EDEN IAS

NEWS IMPULSE

MARCH 2020

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

MARITIME INDIA SUMMIT 2021

Why In News?

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate 'Maritime India Summit 2021' on 2nd March via video conferencing

About Maritime India Summit 2021

- The Maritime India Summit 2021 is being organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on a virtual platform
- The Summit will visualize a roadmap for India's Maritime sector for next decade and will work to propel India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector.
- Speakers from several countries will attend the Summit and explore the potential business opportunities and investments in the Indian Maritime domain. Denmark is the partner country for the three-day summit.

Source: PIB

CARACAL

Syllabus section: Environment and ecology

Why in News?

Recently The National Board for Wildlife and Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change month included the caracal, a medium-sized wildcat found in parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat, in the list of critically endangered species.

About:

- Besides India, the caracal is found in several dozen countries across Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia.
- While it flourishes in parts of Africa, its numbers in Asia are declining.
- The wildcat has long legs, a short face, long canine teeth, and distinctive ears — long and pointy, with tufts of black hair at their tips.
- Name: The iconic ears are what give the animal its name — caracal comes from the Turkish karakulak, meaning 'black ears'. In India, it is called siya gosh, a Persian name that translates as 'black Ear'. A Sanskrit fable exists about a small wild cat named deergha-karn or 'long-eared'.

- The earliest evidence of the caracal in the subcontinent comes from a fossil dating back to the civilisation of the Indus Valley c. 3000-2000 BC, according to a reference in 'Historical and current extent of occurrence of the Caracal in India', one of the few published studies on the animal.

Do you know?

- Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351-88) had siyah-goshdarkhana, stables that housed large numbers of coursing caracal. It finds mention in Abul Fazl's Akbarnama, as a hunting animal in the time of Akbar (1556-1605). Descriptions and illustrations of the caracal can be found in medieval texts such as the Anvar-i-Suhayli, Tutinama, Khamsa-e-Nizami, and Shahnameh.
- The caracal's use as a coursing animal is believed to have taken it far beyond its natural range to places like Ladakh in the north to Bengal in the east. The East India Company's Robert Clive is said to have been presented with a caracal after he defeated Siraj-ud-daullah in the Battle of Plassey (1757).

Source: Indian express

NATIONAL BAMBOO MISSION

Syllabus section: economy

Why in News?

The National Bamboo Mission anchored at the Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare organized a two-day conference 'National Consultation on Opportunities and Challenges for Bamboo in India' through the virtual platform on the 25th and 26th of February 2021.

About:

- NITI Aayog and Invest India also joined hands with the National Bamboo Mission to conduct the event.
- The aim of the brainstorming session was to deliberate on the bamboo ecosystem for promoting the holistic growth of the sector across the entire value chain.
- The deliberations of experts and stakeholders from various fields would further accelerate the efforts of the National Bamboo Mission to pinpoint solutions to issues facing the sector.
- This conference provided benefit because of the participation of eminent professionals related to bamboo farming, innovation, research, industry, entrepreneurs, and attendees from research institutes, farmers and entrepreneurs.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

1   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- It held discussions on all subjects related to the bamboo industry starting from planting material to high-end engineered products & marketing.
- The topics of discussion in the conference include-
  - Bamboo for Atma Nirbhar Bharat,
  - Promoting Exports & Global Branding,
  - Availability of Feedstock & Plantations,
  - Innovations, Research & Development,
  - Skill Development and
  - Access to Institutional Credit & International Cooperation.

Some important ideas/challenges that emerge from the discussions were as follows:

- Adoption of agro-forestry models by the farmers, especially to tide over the initial 3-4 years of gestation of bamboo plantation
- Intercropping with ginger, pulses, lemongrass, etc were suggested as a viable option.
- Use of good credible planting material and improved agronomic practices to increase yields were considered to be absolutely vital for the sector.
- Plantations on culturable wastelands should be encouraged on a large scale to provide feed stock to the industry.
- Integrated primary processing units for the complete utilization of bamboo i.e. a zero waste policy would lead to optimum use of bamboo in the country.

What else can be done?

- To overcome the issue of high transport cost especially from the North Eastern Region, use of waterways and transport subsidy options need to be explored.
- Incentives available across sectors for bamboo need to be compiled for use by potential entrepreneurs.
- Steps need to be taken to encourage startups, entrepreneurship in the bamboo sector.
- The GeM portal will create a dedicated window for registration of bamboo products to add visibility of bamboo products in the electronic market space for Government procurement.
- The need for mass production related to bamboo in areas such as construction, bio CNG, ethanol etc. would provide a real fillip to the sector and add to the income of farmers. Import substitution should be an important aim such as for agarbatti and engineered wood.

Source: DD News

"SUGAMYA BHARAT APP" AND "ACCESS - THE PHOTO DIGEST"| 01 MARCH

Why in News?

Union Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot will virtually launch the "Sugamya Bharat App" and a handbook entitled "Access – The Photo Digest".

About:

Sugamya Bharat APP

- It is a Crowdsourcing Mobile Application.
- It is meant for sensitizing and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign i.e. built environment, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem in India.
- The app provides for five main features, 4 of which are directly related to enhancing accessibility, while the fifth is a special feature meant only for Divyangjan for COVID-related issues.
- The accessibility-related features are: the registration of complaints of inaccessibility across the 3 broad pillars of the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyaan; positive feedback of examples and best practices worth emulating being shared by people as jan-bhagidhari; Departmental updates; and guidelines and circulars related to accessibility.
- It is available in 10 regional languages, namely, Hindi, English, Marathi, Tamil, Odiya, Kannada, Telugu, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Malayalam.
- DEPwD has also prepared a handbook entitled "Access - The Photo Digest" with a collection of photographs from across different States and UTs

Source: PIB

EWS IMPULSE -CITY INNOVATION EXCHANGE (CIX)| 02 MARCH

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

City Innovation Exchange (CiX) Launched for Fostering Innovation in Urban Ecosystem.

About:

- The platform will be a significant addition to the growing innovation ecosystem of India and focuses on fostering innovative practices in cities.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

2

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- CiX, through an 'open innovation' process, engages with innovators to design-test-deliver on solutions to pressing urban challenges.
- This initiative is among the ongoing efforts of the Government to realize the Prime Minister's vision of New and AtmaNirbhar Bharat, by making cities more self-reliant and enabled to meet the needs of and provide services to their citizens.
- the platform will bring together Citizen Organisations-Academia- Businesses-Government to co-create for the future of Urban India in a transparent and sustainable manner.
- The Smart Cities Mission will partner and effectively collaborate with Startup India, Atal Innovation Mission, AGNIi and other initiatives in the Indian Innovation ecosystem.

City Innovation Exchange (CiX)

- The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges.
- The platform will ease the discovery, design& validation of solutions through a robust, transparent and user-centric process that will reduce barriers for innovators and cities to discover fitting solutions.
- Built on the concept of 'open innovation', the platform will help in the flow of ideas 'outside in and inside out', enhancing the skills and capacity required to deliver smart urban governance.
- Through interaction with Academia and businesses/Startups, the platform will benefit cities in the transfer of ideas from 'labs' to real environment. Similarly, by helping urban governments interact with citizens, the platform will ensure the adoption of tested solutions that will be impactful and sustainable.
- The platform in due time will help our cities in adopting solutions that will enhance the quality of life for its residents and significantly improve the Ease of Doing Business.
- The Platform has more than 400 start-ups, 100 smart cities, more than 150 challenges statements, and over 215 solutions at the time of launch.

Source: PIB

INDIA SENDING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO DROUGHT-HIT MADAGASCAR

Syllabus section: International relations

Why in News?
India is sending a consignment of 1,000 metric tonnes of rice and 100,000 hydroxychloroquine tablets to Madagascar in response to the east African country's appeal for assistance to deal with a humanitarian crisis triggered by a severe drought.

About:
- The humanitarian assistance is being delivered onboard the Indian Naval Ship Jalashwa, which will leave with food and medical assistance on March 3 and is expected to reach the Port of Ehoala in Madagascar.
- India has always been among the first responders when it comes to assisting the people of Madagascar in such humanitarian crises.
- INS Jalashwa will also have onboard an Indian naval training team, which is being deployed in Madagascar for capacity building and training of the Malagasy Special Forces for two weeks.
- INS Jalashwa will also call at Port Anjouan in the Republic of Comoros where it will deliver a consignment of 1,000 metric tonnes of Indian rice.

The supplies of food assistance and support for capacity building to the friendly countries of Madagascar and Comoros is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of SAGAR and India's time-tested role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region

Source: Indian Express

ARCTIC-MONITORING SATELLITE

Syllabus section: Science and tech

Why in News?
Russia has successfully launched its first satellite to monitor the Arctic's climate and environment, the country's space corporation Roscosmos.

Need: The creation of a satellite system in highly elliptical orbits is necessary for information collection to solve operational meteorology and hydrology problems, and monitoring the climate and environment in the Arctic region.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- The Arktika-M will provide round-the-clock continuous monitoring of the northern territory of Russia and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.
- The satellite will be able to transmit overview images of the Earth's northern polar region and the adjacent areas at least every 15-30 minutes.
- The satellite will be based on the LavochkinElektro-L meteorological satellite.
- The payload of the satellite comprises of MSU-GSM multi-spectral imager along with the transmitters for meteorological systems and rescue systems.

Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities (Roscosmos)

It is a state corporation of the Russian Federation which is involved in space flights, aerospace research, and cosmonautics programs. The Roscosmos was emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the year 1991. It was initially established as the Russian Space Agency, in 1992. The Roscosmos is headquartered in Moscow. It has its main Mission Control Center located in the nearby city Korolyov,

Source: Buisness standard

RASHTRIYA SANSKRITI MAHOTSAV 2021

Why in News?

The third and final leg of the 11th edition of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021 took place at Murshidabad, West Bengal.

- Various colorful performances were given by the local artists, including 'BaulGaan', 'AlkupGaan', 'Leto gaan', 'Jhumuriya' and Ranpa folk dances.
- It has been instrumental in showcasing folk and tribal art, dance, music, cuisines & culture of one state in other states reinforcing the cherished goal of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat".

About:

- It is the flagship festival of the Ministry of Culture.
- It has been organized since 2015 with the active participation of Seven Zonal Culture Centres.
- It was started with an intention to exhibit the rich cultural heritage of the country in all its rich and varied dimensions namely, Handicrafts, Cuisine, Painting, Sculpture and Performing Arts- Folk, Tribal, Classical and Contemporary- all at one place.

SIGNIFICANCE:

- It has been instrumental in showcasing folk and tribal art, dance, music, cuisines & culture of one state in other states reinforcing the cherished goal of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat".
- The RashtriyaSanskritiMahotsava will reconnect the people, especially the youth, with their indigenous culture, its multi-faceted nature, magnificence, opulence and historical, importance in the context of India as a nation over the millennia.
- It has been instrumental in showcasing folk and tribal art, dance, music, cuisines & culture of one state in other states reinforcing the cherished goal of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat".

Source: PIB

GLOBAL BIO INDIA: ATMA NIRBHAR BHARAT CONCLAVE: FOR INDIA AND THE WORLD

Why in News?

The largest biotechnology conglomerate Global Bio-India 2021 was inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Science &Technology,Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare 1st March 2021.

- **Co-organised by:** Department of Biotechnology along with its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) in partnership with Invest India.

About:

- **Objective:** The event will see different sessions touching down upon different aspects of biotechnology.
- The first session of the Global Bio-India addressed how India's campaign of 'Make in India' has translated into "Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan" to provide resilience and self-sufficiency" to the country.
  - o The session highlighted the National Priorities, examples from India's experience in turning COVID pandemic challenges into opportunities for developing domestic innovation ecosystem gaining self-sufficiency in requirements
- The first edition of Global Bio-India 2019 was organized at New Delhi.
- **Theme:** "Transforming lives"
- **Tag line:** "Biosciences to Bioeconomy"

Source: PIB

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

REVISING FOOD SECURITY ACT

Why in News?

The NITI Aayog recently circulated a discussion paper on a proposed revision in the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

About:

Why a discussion on a revision?

- The NFSA provides a legal right to persons belonging to "eligible households" to receive foodgrains at subsidised price– rice at Rs 3/kg, wheat at Rs 2/kg and coarse grain at Rs 1/kg — under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).
  - o The term "eligible households" comprises two categories — "priority households", and families covered by the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY).
  - o Priority households are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month, whereas AAY households are entitled to 35 kg per month at the same prices.
- These are called central issue prices (CIPs)
- A revision of CIPs is one of the issues that have been discussed.
- The other issues are updating of the population coverage under the NFSA, and beneficiary identification criteria.

What is the extent of coverage, and how is it to be updated?

- The Act has prescribed the coverage under "eligible households" — 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population.
- The number of NFSA beneficiaries was frozen in 2013.
- However, given the population increase since then, there have been demands from the states and union territories to update the list by ensuring an annual updating system under NFSA,
- It was in this context that the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution had asked the NITI Aayog to suggest an alternative methodology for "covering beneficiaries under NFSA, including prospective beneficiaries.

NITI Aayog Proposal:

- The NITI Aayog has suggested that the national rural and urban coverage ratio be reduced from the existing 75-50 to 60-40. if this reduction happens, the number of beneficiaries under the NFSA will drop to 71.62 crore

- To make these changes in the law, the government will have to amend sub-section (2) of Section 3 of the NFSA.

Benefits of the Proposal:

If the national coverage ratio is revised downward, the Centre can save up to Rs 47,229 crore (as estimated by the NITI Aayog paper).

Source: PIB

MOBILE TRAIN RADIO COMMUNICATION (MTRC) SYSTEM

Syllabus section: science and technology

Why in News?

Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) System commissioned in Western Railway Trains.

About:

- The Mobile Train Radio Communication system is an effective and technologically advanced communication system which can play an intrinsic role in preventing train accidents and reducing delays through effective communication.
- It facilitates an instant and constant interaction of train crew with the Control Centre and the Station Master.
- MRTC acts in a similar way to that of Air traffic control (ARC) for aircrafts.
- The system will monitor, track and aid in communication between the trains and the control room thereby ensuring smooth movement of rakes as well as help in preventing adverse events.
- This is the first time that MTRC is commissioned in Indian Railways.
- The new system has already been installed in 90 out of 100 rakes running between Churchgate and Virar.

The benefits of MTRC System are as follows:

- Single touch dialing to call any of the Two Section Train Controllers, Dy. Train Controller, EMU Controller
- Auto Call Answer for Cab Radios for Motorman and Guards to receive only audio (Only from Controllers and call from another cab of same rake)
- Contact numbers of three controllers (TPC, SIG and TMS) are fed into the phonebook for easy access while dialing
- Motorman can directly communicate defect of EMU-to-EMU Controller which reduces detention of other trains

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

5

www.edenias.com

- In any Unusual Situation, i.e. if the called MTRC phone is busy then on making the emergency call the overriding feature the speech will get through and communication will be established. The emergency call goes to Dy. CTNL

Source: PIB

NASSCOM LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO ACCELERATE AI-LED INNOVATION

Syllabus section: science and tech

Why in News?

Nasscom is launching an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country, the apex body of the IT industry.

Aims: Nasscom aims to spotlight some of the leading AI-based innovations in the country, to recognize their efforts, and motivate the larger ecosystem to leverage this opportunity to help India become a global powerhouse in AI-led innovation.

About:

- The program seeks to recognize impactful and scalable AI-based innovation in the country.
- The program will recognize innovators for their successful AI implementation at Nasscom'sXperience AI Summit, one of the largest AI summits in India.
- This will serve as a platform for startups, enterprises, academia, governments, and NGOs to showcase their AI-based products and solutions, providing reach and impetus to drive AI innovation for the country.
- AI to unlock $500 billion of value to India's GDP by 2025.
- Data and AI are driving transformation at scale across industries and offer a tremendous opportunity to transform public infrastructure and solve some of the most critical issues facing the country.

Source: Livemint

HARYANA GOVERNMENT APPROVES BILL TO RESERVE 75% JOBS IN PRIVATE SECTOR FOR LOCALS

Syllabus section: Polity

Why in News?

The Deputy Chief Minister of Haryana, that the governor of the state Satyadev Narayan Arya has approved the bill that will provide 75% reservation in the private sector jobs with a gross salary of up to Rs. 50,000 per month to the people of the state. The legislation was passed by the state Assembly in 2020.

Key Highlights:

- The billmakes it compulsory for the private sector companies to reserve 75% of the jobs with a salary up to 50,000 for the people of the state.
- The bill by the government also contains clause companies can invoke in case they are not able to find suitable candidates. In this case, the company can hire from outside as long as they inform the government of such a step.
- The companies must register the details of the employees getting Rs. 50,000 per month and in case they fail to do so within three months, it will attract penalties.
- According to the state government, the reservation will be economically, socially, and environmentally desirable.

Source: Economic times

INDIA AND FRANCE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY COOPERATION

Why in News?

Cabinet approves Memorandum of Understanding between India and France on Renewable Energy Cooperation.

About:

- The objective of the MoU is to establish the basis for the promotion of bilateral cooperation in the field of new and renewable energy on the basis of mutual benefit, equality, and reciprocity.
- It covers technologies relating to solar, wind, hydrogen, and biomass energy.

The MoU Covers:

- exchange and training of scientific and technical personnel;
- exchange of scientific and technological information and data;

- organization of workshops and seminars; transfer of equipment, know-how and technology;
- development of joint research and technological projects.
- This MoU will help in the development of technological know-how in the field of Renewable Energy and thereby aid the process of attaining the ambitious target of 450 GW of installed Renewable Energy capacity by 2030.

Source: PIB

GOVERNMENT AMENDS INSURANCE OMBUDSMAN RULES

Why in News?
Government amends Insurance Ombudsman Rules for better resolution of policyholders' complaints regarding insurance service deficiencies.

About:

Amendments:
- It has enlarged the scope of complaints to Ombudsmen from only disputes earlier to deficiencies in service on the part of insurers, agents, brokers and other intermediaries.
- Insurance brokers have been brought within the ambit of the Ombudsman mechanism, by empowering the Ombudsmen to pass awards against insurance brokers as well.
- Policyholders will now be enabled for making complaints electronically to the Ombudsman
- Complaints management system will be created to enable policyholders to track the status of their complaints online.
- To enable access to relief through the Ombudsman mechanism even when there is a vacancy in the office of a particular Ombudsman, provision has been made for giving additional charge to another Ombudsman, pending the filling of the vacancy.

About Insurance Ombudsman:
- The Insurance Ombudsman scheme was created by the Government of India for individual policyholders to have their complaints settled out of the courts system in a cost-effective, efficient and impartial way.

- The Ombudsman is a person in the insurance industry, civil or judicial services, and is appointed by the insurance council.
- The serving term of the Insurance Ombudsman is three years.

Source: PIB

NEWS IMPULSE -RASHTRIYA UCCHTAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Why in News?
Union Education Minister chaired a review meeting on RashtriyaUcchtar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

About:

Highlights of the Meeting:
- It has been asked to strengthen the RUSA Scheme and to draw plans on educating additional 3.5 crore students to increase GER to 50% by 2035.
- A total of 7 crore students with employable skills that suits local conditions should pass out from our colleges and Universities.
- To reach the last mile students, online distance learning and infrastructure development should be encouraged across the country.
- It has been stressed that education should lead to local employment. Education in Degree College should be aligned with "One district one product" plan.
- University Grants Commission will monitor the progress of work done by Institutions that received funding under RUSA Scheme.
- The Minister will review the RUSA Scheme in every three months.

About RashtriyaUcchtar Shiksha Abhiyan
- **Aim:** It aims at providing strategic funding to higher education institutions throughout the country.
  - The scheme is being operated in mission mode for funding state universities and colleges to achieve the aims of equity, access and excellence.
- **Funding:** It is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in October 2013.
  - Since 2016-17, the government has spent an average of Rs. 1,500 crore every year on RUSA.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
7
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- **Objectives:**
o Improve the overall quality of state institutions by conforming to the prescribed norms and standards.
o Adoption of accreditation (certification of competency) as a mandatory quality assurance framework.
o Promoting autonomy in state universities and improving governance in institutions.
o Ensure reforms in the affiliation, academic and examination system.
o Ensure adequate availability of quality faculty in all higher educational institutions and ensure capacity building at all levels of employment.
o Create an enabling atmosphere for research in the higher education system.
o Correct regional imbalances in access to higher education by setting up institutions in unserved and underserved areas.

KARNATAKA'S ENGINEERING RESEARCH POLICY

Syllabus section: science and tech

Why in News?

The Karnataka government recently launched the 'Karnataka Engineering Research & Development (Engineering R&D) Policy 2021' as a measure to leverage the sector's potential, create jobs and improve the state's contribution in the space through strategic interventions and bridging the gap between academia and industry.

Objective: The policy would help bridge the gap between engineering talent and the industry.

About:

- The ER&D sector in the country is the fastest growing industry with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.8%.
- The global Engineering Research and Development industry is expected to reach spending of $2 trillion by 2025.
- This policy aims to prepare the state to make use of the future opportunities emanating from this sector.
- The new policy envisages creation of an additional 50,000 jobs.

- Government of Karnataka seeks to integrate the state's Engineering R&D ecosystem and further strengthen its overall value proposition, to champion India's Engineering R&D growth trajectory

The policy will also support industrial application of academic research, spend 10,000 per student on training and certification as provide grants to universities to set up laboratories.

Source: Hindustan Times

SWACHHTA SAARTHI FELLOWSHIP

Syllabus section: society

Why in news?

The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its "Waste to Wealth" Mission launched the "Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship" to recognize students, community workers/self-help groups, and municipal/sanitary workers who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management, scientifically and sustainably.

About:

Swachhta Saarthi Fellowships invites applications from students and community workers who have done previous work or are currently engaged in waste management activities, including awareness campaigns, surveys & studies. The three categories of awards under the fellowships are as below:

- **Category-A –** Open to School students from 9th to 12th standards engaged in waste management community work.
- **Category-B –** Open to College students (UG, PG, Research students) engaged in waste management community work.
- **Category-C –** Open to Citizens working in the community and through SHGs, municipal or sanitary workers working beyond specifications of their job requirement/descriptions.

Waste to Wealth Mission

- The "waste to wealth mission" was launched with the objective of identifying, developing and deploying technologies in order to treat the waste to recycle materials, extract worth and generate energy.
- This mission is one among the nine-national mission of the "Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)" of the Prime Minister.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

8   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- It will also assist and augment the Smart Cities project and Swachh Bharat Mission in a bid to create circular economic models which are financially viable for waste management.
- This will in turn help in streamlining the waste handling across the country.

Source: PIB

ODISHA SURVEY OF BACKWARD CLASSES

Syllabus section: Polity

Why in news?
The Odisha government is set to begin its first state survey of the social and educational conditions of people from backward classes — there are around 209 communities identified as socially and educationally backward classes (SEBCs) comprising around 54 percent of Odisha's population.

About:
- Survey will be conducted on the social and educational conditions of the people belonging to backward classes.
- Their occupation, education standard and other parameters will be covered.
- The move will have a transformative impact on the backward classes of the state.
- The supreme court of India recently agreed to examine a plea that seeks for directions to the central government to conduct "caste-based" census in the year 2021 in order to collect data on the other backward classes.
- In the state of Odisha, there are around 209 communities which are identified as the socially and educationally backward classes (SEBCs).
- They account for 54% of the Population in Odisha.

Source: Indian Express

MERCHANT DIGITIZATION SUMMIT 2021

Why in News?
The Government of India, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and UN-based Better Than Cash Alliance

- **Merchant Digitization Summit 2021:** Towards AatmaNirbhar (Self Reliance) Bharat with special focus on Himalayan Regions, North East Regions and Aspirational Districts of India.

- The Summit brought together leaders from the public and private sectors to accelerate responsible digitization of merchants in India's North-Eastern and Himalayan regions, and Aspirational districts.

About:

The Highlights of the Summit are:
- Empowering women merchants who play critical roles in their communities is one of the priorities to help achieve the mission of Digital India.
- The National Language Translation Mission can be used to disseminate digital payments information, privacy clauses and consent in local languages for trust and empowerment.
- Identified opportunities to address the challenges of connectivity, access to smartphones, and digital literacy for merchants at the last mile.
- Along with the increased focus on 'Make in India' through Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme, responsible digitization must more strongly include rural networks such as Self Help Groups and community enablers.
- This will lead to the creation of the local digital ecosystems to help millions of merchants join the formal economy, access credit, and grow their business.
- From an average of 2-3 billion digital transactions monthly, India has set an ambitious target for 1 billion digital transactions per day.
- Person to Merchant (P2M) digital payment transactions will scale to 10-12 billion transactions every month to contribute to India's digital economy.

Related Recent initiatives:
- Digital Payments Index.
- Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme.
- Relaxations in Merchant Discount Rate.

Source: PIB

SENKAKU ISLANDS

Why in News?
Japan dismisses Chinese claims over Senkaku Islands, empowers its coastguard to use weapons.

About:
- China has recently passed a law allowing its coastguard to fire on foreign vessels in some circumstances, a change that provoked criticism from Japan

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- China justified the intrusion of its Coast guard vessels into Japan's territorial waters near Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea.
- China claims Senkaku Islands as 'inherent' territory.

Background:

Dispute History:

➤ China says that the islands have been part of its territory since ancient times, serving as important fishing grounds administered by the province of Taiwan.

➤ Taiwan was ceded to Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, after the Sino-Japanese war.

➤ Japan annexed the archipelago following China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war from 1894 to 1895. Yet the islands were left out of the Treaty of San Francisco at the end of the second world war that returned to China most of the territories previously occupied by Japan.

  o China says, when Taiwan was returned in the Treaty of San Francisco, the islands should have been returned too.

➤ Under the terms of Japan's surrender, the island chain was controlled by the US until 1971, when it was returned to Japan along with Okinawa and other surrounding islands.

➤ Two years earlier, a report highlighting the potential for oil reserves in the area prompted China to reassert its territorial claims over the islands. Japan does not recognise China's claims nor the existence of a dispute over the islands' sovereignty.

Source: All India News

INDIA & AIIB SIGN AGREEMENT

Why in News?

India & AIIB sign agreement for $304 million to improve reliability, capacity and security of the power transmission network in Assam.

About:

- The project aims to strengthen Assam's electricity transmission system by
  1. constructing 10 transmission substations and laying transmission lines with the associated infrastructure;
  2. upgrading 15 existing substations, transmission lines and existing ground wire to optical power ground wire; and
  3. providing technical assistance to support project implementation.

- The programme would strengthen the existing intrastate transmission network of Assam by augmenting it with newer networks to achieve affordable, secure, efficient and reliable 24×7 power.
  o This would, in turn, bring Assam closer to ensuring long-term sustainability of its electricity supply.

Benefits of the Project:

- The strong backward and forward linkages associated with the project will create socio-economic opportunities for both households and business communities in the State.
- The project would improve the transmission network constraints and congestion in the state.
  o The State of Assam currently witnesses substantial energy and peak demand deficits. One of the main reasons for the power-deficit scenario in Assam is congestion of the electricity distribution and transmission networks.
  o Assam Electricity Grid Corporation Limited (AEGCL), the sole transmission utility in Assam is responsible for the operation, maintenance and development of the transmission system in the State.
- The project will also help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improve the quality of power supply to the ultimate consumers.

Source: DD News:

CERAWEEK GLOBAL ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Why in News?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will receive the CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award today.

About:

- CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award was instituted in 2016.
- It recognizes the commitment of leadership on the future of global energy and environment and for offering solutions and policies for energy access, affordability and environmental stewardship.

CERAWeek:

- In 1983, Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA) was founded in Cambridgeby Dr. Daniel Yergin.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
10   www.edenias.com

- CERAWeek brings together global leaders to advance new ideas, insight and solutions to the biggest challenges facing the future of energy, the environment, and climate.
- Now in its 39th year, CERAWeek is widely considered to be the most prestigious annual gathering of CEOs and Ministers from global energy and utilities, as well as automotive, manufacturing, policy and financial communities, along with a growing presence of tech.
- It has been described by the Financial Times as the 'the Davos of energy,' and by Politico as the "industry's Super Bowl." CNBC called it "the world's preeminent energy conference."

Source: All India Radio

RED RICE

Why in News?

First export consignments of 'red rice' from Assam to the USA flagged off.

About:

- 'Red rice' is grown in Brahmaputra valley of Assam,
- It is rich in Iron, grown without the use of any chemical fertilizer.
- The rice variety is referred as 'Bao-dhaan', which is an integral part of the Assamese food.
- The flagging-off ceremony of the export consignments was carried out by APEDA.

About APEDA:

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act passed by the Parliament in December 1985.

- **FUNCTIONS:**

Following functions have been assigned to the Authority.

o Development of industries relating to the scheduled products for export by way of providing financial assistance.
o Registration of persons as exporters of the scheduled products on payment of such fees as may be prescribed;
o Fixing of standards and specifications for the scheduled products for the purpose of exports;

o Carrying out inspection of meat and meat products in slaughterhouses, processing plants, storage premises, conveyances or other places where such products are kept or handled for the purpose of ensuring the quality of such products;
o Improving of the packaging of the Scheduled products;
o Improving of marketing of the Scheduled products outside India;
o Promotion of export oriented production and development of the Scheduled products;
o Collection of statistics from the owners of factories or establishments engaged in the production, processing, packaging, marketing or export of the scheduled products or from such other persons as may be prescribed on any matter relating to the scheduled products and publication of the statistics so collected or of any portions thereof or extracts therefrom;
o Training in various aspects of the industries connected with the scheduled products;

- **PRODUCTS MONITORED**

APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of export promotion and development of the following scheduled products:

- Fruits, Vegetables and their Products.
- Meat and Meat Products.
- Poultry and Poultry Products.
- Dairy Products.
- Confectionery, Biscuits and Bakery Products.
- Honey, Jaggery and Sugar Products.
- Cocoa and its products, chocolates of all kinds.
- Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages.
- Cereal and Cereal Products.
- Groundnuts, Peanuts and Walnuts.
- Pickles, Papads and Chutneys.
- Guar Gum.
- Floriculture and Floriculture Products.
- Herbal and Medicinal Plants.

INDIA'S DIGITAL SKILLED WORKFORCE NEEDS TO GROW NINE-FOLD BY 2025

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

Recently, a report was commissioned by the Amazon Web Services (AWS) on India's Digital skilled workforce.

11   EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

Highlights:

- India's present workforce comprises only 12% digitally skilled employees, and the number of employees requiring digital skills in the country will need to increase nine-fold by 2025

- The research surveyed over 500 digital workers in India, and 3,196 workers in total across six countries in the APAC region, including Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea.

- As per the report, transitioning organizations from the on-premises to the cloud environments are the most frequently used digital skill in India.

- Nearly 150 million workers in six APAC countries apply digital skills on the job, and those in need of such skills is poised to surge past 800 million by 2025.

- the top five digital skills in-demand in India are cloud architecture design (34%); software operations support (31%); website, game, or software development (28%); large-scale data modeling (28%); and cybersecurity skills (27%).

- Over 50% of digital workers in the manufacturing sector think they will require skills like cloud architecture design and the ability to create original digital content, to perform their jobs.

To meet the projected digital skill needs by 2025, each of the six APAC countries will require different policy approaches that address their unique challenges and skills priorities.

Source: The Hindu

EASE OF LIVING AND MUNICIPAL PERFORMANCE INDEX (MPI) 2020

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs released the final rankings of the Ease of Living Index (EoLI) 2020 and the Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020.

About:

Municipal Performance Index:

- It has been launched as an accompaniment to the Ease of Living Index.

- It seeks to examine local government practices in municipalities across areas of services, finance, policy, technology and governance.

- It also seeks to simplify and evaluate the complexities in local governance practice and promote the ethos of transparency and accountability.

- The MPI examined the sectoral performance of 111 municipalities (with Delhi being assessed separately for NDMC, and the three Municipal Corporations).

Parameters Used:

- The five verticals under MPI are Services, Finance, Policy, Technology and Governance. These five verticals comprise 20 sectors and 100 indicators in all totality.

Categories: The assessment framework under MPI 2020 has classified municipalities based on their population:

- Million+ (municipalities having over a million population) and
- Less than a Million Population.

MPI 2020 Performance

- Million+ category:

Indore has emerged as the highest-ranked municipality, followed by Surat and Bhopal.

- **Less than Million category:**

New Delhi Municipal Council topped, followed by Tirupati and Gandhinagar.

Ease of Living Index

- It is an assessment tool that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development.

- It provides a comprehensive understanding of participating cities across India based on the quality of life, economic-ability of a city, and its sustainability and resilience.

- It aims to enable cities to systematically assess themselves against global and national benchmarks and encourage them to shift towards an 'outcome-based' approach to urban planning and management.

Parameters:

1) Citizen Perception:

The EoLI 2020 strengthens its scope by consolidating the framework with the addition of a Citizen Perception Survey in the index, holding a weightage of 30%.

2) Citizen Perception Survey:

- It was undertaken to help validate citizens' experience of their city in terms of service delivery.

- Bhubaneswar had the highest CPS score, followed by Silvassa, Davangere, Kakinada, Bilaspur and Bhagalpur.

12

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

3) Existing Living Conditions:
- It also examines the outcomes that lead to existing living conditions.
- Across 13 categories such as Education, Health, Housing and Shelter, Buildings, Energy Consumption, and City Resilience, that account for 70% of the overall outcome.

EoLI Performance 2020
o   Million+ Category:

- **Top Performers:**
➢ Bengaluru followed by Pune and Ahmedabad.

- **Worst Performers:**
➢ Amritsar, Guwahati, Bareilly, Dhanbad and Srinagar.

o   Less than Million Category:

- **Top Performers:**
➢ Shimla followed by Bhubaneshwar and Silvassa.
- **Worst Performers:**
➢ Aligarh, Rampur, Namchi, Satna and Muzaffarpur.

Source: Indian Express

DRDO CONDUCTS SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT TEST OF SOLID FUEL DUCTED RAMJET

Why in News?
Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology from Integrated Test Range Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

About:
- Successful demonstration of Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet technology has provided DRDO with a technological advantage that will enable it to develop long-range air-to-air missiles.
- At present, such technology is available only with a handful of countries in the world.
- The performance of the missile was monitored using the data captured by Electro-Optical, Radar and Telemetry instruments deployed by ITR and confirmed successful demonstration of the mission objectives.

Ramjet:
- A ramjet is a form of air-breathing jet engine that uses the vehicle's forward motion to compress incoming air for combustion without a rotating compressor.

- Fuel is injected in the combustion chamber where it mixes with the hot compressed air and ignites.
- A ramjet-powered vehicle requires an assisted take-off like a rocket assist to accelerate it to a speed where it begins to produce thrust.
- Ramjets work most efficiently at supersonic speeds around Mach 3 (three times the speed of sound) and can operate up to speeds of Mach 6.
- However, the ramjet efficiency starts to drop when the vehicle reaches hypersonic speeds.

Source: PIB

REBUTTAL TO FREEDOM HOUSE REPORT ON INDIA'S DECLINING STATUS AS A FREE COUNTRY

Syllabus section: Polity

Why in News?
The Freedom House report titled "Democracy Under Siege" in which it has been claimed that India's status as a free country has declined to "partly free", is misleading, incorrect and misplaced.

About:
- This is evident from the fact that many states in India under its federal structure are ruled by parties other than the one at the national level, through an election process that is free and fair and which is conducted by an independent election body.
- This reflects the working of a vibrant democracy, which gives space to those who hold varying views.

Rebuttal to specific points:-
- Discriminatory policies against Muslims in India and North East Delhi riots– the Government of India treats all its citizens with equality as enshrined under the Constitution of the country and all laws are applied without discrimination. Due process of law is followed in matters relating to law and order, irrespective of the identity of the alleged instigator.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
13
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- Use of sedition law –"PublicOrder' and 'Police' are State subjects under India's federal structure of governance. The responsibility of maintaining law and order, including investigation, registration and prosecution of crimes, protection of life and property, etc., rests primarily with the concerned State governments. Therefore, measures as deemed fitare taken by law enforcement authorities to preserve public order.

- Government response to COVID-19 through Lockdown – between March 16 to 23, most State governments/Union Territories resorted to partial or full Lockdown in their respective State/ Union Territory based on their assessment of the COVID-19 situation. Any mass movement of people would have spread the disease rapidly throughout the country. Taking into consideration these facts, the global experience and need for consistency in the approach and implementation of various containment measures across the country, a nationwide lockdown was announced.

- Government response on human rights organizations – the Indian Constitution provides for adequate safeguards under various statutes, including the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993 for ensuring the protection of human rights. This Act provides for the constitution of a National Human Rights Commission and State Human Rights Commissions in the States for better protection of human rights and for matters connected to this subject.

- Intimidation of academics and journalists and crackdown on expressions of dissent by media – the Indian Constitution provides for freedom of expression under Article 19. Discussion, debate and dissent is part of Indian democracy. The Government of India attaches highest importance to the safety and security of all residents of the country, including journalists

- Internet shutdowns: the temporary suspension of telecom/internet services is resorted to with the over-arching objective of maintaining law and order under strict safeguards.

- FCRA amendment leading to freezing of Amnesty International's assets has led to decline in ranking.

Source: PIB

SINGORGARH FORT

Syllabus section: Art and culture

Why in News?

President Inaugurates conservation works at Singorgarh Fort in Damoh district (MP).

About:
- The program was organized by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh.
- Singorgarh Fort, in the Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh state in Central India, is a hill-fort of Garha Kingdom, spread over the hills of a forested area.
- It is about 45 km from Jabalpur city, on the way to Damoh town.
- It was a magnificent fort and a residence of Rajgond rulers of Central India who spent part of each year there.

Background:
- Before coming in hand of Gond rulers, Singorgarh fort was under Chandel rulers in 1308.
- It was Gond ruler Sangram shah who conquered the Singorgarh fort in early period of 16th century.
- Sangram Shah was a powerful Gond ruler and was Father in Law of Rani Durgavati.
- It was year 1564 when the Mughal army, led by Asaf Khan (from Kunda, Uttar Pradesh), with the assistance of Rewa rulers, attacked the Gond Kingdom.
- In those days, Mughal ruler Akbar ordered his general Asaf Khan of Kunda, to attack the Gond dynasty as he was jealous of the Gond dynasty's prosperity and sovereignty. In summers of year 1564, Mughal army reached the Gond kingdom border.
- During that time, Rani Durgavati was ruling the kingdom and was present in same Singorgarh fort.
- When she came to know about the huge army of more than 70,000 soldiers, she decided to leave the fort and shifted to Garha fort of Jabalpur and major war took place in this area.
- While marching towards Jabalpur, Mughal army first reached Singorgarh fort and attacked here in which fort was badly damaged and since then, although ruled but never gained its previous prosperity and gleam.

Source: PIB

14

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

EASE OF LIVING INDEX

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

Ease of Living Index (EoLI) 2020 was recently released by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Highlights:

- Chandigarh Ranked 29th in the Ease of Living Index (EoLI) and 23rd in the Municipal Performance Index (MPi) 2020.
- Bengaluru topped the Ease of Living Index with 66.70 score followed by Pune and Ahmedabad in Million plus category.
- Indore topped in Municipal Performance Index followed by Surat and Bhopal.

Ease Of Living Index

- According to the Government of India, the Ease of Living Index (EoLI) is an assessment tool that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development.
- It provides a comprehensive understanding of participating cities across India based on quality of life, economic-ability of a city, and its sustainability and resilience.
- The assessment also incorporates the residents' view on the services provided by city administration through a Citizen Perception Survey.
- In the indicator of quality of life, Chandigarh scored 54.42 while economic ability was 9.90. In sustainability criteria, Chandigarh scored 60.12, in citizen perception survey it got 72.8.

Source: Indian Express

FLORICULTURE MISSION

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

Union Health Minister launched 'CSIR Floriculture Mission' through virtual mode.

Implementation:

The CSIR Floriculture Mission will be implemented in collaboration with several bodies including the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Directorate of Floriculture, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Universities, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC) and the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

Objective

- The CSIR Floriculture Mission aims to focus on commercial floral crops, seasonal/annual crops, cultivation of flower crops for honey bee rearing, and wild ornaments.
- Some of the popular floriculture crops include Marigold, Rose, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gladiolus, Gerbera, Canna, Lilium, and Tuberose.

Significance

- The CSIR Floriculture Mission is expected to create opportunities for entrepreneurship development in floriculture.
- Under the mission, CSIR will lead to infuse the latest technologies in the field of floriculture.
- Floriculture has the potential to employ a large number of people through nursery raising, floriculture farming, entrepreneurship development for nursery trade, value addition, and export.
- Through the CSIR Floriculture Mission, agro-technologies, new varieties, and value addition technologies available with the CSIR institutions, efforts are being made to take these to farmers and entrepreneurs and help them in multiplying their income.
- The market linkage and trade-related issues will be solved with the partnership of APEDA, state horticulture departments, and TRIFED and added that the convergence of Floriculture with Apiculture as envisaged in the mission will yield even greater benefits.

Source: PIB

INDIAN MEDICINES PHARMACEUTICAL CORPORATION LIMITED

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

Indian Medicines Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited (IMPCL) has entered into a tie-up with the Government e-Market (GeM) portal for selling its products online.

Highlights:

- GeM created 31 categories covering 311 medicines, which are life in the marketplace and IMPCL can now upload these medicines on GeM Portal.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

15

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- With this decision of GeM, the Ayurvedic and Unani medicines of IMPCL will figure on the GeM portal to hundreds of government sector buyers, at prices finalized by the Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure.

This will facilitate quick procurement of these medicines by Central/State Government institutions for their healthcare programmes.

- Thus, this tie-up between GeM & IMPCL also helps to streamline the procurement and distribution of Ayurvedic and Unani medicines by State Units.
- The thousands of patients and other clients who visit Government Ayush hospitals every day stand to gain because of this increased availability of such medicines even in far-flung Ayush Hospitals and Clinics.

Indian Medicines Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited

- IMPCL is the public sector manufacturing unit of the Ministry of AYUSH.
- IMPCL is the only CPSE under the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, and its prices are vetted and finalized by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) for their Ayurvedic & Unani Medicines.

Source: PIB

SMS SCRUBBING
Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?
The Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) started to implement the second phase of SMS regulation. With this move, the functioning of banks and e-commerce firms were hit and several crucial services were disrupted such as sending of one-time password (OTP) by banks and e-commerce firms for several services.

Highlights:
- New regulations provide the subscriber with complete control over their consent and the ability to revoke the consent already granted, at their option.
- concept of registered templates for both SMS and voice communication has been introduced to prevent the deliberate mixing of promotional messages into the transactional stream.

- This process of verifying the SMS content is known as SMS scrubbing.
- A blockchain method is used to verify the content of every SMS and every unregistered SMS is blocked.

About TRAI
It is a statutory body established under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. It regulates the telecommunications sector in India. TRAI comprises of a Chairperson and more than two full-time members

Source: Indian Express

TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY DESK AT CYBERABAD

Syllabus section: society
Why in News?
A 'Transgender Community Desk' was inaugurated at Gachibowli Police Station, Telangana.It is India's first-of-its-kind gender-inclusive community policing initiative.

Highlights:
- It will be managed by a Police Liaison Officer and a member of the transgender community who is designated as a community coordinator.
- It will also be the focal point for all grievance redressal among the transgender community in Cyberabad Commissionerate.

Advantages:
- It will provide support to file cases in offenses related to violence or discrimination against any transgender person.
- It will provide counseling, legal aid, life-skills, soft skills training, job placements, and referral linkages to welfare schemes in partnership with the Department of Women & Child Welfare and District Legal Services Authority.
- The Society for Cyberabad Security Council will organize monthly employability training and life-skill training and facilitate access to job opportunities. Prajwala will assist the desk to facilitate safe space for any transgender person who needs an emergency transit stay.

Source: The Hindu

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
16
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

UNEP FOOD WASTE INDEX REPORT 2021

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in news?

An estimated 931 million tonnes of food were wasted globally in 2019, enough to circle the Earth seven times, according to a UN report which said that household food waste in India is about 68.7 million tonnes a year.

Highlights:

- Around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019, sixty-one percent of which came from households, 26 percent from foodservice and 13 percent from retail.
- In India, the household food waste estimate is 50 kg per capita per year, or 68,760,163 tonnes a year.
- The household food waste estimate in the US is 59 kg per capita per year, or 19,359,951 tonnes a year, while for China these estimates are 64 kg per capita per year or 91,646,213 tonnes a year.
- It shows that most of this waste comes from households, which discard 11 percent of the total food available at the consumption stage of the supply chain.
- Food services and retail outlets waste 5 percent and 2 percent respectively.
- On a global per capita-level, 121 kgs of consumer-level food is wasted each year, with 74 kgs of this happening in households.

Advantage of reducing food waste: Reducing food waste would cut greenhouse gas emissions, slow the destruction of nature through land conversion and pollution, enhance the availability of food and thus reduce hunger and save money at a time of global recession

About the Food Waste Index Report 2021:

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 12.3 aims at halving per-capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains. Countries using this methodology will generate strong evidence to guide a national strategy on food waste prevention, that is sufficiently sensitive to pick up changes in food waste over two- or four-year intervals, and that enables meaningful comparisons between countries globally.

Source: NDTV

WOMEN WILL" WEB PLATFORM"

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

Internet giant Google Inc. said it will support one million rural women entrepreneurs in India to help them pursue their ambitions and improve their livelihoods. Google will implement this through the 'Women Will' web platform launched at the virtual Google for India.

About:

- Google also announced a $500,000 Google.org grant to Nasscom Foundation to train 100,000 women Agri workers in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh on digital and financial literacy.
- The Foundation will set up a helpline where the women can get counseling on their entrepreneurship-related queries.
- Available in English and Hindi, the Women Will platform is designed for women aspiring to explore entrepreneurship.
- To begin with, Google will work with 2,000 'Internet Saathis' to help other women with this resource to start their entrepreneurial journey.

Together, we embarked on training women trainers to familiarize other women on how to utilize the internet, all in the rural environment, that would otherwise never take place. In bringing today's technology, and perhaps tomorrow's technology, to bear for the benefit of rural women is a great move forward.

Source: Livemint

TRISHUL MILITARY AIRBASE

Syllabus section: Defence and security

Why in News?

The first flight from Delhi to the newly upgraded Trishul Military Airbase, Bareilly Airport, Uttar Pradesh, was recently flagged off.

Significance: Now people can fly at ease by opting for a flight of 60 mins from Delhi to Bareilly while earlier they were forced to opt for a road travel of more than 6 hours or a train journey of more than 4 hours.

Highlight:

- The Bareilly airport has been upgraded for commercial flight operations under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) of the Government of India.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

17   www.edenias.com

- Trishul Military Airbase, Bareilly belongs to the Indian Air Force and the land was handed over to the Airport Authority of India for construction of the interim civil aviation operations.
- To date, 325 routes and 56 airports including 5 heliports and 2 Water Aerodromes have been operationalized under the UDAN scheme. To keep the fares accessible for the common man, financial incentives in the form of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) are being provided under the UDAN scheme from the Centre, State governments, and airport operators to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports under the scheme.
- This aerial connectivity will fulfill the aspirations of the lakhs of people who visit Bareilly for the NathNagri

About the Scheme:
Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) was launched as a regional connectivity scheme (RCS) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2016.

Aim:
➢ To develop the regional aviation market.
➢ To provide affordable, economically viable, and profitable air travel on regional routes to the common man even in small towns.
➢ It envisages providing connectivity to un-served and under-served airports of the country through the revival of existing airstrips and airports.
➢ Under-served airports are those which do not have more than one flight a day, while unserved airports are those where there are no operations.
➢ The scheme is implemented by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and is operational for a period of 10 years.

Source: PIB

INDIA'S FIRST FOREST HEALING CENTRE

Syllabus section: environment and ecology

Why in News?
First Forest Healing centre of the country was inaugurated at Ranikhet in Kalika Uttarakhand. The forest healing centre has been developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department after research on healing properties of the forests and its revitalizing impact on overall health and well being.

About:
- This healing centre has been established in a pine-dominated forest as it has been found in various studies that coniferous like Pine trees emit certain oil compounds to safeguard themselves from various microbes and pathogens, which are called phytoncides.
- It has been found in various researches that these compounds help to multiply natural killer (NK) cells in our blood, which help in fighting infections and cancerous growth and enhance overall immunity.
- It has been found that because of typical molecular vibration patterns of trees, tree-hugging has a beneficial impact on the increase in the level of feel-good hormones like oxytocin, serotonin and dopamine, creating the pleasant effect and in countries like Iceland forest department has been making efforts to facilitate this activity for benefit of health purpose of local citizens.
- Another important activity in this healing centre in forest meditation which is distinct from the traditional meditation system of controlling thoughts or concentrating the awareness on some particular point.
- This practice is based more on immersing oneself in silence and the ambience of the forest without making any extra effort.
- It involves many activities like forest walking, tree-hugging, forest meditation and sky gazing.

Source: Livemint

SUPER-75 SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?
On International Women's Day, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor announced the launch of the Super-75 scholarship scheme to support the education of meritorious girls from poor families, so that they can excel in streams like medicine, engineering, ITI (Industrial training institutes) and humanity and contribute to nation-building.

About the Super-75 scholarship scheme:
- The super-75 scholarship scheme will support the education of meritorious girls from poor families, so that they can excel in streams like medicine, engineering, ITI (Industrial training institutes) and humanity and contribute to nation-building.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
18 www.edenias.com

- Apart from this, Lt Governor Sinha also announced a new scheme named 'Tejaswini'. This scheme has been launched under 'Mission Youth-J&K'.
- Mission Youth will provide 10 % of the project cost and will also pay the interest every year
- Under Tejaswini, financial assistance of Rs 5 lakhs will be provided to the girls between the age group of 18 to 35 years to start their business.

Areas to be focussed for womens development:

Acknowledging women's role in economic development of J&K, the Lt Governor stressed on the need to put more focus on some key areas like creating a positive environment; skill development of women entrepreneurs; facilitating financial assistance; providing global market to women entrepreneurs and connecting them with innovative products.

Source: Hindustan Times

AGROFORESTRY IN THE SILK SECTOR

Syllabus section: economy

Why in News?

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Central Silk Board under the Ministry of Textiles on a convergence model for the implementation of Agroforestry in the silk sector under the ongoing Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) Scheme.

Highlights:

- The signing of this MoU aims to incentivize the farmers to take up sericulture-based Agroforestry models thereby contributing to the Make in India and Make for the World vision of the Prime Minister.
- This linkage will add another dimension to agroforestry for faster returns to the growers as well as support the production of the range of silks that India is famous for.
- The Central Silk Board (CSB), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India will act as a catalyst to promote Agroforestry in the silk sector.

About SMAF:

- SMAF aims to encourage farmers to plant multi-purpose trees together with the agriculture crops for climate resilience and an additional source of income to the farmers, as well as enhanced feedstock to inter alia wood-based and herbal industry.

- Hence there is a concerted effort to include medicinal, fruits, fodder, tree-borne oilseeds, lac host etc. in addition to the longer rotation timber species.
- The initiative of formalizing the collaboration in the sericulture sector is especially targeted for augmentation of sericulture host plants e.g. Mulberry, Asan, Arjuna, Som, Soalu, Kesseru, BadaKesseru, Phanat, etc. to be cultivated both as block plantations and border or peripheral plantations on farmlands.
- Planting sericulture-based tree species on the farm bunds and rearing silkworms has the potential of creating additional income opportunities for farmers besides their regular source of income from agriculture activities.

Source: PIB

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

Why in News?

India has lauded the efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for countering terrorism on the occasion of the United Nations Security Council open briefing.

About:

- OSCE was among the first regional organizations to strongly condemn the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001.
- Sweden has taken the OSCE Chair. Ann Linde, Sweden's Foreign Minister is the new OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and took over in January 2021.

About OSCE:

- The OSCE has a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental and human aspects.
- Within the politico-military dimension, the OSCE seeks to create greater openness, transparency and co-operation and has developed the world's most advanced regime of arms control and confidence-building measures. Areas of work include reforms in the security sector and the safe storage and destruction of small arms, light weapons and conventional ammunition
- It addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism, and economic and environmental activities.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- There are 57 participating states encompassing three continents - North America, Europe and Asia.
o All 57 participating States enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis.
- OSCE has broken new ground in developing effective tools for conflict prevention, peace-building, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation to address these risks and threats to security.

Source: PIB

VACCINE MAITRI INITIATIVE

Why in News?

Under the Vaccine Maitri initiative of the Government of India, three nations (Iran, Bahamas and Benin) received the Made in India COVID-19 Vaccines.

About :

- India produces 60 per cent of all vaccines manufactured in the world.
- Vaccine Maitri initiative aimed to assist countries in their fight against the coronavirus pandemic.
- Under the Vaccine Maitri initiative, in accordance with the 'Neighbourhood First' policy Bhutan and Maldives became the first two countries to receive vaccines respectively, on January 20, 2021.
- Twenty-five nations across the world have already received Made-in India vaccines.
- Forty-nine more countries will be supplied in the coming days, ranging from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean to Africa, South-East Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Earlier Diplomacy measures by India:

➢ India had earlier supplied Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir and Paracetamol tablets as well as diagnostic kits, ventilators, masks, gloves and other medical supplies to a large number of countries during the pandemic.
➢ Under the Partnerships for Accelerating Clinical Trials(PACT) programme, India has also provided training to several neighbouring countries to enhance and strengthen their clinical capabilities

Additional Facts:

➢ PACT programme: It has been launched for supporting COVID-19 vaccine development activities in partner countries.

o The initiative is being implemented by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council(BIRAC) and Clinical Development Services Agency(CDSA) under the aegis of the National Biopharma Mission and Ind-CEPI Mission of DBT.

Source: PIB

AZADI KA AMRUT MAHOTSAV

Why in News?

The Mahotsav is a series of events being organized by the Government to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence.

About:

- A Padyatra from the Sabarmati Ashram will be flag off at Ahmedabad in Gujarat
- It will be celebrated as a Jan-Utsav in the spirit of Jan-Bhagidari
- The Padyatra will be undertaken by 81 marchers from Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad to Dandi in Navsari, a journey of 241 miles that will end on 5th of April, lasting for 25 days.
  o The day marks the historic salt march of Mahatma Gandhi.
  o It was on 12th of March in 1930 that Gandhiji began the Dandi March from Sabarmati Ashram against the Salt Laws along with 81 padyatris.
- A National Implementation Committee headed by the Home Minister has been constituted to chalk out policies and planning of various events to be undertaken under the Commemoration.
- State and Union Territories Governments are also organizing programs all over the country . In addition to these programs, the Archaeological Survey of India and Zonal Cultural Centres under the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Youth Affairs and TRIFED have planned various activities to mark the occasion.

Source: PIB

FUGAKU- WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL SUPERCOMPUTER

Syllabus section: science and tech

Why in News?

The world's most powerful supercomputer Fugaku is now fully developed in Japan, and the machine is available for research use.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
20
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- Fugaku is fully open and available for shared use, Japan's Research Organization for Information Science and Technology (RIST) has selected 74 projects that will use the supercomputer in FY2021.
- Fugaku is a key national technology,
- Objective is to achieve research results that will help build a long-lived and healthy society, disaster mitigation, and better energy use, with the ultimate goal to establish the government's vision of an ultra-smart Society 5.0.
- Fugaku has topped the Top500 list, a supercomputer benchmark index, for two consecutive years.
- The computer has 100 times the application performance of K supercomputer and is developed to implement high-resolution, long-duration and large-scale simulations.
- A portion of Fugaku's research is said to be dedicated to COVID-19 related projects.
- The initiative by the Japanese government aims to make a society where all people live safe and comfortable lives.

Source: The Hindu

ISRO, JAXA REVIEW COOPERATION ON JOINT LUNAR POLAR EXPLORATION SATELLITE MISSION

Syllabus section: science and tech

Why in News?

Indian and Japanese space agencies on Thursday reviewed their ongoing cooperation to launch a joint lunar polar exploration (LUPEX) mission. Scientists from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) have been working on a mission that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole around 2024.

About:

- Apart from reviewing on-going cooperation in earth observation, lunar cooperation and satellite navigation, both sides have agreed to explore opportunities for cooperation in space situational awareness and professional exchange programme.
- Both agencies signed an "Implementing Arrangement" for collaborative activities on rice crop area and air quality monitoring using satellite data.
- India and Italy decided to explore opportunities in the field of earth observation, space science and robotic and human exploration.

- Both leaders have also reviewed the status of on-going cooperation activities in earth observation, satellite navigation, space situational awareness and establishment of the transportable terminal in Australia to support Indias "Gaganyaan" programme.
- According to ISRO, India has always recognised that space has a dimension beyond national considerations, which can only be addressed along with international partners.

About Gaganyaan

It is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme. It is being designed so as to carry three people. It will also carry a planned upgraded version equipped with the rendezvous and docking capability. This will be the first crewed mission of the Indian Space Research Organisation. The spacecraft will orbit the Earth at 400 km altitude for up to seven days with two or three-person on board. The mission was planned to be launched on ISRO's GSLV Mk III in December 2021 but it has been delayed to 2023.

Source: Outlook India

MOBILE INTEGRATED NETWORK TERMINAL (MINT

Why in News?

Mobile integrated network terminal (mint) for Indian army under AatmaNirbharBharat Abhiyaan.

About:

- The Indian Army is in the process of procuring Mobile Integrated Network Terminal (MINT) systems under the Make II category of DAP 2020.
- The system is envisaged as a lightweight, portable, state of art integrated communication solution with satellite backhaul and wireless access system to support voice, video and data.
- The Contract will subsequently be placed with one of the firms on the successful development of the prototype as per provisions of Buy (Indian-IDDM) of DAP 2020.

MOBILE INTEGRATED NETWORK TERMINAL

- MINT exploits the advantage of icy, high-altitude terrain to deliver unfettered voice, video, data and remote monitoring services at sub-zero temperatures.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- Lightweight, portable, and easy-to-configure, it creates a dedicated high-speed 4G network bubble, with on-request support for interoperability between LTE handsets and other existing tactical networks.

Significance:

- Development of MINT systems will enhance the operational communication capability of the field army in consonance to the self-reliance vision of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" for Defence production

- Robust communication support has always been a key enabler of the combat potential of the field army. Advancements in communication technologies have facilitated solutions that can be adapted and customised as per operational requirements to give a distinctive winning edge

About Make Category:

- The provision of 'Make' category of capital acquisition in Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) is a vital pillar for realising the vision behind the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government, by fostering indigenous capabilities through design & development of required defence equipment's by both public and private sector industry in a faster time frame.

- 'Make' Procedure has the following two sub-categories:

o Make-I (Government Funded): Projects under the 'Make-I' sub-category will involve Government funding of 90%, released in a phased manner and based on the progress of the scheme, as per terms agreed between MoD and the vendor.

o Make-II (Industry Funded): Projects under the 'Make-II' category will involve prototype development of equipment/ system/ platform or their upgrades or their subsystems/ sub-assembly/ assemblies/ components, primarily for import substitution/innovative solutions, for which no Government funding will be provided for prototype development purposes.

Source: PIB

1ST MEETING OF THE BRICS CONTACT GROUP ON ECONOMIC AND TRADE ISSUES

Why in News?

The BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI) leads held their first meeting under India's Chairship from 9-11 March 2021.

About:

- Theme: "BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus".

- India, under its Chairship in 2021, presented the calendar of events for BRICS CGETI 2021, which included the priority areas for deliverables, schedule, and scope of the MSME roundtable conference workshop on Services Statistics, and the BRICS Trade Fair.

- The deliverables proposed are on :

i. Action plan based on the document "Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025" adopted during Russian Presidency in 2020

ii. BRICS Cooperation on Multilateral Trading system including cooperation for the TRIPS Waiver proposal at WTO;

iii. Framework for Consumer Protection in E-Commerce;

iv. Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) Resolution Mechanism;

v. Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) Working Mechanism;

vi. Co-operation framework for the protection of Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge;

vii. BRICS Framework on Co-operation in Professional Services.

Source: PIB

ATMANIRBHAR NIVESHAK MITRA PORTAL

Why in News?

Government working on AtmanirbharNiveshak Mitra portal to digitally facilitate investors.

- In order to strengthen efforts to promote domestic investments, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry is in the process of finalizing a dedicated digital portal "AtmanirbharNiveshak Mitra" for handholding and facilitation, information dissemination, and facilitation of domestic investors

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

22

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- The portal is in the testing phase and the final version will be ready for launch by 15th May 2021.
- This Project is under the "Invest India" agency which was set up in 2009 as a non-profit venture under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
- The portal will digitally support investors throughout their doing business journey in India and help them getting all the information starting from finding an investment opportunity to exploring incentives & taxes applicable to their businesses.
- It will give all the information and assistance for doing business in India, sources of funding, information on raw material availability, training, management requirement, and tender information.

Special features of the Portal:

- Daily updates on Policies and New Initiatives by the Central and State Government will be made available on the portal.
- One-stop-shop to access all MSME portals like Champions portal, MSME Samadhaan, MSME Sampark, etc.
- Know more about the Approvals, Licenses & Clearances applicable to your business.
- Explore Incentives & Schemes across different sectors and states and do an apple-to-apple comparison.
- Information on Manufacturing Clusters and Land Availability.
- One on one Meetings & Discussions with the Invest India experts which will ensure adequate facilitation to domestic investors and issue resolution.
- Connect to various Stakeholders on a single platform like Central Ministries, Industry Associations, State Departments.
- Information on all Central and State Tenders by linking to the tender portal of Government of India.
- Information on all states their policies, know your approvals, departments, and key officials etc.
- Linking platform to other initiatives like National Single Window, Startup India, ODOP, PMG, NIP, etc.

Significance:

- This is one of the most significant digital initiatives being undertaken to target the specific investor interests and ensure swift clearances & approvals throughout their doing business journey.

Source: PIB

NATIONAL STEEL POLICY

Syllabus Section: Industry

Why in News?

Union Minister for Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan in a written reply in the Lok Sabha has given the information about National Steel Policy.

About:

- National Steel Policy enshrines the long-term vision of the government to give impetus to the steel sector.
- The policy envisages creating a technologically advanced and globally competitive steel industry that promotes self-sufficiency in steel production as well as economic growth.
- Steel being a de-regulated sector, government acts a facilitator, by creating enabling environment for the development of the steel sector.
- Various initiatives taken by the Government are as following:-

(i) Domestically Manufactured Iron & Steel Products (DMI&SP) Policy with an objective to encourage production and consumption of domestically produced steel.

(ii) Steel Scrap Policy to enhance the availability of domestically generated scrap.

(iii) Issuance of Steel Quality Control Orders to prevent manufacturing and import of non-standardized steel.

(iv) Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) for advanced registration of steel imports.

(v) Engagement with various stakeholders including industry associations and leaders of the domestic steel industry to identify their issues required to be addressed by the concerned Ministries/ Departments of the Central Government and State Governments.

(vi) Engagement with relevant stakeholders including those from the Ministry/ Department of Railways, Defence,

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

23

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

Petroleum and Natural Gas, Housing, Civil Aviation, Road Transport and Highways, Agriculture and Rural Development sectors to enhance the overall demand for steel in the country.

(vii) Inclusion of 'Specialty Steel' under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme recently announced by the Government

(viii) Various schemes as notified from time to time to refund or exempt taxes and duties levied on inputs used in export production like Duty Drawback Scheme and Advanced Authorization Scheme etc. to improve the cost competitiveness of exported items.

Source: PIB

UK'S TURING SCHEME

Syllabus Section: International Relation

Why in News?

- Having left the European Union's flagship Erasmus scholarship program after Brexit, the UK launched its own replacement called the Turing scheme to enable UK students to study abroad.
  - o Named after the celebrated English mathematician and codebreaker Alan Turing.

About the Scheme:

- The Turing Scheme is the UK government's scheme to provide funding for international opportunities in education and training across the world.
- It supports Global Britain by providing an opportunity for UK organizations from the higher education, further education, vocational education, and training and schools sectors to offer their students, learners, and pupils life-changing experiences to study or work abroad.
- The scheme is part of the UK's drive to increase the amount generated from education exports, including fees and income from overseas students and English language teaching abroad.
- The British government has said that the scheme is aimed towards ensuring social mobility and targets students from disadvantaged backgrounds and areas from where not many could benefit under the previous Erasmus+ scheme.

- Beneficiaries of the scheme from disadvantaged backgrounds can receive up to 490 pounds per month towards living costs, as well as travel funding and money to offset the cost of passports, visas, and insurance.

SCHEME'S IMPACT ON INDIA

- The UK's Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that India, already a top source of international students to the UK, could be among the leading list of countries with which UK universities seek to strike student exchange projects.

Source: Indian Express

CSIR-NIO90 DAYS EXPEDITION TO INDIAN OCEAN

Syllabus Section: Science and Technology

Why in News?

CSIR-NIO has launched a 90 days Expedition to the Indian Ocean to conduct genome and proteome mapping of microorganisms present in the seawater and sediments.

About:

- The expedition will be starting from Visakhapatnam Port, going to the mouth of Hooghly, Brahmaputra, and going southwards right up to 30oS latitude along 90oE.
- The team will be cruising through CSIR-NIOs Research Vessel Sindhu Sadhana.
- Key objectives of the mission is to identify and characterize the genes and proteins in the ocean to understand the cellular level processes occurring in the microorganisms is the response.
- The researchers will also explore the macro-and micro-nutrients in the waters to understand cellular level operations of ocean organisms,
- The scientists will use modern molecular biomedical techniques, genetic sequencing, and bioinformatics to understand the ecosystem dynamics of the Indian Ocean.
- Using proteins, the catalysts of biogeochemical reactions, the researchers will try to identify the physiological responses of ocean organisms under varying conditions.
  - o This will allow the scientists to understand cellular biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change, nutrient stress, and pollution.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

Significance of Expedition:
- The large oceanic genetic information generated in the form of an RNA and DNA library can be utilized for future bio-prospecting explorations.
- With the gene-level research, the team is expecting to get new insights into the taxonomy and adaptive capacity that can help conservation efforts around marine species
- The scientists are also hoping to find commercial biotechnology applications — anticancer treatments, cosmetics, industrial enzymes, and antiviral molecules — from the exploration.

Source: DD News

PRADHAN MANTRI SWASTHYA SURAKSHA NIDHI

Syllabus section: Society

Why in News?

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN) as a single non-lapsable reserve fund for a share of Health from the proceeds of Health and Education Cess levied under Section 136-b of Finance Act, 2007.

Salient features of the PMSSN
- A non-lapsable reserve fund for Health in the Public Account;
- Proceeds of the share of health in the Health and Education Cess will be credited into PMSSN;
- Accruals into the PMSSN will be utilized for the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare namely,
  ➢ Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)
  ➢ Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs)
  ➢ National Health Mission
  ➢ Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)
- Emergency & disaster preparedness and responses during health emergencies
- Administration and maintenance of the PMSSN is entrusted to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare; and
- In any financial year, the expenditure on such schemes of the MoHFW would be initially incurred from the PMSSN and thereafter, from Gross Budgetary Support (GBS).

Benefits:

The major benefit will be enhanced access to universal & affordable health care through the availability of earmarked resources while ensuring that the amount does not lapse at the end of the financial year.

Background:

Health is vital for improved developmental outcomes. From an economic standpoint, better health improves productivity and reduces losses due to premature death, prolonged disability, and early retirement. Health and Nutrition also directly impact scholastic achievements and have a bearing on productivity and income. Health Outcomes depend substantially on public spending on health. One extra year of population life expectancy raises GDP per capita by 4%, Investment in health creates millions of jobs, largely for women, through a much-needed expansion of the health workforce.

Source: PIB

UDAN 4.1

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

On the commencement of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (India@75)' launched by the Government of India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has proposed about 392 routes under UDAN 4.1 bidding process.

Highlights:
- The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) envisaged to make air travel affordable and widespread in the country.
- The scheme intends to boost inclusive national economic growth, employment opportunities, and air transport infrastructure development across the nation.

About UDAN 4.1 :
- UDAN 4.1 round is focused on connecting smaller airports, along with a special helicopter and seaplane routes.
- Some of the operational flexibilities are extended to Airlines under the UDAN 4.1 to ensure suitable operation models to connect smaller cities/ airstrips.
- Additionally, operations under NSOP will be allowed for a seaplane, fixed-wing aircraft, Helicopters for RCS Routes awarded under UDAN 4.1.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

25

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik

- Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik" is a Government of India's flagship program which aims to provide affordable, economically viable, and profitable air travel on regional routes.
- This Regional Connectivity Scheme offers a unique opportunity to a common man to fly at an affordable price.
- UDAN has played a major role in adding new airports and routes to the aviation landscape of the country.
- As the implementing agency, AAI has an ambitious plan to develop at least 100 airports/waterdromes/heliports by 2024 under the Scheme.

Source: PIB

NEW PARCEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PMS)

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

The new parcel management system (PMS) of the Indian Railways will soon be extended from 84 locations to 523 as part of its transformation geared towards providing transportation for small consignments over a vast network of stations.

Highlights:

- This will bring enhancements such as provision for 120 days advance booking, showing the availability of parcel space on the online e-forwarding note module on the PMS website, and generation of forwarding notes online by registered customers with fare estimates.
- Other enhancements include
  - Booking of parcel/luggage at parcel office at stations through computerized counters
  - Automatic capturing of weight through electronic weighing of consignment
  - Barcoding on each consignment for tracking
  - Status updates of packages through GPRS network transmission of data, and
  - SMS updates to customers at each stage.
- The new PMS will also include an FSLA (Freight System Ledger Accounting) module for online preparation of manifest for registered newspapers and magazines.

What is Parcel Management System?

The Parcel Management System of the Indian Railways envisages the complete automation of booking, tracking, and handover of these packages, simultaneously improving the quality of customer service, and reliability and efficiency of the parcel division. The packages can also be tracked online.The parcel booking counter equipment plays an important role in this project. A thin client computer is provided, that is interfaced to a digital weighing scale, a barcode printer, and a barcode scanner. All of these devices interact directly with the web-based PMS software, using APIs and technology developed jointly by CRIS and Thinvent.

Source: Live Mint

ADOPT A HERITAGE: APNI DHAROHAR, APNI PEHCHAAN" PROJECT

Syllabus section: Art and culture

Why in News?

The 28th MoU under the "Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan" project has been awarded for Dara Shikoh Library Building.

Highlights:

- The project will be implemented by the government stakeholders including the Ministry of Tourism Government of India; Art, Culture & Language Department (through The Department Of Archaeology) Government Of National Capital Territory Of Delhi and the private entities i.e. Monument Mitras, The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust (TAACHT) and the Museum & Arts Consultancy (MAC) acting in a joint consortium.
- Under this MoU, the Monument Mitras plan to take up development, operations, and maintenance of basic amenities such as the cleanliness of the building and outdoor area including provision of garbage bins, etc.
- The duration of the MoU is for an initial period of five years, extendable based on the performance of the Monument Mitra.

About Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan" project

- **The 'Adopt a Heritage:** Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan' scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and the Archaeological Survey of India.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
26
www.edenias.com

- It was launched in September 2017 on World Tourism Day.
- Under it, the government invites entities, including public sector companies, private sector firms as well as individuals, to develop selected monuments and heritage and tourist sites across India.
- **Aim:** The project aims to encourage companies from the public sector, private sector, trusts, NGOs, individuals, and other stakeholders to become 'Monument Mitras'.
- The Monument Mitras are selected by the 'oversight and vision committee,' co-chaired by the Tourism Secretary and the Culture Secretary, on the basis of the bidder's 'vision' for development of all amenities at the heritage site.

Source: PIB

GENOME MAPPING IN INDIAN OCEAN

Syllabus section: Science and technology

Why in News?

National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) first-of-its-kind research project in the country to map genomes in the Indian Ocean.

Highlights:

A 30-member team of scientists and researchers from the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) in Panaji and another 30 crew members on board its research vessel Sindhu Sadhana will spend the next three months traversing the course of over 10,000 nautical miles in the Indian Ocean on a research project to reveal the internal working of the body of the ocean at a cellular level.

Aims: The first-of-its-kind research project in the country is aimed at understanding the biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change, nutrient stress, and increasing pollution.

About the project:

- The researchers will collect samples from various stretches of the ocean at an average depth of about 5 km.
- Just like gene mapping is carried out on blood samples collected from humans, the scientists will map these in the bacteria, microbes found in the ocean.
- The mapping of the Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and Ribonucleic acid (RNA) will show the nutrients present in them, and also those lacking in different parts of the ocean.

What will the scientists learn from this genome mapping in the ocean?

- This will help scientists understand the internal working of the ecosystem of the Indian Ocean.
- The research will enable scientists to identify the factors controlling the changes in RNA, DNA in the oceans, and various stressors impacting them.
- The ocean has several micronutrients like nitrates, sulfates, and silicates, minerals like iron ore and zinc, and trace metals like cadmium or copper.
- The genome mapping will show the presence of which these microbes have adapted to, in addition to their reaction to atmospheric carbon dioxide.
- This will help in identifying which part of the ocean has a greater concentration of which mineral or element.
- Scientists will then use these as tracers to tackle the causative factors for excess or lack of a certain mineral or element and suggest possible solutions for their mitigation.
- In addition, the large pool of RNA, DNA libraries of the oceans will be utilized for using the Indian Ocean to human benefit in the future.
- Exploring the ocean genome will enable an increase in the growing number of commercial biotechnology applications, extending from multiple anticancer treatments to cosmetics and industrial enzymes to antiviral molecules.
- Exploration of the ocean at a genetic level will result in new insights into the taxonomy and adaptive capacity that can help optimize conservation efforts.

Objective:

- Trace metals like cadmium or copper are supplied to oceans via continental run-offs, atmospheric deposition, hydrothermal activities, and continental shelf interaction.
- They are essential for ocean productivity.
- Isotopic forms of trace metals can be utilized to track the movement of water masses responsible for ocean circulation and as tools to study the biological, geochemical, and ecosystem processes and food web analyses.
- It will generate new information about trace metals from underexplored regions of the Indian Ocean, the third-largest water body in the world, covering about 20 percent of the Earth's water surface.

Source: Indian Express

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

RAJYA SABHA PASSES NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY BILL 2019

Syllabus section: Polity

Why in News?

The Rajya Sabha on Monday approved a Bill that declares two food technology institutes at Kundli in Haryana and Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu as national institutes. The Rajya Sabha passed The National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2019 by voice vote.

Highlights:

* The bill aims to declare certain institutions of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Management to be the institutions of national importance.
* The bill facilitates these institutes in terms of providing instruction, research, and knowledge dissemination in the field of food science and technology.
* The Bill also provides for a Board of Governors, which will act as the principal executive body of the institutes and a Council for coordinating activities and facilitating interactions for performance improvement.
* Reservation policy will also be applicable on these institutes

Functions of the institutes:

Under the Bill, the functions of the institutes include:

* providing for instruction, research, and knowledge dissemination in the field of food science and technology,
* holding examinations and granting degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other academic distinctions or titles,
* determining and collecting fees and other charges, and (iv) instituting and making appointments for academic and other posts, except that of the Director.

Benefits:

upgradation of the two institutes will not only attract students to make a career in the food processing sector but will also boost employment opportunities and export.

The bill was introduced in the light that, India is currently facing challenges in food storage, cold chain, and processing of the food. As per a report, Further, food worth USD 14 billion is wasted in India while every third child is suffering from malnutrition. Thus, more such institutes are required to manage the entire food chain and skill development & training of the food processing units. Further, the law will create jobs and will make the farmers an entrepreneur.

Source: Economic Times

FORMALISATION OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

Minister of State (I/C) for Labour & Employment in a written reply in Rajya Sabha gave information about measures taken.

About:

The Government has taken a number of measures to formalize the informal sector. The details are as under:

Pradhan Mantri RojgarProtsahan Yojana (PMRPY)

* Government is implementing this yojana since 2016.
* Objective: to incentivize employers for the creation of new employment and also aimed to bring informal workers to the formal workforce.
* Under the scheme, the Government of India is paying Employer's full contribution i.e. 12% towards Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) and Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) both (as admissible from time to time) for a period of three years to the new employees through Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).
* The terminal date for registration of beneficiary through establishment was 31 st March 2019.
* The beneficiaries registered up to 31st March 2019 will continue to receive the benefits for 3 years from the date of registration under the scheme.
* The total outlay of the PMRPY scheme for the entire period of the scheme is Rs. 10178.60 Crore.

Aatmanirbhar Bharat RozgarYojana (ABRY):-

Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ABRY) has been launched to incentivize employers for the creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the scheme;

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

- An employee drawing a monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who was not working in any establishment registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) before 1st October 2020 and did not have a Universal Account Number or EPF Member account number prior to 1st October 2020 is eligible for the benefit.

- An employee drawing a monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who was not working in any establishment registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) before 1st October 2020 and did not have a Universal Account Number or EPF Member account number prior to 1st October 2020 is eligible for the benefit.

- This scheme being implemented through the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).

- Under ABRY, the Government of India is crediting for a period of two years, both the employees' share (12% of wages) and employers' share (12% of wages) of contribution payable or only the employees' share, depending on employment strength of the EPFO registered establishments.

- The scheme has commenced from 1st October 2020 and shall remain open for registration of eligible employers and new employees up to 30th June 2021.

- Government will pay the subsidy for two years from the date of registration.

Source: PIB

NO BACK-DOOR PACT FOR DEFAULTING PROMOTERS

Syllabus Section:

Why in News?

The Supreme Court has ruled that promoters of insolvent companies, which are barred from bidding for their own companies under Section 29A of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) cannot use any scheme or arrangement to gain control of their company even if it goes into liquidation.

Meaning of the ruling by the Supreme Court:

- Section 230 of the Companies Act allows promoters or creditors of the company to propose a scheme of arrangement or compromise under which the debt of the company can be restructured.

- In the case of liquidation of Gujarat NRE Coke Limited, National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), in 2019, held that any person who was ineligible, under Section 29A of IBC, to bid for his company, was also barred from proposing a scheme of compromise and arrangement under Section 230 of the Companies Act.

- Supreme Court uphold the NCLAT decision and said that while Section 230 would be applicable for promoters and creditors in the normal course of the workings of the company, it would not be applicable if the company is facing liquidation under IBC.

- It would lead to a manifest absurdity if the very persons who are ineligible for submitting a resolution plan, participating in the sale of assets of the company in liquidation are somehow permitted to propose a compromise or arrangement under Section 230 of the Act of 2013

Impact On Promoters Of Companies

- It will speed up the resolution process.

- Quick liquidation is of utmost importance to maximize the value of the assets of the company.

- It also settles down the conflicting judgments given by different benches of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), wherein these forums had, in order to follow the IBC's principle of the value of asset maximization, allowed some of the promoters to re-bid for the company or propose some arrangement when it was sent to liquidation.

Source: PIB

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI (AMENDMENT) BILL, 20210

Syllabus Section: Governance

Why in News?

The Centre introduced the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in Lok Sabha. to amend the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.

➢ It aims to "further define the responsibilities of the elected government and Lieutenant Governor (LG) in Delhi".

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

Provisions of the Bill:

- Among the major proposed amendments, one makes it explicitly clear that the term "government" in any law made by the Legislative Assembly shall mean the L-G.

- The Bill gives discretionary powers to the LG even in matters where the Legislative Assembly of Delhi is empowered to make laws.

- The amendment also says that "Legislative Assembly shall not make any rule to enable itself to consider the matters of the day-to-day administration of the Capital or conduct inquiries in relation to the administrative decisions".

- The Bill adds that the L-G's opinion shall be obtained before the government takes any executive action based on decisions taken by the Cabinet or any individual minister.

Background:

- Delhi's current status as a Union Territory with a Legislative Assembly is an outcome of the 69th Amendment Act through which Articles 239AA and 239BB were introduced in the Constitution.

- The GNCTD Act was passed simultaneously to supplement the constitutional provisions relating to the Assembly and the Council of Ministers in the national capital.

- the GNCTD Act outlines the powers of the Assembly, the discretionary powers enjoyed by the L-G, and the duties of the Chief Minister with respect to the need to furnish information to the L-G.

What did the Constitution Bench say?

- In its 2018 verdict, the five-judge Bench had held that the L-G's concurrence is not required on issues other than police, public order, and land.

- It had added that decisions of the Council of Ministers will, however, have to be communicated to the L-G.

- The status of the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi is not that of a Governor of a State, rather he remains an Administrator, in a limited sense, working with the designation of Lieutenant Governor".

Changes if the amendments are cleared by Parliament

- The amendment, if cleared, will force the elected government to take the L-G's advice before taking any action on any cabinet decision.

- The Bill seeks to add a provision in the original GNCTD Act, 1991, barring the Assembly or its committees from making rules to take up matters concerning day-to-day administration, or to conduct inquiries in relation to administrative decisions.

- This assumes significance as the 70-member Assembly, where the AAP has as many as 62 MLAs, has multiple committees examining matters ranging from riots to environment.

Source: Indian Express

PROJECT RE-HAB

Syllabus Section: Environment

Why in News?

KVIC rolls out project RE-HAB to prevent Elephant – Human conflict using Honey Bees.

About:

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), launched a unique project of creating "bee-fences" to mitigate human-elephant conflicts in the country.

- The objective of Project RE-HAB (Reducing Elephant – Human Attacks using Bees) is to thwart elephant attacks in human habitations using honey bees and thus reducing the loss of lives of both, humans as well as elephants.

- The pilot project was launched at four locations around village Chelur in Kodagu district of Karnataka

- These spots are located on the periphery of Nagarhole National Park and Tiger Reserve and prone to human-elephant conflicts.

- Project RE-HAB is a sub-mission under KVIC's National Honey Mission.

National Honey Mission

Honey Mission is a program to increase the bee population, honey production and beekeepers' income by setting up apiaries.

National Honey Mission

Honey Mission is a program to increase the bee population, honey production and beekeepers' income by setting up apiaries.

Source: DD News

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
30
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

FIRST VIRTUAL TRADE FAIR BY APEDA

Why in News?

The First Virtual Trade Fair (VTF) organized by APEDA to boost the export potential of India's agricultural and processed food products during the COVID19 pandemic drew a huge response from participants, exporters, and buyers from countries including India, UAE, Brazil, New Zealand, and France.

About:

- The fair with a theme 'India Rice and Agro Commodity', focussed on showcasing the export potential of various agricultural commodities.
- Importers, as well as exporters, were key participants of the VTF.
- Because of COVID19 related restrictions on physical travel and trade, APEDA has initiated the concept of VTF for sustaining India's agricultural and processed food products exports and also exploring new markets for expanding export footprints.
- In the pre-COVID19 era, trade fairs and exhibitions have been instrumental in promoting the export of agricultural foods by APEDA.
- Such virtual events also provide cost-effective and productive platforms where the buyers and sellers could negotiate or discuss trade face to face giving a feel of real-time exhibitions or fairs.
- APEDA has been a pioneer in taking IT initiatives in the past in terms of making its process system online, implementation of traceability, and adoption of advanced technology.

Source: PIB

VEHICLE SCRAPPING POLICY

Syllabus section: environment and ecology

Why in News?

Minister for Road Transport & Highways said that "the new vehicle scrapping policy will present a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

Highlights:

- The results of the policy will include aspects like safety, reduction in fuel consumption and pollution.
- Concession in Goods & Services Tax on purchase of new vehicles.
- Road Transport Ministry has made it mandatory for economic models of the cars to have airbags as an additional safety measure.

- It is the policy as one to convert waste and knowledge into wealth.

About Vehicle Scrapping Policy:

- In case of failure to get a fitness certificate, commercial vehicles will be de-registered after 15 years. Private vehicles will be de-registered after 20 years if found unfit or in case of a failure to renew registration certificates.
- owners of old vehicles will get strong incentives to scrap old and unfit vehicles.
- The scheme shall provide strong incentives to owners of old vehicles to scrap old and unfit vehicles through registered scrapping centres, which shall provide the owners with a scrapping certificate.
- The registration fees may also be waived for the purchase of a new vehicle against the scrapping certificate.
- The criteria for a vehicle to be scrapped is primarily based on the fitness of vehicles through Automated Fitness Centres (AFCs) in case of commercial vehicles and non-renewal of Registration in case of private vehicles.

Advantages: Due to using the raw material from the scrapped vehicles, not only the price of new vehicles will be reduced but their maintenance cost will also come down and it will also help in generating more employment opportunities in the sector".

Around 100 vehicle scrapping centres will become operational in the country in the next one and a half to two years and the number will keep increasing.

Source: PIB

IQ AIR'S GLOBAL AIR POLLUTION REPORT

Syllabus section: environment and ecology

Why in News?

New Delhi was the world's most polluted capital for the third straight year in 2020, according to IQAir, a Swiss group that measures air quality levels based on the concentration of lung-damaging airborne particles known as PM2.5.

Highlights:

- India was home to 35 of the world's 50 most polluted cities.
- The findings were based on the country's annual average of particulate matter PM2.5, airborne particles with less than 2.5 microns in diameter.

31

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

- Prolonged exposure to PM2.5 can lead to deadly diseases, including cancer and cardiac problems.
- Air pollution caused an estimated 54,000 premature deaths in New Delhi in 2020, according to a recent study by Greenpeace Southeast Asia Analysis and IQAir.
- Despite an 11% reduction in the annual average of PM2.5 levels due to nationwide coronavirus lockdown curbs imposed last year, India emerged as the world's third most polluted country after Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- China ranked 11th in the latest report, a deterioration from the 14th in the previous edition of the report.

About the World Air Quality Report

The 2020 World Air Quality Report is based on PM2.5 data from 106 countries, that has been measured by ground-based monitoring stations. Of the data sources included in this report, 66.6% of stations were operated by governmental agencies, while the remainder represents monitoring stations managed by local residents, non-profit organizations, and companies.

About IQAir

IQAir is a Swiss-based air quality technology company that since 1963 seeks to empower individuals, organizations, and communities to breathe cleaner air through information, collaboration, and technology solutions.

Source: Indian Express

INDIAN NAVAL LANDING CRAFT UTILITY L58

Syllabus section: science and tech

Why in News?

Indian Naval Landing Craft Utility (LCU) L58, the eighth and last ship of the Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mark IV Class, was commissioned into the Indian Navy at Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

About:

- Indigenously designed and built by GRSE, Kolkata, the ship's commissioning has added one more feather in the cap of the nation's 'Make in India' & 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' program in the field of warship design and construction.

- The LCU 58 is an amphibious ship that can carry 160 troops, in addition to its crew. With a displacement of 900 tons, the ship is capable of carrying various types of combat vehicles such as Main Battle Tanks (MBTs), BMPs, Armoured Vehicles, trucks, etc.
- The ship measures 63 meters in length and is fitted with two MTA 4,000 series engines, which are capable of propelling the ship at speeds of up to 15 knots (28 kmph).
- The ship is also fitted with an advanced Electronic Support Measure (ESM) suite to intercept enemy radar transmissions, an advanced Integrated Bridge System (IBS), and a sophisticated Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS), which allow single station monitoring of the ship's navigational and machinery equipment respectively.
- The main armament of the ship includes two indigenously manufactured 30 mm CRN 91 guns which are controlled by a Stabilised Optronic Pedestal (SOP), an electronic day-night director sight manufactured by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- In addition, the ship is fitted with six Machine Gun Posts to neutralize air, surface, and sub-conventional threats.

Uses: It will be deployed in a variety of roles such as Beaching, Search and Rescue, Disaster Relief, Coastal Patrol, and Surveillance operations along the Andaman and Nicobar Group of Islands, Bay of Bengal, and in the Indian Ocean.

Advantage: It will augment the Indian Navy's mobility, reach, and flexibility, furthering the Andaman and Nicobar Command's motto, 'Victory through Jointness'.

Source: PIB

US INDIA ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (USIAI) INITIATIVE

Syllabus Section: Science and Technology

Why in News?

USIAI was launched during the launch ceremony organized by Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) on March 17, 2021.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

32   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- IUSSTF's USIAI Initiative focuses on AI cooperation in critical areas that are priorities for both countries.
- USIAI will serve as a platform to discuss opportunities, challenges, and barriers for bilateral AI R&D collaboration.
- It will enable AI innovation, help share ideas for developing an AI workforce, and recommend modes and mechanisms for catalyzing partnerships.

Significance of the Initiative:

- The US-India strategic partnership can be strengthened by focusing on AI cooperation in critical areas that are priorities for both countries,
- India scores in diversity, and diversity is very important for research. India is rich in data and banking on the strength of both countries, these global collaborations help them both."
- The AI Initiative is another example of IUSSTF's critical role in catalyzing collaborations between India and the U.S. in cutting-edge areas of science and technology.
- USIAI leverages IUSSTF's unique ability to bring together key stakeholders from India and the United States to create synergies that address challenges and opportunities at the interface of science, technology, and society.

Source: PIB

MANIPUR EMERGES AS THE MODEL STATE FOR VAN DHAN VIKAS YOJANA

Syllabus Section: Society

Why in News?

- Manipur has emerged as the champion state where the Van Dhan programme has emerged as a major source of employment for the local tribals.
  - o Since the time that the programme was launched in the State in October 2019, 100 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras have been established.
  - o These constitute 1500 SHGs and are benefitting 30,000 tribal entrepreneurs, who are involved in the collection, processing, value-adding, packaging and marketing of value-added products from Minor Forest produce.

About:

Van Dhan Programme

- It was launched on 14th April 2018. Implemented by TRIFED as the nodal agency at the national level.
- It is a programme for value addition, branding & marketing of Minor Forest Produces by establishing Van DhanKendras to facilitate the creation of sustainable livelihoods for the forest-based tribes.
- ➢ One major scheme that has contributed to increasing employment and income generation among the tribal population is the Van Dhan tribal start-ups programme.
  - o It is a component of the 'Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain for MFP' Scheme.

Source: PIB

ATAL INNOVATION MISSION, AWS COLLABORATE TO SCALE CLOUD SKILLING

Syllabus Section: Science and Technology

Why in News?

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and Amazon Web Services (AWS) announced new initiatives to strengthen the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in India.
- o It will be done by empowering school students with cloud computing skills, and enabling entrepreneurs to build innovative education technology (EdTech) solutions on the cloud.

About:

- A Statement of Intent (SoI) was signed between NITI Aayog and Amazon Internet Services Private Limited (AISPL), which undertakes the resale and marketing of AWS Cloud services in India.
- As per the SoI, AIM will leverage AWS Educate, Amazon's global program that provides resources for students and educators to accelerate cloud-related learning.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
33 www.edenias.com

- This program will introduce the fundamentals of cloud computing such as cloud storage, virtual compute power, web hosting, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and virtual reality (VR), to students at more than 7000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) in India.
- AWS will also conduct Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) for the personnel in-charge at the ATLs, and provide resources and tools at each ATL to expedite student learning and enable them to create and build solutions on the cloud.
- AIM will also adopt AWS EdStart,a virtual startup accelerator program that enables EdTech startups to develop innovative teaching and learning solutions on AWS.

Benefits:

- The collaboration with AWS will equip the talented youth of the country with digital and web-based tools that can enhance their creative and innovative capabilities, in turn helping the nation to grow manifold in its innovation and entrepreneurship network
- The education and tools will establish a strong foundation in cloud computing for students of ATLs across India, while the support of AWS EdStart for startups from AICs and ACICs will accelerate their productization and potential commercialization,
- AWS is committed to bridging the digital skills gap in cloud computing and empowering entrepreneurs to build innovative products and services on the cloud.
    o India will need nine times as many digital skilled workers by 2025, according to the report

Unlocking APAC's Digital Potential: Changing Digital Skill Needs and Policy Approaches, prepared by strategy and economics consulting firm AlphaBeta, and commissioned by AWS.

Source: PIB

SAAMAR CAMPAIGN

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

The Jharkhand government Wednesday announced the launch of SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign to tackle malnutrition in the state.

Highlights:

- The campaign aims to identify anemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state where malnutrition has been a major problem.
- The recent Economic Survey quoted The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey conducted in the state during March 2017 to July 2017 stating that based on the sample data, 36% of under five years of age are stunted—height for age, 29% are affected from Wasting—weight for height, and 45% are underweight—weight for age, indicating the status of undernutrition.

What are the existing schemes to tackle malnutrition in Jharkhand?

The state government runs various schemes under Child Development Schemes, National Nutrition Mission among others to deal with the situation, but it is not enough. Dealing with malnutrition in the state monitoring has been an important concern due to lack of doctors or health care workers.

The need of SAAMAR Campaign:

- SAAMAR has been launched with a 1000 days target, under which annual surveys will be conducted to track the progress.
- It talks of convergence of various departments such as Rural Development Department and Food and Civil Supplies and engagement with school management committees, gram sabhas among others, and making them aware of nutritional behavior.
- Most importantly, the campaign, as per the note, also tries to target Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- It encourages research and proposes fellowships on the nutritional behavior of these groups for effective implementation.

How does SAMAAR propose to tackle acute malnutrition in children and anemic women?

- All of these will be done through measuring Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) of women and children through MUAC tapes and Edema levels, swelling in a small area or the entire body—malnutrition is one of the reasons attributed to this disease.
- Angawadi'sSahayia and Sevika will take them to the nearest Health Centre where they will be checked again and then registered on the portal of State Nutrition Mission.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

What is the program on adolescent girls and women?

- It will capitalize on the Tejaswini Project functioning in the 17 districts of the state where 12, 800 youth communities—of women and adolescent girls have been formed—are being trained in various skills, entrepreneurship, and -jobs.
- All these adolescent girls and women will be educated on nutritional behavior too, and all will be given a health and nutrition card where they will be informed on their weight, height, Body Mass Index, and Hemoglobin.
- They will also be asked to consume Iron-Folic Acid and deworming tablets under supervision.

How will the campaign measure the outcome?

- Nutrition Sabhas will be conducted and the Mukhiyas will work along with every villages' Anganwadi Sevika, Sahayika, Poshan Sakhi, School Management Committee President, Jal Sahiya among others.
- The Panchayat Secretariat will carry color-coded boards of every village's nutritional condition.
- Later a social audit will be conducted after which a panchayat will be given the tag of Malnutrition Free Panchayat.
- There is a provision of Rs 1 lakh to be given to every panchayat to achieve this.

Source: Indian express

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JAAPI, XORAI AND GAMOSA IN ASSAM

Syllabus Section: Society and Culture

Why in News?

Primarily used to felicitate important people and guests, these important symbols of Assamese identity and culture are abundantly seen in political campaigns across the state.

About:

Jaapi

- The jaapi is a conical hat made of bamboo and covered with dried tokou (a palm tree found in rainforests of Upper Assam) leaves.

- While it is most often used in official functions to felicitate guests, the landscape of rural Assam features a more utilitarian version, which farmers wear to protect themselves from the harsh weather, both sun and rain, while working in the fields.
- The decorated ones, on the other hand, are used to felicitate people who visit Assam
- It is basically a memento that represents the state."
- The first possible recorded use of jaapi dates back to the Ahom-era buranjis, or chronicles.
- Today, the bulk of Assam's jaapis are made by artisans based in a cluster of villages in Nalbari district.

Gamosa

- The Gamosa, which literally translates to a cloth to wipe one's body, is omnipresent in Assam, with wide-ranging uses. It can be used at home as a towel (ukagamosa) or in public functions (phulam/floral gamosa) to felicitate dignitaries or celebrities
- the gamosa is a "symbol of the Assamese nation" and its use in that context can be traced back to 1916 and 1917, when the AsomChatraSanmillan (first student organisation) and Asom Sahitya Sabha (premier literary organisation) were founded
- "Both were Assam's first non-political organisations, and it was from them that the initial strains of Assamese jatiyotabaad (nationalism) grew, and so did the use of the gamosa,
- Today, no public function can commence without the guest first being felicitated with the gamosa.

Xorai:

- Made of bell-metal, the xorai — essentially a tray with a stand at the bottom, with or without a cover — can be found in every Assamese household.
- it is primarily used as an offering tray during prayers, or to serve tamale-paan (betel-nut) to guests, a xorai is also presented along with the jaapi and gamosa while felicitating someone
- The bulk of xorais in Assam are made in the state's bell metal hub Sarthebari in the Bajali district.
- The xorai has a long history. "It was used during the time of Vaishnavite reformer Sankardeva too.

Source: Indian Express

35

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

GRAM UJALA SCHEME

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

In the first phase of the Gram Ujala scheme, 15 million LED bulbs will be distributed across villages in 5 states.

Highlights:

- Union power and new and renewable energy minister launched the scheme, which comes with no government support or subsidy.
- In its first phase launched from Arrah in Bihar, 15 million LED bulbs will be distributed across villages of Arrah (Bihar), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), and western Gujarat.
- The bulbs are offered by state-run Energy Efficiency Services Ltd's subsidiary Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL) by leveraging scale.
- Gram Ujala program will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such program in India.
- Under the United Nations' Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), the scheme will claim carbon credits. Also, under the new scheme, the rural consumer's incandescent and CFL (compact fluorescent lamp) bulbs will be taken back.
- Under the program, 7 watts and 12 watts LED bulbs with three years warranty will be given to rural consumers against submission of working incandescent bulbs.
- The Gram Ujala program will be implemented in villages of the 5 districts only and consumers can exchange a maximum of 5 LED bulbs.

Significance of the scheme

India is currently the second-largest LED market across the world by value. So, the scheme will help in avoiding the peak electricity demand of 9,428 megawatts.

Source: Livemint

INDIA TB SUMMIT

Syllabus Section: Health-Related Issues

Why in News?

The India TB summit was organized to highlight the global and national prevalence of Tuberculosis in the run-up to World TB Day celebrations on 24th March 2021.

Key Highlights:

- The Union Health Minister reaffirmed the political commitment of the government to end TB.
o Indian Government accorded high priority to eradicating Tuberculosis in India by 2025, five years ahead of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target of 2030.
- He gave the details of the National TB Elimination Programme's ambitious National Strategic Plan (NSP) to achieve the said target by 2025,
o The NSP embraces bold strategies with commensurate resources to rapidly decline TB incidence and mortality
o National TB Elimination Programme's (NTEP)has instituted many innovations such as:
➢ Contracting of Patient-Provider Support Agencies (PPSAs) to enhance engagement with the private sector.
➢ Strengthening community engagement through TB Forums at the National, State and District levels.
➢ Integrating TB services across all levels in the Health System, including the Ayushman Bharat- Health & Wellness Centres, thereby, making TB an essential part of Comprehensive Primary Health Care
- New initiatives taken at the sub-national level to strengthen community-level engagement and to make it a part of Comprehensive Primary Health Care:
i. Through enhanced access to molecular diagnostics by decentralizing CBNAAT and TruNat services, India has enabled earlier detection of drug resistance.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
36
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

ii. Through Active Case Finding, India has reached out to the unreached and vulnerable groups. Sub-national surveillance of TB and disease-free certification has been introduced, wherein States/Districts that have achieved a significant reduction in the incidence of TB from 2015 baselines were assessed and have been likewise awarded Bronze, Silver, Gold and even TB Free certifications.

iii. India has established TB Forums which provide a common platform to govt officials, physicians, civil society and representatives from patient groups to discuss all concerns pertaining to service delivery and patient care.

• He called upon every citizen to fight collectively and think of TB not as only a biomedical disease but also as a social disease. To address Tuberculosis, the first step is that we need to stop thinking of biomedical solutions only as TB is a social disease. TB control needs to be taken up by all of us as a developmental issue.

Source: PIB

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS REFORMS

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in News?

• Five more States namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Meghalaya and Tripura have completed the "Ease of Doing Business" reforms stipulated by the Department of Expenditure.

o The number of States who have successfully completed the "Ease of Doing Business" reforms has reached to twenty

About:

• States completing Ease of Doing Business reforms are eligible for additional borrowing of 0.25 percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)

o Accordingly, on receipt of recommendations from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the Department of Expenditure has granted permission to these 20 States to raise additional financial resources of Rs.39,521 crore through Open Market Borrowings.

o State wise amount of the additional borrowing permitted to these 20 States is annexed.

• The government of India had in May 2020, decided to link grant of additional borrowing permissions to States who undertake the reforms to facilitate ease of doing business. The reforms stipulated in this category are:

a. Completion of first assessment of 'District Level Business Reform Action Plan'

b. Elimination of the requirements of renewal of registration certificates/approvals/licences obtained by businesses under various Acts.

c. Implementation of computerized central random inspection system under the Acts wherein allocation of inspectors is done centrally, the same inspector is not assigned to the same unit in subsequent years, prior inspection notice is provided to the business owner, and inspection report is uploaded within 48 hours of the inspection.

• In view of the resource required to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India had enhanced the borrowing limit of the States by 2 percent of their GSDP. Half of this special dispensation was linked to undertaking citizen-centric reforms by the States.

o The four citizen-centric areas for reforms identified were

(a) Implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System,

(b) Ease of doing business reform,

(c) Urban Local body/ utility reforms and

(d) Power Sector reforms.

Significance of the Reform

• The ease of doing business is an important indicator of the investment-friendly business climate in the country.

• Improvements in the ease of doing business will enable faster future growth of the state economy.

Source: PIB

4,690 ANTI-TANK GUIDED MISSILES

Syllabus section: society

Why in News?

The Defence Ministry sealed a deal with state-run Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) to acquire 4,960 anti-tank guided missiles at a cost of 1,188 crores for the Indian Army.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

37   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- The missiles, having a range of 1,850 meters, can be fired from the ground as well as vehicle-based launchers.
- Their induction is planned to be completed in three years.
- The missiles are being produced by BDL under license from French defense major MBDA Missile Systems.
- They can be deployed in the anti-tank role for both offensive and defensive tasks.
- The contract will further boost the 'Make in India' initiative of India.

Significance: Induction of these missiles will further enhance the operational preparedness of the armed forces.

This project is a big opportunity for the defense industry to showcase its capability and will be a step in the direction of achieving the goal of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in the defense sector.

Source: Livemint

INDIA TO CONDUCT RADAR SURVEYS OF HIMALAYAN GLACIERS

Syllabus section: environment and ecology

Why in News?

India plans to conduct airborne radar surveys to estimate the thickness of Himalayan glaciers, with a pilot study to be conducted in Lahaul-Spiti basin of Himachal Pradesh. Once the pilot project is done, similar studies will be conducted in Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra sub-basins.

Background:

This also comes in the backdrop of India being one of the most vulnerable country for extreme weather events, ranking 20th on Climate Risk Index (CRI). Also, the country was recently witness to a human tragedy when several people lost their lives, after a glacier near Raini village above Rishiganga river in Uttarakhand burst

Highlights:

- The development assumes significance given the importance of glaciers in India' river systems and the 500 million lives they sustain downstream in the Indo-Gangetic plains.
- They are also important from the energy security standpoint and have a strategic imperative.

- A proposal has been initiated by National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) Ministry of Earth Sciences to estimate thickness of Himalayan glaciers using innovative airborne radar surveys in collaboration with established Indian researchers in India and abroad.
- India plans to add 45 gigawatts (GW) of hydropower capacity to its energy basket.
- Different techniques like geophysical techniques and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) profiling have been employed for glacier depth assessment by Geological Survey of India (GSI).

Importance:

- There is a high interdependence between the glaciers located in the Himalayas and the energy security of the country.
- Almost 33% of country's thermal electricity and 52% of hydropower in the country is dependent on the water from rivers originating in Himalaya.
- These rivers receiving significant part of their water due to melting of ice, glaciers make an indispensable part of India's energy security

Impact of climate change:

Climate change has strong influence on the precipitation over Himalayas as well as melting response of glaciers/ snow cover in Himalayas. This in turn affects the runoff pattern of rivers draining from the glaciated catchments of Himalayas.

Source: Livemint

KEN-BETWA LINK

Syllabus section: Governance

Why in News?

Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh will sign an agreement to implement the Ken-Betwa Link Project, according to the Jal Shakti Ministry.

About Ken Betwa Link Project (KBLP)

- The first project of the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers, through video conferencing/ virtual platform.
- Under the link project, water from the Ken river will be transferred to Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers, the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
38   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- The project will be of immense benefit to the water-starved region of Bundelkhand, especially to the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh.
- It will pave the way for more interlinking of river projects to ensure that scarcity of water does not become an inhibitor for development in the country.

Concern: Interlinking of Ken and Betwa rivers will destroy the Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh.

Aim: This agreement will herald the beginning of inter-state cooperation to implement the vision of Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee to carry water from areas that have surplus water to drought prone and water deficit areas through the interlinking of rivers.

Source: Livemint

THE INSURANCE (Amendment) BILL 2021

Syllabus section: Polity and Governanace

Why in News?
The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed in the Lok Sabha on Monday. Finance Minister moved the bill in the lower house of the parliament which sought to raise the FDI limit in the insurance sector to 74% from 49%.

Highlights:
- The Act provides the framework for functioning of insurance businesses and regulates the relationship between an insurer, its policyholders, its shareholders, and the regulator (the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India).
- The Bill seeks to increase the maximum foreign investment allowed in an Indian insurance company.
- The Act allows foreign investors to hold up to 49% of the capital in an Indian insurance company, which must be owned and controlled by an Indian entity.
- The Bill increases the limit on foreign investment in an Indian insurance company from 49% to 74%, and removes restrictions on ownership and control.
- However, such foreign investment may be subject to additional conditions as prescribed by the central government.

- The Act requires insurers to hold a minimum investment in assets which would be sufficient to clear their insurance claim liabilities.
- If the insurer is incorporated or domiciled outside India, such assets must be held in India in a trust and vested with trustees who must be residents of India.
- The Act specifies in an explanation that this will also apply to an insurer incorporated in India, in which at least:
    o 33% capital is owned by investors domiciled outside India, or
    o 33% of the members of the governing body are domiciled outside India.

Source: PRS

CATCH THE RAIN CAMPAIGN

Syllabus Section: Environment and Ecology

Why in News?
On World Water Day (22nd March), Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches the 'Catch the Rain' campaign.

About:
- Catch the Rain' campaign aims to "conserve rainwater when it falls, where it falls so that water reaches every corner of the nation.'
- The 'Catch the Rain' campaign, focusing on water security, will go on from March 22 to November 30, covering the pre-monsoon and monsoon season in the country.
- It will also encourage "water conservation at the grass-root level through people's participation."
- Theme for this year's World Water Day is "Valuing Water".

Source: All India Radio

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS

Syllabus Section: Environment and Ecology

Why in News?
The United Nations observes March 21 as the International Day of Forests, commemorating the green cover around the world and reiterating its importance.

- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed March 21 as the International Day of Forests (IDF) in 2012.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- The theme of the International Day of Forests for 2021 is "Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being".
- The Day is celebrated by the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and other relevant organizations in the field.
- Themes of the International Day of Forests are aimed to fit into the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), which calls for the protection and revival of ecosystems around the world.

Forest cover in India

- As per the biennial State of Forest Report, 2019, India's forest cover has increased by 3,976 sq km or 0.56% since 2017.
- For the second consecutive time since 2007, the report recorded a gain — an impressive 1,275 sq km — in dense forest (including very dense forest with a canopy density of over 70%, and moderately dense forest with a canopy density of 40-70%).

Source: Indian Express

GANDHI PEACE PRIZE FOR YEAR 2019 AND 2020

Why in News?

The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019 and 2020 is being conferred on His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman respectively.

About:

- Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by Government of India since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation, a plaque andan exquisite traditional handicraft/ handloom item.
- The Jury for Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sh Narendra Modi ,and comprises of two ex-officio members, namely the Chief Justice of India and Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in Lok Sabha.

- The past awardees include luminaries like Dr. Julius Nyerere, Former President of Tanzania; Dr. Gerhard Fischer, Federal Republic of Germany; Ramakrishna Mission; Baba Amte (Shri MurlidharDevidasAmte); Late Dr. Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa; Grameen Bank of Bangladesh; Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa; Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt & Indian Space Research Organisation. Recent awardees include Vivekananda Kendra, India(2015); Akshaya Patra Foundation, India and Sulabh International (Jointly, for 2016); Ekal Abhiyan Trust, India(2017) and Shri Yohei Sasakawa, Japan(2018).

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said

- His Majesty Sultan Qaboos was a visionary leader whose twin policy of moderation and mediation in addressing international issues won him praise and respect across the globe.
- He played an important role in supporting peace efforts in various regional disputes and conflicts. H.M. Sultan Qaboos was the architect of the special ties between India and Oman.
- Under his leadership, India and Oman became strategic partners and our mutually beneficial, comprehensive partnership strengthened and scaled newer heights.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- Bangabandhu was a champion of human rights and freedom in Bangladesh
- The legacy and inspiration of Bangabandhu has made the heritage of both countries more comprehensive and deep-rooted, and that the path shown by Bangabandhu has laid a strong foundation for the partnership, progress and prosperity of both countries over the last decade.

Source: PIB

PORTAL "PRANIT"

Syllabus Section: Industry

Why in News?

POWERGRID Launches Certified E-Tendering Portal "PRANIT".

About:

- It will lead to less paperwork and ease of operation, making the tendering process more transparent.

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
40
www.edenias.com

- It has been certified by Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
- POWERGRID is now the only organization in India to have an eProcurement solution on SAP Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency as stipulated by STQC.

Source: PIB

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Syllabus Section: Disaster Management

Why in News?

- Finance Minister urged advanced economies to scale up their climate change financing commitments and help emerging countries build climate resilient infrastructure.
- The Minister was addressing the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI).

What is climate finance?

- Climate finance refers to local, national or transnational financing—drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing—that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change.
- The Convention(UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement call for financial assistance from Parties with more financial resources to those that are less endowed and more vulnerable.
- It is in accordance with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities" set out in the Convention.
- Climate finance is needed for mitigation, because large-scale investments are required to significantly reduce emissions
- Climate finance is equally important for adaptation, as significant financial resources are needed to adapt to the adverse effects and reduce the impacts of a changing climate.

About:

- PM, Modi also addresses International Conference on Disaster resilient Infrastructure.
- Prime Minister stressed that Countries that are making large investments in infrastructure, such as India, must ensure that this is an investment in resilience, and not in risk.
- The Prime Minister elaborated on key priority areas.
- First, CDRI must embody the central promise of the Sustainable Development Goals, that is, "leave no one behind". This means that we have to put the concerns of the most vulnerable nations and communities first.
- Second, we must take stock of the performance of some of the key infrastructure sectors - particularly health infrastructure and the digital infrastructure, that played a central role during the pandemic.
- Third, in our quest for resilience , no technological system should be considered too basic or too advanced.
- The CDRI must maximize the demonstration effect of the application of technology. And finally, the notion of "resilient infrastructure" must become a mass movement galvanizing the energies of not just the experts, and formal institutions

Climate Financing in India:

- The largest source of climate financing in India is public funding, which is routed through budgetary allocation and several funds and schemes related to climate change established by the Government of India such as National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) and National Adaptation Fund (NAF).
- The Government of India also provides funding through eight missions established under the National Action Plan for Climate Change.
- It has established a Climate Change Finance Unit (CCFU) in the Ministry of Finance, which is the nodal agency for all climate change financing matters.
o However, public funding in India is inadequate and misused. For example, NCEF funds have been used to meet budgetary shortfalls in the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MoNRE).

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
41   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

o   Additionally, there is no assessment of climate relevance of publicly funded projects in India, making it difficult to evaluate financial allocation towards climate action.

Source: PIB

MOU BETWEEN UPSC, AFGHANISTAN'S IARCSC

Why in News?
Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UPSC and Civil Services Commission (IARCSC), Afghanistan.

Significance:
*   The MoU will strengthen the relationship between IARCSC and UPSC.
*   It will facilitate sharing of experience and expertise of both the institutions in the area of recruitment.
*   The MoU includes exchange of information and expertise including books, manuals and other documents which are not of a confidential nature and sharing of expertise in the use of Information Technology (IT) for the preparation of written examinations and holding of Computer Based Recruitment Tests and Online Examinations.

Source: All India Radio

GREAT NICOBAR ISLAND

Why in News?
More than 150 sq. km. of land is being made available for Phase I of a NITI Aayog-piloted 'holistic' and 'sustainable' vision for Great Nicobar Island, the southernmost in the Andaman and Nicobar group.

About:
*   This amounts to nearly 18% of the 910 sq. km. island, and will cover nearly a quarter of its coastline. The overall plan envisages the use of about 244 sq. km. — a major portion being pristine forest and coastal systems.
*   Projects to be executed in Phase I include a 22 sq. km. airport complex, a transshipment port (TSP) at South Bay at an estimated cost of 12,000 crore, a parallel-to-the-coast mass rapid transport system and a free trade zone and warehousing complex on the south western coast.

*   In mid-2020 the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO) was designated as the nodal agency for the process.
*   In January, 2021, the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) denotified the entire Galathea Bay Wildlife Sanctuary to allow for the port there.
*   Nicobar megapode is the globally endangered bird unique to the Nicobars.
*   Threat to Shompen community: The proposed project areas are important foraging grounds for this hunter-gatherer nomadic community.

Source: TH

DISTRICT – WISE EXPORT PROMOTION

Syllabus Section: Economy

Why in news?
The government has readied a draft district-wise export promotion plan for 451 districts in the country after identifying products and services with export potential in 725 districts.

Aim: To double-digit export growth from 500 districts over 3-5 years.

Highlights:
*   Commerce Ministry has asked States to prepare an annual 'export ranking index' of districts on export competitiveness with the assistance of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).
*   While foreign trade constitutes 45% of India's GDP, most export promotion efforts are driven by the Centre.
*   In the initial phase, products and services with export potential in each district have been identified and an institutional mechanism of State and District Export Promotion Committees (SEPC) are being created, with an action plan to grow exports from each district.
*   Products/services with export potential have been identified in 725 districts across the country (including Agricultural & Toy clusters and GI products in these Districts).
*   District Export Promotion Committees have been notified in the districts of all the States except West Bengal.

Source: The Hindu

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

SPECIAL PURPOSE ACQUISITION COMPANIES (SPAC)

Syllabus Section: Exonomy

Why in News?

The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued an investor alert warning to SPACs, or special purpose acquisition companies.

- The securities watchdog cautioned investors "not to make investment decisions related to SPACs based solely on celebrity involvement

About:

Meaning of SPAC:

- An SPAC, or a blank-cheque company, is an entity specifically set up with the objective of acquiring a firm in a particular sector.
- The concept of SPAC has existed for nearly a decade now and several investors and company promoters have used this route to take their investments public, the vehicle has gained momentum just last year, making 2020 a record year for SPAC deals — a record that has already been broken by 2021
- The aim of this SPAC is to raise money in an initial public offering (IPO), and at this point in time, it does not have any operations or revenues.
- Once the money is raised from the public, it is kept in an escrow account, which can be accessed while making the acquisition. If the acquisition is not made within two years of the IPO, the SPAC is delisted and the money is returned to the investors.

Why it is so attractive?

- A key factor that makes SPACs attractive to investors despite them essentially being shell companies, are the people sponsoring the blank-cheque company.

India and SPAC:

- In India, renewable energy producer ReNew Power last month announced an agreement to merge with RMG Acquisition Corp II, a blank-cheque company, in what became the first involving an Indian company during the latest boom in SPAC deals.

- The merger of ReNew Power with RMG Acquisition will result in the former's listing on Nasdaq and gross cash proceeds of around $1.2 billion.

Regulation of SPACs in India:

- India has not taken an official regulatory stand on allowing the listing of SPACs here, the Security and Exchanges Board of India (SEBI) has reportedly formed a group of experts to study the feasibility of bringing SPACs under the regulatory ambit.
- The Indian regulatory framework does not allow the creation of these blank cheque companies as yet.

Risk Involved:

- The boom in investor firms going for SPACs and then looking for target companies have tilted the scales in favour of investee firms. This has the potential, theoretically, to limit returns for retail investors post-merger
- Also, even as the SPACs are mandated to return money to their investors in the event no merger is made within two years, fine print of several SPAC prospectuses shows that certain clauses could potentially prevent investors from getting their monies back.

Source: Indian Express

'BULDHANA PATTERN' FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Syllabus Section: Environment and Ecology

Why in News?

Minister for Jal Shakti informed Rajya Sabha about the 'Buldhana Pattern' for water conservation.

Details:

- It is based on the synchronization of national highway construction and water conservation.
- NITI Aayog has prepared draft guidelines for convergence of the activities of
(i) sourcing earth for improvement/ construction of national highways, state roads and railways and
(ii) water conservation works through desiltation/ deepening of water bodies.

This two-fold activity has already been successfully implemented as a pilot project in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra state.

Source: PIB

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

43   www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

SAUDI ARABIA'S PEACE INITIATIVE IN YEMEN

Syllabus Section: International Relation

Why in News?

India has welcomed the initiative announced by Saudi Arabia for fostering peace in Yemen.

About:

- The initiative inter proposes a comprehensive ceasefire across Yemen under the supervision of the UN as well as consultations between the Yemeni parties to reach a political resolution under the auspices of the UN
- The initiative also includes humanitarian cooperation and economic concessions too.
- Restrictions on the Red Sea port of Hodeidah would be eased, allowing access for ships and cargo. Income from the port, including taxes, would go to the central bank in Hodeidah in accordance with the Stockholm agreement.
- The plan calls for the reopening of Sanaa airport, and new talks to reach a political resolution to the conflict.

Background: Yemen War Broke Out:

- The conflict has its roots in the Arab Spring of 2011, when an uprising forced the country's long-time authoritarian president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi.
- The political transition was supposed to bring stability to Yemen, one of the Middle East's poorest nations, but President Hadi struggled to deal with various problems including militant attacks, corruption, food insecurity, and continuing loyalty of many military officers to Saleh.
- Fighting began in 2014 when the Houthi Shia Muslim rebel movement took advantage of the new president's weakness and seized control of northern Saada province and neighbouring areas.
- The Houthis is a group of Zaidi Shia Muslims who ruled a kingdom there for nearly 1,000 years.
- Saudi Arabia interfered in Yemen after the Shia Houthi rebels captured Sana'a, the capital city, and the internationally recognised government of President Hadi moved to the country's south.

Source: All India Radio

VMRDA ORDER ON NON-TRIBAL MANDALS AND THE CONTROVERSY

Syllabus Section: Society

Why in News?

The Andhra Pradesh government has issued orders to expand the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Development Authority (VMRDA) which created a controversy.

About:

- Due to rapid urbanisation of Visakhapatnam city, a significant urban sprawl has been detected in the fringe areas of existing VMRDA limits towards western corridor of Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region.
- In order to reduce pressure on urban infrastructure of the city, and to ensure planned development in the fringe areas by curbing unauthorised constructions, the 13 mandals have been brought into VMRDA.
- These mandals are said to be 'contiguous in nature', having the potential to develop as urban areas.

Controversy:

- Organisations like Human Rights Forum (HRF) are of the opinion that expanding the area under the VMRDA to include 13 non-Agency mandals within it is a reckless move because tribals live in many of the villages and they have been demanding to be declared as Scheduled villages.
- As per the Constitution, the Fifth Schedule area is of a unique and exceptional nature and is endowed with explicit Constitutional recognition.
- Merger of these villages in the VMRDA directly infringes upon the Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) as well as The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, (FRA of 2006) that grant special and exclusive powers to Adivasi gram sabhas. The Government Order, is plainly violative of these seminal statutes.

Other Concerns:

- There is also concern that several villages that are predominantly Adivasi and are seeking inclusion in the Fifth Schedule since many decades have also been included in the list of mandals to be merged in the VMRDA.

- Tribes of these villages have been seeking inclusion in the Fifth Schedule but to now include about 90 such villages in the VMRDA, they say, is historic injustice.

Source: Indian Express

ELECTORAL BOND SCHEME

Why in News?

Supreme Court flags concern over misuse of electoral bonds.

About:

- Announced in the 2017 Union Budget, electoral bonds are interest-free bearer instruments used to donate money anonymously to political parties.
- A bearer instrument does not carry any information about the buyer or payee and the holder of the instrument (which is the political party) is presumed to be its owner.
- The bonds are sold in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore, and the State Bank of India (SBI) is the only bank authorised to sell them.
- Donors can purchase and subsequently donate the bonds to their party of choice, which the party can then cash through its verified account within 15 days.
- There is no limit on the number of bonds an individual or company can purchase.

Problems Associated:

- The anonymity provided to donors donating electoral bonds is the point of contention.
- Through an amendment to the Finance Act 2017, the Union government has exempted political parties from disclosing donations received through electoral bonds.
- Before the introduction of electoral bonds, political parties had to disclose details of all its donors, who have donated more than Rs 20,000
- In less than three years of their introduction, by virtue of the anonymity they offer to donors, electoral bonds have become the most popular route of donation.

Election Commission's stand on electoral bonds

- The Election Commissionhad objected to the amendments in the Representation of the People (RP) Act, which exempt political parties from disclosing donations received through electoral bonds. It described the move as a "retrograde step".

Source: Indian Express

INDIA TB REPORT

Syllabus Section: Health

Why in News?

- India TB Report 2021 was released by Health Ministry recently.
- India reported a 24% year-on-year fall in tuberculosis registrations last year.

Highlights:

- Between January and February 2020, registrations rose 6% on year.
- As a result of the lockdown, notifications in the public sector fell by 38% and 44% in the private sector in April and May
- In 2019, of the total reported tuberculosis cases of 24.04 lakh, the treatment success was at 82% and mortality rate was 4%.
- The report said 20,892 (42%) of patients were initiated on a shorter MDR-TB regimen at the time of diagnosis.
- This is a significant decline from 2019.

Government Initiatives

Government of India is undertaking several schemes to tackle the challenge of TB:

- Nikshay Ecosystem: It is a National TB information system which acts as one-stop solution to manage the information of patients and monitor program activity & performance across the country.
- NikshayPoshan Yojana (NPY): NYP scheme was launched with the aim of providing financial support to TB patients for their nutrition.
- TB HaregaDeshJeetega Campaign: This campaign was launched in September 2019 with highest level of commitment to eliminate TB.
- Saksham Project: This project was launched by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to provide psychosocial counselling to Drug resistant-TB patients.

Source: Live Mint

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
45
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

MICE ROADSHOW - MEET IN INDIA' AND INAUGURATION OF CHHATRASAL CONVENTION CENTRE AT KHAJURAHO

Syllabus Section: Art and Culture

Why in News?

Minister of State for Tourism will inaugurate the 'Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho developed under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism.

They will also launch "MICE Roadshow Meet in India" Brand and Roadmap for the Promotion of India as MICE Destination in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh .

About:

- To promote India as MICE Destination (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in association with Madhya Pradesh Tourism and India Convention Promotion Bureau are organizing 'MICE Roadshow – Meet in India' at the heart of Incredible at Chhatrasal Convention Centre, Khajuraho.
- It will be an effort under Aatmanirbhar Bharat, realizing India's MICE potential.
- The roadshow will be an opportunity to focus on the Government's initiatives in developing India as a MICE destination with infrastructure and an eco-system pan-India that will favourably place India amongst the global competitors.
- the Ministry of Tourism plans to launch its campaign "Meet in India" from Khajuraho, which is one of the identified iconic tourist destinations of the country.
- Recognizing India's huge potential as a MICE destination, 'Meet in India' will be the distinct sub-brand under 'Incredible India' to promote the country as a MICE destination.

Development of Iconic Tourist Destinations Scheme:

- The Ministry of Tourism has framed 'Development of Iconic Tourist Destinations Scheme' a Central Sector Scheme for development of nineteen identified iconic destinations in the country following a holistic approach.
- The identified tourist sites to be developed as iconic destinations under the scheme are Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh), Ajanta Caves & Ellora Caves(Maharashtra), Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort & Qutub Minar (Delhi), Colva Beach (Goa), Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Somnath, Dholavira & Statue of Unity(Gujarat), Khajuraho (MP), Hampi(Karnataka), Mahabalipuram (TamilNadu), Kaziranga (Assam), Kumarakom (Kerala), Konark(Odisha) and Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

Source: PIB

34 GREEN ZONE SITES APPROVED FOR NPNT

Syllabus Section: Government Policies and Intervention

Why in News?

Ministry of Civil Aviation has granted permit to "No-Permission-No-Takeoff' (NPNT) compliant drone operations at 34 additional green zones to facilitate, smoothen, and promote drone operations in the country.

About:

- As per DGCA, "NPNT or 'No Permission – No Take-off' compliance enables every Remotely Piloted Aircraft (except Nano) to obtain a valid permission through Digital Sky platform before operating in India.
- Flying in these approved 'green-zones' will require only intimation of the time and location of the flights via the Digital Sky portal or the app.
- The approved sites allow drone usage up to 400 ft Above Ground Level (AGL)
- These zones are in addition to the twenty-six green zone sites approved dated 02 Feb 2021 and six green zone sites approved dated 03 Apr 2020.
- Drone flights in the green zone sites shall be compliant with the applicable conditions of Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules, 2021.

About Unmanned Aircraft Systems

- Unmanned Aircraft means an aircraft, which is intended to operate with no pilot on board and UAS includes these and the associated elements.
- Categories: Aeroplane, Rotorcraft and Hybrid unmanned aircraft system.
- Sub-categories: Remotely piloted, Model remotely piloted and Autonomous unmanned aircraft systems.

46

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819

www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- Classification based upon the maximum all up weight including the pay loads.
  - o Nano Unmanned Aircraft: Less than or equal to 250g.
  - o Micro Unmanned Aircraft: Greater than 250g and less than or equal to 2 kg.
  - o Small Unmanned Aircraft: Greater than 2 kg and less than or equal to 25 kg.
  - o Medium Unmanned Aircraft: Greater than 25 kg and less than or equal to 150 kg.
  - o Large Unmanned Aircraft: Greater than 150 kg.
- Under the Drone Regulation, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has partitioned the Air space into Red Zone (flying not permitted), Yellow Zone (controlled airspace), and Green Zone (automatic permission).

Source: PIB

NORTH KOREAN MISSILE TESTS

Why in News?

North Korea fired four short-range missiles into the sea in its first missile launches in about a year.

About:

North Korea's strategy

- North Korea has a long history of performing major weapons tests around the time new governments take power in the United States and South Korea.
- The four missiles fired appear to follow that playbook.

Biden Administration Response:

- It's highly unlikely for the Biden administration to back down and make concessions in the face of North Korea's short-range missile launches.
- North Korea could end up launching bigger weapons tests, especially if it isn't satisfied with the Biden administration's North Korea policy review

Way Forward:

- Such a major provocation would certainly prompt the United States and its allies to seek additional UN sanctions against North Korea.
- But tougher sanctions may be difficult because of China, the North's major diplomatic ally and economic lifeline, wields veto power on the UN Security Council.

Source: Indian Express:

INTER-STATE TIGER RELOCATION PROJECT

Syllabus Section: Environment and Ecology

Why in News?

Sundari — a tigress shifted as part of India's first inter-state translocation project in 2018 from Madhya Pradesh to Odisha has returned home.

About:

- Both the big cats were selected for the translocation project as per the NTCA guidelines and in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India and the GoI.
- Two key factors were considered for choosing the animal — first, a dispersing young animal which is to find a new and second, an adult transient which was yet to establish any territory
- Satkosia Tiger Reserve was chosen because according to NTCA, Satkosia falls under reserves where "there is a potential for increasing tiger populations".
- The purpose of the relocation was to repopulate tigers in the reserve areas.

Tiger Relocation Project

- The tiger relocation project was initiated in 2018 wherein two big cats, a male (Mahavir) from Kanha Tiger Reserve and a female (Sundari) from Bandhavgarh from MP were relocated to Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha.
- The relocation was meant to serve two purposes
1. to reduce the tiger population in areas with excess tigers to majorly reduce territorial disputes and
2. to reintroduce tigers in areas where the population has considerably reduced due to various reasons

Source: The Hindu

NISAR, THE JOINT EARTH-OBSERVING MISSION OF NASA AND ISRO

Syllabus Section: Science and Technology

Why in News?

NASA and ISRO are collaborating on developing a satellite called NISAR, which will detect movements of the planet's surface as small as 0.4 inches .

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
47
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

About:

- It's an SUV-sized satellite that is being jointly developed by the space agencies of the US and India

- The partnership agreement was signed between NASA and ISRO in September 2014, according to which NASA will provide one of the radars for the satellite, a high-rate communication subsystem for science data, GPS receivers and a payload data subsystem.

- ISRO, will provide the spacecraft bus, the second type of radar (called the S-band radar), the launch vehicle and associated launch services.

- NISAR will be equipped with the largest reflector antenna ever launched by NASA.

- Primary Goal: tracking subtle changes in the Earth's surface, spotting warning signs of imminent volcanic eruptions, helping to monitor groundwater supplies and tracking the rate at which ice sheets are melting.

- The name NISAR is short for NASA-ISRO-SAR. SAR here refers to the synthetic aperture radar that NASA will use to measure changes in the surface of the Earth.

- Essentially, SAR refers to a technique for producing high-resolution images. Because of the precision, the radar can penetrate clouds and darkness, which means that it can collect data day and night in any weather.

Source: Indian Express

INDEX MONITORING CELL

Syllabus Section: Polity and Governance

Why in News?

Recently, the Index Monitoring Cell submitted its report to the Central Government.

About:

Recommendations of the Report:

- This report talks about declaring defamation as non-criminal. It is known that India is one of the few countries where defamation is considered a criminal act.

- It has also been recommended to make the consent of the Press Council of India mandatory before filing an FIR against the media or publication.

About Index Monitoring Cell

- It was established in the year 2020 by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

- Objective : Improving the rank of India in the 'World Press Index' and developing unbiased criteria to measure the freedom of media.

- It is noteworthy that India was ranked 142 out of 180 countries in the 'World Press Index, 2020'.

- It will develop a mechanism for determining the ranking of states in press freedom.

- Structure: I.M.C. is a 15-member committee, headed by Kuldeep Singh Dhatwalia (Principal Director General of Press Information Bureau).

- It includes the Secretary of the Press Council of India and NITI Aayog in addition to the Registrar Officers of the Indian Newspaper, Outreach and Communications Bureau and Press Facilitation Unit.

Source: Live Mint

SWARNA JAYANTI SCHOLARSHIP FOR YOUTHS OF BANGLADESH

Syllabus Section: International Relations

Why in News?

Prime Minister Modi announced Swarna Jayanti scholarship for youths of Bangladesh.

About:

- The Swarna jayanti Fellowship is a research fellowship awarded annually by the Department of Science and Technology of India.

- It is given for the notable and outstanding research by young scientists, applied or fundamental, in biology, chemistry, environmental science, engineering, mathematics, medicine and physics.

- Referring to the completion of 50 years of diplomatic relationship between India and Bangladesh, Mr. Modi also announced to invite 50 entrepreneurs of Bangladesh to visit India and join start-up initiative and meet Indian venture capitalists.
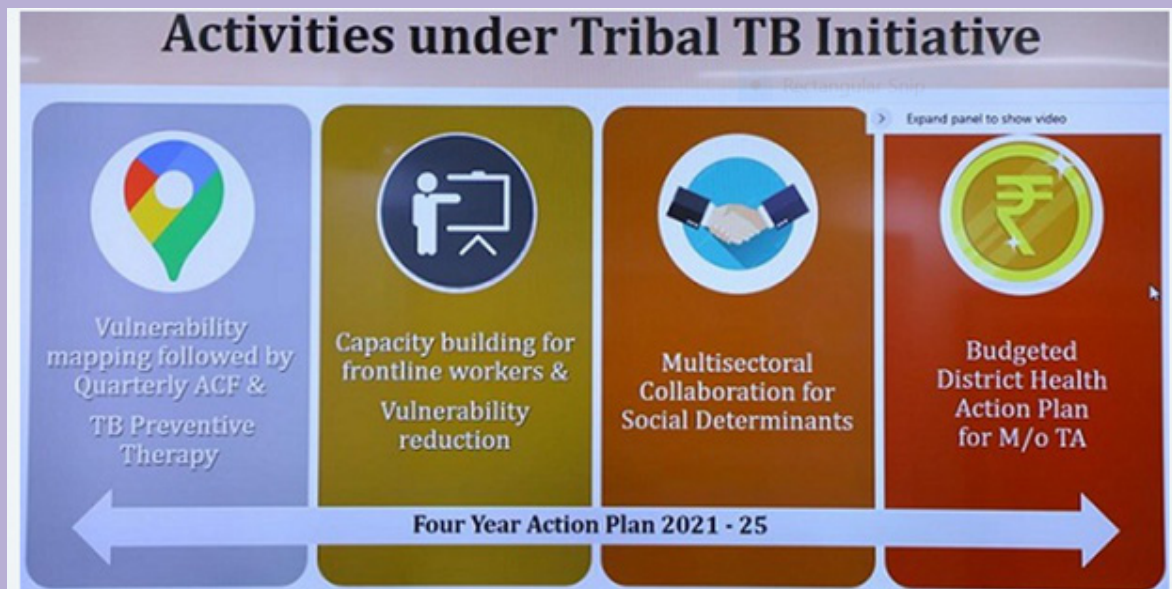
Source: DD News

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
48
www.edenias.com

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

TRIBAL TB INITIATIVE

Syllabus Section: Health Issues

Why in News?

- Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched 'Tribal TB Initiative' in pursuit of TB Mukt Bharat.
- A Guidance Note on Joint Action Plan for Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination, a Special Edition of Tribal Ministry's Publication 'ALEKH' on TB, and a document on Tribal Tuberculosis (TB) Initiative was also released at the event.

Activities under Tribal TB Initiative

Vulnerability mapping followed by Quarterly ACF & TB Preventive Therapy | Capacity building for frontline workers & Vulnerability reduction | Multisectoral Collaboration for Social Determinants | Budgeted District Health Action Plan for M/o TA

Four Year Action Plan 2021 - 25

About:

- Over 104 million tribal population lives in India, across 705 tribes, accounting for 8.6 % of the country's population.
- 177 tribal districts were identified as high priority districts where physical remoteness, malnutrition, poor living conditions and lack of awareness contribute to the vulnerability of the tribal population to TB.
- Initially, the activities of the joint plan will be focusing on 161 districts across 18 identified States. This would involve periodic TB active case finding drives and provision of TB Preventive Therapy (IPT) to identified vulnerable population and develop long term mechanisms for vulnerability reduction.
- The linking of NIKSHAY Portal of MoHFW and Swasthya Portal of the M/o Tribal Affairs will help boost data compilation on TB and pave way for efficient and convergent actions.
- The health problems of the tribal communities need customised solutions.

Highlights from the Events:

- UT of Lakshadweep and district of Badgam in Jammu & Kashmir have been declared TB Free on World TB Day this year.
- Government accords top priority to ensuring Universal Access to free treatment and care for TB across the country.
- High quality drugs, diagnostics, digital initiatives, innovative private sector interventions and community engagement intervention, are all aligned to rapidly decline TB incidence and mortality in the country.

Source: PIB/ All India Radio

EDEN IAS Classroom : Shop no - 6, 2nd Floor, Front Side, Bada Bazar Road, Old RajindeNagar Market
Land mark - Fair Price book shop and kumar book depo
Contact No : | 9311092321 | 9354399200 | 9315227819
49
www.edenias.com