

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCS)**

Election commission of India (ECI) organized Orientation Programme for Civil Society Organizations on Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs).

About:

- ECI, under its flagship programme 'Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation' (SVEEP), has introduced the project for Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy through Educational Institutions/ Organizations.
- This project envisages setting up of Electoral Literacy Club in every educational institution and Chunav Pathshala at every booth to cover those outside the formal education system.
- Launched on 8th National Voters' Day on 25th January, 2018, ELCs shall serve as a vibrant hub of Electoral Literacy for developing and strengthening the culture of electoral participation through hands on experience. Till now 5,80,620 ELCs have been established across the country.

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.**Ayush**

Minister for AYUSH informed Lok Sabha about the Steps Taken to Popularize AYUSH System of Medicine in the Country. The measures taken by the Ministry of AYUSH for further propagating the natural medical systems are:

- The Ministry of AYUSH regularly observes days dedicated to AYUSH Systems of Medicine Viz. International Day of Yoga, Ayurveda Day, Unani Day, Siddha Day, Naturopathy Day, Homoeopathy Day etc. to create awareness about the benefits of the respective AYUSH system.
- Ministry of AYUSH has established research councils namely Central council for research in homoeopathy (CCRH), Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Central Council in Research in Siddha (CCRS) and Central Council for Research in Unani Medicines (CCRUM) for undertaking Research and health awareness campaigns.
- At present there is no such proposal for consideration to establish a University for Siddha and Unani Medical systems in Tamil Nadu on the lines of Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Ayurveda Medical University in Rajasthan. However, the matter comes under the purview of State Government.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS**Global Migration Report 2020**

The Global Migration Report 2020 was recently released by the UN-affiliated International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Key findings of the report:

- Of the 272 international migrants worldwide (3.5% of the global population), India accounts for the highest share with 17.5 million Indians living outside the country. India is followed by Mexico (11.8 million) and China (10.7 million).
- Roughly two-thirds of international migrants are labour migrants.
- India is the leading recipient of remittances. International remittances in 2018 (2020 report) reached \$689 billion, out of which India received \$78.6 billion from the 17.5 million living abroad. India is currently followed by China (\$67.4 billion) and Mexico (\$35.7 billion).
- The top destinations for international migrants is the USA followed by Germany, Saudi Arabia, Russian Federation and the UK.
- The top migration corridors for Indians are the United Arab Emirates, the US and Saudi Arabia.
- The highest number of migrants entering India come from Bangladesh.
- Oceania is the region with the highest proportion of international migrants and the UAE is the country with the highest proportion of international migrants. More than half of all international migrants (141 million) live in Europe and North America.

First India-Japan 2+2 Foreign And Defence Ministerial Meeting

Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister of India S. Jaishankar, met Foreign Affairs Minister of Japan and Minister of Defense of Japan on 30 November 2019 in New Delhi for the first India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting.

About:

- THE Ministers welcomed the recently conducted exercises namely the second “Dharma Guardian-2019” and the second “SHINYUU Maitri-2019”. The Ministers also concurred to proceed with coordination for the first India-Japan joint fighter aircraft exercise in Japan.
- The Ministers welcomed the progress made in the negotiations of Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) since the announcement to commence the negotiations in October 2018. The Ministers expressed their desire for early conclusion of the negotiations.
- The Ministers welcomed the setting up of Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) by India in December 2018. The Indian side looked forward to Japanese side dispatching a liaison officer at the IFC-IOR in the near future.
- The Ministers emphasized the need to further strengthen the defence equipment and technology cooperation and looked forward to productive discussions in the fifth Joint Working Group on Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation (JWG-DETC).
- The Ministers welcomed the progress on cooperative research in the area of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV)/ Robotics.
- The Ministers expressed their satisfaction at trilateral cooperation with the US represented by the “MALABAR 2019” held from September-October 2019 off the coast of Japan, mine-countermeasures exercise (MINEX) held in Japan in July 2019 and “Cope India 2018” in which Japan participated as an observer in December 2018.
- The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of supporting ASEAN centrality and unity for promoting peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)” during the 34th ASEAN Summit in Thailand in June 2019.

India Sri Lanka Relations

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's paid a two-day visit to India. This was Mr Gotabaya's first overseas visit since assuming office.

Key highlights of the visit:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a 400 million dollar Line of Credit of to Sri Lanka to boost the island nation's development. India will also extend a 50 million dollars Line of Credit to Sri Lanka to fight terrorism.
- The Prime Minister also said that the two leaders had decided to utilise the \$100 million credit line earlier announced for setting up solar projects in the country.
- The two sides also discussed a range of bilateral and regional issues, including fulfilling the aspirations of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, situation in the Indian Ocean region and steps to boost trade and investment ties.

Related Info:

- Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a former Defence Secretary who is credited with ending the country's long civil war, was sworn in as the island nation's new president on November 18.
- Three days later, he appointed his elder brother Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister.

INDIAN ECONOMY**Economic Growth In India**

According to data released by National Statistical Office, India's GDP growth rate slipped to a 26-quarter low of 4.5 per cent in July-September, due to contraction in manufacturing growth.

About:

- The previous low for the country's GDP growth was 4.3 per cent during January-March 2012-13.

- In July-September, manufacturing growth slumped to (-)1.0 per cent as against 6.9 per cent growth last year, while the “agriculture, forestry and fishing” sector recorded a growth rate of 2.1 per cent as against 4.9 per cent last year.
- At 4.5 per cent, the GDP growth rate is much lower than 5.3 per cent projected for July-September by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its October policy.
- With this, GDP growth rate for April-September, the first half of this fiscal, is now at 4.8 per cent as against 7.5 per cent growth in the year-ago period.
- Growth rate in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), which is GDP minus net product taxes, has slowed to 4.3 per cent in July-September as against 6.9 per cent a year ago.

Related Info:

- The slowdown in economy is also expected to adversely affect income growth which, in turn, would further dent consumption demand.
- With declining household savings and lower buoyancy in government’s revenue collections, there will be limited fiscal space to spur economic growth and the monetary policy tool — through more rate cuts — could be relied on to boost growth going ahead.
- In just about a year-and-a-half, India has hurtled down the economic growth path. The GDP grew at a robust 8.1 per cent in January-March 2018. Since then, it has decelerated every consecutive quarter.

E-Agriculture

Union Minister of Agriculture informed Rajya Sabha about the various initiatives for promotion of technology in agriculture sector.

These are:

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a network of 715 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the country mandated with Technology Assessment and Demonstration for its Application and Capacity Development (TADA-CD).
- Agro-advisories are given to the farmers through mKisan portal. mKisan portal is a platform which provides web-based mobile advisory to farmers with the technological backstopping from Research Institutes and Agricultural Universities supporting farmers.
- Further, Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) provides a suitable platform for converging all activities for inclusive growth of agricultural mechanization by providing a ‘single window’ approach for implementation with a special focus on small & marginal farmers.
- Government is also implementing National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) scheme for transparent price discovery for remunerative prices for the farmers for their produce through competitive online bidding system.
- Under Marketing Research & Information Network (MRIN) Scheme, support is provided to the States towards setting up and maintaining connectivity with Agmarknet portal for collection and dissemination of market information on arrivals and prices of agri-commodities.

Chagos Archipelago Sovereignty Dispute

Mauritius called the UK an “illegal colonial occupier”, after it ignored a UN mandated deadline to return the Chagos Islands to Mauritius. The United Nations had given UK six months to process the transfer, a move the UK and the US have bitterly resisted.

About:

- The Chagos Archipelago is a group of seven atolls comprising more than 60 individual tropical islands in the Indian Ocean.
- It is officially part of the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Timeline of dispute:

- Chagos Archipelago has been part of Mauritius since at least the 18th century when France governed it. In 1810, Mauritius was captured by the United Kingdom and France ceded the territory in the Treaty of Paris.

- In 1965, three years before Mauritius got its independence, Britain separated the Chagos islands to carve out a 'British Indian Ocean Territory'.
- In 1966, the UK leased Diego Garcia (the biggest island in the Chagos archipelago) to the US to create an air & naval base. For constructing the defence installation, the inhabitants of the island were forcibly removed.
- In 1968 Mauritius was granted independence.
- In February 2019, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion that Britain has an obligation to end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago — home to the U.S. military base of Diego Garcia — and complete the process of decolonisation of Mauritius.
- In May 2019, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution asking the U.K. to withdraw its "colonial administration" from the Chagos Archipelago within six months. Mauritius wants its sovereignty over the islands restored.

ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Gujarat Control Of Terrorism And Organised Crime (GCTOC) Act

The Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Act, which received President Ram Nath Kovind's assent on November 5 comes into effect on December 1.

About:

- The anti-terrorism law draws heavily from The Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), 1999, with two significant differences:
- the checks on interception of communication that are part of the Maharashtra law are missing in the Gujarat law; and
- the definition of "terrorist act" in the GCTOCA also covers "intention to disturb public order".
- These differences make the Gujarat law tougher and broader in scope than MCOCA.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Clownfish

A new study published in the journal Ecology Letters has concluded that clownfish cannot be expected to be able to adapt to a rapidly changing environment as it does not have the genetic capacity to do so.

About:

- Clownfish (family: Pomacentridae), also known as anemonefish, are some of the most iconic marine fish in the world.
- They are highly popular among SCUBA divers due to their striking colour combinations of white, orange, yellow and brown.
- There are a total of 28 species of clownfish, which are all very similar in their habits. Perhaps the most renowned of these is the Common Clownfish (*Amphiprion ocellaris*), which was popularised in the Walt Disney movie 'Finding Nemo'.
- Distribution: Clownfish are found in tropical and subtropical areas of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The greatest diversity of clownfish is found close to Papua New Guinea, although the Great Barrier Reef in Australia is also known for a number of unique variants
- Habitat: Within their range, clownfish are restricted to shallow waters due to their fascinating relationship with only a handful of specific sea-anemone species.

Related Info:

- Clownfish breed only in sea anemones, sharing a symbiotic bond. The anemone benefits because clownfish can defend the anemone from fish that might eat it. Clownfish are the only fish that do not get stung by the nematocysts of the anemone

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

INAS 314 - "RAPTORS"

Indian Naval Air Squadron 314, the sixth Dornier aircraft squadron was commissioned at Naval Air Enclave- Porbandar on Gujarat coast.

About:

- The INAS 314 derives its name Raptors from the Bird of Prey family. The insignia of the squadron depicts a Raptor bird searching over the vast blue expanse of the sea.
- Raptors are large birds of prey known for excellent sensory capabilities, powerful and sharp talons and strong wings symbolizing the capabilities of the aircraft and envisaged roles of the squadron.
- This squadron will operate the Dornier aircraft, a multi-role SRMR aircraft, with twin turboprop engine manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautical Limited, Kanpur. The aircraft can be used for electronic warfare missions, maritime surveillance, search and rescue and to provide targeting data to weapon platform.
- Navy is procuring 12 new Dornier aircraft from HAL with state-of-the-art sensors and equipment including glass cockpit, advanced surveillance radar, optical sensors and networking features.

Spike

In Madhya Pradesh, the Indian Army successfully test-fired two newly-acquired Israeli Spike LR anti-tank guided missile (ATGM).

About:

- Spike is a fourth generation missile which can engage any target with precision at ranges up to 4 kilo metres.
- In addition to fire and forget capability, the missile also has the ability to fire, observe and update, providing substantial flexibility to the firer to pinpoint the impact point, as also the ability to switch to a different target mid-flight, should he want to do so.
- The missile has an inbuilt seeker, which gives the firer the flexibility to use any of two modes: Day (CCD) and Night (IIR). The dual seeker adds to the missile's reliability.
- India became the 33rd country to have the Spike missile as part of its inventory.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETCWorld Aids Day

World AIDS Day 2019 is being observed on the 1st of December with this year theme of "Communities make the difference."

About:

- World AIDS Day is observed on the 1st of December, every year, since 1988. World AIDS Day was the first global health day to be celebrated.
- AIDS is the abbreviation for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. It is a chronic illness, which can also be potentially life-threatening. The disease is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus, HIV which affects the human immune system.
- According to the WHO, at the end of 2018, about 37.9 million people were living with HIV. Data suggests that about 75 million people have been infected with the virus until now, out of which 32 million lives have been lost because of HIV.

Government's response:

- The government is implementing National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) as a hundred per cent Central Sector Scheme for prevention and control of AIDS. NACP response to HIV epidemic comprise a comprehensive three-pronged strategy of prevention, testing and treatment.
- The Government has also developed a seven-year National Strategic Plan from 2017 to 2024 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

ODISHA DEVELOPMENTMo Sarkar 2.0: KALIA Among Nine Other Schemes Comes Under 5T Purview

As many as nine schemes of six departments including the much-hyped KALIA yojana have come under the Mo Sarkar charter of the Odisha government.

About:

- As per the regulations of the Mo Sarkar, while the government has made it mandatory for officials to collect feedback from people on various issues, a 24X7 call centre opened at the

OCAC building in Bhubaneswar from January 5 and the toll-free number launched to provide information to farmers on KALIA scheme have reportedly become inoperative raising questions on the successful implementation of the initiative.

- On the other hand, farmers in the State have alleged delay in release of second phase of KALIA funds despite government assurances.
- Apart from KALIA scheme, registration of farmers and national food security scheme have also come under the 5T charter. Besides, Vahan and Sarathi of transport department have come under the 5T.
- Soon after the implementation of the Mo Sarkar initiative, the Agriculture department has given various responsibilities to its officials to further streamline accountability in the district level.
- Notably, Mo Sarkar was launched in hospitals and police stations from October 2 to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi this year. While six departments are covered under it, the government aims to bring all departments under its purview by March 2020.

EDITORIALS

Column: Restoring Odisha's Lost Greenery

Odisha is among the top beneficiaries of Centre's CAMPA fund meant for compensatory afforestation. It has received more than Rs.5000 crore on this account this year which is much more than the share of bigger states like Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

- The fund, as evident from its nomenclature, is aimed at restoring lost greenery. Environment Minister, Prakash Javadekar has also laid emphasis on augmentation of water reserves to improve the quality of forests being created through the fund. He is apparently keen to ensure that compensatory afforestation does not end up generating scrubland.
- This is of particular importance for a state like Odisha where a lot of greenery is lost every year to mining and industrial activities. Natural disasters like cyclones further worsen the situation. With a sizeable chunk of the state's existing forest wealth having deteriorated into scrubland it is imperative that the government ensures the creation of quality forests through endeavours supported by initiatives like CAMPA.
- State forest and environment ministry have confirmed Odisha's forest area increased by over 885 square kilometres in the last two years. But he did not mention whether these were forests with a thick canopy or undergrowth that could be described as forest only in a technical sense.
- Odisha must put the CAMPA funds to best possible use as it has suffered a massive loss of greenery in cyclones in the last few years. Cyclone Fani that was almost as furious and destructive as the supercyclone of 1999 in terms of the damage it inflicted on cropland and forests left behind a trail of devastation even in protected sanctuaries.
- While thousands of trees in the Chandaka sanctuary in the backyard of Bhubaneswar were uprooted by the gale Balukhand sanctuary in Puri district was one of the worst-hit by the cyclone. It lost 50 per cent of its tree cover. Massive destruction of greenery also took place along the Bhubaneswar-Puri highway and along the roads in many other areas of Puri, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Khurda.
- As luck would have it wildlife was not affected as badly by the fury of cyclone Fani. The spotted deer of Balukhand sanctuary that had gone missing for some time in the wake of the gale returned soon after. There were no reports of any major casualty to fauna in any other sanctuary or forest of the state because of Fani.
- But the loss of greenery remains a matter of concern and must be compensated through afforestation activities. This is all the more important because a large chunk of the state's forest cover has even otherwise deteriorated because of increased human interference. The Chandaka-Dampara forest in the backyard of the state capital itself is a glaring example of the adverse impact if the human activity on the state's green wealth. Sizeable patches of this once flourishing wildlife habitat have turned into a scrub forest. It is a victim of over-exploitation by the local communities. With many such examples existing in the state forest officials must ensure that CAMPA funds are used to restore Odisha's lost green wealth.
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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. "Dharma Guardian-2019" is a military exercise between India and:
 - (a) **Japan**
 - (b) U.S.A
 - (c) France
 - (d) U.K
2. The proposed Raigad refinery is located in which of the following states?
 - (a) **Maharashtra**
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh
 - (c) Gujarat
 - (d) Odisha
3. With reference to the World AIDS Day 2019, consider the following statements:
 1. It is observed on the 1st of December, every year, since 1988.
 2. The Government has developed a seven-year National Strategic Plan from 2017 to 2024 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. With reference to the Spike LR anti-tank guided missile (ATGM), consider the following statements:
 1. It is a fourth-generation missile which can engage any target with precision at ranges up to 4 kilo metres.
 2. It is indigenously developed by DRDO.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) **1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. What is INAS 314 - "RAPTORS", recently seen in news?
 - (a) Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
 - (b) **Sixth Dornier aircraft squadron**
 - (c) Guided-Missile Frigate Warship
 - (d) None of the above
6. 'Katchatheevu Islands' often mentioned in news, are dispute between India and:
 - (a) Maldives
 - (b) Bangladesh
 - (c) Mauritius
 - (d) **Sri Lanka**
7. With reference to the Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs), consider the following statements:
 1. It envisages setting up of Electoral Literacy Club in every educational institution and Chunav Pathshala at every booth to cover those outside the formal education system.
 2. It was launched on 8th National Voters' Day on 25th January, 2018.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. With reference to the various initiatives for promotion of technology in agriculture sector, consider the following statements:
 1. mKisan portal is a platform which provides web-based mobile advisory to farmers with the technological backstopping from Research Institutes and Agricultural Universities supporting farmers.
 2. Under Marketing Research & Information Network (MRIN) Scheme, support is provided to the States towards setting up and maintaining connectivity with Agmarknet portal for

collection and dissemination of market information on arrivals and prices of agri-commodities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. Which of the following statements are correct with respect to Global Migration Report 2020?
- 1. India accounts for the highest share with 17.5 million Indians living outside the country.
 - 2. The top migration corridors for Indians are the United Arab Emirates, the US and Saudi Arabia.
 - 3. The highest number of migrants entering India come from Pakistan.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) **1 and 2 only**
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
10. With reference to the economic growth in India, consider the following statements:
- 1. According to data released by National Statistical Office, India's GDP growth rate slipped to a 26-quarter low of 4.5 per cent in July-September 2019.
 - 2. Growth rate in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), which is GDP plus net product taxes, has slowed to 4.3 per cent in July-September 2019 as against 6.9 per cent a year ago.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) **1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
11. With reference to the Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Act, consider the following statements:
- 1. One of the key features of the new Act is intercepted telephonic conversations, which would now be considered as a legitimate evidence.
 - 2. It provides the confessions made before police officers are not admissible in court.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) **1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
12. The Chagos Archipelago is a group of seven atolls comprising more than 60 individual tropical islands in the:
- (a) Pacific Ocean
 - (b) Atlantic Ocean
 - (c) Arctic Ocean
 - (d) **Indian Ocean**
13. With reference to the Clownfish, consider the following statements:
- 1. They are found in all marine bodies.
 - 2. Clownfish breed only in sea anemones, sharing a symbiotic bond.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) **2 only**
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2