

**INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY****Ebrahim Alkazi**

Theatre director Ebrahim Alkazi, who revolutionised Indian theatre and was the longest-serving director of the National School of Drama, passed away at the age of 94.

**About:**

- Ebrahim Alkazi (1925 – 2020) was an Indian theatre director and drama teacher. He is remembered as the father of Indian theatre.
- He served as the Director of National School of Drama, New Delhi (1962–1977). He was the first person to bring regional language plays to NSD.
- He has directed over 50 plays, including Girish Karnad's Tughlaq and Dharamvir Bharati's Andha Yug.

**Awards:**

- He was the first recipient of Roopwedh Pratishtan's the Tanvir Award (2004) for lifetime contribution to the theatre.
- He received the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan (1991), and Padma Vibhushan in 2010.
- He received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in Direction in 1962, and later the Akademi's highest award the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship for lifetime contribution to theatre.

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS****Barakah Nuclear Power Plant**

As the Barakah Nuclear Plant's 1st Unit got operational, UAE became the first country in the Arab World to produce nuclear energy.

**About:**

- The Barakah nuclear power plant is the United Arab Emirates's first nuclear power station, the first nuclear power station in the Arabian Peninsula, and the first commercial nuclear power station in the Arab World.
- It is situated in the Al Dhafrah region of Abu Dhabi.
- It consists of four APR-1400 nuclear reactors (one operational, three mostly completed).
- The plant, powered by South Korean technology, hopes to produce 5.6 gigawatts of electricity and supply up to 25% of the UAE's electricity needs.

**India-Bangladesh Energy Relations**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a dollar 200 million financing deal with the Reliance Bangladesh LNG and Power Limited (RBLPL) to build and operate a 718-megawatt combined-cycle gas-fired power plant in Bangladesh.

**About:**

- Location: The plant is proposed to be located on land allotted by Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), in Meghnaghat, Narayanganj District near Dhaka.
- Significance: The power plant will reduce dependence of Bangladesh on electricity imports. It will also reduce the share of environmentally harmful and expensive fuels like coal and oil in the energy mix of the country.
- Technology: A combined-cycle power plant is a relatively more efficient way of producing electricity. It uses both a gas and a steam turbine together to produce up to 50 percent more electricity from the same fuel than a traditional simple-cycle plant.
- Funding: The financing deal has two components of dollar 100 million each. While ADB will provide dollar 100 million, it will also administer the other part worth dollar 100 million from the Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund (LEAP).

**Related Info:**

LEAP was set up in 2016 with a dollar 1.5 billion capital commitment for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Reliance Bangladesh LNG & Power is a 51:49 joint venture between Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group's Reliance Power and Japan's JERA Co Inc.

**INDIAN ECONOMY****Khadi Agarbatti Atma Nirbhar Mission**

Union Minister for MSME has approved a unique employment generation program proposed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to make India Aatmanirbhar in Agarbatti production.

About:

- The program named as “Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission” aims at creating employment for unemployed and migrant workers in different parts of the country while increasing domestic Agarbatti production substantially. The pilot project will be launched soon.
- The scheme is designed by KVIC on PPP mode. Under the scheme, KVIC will provide Automatic Agarbatti making machines and powder mixing machines to the artisans through the successful private Agarbatti manufacturers who will sign the agreement as business partners.
- KVIC will provide 25% subsidy on the cost of the machines and will recover the remaining 75% of the cost from the artisans in easy installments every month. The business partner will provide the raw material to the artisans for making Agarbatti and will pay them wages on job work basis.
- Cost of artisans’ training will be shared between KVIC and the private business partner wherein KVIC will bear 75% of the cost while 25% will be paid by the business partner.

Need of Mission:

- The current consumption of Agarbatti in the country is approximately 1490 MT per day; however, India’s per day production of Agarbatti is just 760 MT. There is a huge gap between the demand and the supply and hence, immense scope for job creation.

### **FDI In The Commercial Coal Mining**

Government has clarified that any FDI in the commercial coal mining should also comply with the recent amendments made in the applicable laws.

About:

- Recently, the government modified its FDI policy according to which any entity of a country, which shares land border with India or where the beneficial owner of an investment into India is situated in or is a citizen of any such country, could invest only under the Government route.
- The new policy further states that a citizen of Pakistan or an entity incorporated in Pakistan can invest, only under the Government route, in sectors and activities other than defence, space and atomic energy.
- Even for the sectors which are prohibited for foreign investment, Government route has been made mandatory for all such entities.
- Government of India had earlier permitted 100 % FDI under automatic route in coal mining activities, including associated processing infrastructure for sale of coal.

### **Core Industries**

According to the data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry, the index of eight core industries dropped 15% in June compared to a 22% decline in May. It had declined 37% in April. This is the fourth consecutive month of contraction in the core sector.

About:

- The output of eight core infrastructure industries shrank by 15 % in June this year due to fall in the production of coal, crude oil, natural gas, steel, cement and electricity.
- Barring fertilisers, other seven industries registered a decline in output. The output of coal sector fell 15.5 %, crude oil declined by 6 %, natural gas by 12 %, refinery products fell by 8.9 %, steel sector plunged by 33.8 %, cement by 6.9 % and electricity declined by 11 %.

Related Important

- The eight industries in the index are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity.
- These eight industries account for 40.27 % in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

### **Tariff Rate Quota Scheme**

Amid sliding prices of maize in the wake of the Covid-19 lockdown, the Centre has notified norms for import of 5 lakh tonnes of maize under Tariff Rate Quota Scheme during the current financial year at a concessional customs duty of 15 %. At present, maize attracts 50 % import duty.

About:

- Under the scheme, the government allows import of four products—maize (corn), “milk and cream in powder, granules”, crude sunflower seed or safflower oil and fractions thereof; and refined rape, colza or mustard oil and fractions thereof—at concessional rates of customs duty.

- Maize farmers in Bihar, who account for over 80 % of India's 6-7 million tonnes (mt) of annual production of rabi maize, are facing difficulties in selling their produce as prices have gone down to Rs 1,100-1,250 per quintal.

### **ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**

#### **Indian Leopard**

As part of its global tiger census, the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is set to release a dedicated report on leopard sightings by the month-end.

#### **About:**

The last formal census on India's leopards was conducted in 2014 which estimated the cat's population at between 12,000 and 14,000. They also estimated 8,000 leopards in the vicinity of tiger habitat.

While the quadrennial tiger survey is the centrepiece of the WII and environment ministry-coordinated undertaking, the exercise also estimates the population of other animals by relying on camera trap images.

#### **Indian Leopard Factsheet**

- The Indian leopard is one of the big cats occurring on the Indian subcontinent, apart from the Asiatic lion, Bengal tiger, snow leopard and clouded leopard.
- Scientific Name: *Panthera pardus*.
- Common Name: Indian leopard or Common leopard.
- Habitat: In India, the leopard is found in all forest types, from tropical rainforests to temperate deciduous and alpine coniferous forests. It is also found in dry scrubs and grasslands, the only exception being desert and the mangroves of Sundarbans.
- Status:
  - Listed on a par with Tigers under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972.
  - Listed in Appendix I of CITES.
  - Listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC**

#### **Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (Evin)**

Since April 2020, eight Indian States are using the eVIN application with 100 % adherence rate to track State specific COVID-19 material supplies, ensure availability and raise alerts in case of shortage of 81 essential drugs and equipment.

#### **About:**

- The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) is an innovative technological solution aimed at strengthening immunization supply chain systems across the country.
- eVIN aims to provide real-time information on vaccine stocks and flows, and storage temperatures across all cold chain points in the country.
- This is being implemented under National Health Mission (NHM) by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- eVIN has reached 32 States and Union Territories (UTs) and will soon be rolled-out in the remaining States and UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Ladakh and Sikkim.

#### **Poseidon-8i Aircraft**

India has formally kicked off the acquisition process for six more long-range Poseidon-8i aircraft from the US .

#### **About:**

- India is extensively using the naval P-8I patrol planes, which are packed with radars and electro-optic sensors as well as armed with Harpoon Block-II missiles and MK-54 lightweight torpedoes, for surveillance missions over the Indian Ocean as well as eastern Ladakh.
- The Navy had inducted eight Boeing-manufactured P-8I aircraft under a \$2.1 billion deal inked in 2009, while the next four will be delivered from this December onwards under another \$1.1 billion contract signed in 2016.
- The "letter of request" for six more P-8Is for around \$1.8 billion has now been issued to the US for the government-to-government deal under Pentagon's foreign military sales (FMS) programme. The contract should be inked by early next year

**BEIDOU**

China's President Xi Jinping officially commissioned its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System constellation.

**About:**

- China's navigation system uses a network of satellites and can provide positional accuracies of under ten metres (GPS provides positioning accuracies of under 2.2 metres).
- China initiated BeiDou in 1994. BeiDou offers services including accurate positioning, navigation and timing as well as short message communication.
- By completing BeiDou, China now has its own navigation system, which will compete with systems developed by other countries.

**Navigation Systems of other countries:**

- The Global Positioning System (GPS) is owned by the US government and operated by the US Air Force.
- Apart from this, Russia has its navigation system called GLONASS, the European Union (EU) has Galileo, while India's is called Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).

**DEFENCE AND SECURITY****Defence Production And Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020)**

Ministry of Defence (MoD) released the draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020) for public feedback.

**About:**

The DPEPP 2020 is envisaged as overarching guiding document of MoD to provide thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.

The policy has laid out following goals and objectives:

To achieve a turnover of Rs 1,75,000 Crores (US\$ 25Bn) including export of Rs 35,000 Crore (US\$ 5 Billion) in Aerospace and Defence goods and services by 2025.

- To develop a competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products.
- To reduce dependence on imports and take forward "Make in India" initiatives.
- To promote export of defence products.
- To create an environment that encourages R&D, rewards innovation and creates Indian IP ownership.

The Policy brings out multiple strategies under the following focus areas:

- Procurement Reforms
- Indigenization & Support to MSMEs/Startups
- Optimize Resource Allocation
- Investment Promotion, FDI & Ease of Doing Business
- Innovation and R&D
- Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)
- Quality Assurance & Testing Infrastructure
- Export Promotion

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Q. "In the wake of recent Galwan Valley incidents, India needs a comprehensive strategy to solve the border issues with the neighbouring country". Discuss.**

Recent border clash between India and China at Galwan valley claimed the lives of many Indian as well as Chinese soldiers.

The incident represents a watershed in India's relations with China and marks the end of a 45-year chapter which saw no armed confrontation involving loss of lives on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Also, Indian and Chinese armies are engaged in the standoff in Pangong Tso, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie in eastern Ladakh.

### Causes of the Galwan Valley Clash

- The recent violent clash is the result of the Chinese side's departure from the consensus to respect the LAC and attempted to unilaterally change the status quo.
  - It is their way of attaining a political goal with military might while gaining more territory in the process.
- The stand-off has escalated more due to the infrastructure projects that India has undertaken in recent years.
  - India is building a strategic road through the Galwan Valley - close to China - connecting the region to an airstrip.
  - China is opposed to any Indian construction in the area.
- The Line of Actual Control (LAC), is not demarcated, and China and India have differing ideas of where it should be located, leading to regular border "transgressions" and sometimes lead to such clashes.
  - Both countries' troops have patrolled this region for decades, as the contested 2,200-mile border is a long-standing subject of competing claims and tensions, including a brief war in 1962.

### Comprehensive Steps to Deal With the Problem

- Devolution of comprehensive China strategy: Strong political direction, mature deliberation and coherence are keys to handling the situation.
  - The Army can make tactical adjustments and manoeuvres to deter the Chinese.
  - Further, a comprehensive China strategy should be devised by the government of India in collaboration with the ground level acting forces.
- Strategic communication: The responsibility of effective strategic communication rests with political leadership and diplomatic set up. The Special Representative (SR) mechanism can be best used to establish the proper communication links.
- Clarification on LAC: India should take the initiative to insist on a timely and early clarification of the LAC. Pockets of difference of alignment as perceived by each side have to be clearly identified and these areas demilitarised by both sides through joint agreement pending a settlement of the boundary.
  - Diplomatic channels must continue to be open and should not be fettered in any way because their smooth operability is vital in the current situation.
- Counterbalancing China in other areas: India's leverage and balancing power within the Indo-Pacific and the world beyond stems from its strong democratic credentials, the dynamism of its economy, its leading role in multilateral institutions.
  - The strategic advantage of its maritime geography is an asset which must be deployed much more effectively to counterbalance the Chinese ingress into this oceanic space that surrounds us.
- Reconsider RCEP engagement: India can also reconsider its stand on joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).
  - If India is to disengage from economic involvement with China and build the capacities and capabilities in manufacturing and in supply chains, it cannot be a prisoner of the short term.
  - Trade between two countries can have the potential to remove the military tensions.

### Conclusion

- The events in Galwan Valley should be a wake-up call to India and its neighbouring countries (esp Bhutan) so as to devise a method to deal with Chinese aggressiveness.
- Such clashes provides an opportunity for India to align its interests much more strongly and unequivocally with the U.S. as a principal strategic partner and infuse more energy into its relations with Japan, Australia, and the ASEAN