstorms.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

4. Proahaetulla antique: 26 million years old species of Vine snake in the Western Ghats

- Researchers discover a new species of vine snake named Proahaetulla antique from the Western Ghats that dates back 26 million years.

- This species is endemic to the southern Western Ghats.
- The common name suggested for these individuals is 'keeled vine snake'.
- Vine snakes get their names due to their slender bodies and vine-like appearances.
- In India particularly there are 4 species of commonly distributed vine snakes, and another one was discovered in Odisha recently

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- In Short

5. UP becomes No. 1 in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Beema Yojna

PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHA BIMA YOJANA (PMSBY)

- Premium: Rs.12 per year
- Age group 18 to 70 years
- The risk coverage available under this scheme is Rs.2 lakh each for accidental deaths and permanent disability and Rs. 1 lakh for partial disability

PRADHAN MANTRI JEEVAN JYOTI BIMA YOJANA (PMJJBY)

- PMJJBY is a one-year life insurance scheme.
- Renewable from year to year, offering coverage for death due to any reason and is available to people in the age group of 18 to 50 years
- Premium of Rs.330/- per annum per member
- life cover of Rs. 2 lakhs

Topic- GS Paper 2–Government Schemes

Source-AIR

6. Lok Sabha clears changes to Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Highlights of the bills

- The Bill amends the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, providing special procedures to deal with terrorist activities, and

individuals and groups that foster terrorism in India.

- Under the Act, the central government may designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation if it:
  - Commits or participates in acts of terrorism,
  - Prepares for terrorism,
  - Promotes terrorism,
- Under the Act, an investigating officer is required to obtain the prior approval of the Director General of Police to seize properties that may be connected with terrorism.
- The Bill adds that if the investigation is conducted by an officer of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the approval of the Director General of NIA would be required for seizure of such property.
- Under the Act, investigation of cases may be conducted by officers of the rank of Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police or above.
- The Bill additionally empowers the officers of the NIA of the rank of Inspector or above to investigate cases.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

7. What data from Census 2011 show on migrations

- Census 2011 data on migration released recently show Maharashtra had more migrants from Madhya Pradesh than from Bihar, and Gujarat had almost double the number of migrants from Rajasthan than from Bihar.
- The data come at a time when migration is a major phenomenon across the world, and “illegal Bangladeshis” is a hot-button political issue in India.
- Over 45.58 crore Indians were found to be “migrants” for various reasons

during the enumeration exercises of Census 2011.

- The previous Census (2001) had recorded the number of migrants at 31.45 crore — more than 30% lower than the 2011 figure.
- According to the website of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, “When a person is enumerated in Census at a different place than his/her place of birth, she/he is considered a ‘migrant’.”
- Migration data began to be collected with the Census of 1872.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Geography

Source- Indian Express

29.07.2019

1. First Bamboo Industrial Park in Assam

- Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region reviews the status of implementation of various projects under MDoNER.
- The First Bamboo Industrial Park to be set up in Dima Hasao district of Assam in an area of 75 hectares.
- The target to complete the bamboo industrial park project by March 2021.
- The Minister was also informed that another project for Bamboo Park in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh would be taken up by North Eastern Council.

Note:

- Recently, bamboo is no longer a tree under the amendment to the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

2. Dolutegravir (DTG): An innovative HIV drug

- World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently recommended the use of the HIV drug dolutegravir (DTG) as the preferred first-line and second-line treatment for all populations, including pregnant women and those of childbearing potential.

Related Information

Dolutegravir

- It is more effective, easier to take and has fewer side effects than alternative drugs.
- It also has a high genetic barrier to developing drug resistance, which is important, given the rising trend of resistance.
- The new recommendations aim at helping more nations improve their HIV policies

Human immunodeficiency virus

- It is a virus that attacks cells in the immune system, which is our body's natural defence against illness.
- The virus destroys a type of white blood cell in the immune system called a T-helper cell and makes copies of itself inside these cells.
- T-helper cells are also referred to as CD4 cell

Topic-GS Paper 3–Science & Technology

Source- Indian Express

3. Vanishing wildlife: 22 species have gone extinct in India

- According to wildlife survey organizations, four species of fauna and 18 species of flora have gone extinct in India in the past few centuries.
- As per the information has been given by the BSI, 18 species of plants — four non-flowering and 14 flowering — have gone extinct.
- The notable among them are
  - (a) Lastreopsis wattii, a fern in Manipur
  - (b) Three species from the genus Ophiorrhiza (Ophiorrhiza brunonis, Ophiorrhiza caudate and Ophiorrhiza radican) all discovered from peninsular India
  - (c) Corypha taliera Roxb, a palm species discovered in Myanmar and the Bengal region by William Roxburgh is also extinct.

- Among mammals, the cheetah and the Sumatran rhinoceros are considered extinct in India.
- The pink-headed duck is feared extinct since 1950 and the Himalayan quail was last reported in 1876.

Factors for extinction

- Competition, predation, natural selection, and human-induced factors like hunting, habitat degradation are some of the important reasons that have led to these extinctions,

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment

Source- The Hindu

4. High-level Committee Formed to Strategise Preparations for 2020 and 2024 Olympics

- A high-level 10-member committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju to coordinate and strategise the preparation for the 2020 and 2024 Olympics.
- The objective of the committee is to ensure that the performance of the Indian athletes is optimised in the Olympics and other multidisciplinary events.
- The committee comprises of prominent sportspersons like Olympic medallists -- tennis ace Leander Paes and shooter Gagan Narang.
- The aim of the committee for the Tokyo Games (2020) would be to provide all possible support to potential and qualified athletes, facilitating smooth logistical arrangements for the participation of the Indian athletes, ensuring seamless acclimatisation and hospitable environment for the contingent.
- For the 2024 Paris Games, the committee would chart out a road-map for the preparation and then will continuously review and suggest course correction whenever required.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- New on AIR

5. Bangalore, Delhi make it to EIU's world's cheapest cities list

- Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released the world's cheapest cities (as in per cost of living) list, which included Bangalore at the fifth position. Apart from Bangalore, Chennai and New Delhi made it to the list at 8th and 10th position, respectively.
- The EIU is a British business company within the Economist Group which provides forecast through research and analysis.
- The list, which included 10 cities from across the world, saw Venezuela's Caracas at the number one position, followed by Syria's Damascus at the second.

Topic-GS Paper 3–Economic Development

Source- Indian Express

6. World Tiger Day: 30% rise in tiger population

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the four-yearly report of the All-India tiger estimation on the occasion of World Tiger Day.
- With an increase of nearly 33% since the last census in 2014, the total tiger count has touched 2,967, according to the All India Tiger Estimation Report 2018.
- The population was recorded at 1,411, which increased to 2,226 in 2014. As per the latest count, it is now estimated to be 2,967.
- India along with 12 other tiger range countries had committed to double the population of tigers in their respective countries by 2022, as part of the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) programme Tx2.
- Madhya Pradesh registered a substantial increase in their tiger population with an estimate of 526 tigers compared to 308 in 2014.
- The state is followed by Karnataka with 524 tigers. The two states have

the highest population of the predator.

- However, the poor and continuing decline in tiger status in the states of Chhattisgarh and Odisha is a matter of concern.
- The number has come down from 46 to 19 in Chhattisgarh, while in Odisha it remains at 28.
- India accounts for nearly 75% of the total tiger population (3,159 adult free-ranging tigers) in the world which is largest for any country.

Topic- GS Paper 3- Environment

Source- Indian Express

### 7. Deep Ocean Mission

- Union Earth Sciences Ministry will approve the 'Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)'.
- The objective of the mission to explore the deep ocean similar to the space exploration started by ISRO about 35 years ago.
- India has been allotted a site of 75,000 sq. km. in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for the exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN).

Related Information

Polymetallic nodules

- These are also known as manganese nodules.
- They are potato-shaped, largely porous nodules found in abundance carpeting the seafloor in the deep sea of the world oceans.
- Besides manganese and iron, they contain nickel, copper, cobalt, lead, molybdenum, cadmium, vanadium, titanium.
- Of these metals nickel, cobalt and copper are considered to be of economic and strategic importance.
- India is one among the top 8-countries to implement a long-term programme on exploration and utilization of Polymetallic Nodules.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

### 1. Nagaland forms a panel to frame RIIN modalities

- The Nagaland government

constituted a commission to frame the modalities of creating the Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland.

- The Commission would be headed by retired Chief Secretary Banuo Z. Jamir as chairman and T. Kiheto Sema and S. Chingwang Konyak as members.
- Justice (Retd.) Zelre Angami will function as the advisor to the Commission.
- The Home Commissioner and the Commissioner Nagaland will be ex-officio members of the panel.
- The panel would submit its report within three months.

Related Information

Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN)

- The RIIN, a register of all the indigenous inhabitants of the State, is required to prevent the issuance of indigenous inhabitant certificates to ineligible persons.
- It would provide protection to genuine citizens who are permanent settlers of Nagaland.
- The Nagaland government began the process of preparing the RIIN on July 10.
- The RIIN will help identify the citizens who settled in Nagaland prior to December 1, 1963, the day it became a full-fledged State.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- News on Air

### 2. CISF launches encyclopaedia to strengthen security services

Central Industrial Security Force launched an online encyclopaedia — Securitypedia — which incorporates a wide gamut of security-related practices across the globe

- Securitypedia has also have CISF Tube where officials can find all videos relevant to CISF.
- The CISF tube streamlines the monitoring of field units on a day-to-day basis, they have developed an innovative dashboard that provides real-time data collection.
- The CISF has also established a technical lab at National Industrial Security Academy (NISA) in

Hyderabad.

- The lab helps to maintain and update technical knowledge about the latest innovations in the field of safety and security that can be used in places like airports and government offices.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Defence

Source- TOI

3. 7<sup>th</sup> Economic Census begins from Tripura
  - The government will kick off the 7th Economic Census from Tripura.
  - It will be launched in other states and union territories in the month of August and September.
  - The Economic Census conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) will be held this year after a gap of five years.
  - The data will be collected through the door to door survey of each household and commercial establishment under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics Act 2008.
  - The fieldwork is expected to be completed by December and the results at the national level are expected to be available by March 2020.

Related Information

- The economic census is the only source of information on the significantly large unorganized sector in the country.

As per the last Economic Census conducted in 2013, there were 58.5

million establishments  
employing around 131  
million workers.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –

Governance Source- News on Air

30.07.2019

1. Project Sahara: a new tool to help reduce maternal mortality
  - Project Sahara is an initiation of Ahmedabad district administration which aimed at reducing haemorrhage-related maternal deaths by providing new

mothers with a special suit —the non-pneumatic anti-shock garment (NASG).

- The use of non-pneumatic anti-shock garment contains blood loss due to postpartum haemorrhage, thus saving the lives of new mothers.
- Postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) leads to continuous and excessive bleeding.
- The rapid loss of blood because of PPH reduces the body's blood pressure and can even cause death.
- According to Sample Registration Scheme results of 2016-17, Gujarat's IMR (per 1,000 live births) was 30 and MMR (per 100,000 live births) was 91.

Related Information

- Maternal mortality refers to deaths due to complications from pregnancy or childbirth.
- Maternal mortality rate (MMR) is taken as the number of recorded maternal deaths, for every 1 lakh live births.

Steps have taken to reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK) on 1st June 2011.
- The scheme is to benefit pregnant women who access Government health facilities for their delivery.

Sustainable Development Goals 3.1- of United Nation also calls to reduce MMR to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- Indian Express

## 2. Integrated Battle Groups

- The Army's plan to create the new concept of Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) is close to implementation which is a part of the overall force transformation.

Related Information

Integrated Battle Groups

- These are brigade-sized, agile, self-sufficient combat formations, which can swiftly launch strikes against an adversary in case of hostilities.
- Each of them (IBGs) would be tailor-made based on Threat, Terrain and

Task and resources will be allotted based on the three Ts.

#### Background

- After the terrorist attack on the Parliament, the Indian military undertook massive mobilisation but the Army's formations which deep inside took weeks to mobilise losing the element of surprise.
- Following this, the Army formulated a proactive doctrine known as 'Cold Start' to launch swift offensive but its existence was consistently denied in the past.
- Its existence was acknowledged for the first time by Gen Rawat on January 2017.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Security

Source- The Hindu

#### 3. Average monthly income per agricultural household is less than Rs 6,500

- The latest available estimates of average income per agricultural household in the country are based on the Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households conducted by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) during its 70th round (January 2013-December 2013).
- As per the survey results, the average monthly income per agricultural household from all sources is estimated to be Rs. 6,426."
- The NSSO, which is a nodal agency or conducting surveys and collecting data, has not conducted any survey on income per agricultural household since 2013.
- The government had constituted an inter-ministerial Committee on April 2016 to examine the issues relating to doubling of farmers' income and recommend strategies to achieve the same.
- The Committee has submitted its Report to the Government on September 2018.

Topic- GS-3- Agriculture

Source- Business

#### Standard

#### 'Odisha Rasagola' finally gets GI tag

- A year after West Bengal walked away with the geographical indication (GI) tag recognition for rasgulla, the Odisha government reopened the battle for ownership of the delicacy and won the rights over 'Odisha rasagola'.
- The registration was conferred to 'Odisha Rasagola' under Section 16(l) or of authorized Section 17(3)(c) of Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999.
- According to the application submitted to the Registrar of GI, 'Odisha Rasagola' is sweet from the state of Odisha made of chhena (cottage cheese) cooked in sugar syrup, which is very soft to feel, is juicy and non- chewy in consistency and can be swallowed without teeth pressure.

Odisha Small Industries Corporation Limited (OSIC) will be the registered holder of Odisha Rasagola's GI tag, and it will enjoy all legal and intellectual protection available for the product, whose uniqueness to Odisha

#### Related Information

#### Geographical Indication (GI)

- It is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.

#### GI tags – a requirement of the TRIPS agreement

- India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2003.
- Darjeeling Tea was the first Indian product to get the geographical indication tag.

Topic- GS Paper 1 – Art & Culture

Source- Times of India

4. Review List of Iconic Tourist Sites

- Union Culture and Tourism Minister of State approved setting up of a committee to review sites included in the project.

These sites are

- Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh), Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra), Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort and Qutub Minar (Delhi), Colva (Goa), Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Somnath and Dholavira (Gujarat), Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Kaziranga (Assam), Kumarakom (Kerala) and the Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).
- Several ministries, from Railways to Civil Aviation, will be involved, while the Tourism Ministry will be the nodal agency.

Related Information

Adopt a Heritage' scheme

- The 'Adopt A Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan', the scheme launched on 27th September 2017 is a collaborative effort by Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State/UTs Government.
- They help to envisage the development and maintenance of tourist amenities at heritage sites and making them tourist-friendly, to enhance tourism potential and cultural importance in a planned and phased manner.
- The project primarily focuses on providing basic amenities that include cleanliness, public conveniences, safe drinking water, and ease of access for tourists, signages, illumination, Wi-fi etc.
- Many of these monuments were opened up for adoption in late 2017 under the Ministry of Tourism's Adopt a Heritage Scheme.
- The Red Fort was adopted by the Dalmia Group, while the Qutub Minar and the Ajanta Caves were

adopted by Yatra Online.

Topic- GS Paper 1 –Art and Culture

Source- PIB

5. Govt panel on Data Protection says foreign firms need not mirror personal data in India

- Recently a high-level government panel has done way with the need for foreign firms to store a copy of all personal data within India.
- The concession could be the result of reservations expressed by several US and European firms.
- The panel also suggested that all critical personal data must still be stored and processed in the country.

Related Information

- The Justice Srikrishna panel had recommended that while personal data can be processed and stored abroad, a copy needs to be stored here.
- According to Srikrishna Committee report, critical personal data will include passwords, financial data, health data, official identifier, sex life, sexual orientation, biometric and genetic data, and data that reveals transgender status, intersex status, caste, tribe, religious or political beliefs or affiliations of an individual.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

6. Tamilnadu to get Silk Samagra for development of the silk industry

- Tamil Nadu, which has been ranked among the leading silk-producing States in the country, will receive about Rs 6.22 crore under the Silk Samagra.
- Silk Samagra is an Integrated Scheme for Development of Silk Industry (ISDSI) implemented by the Union government through the Central Silk Board (CSB) at an outlay of Rs. 2,161.68 crore for three years from 2017-18 for the overall development of silk in the country.
- The scheme includes major components which are - research & development, training, transfer of technology and Information

Technology initiatives, seed organisations, coordination and market development and quality certification systems export brand promotion and technology upgradation.

Topic-GS Paper 2 –Government Schemes  
Source- Deccan Chronicle

#### 7. Microdot Technology

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has amending Central Motor Vehicle Rules, allowing motor vehicles and their parts, components, assemblies, sub-assemblies to be affixed with permanent and nearly invisible microdots.

Microdot Technology

- It involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification.
- Use of this technology will help check the theft of vehicles and also the use of fake spare parts.
- The microdots and adhesive will become permanent fixtures/affixation which cannot be removed without damaging the asset that is the vehicle itself.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- PIB

#### 8. Deepfakes

- It is a combination of “deep learning” and “fake”.
- It is Artificial Intelligence (AI) software that superimposes a digital composite on to an existing video (or audio).
- It creates real fakes and deceptive videos, which make differentiating, fake from real even more cumbersome and complex.
- Fake celebrity footages, propaganda videos or revenge porn are all outcomes of the deep fake technology.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- TOI

31.07.2019

#### 1. Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill 2019

- Parliament passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill 2019.
- The Bill would ensure gender equality and gender justice to Muslim women.
- The Bill would also help in protecting the rights of married Muslim women and prevent divorce by the practice of ‘talaq-e-biddat’ by their husbands.

Salient features of the bill:

- The Bill propose to declare the practice of triple talaq as void and illegal.
- It also makes an offence punishable with imprisonment up to three years and fine.
- It also provides for payment of subsistence allowance to married Muslim women and dependent children.
- The Bill also has provision to make the offence cognizable, if information relating to the commission of an offence is given to an officer in charge of a police station by the married Muslim woman upon whom talaq is pronounced or by any person related to her by blood or marriage.
- The offence is made compoundable with the permission of the Magistrate at the instance of the married Muslim woman upon whom talaq is pronounced.
- The Bill further provides for hearing the married Muslim woman upon whom talaq is pronounced before the accused is released on bail by the Magistrate.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- PIB

#### 2. National Creche Scheme

- National Crèche Scheme is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through States/UTs.

- The scheme provides daycare facilities to children (age group of 6 months to 6 years) of working mothers in the community.
- The scheme also aims to provide supplementary nutrition, health care inputs like immunization, polio drops, basic health monitoring, sleeping facilities, pre-school education for children aged between 3-6 yrs.

Related Information

Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme (RGNCS)

- It a Central Sector Scheme, being implemented through the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW).
- Creche facilities are also provided under the Beedi & Cigar Worker (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –

Governance Source- PIB

3. Nigeria becomes the fourth African nation to join a global coalition to protect pollinators

- Nigeria became the fourth African country to join the Global Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators.
- Ethiopia was the first African nation to be part of this global coalition in 2017. Burundi was the second African country to join this global group.
- Other non-African nations such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dominican Republic, Ireland and Mexico had joined the global group last year.

About pollinator

- A pollinator is an animal that causes plants to make fruit or seeds.
- They do this by moving pollen from one part of the flower of a plant to another part.
- They are biotic (Bees, hummingbirds, flies etc.) as well as an abiotic like water, air etc.

Related Information

Global coalition to protect pollinators

- The coalition now has 28 signatories including 17 European countries,

five from Latin America and the Caribbean and four from Africa.

- They follow up on the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Assessment on Pollinators.
- The protecting pollinators will be important for addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) too.
- The goals relevant to pollinators are SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 15 (life on land), SDG 3 (good health and well-being) through access to sufficient nutritious food (highly dependent on pollinators) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) too as 1.4 billion people work in agriculture.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Environment and Biodiversity

Source- Down to Earth

4. Three exoplanets discovered around neighbouring star

- Three new planets, which orbit a star situated 73 light-years away from the Earth, have been discovered using NASA's newest planet-hunting satellite.
- Of the three new exoplanets, one is rocky and slightly larger than Earth, while the two others are gaseous and roughly twice the size of our planet.
- The new star system, called TESS Object of Interest, or TOI-270, is exactly what the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, or TESS, was designed to find.
- Follow-up observations on the system have been planned for 2021 when the James Webb Space Telescope launches. It will be able to measure the composition of the TOI-270 planets' atmospheres for oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon monoxide.

Topic- GS Paper 3- Science & Technology

Source- Indian Express

5. What is the Dholera Special Investment Region (DSIR)?

Dholera Special Investment Region is one of the several greenfield cities that have been planned on the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC).

- It is located about 100 kilometres south-west of Ahmedabad.
- It is expected to be the world's first green city.
- It covers an estimated 920 square kilometres.
- Dholera SIR is slated to be bigger than Singapore.
- The International Airport of Dholera Greenfield is a component of DSIR.

Topic- GS Paper 3- Science & Technology Source- Indian Express

6. Maharashtra becomes the first state in the country to adopt automated multimodal biometric identification system (AMBIS)
- Maharashtra chief minister inaugurated an AMBIS that aims to create a criminal database by addition of iris and face biometrics.
  - AMBIS is part of the state government's plans to modernise the state police department and improve crime detection.
  - Under this system, a digital database of fingerprints and photographs of criminals will be prepared, that will lead to a subsequent hike in conviction rate.
  - Mumbai Police get Automated Multimodal Biometric Identification System first-of-its-kind biometric criminal tracking system on a pilot basis.
  - This kind of biometric identification to be used first time by a police force in India.

Topic- GS Paper 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

7. Atal Community Innovation Centre
- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Atal Community Innovation Centre in New Delhi to encourage the spirit of innovation at the community level.

This initiative aims to encourage the spirit of innovation through solution- driven design thinking to serve society.

- Atal Innovation Mission has a key role to perform in order to achieve the target of five trillion dollar economy by 2025.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Government Policies Source- AIR

8. Minorities panel draws its remit

- The National Commission of Minorities (NCM) has refused to entertain a plea to declare Hindus a "minority community" in those States where they do not form a majority of the population.
- The NCM formed a sub-committee of George Kurian, Manjit Singh Rai and Atif Rasheed.
- The report said that only the Centre has the power to declare new groups, not the minorities commission.

Related Information

National Commission for Minorities (NCM)

- The Union Government set up the NCM under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.

Five religious communities, viz; Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis) have been notified as minority communities by the Union Government

- The functions of these Commissions, inter-alia, are to safeguard and protect the interests of minorities provided in the Constitution and laws enacted by Parliament and the State Legislatures.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance

Source- The Hindu

9. I&B Minister launches e-projects of publication division

- The website will provide information about the publication division's books and journals.
- All books are available on the website for sale.
- The Minister also commissioned a mobile app of the division namely Digital DPD to keep a check on possible piracy of e-books.
- He also launched e-version of Rozgar Samachar and e-book Satyagraha Geeta.

Topic- GS Paper 2 –Governance Source- AIR



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