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FORTNIGHTLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE

Feb 1-15

CHANDRAYAAN 3





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Anjali Surendranathan IFS
Second Secretary (Political) &
Special Assistant to Ambassador
UPSC 2017 AIR 26



Team Enlite has an excellent Civil Service preparation program with personalized guidance. I am sure that no other institute can have an amazing mentor like Mahesh sir who can make the preparation simple and enjoyable for the students.

Anandu Suresh Govind IAS
Assistant Collector & SDM, Pardi
UPSC 2018 AIR 127



I have done my complete preparation in general studies papers as well as optional subject (Philosophy) at Enlite IAS. I have also attended the current affairs classes and the Interview program there. I owe my success largely to the guidance and support I received from team Enlite and especially Mahesh Sir. I'm glad that I made the right choice in choosing the best institute.

Arjun Mohan IAS
Additional District Magistrate (HQ)
- Central Islands & Minicoy
UPSC 2018 AIR 66



I cannot quantify in words the support provided by Team Enlite in helping me secure 66th rank in Civil Services Examination 2018. Personal care provided by the mentors - Abhilash sir, Mahesh Sir, Abu Sir helped me complete the syllabus in an efficient manner in less than seven months. True to their motto team Enlite enlightens anyone who associate with them and I owe my success completely to ENLITE IAS

Dr. Aswathy Srinivas IAS
Subcollector, Thiruvananthapuram
UPSC 2019 AIR 40



My decision to join and learn with Enlite IAS Academy was the turning point in my life. Words can't explain, the amount of sincere concerted efforts Mahesh sir and Abhilash sir put into everyone of us, including me. The learner centric environment at Enlite gave me the strength and confidence which ensured my overall success, stands testimony to their incredible way of work. This success is synonymous with Enlite for me. ENLITE IS LIGHT!!!

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Note: Contents of Economic Survey and Budget 2023 will be shared as a separate document

POLITY

1. Judicial Majoritarianism

In News

As the recent majority judgment of the Supreme Court on demonetisation comes under criticism, the minority judgment by J. Nagarathna is being hailed for its challenge to the RBI's institutional acquiescence to the Central government.

About judicial majoritarianism

- Constitutional Benches, consisting of five or more judges, are set up in consonance with *Article 145(3) of the Constitution*.
- Such Benches usually consist of five, seven, nine, 11 or even 13 judges.
- The requirement for a *majority consensus* flows from *Article 145(5)* of the Constitution which states that no judgment in such cases can be delivered except with the concurrence of a majority of the judges but that judges are free to deliver dissenting judgments or opinions.

2. Contesting Two Seats in one Poll

In News

The Supreme Court rejected a petition to bar candidates from contesting from more than one constituency in the general or assembly elections.

Provisions Related to Twin Candidature

- **Section 33(7) of the Representation of People Act (RPA)** permits a candidate to contest any election (parliamentary, state assembly, biennial council, or by-elections) from up to two constituencies.
- The provision was **introduced in 1996** prior to which there was no bar on the number of constituencies from which a candidate could contest.

3. Aldermen

In News

The Supreme Court said the Constitution does not allow *nominated members* (aldermen) of a municipality the right to vote in meetings.

About Aldermen

- Alderman" refers to a member of a city council or municipal body, with exact responsibilities depending on the location of its usage. It is derived from Old English.
- As per the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, ten people, over the age of 25 can be nominated to the corporation by the administrator (the Lieutenant Governor).

- These people are expected to have special knowledge or experience in municipal administration.

Constitutional status

- As per the **Article 243 R** of the Constitution of India (Part 9 (A)) and as given in the Proviso to Section 3 (b)(i) of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, the nominated members (aldermen) are **not entitled to** vote in the elections
- **Article 243U** (Part 9 (A)) of the Constitution mandates that elections to constitute a municipality should be completed well in time
- **74th amendment of constitution: Municipalities (part 9A)**

4. Expunging in Parliament

In News

A portion of a speech delivered by the opposition leader in the Lok Sabha on February 7th, 2023 were expunged from the records of Parliament

About Expunging

- **Article 105(2) of the Indian Constitution**, Members of Parliament enjoy immunity from court proceedings for their statements in Parliament.
- Rule 380 of the **Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha** gives the Speaker the discretion to expunge any words or expressions used in debate that are considered defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary, or undignified.
- The expunged portions cease to exist in the records of Parliament and cannot be reported by media houses

Unparliamentary Expressions

- The **Lok Sabha Secretariat prepares** a book of ‘Unparliamentary Expressions’ containing words or expressions that would likely be considered rude or offensive in most cultures.
- **The Presiding Officers** - Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairperson of Rajya Sabha have the job of keeping such words out of Parliament’s records.

5. J&K Delimitation Commission

In news

The Supreme Court dismissed a challenge to the constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission to readjust constituencies in the new Union Territory.

About Supreme Court findings

- **Articles 2 and 3** of the Constitution enable the Parliament to create new States and Union territories.
- A law made **under Article 3** can always provide for readjustment of the Constituencies in the newly constituted States or Union territories through the Delimitation Commission.

- It was headed by *retired Supreme Court Justice* Ranjana Prakash Desai, it has the Chief Election Commissioner and J&K's Chief Electoral Officer as members, and J&K's five MPs as associate members.

Delimitation Commission



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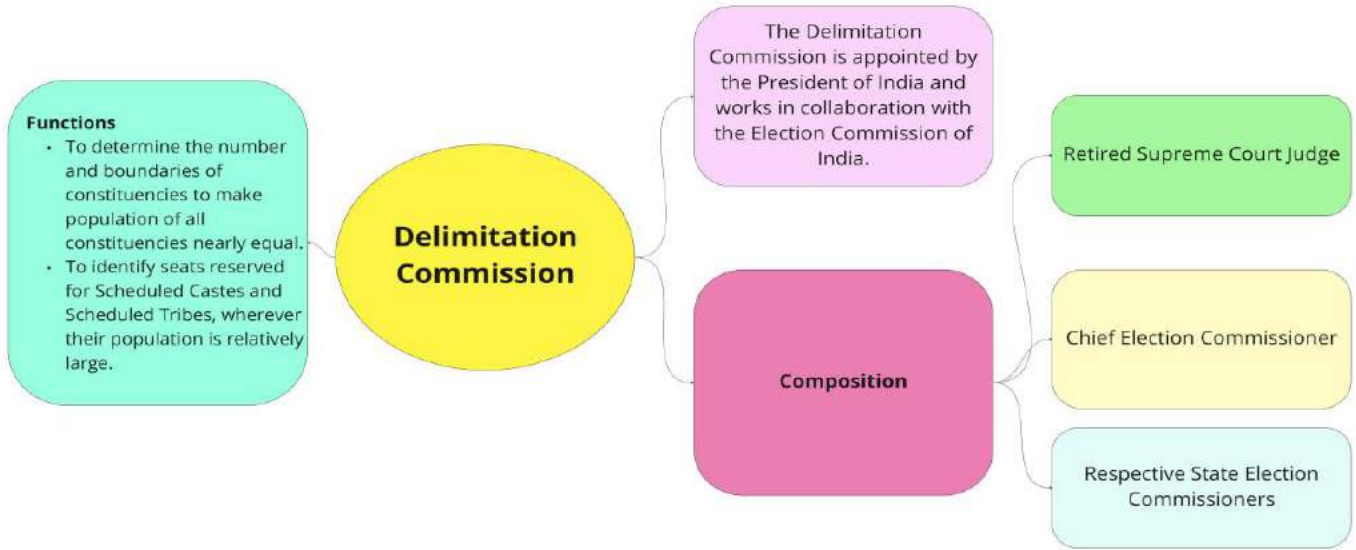
Why in news?

- The Supreme Court dismissed a challenge to the constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission to readjust constituencies in the new Union Territory.

Key Takeaways from the News

- Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution enable the Parliament to create new States and Union territories. Accordingly, the two new Union territories have been created.
- The J&K Reorganisation Act which created the two new Union territories assigns the role of readjustment of constituencies to the Delimitation Commission under the Delimitation Act, 2002 a law made under Article 3 can always provide for readjustment of the Constituencies in the newly constituted States or Union territories through the Delimitation Commission.

MAP OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND UT OF LADAKH



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ENVIRONMENT

1. MISHTI Initiative for Mangroves

In News

The Union Budget 2023-24 announced a new initiative for mangrove plantations along the coastline and on salt pan lands - MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes)

About the Scheme

- The new programme will facilitate mangrove plantation along India's coastline and on salt pan lands
- **Operation:** The programme will operate through “*convergence between MGNREGS, Campa Fund and other sources*”
- **Aim:** intensive afforestation of coastal mangrove forests.
- According to *India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021*, India's total mangrove cover is 4,992 km² (0.15% of total geographical area). India lost 40% of its mangrove cover during the last century with Kerala losing 95% of its mangroves in the last 3 decades.

MISHTI and Amrit Dharohar



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Why in news?

- Initiatives announced by Union Finance Minister in the Budget Speech for the conservation of wetlands and mangroves

MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes)

- It is a new programme that will facilitate mangrove plantations along India's coastline and on saltpan lands.
- The programme will operate through “convergence between MGNREGS, Campa Fund and other sources.”
- This new programme will aim at the intensive afforestation of coastal mangrove forests.

Amrit Dharohar

- This is a scheme that will be implemented over the next three years.
- Aim - To encourage the optimal use of wetlands and enhance bio-diversity, carbon stock, eco-tourism opportunities and income generation for local communities.
- Amrit Dharohar will emphasise the importance of wetlands and their preservation, with an outlook that is inclusive of local communities as caretakers of the ecosystem.



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2. Upper Bhadra Project In News

In budget 2023, Finance Minister announced a grant of ₹5300 crore for the Upper Bhadra Irrigation Project.

About the Project

- It is a major *lift irrigation* Scheme under implementation in the central region of Karnataka State.

The Tungabhadra River:

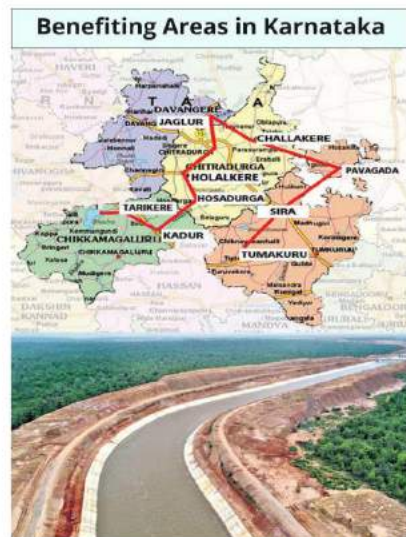
- It is a sacred river in southern India that flows through the states of *Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana.*
- The ancient name of the river was *Pampa.*
- It is formed by the confluence of two rivers, the *Tunga River* and the *Bhadra*
- Origin: Both Tunga & Bhadra Rivers are originated on the *eastern slopes of the Western Ghats.*
- Tungabhadra River flows in east, joins *Krishna River and then drains into Bay of Bengal.*
- The Historic city '*Hampi*' is located on the banks of the Tungabhadra River.
- Major Tributaries: Tunga, Kumudvati, Varada, Bhadra, Vedavathi, and Handri.

Upper Bhadra Project



Upper Bhadra Project

- It is a major lift irrigation project
- Location - Karnataka
- River - Tungabhadra River
- Objectives:
 - To provide sustainable irrigation facility in khariff season.
 - It also proposes to recharge ground water tables and provide drinking water by filling 367 tanks with six tmc ft water in drought-prone taluks.
- In 2022, Central government gave national project status to "Upper Bhadra Project".



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3. Red sanders

In News

The CITES trade database has recorded 28 incidents of red sanders confiscation, seizure and specimens from the wild being exported from India, a fact sheet prepared by TRAFFIC, a global wildlife trade monitoring organisation has revealed.

Red Sanders



The potential and the problem

Why in news?

- The recent trade database of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has recorded 28 incidents of Red Sanders confiscation, seizure, and wild specimen being exported from India.

Red Sanders

- Location - Indian endemic tree species, with a restricted geographical range in the Eastern Ghats region of Andhra Pradesh.
- Geographical Conditions Required - It usually grows in rocky, degraded and fallow lands with Red Soil and a hot and dry climate.
- Threats - Illicit felling for smuggling, forest fires, cattle grazing
- Reasons for Illicit Felling for Smuggling - High in demand across Asia, particularly in China and Japan, for use in cosmetics and medicinal products as well as for making furniture, woodcraft and musical instruments.
- Protection Status:
 - IUCN Red List - Endangered
 - CITES - Appendix II
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972- Schedule IV



1,000 metric tonnes

The annual market demand for Red Sanders

Rs 50 lakh - 1 cr

The price commanded by a tonne of this timber in international markets

50-80%

The population decline in this species over the last 3 generations

Distribution of Red sanders in India



1,000 sq km

The area of occupancy by Red Sanders that's endemic to the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh



60-100 years

For Red Sanders to reach good harvestable width



Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

- CITES is an international agreement to which States and regional economic integration organizations adhere voluntarily.
- CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- CITES entered into force in July 1975.
- Aim: Ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
- The CITES Secretariat is administered by UNEP (The United Nations Environment Programme) and is located at Geneva, Switzerland.
- 19th COP of CITES held at Panama.

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About Red Sanders

- The species, *Pterocarpus santalinus*, is an Indian endemic tree species.
- Geographical range: restricted in the *Eastern Ghats*. It is endemic to a distinct tract of forests in *Andhra Pradesh*

➤ Protection status:

- ✓ '**Endangered**' category in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.
- ✓ Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972: **Schedule IV**

4. Yaya Tso

In News

The Biodiversity Management Committee, the panchayat of Chumathang village, along with SECURE Himalaya Project recently resolved to declare Yaya Tso as Ladakh's first Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) under the Biological Diversity Act.

About

- Yaya Tso is also known as birds' paradise for its beautiful lake and is located at an altitude of 4,820 meters.
- Yaya Tso is a nesting habitat for a large number of birds and animals, such as the bar-headed goose, black-necked crane and brahminy duck.

Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS)

- These are areas that are unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems having rich biodiversity.
- The Indian State Government can notify the Biodiversity Heritage Sites in consultation with local governing bodies under Section 37 of Biological Diversity Act of 2002.
- India has 36 Biodiversity Heritage Sites spread across several states to date.
- The most recent addition was the *Mahendragiri hill Biodiversity Heritage Site in Odisha*.

About SECURE Himalaya

- It is a part of "Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development" (Global Wildlife Program) funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- The project promotes sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems to secure conservation of globally significant wildlife and their habitats.

Yaya Tso Lake



Why in news?

- Yaya Tso Lake was declared Ladakh's first biodiversity heritage site under the Biological Diversity Act.

Yaya Tso Lake

- Lake Yaya Tso is known as a bird's paradise for its beautiful lake located at an altitude of 4,820 metres.
- It is a nesting habitat for a large number of birds and animals, such as the bar-headed goose, black-necked crane and brahminy duck
- It is also one of the highest breeding sites of the black-necked crane in India.



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5. Save Wetlands Campaign

In News

The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the 'Save Wetlands Campaign' in Goa.

About

- **Ramsar Convention:** The convention aims at conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation. It came into force in 1975.
- **Montreux Record:** It is a register of Ramsar wetland sites where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference.
- India is a party to the Ramsar Convention since 1982 and has so far declared 75 wetlands as Ramsar sites
- **Tamil Nadu** has the maximum number of Ramsar sites (14 nos), followed by UP which has 10 nos. of Ramsar sites.

Recently added sites

Name	State	Peculiarity
<i>Tampara Lake</i>	Odisha	Right bank of Rushikulya River
<i>Hirakud reservoir</i>	Odisha	River Mahanadi
<i>Ansupa Lake</i>	Odisha	Oxbow lake formed by River Mahanadi
<i>Yashwant Sagar</i>	Madhya Pradesh	Important Bird Areas (IBA) in the Indore and Malwa region
<i>Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary</i>	Tamil Nadu	Ramanathapuram district
<i>Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex</i>	Tamil Nadu	
<i>Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary</i>	Tamil Nadu	a large human-made irrigation tank and shelter for migratory birds.
<i>Thane Creek</i>	Maharashtra	
<i>Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve</i>	Jammu and Kashmir	Within the River Jhelum basin

6. E20 Fuel**In News**

During the India Energy Week 2023 event, Indian Prime Minister launched the E20 fuel.

E20 Fuel

Why in news?

- During the India Energy Week 2023 event, Indian Prime Minister launched the E20 fuel.

E20 Fuel

- E20 Fuel is a blend of 20% ethanol and 80% petrol.
- An ethanol blend is a blended motor fuel containing ethyl alcohol (99% pure) blended exclusively with gasoline.
- Apart from sugarcane based raw material, ethanol production from surplus rice with FCI and Maize is allowed.
- India has already met its E10 target in 2022, so petrol used in the country has 10% ethanol in it.
- The government now aims to achieve a complete 20% blending of ethanol by 2025 (advanced from 2030).

Do You Know?

At present ethanol production is concentrated in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka.



Significance

- Adoption of E20 fuel will be instrumental in cutting down vehicular emissions.
- It will also help in cutting down the country's oil import bill, thereby saving foreign exchange and boosting energy security.
- It would extend support to the agricultural sector as well as provide additional income to farmers.

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7. Keoladeo National Park

In News

The Rajasthan Government has proposed to construct a zoo (WESCE) inside Keoladeo National Park, a World Heritage Site popularly known as Bharatpur bird sanctuary

About

- Wetland ex-situ Conservation Establishment (WESCE), is to display dolphins and exotic species.
- WESCE aims to rejuvenate the biodiversity of Keoladeo National Park

About: Keoladeo National Park

- **Chilika Lake** (Orissa) and Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) were recognized as the first Ramsar Sites of India in 1981.
- Currently, Keoladeo National Park and Loktak Lake (Manipur) are *in Montreux record*.
- **Gambhir and Banganga** are two rivers that flow through this National Park.

Keoladeo National Park



Keoladeo National Park

- The Keoladeo National Park formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary.
- State - Rajasthan
- It is strategically located in the middle of the Central Asian migratory flyway.
- It is a Ramsar site (Montreux Record) and also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Fauna - Sambar, Nilgai, wild cats, hyenas, wild boar, birds like Siberian Crane.



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8. Lithium Finding in India

In News

The *Geological Survey of India* has for the first-time established Lithium ‘inferred’ resources(G3) of 5.9 million tonnes in Salal-Haimana area of the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

About

- Lithium (Li) is *a soft and silvery-white metal*, often referred as ‘*White gold*’ due to its high demand for rechargeable batteries

Major Global Lithium Reserves:

- Chile, Australia, Argentina, China are top countries with Li reserves.
- *Lithium Triangle*: Chile, Argentina, Bolivia (concentrated in various salt pans present in the Atacama Desert)



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K AMAN CHANDRAN IFS
Third Secretary (PIC)
Embassy of India – Madrid, Spain
UPSC2019 Rank : 197



The Enlite team has supported and guided me throughout my UPSC journey. Whether it was the PCM classes, prelims and mains test series, philosophy optional preparation, or interview guidance, Enlite provides the best possible standards in the country. The atmosphere at Enlite is friendly and conducive to an ideal study environment. Nobody understands the demand of the exam better than Enlite!

ADHARSH RAJEENDRAN IAS
Andhra Pradesh Cadre
UPSC2019 Rank 405



ENLITE IAS is the best option for civil service aspirants in Trivandrum. I have attended their prelims and mains test series, answer writing sessions and Interview guidance programme and I can definitely say that you can't get a better option in Kerala other than Enlite IAS.

ANGEL RAJ
Indian Postal Service
UPSC2018 Rank : 623



I stand tall on the shoulders of "TEAM ENLITE" I attended the MTS and Last Lap courses of Enlite IAS. The individualized feedback by subject experts were truly a game changer for me in this attempt. For the interview Mahesh sir and Abhilash sir were instrumental in giving me an analytical and focused outlook on current events. I thank Mahesh Sir who could calm any stressed student with wise words and entire team (Abhilash sir, Abu sir, Abu Cherian sir) for truly enlightening my civil service preparation.

AKHIL SANALKUMAR IAAS
Deputy Accountant General,
Indian Audit and Accounts Department (CAG India)
UPSC2016 Rank 452



The courses offered by the institute is of the highest quality with candidates being given individual attention so as to rectify the issues in their style and develop in a well-rounded manner. In short, Enlite IAS is a one-stop solution for all civil service aspiring candidates.

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The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has categorised the recent discovery of resources in preliminary exploration, called the **G3 stage**.

The United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC)

- Developed by the UN Economic Commission for Europe.,
- There are four stages of exploration for any mineral deposit: reconnaissance (G4), preliminary exploration (G3), general exploration (G2), and detailed exploration (G1).
- The mineral extraction process typically begins with the G4 stage

9. Galathea Bay

In News

The Central government has invited expressions of interest (EOI) bids for the development of a mega international container transshipment port (ICTP) at Galathea Bay

Andaman and Nicobar Islands



Why in news?

- The Central government has invited expressions of interest (EOI) bids for the development of a mega international container transshipment port (ICTP) at Galathea Bay , Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

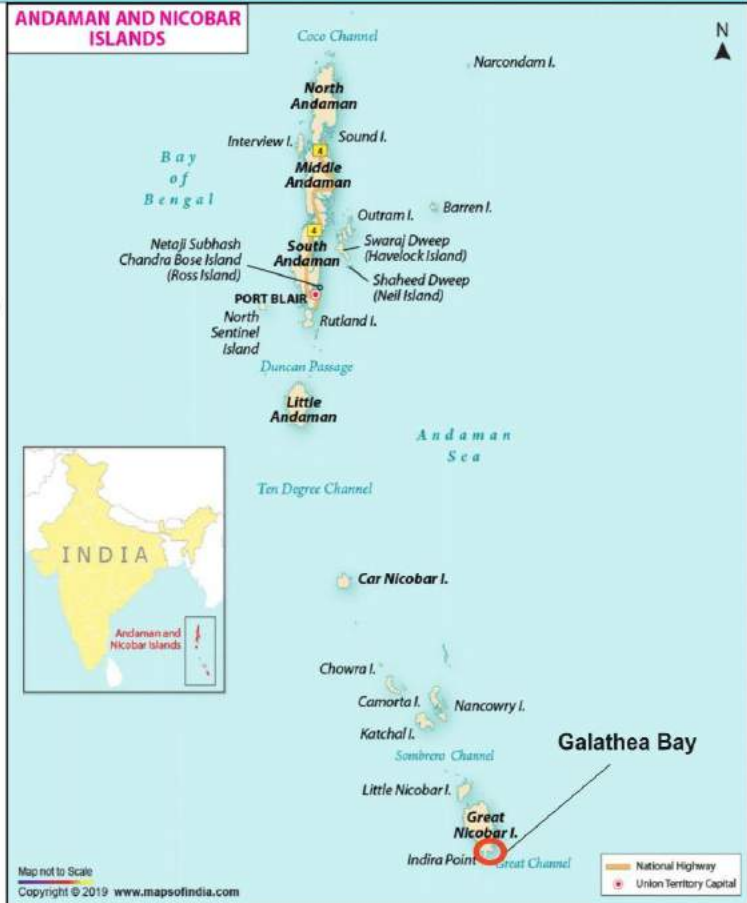
- Location - Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands or Emerald Islands is a union territory of India consisting of 572 islands, of which 38 are inhabited
- Capital - Port Blair(In South Andaman Island)
- It comprises two island groups, the Andaman Islands (partly) and the Nicobar Islands.
- The island chains are thought to be a submerged extension of the Arakan Mountains.
- Highest Peak - Saddle peak (737 m) in North Andaman
- Vegetation - The Islands have dense tropical rain forests.
- Volcanic Islands
 - Barren Island - Active Volcano
 - Narcondam Islands - Dormant volcano

Straits

- Coco Strait - Separates Coco Island(Myanmar) and Andaman Group of Islands
- Ten Degree Channel (on the 10°N parallel) - Separates Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- Duncan passage - Separates Little Andaman from South Andaman.
- Great Channel - Nicobar Island and Indonesia.

Significance Galathea Bay

- 40 nautical miles away from the Malacca Strait international shipping channel, which handles about 35% of the annual global sea trade
- Galathea Bay is an iconic nesting site in India of the Giant Leatherback, the world's largest marine turtle and Nicobar Megapode.
- Galathea National Park is a part of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve , a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- The Galathea Bay is home to the indigenous Shompen community



Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Tribes	Race
Great Andamanese	Negrito
Onge	Negrito
Jarawa	Negrito
Sentinelese	Negrito
Shompen	Mongoloid
Nicobarese	Mongoloid

SCHEMES/INITIATIVES

1. PM-PRANAM

In News

PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth will be launched to incentivize States and Union Territories to promote alternative fertilizers and balanced use of chemical fertilizers

About

- **Ministry:** *Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers*
- **Aim:** **Scheme** intends to reduce the subsidy burden on chemical fertilisers.
- **Financed:** It will be financed by the “*savings of existing fertiliser subsidy*” under schemes run by the Department of fertilisers.
- 50% of subsidy savings will be passed on **as a Grant** to the state that saves the money
- **70% of that Grant** provided under the scheme can be used for **asset creation** related to technological adoption of alternate fertilisers and alternate fertiliser production units at village, block and district levels.
- **30% grant money** can be used **for incentivising** farmers, panchayats, farmer producer organisations and self-help groups that are involved in the reduction of fertiliser use and awareness generation.

2. Pradhan Mantri PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) Development Mission

In News

The Finance minister announced the launch of a new scheme called the Pradhan Mantri PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) Development Mission as part of the Union Budget 2023-24.

About

- The PVTGs Mission aims to provide basic facilities like **housing, water, road, telecom, education and health** in PVTG areas across the country.
- Launched as part of ‘**Reaching The Last Mile**’, one of the seven Saptarishi priorities enlisted in this year’s Budget.
- **Ministries involved in Implementation:** *The Rural Development Ministry, The Water Resources Ministry, The Education Ministry, The Health Ministry and the Women and Child Development Ministry.*

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

- On the recommendation of the *Dhebar Commission*, the Central government began to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category in 1975, establishing 52 such groups.
- The list was expanded in 1993, when another 23 groups were added, *for a total of 75 PVTGs* out of 705 Scheduled Tribes spread across *17 states and one Union Territory (UT) in the country (2011 census), the highest number being found in Odisha.*
- **Criteria for identification of PVTGs:**
 - ✓ Pre-agricultural level of technology
 - ✓ Low level of literacy
 - ✓ Economic backwardness
 - ✓ A declining or stagnant population

Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission

Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission

- The mission will be launched as part of 'Reaching The Last Mile', one of the seven Saptarishi priorities enlisted in this year's Budget.
- The mission will saturate the particularly vulnerable tribal groups with safe housing, clean drinking water, education, nutrition, road and telecom connection and livelihood.
- A Budget of Rs 15,000 crore will be dedicated to this mission in the next three years.
- The scheme will benefit 3.5 lakh tribals.





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3. PM KUSUM

In News

The deadline to install 30,000 MW solar power capacity in rural India under PM-KUSUM has extended to March 2026.

PM KUSUM: Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Uttham Mahabhiyan

- **The Scheme consists of three components:**
 - ✓ **Component A:** Addition of 10,000 MW of solar capacity through installation of small solar power plants of capacity up to 2 MW.
 - ✓ **Component B:** Installation of 20 lakh standalone solar powered agricultural pumps.
 - ✓ **Component C:** Converting 15 lakh agriculture pumps, already connected to the grid, into solar.
- Centre's Assistance of 30%, State Government subsidy 30%; Remaining 40% by the farmer will be provided in component B and C.
- In North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Lakshadweep and A&N Islands, Centre's assistance of 50%, State Government subsidy 30%, Remaining 20% by the farmer.

4. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Scheme

In News

- Indian Railways to introduce ***Bharat Gaurav Deluxe AC Tourist Train*** under 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' Scheme for special tour Garvi Gujarat. The train launch is in line with the Government of India initiative "***Dekho Apna Desh***" to promote domestic tourism.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Scheme

- Launched by the PM on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas held on 31st October, 2015, **to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.**
- It aims to enhance interaction & promote mutual understanding between people of different states/UTs through the concept of state/UT pairing.
- **Implementation:** Every State and UT in the country would be paired with another State/UT for a time period, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.
- The ***Ministry of Education*** has been designated as the Nodal Ministry for coordination of the programmes.

Dekho Apna Desh Initiative

- It was launched by the ***Ministry of Tourism in 2020.***
- **Objective:** To create awareness among the citizens about the rich heritage and culture of the country and encourage citizens to travel within the country.

5. NAMASTE Scheme

In news

Union Budget 2023-2024 has allocated nearly Rs 100 crore for *the National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)*

About NAMASTE

- Launched in 2022 as a *Central Sector Scheme*.
- The scheme is being undertaken jointly by the *Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE)*
- Aims to eradicate unsafe sewer and septic tank cleaning practices.

Key Features of the Scheme

- **Identification:** NAMASTE envisages identifying the Sewer/Septic Tank Workers (SSWs).
- **Occupational Training and distribution of PPE Kits** to SSWs.
- **Assistance for Safety Devices to Sanitation Response Units (SRUs).**
- **Extending Health Insurance Scheme Benefits** to identified SSWs and their families under the Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- **Livelihood Assistance:** The Action Plan will promote mechanization and enterprise development by providing funding support and subsidy (capital +interest) to the sanitation workers, to procure sanitation related equipments.
- **IEC (Information Education and Communication) Campaign:** Massive campaigns would be undertaken jointly by the ULBs & NSKFDC (National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation) to spread awareness about the interventions of NAMASTE.

6. SWAYAM

In News

With 2.4 crore enrolling for courses which yield credits, the government-run SWAYAM Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) has outperformed any other e-Learning platform

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

- Launched in *2017 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development*
- Aim : to provide one integrated platform and portal for *online courses*.
- It is a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform, offering online courses in disciplines such as Science, Engineering and Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, Management free of cost.
- Study materials on SWAYAM are available in *8 Indian languages* - Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, and Telugu.

Other initiatives:

- ✓ SWAYAM Prabha (provide 32 High-Quality Educational Channels through DTH)
- ✓ E-Pathshala (for E-textbooks)

- ✓ Education 4.0 India initiative (To address learning gaps and make education accessible to all)

7. Bhashini Mission

In News

Government integrates Bhashini Mission's capabilities with UPI ecosystem

About

Bhashini's capabilities have been integrated with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to make digital payments through the UPI 123 Pay available in *more than 20 local Indian languages*

Mission Bhashini

- It's a *Centre-run National Language Translation Mission*, better known as Mission Bhashini
- *Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology*
- This government platform aims to make Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) resources available in the public domain to be used by Indian MSMEs, startups and individual innovators.
- This will help developers to offer all Indians easy access to the internet and digital services in their native languages

UPI 123 Pay

- It is *an instant payment system* which will allow users to make UPI transactions *without an internet connection*.
- It was launched by the *National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)*
- Transactions through UPI 123Pay can be done through *IVR (interactive voice response) based payment solution, missed call, sound-based technology, and payment app*.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)



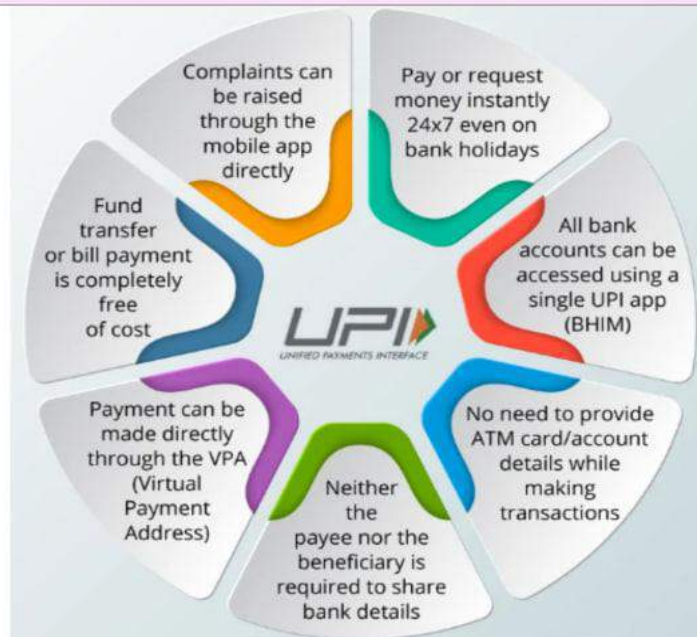
Why in news?

- The RBI has decided to permit all inbound foreign travellers to use UPI payments for their merchant payments while they are in India.
- Initially, it will be limited to travellers from G20 countries arriving at select international airports
- They will be able to use UPI while carrying out P2M (person-to-merchant) transactions.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- UPI is a technology that consolidates various bank accounts into a single mobile app (of any participating bank) .
- Providing an instant real-time payment system,
- Allowing users to transfer money across multiple bank accounts without revealing details of one's bank account to the other party.
- It was launched by the NPCI in 2016 in conjunction with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks Association (IBA).
- The UPI ID of the recipient can be used to transfer money.
- Function & regulation: It runs as an open-source application programming interface (API) on top of Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) and is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Features of UPI



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8. Krishi Udan scheme

In News

The government will soon add 21 more airports under the Krishi Udan scheme.

About the Scheme

- Krishi UDAN was launched in August 2020, on international and national routes to *assist farmers in transporting agricultural products* so that it improves their value realisation
- Krishi UDAN 2.0 launched in 2021 focus on *transporting perishable food products from the hilly areas, north eastern states and tribal areas.*
- Krishi Udan Scheme is a convergence scheme of *Ministry of Civil Aviation and 7 other Ministries/Departments*
- **E-KUSHAL:**
 - ✓ An online platform named E-KUSHAL (Krishi Udaan for Sustainable Holistic Agri-Logistics) would also be developed to facilitate information dissemination to all stakeholders regarding the transportation of agricultural produce.

9. River Cities Alliance

In News

- DHARA the annual meeting of the members of the River Cities Alliance (RCA), is being organised by *the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)* in association with the *National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)*.
- DHARA which stands for *Driving Holistic Action for Urban Rivers*, is a platform to co-learn and discuss solutions for managing local water resources.

River Cities Alliance


- River Cities Alliance (RCA) was launched in 2021 as a dedicated platform for river cities *across India to discuss & exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.*
- It includes cities from both *the Ganga basin and non-Ganga basin states.*
- River Cities Alliance is a first-of-its-kind Alliance in the world, symbolising the successful partnership of the two Ministries i.e., the *Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.*

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS/INITIATIVES

1. Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET)

In News

India's National Security Advisor hold talks with the US counterpart on the first dialogue on Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) in the US.



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Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET)

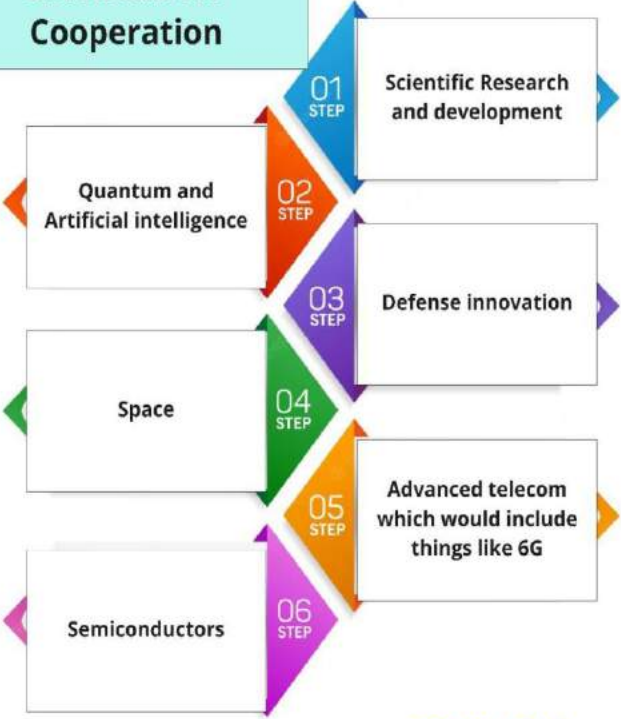
Why in news?

- India's National Security Advisor hold talks with the US counterpart on the first dialogue on Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) in the US.

Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET)

- The iCET initiative was launched by India and the US in May 2022,
- It is being run by the National Security Councils of both countries.
- Under iCET, the both countries have identified six areas of cooperation which would include co-development and co-production.
- India is ready to share its core technologies with the US and expects Washington to do the same.

Six Areas for Cooperation





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2. New START Treaty

In News

Recently, the U.S. accused Russia of not complying with the New START treaty.

About

- It restricts both countries to a **maximum of 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads each** and limits **launchers and heavy bombers to 800**.
- It also outlines **mutual inspections** and **regular data exchanges** on warheads and delivery mechanisms.

- It includes an agreement to *notify each other about the status of some ballistic missiles.*

Background:

- It is a successor to the **START framework of 1991** (at the end of the Cold War) that limited both sides to 1,600 strategic delivery vehicles and 6,000 warheads.
- The term ‘strategic offensive arms’ applies to nuclear warheads deployed by **Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles** (‘SNDVs’).
 - ✓ SNDVs are Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (‘ICBMs’) with a range exceeding 5,500 kilometres, strategic bombers, warships (including strategic submarines) and cruise missiles, including air and sea-launched cruise missiles.

New START Treaty

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Why in news?

- The U.S. accused Russia of not complying with the New START treaty.

New START Treaty

- The New START treaty is formally known as the Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.
- It is the last remaining arms control treaty between the world's two main nuclear powers, US and Russia.
- It is one of the key controls on the superpower deployment of nuclear weapons.
- Signed by: Barack Obama in 2010 and extended by Joe Biden till 2026.
- It took effect in February 2011.
- The treaty will remain in force till 4 February, 2026.



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3. Paris Club

In News

Paris Club is likely to give the IMF financial guarantees about the Sri Lankan debt.

About

- The Paris Club is an *informal group of mostly western creditor countries.*
- Its objective is to find *sustainable debt-relief solutions* for countries unable to repay their bilateral loans.

- The members of the Paris Club are also members of the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*.
- **Members:** Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

4. Nord Stream Pipeline

In News

Controversies has resurfaced regarding underwater explosions in the Baltic Sea that ruptured the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines in September 2022.

About Nord Stream

- The Nord Stream pipeline is a natural gas pipeline that runs under the Baltic Sea, connecting *Russia and Germany*.

Nord Stream

Why in news?

- The Kremlin said the world should know the truth about who sabotaged the Nord Stream gas pipelines and those responsible should be punished.

Nord Stream

- Nord Stream consists of two pipelines
 - Nord Stream 1 - Vyborg in Leningrad (Russia) to Lubmin near Greifswald, Germany.
 - Nord Stream 2 - Ust-Luga in Leningrad to Lubmin.
- The twin pipelines together can transport a combined total of 110 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas a year to Europe for at least 50 years.
- The Nord Stream crosses the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of several countries including Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, and the territorial waters of Russia, Denmark, and Germany.

Nord Stream pipelines from Russia

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5. Operation Dost

In News

India, under 'Operation Dost' has sent its sixth plane carrying National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, essentials, and medical equipment for the earthquake-hit Turkey.

About

- Operation Dost symbolises that India is a friend of Turkey and the two must deepen their relations.

- A field hospital under Operation Dost has been set up by the Indian Army in **Hatay province of Turkey**.

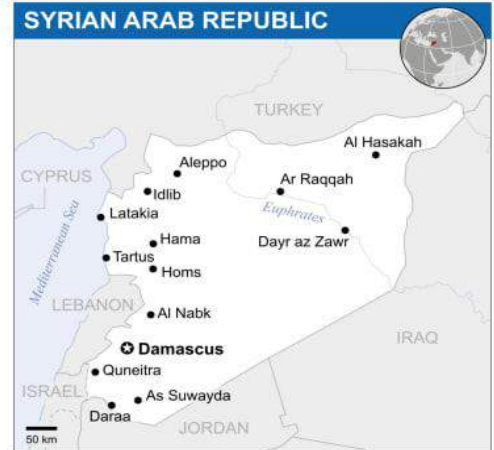
Syria and Turkey

Why in news?

- Syria and Turkey struck by a major earthquake.

Syria

- Syria is a Western Asian country located in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant.
- Capital - Damascus
- Borders
 - West - Mediterranean Sea
 - North - Turkey
 - East and southeast - Iraq
 - South - Jordan
 - Southwest - Israel and Lebanon
 - Cyprus lies to the west across the Mediterranean Sea
- Major Rivers in Syria - Euphrates, Tigris
- Disputed Territories - Golan heights with Israel



Turkey

- Turkey is a transcontinental country located mainly on the Anatolian Peninsula in Western Asia, with a small portion on the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe.
- Asian Turkey is separated from European Turkey by Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles.
- Capital - Ankara
- Borders
 - North - Black Sea
 - Northeast - Georgia
 - East - Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran
 - Southeast - Iraq
 - South - Syria and the Mediterranean Sea
 - West - Aegean Sea
 - Northwest - Greece and Bulgaria
 - Cyprus is off the south coast
- Climate - Mediterranean climate
- International Relation
 - Turkey is a founding member of the United Nations the OECD the OIC the OSCE ECO BSEC TURKSOY , the D-8 G20 and the OTS.
 - Turkey is also member of UNSC and NATO.



ECONOMY

1. Economic Survey 2022-23

In News

- The Economic Survey 2022-23 highlighted that *India's economic recovery from the pandemic is complete* and the *economy is expected to grow* in the range of 6% to 6.8% in the coming financial year 2023-24.

The Economic Survey

- The Economic Survey of India is an *annual document* released by the *Ministry of Finance*.
- It is usually presented in Parliament a day before the Union Budget.
- It is prepared by the *Economics Division of the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)* under the *guidance of the Chief Economic Advisor*.
- It *reviews* the developments in the Indian economy over the *previous 12 months*
- The *first Economic Survey* in India was presented in the year *1950-51*.
- Up to 1964, it was presented along with the Union Budget. From 1964 onwards, it has been delinked from the Budget.

2. GOVERNMENT'S NEW POLICY OF UPI FOR NRIs

In News

National Payments Corporation of India(NPCI) has paved the way for *international (phone) numbers* to be able to transact using UPI.

About

- Non-resident accounts such as *non-resident external accounts (NRE) and non-resident ordinary accounts (NRO) having international numbers* will now be *allowed into the UPI* payment system.
- NRE accounts are those used by non-residents to transfer earnings from foreign soil to India while NRO accounts are used to manage income earned in India by non-residents.
- *At present, users from ten countries* will be able to avail the facility— Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, UAE, and the U.K.

UPI

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an *instant real-time payment system* developed by the *National Payments Corporation of India*.
- The interface facilitates *inter-bank peer-to-peer and person-to-merchant* transactions.
- It is used on mobile devices to instantly transfer funds between two bank accounts.



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ARUN K PAVITHRAN IPS
Assistant Superintendent of Police
Mattancherry, Kerala
UPSC2019 Rank 561



Enlite is my 'Home away from home' where I felt most comfortable during my entire journey of preparation. This success would not have been possible without the constant support of my mentors Mahesh Sir, Abhilash Sir and the entire Team Enlite who raised me whenever I fell down. My mentors asked me to have faith in myself and not to overthink during the prelims. It was Mahesh Sir, who constantly demanded me to get my answers corrected during the Mains preparation including Malayalam optional which gave me the much-needed scope for improvement. The one-on-one session with him gave me the confidence to articulate my opinion before the Interview board. I am so grateful to Enlite for my success.

ANKITHA MISHRA IPS
UPSC2021 Rank : 169



Enlite IAS was an integral part in my preparation along with Philosophy Optional, GS Mentorship & Ethics as well as Interview Preparation by Mahesh Sir has really made the difference.

AMITH MP IAS
Asst. Collector - Tindivanam,
Villupuram Dist, Tamil Nadu
UPSC2018 Rank 405



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3. Reverse-flipping

In News

Economic Survey 2022-23 states that Indian start-up companies are looking at 'reverse flipping'.

Reverse-flipping

- *Flipping* is the process of *transferring entire ownership of an Indian company to an overseas entity*.
- It is generally *accompanied by a transfer of all intellectual property* and data owned by an Indian company.
- *Reverse Flipping* is the *process of shifting the domicile of those companies back to India who flipped earlier*.
- *Companies reverse flip because of easy access to capital* from private equity and venture capital, *changes in rules* regarding round-tripping, and the *growing maturity of India's capital market*.

4. Angel Tax

In News

The Finance Bill, 2023, has proposed to amend the Section of the Income Tax Act which might affect Start-Ups funding in India.

About

- *The Finance Bill, 2023 has proposed to amend Section 56(2) VII B of the Income Tax Act.*
- Section 56(2) VII B -colloquially known as the '*angel tax*' *was first introduced in 2012.*

Angel tax

- Angel tax refer to the *income tax payable on capital raised by unlisted companies via the issue of shares* where the *share price is seen in excess of the fair market value* of the shares sold.
- The excess realization is treated as income and taxed accordingly

Finance Bill, 2023:

- The government has proposed to also include foreign investors in the ambit.
- Meaning that when a start-up raises funding from a foreign investor, that too will now be counted as income and be taxable.

5. Follow-on Public Offer (FPO)

In News

Adani Enterprises canceled its Rs 20,000 crore Follow-on Public Offer after the shares of the firm declined following allegations of accounting fraud by US short-seller Hindenburg Research.

Follow-on Public Offering (FPO)

- **Initial public offer (IPO) and follow-on public offer (FPO)** are two basic fundamental ways a company raises money from the equity market
- A **Follow-on Public Offering (FPO)** also known as **secondary offerings**, is the **issuance of shares to investors** by a **company listed** on a stock exchange.
- They **typically** occur **after the company has completed an initial public offering (IPO)** to make its shares available to the public.

Types of FPO'S

1. Dilutive FPO:

- This is the process where the **company issues additional fresh shares to the public to raise capital.**
- It **results in increasing the company's total outstanding shares, decreasing the Earnings Per Share (EPS).**

2. Non-Dilutive FPO:

- A non-diluted FPO is when the **company's largest shareholders, such as the founders or board of directors, offer the shares they hold privately to the general public.**
- Unlike a diluted IPO, this method **does not increase or decrease the company's number of shares.**

FPO vs IPO

- Meaning: **Initial public offering or IPO is the first time a company goes public.** Company has gone public; it means it has offered its shares to the public at large and is ready to get listed at the stock exchanges of the country.
- **Follow on public offer or FPO** is a way by which **companies already listed on the stock exchange issue shares to the public.**
- Price: **In an IPO, the price is either fixed or variable as a range,** while in an **FPO the price is dependent upon the number of shares** as they increase or decrease and is market-driven.
- Share capital: **In an IPO the share capital increases** because the company decides to issue fresh capital to the public for its listing.
- **In an FPO, alternatively, the number of shares can either increase or decrease depending upon the type of FPO** it is. In a dilutive FPO, the number of shares increases, while remaining the same in a non-dilutive FPO.
- Value: **IPOs are oftentimes more expensive to carry out than FPOs.** The reason FPOs are cheaper is that the value of the company listing its shares is getting diluted further.
- Risk: **IPOs are considered to be riskier than FPOs.**

6. Equalization levy

In News

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued norms for processing returns filed by digital economy firms that are liable to equalization levy, streamlining the administration of India's digital economy tax.

About Equalization Levy

- *Equalization Levy* also known as *Google tax* was *introduced* in *2016* to tax digital economy.
- *Equalisation levy at 6%* has been in force on *payment exceeding Rs 1 lakh a year to a non-resident service provider* for *online advertisements till 2019*.
- The *amendments to the Finance Act, 2020* had *expanded the ambit of the equalisation levy for non-resident e-commerce operators* involved in supply of services & goods at the *rate of 2%*
- The equalisation levy was imposed "to give level playing field between Indian businesses who pay tax in India and foreign e-commerce companies who do business in India but do not pay any income tax here.

7. Market Access Initiative (MAI)

In News

Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) inaugurated the first edition of upnext India 2023 in presence of international buyers and exhibitors.

About

- This initiative is in the form of a series of *Reverse Buyer Seller meet under the name of "UPNEXT INDIA"*.
- *Reverse Buyer Seller Meet* is to provide an opportunity for prospective *importers (Buyers) to interact with their Indian counterparts (sellers)* about the requirements, *instead of sellers going to buyers* to sell their products.
- Upnext India is organized by AEPC and supported by the *Ministry of Commerce and Industry under the Market Access Initiative (MAI) Scheme*.

Market Access Initiative (MAI)

- It is an *Export Promotion Scheme*.
- The scheme aims to act as a *catalyst to promote India's exports* on a sustained basis.

8. Transfer Pricing

In News

The income tax authorities conducted a survey in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)'s India offices for alleged violations of transfer pricing norms.

Transfer Pricing

- According to the I-T Department, “*transfer pricing* generally refers to *prices of transactions between associated enterprises* which may take place under conditions differing from those taking place between independent enterprises”.

How does transfer pricing work?

- Suppose a *company A purchases* goods for *100 rupees* and *sells* it to its *associated company B in another country* for *200 rupees*, who *in turn sells in the open market for 400 rupees*.
- “*Had A sold it* (the good) direct, it would have made a *profit of 300 rupees*. *But by routing it through B*, it (A) restricted it (profit) to 100 rupees, permitting B to appropriate the balance 200.
- *The profit of 200 rupees is*, thereby, *shifted to the country of B* with *lower tax rates* thereby *evading tax in country A*. *Company need to pay tax for only Rs 100 profit* in country A.
- *The goods is transferred on a price (transfer price)* which is *arbitrary or dictated* (200 hundred rupees), but not on the market price (400 rupees).

The Arm’s Length principle:

- If *two unrelated companies trade with each other*, a *market price* for the transaction will generally result.
- This is known as “*arms-length*” trading, *because it is the product of genuine negotiation in a market*.
- This *arm’s length price* is usually considered to be *acceptable for tax purposes*.
- But *when two related companies trade with each other*, they may wish to *artificially distort the price* at which the trade is recorded, to minimise the overall tax bill.

HISTORY/ART & CULTURE

1. Visva-Bharati University

In News

Visva-Bharati University *will soon get the 'heritage' tag from UNESCO* to take the distinction of *world's first living heritage university*.

About Visva Bharati University

- Founded by: The university was *founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1921*.
- Declared to be a *Central University* and an institution of national importance by an *Act of Parliament in 1951*.
- Its *first vice-chancellor was Rathindranath Tagore, the son of Rabindranath Tagore*.
- Rabindranath believed in *open-air education* and introduced that system at the university, which prevails to date.
- It will be the *world's first heritage university*.
- *Normally a heritage tag is given to a dead monument. For the first time in the world, a living university which is functioning is going to get the heritage tag from UNESCO.*
- The *President of India is the Paridarsaka (Visitor)* of the University, the *Governor of West Bengal is the Pradhana (Rector)*, and the *Prime Minister of India acts as the Acharya (Chancellor)*.
- *The President of India appoints the Upacharya (Vice-chancellor)* of the University.

2. Grishneshwar Temple

In News

Recently, Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited the historic Grishneshwar temple, which is the *12th Jyotirlinga* in the country.

Grishneshwar Jyotirlinga Temple

- *Grishneshwar Jyotirlinga Temple also known as Ghushmeshwar Temple, is one of the shrines* dedicated to Lord Shiva that is referenced in the *Shiva Purana*.
- It is situated in the state of *Maharashtra*.
- This pilgrimage site is *located near to Ellora Caves – a UNESCO World Heritage Site*.

Historical background:

- The temple structure was *destroyed by the Delhi Sultanate in the 13th and 14th-century*.
- It was rebuilt in the current form in the 18th century by Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore, after the fall of the Mughal Empire.

Architectural Design:

- The Grishneshwar temple is *an illustration of maratha temple architectural style and structure*.
- It is built of *red rocks and is composed of a five-tier shikara*.
- The temple is the *smallest Jyotirlinga temple* in India.

- There is a Nandi bull in the court hall.

3. Swami Dayanand Saraswati

In news

Prime Minister paid tribute to Dayanand Saraswati on his *200th birth Anniversary*.

Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati (12 Feb 1824 - 30 Oct 1883)

- *Born in Tankara, Gujarat as 'Mool Shankar'* to a Brahmin family
- *Made Swami Virajananda his Guru.*

Contributions

Socio Religious:

- Believer in Hinduism but *rejected man –made ritualism and worship of idols.*
- Gave a call of '*Back To Vedas*' and *established Arya Samaj in 1875.*
- He was first to give *call for Swaraj as "India for Indians" in 1876.*
- *Started Shuddhi movement* wherein purification was imparted to those who sought their way back to Hinduism.

Educational Reforms:

- Set up Gurukuls to teach knowledge of Vedas.
- *Dayananda Anglo Vedic College Trust* and Management Society was established by his disciples.
- *First DAV High School was established at Lahore in 1886 with Lala Hans Raj* as its headmaster.

Independence struggle:

- His teachings *inspired Lala Lajpat Rai, Madam Cama, Ram Prasad Bismil etc*

Publications :

- *Satyarth Prakash, Sanskarvidhi, Yajurved Bhashyam*

Arya Samaj

- Founding principles: *Infallible authority of Vedas and Monotheism*
- *First Arya Samaj Unit set up in Mumbai, 1875*
- Worked against *abolition of social evils like caste system, subjugation of women etc..*

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Neglected Tropical Diseases

In News

The World Health Organization's (WHO) has released a Global report on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) 2023, which states that NTD continues to disproportionately impact the most impoverished members of the international community.

About NTD

- NTDs are a group of *infections* that are *most common among marginalized communities* in the developing regions of *Africa, Asia and the Americas*.
- They are caused by a variety of pathogens such as *viruses, bacteria, protozoa and parasitic worms*.
- *Virus: Rabies, Dengue, Chikungunya*
- *Bacteria: Buruli Ulcer, Leprosy, Trachoma, Yaws*
- *Protozoa: Chagas Disease, Leishmaniasis, Human African trypanosomiasis*
- *Helminth (Parasitic worms): Cysticercosis, lymphatic filariasis, soil transmitted Helminthiasis, river blindness etc..*
- NTDs are especially *common in tropical areas where people do not have access to clean water* or safe ways to dispose of human waste.
- India has the world's largest absolute burden of at least 10 major NTDs, including hookworm, dengue, lymphatic filariasis, leprosy, visceral leishmaniasis or kala-azar and rabies.

2. SSLV & EOS-O2

In News

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday released the failure analysis report of the *Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV-D1)*, which *failed during its maiden launch* in August 2022.

About SSLV

- The *SSLV* aims to service the rapidly expanding market for the *launch of tiny satellites into LEO (Earth's low orbits)*
- SSLV is a *three-stage Launch Vehicle* configured with *three solid propulsion stages and a liquid propulsion-based velocity trimming* module as a terminal stage.
- SSLV can transport satellites weighing *less than or equal to 500 kg*.
- *SSLV is ISRO's lightest launch vehicle*, weighing around 110 tons.

Earth Observation Satellite: EOS-02

- **EOS-02 (formerly known as Microsat-2A)** is a planned Indian Earth observation microsatellite being **developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation**. EOS-02 is based on Microsat-TD.
- Earth observation satellites are the satellites equipped with remote sensing technology.

3. Muons

In News

Scientists are using **outer space particles called muons** to **examine the fortress wall of Xi'an city, an ancient city in China**

About

- **Muons are subatomic particles raining from space.**
- They are **created when the particles in Earth's atmosphere collide with cosmic rays**
- Muons are **similar to electrons but weigh more than 207 times as much**, Therefore, called "**fat electrons**".
- **Muons are so heavy**, they can travel through **hundreds of metres of rock** or other matter in comparison, **electrons can penetrate through only a few centimetres**.
- Muons **exist for only 2.2 microseconds before they decay into an electron and two kinds of neutrinos**.
- Muography: **Muography (or muon radiography)** is a technique that **exploits the penetration capability of muons**. The measurement of their **absorption in matter allows the imaging of the inner structure** of large bodies.
- Muography is **conceptually similar to X-ray but capable of scanning much larger and wider structures**, owing to the penetration power of muons.
- **Neutrinos** : A **neutrino** is a **fermion that interacts only via the weak interaction and gravity**. The neutrino is **electrically neutral** and because its rest **mass of neutrino is much smaller** than that of the other known elementary particles excluding massless particles. Neutrinos **typically pass through normal matter unimpeded and undetected**.

4. Sickle Cell Anaemia

In News

Finance Minister announced **government's plan to launch a mission to eliminate sickle cell anaemia by 2047**

About

- It is a group of **inherited red blood cell disorders that is genetic** in nature.
- **Red blood carries oxygen** to all parts of the body. **Healthy red blood cells are round**, and they move through small blood vessels to carry oxygen to all parts of the body.
- In **someone who has SCD, the haemoglobin is abnormal**, which causes the red blood cells to become **hard and sticky** and look like a **C-shaped farm tool called a "sickle"**.

- The *sickle cells die early*, which causes a constant *shortage of red blood cells*.
- Causes: SCD is a *genetic condition* that is present at birth. It is inherited when a *child receives two genes—one from each parent*—that code for abnormal haemoglobin.
- Diagnosis :A *blood test* can determine whether one have SCD or sickle cell trait
- Treatment :SCD can only be *cured by bone marrow or stem cell transplantation*

Initiatives:

- The *Unmukt Project is being implemented by the Central Government* to strengthen screening and timely management of Sickle Cell Anaemia.
- The *Tribal Affairs Ministry established the National Council on Sickle Cell Disease and Tribal Health Cell*, which would coordinate with the Ministry of Health and State Government

5. Deepfakes Voice

In News

A social media platform used speech synthesis to make deep fakes of celebrities.

About Deepfakes

- Deep fake is a type of *Artificial Intelligence (AI) used to create convincing images, audio, and video hoaxes*.
- Deepfakes use deep learning AI to replace the likeness of one person with another in video and other digital media.
- Although deepfakes could be used in positive ways, such as in art, expression, accessibility, and business, it has mainly been weaponized for malicious purposes.

Deepfake voice:

- Deepfake voice, also called a *synthetic voice, uses AI to generate a clone of a person's voice*.
- The voice can accurately replicate the tone, and accents, of the target person.

6. NISAR Mission

In News

The NISAR Satellite will be shipped to India by February 2023 for a possible launch in 2024 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh.

Key Facts about NISAR

- NISAR is an *Earth-observation satellite that stands for (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar)*.
- Developed by: *Jointly developed NASA and ISRO* under a partnership agreement signed in 2014.

- Function: It will *scan the globe every 12 days* over the course of its *three-year mission of imaging the Earth*
- Features:
 - ✓ The 2,800 kilogram satellite is a *dual-frequency imaging radar satellite*.
 - ✓ *Synthetic aperture radar (SAR)*, will produce high-resolution images and is *capable of penetrating clouds*. Therefore can *collect data day and night* regardless of the weather conditions
- NASA provides the L-band radar, GPS, a high-capacity solid-state recorder to store data, and a payload data subsystem,
- *ISRO provides the S-band radar, the GSLV launch system and spacecraft.*

7. Chandrayaan 3

In News

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has finalised the coordinates of three possible landing sites for its *third lunar mission – Chandrayaan-3*.

About

- The prime landing site for Chandrayaan-3 lies between *Manzius U and Boguslawsky M craters* on the moon.
- The *moon's southern polar region* is of particular interest to scientists because there's a possibility of *finding water ice*.

About Chandrayaan

- Chandrayaan programme, also known as the Indian lunar exploration programme, is an ongoing series of outer space missions by ISRO.
- *Chandrayaan-1 was launched in 2008* and was *successfully inserted into lunar orbit*.
- *Chandrayaan-2 was successfully launched and inserted into lunar orbit in 2019, but its lander crash-landed* on the moon's surface (*Vikram lander*)
- *Chandrayaan-3 will be launched by Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (GSLVM3) rocket from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.*
- *Aims to land a rover and lander on the lunar South Pole by 2023.*
- It will communicate to the earth via the orbiter from Chandrayaan 2.

8. CAR T-cell Therapy

In News

Oncologists explain the importance of *CAR T-cell technology* in curing people with *leukemia and lymphomas*.

About

- **Leukaemia** is a type of **cancer** that affects the **blood and bone marrow**, while **lymphoma** is a type of cancer that **starts in the cells of the lymphatic system**, which is part of the immune system.
- At present, there are three major forms of treatment for any cancer viz.,
 - ✓ Surgery: removing the cancer
 - ✓ Radiotherapy: delivering ionising radiation to the tumour
 - ✓ **Systemic therapy: administering medicines that act on the tumour**

Systemic therapy Types

- **Chemotherapy, preferentially acts on cancer cells** but has modest response rates and **significant side-effects**.
- **Immunotherapy : drugs bind to specific targets on cancer cells**, has **fewer side-effects** but is effective only against certain tumours
- **Chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy :**
 - ✓ Unlike chemotherapy or immunotherapy which involve taking drugs, **CAR T-cell therapies use a patient's own cells**.
 - ✓ **T cells are taken from a patient's blood and then the gene for a special receptor** that binds to a certain protein on the patient's cancer cells is added to the T cells in the laboratory.
 - ✓ **The special receptor is called a chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)**.
 - ✓ CAR T-cell therapies directly **stimulate the patient's immune system to fight cancer**, leading to greater clinical efficacy.
 - ✓ That's why they're **referred to as "living drugs"**.

9. ISRO's SSLV-D2

In News

In its second development flight on February 10, 2023, the SSLV-D2 was launched successfully from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota

About Small Satellite Launch Vehicle

- SSLV is a small-lift launch vehicle being developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- It is a **three stage Launch Vehicle** configured with **three Solid Propulsion Stages and a liquid propulsion-based Velocity Trimming Module (VTM)** as a terminal stage.
- SSLV is **ISRO's smallest launch vehicle**

Azzadi SAT-2

- **One among the three payloads of SSLV D2** which have been built by **750 girl students** from across India.
- Other payloads were ISRO's earth observation satellite **EOS-07** and **Janus-1** satellite built by United States-based Antaris and its Indian partners XDLinks and Ananth Technologies

10. MicroLED Display

In news

Smart phone manufacturer Apple is reportedly shifting to microLED display technology, which is considered as the next big transition in display technology.

Micro LED display

- **Micro-LED (also known as mLED or μ LED)** is a display technology that is based on micro LED devices that are used to **directly create color pixels**.
- MicroLEDs are **self-illuminating diodes that have brighter and better colour reproduction than Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED)** display technology.
- Its pixel elements are made of **microscopic LEDs**.
- The main advantage of micro-LED display is **greater control of pixel-level light control**
- The **lifetime of micro LEDs is greater than the OLED** (Organic LED)
- Higher brightness at **reduced risk of screen burning**

Working Principle

- The micro LED uses **Indium Gallium Nitride semiconductors**.
- In micro LEDs, **each pixel can be turned ON or turned OFF**. This **cannot be done with conventional LEDs**. Therefore, you get **perfect colour control and contrast** with micro-LED displays.
- The **life of micro LEDs is longer**. They can emit light continuously for more than **100,000 hours**. That is, **non-stop use for 11 years**.

11. Diyodar Meteorite

In News

Scientists from Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, are claiming that the meteorite that crashed in two villages in Banaskantha, Gujarat on August 17, 2022, has been identified as an aubrite.

Aubrite meteorite

- Aubrite meteorite is a **coarse-grained igneous rock that formed in oxygen-poor conditions**
- They are **rare and unique, contains exotic minerals not found on Earth**.
- **Source of origin: Scientists are not yet sure of their origin**, but some signs indicate that **they could be from the asteroid 3103 Eger or from the planet Mercury**.
- This is the **second recorded crash of an aubrite in India ,after 175 years(1852 in Basti, Uttar Pradesh.)**.
- The meteorite has been **named the Diyodar meteorite** after the taluka in which the villages are located.

Meteor, Meteorite and Meteoroid

- The *difference* between a meteor, meteorite and meteoroid is nothing but *where the object is*.
- *Meteoroids* are *objects in space* that range in size from *dust grains to small asteroids*.
- But *when meteoroids enter the Earth's atmosphere*, they are called *meteors*.
- But *if a meteoroid enters the Earth's atmosphere and hits the ground, it is called a meteorite*.

12. Marburg Virus Disease

In News

Equatorial Guinea has confirmed its *first-ever outbreak of Marburg virus disease* after at least nine people died in the country.

About Marburg Virus

- *Marburg virus disease (MVD)*, formerly known as *Marburg hemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal illness in humans*.
- *Marburg and Ebola* viruses are both members of the *Filoviridae family (filovirus)*. Though *caused by different viruses*, the two diseases are clinically similar.
- **Transmission:**
 - ✓ *Rousettus aegyptiacus, fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family*, are considered to be natural hosts of the Marburg virus.
 - ✓ The Marburg virus is *transmitted to people from fruit bats and spreads among humans through human-to-human transmission* via direct contact with the blood, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people, and with surfaces and materials contaminated with these fluids.
- **Treatment:**
 - ✓ There are *no authorized vaccines or drugs* to treat Marburg, but rehydration treatment to alleviate symptoms can improve the chances of survival.

DEFENCE/MILITARY EXERCISES

1. Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas landed on INS Vikrant

In News

The naval version of the indigenous *Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas* landed on *INS Vikrant*, which is an *indigenous aircraft carrier*, marking the maiden landing of a fixed-wing aircraft on INS Vikrant.

History of Aircraft Carriers in India:

- *INS Vikrant (R11)-*
 - ✓ India's *First Aircraft Carrier*
 - ✓ *purchased from Britain in 1957*
 - ✓ crucial role in the Goa Liberation Operation in 1961 and 1971 war
- *INS Viraat*
 - ✓ British origin
 - ✓ commissioned by the Indian Navy in 1987.
- *INS Vikramaditya-*
 - ✓ Indian Navy's Biggest Ship:
 - ✓ Russia's refurbished Admiral Gorshkov
 - ✓ Commissioned into the Indian Navy in 2013.
- *INS Vikrant (IAC-1):*
 - ✓ *Designed by Indian Navy's in-house Warship Design Bureau (WDB) built by Cochin Shipyard Limited*
 - ✓ It is country's *maiden indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-1)*.
 - ✓ was commissioned in 2022
 - ✓ have a top speed of 30 knots (approximately 55 kmph) and is propelled by four gas turbines.
 - ✓ Its endurance is 7,500 nautical miles at 18 knots (32 kmph) speed.
 - ✓ The ship shall operate *MiG-29K fighter aircraft, Kamov-31 Air Early Warning Helicopters*, the soon to be inducted MH-60R multi-role helicopter and the indigenously manufactured Advanced Light Helicopters

2. Exercise TARKASH

In News

In a first, India-US conduct drills on nuke, chemical, bio terror attacks prevention.

Exercise TARKASH:

- ✓ The exercise by the *National Security Guard (NSG) and US Special Operations Forces (SOF) is being held in Chennai.*
- ✓ Indo-US joint exercise has *for the first time included "Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) terror response"* in its drill.

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