



# ENLITE IAS

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**FORTNIGHTLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE**

*Jan 1- 15*

**NATIONAL MONETISATION PIPELINE**



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## POLITY

### 1. Decennial Census

#### In News

The Union government informed States that the decennial census exercise has been postponed till September 2023 and the date of freezing of administrative boundaries has been extended till June 30, 2023.

#### About Census

- It was first started under British Viceroy *Lord Mayo in 1872*.
- *The first synchronous census in India was held in 1881*.
- Census is conducted under the provisions of the **Census Act, 1948**.
- 2011 marks the *first time biometric information* was collected.
- **Who conducts:** The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, under the *Ministry of Home Affairs*, Government of India.
- **Collected data:** Data is collected on demographic and various socio-economic parameters like education, SC/ST, religion, language, marriage, fertility, disability, occupation and migration of the individuals.
- **Confidentiality:** The information collected during the population Census is so confidential that it is *not even accessible to the courts of law*.

### 2. Delegated Legislation

#### In news

The majority ruling of the Supreme Court upheld the validity of the delegated legislation in the Centre's 2016 decision on demonetization

- Since the Parliament cannot deal with every aspect of the governance system by themselves, they delegate these **functions to the authorities established by law**.
- Delegated legislation or subordinate legislation happens when lawmakers contract out the process of creating laws to the executives
- **Delegation of power in Demonetisation:** Section 26(2) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 essentially gives powers to the Centre to notify that a particular denomination of currency ceases to be legal tender

### 3. Lokur Committee (1965)

#### In News

The Office of the Registrar-General of India (RGI) is following the set of criteria set out by the Lokur Committee nearly 60 years ago to define any new community as a Scheduled Tribe

- The Lokur Committee (1965) was set up to look into criteria for defining Schedule Tribes.

#### 4. Multi-state Cooperative Societies

##### In News

The Union Cabinet gave its approval for the creation of three new multi-state cooperative societies under Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 2002.

##### About

The Government will set-up three new cooperative bodies under the ***Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002***. (*National multi-state cooperative export society, National multi-state cooperative organic society, National multi-state cooperative seed society*)

##### ➤ **Multistate Cooperative Society**

- ✓ Multistate Cooperative Society means a society registered or deemed to be registered under Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002.
- ✓ ***It is not mandatory for society to have branches in more than one state***, it may have it limited to one state, and it shall not cease to be a “Multi State Cooperative Society,” as long as it serves the interest of members in more than one state.

##### ❖ **National multi-state cooperative export society:**

- Act as an ***umbrella organisation*** for carrying out and promoting exports from cooperative Sector.

##### ❖ **National multi-state cooperative organic society**

- Manage various activities related to ***organic sector*** by providing certified and authentic organic products.

##### ❖ **National multi-state cooperative seed society**

- Apex organization for production, procurement, processing, branding, labelling, packaging, storage, marketing and distribution of quality seeds
- Strategic research and development
- Develop a system for preservation and promotion of indigenous natural seeds

## ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Heat Dome

#### In News

Several countries in Europe recorded their hottest January weather ever in 2023 with temperatures 10 to 20 degrees Celsius above average.

#### **About Heat Dome**

- A heat dome occurs when an area of high-pressure traps warm air over a region, just like a lid on a pot, for an extended period of time.

#### **Heat Domes and the Jet Stream:**

- The heat dome's formation is related to the behaviour of the jet stream.
- Jet streams are relatively narrow bands of strong wind in the upper levels of the atmosphere.
- When these waves get bigger and elongated, they move slowly and sometimes can become stationary.
- This is when a high-pressure system gets stuck and leads to the occurrence of a heat dome.



## 2. Deepor Beel

### In News

Assam's only Ramsar site troubled by developmental projects and urban waste has 30 more waterfowl species than the total counted in 2022.

### **About**

- It is considered one of the largest and important riverine wetlands in *the Brahmaputra Valley of lower Assam*, India.
- It was designated a **Ramsar site** in 2002 for sustaining a range of aquatic life forms besides 219 species of birds.
- A Ramsar Site is a wetland designated to be of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands, held at the *Iranian city of Ramsar* in February 1971.

## Deepor Beel



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### Why in news?

- Guwahati Wildlife Division of the Assam Forest Department conducted the 2nd Bird Species Count Exercise after February 2022 in Deepor Beel Wetland.
- Altogether 26,747 birds belonging to 96 species were recorded during a bird count at the Deepor Beel wetland. There were 10,289 individuals across 66 species in 2022.
- The bird count revealed greater species diversity and an increase in the total number of species.

### Deepor Beel

- Location - It is located towards the southwest of Guwahati city, Assam
- It is a perennial freshwater lake
- The landscape of Deepor Beel, a riverine wetland in the Kamrup district in the lower Brahmaputra valley.
- Protection
  - It is an Important Bird Area by Birdlife International.
  - Deepor Beel has been designated as a Ramsar Site in November, 2002

### Protected Regions of Assam



## 3. Wildlife Conservation Bond

### In News

The World Bank has priced the world's first wildlife bond, raising USD 150 million that will be partly used for the conservation of *black rhinos in South Africa* [ Rhino Bond]

## About

- The Wildlife Conservation Bond is a first-of-its-kind, outcome-based, financial instrument that *channels private investments* to achieve conservation outcomes.
- It is part of *Global Environment Facility's Blended finance Initiative* that shows how innovative finance can work to combat global environment degradation
- There are five species of rhino – white and black rhinos in Africa, and the greater one-horned, Javan and Sumatran rhino species in Asia.
- In South Africa almost all of them are white rhinos as the number of black rhinos is decreasing day by day.

## 4. White Tufted Royal Butterfly

### In News

A team of butterfly observers and researchers have found white tufted royal butterfly, a rare butterfly species in Kannur, Kerala.

### About

- It is a rare butterfly species found in Western Ghats. The species had been spotted in Agasthyakoodam in 2017 and the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary in 2018.
- It is protected under Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Protection Act.

## 5. Olive Ridley Turtles

### In News

Olive Ridley turtles have arrived for mass nesting at Odisha's Rushikulya rookery and Devi river mouth.

- *Rushikulya rookery is in Ganjam district of Odisha and Devi river is one of the principal distributaries of Mahanadhi.(odisha)*
- The Olive ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles.
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called *Arribada*, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- The species is listed as *Vulnerable* in the IUCN Red List, Appendix 1 in CITES, and *Schedule 1 in Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.*
- *Bhitarkanika* is located in the estuary of Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, and Mahanadi river systems.



## 6. Ganga Vilas Cruise

# Ganga Vilas Cruise



### Why in news?

- Prime Minister of India flagged off the world's longest river cruise, MV Ganga Vilas in Varanasi.

### Ganga Vilas Cruise

- Operating Authority - The cruise will be managed by private operators, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways (MoPSW) has supported the project.
- It will explore forty historic sites on the banks of the river Ganga including, Mahabodhi temple, Hazarduari Palace, Katra Masjid, Bodh Gaya, Chandanagar church, Char Bangla Temple and more.
- Besides connecting National Waterway 1 (NW-1) which includes Ganga and National Waterway 2 (NW-2) on Brahmaputra, the cruise will cross 27 river systems.
- The 51 days cruise is planned with visits to 50 tourist spots including World Heritage Sites, National Parks, River Ghats, and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahibganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam.



## SCHEMES/INITIATIVES

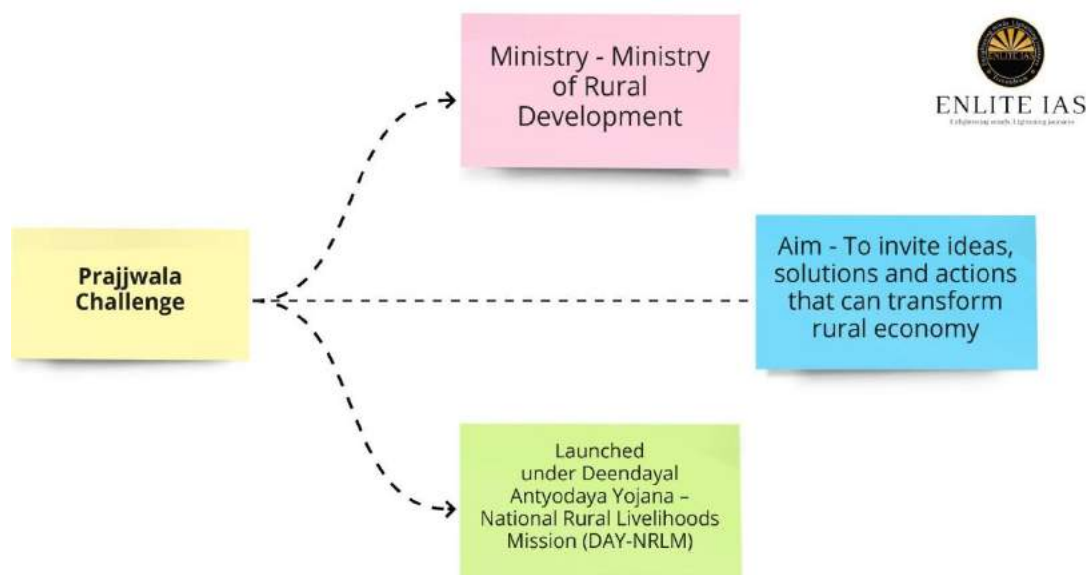
### 1. Prajjwala Challenge

#### In News

The *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)* has launched the Prajjwala Challenge

#### DAY-NRLM

- It is one of the flagship *poverty alleviation programs of the Ministry of Rural Development*, which aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income



### 2. Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)

#### In News

Union Home Minister said that borders can be permanently secured only when border villages are populated by patriotic citizens, asking the border-guarding forces to use the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) to ensure that.

#### **About Vibrant Village Programme**

- The programme was announced in the Budget Speech 2022.
- The program aims to improve infrastructure in villages along India's border with China.

# Vibrant Villages Programme



## Vibrant Villages Programme

- Ministry - Ministry of Home Affairs
- Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) has been announced in the Finance Minister's Budget Speech 2022.
- Objective
  - It focuses livelihood generation, road connectivity, housing, rural infrastructure, renewable energy, television and broadband connections.
  - This objective will be met by strengthening infrastructure across villages located near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
  - Under the programme, residential and tourist centres will be constructed.



### 3. Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme

#### In News

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approves Central Sector 'Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND)' Scheme.

#### About BIND

- Ministry: **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**
- **A Central Sector Scheme**
- Provides financial support to Prasar Bharati for expenses related to expansion and upgradation of its broadcasting infrastructure, content development and civil work related to the organization.
  - ✓ **Prasar Bharati** - is the public broadcaster of the country comprises of : All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD)

#### **Scheme Targets**

- Improving infrastructure to widen the broadcaster's reach, including in the Left Wing Extremism areas, border areas and strategic areas.
- Development of high-quality content for both domestic and international audience

- Increase coverage of AIR FM transmitters in the country to 66% by geographical area and 80% by population up from 59% and 68% respectively.
- Free distribution of over 8 lakh DD Free Dish STBs to people living in remote, tribal, LWE and border areas.

#### 4. National Green Hydrogen Mission

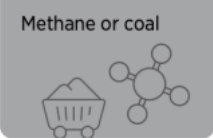



##### In News

The Union Cabinet approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which is aimed at making India the global hub for the production of green hydrogen.

Nodal Ministry: *The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy*

##### **Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT).**

- It is a sub scheme of National green hydrogen mission, under the SIGHT there will be two **financial incentive mechanisms** that target domestic manufacturing of electrolyzers and the production of green hydrogen.

Color	GREY HYDROGEN	BLUE HYDROGEN	TURQUOISE HYDROGEN*	GREEN HYDROGEN
Process	SMR or gasification	SMR or gasification with carbon capture (85-95%)	Pyrolysis	Electrolysis
Source	Methane or coal 	Methane or coal 	Methane 	Renewable electricity 

Note: SMR = steam methane reforming.

\* Turquoise hydrogen is an emerging decarbonisation option.



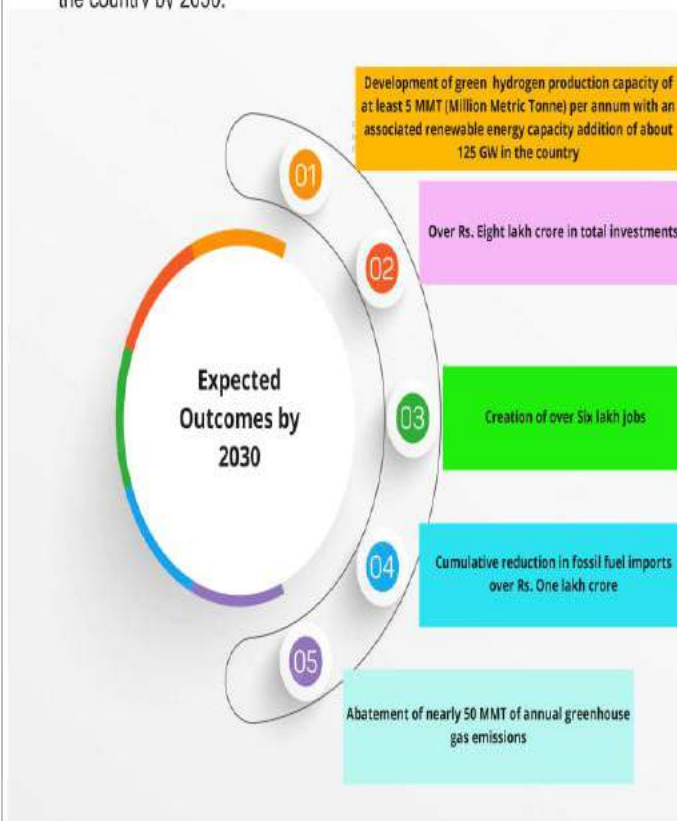
# National Green Hydrogen Mission

## Why in news?

- Cabinet approves National Green Hydrogen Mission.

## National Green Hydrogen Mission

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) will formulate the scheme guidelines for implementation.
- The mission seeks to promote the development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonnes) per annum with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW in the country by 2030.



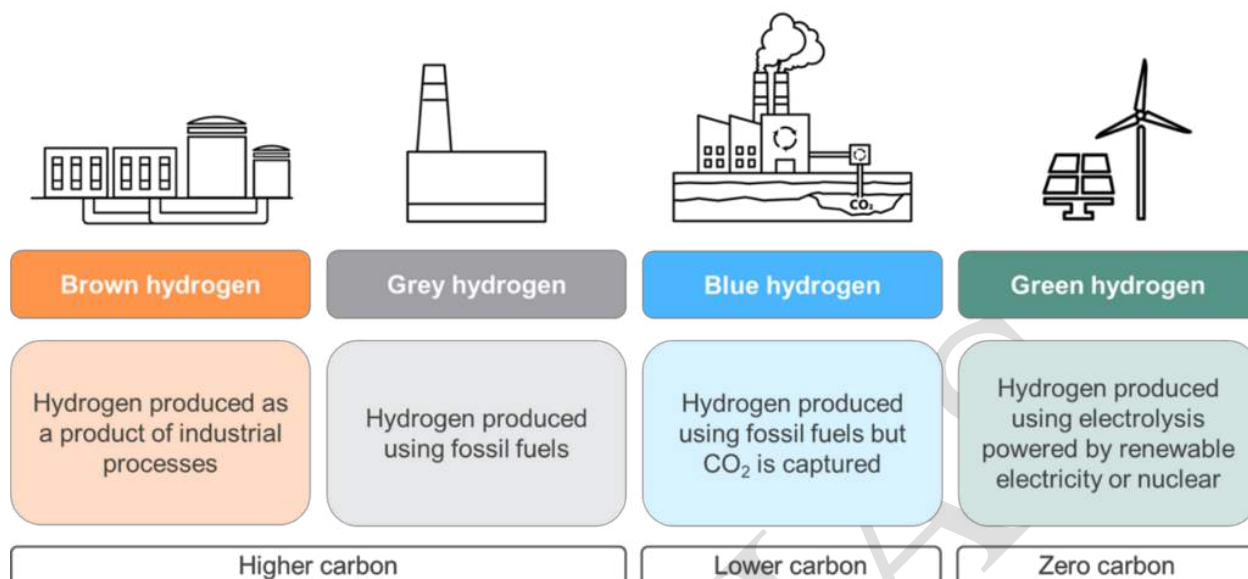
## Benefits

- Creation of export opportunities for Green Hydrogen and its derivatives;
- Decarbonisation of industrial, mobility and energy sectors;
- Reduction in dependence on imported fossil fuels and feedstock;
- Development of indigenous manufacturing capabilities;
- Creation of employment opportunities;
- Development of cutting-edge technologies.

## Do You Know?

Hydrogen, made by splitting water with an electrical process called electrolysis, can be used as a fuel. If the devices that do that, electrolyzers, are powered by renewable energy, the product is called green hydrogen.





## 5. Aspirational Blocks Programme

### In News

PM launched Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) during the 2nd National Conference of Chief Secretaries held from 5th January to 7th January, 2022.

- The ABP is based on the **Aspirational District Programme (ADP)**.

### **Aspirational District Programme**

- Aspirational Districts are those districts in India *that are affected by poor socio-economic indicators*.
- It covers **112 districts** across the country.
- The programme is anchored **by NITI Aayog**. In addition, individual Ministries have assumed responsibility to drive progress of districts.

## Aspirational Block Programme

### Why in news?

- The Prime Minister of India launched the Aspirational Block Programme at the second National Conference of Chief Secretaries in Delhi.

### Aspirational Block Programme

- The Aspirational Blocks Programme is on the lines of the Aspirational District Programme that was launched in 2018 and covers 112 districts across the country.
- This new programme is aimed at improving performance of blocks lagging on various development parameters.
- This will enable holistic development in those areas that require added assistance.
- The programme will cover 500 districts across 31 states and Union Territories initially.
- Over half of these blocks are in 6 states—Uttar Pradesh (68 blocks), Bihar (61), Madhya Pradesh (42), Jharkhand (34), Odisha (29) and West Bengal (29).

## SMALL STEPS FOR BIG RESULTS



**Work to be implemented on 5 socio-economic themes** | Health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, and skill development and infrastructure

**100 blocks identified for development at micro level**

- Schemes being implemented include Banking Correspondent Sakhi programme, gram sachivalaya and Amrit Sarovar
- Students of IIT-Kanpur and IIM-Lucknow will be roped in for continuous monitoring of aspirational development blocks
- The SDM will be the nodal officer of the block

### 6. Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)

- To provide quality education to *tribal students* with residential facilities in remote corners.
- It is a scheme by **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** with maximum control of identifying new schools, recruiting, management and admissions lying with *State governments*.

## 7. **Right to repair portal**

### **In News**

Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal launched a host of new initiatives, including the right to repair portal and an NTH mobile app

- On the 'right to repair' portal, manufacturers would share the manual of product details with customers so *that they could either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers.*
- Initially, mobile phones, electronics, consumer durables, automobile and farming equipment's would be covered.

## 8. **Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP)**

### **In News**

Union government has informed the Supreme Court that significant progress has been made in the digitization of land ownership records, as cadastral maps of 35% of over six lakh villages have so far been geo tagged.

- **Cadastral Maps:** are a digital form of land records that show all boundaries of different parts of land pieces based on their length, area, and direction.

### **Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP):**

- ✓ In 2008, two schemes Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) and Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA&ULR) were merged into a modified scheme named DILRMP.
- ✓ DILRMP is a **Central Sector scheme** that has been extended to 2023-24, to complete its original targets
- ✓ Implemented by: **Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development.**
- ✓ The DILRMP has 3 major components – *Computerization of land record, Survey/re-survey and Computerization of Registration.*



## INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS/INITIATIVES

### 1. Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)


#### In News

India will take over the leadership of the Asian Pacific Postal Union from January 2023 for the next four years.

#### **Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)**

- Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) aims to extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between the member countries and promote cooperation in the field of postal services.

## Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)




**Why in news?**

- India will take over the leadership of the Asian Pacific Postal Union from January 2023. Dr. Vinaya Prakash Singh will assume the charge of Secretary General of the Union during India's four year tenure there.

**Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)**

- Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) is an intergovernmental organisation comprising 32 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Headquarter - Bangkok, Thailand.
- Aim - To extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between the member countries and promote cooperation in the field of postal services.
- It is the only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- It is the Secretary General who leads the activities of the Union. It is made up of three bodies namely, Congress, Executive Council and APPU Bureau.



### 2. Indian Women Peacekeeping Forces

#### In News

India deployed a platoon of women peacekeepers in *Abyei* on the border of Sudan and South Sudan as part of the Indian Battalion in the United Nations Interim Security Force.

#### **About**

- The contingent has 25 women soldiers from the Corps of Military Police (CMP) and the Assam Rifles.

- This is **India's largest single unit of women peacekeepers** in a UN Mission..
- **India had deployed the first-ever all women's contingent from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in Liberia in 2007** as part of United Nations Mission in Liberia
- As of October 31, 2022, **India is the second largest contributor** to UN peacekeeping missions with 5,887 troops and personnel deployed across 12 missions, after Bangladesh.

### U.N. Peacekeeping mission

- The U.N. began its Peacekeeping efforts in 1948 when it deployed military observers to West Asia where the mission's role was to monitor the **Armistice Agreement** between Israel and its Arab neighbours.
- **Blue Helmets** are the military personnel of the UN that work alongside the UN Police and civilian colleagues to promote "stability, security, and peace processes"

## Sudan



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#### Why in news?

- India is set to deploy an all woman platoon of peacekeepers as part of a battalion to the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (on the border between South Sudan and Sudan), which will be India's largest single unit of women peacekeepers in a UN mission since the deployment of the first ever all woman contingent in Liberia in 2007.

#### Sudan

- Sudan is an East African country.
- Capital - Khartoum
- Borders
  - Southwest - Central African Republic
  - West - Chad
  - North - Egypt, Red Sea
  - Northeast - Eritrea
  - Southeast - Ethiopia (Lake Nubia on the Sudanese-Egyptian border.)
  - Northwest - Libya
  - South - South Sudan
- The Blue Nile and White Nile rivers meet in Khartoum to form the Nile, which flows northwards through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.
- Climate - Savannah Climate



### **3. India-UK - Young Professionals Scheme**

#### **In News**

India and U.K signed the Young Professionals Scheme. The Young Professionals Scheme was conceived as part of an India-U.K. The Migration and Mobility MoU

#### **About**

- The scheme will permit *degree-holding citizens aged between 18 and 30* to live and work in each other's countries for a *period of two years*.
- They would be able to work, study, or visit for two years.
- The scheme will run for a *period of three years initially*.
- The scheme allows for exchange visas for *up to 3,000 individuals per year*.
- It isn't even necessary for an applicant to have a job in hand when he/she applies for the visa.

#### **Migration and Mobility agreement of 2021**

- To enable the UK as well as Indian nationals to strengthen their skills which they can implement in their countries of nationality.
- To address the issues of illegal migration from India to the UK

### **4. Global South Summit**

#### **In News**

The PM of India has recently inaugurated a virtual event, "Voice of the Global South Summit".

- It was held under the theme - 'Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose'
- *Global North* refers loosely to countries like the US, Canada, Europe, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.
- *Global South* includes countries in *Asia, Africa and South America*.

## ECONOMY

### 1. Bad Loans

#### In News

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told Parliament that banks had *written off bad loans* worth ₹10,09,511 crore during the last five financial years.

#### About Bad Loans

- A bad loan is that which has *not been 'serviced'* for a certain period.
  - ✓ Servicing a loan is paying back the interest and a small part of the principal depending on the agreement between bank and borrower.
- Bad loans are where there is less certainty that the loan would be paid back in full.

#### Non Performing Assets

- *A non performing asset (NPA)* is a loan or advance for which the *principal or interest* payment remained overdue for a period of *90 days*.

#### Types of NPA:

- *Sub Standard*: A sub-standard asset is one that is classified as an NPA for a period *not exceeding twelve months*.
- *Doubtful*: A doubtful asset is one that has remained as an NPA for a period *exceeding twelve months*.
- *Loss*: A loss asset is one where loss has already been identified by the bank or an external institution, but it *is not yet completely written off*, due to its recovery value, however little it may be.

#### Writing off Loans

- Writing off a loan essentially means it will *no longer be counted as an asset*.
- The bank moves the defaulted loan/NPA, out of the assets side and reports the amount as a loss.
- *By writing off loans*, a bank can reduce the level of non-performing assets (NPAs) on its books
- After the write-off, banks continue their efforts to recover the loan using various options.
- The *tax liability of banks will come down* as the written-off amount is reduced from the profit.

### 2. Windfall Tax

#### In News

The government has increased windfall tax on the sale of locally produced crude oil to ₹2,100 per tonne from ₹1,700 per tonne after a gap of two weeks.

### **About Windfall Tax**

- The U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) defines a *windfall as an “unearned, unanticipated gain in income through no additional effort or expense”*.
- Windfall taxes are *imposed by a government against certain industries when they experience above-average profits* due to economic conditions.
- On July 1, 2022 the government-imposed windfall gain taxes on the export of petrol, diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF), and on the domestic production of crude oil.
- The tax was imposed after the companies were seen to be making abnormal profits with oil prices shooting up in global markets due to geopolitical turmoil.

### **3. Domestically Systemic Important Banks**

#### **In News**

The Reserve Bank of India said that the State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, and HDFC Bank continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs).

#### **Domestic- Systematically Important Banks (DSIBs)**

- DSIBs are also referred to as *“Too Big To Fall” (TBTF)* because of their *size, cross jurisdictional activities, complexity and lack of substitute and interconnection*.
- Banks whose assets cross *2% of the GDP* are considered DSIBs.
- If these banks fail, they can have a disruptive effect on the economy.
- D-SIBs are mandated under special provisions and are closely monitored by the central bank to ensure their better functioning and prevent the indulgence of such banks in any grey areas such as money laundering etc.
- The Systematically Important Banks domestically are *identified by Central Banks* of a country and globally by BASEL committee on banking supervision.
- The RBI announced *SBI and ICICI Bank as D-SIBs in 2015 and 2016 while HDFC Bank was added to the list as on March 31, 2017*.

### **4. Utkarsh 2.0**

#### **In News**

The Reserve Bank of India’s Medium-term Strategy Framework for the period *2023- 2025 ‘Utkarsh 2.0’* was launched by the Governor of RBI.

#### **About Utkarsh 2.0**

- The first strategy framework (Utkarsh 2022) covering the period 2019-2022 was launched in July 2019.
- It became a medium-term strategy document guiding the Bank's progress toward realisation of the identified milestones.
- Vision: The Vision in Utkarsh 2.0 that *will guide the Reserve Bank of India over the period 2023-25*

## 5. First Advance Estimates by NSO

### In News

According to the first advance estimates of national income India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow 7 percent in the financial year 2022-23.

### About First Advance estimate

- Released by the *National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation*.
- It was *first introduced in 2016-17*, and is typically published at the end of the first week of January.
- They are the *"first" official estimates of how GDP is expected to grow in that financial year*.
- But they are also the *"advance" estimates because they are published long before the financial year* (April to March) is over.
- Methodology: The FAE is derived by extrapolating the available data.
- The second advance estimate of GDP is then released on February-end.

## 6. National Monetisation Pipeline

### In news

The Centre's ambitious National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) may miss the target in FY23 by a wide margin as railways, telecom and petroleum sector slip on their goals.

### Asset Monetization

- Asset monetization consists of *limited period transfer of performing assets* (or *disposing of non-strategic / underperforming assets*) to unlock *"idle" capital* and reinvesting it in other assets or projects that deliver improved or additional benefits.

### About National Monetisation Pipeline

- *Developed by : NITI Aayog* in consultation with infrastructure line ministries, based on the mandate for 'Asset Monetisation' under Union Budget 2021-22.
- It aims to *unlock value in brownfield projects* by engaging the *private sector*.

- NMP involves *transferring to Private sector revenue rights and not ownership* in the projects
- Asset will be *handed back to government at end of transaction life*.
- Government will get stable revenue stream from private parties throughout the transaction life of the asset.
- *Currently, only assets of central government* line ministries and Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in infrastructure sectors
- *Roads, railways and power sector assets will comprise over 66%* of the total estimated value of the assets to be monetised
- Target : Monetisation of *Rs 6.0 lakh crores* through core assets of the Central Government, over a four-year period, from *FY 2022 to FY 2025*.
- The plan is in line with Prime Minister's strategic divestment policy
- NMP has been planned to be *co-terminus with* the remaining four-year period of the *National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)*.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. Talacauvery

#### In News

Talacauvery in the Kodagu district of **Karnataka**, which is considered the place of origin of the Cauvery River, has emerged as **South India's Hanle**, as astronomers are seen hosting “star parties” in the region.

- **Hanle, which is situated in Ladakh**, is famous for its pristine skies and minimal light pollution.
- The Department of Science & Technology (DST) under the Ministry of Science & Technology, announced the establishment of **India's first Dark Sky Reserve** at Hanle.

#### **Dark Sky Reserve**

- A dark sky reserve requires a “core” area that has clear sky without any light pollution, which can enable telescopes to see the sky in its natural darkness.

#### Dark Sky Reserve



#### **Dark Sky Reserve**

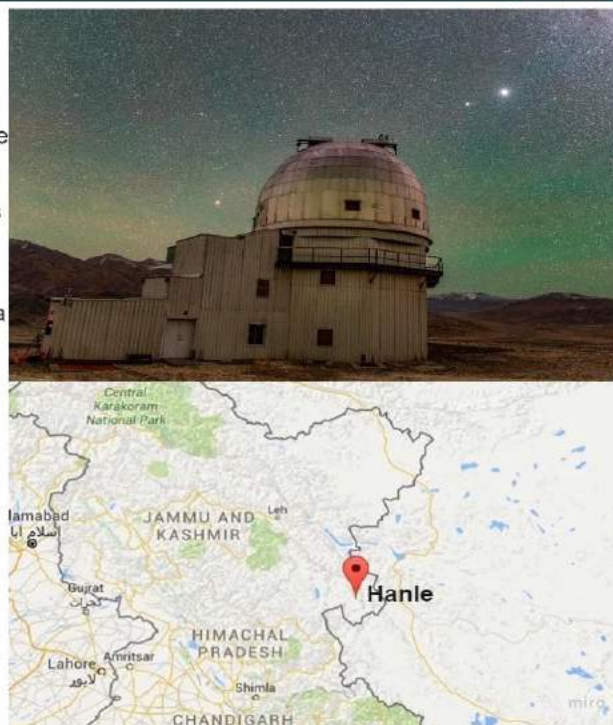
- Announced by - Department of Science & Technology (DST)
- Location - Hanle, Ladakh
- Other Place Near to it - Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.

#### **What is it and who designates it ?**

- It is a designation given to a place that has policies in place to ensure that a tract of land or region has minimal artificial light interference.
- The International Dark Sky Association is a U.S.-based non-profit that designates places as International Dark Sky Places, Parks, Sanctuaries and Reserves

#### **Why the designation is significant?**

- Boost astro tourism that result in generation of employment for youth.
- Enhance region based astronomical studies.
- Astronomical knowledge and skill for local people.





## 2. Kala Azar

### In News

The Union Health Ministry reported that India is committed to *eliminating Kala-azar from the country by 2023*.

### About Kala Azar

- *Kala-Azar or Visceral Leishmaniasis* is a slow progressing indigenous condition that is caused by a *protozoan parasite*.
- One of the most lethal and *neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)* and Second deadliest parasitic killer in the world after Malaria.
- The parasite infects the reticuloendothelial system and may be found in abundance in bone marrow, spleen, and liver.

### Distribution:

- Global: About 90% of global cases of Kala-azar were reported from eight countries: Brazil, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan in 2021.
- India: Contributing 11.5% of total cases reported globally.

### Government Efforts:

- *WHO has set the target to eliminate Kala-azar by 2017*.
- *India* is committed to *eliminating Kala-Azar from the country by 2023*
- *Elimination* is defined as reducing *the annual incidence of Kala Azar (KA) to less than 1 case per 10,000 people* at the sub-district level
- Kala Azar endemic states: Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

## 3. Local Bubbles

### In News

Researchers from the Center for Astrophysics (CfA) | Harvard & Smithsonian have generated a 3D magnetic map of the cavity called Local Bubble.

### About

- The *Local Bubble is a 1,000-light-year-wide cavity or a superbubble*.
- The Local Bubble is a large, low-density region in the interstellar medium (ISM) of our galaxy, the Milky Way.
- Other superbubbles also exist in the Milky Way.
- Space is full of these superbubbles that trigger the formation of new stars and planets and influence the overall shapes of galaxies.

### Supernova

- A supernova is a powerful and luminous explosion that occurs at the *end of the life of a massive star*.
- It is caused by the collapse of the core of the star, which can trigger a massive release of energy.

ENLITE IAS

## HISTORY/ART & CULTURE

### 1. Bhima-Koregaon Battle

#### In News

The 205th anniversary of the *Bhima-Koregaon battle of 1818* was celebrated on January 1, 2023 at the victory pillar (also known as *Ransthamb*) in *Bhima-Koregaon village (Pune district of Maharashtra)*.

#### About

- A battle was fought in Bhima Koregaon *between the Peshwa forces and the British* on January 1, 1818.
- The *British army*, which comprised mainly of *Dalit soldiers, fought the upper caste-dominated Peshwa army*. The *British troops defeated the Peshwa army*.
- Peshwa Bajirao II had insulted the Mahar community and terminated them from the service of his army. This caused them to side with the English against the Peshwa's numerically superior army.
- The defeat of Peshwa army was considered to be a victory against caste-based discrimination and oppression.
- It was *one of the last battles of the Third Anglo-Maratha War*, which ended the Peshwa domination.

### 2. Parasnath Parvat

#### In News

Jains across Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi, have been organising peaceful protests to save Parsanath hill that the community considers sacred.

#### About

- The *Parasnath Hills* are a range of hills located in the *Giridih district of Jharkhand*, the highest of which is 1350 meters high.
- This hill has been named Parsanath after the 23rd Jain Tirthankara.
- As per Jain Religion, *Parsanath Paravath is where 20 Tirthankaras out of 24 Jain Tirthankaras, attained Kaivalya* .
- For each of these a *temple (Gumti or Tuk)* has been built on the hill
- Both Digambara and Svetambara consider it to be the most significant Jain Tirtha (pilgrimage destination)
- Jains call it *Sammed Shikhar.( Sammed Shikharji Jain Temple)*

## Parsanath Hill

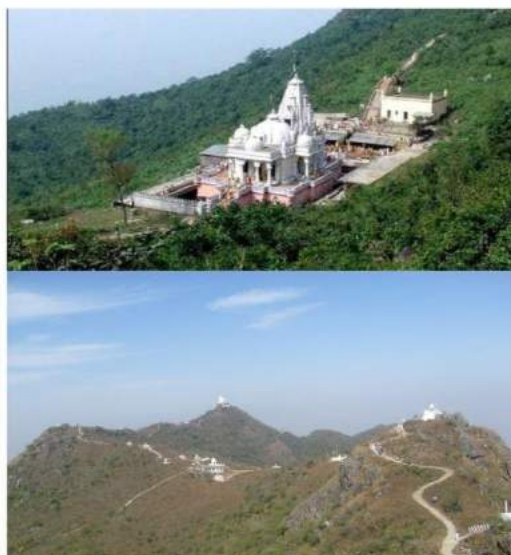


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### 3. Vishwa Hindi Diwas (VHD)

#### In news

**Vishwa Hindi Diwas (VHD) or World Hindi Day (WHD)** is celebrated every year on 10th January to promote the Hindi language all around the world.

#### About

- It was **first celebrated in 2006** to commemorate the **anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference** which was held in **Nagpur on 10th January, 1975**.
- It marks the day when Hindi was first spoken in the United Nations' General Assembly in 1949.
- Significance: The purpose of this day is to create awareness about the Indian language and promote it as a global language around the world.

#### National Hindi Day:

- The National Hindi Day is celebrated every year in India on **September 14** to mark the day of **adoption of Hindi as the official language** by the Constituent Assembly of India in 1949.
- Hindi is also an **eighth schedule** language.
- **Article 351** pertains to 'Directive for development of the Hindi language'.

#### 4. Parshuram Kund Festival

##### In News

The Parshuram Kund Festival is to be held in *Arunachal Pradesh* from the 12th to the 16th of January.

##### About Parshuram Kund Festival

- *Parshuram Kund* is a Hindu pilgrimage center situated at Telu Shati/Tailung area of the Mishmi plateau in the lower reaches of the Lohit River in *Arunachal Pradesh*.
- It falls within the *Kamlang reserve forests* and is surrounded by dense forests.

#### 5. Ramcharitmanas

##### In News

A controversial statement has been made by Bihar Education Minister regarding Ramcharitmanas.

##### About Ramcharitmanas

- Ramcharitmanas was written in the *Awadhi language during the 16th century by poet Tulsidas*
- Sri Tulsidas calls the Ramcharitmanas the *story of Rama, which was stored in Shiva's mind (Manasa)*

#### 6. Rajmata Jijau

##### In News

Recently, the Prime Minister of India has paid tributes to Rajmata Jijau on her Jayanti.

##### Jijabai Bhonsle (12 January 1598 – 17 June 1674)

- She is also referred to as *Rajmata, Rashtramata, Jijabai or Jijau*.
- Jijabai was born in present-day *Maharashtra*.
- Jijabai was *married* at an early age to *Shahaji Bhosle*.
- She was the *mother of Shivaji*, founder of the Maratha Empire.
- She died at Pachad village near Raigad Fort.

## DEFENCE

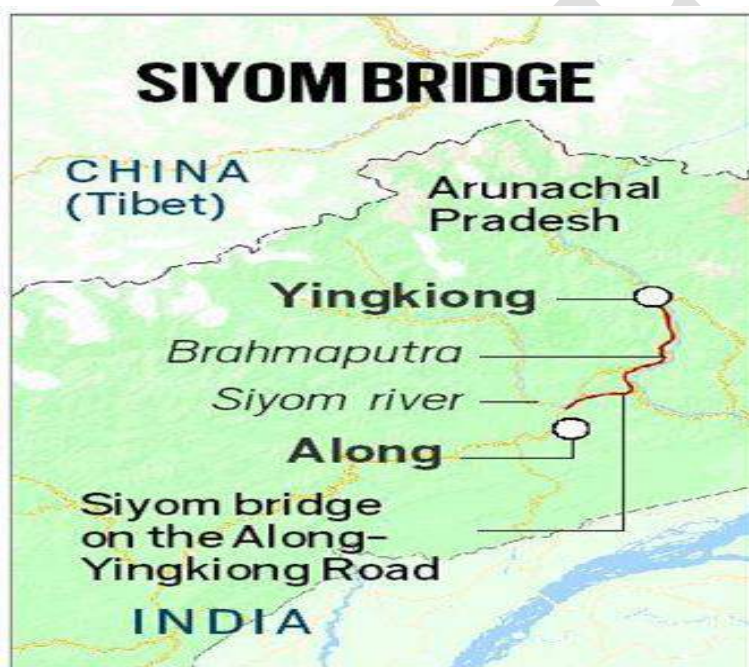
### 1. Siyom Bridge

#### In News

The Union Defence Minister inaugurated the *Siyom Bridge in Arunachal Pradesh*, along with 27 other infrastructure projects.

#### About

- A strategically important bridge over the *Siyom River in Arunachal Pradesh by the Border Roads Organisation*.
- The bridge will hugely augment India's border infrastructure, mostly along the Chinese border, from Ladakh to Arunachal.
- The Siyom Bridge on the Along-Yingkiong Road is a 100-meter 'Class-70' steel arch superstructure.
- The Along-Yingkiong road shares over 3,000-km long border with China — the Line of Actual Control (LAC).



### 2. Exercise 'Veer Guardian-2023'

#### In News

**India and Japan will hold their first bilateral air exercise** from January 12 to 26, in reflection of the growing defence ties amid increasing concerns over China's military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### About

- The exercise '**Veer Guardian-2023**' involving the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and **Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF)** will be held at Japan's Hyakuri air base.

### 3. **SPRINT Scheme**

#### In News

The Indian Navy has recently inked an agreement with Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd for acquiring armed autonomous boat swarms under the 'SPRINT' initiative.

#### **SPRINT Scheme:**

- '**SPRINT**' Scheme is an initiative to **promote development of niche defence technologies** by domestic companies.
- The task of development of this technology is **one of the 75 challenges** that have been introduced by the **Indian Navy under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav** last year.
- To achieve 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence, Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO), in conjunction with the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO), aims to induct at least 75 new indigenous technologies/products into the Indian Navy till August 2023.
- This collaborative project is named SPRINT {Supporting Pole-Vaulting in R&D through Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), NIIO and Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC)}.
- It was launched by Prime Minister in July, 2022.
- It will transform Navy from a 'Buyer's Navy' to a 'Builder's Navy'.

#### **Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO):**

- **Defence Ministry had launched the NIIO in August 2020**, to **encourage innovation and indigenisation** for self-reliance in defence sector.
- It is a **3-tiered organisation**:
- Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC) will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenization and provide apex level directives.
- Working group under the N-TAC will implement the projects.
- Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC) has been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.

#### 4. Prithvi-II Missile

##### **In news**

India carried out a successful test launch of tactical ballistic missile Prithvi-II from a test range off the Odisha coast.

##### **About**

- Prithvi-II is an *indigenously developed Surface-to-Surface Missile Short-Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM)*
- Developed by: *Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)* of India under its *Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme*
- Range of around *350km*
- Prithvi II class is a *single-stage liquid-fueled missile* that has warhead mounting capability of 500 kg-1000kg.
- Prithvi-II was first tested in 1996 and was inducted into the Indian armed forces in 2003.
- The *naval variant of Prithvi I and Prithvi III class missiles have the code-name Dhanush.*



## **INDEX/REPORTS**

### **1. Rule of Law Index**

#### **In News**

After the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' rankings, the government has turned its attention to scoring better in the Rule of Law Index (ROLI).

#### **About**

- The **Rule of Law Index (ROLI)** is released by the **World Justice Project (WJP)**, a **US-based civil society group**.
- It rates countries based on accountability of executives and respect for fundamental rights of people.
- The index is prepared by examining these four principles through eight factors:
  - ✓ constraints on government powers,
  - ✓ absence of corruption,
  - ✓ open government,
  - ✓ fundamental rights,
  - ✓ order and security,
  - ✓ regulatory enforcement,
  - ✓ civil justice and criminal justice.
- India has been **ranked 77th out of 140 countries in 2022** by the World Justice Project (WJP)

### **2. Global Economic Prospects**

#### **In News**

The World Bank in its latest “Global Economic Prospects” stated that India’s growth is slowing to 6.6% in FY24.

#### **Global Economic Prospects**

- **Global Economic Prospects** is a **World Bank Group flagship report** that examines global economic developments and prospects, with a special focus on emerging markets and developing economies.
- It is issued twice a year, in January and June.

#### **World Bank**

- It traces its origin to **the Bretton Woods Conference 1944**.
- The World Bank Group is an international partnership comprising 189 countries and five constituent institutions that works towards eradicating poverty and creating prosperity.

- The five development institutions under the World Bank Group are:
  - ✓ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
  - ✓ International Development Association (IDA)
  - ✓ International Finance Corporation (IFC)
  - ✓ Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
  - ✓ International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)

### **Reports and Publication**

- Ease of Doing Business
- World Development Report
- Global Economic Prospects

### **3. The Human Rights Watch's World Report 2023**

World Report 2023 (33rd edition) released by the *The Human Rights Watch* said that Indian authorities had “intensified and broadened” their crackdown on activist groups and the media throughout year 2022.

#### **The Human Rights Watch**

- Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an international non-governmental organisation founded in 1978 as “*Helsinki Watch*,”
- Aim: investigating rights abuses in countries that signed the *Helsinki Accords*.
- The 33rd edition reviews human rights practices in close to 100 countries.
- It is headquartered in New York City.

#### **Helsinki Accords (1975)**

- A major diplomatic agreement signed in Helsinki, Finland, at the conclusion of the first Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (now Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe).
- Primarily an effort to reduce tension between the Soviet and Western blocs, they were signed by all the countries of Europe, the US and Canada.
- The agreement made the 35 signatory nations pledge to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

### **4. Global Risks Report**

#### **In News**

World Economic Forum (WEF) has released Global Risk Report 2023

#### **About**

- ***Global Risks Report***, an annual report, released by the ***World Economic Forum***.
- It tracks global risk perceptions among risk experts and world leaders in business, government, and civil society.
- It examines risks across five categories: economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal, and technological.
- ***According to Global Risks Report 2023***
  - ✓ *Biggest short-term risk faced by the world : Cost of living crisis*
  - ✓ *Biggest long-term threat faced by the world : Climate change*

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