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UPSC MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS
AUGUST 2022

Federalism applies to judiciary too: Madras HC



July wholesale inflation slows to 13.9%



Reserve notified in Agasthyamalai



Kodi Kaatha Kumaran, the man who



held the flag aloft

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1. INDIAN POLITY

1.1 [News]: Kerala Gov. objects to reissue of ordinances

[Background]:

- * The government should elaborate on the rationale for re-promulgating the ordinances repeatedly. The government had sent him a set of executive decrees to re-promulgate on the eve of his visit to New Delhi.
- * “The Supreme Court had ruled [in January 2017] that re-promulgation of ordinances tantamount to sub-version of the democratic legislative process.”

[Concept]:

ORDINANCE

- * An ordinance is a law that is promulgated by the President and Governor only when the legislature is not in session.
- * President and Governor promulgates an ordinance on the recommendation of the union cabinet.
- * Article 213 deals with the power of the Governor to legislate through ordinances. His power of ordinance making is quite similar to the President’s power which is given in article 123

1.2 [News]: Withdrawal of the data Bill was a bad move

[Background].

- In a surprise development last week, the Government withdrew the Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill, 2019, thereby abruptly halting the country's quest for a national data protection law that had been in the works for over five years.

[Concept].**About PDP Bill, 2019**

- * It was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, on December 11, 2019.

Why ?

- * Collection of information about individuals and their online habits has become an important source of profits, but also a potential avenue for invasion of privacy because it can reveal extremely personal aspects.
- * Companies, governments, and political parties find it valuable because they can use it to find the most convincing ways to advertise online.
- * To prevent the breach of privacy and unwarranted advertising, this bill was a necessity.

Obligations of data fiduciary.

- * Personal data can be processed only for a specific, clear and lawful purpose. Additionally, all data fiduciaries must undertake certain transparency and accountability measures such as:
 - * Implementing security safeguards (such as data encryption and preventing misuse of data), and
 - * Instituting Grievance Redressal Mechanisms to address complaints of individuals. They must also institute mechanisms for age verification and parental consent when processing sensitive personal data of children.

Exemptions

- * The central government can exempt any of its agencies from the provisions of the Act.
- * In the interest of the security of the state, public order, sovereignty and integrity of India and friendly relations with foreign states, and
- * For preventing incitement to the commission of any cognisable offence (i.e. arrest without warrant).

Offences:

- * Processing or transferring personal data in violation of the Bill is punishable with a fine of Rs 15 crore or 4% of the annual turnover of the fiduciary, whichever is higher, and

- * Failure to conduct a data audit is punishable with a fine of five crore rupees or 2% of the annual turnover of the fiduciary, whichever is higher.

1.3 [News]: SC to take up plea to ban convicts from polls for life

[Background]:

- * The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it would consider a plea seeking a lifetime ban on people convicted of offences from contesting elections and becoming MPs and MLAs.
- * The Centre, in an affidavit filed in 2020, maintained in court that disqualification under the Representation of the People Act of 1951 for the period of prison sentence and six years thereafter was enough for legislators.
- * On Wednesday, senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, the court's amicus curiae, however, said a convicted MP or MLA could come back after the six-year ban and make laws.
- * India. In 2017, the poll body endorsed the call for a life ban in the top court. Such a move would "champion the cause of decriminalisation of politics", it had said.

[Concept]:

Disqualification grounds:

The constitution of India has provided (in article 102) that a member of parliament will be disqualified for membership if:

- * He holds any office of profit under the Union or state government (except that of a minister or any other office exempted by Parliament)
- * He is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a court.
- * He is an undischarged insolvent.
- * He has ceased to be a citizen of India.
- * He is disqualified under any other law by parliament

The last condition above led the parliament to include some other conditions for disqualification in Representation of People Act (1951). These are as follows:

- * He must not have been found guilty of certain election offences and corrupt practices
- * He must not have been convicted for any offence that results in imprisonment for two or more years. However, detention under preventive detention law is not disqualification.
- * He must not have failed to lodge an account of election expenses within stipulated time.
- * He must not have any interest in government contracts, works and services.
- * He must not be a director or managing personnel in a company / organization in which government has at least 25% share.

- * He must not have been dismissed from government service due to corruption or disloyalty to state.
- * He must not have been convicted for promoting enmity between groups.
- * He must not have been punished for supporting social crimes such as untouchability, sati, dowry etc.

1.4 [News]: Dhankhar sworn in as Vice-President Inspired, motivated to be ever in service of Bharat, he tweets after Raj Ghat visit

[Concept]:

Related Articles

- * Article 63: There shall be a Vice President of India
- * Article 64: The Vice-President shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Council of States and shall not hold any other office of profit
- * Article 69: Every Vice-President shall make an Oath or Affirmation on entering upon his office before the President, or some person appointed in that behalf by him

1.5 [News]: A timely gesture Transferring more tax devolutions to States early in the year is a prudent move

[Concept]:

Financial Relations between Union and State

- * Part XII of the Indian Constitution deals with financial relations between the centre and the states.
- * The Finance Commission (Article 280) makes recommendations to the President on the division of net tax receipts between the centre and the states.
- * Indian Constitution divides the taxation authorities between the Central government and the states in the following ways;
- * Parliament has sole authority to charge the taxes included in the Union List.
- * The state legislature has sole authority to impose the taxes listed on the state list.
- * The taxes included in the Concurrent List can be imposed by both Parliament and state legislatures.
- * The Parliament has the residuary power of taxation (that is, the authority to impose taxes not listed in any of the three lists). The parliament has implemented a gift tax, a wealth tax, and an expenditure tax under this clause.
- * The Union can make grants-in-aid to states, which Parliament can authorize. Such funds are applied to India's Consolidated Fund.
- * The Union has the authority to make grants to states and to any institution within those states for public purposes.

1.6 [News]: Changing contexts of caste

[Background]:

Caste today is active in three main ways.

- * First, it is a system that regulates the distribution of material opportunity or life chances, and hence it is a source of enduring inequalities.
- * Second, it remains one of the primary modes of political mobilisation, even though caste politics is now far more disaggregated, complex and uncertain than it used to be.
- * Third, and perhaps most elusive, for everyone except a small upper-class, upper-caste elite caste continues to be a form of community offering a sense of kinship, belonging and identity. The contexts of caste have changed in ways that affect all three modalities.

[Concept]:

Constitutional Provisions Governing Reservation in India

- * Part XVI deals with reservation of SC and ST in Central and State legislatures.
- * Article 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution enabled the State and Central Governments to reserve seats in government services for the members of the SC and ST.

- * The Constitution was amended by the Constitution (77th Amendment) Act, 1995 and a new clause (4A) was inserted in Article 16 to enable the government to provide reservation in promotion.
- * Constitutional 81st Amendment Act, 2000 inserted Article 16 (4 B) which enables the state to fill the unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for SCs/STs in the succeeding year, thereby nullifying the ceiling of fifty percent reservation on total number of vacancies of that year.
- * Article 330 and 332 provides for specific representation through reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the Parliament and in the State Legislative Assemblies respectively.
- * Article 243D provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Panchayat.
- * Article 233T provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Municipality.
- * Article 335 of the constitution says that the claims of SCs and STs shall be taken into consideration constitutently with the maintenance of efficacy of the administration.

1.7 [News]: India proved sceptics wrong, says President

[Background]:

- * “As all of us celebrate the anniversary of that day, we bow to all those men and women who made enormous sacrifices to make it possible for us to live in a free India,” the President said and added that August 14 is observed as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day so as to promote social harmony, unity and empowerment.
- * Ms. Murmu said this Independence Day was a cause of celebration not only for all Indians but also for every advocate of democracy around the world.

[Concept],

Democracy.



- * The term implies that the Constitution of India has an established form of Constitution which gets its authority from the will of the people expressed in an election.
- * The word democratic refers not only to political democracy but also to social and economic democracy.
- * Direct and Indirect Democracy (Parliamentary form of government).

1.8 [News]: The fragility of the Northeast's integration

[Background]:

- * The integration of Northeast India into mainstream Indian life has been on the national agenda from the very start of India's journey as an independent nation. The region has always been seen to be somewhat alien and needing assimilation, which found (and finds) reflection in administrative terms too.
- * Two such measures, on opposite ends of the spectrum, should characterise this predicament: the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution introduced in 1949 and the draconian Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), promulgated in 1958.
- * Seventy- five years after Independence, the question is how successful has this integration been.

[Concept]:

Sixth Schedule

- * It provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram to safeguard the rights of the tribal population in these states.
- * This special provision is provided under Article 244(2) and Article 275(1) of the Constitution.

- * It seeks to safeguard the rights of the tribal population through the formation of Autonomous District Councils (ADC).
- * ADCs are bodies representing a district to which the Constitution has given varying degrees of autonomy within the state legislature.

Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), 1958

- * It is an act of the Parliament of India that grants special powers to the Indian Armed Forces to maintain public order in "disturbed areas".
- * According to the Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976 once declared 'disturbed', the area has to maintain status quo for a minimum of 6 months.
- * One such act passed on 11 September 1958 was applicable to the Naga Hills, then part of Assam.
- * In the following decades it spread, one by one, to the other Seven Sister States in India's northeast (at present, it is in force in the States of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur {excluding Imphal Municipal Council Area}, Changlang, Longding and Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh, and areas falling within the jurisdiction of the eight police stations of districts in Arunachal Pradesh bordering the State of Assam.

North Eastern Council (NEC)

- * It is a statutory advisory body constituted under the North Eastern Council Act 1971 and came into being on 7 November 1972 at Shillong.

- * The eight States of Northeast India viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, are members of the council, with their respective Chief Ministers and Governors representing them. Sikkim was added to the council in the year 2002.
- * The headquarters of the council is situated in Shillong and functions under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER) of the Government of India.

1.9 [News]: ‘Fundamental duties key to social transformation’

[Background]:

- * Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana on Monday said fundamental duties in the Constitution are not merely to serve a “pedantic or technical” purpose, they are meant to guide citizens engineer a social transformation.
- * “Our Constitution is the fundamental document which regulates the relationship between the citizens and the government. While it has granted us inalienable rights, it places upon us certain fundamental duties.

[Concept]:

Fundamental Duties.

- * 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 added 10 Fundamental Duties to the Indian Constitution.

- * 86th Amendment Act 2002 later added 11th Fundamental Duty to the list.
- * Swaran Singh Committee in 1976 recommended Fundamental Duties
- * The Fundamental Duties are dealt with Article 51A under Part-IV A of the Indian Constitution.
- * The Fundamental Duties are confined to Indian citizens only and do not extend to foreigners unlike a few Fundamental Rights
- * They are also nonjusticiable similar to Directive Principle of State Policies

1.10 [News]: Remission without reform . Premature release of prisoners must be done with discretion and wisdom

[Concept].

Pardoning Power in Indian Constitution.



- * Article 72 of the Constitution gives the president the right to grant pardons, remit, or commute the sentences of anyone convicted of any crime.
 - * Governors given in Article 161
- * **Pardon.** It removes both the sentence and the conviction and completely absolves the convict from all sentences, punishments and disqualifications.

- * **Commutation.** It denotes the substitution of one form of punishment for a lighter form. For example, a death sentence may be commuted to rigorous imprisonment, which in turn may be commuted to a simple imprisonment.
- * **Remission.** It implies reducing the period of sentence without changing its character. For example, a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for two years may be remitted to rigorous imprisonment for one year.
- * **Respite.** It denotes awarding a lesser sentence in place of one originally awarded due to some special fact, such as the physical disability of a convict or the pregnancy of a woman offender.
- * **Reprieve.** It implies a stay of the execution of a sentence (especially that of death) for a temporary period. Its purpose is to enable the convict to have time to seek pardon or commutation from the President

1.11 [News]. High points in science, technology and innovation

[Background].

- * The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research has undertaken its mission effectively since Independence

[Concept].

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

- * Its the largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India.

- * Established: September 1942
- * Headquarters: New Delhi
- * CSIR is funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology and it operates as an autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- * CSIR covers a wide spectrum of streams – from radio and space physics, oceanography, geophysics, chemicals, drugs, genomics, biotechnology and nanotechnology to mining, aeronautics, instrumentation, environmental engineering and information technology.
- * It provides significant technological intervention in many areas with regard to societal efforts which include the environment, health, drinking water, food, housing, energy, farm and non-farm sectors.
- * President: Prime Minister of India (Ex-officio)

1.12 [News]: CJ receives complaint of manual scavenging right outside HC

[Concept]:

Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013

- * Manual scavenging is the practice of removing human excreta by hand from sewers or septic tanks.

- * India banned the practice under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMSR).
- * The Act recognizes manual scavenging as a “dehumanizing practice,” and cites a need to “correct the historical injustice and indignity suffered by the manual scavengers.”

Why is manual scavenging still prevalent in India?

- * The lack of enforcement of the Act.
- * Exploitation of unskilled labourers.
- * The practice is driven by caste, class and income divides.

Constitutional guarantee.

- * Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees ‘Right to Life’ and that also with dignity. This right is available to both citizens and non-citizens. The ban Manual Scavenging should, therefore, should be implemented in letter and spirit.

1.13 [News]: States’ borrowing powers hit: Kerala FM

[Background].

- * Citing the objections of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) against external borrowing by the State’s special purpose vehicles (SPVs) such as KIIFB and the Kerala Social Security Pension Limited (KSSPL), Mr. Balagopal

said such restrictions were not imposed against agencies of the Centre, which were also bound to go by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act.

- * “It was with this objective in mind that the Centre adopted an idealistic but illegal interpretation of Article 293 (3) of the Constitution.
- * He said the States were forced to limit their spending on welfare schemes such as housing for poor and food security for the people. “While putting the State governments under financial pressure, the Centre has written off corporate debt to the tune of nearly ₹ 7.94 lakh crore during 2015-2019. Apart from this, huge tax breaks are given to corporates every year.

[Concept]:

- * **Masala bond.** Masala Bonds are rupee-denominated bonds. It is a debt instrument issued by an Indian entity in foreign markets to raise money, in Indian currency, instead of dollars or local denomination.
- * As per the **FRBM Act 2003**, the Indian parliament sets a target for the government to establish financial discipline, improve the administration of public finances, strengthen fiscal prudence, and reduce the country's fiscal deficits.
- * **Revenue Deficit (RD):** – RD should be completely eliminated by 2009. The minimum annual reduction target was 0.5% of GDP.

- * **Fiscal Deficit (FD):** FD should be reduced to 3% of GDP by 2009. The minimum annual reduction target was 0.3% of GDP.
- * **Article 293(3) in The Constitution Of India 1949.** A State may not without the consent of the Government of India raise any loan if there is still outstanding any part of a loan which has been made to the State by the Government of India or by its predecessor Government, or in respect of which a guarantee has been given by the Government of India or by its predecessor Government.

1.14 [News]: Cleared almost all names for Delhi HC: CJI Ramana

[Concept]:

Appointment of High court Judges:

- * The President of India, in consultation with the Chief Justice of India and the Governor of the State, appoints the Judge of a High Court, according to Article 217 of the Indian Constitution.
- * In addition, except in the instance of his or her own appointment, the Chief Justice of the High Court should be consulted.

1.15 [News]: Atrocities against Dalits: NSSC completes Rajasthan review

[Concept]:

NCSC:

- * NCSC is a constitutional body that works to safeguard the interests of the scheduled castes (SC) in India.
- * Article 338 of the constitution of India deals with this commission.
- * It provides for a National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with duties to investigate and monitor all matters relating to safeguards provided for them, to inquire into specific complaints and to participate and advise on the planning process of their socio-economic development etc.
- * 89th Amendment, 2003:By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for SC and ST was replaced by two separate Commissions from the year 2004 which were: National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

1.16 [News]: Nine more judges for Calcutta HC

[Background]:

- * Nine judicial officers were on Sunday elevated as additional judges of the Calcutta High Court, the Law Ministry said.

[Concept]:

- * Article 224 of the Indian Constitution provides that if by reason of any temporary increase in the business of a High Court or by reason of arrears of work therein, it appears to the President that the number of the Judges of that Court should be for the time being increased, the President may appoint duly qualified persons to be additional Judges of the Court for such period not exceeding two years as he may specify.

1.17 [News]: Sops for votes

[Background]:

- * Promising gifts in run-up to polls, not welfare, is the real ‘freebie’ issue
- * It referred for deeper consideration is the correctness of an earlier judgment in *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu (2013)*, which ruled that making promises in a manifesto would not amount to a corrupt practice.
- * Over the few hearings, the Bench moved from vague references to ‘freebies’ to making rational distinctions between welfare schemes and socio-economic concessions on the one hand, and poll-time announcements of material goods and items as incentives to vote.
- * The two-judge Bench judgment in 2013 had examined the issue in the backdrop of the DMK coming to power in 2006 on a promise to distribute television sets to the poor and implementing it. It ruled that the Directive

Principles of State Policy allow such schemes and that spending of public funds on them could not be questioned if it was based on appropriations passed by the legislature.

[Concept],

Directive Principle of State Policy

- * Constitutional Provisions: Part IV of the Constitution of India (Article 36–51) contains the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).
- * Article 37- of the Indian Constitution States about the application of the Directive Principles.
- * These principles aim at ensuring socioeconomic justice to the people and establishing India as a Welfare State.

1.18 [News], Federalism applies to judiciary too: Madras HC

[Background],

- * Federalism is a part of the basic structure of the Constitution and it applies to the judiciary as well. A High Court in one State cannot exercise powers which, under normal circumstances, can be exercised only by the High Court in another State,

[Concept],

Federalism

- * It is a system of government in which powers have been divided between the centre and its constituent parts such as states or provinces.

There are two kinds of federations:

Holding Together Federation –

- * In this type, powers are shared between various constituent parts to accommodate the diversity in the whole entity. Here, powers are generally tilted towards the central authority.
- * Example: India, Spain, Belgium.

Coming Together Federation

- * In this type, independent states come together to form a larger unit. Here, states enjoy more autonomy as compared to the holding together kind of federation.
- * Example: USA, Australia, Switzerland.

1.19 [News]: Poor being bled dry by litigation: CJI-designate

[Background]:

- * Justice Lalit, who is the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority, said this while formally launching the Legal Aid Defense Counsel System (LADCS) system.
- * He said the legal aid system had increased its reach over the years, but the poor were still bled dry by litigation, especially in criminal cases. “Over 70% population is below poverty line but only 12% opt for legal aid.

[Concept],

- * The NALSA was founded in 1995 under the Legal Services Authorities Act of 1987 to monitor and review the effectiveness of legal aid programs and to develop rules and principles for providing legal services under the Act.
- * It also distributes funding and grants to state legal services authorities and non-profit organisations to help them execute legal aid systems and initiatives.

Objectives of Legal Services Authorities.

1. Provide free legal aid and advice.
2. Spread legal awareness.
3. Organise lok adalats.
4. Promote settlements of disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanisms. Various kinds of ADR mechanisms are Arbitration, Conciliation, Judicial settlement including settlement through Lok Adalat, or Mediation.

5. Provide compensation to victims of crime.

- * National Level: NALSA was constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The Chief Justice of India is the Patron-in-Chief.
- * State Level: State Legal Services Authority. It is headed by the Chief Justice of the State High Court who is its Patron-in-Chief.
- * District Level: District Legal Services Authority. The District Judge of the District is its ex-officio Chairman.

2.INDIAN ECONOMY

2.1 [News]: Bill to set up carbon markets passed in LS

[Background]:

- * The Lok Sabha on Monday passed the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022,
- * It will provides for the establishment of carbon credit markets and brings large residential buildings under the energy conservation regime.
- * The Bill mandates the use of non-fossil sources, including green hydrogen, green ammonia, biomass and ethanol, for energy and feedstock, according to the statement of objects and reasons.
- * The Bill amended the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, to establish carbon markets,
- * The carbon credit would not be exported and would have to be used domestically.

[Concept]:

Carbon Markets

- * ‘Carbon Markets’ has become a contentious issue at the Conference of Parties 25 (CoP 25), being held in Madrid (Spain) from 2nd-13th December, 2019.
- * Carbon markets existed under the Kyoto Protocol, which is being replaced by the Paris Agreement in 2020.
- * Carbon Markets can potentially deliver emissions reductions over and above what countries are doing on their own.
- * The Entity can make the investment, and then offer on sale the emission reduction, called carbon credits. Another party, struggling to meet its own targets, can buy these credits and show these as their own.

2.2 [News]: The fight for fiscal autonomy

[Background]:

- * Adam Smith had argued that taxation per se is not bad, but should follow the principles of fairness.

[Concept]:

- * Canon of Equality: Adam Smith argued that the taxes should be proportional to income, i.e. citizen should pay the taxes in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State
- * Corporate Tax is a direct tax levied on the net income or profit of a corporate entity from their business, foreign or domestic.
- * A cess and Surcharge is a tax on tax.

2.3 [News]: Population an asset to economy: Shah

[Background]:



- * Population was an asset to the economy as it was linked to the scale of a market.
- * “Those who know economics believe that population can also be a strength, and people like me believe that population is an asset as it also a market and represents the scale of market.

[Concept]:

- * High Population is asset when giving Proper Education, Health, Skill and on the job Training.

1. Labour availability is High

2. Demand for product increases → Price increases → Producer Profit increases → Production increases → Automatically increases GDP of the country.

2.4 [News]: Govt. extends PMAY–Urban scheme

[Background]:

- * Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)
- * It was launched in 2015
- * The aim of the scheme is constructing over 112 crore homes by August 15, 2022.
- * The Cabinet approved an extension till December 31, 2024

[Concept]:



About PMAY.

- * Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) falls under the Government's mission - Housing for All by 2022 for urban housing being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- * It makes home loans affordable for the urban poor by providing a subsidy on the Interest Rate of a home loan during repayment by way of EMI (Equated Monthly Installments).

Beneficiaries.

- * Economically Weaker Section (EWS) – with a maximum annual family income of Rs. 3,00,00.
- * Low Income Group (LIG) – with maximum annual family income of Rs. 6,00,000 and
- * Middle Income Groups (MIG I & II) – with a maximum annual family income of Rs. 18,00,000)
- * A beneficiary family will comprise husband, wife, unmarried sons and/or unmarried daughters.

2.5 [News]. Youth employment declined in India, says ILO report

[Background].

- * Indian youth employment deteriorated in 2021 compared with the 2020 situation, according to the Global Employment Trends for Youth 2022 report released by the International Labour Organisation
- * It finds that the pandemic has worsened the numerous labour market challenges facing those aged between 15 and 24. Youngsters in this age group experienced a much higher percentage loss in employment than adults since early 2020.
- * It said school closures not only prevented new learning, but also led to the phenomenon of “learning regression”, that is, children forgetting what they had learned earlier.
- * It appreciated the MGNREGA and said it has played an important role in providing paid employment, particularly for women, but also in carbon sequestration because of the Act’s focus on natural resources, such as land, water and trees, which provide adaptation benefits.

[Concept].

WHAT IS UNEMPLOYMENT ?

- * Unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work.
- * Unemployment is often used as a measure of the health of the economy.
- * The most frequent measure of unemployment is the unemployment rate, which is the number of unemployed people divided by the number of people in the labour force.

2.6 [News]: Retail inflation in India eases to 6.71% in July

[Background]:



- * India's retail inflation slipped below the 7% mark for the first time since April, easing to 6.71% in July.

[Concept]:

Retail prices of goods and services:

- * When we talk about the rate of inflation, it often refers to the rate of inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI).
- * The CPI tracks the change in retail prices of goods and services which households purchase for their daily consumption.

CPI formula.

- * $(\text{Price of basket in current period} / \text{Price of basket in base period}) \times 100$

2.7 [News]: Corporate tax revenue rose 34% till July 31

[Concept]:

corporate tax

- * Its a tax on the profits of a corporation.
- * Direct Tax
- * Proportional Tax
- * Corporate tax rates vary widely by country, with some countries considered to be tax havens due to their low rates. Corporate taxes can be lowered by various deductions, government subsidies, and tax loopholes, and so the effective corporate tax rate, the rate a corporation actually pays, is usually lower than the statutory rate;

2.8 [News]: Essential Commodities Act invoked to rein in tur dal price

[Background]:

- * With tur dal prices surging since mid-July and reports coming in of some traders creating artificial supply squeeze by restricting sales, the Centre has invoked the Essential Commodities Act of 1955 to ask States to monitor and verify the stocks available with such traders.
- * Moderated slightly to 7.01% in June. Tur dal prices have risen since mid-July amid slow progress in kharif sowing as compared to last year due to excess rainfalls and water logging conditions in parts of major tur dal growing States of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh
- * The government is currently holding about 38 lakh tonnes of pulses which are being released in the market

[Concept]:

Essential Commodities Act (ECA):

- * The Essential Commodities Act (ECA) was a Parliamentary act which governed the delivery and supply of commodities or products, whose obstruction could affect the lives of the common people to a great extent.
- * The list of commodities included under the ECA are as follows.
 - Fertilizers
 - Pulses
 - Edible Oil
 - Cereals
 - Oilseeds
 - Petroleum and allied products
 - Seeds of fruits and vegetables
- * In the event of a commodity's supply becoming short and its price increasing as a result, then the Centre can set stock holding limits for a specific period.
- * Once the limit is set, the States will ensure that adequate steps are taken to ensure the guidelines are followed by preventing wholesalers, retailers, importers etc from accumulating a commodity beyond the specified quantity.
- * It is however at the discretion of the State to impose any form of restrictions.
- * But should restrictions be imposed then the State will punish any errant shopkeeper and traders who indulge in blackmarket practices by conducting raids and auctioning of the excess goods.

2.9 [News]. Why are bank loans being written off, asks Congress

Concept].

Non Performing Asset

- * When a borrower is unable to repay his/her EMIs for more than 90 days, the lender declares the particular loan account a 'Bad Debt'. When a loan

becomes a bad debt, the lender typically deals with it in two ways; either they will write it off or waive it off.

- * A loan waive-off is a complete cancellation of a loan account. This means that the borrower is free from that particular debt.
- * Lenders write-off loans to clean up the balance sheet. But, the loan account stays in their books as they hope to recover it at a later date.

2.10 [News]: ‘States signal intent to raise capex spend’

[Background]:

- * States aim to ramp up capital spending and rein in revenue deficits this year as they chart a return to fiscal consolidation following the pandemic shock, and have even factored in the loss of GST Compensation from the Centre, an analysis of States’ 2022–23 budgets shows.
 - * States aim to reduce revenue spending by 0.13% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and increase capex by 0.24% of GSDP.
 - * If successful, this would help increase the share of States’ capital spending marginally from the 2–2.5% of GSDP levels that it has been hovering around for long, according to the study’s author.
 - * ‘Signs of improvement’
 - * While their consolidated fiscal deficit in 2022–23 is projected at 3.29% of GSDP, in line with the Finance Commission’s prescribed glide path of 3.3%, they aim to cut the share of revenue deficit sharply from 50.3% in 2020–21, to 16%. Revenue deficit accounted for 32.4% of fiscal deficit in 2021–22.
- State finances

[Concept]:

- * Fiscal policy refers to the use of government spending and tax policies to influence economic conditions, especially macroeconomic conditions.

2.11 [News]: July wholesale inflation slows to 13.9%

[Background],

- * Wholesale price inflation moderated to a five-month low of 13.93% in July from 15.18% in June, driven by a lower pace of price gains in primary products, food items and manufactured products, even though fuel and power inflation resurged to 43.75% last month, from June's 40.38%
- * While this was the 16th month in a row that wholesale inflation was above 10%, the reading marked the first dip below 14%-plus levels since February.
- * Despite the paring of the headline inflation rate, the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) dropped only 0.13% on a month-on-month basis between June and July, as fuel and power inflation jumped 6.56% sequentially, off setting the moderation in other categories.
- * Pace slows for food items
- * "The easing of wholesale inflation is primarily led by lower food, metals and chemical prices," said CARE Ratings chief economist Rajani Sinha. "If not for a sharp sequential rise in mineral oil prices and hike in electricity tariff, the fall would have been sharper," she added

[Concept],

Whole sale Inflation.

- * It measures the changes in the prices of goods sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
- * Published by the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- * It is the most widely used inflation indicator in India.
- * The base year of All-India WPI has been revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.

Headline Inflation.

- * Headline inflation refers to the rate of change in the CPI, a measure of the average price of a standard basket of goods and services consumed by a typical family.

Core inflation:

- * Core inflation measures the change in average consumer prices after excluding from the CPI certain items with volatile price movements.

2.12 [News]: Credit guarantee plan expanded to aid hospitality, related sectors

[Background]:

- * Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), raising its limit to 5 lakh crore , with the additional amount set to be deployed for enterprises in the hospitality and related sectors that were hit hard by the COVID- 19 pandemic.
- * It was introduced to provide guarantees for additional credit needs of businesses hit by lockdowns and disruptions since the onset of the pandemic in 2020.
- * The pandemic had adversely affected contact-intensive sectors, and demand has continued to be subdued for them even as other sectors have returned to the recovery path faster.
- * Justifying the need for interventions for such businesses’ ‘sustenance and recovery’, the Ministry added that their revival was also necessary for supporting the overall economic rebound, taking into account their high employment intensity as well as their linkages with other sectors.

[Concept]:

Emergency credit line guarantee Scheme.

- * The scheme is a part of the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan to make India a self-dependent country.
- * Under the ECLGS, all loans sanctioned under the Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL) facility will be provided with additional credit. However, there are two specifications:
- * As per this scheme, 100% guarantee coverage is to be provided by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to the Member Lending Institutions (MLI), Banks, Financial Institutions, and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC)
- * It would increase access to, and enable the availability of additional funding facilities to MSME and MUDRA borrowers.

2.13 [News]: ‘Big-bang privatisation of banks can be harmful’

[Background]:

- * Big-bang privatisation of public sector banks (PSBs) can do more harm than good, authors of an article in the latest RBI bulletin have warned, asking the government to take a nuanced approach on the issue.
- * While private sector banks (PVBs) are more efficient in profit maximisation, PSBs have done better in promoting financial inclusion, they said in the article
- * A gradual approach to privatisation could ensure that a void was not created in fulfilling the social objective of financial inclusion and monetary transmission, they added.

[Concept]:

Types of Disinvestment.

- * A minority disinvestment is one such that, at the end of it, the government retains a majority stake in the company, typically greater than 51%, thus ensuring management control.
- * A majority disinvestment is one in which the government, post disinvestment, retains a minority stake in the company i.e. it sells off a majority stake.
- * Privatisation is a form of majority disinvestment wherein 100% control of the company is passed on to a buyer.

2.14 [News]: 'Elevated inflation needs apt policy reply'

[Concept]:

Monetary Policy Committee.

- * Section 45ZB of the amended (in 2016) RBI Act, 1934, the central government is empowered to constitute a six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

Objective.

- * Further, Section 45ZB lays down that "the Monetary Policy Committee shall determine the Policy Rate required to achieve the inflation target".
- * The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee shall be binding on the Bank.
- * MPC shall consist of 6 members:
- * RBI Governor as its ex officio chairperson,
- * Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy,
- * An officer of the Bank to be nominated by the Central Board.

2.15 [News]: 'FTA norms to prevail in Rules of Origin disputes'

[Concept]:

Free Trade Agreement (FTA):

- * It is a pact between two or more nations to reduce barriers to imports and exports among them.
- * Under a free trade policy, goods and services can be bought and sold across international borders with little or no government tariffs, quotas, subsidies, or prohibitions to inhibit their exchange.

Rules of Origin:

- * Customs (Administration of Rules of Origin under Trade Agreements) Rules, 2020. It applies to the import of goods into India where the importer makes a claim of a preferential rate of duty in terms of a trade agreement.
- * It implements the commitment to protect the domestic industry from misuse of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)
- * As per the revised rules, the country importing goods will have to present evidence of the country of origin. This will support the importer to correctly ascertain the country of origin, properly claim the concessional duty and assist customs authorities in ensuring smooth clearance of legitimate imports.

2.16 [News]: Resolution confuses more than it clarifies: MPC's Varma argued

[Background]:

- * August 5 resolution accompanying the RBI's interest rate increase, which stressed that the MPC would "remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation remains within the target going forward, while supporting growth"

[Concept]:

Policy Rate

- * **Repo Rate:** The interest rate at which the Reserve Bank provides overnight liquidity to banks against the collateral of government and other approved securities under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF).

Policy Stance of RBI

- * **Accommodative:** An accommodative stance means the central bank is prepared to expand the money supply to boost economic growth. The central bank, during an accommodative policy period, is willing to cut the interest rates. A rate hike is ruled out. Growth is main Concern.
- * **Neutral:** A 'neutral stance' suggests that the central bank can either cut rate or increase rate. Growth and Inflation is equally treated.
- * **Hawkish Stance:** central bank is willing to hike interest rates to curb money supply and thus reduce the demand. Controlling inflation is main concern.

2.17 [News]: Trade gap to taper, goods may hit \$480-bn exports:

Secretary

[Background]:

- * India's goods exports are likely to touch \$470-480 billion this year from \$422 billion last year and the trade deficit is expected to moderate in coming months,
- * India's trade deficit won't cross the 'discomfort level' and that he expected exports to touch \$750 billion this year, with goods exports of \$470-480 billion.
- * "There is going to be a moderation in the trade deficit from current levels.

[Concept]:

- * Trade deficit or negative balance of trade (BOT) is the gap between exports and imports. When money spent on imports exceeds that spent on exports in a country, trade deficit occurs.

2.18 [News]: Officials examining reasons for State not topping NFSA index

[Background]:

- * T.N. secured only the ninth rank with 0.778 marks
- * Piqued by Tamil Nadu not securing a top rank in the Central government's first edition of State Ranking Index for the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

[Concept]:

National Food security Act 2013

- * The objective is to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.
- * Coverage and entitlement under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS): The TDPS covers 50% of the urban population and 75% of the rural population, with uniform entitlement of 5 kg per person per month.
- * However, the poorest of the poor households will continue to receive 35 kg of food grains per household per month under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY).

2.19 [News]: Central teams in Chhattisgarh to probe MGNREGS works

[Concept]:

- * MGNREGA is one of the largest work guarantee programmes in the world which was launched in 2005.

- * The primary objective of the scheme is to guarantee 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work.
- * MGNREGA aims at addressing the causes of chronic poverty through a rights-based framework.
- * At least one-third of beneficiaries have to be women.
- * Wages must be paid according to the statutory minimum wages specified for agricultural labourers in the state under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

2.20 [News]: Forex buffers ample to tackle cyclical difficulty: S&P Global
[Background]:

- * India has strong external balance sheet, lean external debt.
- * India has built up buffers against cyclical difficulties and has ample foreign exchange reserves to withstand pressure on credit worthiness,
- * Speaking at the India Credit Spotlight 2022 webinar, S&P Sovereign & International Public Finance Ratings Director Andrew Wood said the country has a strong external balance sheet and limited external debt, making debt servicing not so expensive.
- * The rupee has depreciated about 7% against the U.S. currency this year but has performed better than its emerging market peers.
- * Forex reserves stood at \$570.74 billion as of August 12. The agency has a 'BBB-' rating on India with a stable outlook.

[Concept]:

India's Forex Reserve include.

1. Foreign Currency Assets
2. Gold reserves

3. Reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). a portion of the required quota of currency each member country must provide to the IMF that can be utilized for its own purposes. The reserve tranche is basically an emergency account that IMF members can access at any time without agreeing to conditions or paying a service fee.
4. Special Drawing Rights: The SDR is an international reserve asset, created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement its member countries' official reserves. The value of the SDR is calculated from a weighted basket of major currencies, including the US dollar, the euro, Japanese yen, Chinese yuan, and British pound. The interest rate on SDRs or (SDRi) is the interest paid to members on their SDR holdings.

[Extra]:

Depreciation: A decrease in the value of a currency relative to other currencies.

2.21 [News]: T.N. has third largest number of vendors registered with GeM

[Background]:

[Concept]:

- * GeM is a one-stop National Public Procurement Portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Central and State Government Departments/Organizations/Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- * The procurement of goods and services by Ministries and the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) is mandatory for goods and services available on GeM.
- * It also provides the tools of e-bidding and reverse e-auction to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.

- * It was launched in 2016 to bring transparency and efficiency in the government buying process.
- * Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

2.22 [News]: Tribe categorisation work delays benefits under SEED

[Background]:

- * Exercise on since its launch in February to include 1,400 communities under SC, ST and OBC for scheme benefits
- * The Scheme for Economic Empowerment of Denotified, Nomadic, Semi-nomadic (SEED) Tribes. More than 10 crore Indians from 1,400 communities belong to these groups, show the latest estimates available.

[Concept]:

SEED Scheme

- * Under the scheme, the government seeks to provide free coaching to students for civil services examinations, competitive exams for admission to professional courses; health insurance; livelihood support and housing.
- * It has been formulated for families having income from all sources of Rs.2.50 lakh or less per annum and not availing any such benefits from similar Scheme of Centre Government or the State Government.
- * The Scheme will be implemented through a portal, developed by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- * Post verification, the funds will be transferred directly to the beneficiaries in their account.
- * The other implementing agencies are Ministry of Rural Development, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and National Health Authority (NHA).

Denotified Tribes:

- * The term ‘De-notified Tribes’ stands for all those communities which were once notified under the Criminal Tribes Acts, enforced by the British Raj between 1871 and 1947.
- * These Acts were repealed after Independence in 1952, and these communities were “De-Notified”.
- * The DNTs (of whom most are the medieval period Banjaras) are the most neglected, marginalized, and economically and socially deprived communities.
- * Most of them have been living a life of destitution for generations and still continue to do so with an uncertain and gloomy future.

2.23 [News]: Redefining direct benefit transfers

[Background]:

- * The concept of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) is to directly transfer cash to the beneficiary’s bank account, empower the beneficiary to spend the amount it originally intended, and arrest the pilferage by corrupt politicians.

[Concept]:

Direct Benefit Transfer

- * It is a mission or an initiative by the government of India started on 1st January 2013 as a way to reform the government delivery system. It has been visioned as an aid for simpler/faster flow of information and funds to the beneficiaries and to reduce the fraud in the delivery system.
- * The primary aim of this Direct Benefit Transfer program is to bring transparency and terminate pilferage from the distribution of funds sponsored by the Central Government of India. In DBT, benefit or subsidy is directly transferred to citizens living below the poverty line.

2.24 [News]: T.N. govt. sanctions over ₹2,000 crore for crop insurance premium subsidy

[Background]:

- * Despite the rising premium burden under the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana-PMFBY) and the Centre gradually reducing its share of premium subsidy, the Tamil Nadu government has sanctioned around ₹2,000 crore towards its share of premium subsidy for the current year.

[Concept]:

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana-PMFBY



- * Launched in 2016 and is being administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- * It replaced the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).

Eligibility:

- * Farmers including sharecroppers and tenant farmers growing notified crops in the notified areas are eligible for coverage.

Objectives:

- * To provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crops as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases.
- * To stabilize the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming.
- * To encourage farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices.
- * To ensure the flow of credit to the agriculture sector

Premium.

- * There will be a uniform premium of only 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops.
- * In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium to be paid by farmers will be only 5%.

2.25 [News]: Panel begins talks on MSP, natural farming

[Background],

- * The first meeting of the committee on minimum support price (MSP), headed by former Union Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agrawal, saw discussions on natural farming, changing cropping pattern in the country and ensuring MSP to farmers by making the system more effective and transparent.
- * The panel also deliberated strategies for making Krishi Vigyan Kendra and other research and development institutions knowledge centres.

[Concept],

- * The MSP is the rate at which the government purchases crops from farmers, and is based on a calculation of at least one-and-a-half times the cost of production incurred by the farmers.
- * MSP is a “minimum price” for any crop that the government considers as remunerative for farmers and hence deserving of “support”.

- * The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) recommends MSPs for 22 mandated crops and fair and remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane.
- * CACP is an attached office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

3.ENVIRONMENT

3.1 [News]: Reserve notified in Agasthyamalai

[Background]:

- * Tamil Nadu gets its 5th Elephant Reserve at Agathiya malai in Tirunelveli district.”
- * Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve and the Kanniyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary in Agasthyamalai landscape constitute the most important habitats of Asian elephants in the southernmost part of the Western Ghats.
- * The reserve will cover a total area of 1,19,748.26 hectares in the districts of Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari.

[Concept]:

Project Elephant



- * It was launched in 1992 by the Government of India Ministry of Environment and Forests to provide financial and technical support to wildlife management efforts by states for their free-ranging populations of wild Asian Elephants. Aims Project Elephant (PE) was launched by the Government of India in the year 1992 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with following objectives:
- * To protect elephants, their habitat and corridors.
- * To address issues of man-animal conflict.
- * Welfare of captive elephants

- * to promote not to harm elephants for their tusks.

3.2 [News]: Eco-tourism facilities planned at Pulicat lake

[Concept]:

Pulicat lake



- * Pulicat Lagoon is the second largest brackish water lagoon in India, (after Chilika Lake Major part of the lagoon comes Andhra Pradesh)
- * The lagoon comprises the following regions, which adds up 759 square kilometres (293 sq mi) according to Andhra Pradesh Forest Department.
- * Pulicat Lake (Tamil Nadu-TN & Andhra Pradesh-AP)
- * Marshy/Wetland Land Region (AP)
- * Venadu Reserve Forest (AP)
- * Pernadu Reserve Forest (AP)
- * The barrier island of Sriharikota separates the lagoon from the Bay of Bengal and is home to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre

3.3 [News]: African cheetahs still stuck in transit

[Background]:

- * Though agreements have been signed with both South Africa and Namibia, administrative delays, as well as the presence of leopards in the cheetahs'

prospective destination—the Kuno Palpur forest reserve, Madhya Pradesh—are believed to be barriers to their arrival.

- * India’s action plan, a longterm translocation project made public this February— on re-establishing the cheetah that has been extinct since 1952 in India—states that a cohort of around 10-12 young would be imported as a founder stock.

challenges:

- * “Without the complete translocation of all leopards, the cheetah cannot be introduced as they will compete for the available prey base of sambar and chital,”

[Concept]:

Kuno National Paek

- * Kuno National Park is a national park in Madhya Pradesh, India, established in 1981 as a wildlife sanctuary
- * In 2018, it was given the status of a national park.
- * It is part of the Khathiar-Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion.

Cheetah.



- * a large cat native to Africa and central Iran. It is the fastest land animal/ Vulnerable
- * **Sambar** is a large deer native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia that is listed as a vulnerable species on the IUCN Red List since 2008.

- * The chital also known as spotted deer, chital deer, and axis deer, is a deer species native to the Indian subcontinent./Least concern.

3.4 [News]: Vaiko urges Tamil Nadu government to prevent construction of check dams across Kosasthalaiyar

[Concept]:

- * Kosasthalaiyar River, also known as Kortalaiyar River
- * Kosasthalaiyar is 136-kilometre long and originates near Pallipattu in Thiruvallur district and drains into the Bay of Bengal. Its northern tributary Nagari river originates in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh and joins the main river in the backwaters of Poondi reservoir. Its catchment area is spread over Vellore, Chittoor, North Arcot, Thiruvallur and Chennai districts.

3.5 [News]: Kerala seeks review of SC order on ESZ

[Background]:

- * Kerala on Wednesday sought a review of the Supreme Court's judgment to have a 1-km eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) ringing protected forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across the country.

[Concept]:

Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs):

- * Eco-Sensitive Zones or Ecologically Fragile Areas are areas within 10 kms around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- * ESZs are notified by MoEFCC, Government of India under Environment Protection Act 1986.

- * In case of places with sensitive corridors, connectivity and ecologically important patches, crucial for landscape linkage, even area beyond 10 km width can also be included in the eco-sensitive zone.
- * The basic aim is to regulate certain activities around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries so as to minimise the negative impacts of such activities on the fragile ecosystem encompassing the protected areas.

3.6 [News]: 'Delhi's PM2.5 levels worst in the world'

[Background]:

- * A global analysis of air quality found that Indian cities, while recording particulate matter emissions (PM2.5) that are among the highest in the world, do relatively better on nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emissions.
- * The report, Air Quality and Health in Cities, released by U.S.-based Health Effects Institute.
- * The focusing on two of the most harmful pollutants - fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).
- * While exposures to PM2.5 pollution tend to be higher in cities located in low- and middle-income countries, exposure to NO₂ is high across cities in high-income as well as low- and middle-income countries
- * Delhi and Kolkata were ranked first and second in the list of top 10 most polluted cities when PM2.5 levels were compared, with Delhi and Kolkata reporting an average annual exposure of (relative to population) of 110 ug/m³ and 84 ug/m³ respectively. ug/m³ refers to microgram per cubic metre.
- * However no Indian city appeared in the list of top 10 or even top 20 - polluted cities when NO₂ levels were compared.
- * NO₂ comes mainly from the burning of fuels in older vehicles, power plants, industrial facilities and residential cooking and heating.

- * Due to their highly reactive nature, nitrogen oxides also contributed to the formation of other pollutants, including ozone and particulate matter. NO₂ also has a shorter lifetime compared with PM_{2.5} and other air pollutants. As a result, NO₂ levels show very high variability in space and time — levels can vary significantly even across a few kilometres. In comparison, PM_{2.5} levels tend to show less spatial variation.

[Concept],

PM_{2.5} :

- * The term fine particles, or particulate matter 2.5 (PM_{2.5}), refers to tiny particles or droplets in the air that are two and half microns or less in width.
- * Effect on health: Particles in the PM_{2.5} size range are able to travel deeply into the respiratory tract, reaching the lungs.
- * Exposure to fine particles can cause short-term health effects such as eye, nose, throat and lung irritation, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and shortness of breath.
- * Long term exposure to fine particulate matter may be associated with reduced lung function and increased mortality from lung cancer and heart disease.

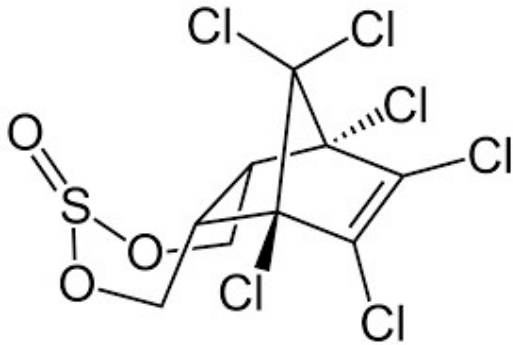
Nitrogen Dioxide

- * Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) belongs to one of the highly reactive gases known as oxides of nitrogen or nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Other nitrogen oxides include nitrous acid and nitric acid.
- * Formation: NO₂ is formed when fossil fuels like coal, oil, gas and diesel are burned at high temperatures. It is also formed during the burning of wood and natural gases.
- * Effects of NO₂: Breathing air with a high concentration of NO₂ can irritate airways in the human respiratory system. Such exposures can aggravate respiratory diseases particularly asthma.

3.7 [News]: Inspect medical facilities given to Kerala endosulfan victims: SC

[Concept]:

What is Endosulfan



- * Endosulfan is an insecticide which was first introduced in the 1950s and is commonly known by its trade name Thiodan.
- * It is linked to a slew of grave medical conditions, such as neurotoxicity, physical deformities, poisoning and more.
- * It is sprayed on crops like cotton, cashew, fruits, tea, paddy, tobacco etc. for control of pests such as whiteflies, aphids, beetles, worms etc.
- * Endosulfan is listed under both the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

3.8 [News]: Tamil Nadu government, on World Elephant Day, notified 1,197 sq. km. in Agasthyamalai in Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari districts (most of it protected area) as the State's fifth elephant reserve.

[Background]:

- * The report lists the Periyar-Agasthyamalai landscape as the southernmost part for the elephant population.

- * The report also suggests the acquisition of defunct estates in the heart of the elephant habitat (as in Meghamalai) and underscores the need for strengthening protection. According to estimates, the Periyar-Agasthyamalai landscape has an estimated 2,000 elephants (in 2010) distributed across 6,000 sq.km. It comprises the southern part of the Periyar plateau, and its eastern spur, the Srivilliputhur- Meghamalai Tiger Reserve, the Achankovil Valley, Agasthyamalai and the Mahendragiri hill ranges on the southern side.

[Concept]:

Agasthiyamalai biosphere reserve.

- * ABR is situated at the southern-most end of the Western Ghats and spread over two southern states Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- * It is named after the Agastya Mala peak that rises up to almost 1868 metres above sea level, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- * In March 2016, it was included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of UNESCO.
- * It covers Peppara and Shendurney wildlife sanctuaries and parts of the Neyyar sanctuary in Kerala and the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve of Tamil Nadu.
- * It is home to the Kanikaran tribe, one of the oldest surviving ancient tribes in the world.

3.9 [News]: A walk through Pallikaranai marsh, the city's last wetland

[Background]:

[Concept]:

Pallikaranai wetland



- * Pallikaranai wetland is a freshwater marsh in the city of Chennai, India. It is situated adjacent to the Bay of Bengal.
- * It is one of the 94 identified wetlands under National Wetland Conservation and Management Programme (NWCMP) operationalised by the Government of India in 1985–86 and one of the three in the state of Tamil Nadu, the other two being Point Calimere and Kazhuveli.
- * The reserve forest has been designated as a protected Ramsar site since 2022.

Ramsar Convention

- * It is an international treaty for “the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands”. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran. The Convention was signed on 2nd of February 1971. The 2nd of February each year is World Wetlands Day.
- * The convention works on three pillars that define the purpose of the Ramsar Convention:
 - * Wise Use – To work towards the wise use of all wetlands
 - * List of Wetlands of International Importance – Designate suitable wetlands under the Ramsar List to effectively manage those
 - * International Cooperation – To bring cooperation internationally over the trans boundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.

3.10 [News]. Move to make Koyambedu market carbon-neutral

[Concept].

- * According to the definition of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), carbon neutrality, or net zero CO₂ emissions, refers only to carbon dioxide emissions and is a state of balance between the CO₂ emitted into the atmosphere and the CO₂ removed from the atmosphere.
- * There are a number of ways of achieving the balance we are talking about. The healthiest way is not to emit more CO₂ than can be absorbed naturally by the world's forests and plants, which act as carbon sinks through the process of photosynthesis – they take in CO₂ from the air and turn it into oxygen – helping to reduce emissions.

4.SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

4.1 [News]: Corbevax gets nod as precaution dose

[Background]:

- * The COVID-19 vaccine, however, has been awaiting emergency use listing (EUL) by the World Health Organization.
- * Corbevax as precaution dose for those aged above 18 vaccinated with either Covishield or Covaxin.
- * They can get the dose 26 weeks after the administration.
- * The EUL is a risk-based procedure for assessing and listing unlicensed vaccines, therapeutics and in-vitro diagnostics with the ultimate aim of expediting the availability of products to people affected by a public health emergency.
- * The international travel in many countries requires people to get a vaccine that is on the WHO's approved list.
- * The latest approval by the Central government makes this the first time that a booster dose that is different from the one used for primary vaccination has been allowed in the country.
- * Biological E announced on February 21 that the Corbevax vaccine received emergency use authorisation from India's Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for the 12-to-18 age group.

[Concept]:

About DCGI

- * The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
- * CDSCO is the central drug authority in India.
- * CDSCO is a national level regulatory body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- * The body is responsible for approving licenses for certain categories of drugs.
- * The DCGI also establishes standards for the manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India.
- * The DCGI also regulates medical and pharmaceutical devices.
- * In case of any dispute with respect to the quality of the drug, the DCGI is the appellate authority.

[Extra].

Emergency Use Listing (EUL):

- * A WHO pre-qualification, or Emergency Use Listing (EUL), is necessary for a vaccine company to supply vaccines to global facilities
- * To be eligible, the following criteria must be met.
- * The disease for which the product is intended is serious or immediately life threatening, has the potential of causing an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic.
- * Existing products have not been successful in eradicating the disease or preventing outbreaks (in the case of vaccines and medicines).
- * The product is manufactured in compliance with current Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in the case of medicines and vaccines and under a functional Quality Management System (QMS) .
- * The applicant undertakes to complete the development of the and apply for WHO prequalification once the product is licensed.

4.2 [News]. “Tomato flu’ detected among children in India, says Lancet

[Concept].

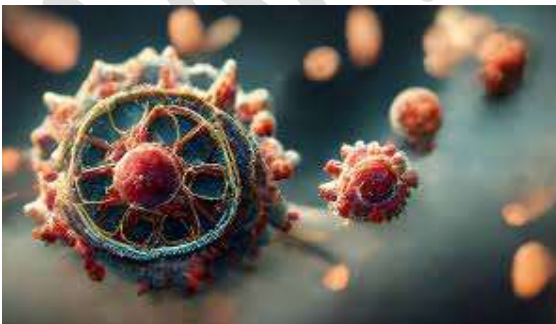


- * Tomato fever is a rare contagious disease of viral nature in humans whose origins are not yet known.
- * However, medical experts have opined that it might be an aftereffect of dengue or chikungunya.
- * It gets its name from the tomato-shaped red rashes that it causes on the body of infected individuals.
- * The flu is said to affect children below five years of age.

4.3 [News]: A new zoonotic virus that has infected 35 people in China.

[Concept]:

Langya Virus



- * The Langya virus is a zoonotic virus which means it can be transmitted from animals to humans.

- * Langya is part of the genus Henipavirus, which has a single-stranded RNA genome with a negative orientation.
- * Unique features of henipaviruses Paramyxovirinae are their larger genomes, longer untranslated regions that are over 100 amino acids longer than any other known phosphoprotein in the family.
- * It is an emerging cause of zoonosis in the Asia-Pacific region.

4.4 [News]: NASA's Artemis I mission will send yeast to deep space with BioSentinel.

[Background]:

NASA's BioSentinel will carry microorganisms to deep space to help scientists better understand the effects of deep space radiation on biological lifeforms.

[Concept]:

Biosentinal



- * BioSentinel is a planned low-cost CubeSat spacecraft on an astrobiology mission that will use budding yeast to detect, measure, and compare the impact of deep space radiation on DNA repair over long time beyond low Earth orbit.
- * Selected in 2013 for a 2022 launch, the spacecraft will operate in the deep space radiation environment throughout its 18-month mission.

- * This will help scientists understand the health threat from cosmic rays and deep space environment on living organisms and reduce the risk associated with long-term human exploration, as NASA plans to send humans farther into space than ever before.
- * The mission is being developed by NASA Ames Research Center.

4.5 [News]: AlphaFold.

[Background]: DeepMind, a company based in London and owned by Google, announced that it had predicted the three-dimensional structures of more than 200 million proteins using AlphaFold.

[Concept]:

AlphaFold.



- * AlphaFold is an Artificial Intelligence-based protein structure prediction tool.
- * It is based on a computer system called Deep Neural Network.
- * Neural networks use a large amount of input data and provide the desired output exactly like how a human brain would.
- * The real work is done by the black box between the input and the output layers, called the Hidden Networks.
- * AlphaFold is fed with protein sequences as input.

- * When protein sequences enter through one end, the predicted three-dimensional structures come out through the other.

4.6 [News]: In News: Army accelerates procurement of light tank ‘Zorawar’ for LAC.

[Concept]:

Zorawar Tank



- * Zorawar will be the name of the Light Tanks which have been envisaged to be manufactured indigenously.
- * Zorawar will be designed to operate from High Altitude Area, the marginal terrain to the Island territories and will be highly transportable for rapid deployment to meet any operational situation.
- * Zorawar will have niche technologies to include Artificial Intelligence, Drone integration, Active Protection System, High Degree of Situational Awareness.
- * Zorawar Singh Kahluria was the famed military general of Dogra King Gulab Singh and was adept at mountain warfare. New tanks will be named after him.
- * Missile-firing capability, counter-drone apparatus, warning system and a power-to-weight ratio will make the tanks “very agile”.

- * The light tanks will help the Army overcome the limitations of medium battle tanks and equip the force for all contingencies in high altitude area, marginal terrain and island territories besides its utilisation in the plains, semi-deserts and deserts.

5.INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5.1 [News]: Bangladesh river water deal likely

[Background],

- * Joint River Commission meeting to decide on agreements on Kushiya, Ganga
- * Apart from the major agreements under discussion, sharing of data of river waters and better flood control planning are expected to feature in the upcoming meeting of the Joint River Commission (JRC) that will meet in the last week of August ahead of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's September 6-7 India visit.
- * Kushiya that flows from Assam into Bangladesh is part of one such agreement that may get "done" during the JRC.
- * "Major agreement" involving the Ganga may also be taken up as there is a "strong urge" to achieve a big river agreement ahead of Prime Minister Hasina's visit, which may be her last trip to Delhi before Dhaka goes into election mode next year.
- * Teesta waters agreement, which has eluded settlement so far.

[Concept],

KUSHIYARA River

- * The Kushiya River is a distributary river in Bangladesh and Assam, India. It forms on the India-Bangladesh border as a branch of the Barak River, when the Barak separates into the Kushiya and Surma. The waters of the Kushiya thus originate in the state of Nagaland in India and pick up tributaries from Manipur, Mizoram and Assam.

TEESTA River

- * Teesta is a long river that rises in the Pauhunri Mountain of eastern Himalayas, flows through the Indian states of Sikkim and West Bengal through Bangladesh and enters the Bay of Bengal. Teesta is the largest river of Sikkim and second largest river of West Bengal after Ganges.

5.2 [News]: ‘Credibility of UN sanctions regime at all-time low’

[Background]:

Key Points

- * The credibility of the United Nations’ sanctions regime is at an “all-time low”, India said on Tuesday, taking aim at China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United Nations Secretariat over “selectivity” and “double standards” against terrorism.
- * Delivering a speech sharply critical of the UN processes, at a Security Council session on ‘Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts’.
- * “It is puzzling to us that the SG’s report chose not to take notice of the activities of the several proscribed groups in this region, especially those that have been repeatedly targeting India.
- * It is most regrettable that genuine and evidence-based listing proposals pertaining to some of the most notorious terrorists in the world are being placed on hold.

5.3 [News]: India, NATO in touch for quite some time: MEA

[Background]:

- * India has been in touch with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for “quite some time now”

[Concept].

About NATO:

- * Its an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 member states – 28 European and two North American.
- * Established in the aftermath of World War II, the organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty, which was signed in Washington, D.C., on 4 April 1949.
- * NATO is a system of collective security:
- * its independent member states agree to defend each other against attacks by third parties.
- * During the Cold War, NATO operated as a check on the perceived threat posed by the Soviet Union.

5.4 [News]:A road map for India–EU ties

[Concept].

- * While India celebrates its 75th year of Independence, it also celebrates 60 years of diplomatic relations with the European Union (EU). A cooperation agreement signed in 1994 took the bilateral relationship beyond trade and economic cooperation.
- * The first India–EU Summit, in June 2000, marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship. At the fifth India–EU Summit in 2004, the relationship was upgraded to a ‘Strategic Partnership’.
- * The two sides adopted a Joint Action Plan in 2005 towards strengthening dialogue and consultation mechanisms in the political and economic spheres, enhancing trade and investment, and bringing peoples and cultures together. The 15th India–EU Summit, in July 2020, provided a common road

map to guide joint action and further strengthen the partnership over the next five years.

- * The road map highlights engagement across five domains: foreign policy and security cooperation; trade and economy; sustainable modernisation partnership; global governance; and people-to-people relations.

Areas of cooperation

- * The India-EU partnership has grown rapidly ever since. Bilateral trade between the two surpassed \$116 billion in 2021-22. The EU is India's second largest trading partner after the U.S., and the second largest destination for Indian exports.
- * For example, the 'green strategic partnership' between India and Denmark aims to address climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- * Cooperation with the EU in the defence sector has also increased substantially.
- * France's on-time delivery of 36 Rafale fighter jets and willingness to offer Barracuda nuclear attack submarines to the Indian Navy reflects the growing level of trust in their relationships.

Challenges

- * However, challenges remain. Both have differing opinions and divergent interests in some areas. India's reluctance to explicitly condemn Russia's intervention in Ukraine, and the country's increasing economic cooperation with Russia
- * There is also ambiguity on the EU's strategy in tackling the rise of China. Its muted response during the Galwan clash is a case in point
- * India and the EU should not let such divergences of views overwhelm the many areas of convergence among them.

Note.

- * India – E.U relation
- * Convergent point – trade, Investment, climate change, Arms import
- * Divergent point – Russia and China.

5.5 [News]: BRI projects are slow, but lending rises

[Background]:

- * China's investments in infrastructure projects under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) have declined while Beijing's short and medium term assistance to partner countries, some of which are
- * dealing with rising debt levels, is increasing, according to recent research highlighting a shift in China's approach to overseas lending.

[Concept]:

Belt and Road Initiative.

- * More than 100 countries signed agreements with China to cooperate in BRI projects like railways, ports, highways and other infrastructure.
- * It was announced by the Chinese President Xi Jinping-led regime in 2013.

5.6 [News]: Indian team deliberating on ocean diversity pact

[Background]:

- * A delegation from India and other member countries of the United Nations are in New York to deliberate on a one-of-its-kind agreement to conserve marine biodiversity in the high seas, namely the oceans that extend beyond countries' territorial waters.
- * Since 2018 to draft an international legally binding instrument under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The high seas comprise nearly 45% of the Earth's surface.

- * A key aspect of the agreement is deciding on the rights of companies that undertake exploration for biological resources in the high seas.
- * Last June, the Union Cabinet approved a 'Blue Economy' policy for India, a nearly ₹4,000-crore programme spread over five years. This among other things will develop a manned submersible vessel as well as work on "bio-prospecting of deep-sea flora and fauna including microbes"

[Concept],

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):

- * In 1982 is an international agreement that establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
- * It is also known as Law of the Sea. It divides marine areas into five main zones namely- Internal Waters, Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the High Seas.
- * It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces. It provides a different legal status to different maritime zones.

Bioprospecting:

- * It (also known as biodiversity prospecting) is the exploration of natural sources.

5.7 [News], China pledges support to Sri Lanka at UNHRC session

[Concept],

UNHRC

- * The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.
- * The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- * The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council.
- * OHCHR is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

5.8 [News]: India refers to Taiwan Strait ‘militarisation’

[Concept]:

Taiwan Strait



- * The Taiwan Strait is a 180-kilometer (110 mi)-wide strait separating the island of Taiwan and continental Asia.
- * The strait is part of the South China Sea and connects to the East China Sea to the north.
- * The entire strait is on Asia’s continental shelf.

- * Former names of the Taiwan Strait include the Formosa Strait or Strait of Formosa, from a dated name for Taiwan;

6.HISTORY AND CULTURE

6.1 [News]: Carnelian beads unearthed in Konthagai

[Background]:



- Konthagai in Sivaganga district, which is part of the Keeladi cluster.
- This is the first time that carnelian beads have been found at this burial site. The beads were found inside an urn.
- The carnelian beads signified a trade relationship with western India, particularly present-day Maharashtra and Gujarat. The beads were available only in the western part of the country.
- Carnelian beads had earlier been unearthed in the Kodumanal and Thandikudi sites.
- Apart from the 74 carnelian beads, one copper piece had been identified at Konthagai.

[Concept]:

- Brownish-red mineral commonly used as a semi-precious gemstone. Its a varieties of the silica mineral chalcedony colored by impurities of iron oxide.
- Keeladi) excavation site is a Sangam age settlement
- The settlement lies on the bank of the Vaigai River and it reflects the ancient culture of Tamil people.

- Kodumanal is a village located in the Erode district in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It was once a flourishing ancient trade city known as Kodumanam, as inscribed in Patittrupathu of Sangam Literature. Northern banks of Noyyal River, a tributary of the Cauvery.

6.2 [News]: A forerunner to the Great Rebellion of 1857

[Background]:

- * Tamil Nadu, which played an important role in the country's freedom struggle and produced a number of sterling leaders during the national movement, had to its credit recorded an event, the Vellore Revolt of 1806, regarded as a forerunner to the 1857 Great Rebellion.
- * As in the case of the 1857 uprising, the perceived harm to religious practices was the trigger for the Vellore Revolt, which broke out in the early hours of July 10, 1806.
- * In March 1806, the introduction of a code of military regulations and dress generated resentment among the Indian soldiers as Hindus were prohibited from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and Muslims were required to shave their beard and trim their moustache.
- * The most offensive part, from the Indian perspective, was the leather cockade in the new turban
- * John Fancourt, Commander of the fort and garrison, was the first to be shot (He died hours after the Revolt was crushed). For some hours of the day, the Fort had Tipu's Royal Tiger Flag flying over it. But the Revolt.
- * The event, however, alarmed the British. William Bentinck, Governor of Madras, was recalled.

[Concept]:

Vellore revolt:

Vellore Mutiny Causes.

- * The English disregard to the religious sensitivities of the Hindu and Muslim Indian sepoys.
- * Sir John Craddock, the Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army had issued orders prohibiting soldiers from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and also to trim their moustaches and shave off their beards. This offended both Hindu and Muslim soldiers.
- * They were also asked to wear new round hats instead of the traditional headgear that they were used to. This led to suspicion among the sepoys that they were being converted to Christianity.
- * A few sepoys who had protested against these new orders were taken to Fort St. George and punished severely. They were given heavy flogging.

The major impact of the Vellore mutiny are given below.

- * All three Madras regiments involved in the Vellore Mutiny were disbanded.
- * After a trial, sepoys involved in the mutiny were punished by death (blown away from canons, hanging and firing squads) and by penal transportation.
- * John Craddock and other senior British officers responsible for the new dress regulations were recalled to Britain.
- * The new dress regulations were abolished.
- * Flogging for Indian soldiers was abolished.
- * Tipu Sultan's family were moved to Calcutta.
- * It is believed that the brutal and swift suppressing of the Vellore Mutiny is partly responsible for the Southern sepoys not taking part in the Indian Revolt of 1857.

6.3 [News]: A political assassination in south India

[Background]:

- * Maniyachi Mail was at the Tirunelveli Junction. Robert William Ashe, the Collector of Tirunelveli, was on the train with his wife. As the train was about to leave the station, two youth boarded it, and as it reached Maniyachi at 10.35 a.m., the two young men moved towards the First Class carriage. The one wearing a coat shot Ashe in the chest with a pistol.
- * The book Ashe Kolaiyum Indiya Puratchi Iyakkamum (Murder of Ashe and Indian Revolutionary Movement - Kalachuvadu Publishers) by A. Sivasubramanian reads like a thriller. The youth who shot Ashe was R. Vanchinathan and his comrade was Madasamy, hailing from Ottapidaram, and a close friend of freedom fighter V.O. Chidambaram Pillai.
- * "It was the first political assassination in the Freedom Movement in South India.
- * It was not done unilaterally by a few but had close links with revolutionary terrorism in North India and the revolutionaries who functioned outside India under who functioned outside India under the leadership of Madam Cama," writes Mr. Sivasubramanian, a former professor of V.O.C. College, Thoothukudi.
- * "Ashe was the first and the last British officer who was assassinated in South India," writes historian A.R. Venkatachalapathy.
- * Vanchinathan, an employee of the Forest Department in erstwhile Travancore, was a member of the Abinav Bharath Samithi, launched by V.D. Savarkar and had close contacts with Nilakanta Brahmachari
- * Ashe allowed all communities to bathe in the Courtallam Falls and transported a pregnant Dalit woman in his coach through the streets of caste Hindus.

[Concept]:

Abhinav Bharat Society (Young India Society)

- * Abhinav Bharat Society (Young India Society) was an Indian Independence secret society founded by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and his brother Ganesh Damodar Savarkar in 1904.
- * Initially founded at Nasik as "Mitra Mela" when Vinayak Savarkar was still a student of Fergusson College at Pune, the society grew to include several hundred revolutionaries and political activists with branches in various parts of India, extending to London after Savarkar went to study law.
- * It carried out a few assassinations of British officials, after which the Savarkar brothers were convicted and imprisoned.
- * The society was formally disbanded in 1952

6.4 [News]: Kuyili: a warrior in Velu Nachiyar's army

The 18th Century freedom fighter's legend lives on in oral tradition

[Background]:

- * One of the personalities prominently featured in the tableau was queen Velu Nachiyar, who ruled Sivganga in the late 18th Century.
- * Velu Nachiyar's story has gained popularity in recent times as the queen who fought against the British even before Rani of Jhansi, many would have wondered who the other woman was. It was Kuyili, believed to be a brave warrior and an aide of Velu Nachiyar.
- * Kuyili worked initially in the palace of Velu Nachiyar and later became a key person in the queen's army.
- * Kuyili set herself ablaze and jumped into an armoury of the British.
- * R. Lenin, who wrote a book on Kuyili under the pen name 'Santhimavo', argues in his book that many folk songs sung in the villages of Sivaganga refer to Kuyili. The book says the deity 'Theepanja Amman' (the name roughly translates to the goddess who jumped into fire), worshipped in Muthupatti village, was in fact Kuyili.

[Concept]:

About Kuyili :

- * Kuyili was an army commander of queen Velu Nachiyar who participated in campaigns against the East India Company in the 18th century. She is considered the first suicide bomber and "first women martyr" in Indian history

6.5 [News]: Oomai Durai's reward for 'purest patriotism' was to grace the gallows

[Background]:

- * Colonel James Welsh, the British officer, who waged the war against the Poligars or Palayakarars in South Tamil Nadu, in his book Military Reminiscences says,
- * Jagaveerapandiyanar, an author of recent years, hails Oomai Durai in glowing terms in his book Panchalankurichi Veeracharithram, writing, "He knew no fear."

[Concept]:

About Oomathurai

- * Oomathurai (real name Kumarasamy Naiyakar), was an Indian Poligar (Palaiyakkarar) from Tamil Nadu, who fought against the British East India Company in the Polygar Wars.
- * He was the younger brother of Veerapandiya Kattabomman. He died due to hanging by British in Tirumayam, Pudukottai Dist.
- * Poligar:Kakatiya dynasty/Vijayanagara Empire, Madurai Nayakas

6.6 [News]: Kodi Kaatha Kumaran, the man who held the flag aloft

[Background]:

- * Kumaraswamy Mudaliar was born on 04 October 1904 in a middle-class family in Chennimalai, now Erode in Tamil Nadu
- * Inspired by Gandhiji's values and objectives, he began participating in demonstrations and activities as per Gandhiji's directives
- * He became so involved in the Indian independence movement that he soon founded the Desa Bandhu Youth Association. The members of this group were primarily the youth from Tamil Nadu and other surrounding areas who were eager to fight for India's independence. Together, they organized numerous anti-British protest marches all across Tamil Nadu. Kumaran was fondly referred to as Tirupur Kumaran as he was the motivational factor in the youth joining the freedom movement.
- * 11 January 1932 in the, in Tirupur, a patriotic march led by Thiyagi P S Sundaram was held in honour of the movement and to also show their defiance towards the British authorities

6.7 [News]: An event to flag

[Background]:

- * On July 22, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the following Resolution before the Constituent Assembly of India: "Resolved that the National Flag of India shall be horizontal tricolour of deep Saffron (Kesari), white and dark green in equal proportion.
- * In the centre of the white band, there shall be a Wheel in navy blue to represent the Charkha The design of the Wheel shall be that of the Wheel (Chakra) which appears on the abacuse of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Asoka... The diameter of the Wheel shall approximate to the width of the

white band and the ratio of the width to the length of the Flag shall ordinarily be 2:3.”

- * The national flag was a slight changeover from the swaraj flag which was first hoisted at the Indian National Congress Session in Calcutta in 1911 by the late Dadabhai Naoroji. The flag was adopted not by a formal resolution, but by popular acclaim and usage, adopted much more by the sacrifice that had surrounded it in the past few decades.
- * Nehru declared, with hope and trust, amid cheers, that this flag was not “a Flag of Empire, a Flag of Imperialism, a Flag of domination over any body, but a Flag of freedom not only for ourselves, but a symbol of freedom to all people who may see it”.
- * The Dharma chakra of Asoka reminds us of the condition of the people at the time of that great Buddhist Emperor of India. He ruled not for his personal aggrandisement but for the contentment, peace and prosperity of the people under his charge....”
- * Article 51A describes Fundamental Duties of every Citizen of India including “to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the national Flag and the National Anthem” as also “to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom”.

[Concept].

National Flag:

- * The flag is based on the Swaraj flag, a flag of the Indian National Congress designed by Pingali Venkayya.
- * 1906: The first national flag, which consisted of three horizontal stripes of red, yellow and green, is said to have been hoisted on 7th August, 1906, at the Parsee Bagan Square, near Lower Circular Road, in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

- * 1921: Later, in 1921, freedom fighter Pingali Venkayya met Mahatma Gandhi and proposed a basic design of the flag, consisting of two red and green bands.
- * 1931: After undergoing several changes, the Tricolour was adopted as our national flag at a Congress Committee meeting in Karachi in 1931.
- * 1947: The Indian flag was adopted in its present form during a meeting of the Constituent Assembly held on 22nd July, 1947.

6.8 [News]: A big line up of events for Madras Day

[Background]:

[Concept]:

- * Madras Day is celebrated on August 22, 2022. Madras Day is a day of celebrations organised in the city of Madras, the capital city of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.
- * It commemorates the founding of the modern city by establishing Fort St George on a small piece of land acquired from the last King of Chandragiri in 1639 by the British East India Company.

6.9 [News]: Savarkar yatra inaugurated in Mysuru

[Background]:

[Concept]:

- * Birth: Born on 28th May, 1883 in Bhagur, a village near Nashik in Maharashtra.

Related Organisations and Work.

- * Founded a secret society called Abhinav Bharat Society.

- * Went to the United Kingdom and was involved with organizations such as India House and the Free India Society.
- * He was the president of Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943.
- * Savarkar wrote a book titled 'The History of the War of Indian Independence' in which he wrote about the guerilla warfare tricks used in 1857 Sepoy Mutiny.
- * He also wrote the book 'Hindutva: who is hindu?'

6.10 [News]: Theatre group to cut short Yakshagana shows

[Concept]:

Yakshagana.



- * Yakshagana is a traditional theatre form of Karnataka.
- * It is a temple art form that depicts mythological stories and Puranas.
- * It is performed with massive headgears, elaborate facial make-up and vibrant costumes and ornaments.
- * Usually recited in Kannada, it is also performed in Malayalam as well as Tulu (the dialect of south Karnataka).
- * It is performed with percussion instruments like chenda, maddalam, jagatta or chengila (cymbals) and chakratala or elathalam (small cymbals).

6.11 [News]: Missing Sambandar sculpture traced to U.S. auction house

[Concept]:

Sambandar:

- * Sambandar, also referred to as Thirugnana Sambandar was a Saiva poet-saint of Tamil Nadu who lived sometime in the 7th century CE. He was a contemporary of Appar, another Saiva poet-saint.
- * According to the Tamil Shaiva tradition, he composed an oeuvre of 16,000 hymns in complex meters, of which 383 (384) hymns with 4,181 stanzas have survived.
- * These narrate an intense loving devotion (bhakti) to the Hindu god Shiva.
- * The surviving compositions of Sambandar are preserved in the first three volumes of the Tirumurai, and provide a part of the philosophical foundation of Shaiva Siddhanta.

6.12 [News]: ‘Datta Peeta will be managed by panel of Hindus, Muslims’

[Concept]:

- * Baba Budan Giri also known as Dattatray Peeta is a mountain in range of the Western Ghats of India.
- * Located in the Chikmagalur District of Karnataka, Dattatreya peeta is known for its shrine to a pilgrimage site for Hindus and Muslims.
- * The main peaks in this range are the Mullayanagiri and Baba Budangiri. Collectively, these peaks are known as Chandradrona Parvatha Shreni as they naturally form the shape of a crescent moon.