

FEBRUARY 2022

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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1. INDIAN POLITY

1.1 News: PM Modi addresses 30th National Commission for Women Foundation Day

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually address the National Commission for Women (NCW) Foundation Day programme on January 31. The theme of this year's foundation day is 'She The Change Maker'.
- ✓ The National Commission for Women was set up as statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 to :
 - Review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women ;
 - Recommend remedial legislative measures ;
 - Facilitate redressal of grievances and
 - Advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.

1.2 News: International Day of Human Fraternity observed on 04 February

- ✓ The 'International Day of Human Fraternity' is celebrated across the world on 4th February.
- ✓ The first International Day of Human Fraternity was held in 2021.
- ✓ The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to declare 4 February as International Day of Human Fraternity on 21 December 2020.

- ✓ The Day is a part of the ‘World Interfaith Harmony Week’, observed during the first week of February, as proclaimed by UN General Assembly in 2010.

1.3 News: J&K topped in India Press Freedom Report 2021



- ✓ The India Press Freedom Report, 2021 was recently released by the Rights and Risks Analysis Group.

✓ Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Tripura topped the list of States and Union Territories where journalists and media houses were targeted in 2021,

1.4 News: Munishwar Nath Bhandari new Chief Justice of Madras High Court

- ✓ 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.

1.5 News: India ranked 46th in EIU's Democracy Index

- ✓ India has ranked 46th position in the 2021 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit.
- ✓ With the highest score of 9.75, Norway topped the Democracy Index 2021 by Economist Intelligence.
- ✓ The list was published on February 10, 2022.
- ✓ India scored 6.91 to rank 46th on the list. Our neighbour Pakistan has been placed further below in the hybrid regime with a rank of 104.

1.6 News: World Day of Social Justice observed on 20 February 2022



- ✓ 2022 Theme: "Achieving Social Justice through Formal Employment"
- ✓ At its sixty-second session, in November 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 20 February as World Day of Social Justice.
- ✓ The day is to be observed for the first time in 2009.

1.7 News: Recently, the Kerala government has proposed to amend the Kerala Lok Ayukta Act with an ordinance. This move has attracted criticism from the opposition

Lokayukta

- ✓ Lokayukta is an anti-corruption authority or ombudsman – an official appointed by the government to represent the interests of the public
- ✓ It investigates allegations of corruption and mal-administration against public servants and is tasked with speedy redressal of public grievances..
- ✓ The Lokayukta is usually a former High Court Chief Justice or former Supreme Court judge and has a fixed tenure.
- ✓ Selection: The Chief Minister selects a person as the Lokayukta after consultation with the High Court Chief Justice, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Chairman of the Legislative Council, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council. The appointment is then made by the Governor.
- ✓ Once appointed, Lokayukta cannot be dismissed nor transferred by the government, and can only be removed by passing an impeachment motion by the state assembly.

1.8 News: High Court stays Haryana's 75% law for reservation to locals in private jobs

Reservation in Private Jobs

- ✓ Article 16(1): There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State
- ✓ Article 16(2): No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect or, any employment or office under the State
- ✓ Article 16(3): Parliament can provides residence as criteria for Public Employment in state or Union territories.
- ✓ Public Employment (Requirement as to Residence) Act, 1957 was passed by Parliament to abolish Residence as criteria for job.
- ✓ Few exceptions were made for Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, and Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Article 16(2): As the language is not mentioned as criteria of non-discrimination, states have mandated knowledge of State Language.
- ✓ Article 371: Special powers have been awarded to few states. Eg. Andhra Pradesh, under Section 371(d), has powers to have “direct recruitment of local cadre” in specified areas.
- ✓ Constitution only talks about Government jobs not of Private jobs.

1.9 News: Explained: Freedom of religion and attire



✓ Recently, six students were banned from entering a college in Karnataka's Udupi district for wearing a hijab. The issue throws up legal questions on reading the freedom of religion and whether the right to wear a hijab is constitutionally protected or not.

Right to Religion

- ✓ **Article 25** :It says that all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice and propagate religion.
 - **Freedom of conscience**: Inner freedom of an individual to frame his relation with God or Creatures in whatever way he desires.
 - **Right to Profess**: Declaration of one's religious beliefs and faith openly and freely.
 - **Right to Practice**: Performance of religious worship, rituals, ceremonies and exhibition of beliefs and ideas.
 - **Right to Propagate**: Transmission and promotion of one's religious beliefs to others. But, it does not include a right to convert another person to one's own religion.
- ✓ Article 25 covers religious beliefs and also religious practices (rituals).

Right to attire: court's rulings on Hijab

- ✓ **In Amna Bint Basheer v Central Board of Secondary Education (2016)**, the Kerala High Court held that the practice of wearing a hijab constitutes an essential religious practise but did not quash the dress code prescribed by CBSE. It rather provided additional safeguards, such as examining students wearing full sleeves when needed.
- ✓ **In Fathima Tasneem v State of Kerala (2018)**, Kerala HC held that collective rights of an institution would be given primacy over the individual rights of the petitioner. The case involved two girls who wanted to wear the headscarf. The school refused to allow the headscarf. However, the court dismissed the appeal as students were no more in the rolls of the respondent-School.

1.10 News: Centre plans to tweak no-build zone around monuments



- ✓ The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958, was amended in 2010 to declare the 100-metre radius of protected monuments as prohibited areas and the next 300-metre radius as regulated areas.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958

- ✓ Its an act of the Parliament of India that provides for the preservation of ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains

of national importance, for the regulation of archaeological excavations and for the protection of sculptures, carvings and other like objects.

- ✓ The Archaeological Survey of India functions under the provisions of this act.

1.11 News: Rights of the weak, duties of the powerful

Fundamental Rights	Fundamental Duties
Part III- Articles 12-35	Part IV A - Article 51A
United States of America	former Soviet Union (USSR)
The Fundamental Rights are not absolute	Fundamental Duties are absolute in nature
Fundamental Rights are enforceable through the Supreme Court and High Courts	Fundamental Duties cannot be enforced through Courts.
Some of the Fundamental Rights are available exclusively to the Citizens of India only, whereas some of the Fundamental Rights are extended to foreigners as well.	Fundamental Duties are provided only to the citizens of India

1.12 News: The era of combative federalism

Cooperative Federalism?

- ✓ Cooperative Federalism in India reflects an ideology of a stable relationship between the centre and other units.
- ✓ Cooperative federalism means cooperation and interdependence between the Centre and the States to ensure smooth governance of the country.
- ✓ The term 'combative federalism' was used by a former Uttarakhand Chief Minister after his government was dismissed under Article 356.
- ✓ The shift of Indian federalism from cooperative to combative has been one of the major changes in Indian polity recently.
- ✓ Combative federalism is against the spirit of the Constitution.
- ✓ The Constitution advocates cooperation and collaboration between the centre and states. As was stated by Supreme Court in *Ajit Mohan V. Legislative Assembly, NCT of Delhi and others (2021)*, for a system to work well central government and state governments have to work hand-in-hand or at least walk side-by-side for better governance.
- ✓ Cooperative federalism is required to negotiate, discuss and resolve the pending conflicts to ensure good governance.

1.13 News: A case for a more federal judiciary

Federal Judiciary

- ✓ Federalism is a midpoint between unitarism which has a supreme centre, to which the States are subordinate, and confederalism wherein the States are supreme, and are merely coordinated by a weak centre.
- ✓ The idea which lies at the bottom of federalism is that each of the separate States should have approximately equal political rights.
- ✓ The federal judicial system comprises the Supreme Court and the High Court in the sense that it is only these two courts which can adjudicate upon the rights of the federal units and the central unit, and between the citizen and these units.
- ✓ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar stated in the Constituent Assembly that the Indian Federation though a dual polity has no dual judiciary at all.
- ✓ The High Courts and the Supreme Court form one single integrated judiciary having jurisdiction and provide remedies in all cases arising under the constitutional law.

1.14 Identification Of Minorities

- ✓ Supreme Court expressed displeasure that the Centre has not yet filed its counter affidavit on a plea seeking minority status for Hindus in states where their numbers are low.

Constitutional Provisions for Minority

Article 29.

- ✓ It provides that any section of the citizens residing in any part of India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own, shall have the right to conserve the same.
- ✓ It grants protection to both religious minorities as well as linguistic minorities.
- ✓ However, the SC held that the scope of this article is not necessarily restricted to minorities only, as use of the word 'section of citizens' in the Article includes minorities as well as the majority.

Article 30.

- ✓ All minorities shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- ✓ The protection under Article 30 is confined only to minorities (religious or linguistic) and does not extend to any section of citizens (as under Article 29).

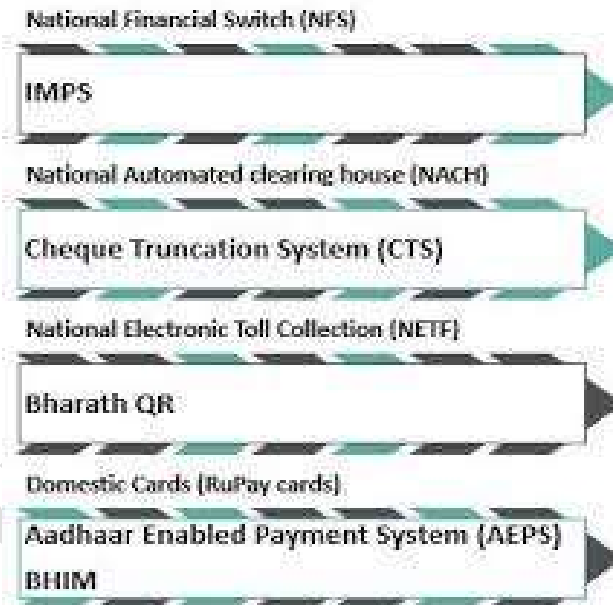
Article 350-B.

- ✓ The 7th Constitutional (Amendment) Act 1956 inserted this article which provides for a Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities appointed by the President of India.
- ✓ It would be the duty of the Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under the Constitution.

2. INDIAN ECONOMY

2.1 NPCI announces UPI safety and awareness week

- ✓ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an initiative taken by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Bank's Association (IBA) to operate the retail payments and settlement systems in India.



- ✓ This organisation was founded in the year 2008 under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. NPCI has been incorporated as a 'not for profit' company under section 8 of Companies Act 2013.

Products of NPCI

1. **RuPay**: It is a domestic card scheme of India
2. **National Common Mobility Card**: Also known as Rupay Contactless card, it is a contactless payment technology that allows cardholders to use their card in the contactless payment terminals without the need to physically swipe or insert the card.
3. **Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM)**: Mobile payments application based on NPCI's Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

4. **Unified Payments Interface (UPI):** This payment system was developed to provide a mobile platform for instant transfer of funds between two bank accounts.
 5. **Bharat Bill Payment System.** The Bharat Bill Payment System is an initiative taken by NPCI along with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for payment of all bills which will provide an interoperable and accessible bill payment service to its customers.
- ✓ National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and the UPI ecosystem (comprising of leading banks and fintechs) have announced the UPI Safety and Awareness initiative, to create awareness amongst consumers. Under this initiative, NPCI and the UPI ecosystem will observe February 1-7 as ‘UPI Safety and Awareness Week’ and the whole of February as ‘UPI Safety and Awareness Month’.

2.2 News:GoI setting up National Land Monetisation Corporation

- ✓ The NLMC will be a wholly owned Government of India company
- ✓ NLMC will undertake monetization of surplus land and building assets of ‘Central Public Sector Enterprises’ (CPSEs) and other Government agencies.

Key functions of NLMC:

- NLMC is expected to own, hold, manage and monetize surplus land and building assets of CPSEs under closure and the surplus non-core land assets of Government owned CPSEs under strategic disinvestment.
- This will speed up the closure process of CPSEs and smoothen the strategic disinvestment process of Government owned CPSEs.
- These assets may be transferred to NLMC to hold, manage and monetize these assets.
- NLMC will also advise and support other Government entities (including CPSEs) in identifying their surplus non-core assets and monetizing them in a professional and efficient manner to generate maximum value realization.
- It is expected that NLMC will act as a repository of best practices in land monetization, assist and provide technical advice to Government in implementation of asset monetization programme.

2.3 News: Banks to transfer 15 NPA accounts worth Rs 50,000 crores to NARCL in FY22



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

✓ Banks are required to classify NPAs further into Substandard, Doubtful and

Loss assets.

1. **Substandard assets:** Assets which has remained NPA for a period less than or equal to 12 months.

2. **Doubtful assets:** An asset would be classified as doubtful if it has remained in the substandard category for a period of 12 months.

3. **Loss assets:** As per RBI, "Loss asset is considered uncollectible and of such little value that its continuance as a bankable asset is not warranted, although there may be some salvage or recovery value."

National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd or NARCL

✓ Its the name of the asset reconstruction company incorporated to take over and dispose of the stressed assets of commercial banks.

✓ In October 2021, NARCL received the RBI's license to enable it to commence operations as a 'bad bank'.

✓ Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have a 51% ownership of NARCL.

- ✓ Banks will aggregate and consolidate stressed assets with NARCL for resolution.

2.4 News: US regains top spot as India's trade partner in 2021

- ✓ United States was India's top trading partner in the calendar year 2021 with a trade of \$112.3 billion. The US is followed by China on second. The value of trade between India and China was \$110.4 billion.
- ✓ In 2020, China was India's top trading partner and the US was in the second rank. In 2019 USA was India's top trading partner and China was on second.

2.5 News: Ravi Mittal named as new Chairman of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

- ✓ The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) established the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) in 2016
Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India
- ✓ The IBBI is the regulating authority for insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings in the country.
- ✓ It also oversees the activities of bodies such as the Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Insolvency Professionals (IP) and Information Utilities (IU), Registered Valuers, and Registered Valuer Organisations.

- ✓ It was established as a statutory body in 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.
- ✓ The IBBI makes and implements rules governing the corporate insolvency resolution process, individual insolvency, corporate liquidation and individual bankruptcy under the IBC.
- ✓ The IBBI is a major pillar in the implementation of the IBC that implements the insolvency and reorganisation resolution process of corporates, individuals and partnerships in a time-bound manner for all the stakeholders.
- ✓ The IBBI is a unique regulator in that it regulates both a profession and the processes.

2.6 News: PM Modi inaugurates 50th Anniversary Celebrations of Hyderabad-based ICRISAT

INTERNATIONAL CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE SEMI-ARID TROPICS (ICRISAT)

- ✓ ICRISAT is a non-profit agricultural research organization.
- ✓ HQ : Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ✓ It was founded in 1972 by a consortium of organizations convened by the Ford and the Rockefeller Foundations.

- ✓ Its charter was signed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- ✓ Since its inception, India has granted special status to ICRISAT as a UN Organization operating in the Indian Territory making it eligible for special immunities and tax privileges.

2.7 News: Govt of India has done a Switch Operation of Rs. 1,19,701 crores

- ✓ The Government of India recently held conversion operation. It is also called **Switch operation**.
- ✓ Under the operation, the government bought back securities from the Reserve Bank of India. These government securities were maturing and these securities were bought ,fresh securities are to be issued to make the transaction cash neutral.

Government securities

- ✓ They are the debt instruments.
- ✓ They are issued by GoI.
- ✓ The two categories of government securities are short term instruments that mature in 91 days, 182 days or 364 days and long term instrument that matures within 5 years to 40 years.
- ✓ These securities are issued through auctions conducted by RBI.

2.8 News: RBI to observe Financial Literacy week 2022: February 14–18

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on various themes among members of public across the country.
- ✓ The theme selected for current year FLW is “Go Digital, Go Secure” which will be observed between February 14–18, 2022.
- ✓ This theme is one of the strategic objectives of the National Strategy for Financial Education 2020–2025.
- ✓ Focus will be on creating awareness about
 - (a) Convenience of digital transactions;
 - (b) Security of digital transactions;
 - c) Protection of customers.

2.9 News: NITI Aayog and USAID announces tie-up under SAMRIDH initiative

- ✓ SAMRIDH stands for Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Healthcare.
- ✓ It aims to improve access to affordable and quality healthcare for vulnerable populations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and tribal and rural regions.
- ✓ It will help in strengthening India’s health systems with sustainable business solutions and innovations.

- ✓ In February 2022, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) declared a new partnership under the SAMRIDH initiative.
- ✓ This collaboration will make use of innovative financing solutions to channelise greater investment towards improving healthcare services for the most vulnerable populations. in India.

2.10 News: PMKSY extended till March 2026 with an allocation of Rs 4,600 crore



- ✓ PMKSY is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Core Scheme) launched in 2015. Centre- States will be 75:25 per cent. In the case of the north-eastern region and hilly states, it will be 90:10.

Its objectives are.

- Convergence of investments in irrigation at the field level,

- To expand the cultivable area under assured irrigation (Har Khet ko pani),
- To improve on-farm water use efficiency to reduce wastage of water,
- To enhance the adoption of precision-irrigation and other water saving technologies (More crop per drop),
- To enhance recharge of aquifers and introduce sustainable water conservation practices by exploring the feasibility of reusing treated municipal based water for peri-urban agriculture and attract greater private investment in a precision irrigation system.

2.11 News: RBI Monetary Policy: RBI keeps Repo Rate unchanged at 4.0 per cent

- ✓ **Repo rate** is the rate at which the central bank of a country (Reserve Bank of India in case of India) lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds. Here, the central bank purchases the security.

Monetary Policy Stance.

1. 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.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been on an accommodative stance for the last two years to support the economy during the COVID-19 crisis.
- ✓ The central bank typically adopts an accommodative policy when growth needs policy support and inflation is not the immediate concern.

2. Neutral

- ✓ A 'neutral stance' suggests that the central bank can either cut rate or increase rate. This stance is typically adopted when the policy priority is equal on both inflation and growth

3. Hawkish

- ✓ A hawkish stance indicates that the central bank's top priority is to keep the inflation low.
- ✓ During such a phase, the central bank is willing to hike interest rates to curb money supply and thus reduce the demand.
- ✓ A hawkish policy also indicates tight monetary policy.

2.12 News: Government continued RYSK Scheme for another 5 years

- ✓ Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) is an umbrella scheme under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and has been continuing since the 12th five year plan, which was from 2012-17.
- ✓ Ultimate motive of the scheme is to develop the personality and the leadership qualities of the youth and to help them become better citizens of the future. The Ministry conceptualized 10 schemes for the same. Eight out of these ten schemes are a part of RYSK.

✓ **List of Sub-Schemes**

- Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS).
- National Youth Corps (NYC).
- National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development (NPYAD).
- International Cooperation (IC).
- Youth Hostels (YH).
- Assistance to Scouting and Guiding Organisations
- National Discipline Scheme (NDS)
- National Young Leaders Programme (NYLP).

✓ **Objectives**

- To develop the personality of youth of India.
- To make Indian youth responsible and able citizens of the future.
- To build a strong and motivated youth for the development of the nation.

- To bring new energy into reforms through different Schemes under RYSK.

- ✓ It is implemented under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- ✓ It will involve life coaching, adolescent training, life skills education, career guidance counselling, etc.
- ✓ **Beneficiaries:** 'Youth' as defined under the National Youth Policy, 2014. People in the age group of 15-29 years. For adolescent youth, this age group is 10-19 years..

2.13 News: World Book of Records: Atal Tunnel recognized as 'Longest Highway Tunnel

- ✓ India's Atal Tunnel is now the World's Longest Highway Tunnel above 10,000 ft! The 9.02 km Atal Tunnel at Rohtang has created a new record.

Rohtang Pass

- ✓ Its on the eastern end of the Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas around 51 km (32 mi) from Manali in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ It connects the Kullu Valley with the Lahaul and Spiti Valleys of Himachal Pradesh, India.

2.14 News: NABARD launched 'JIVA Programme' to promote natural farming



✓ The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has recently launched the JIVA Programme.

✓ JIVA is an agroecology-based programme that aims to promote

natural farming under NABARD's existing watershed and wadi programmes in 11 states of the country covering five agroecological zones, that are in ecologically fragile and rain-fed areas.

- ✓ It encourages the farming community towards natural farming as commercial farming cannot work in these regions.
- ✓ This is ensured using the principles of agroecology long-term sustainability and transforming the pre-existing social and natural capital for natural farming.
- ✓ An amount of Rs 50,000 per hectare will be invested under this programme.
- ✓ NABARD will collaborate with national and multilateral agencies as this is a knowledge and skill-intensive programme focused on resilience to climate change, food sustainability, nutrition security etc.

2.15 News: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2021/2022 report: India ranked 4th

- ✓ The report revealed that India's Total Entrepreneurial Activity rate (percentage of adults (aged 18–64) who are starting or running a new business) increased to 14.4% in 2021, up from 5.3% in 2020.
- ✓ Percentage of adults (aged 18–64) who are starting or running a new business.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

- ✓ The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) is an international project which seeks to provide information on the entrepreneurial landscape of countries.
- ✓ GEM carries out survey-based research on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship ecosystems around the world and is being led by Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad.
- ✓ The main indicator used is called TEA (Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity), which assesses the percentage of the working age population both about to start an entrepreneurial activity, and that have started one from a maximum of 3 and a half year

2.16 News: Saubhagya Scheme: Rajasthan tops solar electrification Scheme

- ✓ Recently, the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA Scheme) has successfully completed four years of its implementation.
- ✓ 2.82 crore households have been electrified since its launch till 31st March, 2021.

Key Points

- ✓ It was launched in 2017 to ensure electrification of all households in the country in rural as well as urban areas.

Objectives:

- Achieving Universal Household Electrification in the country, through last mile connectivity.
- Providing access to electricity to all un-electrified households in rural areas and poor households in urban areas.

✓ Beneficiaries:

- They are identified using Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 data.
- However, un-electrified households not covered under the SECC data would also be provided electricity connections under the scheme by paying Rs 500.

✓ Expected Outcomes:

- Environmental upgradation by substitution of Kerosene for lighting purposes.
- Improvement in education services.
- Better health services.
- Enhanced connectivity through radio, television, mobiles, etc.
- Increased economic activities and jobs.
- Improved quality of life especially for women.

2.17 News: Retail inflation rose to 6.01% in January, just above RBI's upper limit

- ✓ It measures price changes from the perspective of a retail buyer. It is released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- ✓ The CPI calculates the difference in the price of commodities and services such as food, medical care, education, electronics etc, which Indian consumers buy for use.
- ✓ The CPI has several sub-groups including food and beverages, fuel and light, housing and clothing, bedding and footwear.
- ✓ Four types of CPI are as follows:
 1. CPI for Industrial Workers (IW).
 2. CPI for Agricultural Labourer (AL).
 3. CPI for Rural Labourer (RL).

4. CPI (Rural/Urban/Combined).

- ✓ Of these, the first three are compiled by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- ✓ Fourth is compiled by the NSO in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- ✓ Base Year for CPI is 2012

2.18 News: MoSPI projected GDP deflator forecast for FY23 at 3–3.5%

- ✓ GDP deflator, also known as the implicit price deflator, is used to measure inflation. It is used to determine the levels of prices of the new domestically produced final goods and services in a country in a year.
- ✓ GDP deflector shows the changes in the average price levels in an economy, and therefore, it is used in conjunction with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for measuring inflation.
- ✓ GDP deflator consists of two important components, which are the nominal GDP and real GDP.
- ✓ Nominal GDP is the monetary value of all the goods and services produced in an economy and is valued at current prices, while the real GDP shows the monetary value of all the finished goods and services in an economy calculated at constant prices.
- ✓ $\text{GDP deflator} = \text{Nominal GDP} / \text{Real GDP} * 100$

2.19 News: LAHDC launched the “Kunsnyom scheme” for differently-abled persons

- ✓ Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh has launched the Kunsnyoms scheme for differently-abled persons.

About the schemes

- ✓ Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh has launched the Kunsnyoms scheme for differently-abled persons.
- ✓ Kunsnyoms = Equal for All, Fair for All and aims inclusive and accessible Ladakh.
- ✓ Launching the new scheme, LAHDC Leh Chief Executive Councillor and Chairman and his executive councillors have handed over 28 tri scooters, battery-run wheelchairs, walking aids and other aids required for the special needs of the individuals.
- ✓ Under this, Leh Hill council is providing assistive devices, technologies to needy people at 90 percent subsidy.
- ✓ After becoming Union Territory, financially empowered with sufficient allocations of budget, the Hill Councils in Ladakh are utilising the funds for welfare schemes.

2.20 News: Government approves 'New India Literacy Programme' for Education of adults

- ✓ A new scheme "New India Literacy Programme" for the period FYs 2022-2027 to cover all the aspects of Adult Education to align with National Education Policy 2020 has been approved.

Objective

- ✓ To impart not only foundational literacy and numeracy but also to cover other components which are necessary for a citizen of the 21st century.

Other components include.

- ✓ Critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare).
- ✓ Vocational skills development (with a view towards obtaining local employment).
- ✓ Basic education (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency).
- ✓ Continuing education (including engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, and recreation, as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as more advanced material on critical life skills).

2.21 News: Govt plans 'Heal by India' for positioning India as global source for health sector

- ✓ The government of India will be promoting the 'Heal by India' initiative to improve India's educational institutions in the health sector.
- ✓ The Union Health Ministry recently organized a Chintan Shivir — 'Heal by India' for two days.
- ✓ 'Heal by India' initiative is meant to generate job opportunities abroad for India's trained professionals in the health sector and enhance education to churn out quality human resources in health, thus helping them become eligible to work anywhere in the world.

2.22 News: GoI, World Bank sign loan agreement of \$115 million for implementation of REWARD Project



- ✓ The World Bank, the Government of India, the State Governments of Karnataka, and Odisha, have signed a USD 115 million deal for the Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development Programme to help national and state governments adopt improved watershed management practices to help farmers become more resilient to climate change, improve incomes, and promote higher productivity.
- ✓ World Bank's lending arm, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) will provide financial support of USD 115 million to this project. The loan has a 15 years maturity period with 4.5 years grace period.

The objective of the Project

- ✓ To improve water and land conservations as well as preventing soil runoff, harvesting rainwater, regenerating natural vegetation, and replenishing the groundwater table.
- ✓ The project also aims to improve the capacities of the state and the central institutions so that they can develop and deliver better watershed management and development programs.

2.23 News: GoI to launch 'Meri Policy Mere Hath' to deliver crop insurance policies

Context:

- ✓ 'Meri Policy Mere Haath' campaign was launched recently in Hassan, Karnataka.

About the Campaign:

- ✓ The campaign is part of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.
- ✓ It is aimed at motivating all farmers in the country to insure their crops.
- ✓ Under this program, every farmer who has taken insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) will get the policy documents at their doorstep.

Significance:

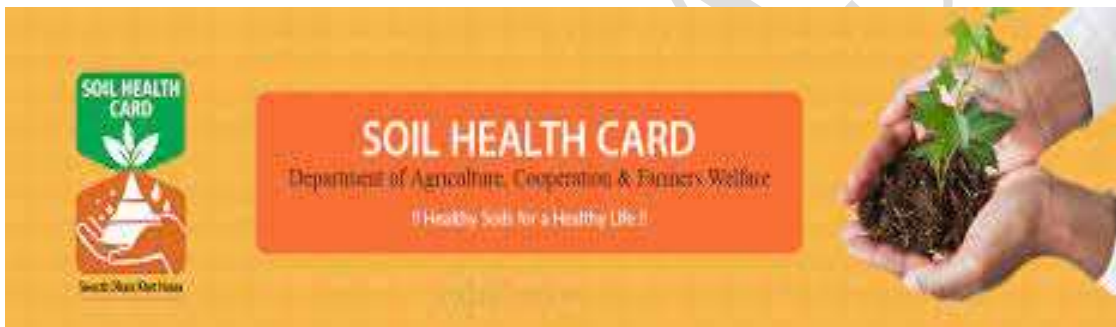
- ✓ The campaign empowers the farmers through crop insurance awareness and by bringing the insurance policy to their doorsteps.
- ✓ The campaign will also help in increasing the direct communication between the farmers and insurance companies.

About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana:

- ✓ It is in line with the One Nation – One Scheme theme- It replaced National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).
- ✓ Launched in 2016.

- ✓ Coverage: All food & oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.
- ✓ **Premium.** The prescribed premium is 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 is 5%.

2.24 News: 7th Soil Health Card Day Observed on 19 February 2022



- ✓ Every year India observes the Soil Health Card Day on 19 February to commemorate the launch of the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme.

Soil Health Card Scheme

- ✓ The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare introduced the scheme on December 5, 2015.
- ✓ Soil Health Card (SHC) is a printed report which contains nutrient status of soil with respect to 12 nutrients: pH, Electrical Conductivity (EC), Organic Carbon (OC), Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potassium (K),

Sulphur (S), Zinc (Zn), Boron (B), Iron (Fe), Manganese (Mn) and Copper (Cu) of farm holdings.

- ✓ SHC is provided to all farmers in the country at an interval of 3 years to enable the farmers to apply recommended doses of nutrients based on soil test values to realize improved and sustainable soil health and fertility, low costs and higher profits.
- ✓ Farmers can track their soil samples and also obtain their Soil Health Card report.
- ✓ It is a field-specific detailed report of soil fertility status and other important soil parameters that affect crop productivity.

2.25 News: Government approved continuation of RUSA scheme till 2026

- ✓ Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
- ✓ RUSA is the centrally sponsored scheme launched in October 2013 that aims at providing strategic funding to higher education institutions throughout the country.
- ✓ The scheme is being operated in mission mode for funding state universities and colleges to achieve the aims of equity, access and excellence.
- ✓ Funding is provided by the central ministry through the State governments and Union Territories (UTs), which in coordination with the

Central Project Appraisal Board monitors the academic, administrative and financial advancements taken under the scheme.

- ✓ Since 2016-17, the government has spent an average of Rs 1,500 crore every year on RUSA.

Objectives

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

2.26 News: Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh becomes 100th 'Har Ghar Jal' District



- ✓ Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh becomes 100th 'Har Ghar Jal' District
- ✓ Jal Jeevan Mission has achieved the significant milestone of providing tap water to every home of 100 districts across the country.
- ✓ Jal Jeevan Mission has achieved the significant milestone of providing tap water to every home of 100 districts across the country. Chamba, in Himachal Pradesh, has become the 100th 'Har Ghar Jal' district, the fifth aspirational district to be covered under the initiative.

2.27 News: Giriraj Singh launches Ombudsperson App for Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

About MGNREGA:

- ✓ The scheme was introduced as a social measure that guarantees "the right to work".

- ✓ The key tenet of this social measure and labour law is that the local government will have to legally provide at least 100 days of wage employment in rural India to enhance their quality of life.

Key objectives:

- ✓ Generation of paid rural employment of not less than 100 days for each worker who volunteers for unskilled labour.
- ✓ Proactively ensuring social inclusion by strengthening livelihood base of rural poor.
- ✓ Creation of durable assets in rural areas such as wells, ponds, roads and canals.
- ✓ Reduce urban migration from rural areas.
- ✓ Create rural infrastructure by using untapped rural labour.

Eligibility criteria for receiving the benefits

- ✓ Must be Citizen of India to seek NREGA benefits.
- ✓ Job seeker has completed 18 years of age at the time of application.
- ✓ The applicant must be part of a local household (i.e. application must be made with local Gram Panchayat).
- ✓ Applicant must volunteer for unskilled labour.

2.28 News: PM-Kisan 3rd Anniversary, transferred Rs 1.80 lakh to farmers accounts directly

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN).

Key Points

- ✓ Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- ✓ It was launched in February 2019.



Funding and Implementation.

- ✓ It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India.
- ✓ It is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Identification of Beneficiaries.

- ✓ The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer families rests with the State / UT Governments.

Objective.

- ✓ To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.

- ✓ To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

PM-KISAN Mobile App:

- ✓ The PM-KISAN Mobile App developed and designed by the National Informatics Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been launched.
- ✓ The farmers can view the status of their application, update or carry out corrections of their Aadhaar cards and also check the history of credits to their bank accounts.

2.29 News: International IP Index 2022: India ranks 43rd

- ✓ Recently, India has improved its overall International Intellectual Property (IIP) score from 38.4% to 38.6%, and the country is ranked 43rd out of 55 countries on the International Intellectual Property Index.
- ✓ International Intellectual Property Index is an annual report compiled by the US Chambers of Commerce.
- ✓ This year (2022) the index is topped by the US with 95.4%.

International Intellectual Property Index

- ✓ The 2020 U.S. Chamber International IP Index titled 'Art of the Possible' creates a template for economies that aspire to become the 21st century, knowledge-based economies through more effective IP protection.

- ✓ In its eighth edition, the Index maps the IP ecosystem in 53 global economies, representing over 90% of global Gross Domestic Product.
- ✓ The Index evaluates the IP framework in each economy across 50 unique indicators which industry believes represent economies with the most effective IP systems.
- ✓ The indicators create a snapshot of an economy overall IP ecosystem and span nine categories of protection:
 - Patents,
 - Copyrights,
 - Trademarks,
 - Design Rights,
 - Trade Secrets,
 - Commercialization of IP Assets,
 - Enforcement,
 - Systemic Efficiency,
 - Membership And Ratification Of International Treaties.

2.30 News: Budget Extends More sops for IFSC

International Financial Services Centres Authority

- ✓ The central government has established IFSC to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).

- ✓ The authority will regulate financial products such as securities, deposits or contracts of insurance, financial services, and financial institutions which have been previously approved by any appropriate regulator such as Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) etc., in an IFSC.
- ✓ The International Financial Services Centres Authority will consist of nine members, appointed by the central government.
- ✓ They will include chairperson of the authority, a member each from the RBI, SEBI, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA); and two members from the Ministry of Finance. In addition, two other members will be appointed on the recommendation of a Selection Committee.
- ✓ Term: All members of the IFSC Authority will have a term of three years, subject to reappointment.

2.31 News: Government Proposes New SEZ Laws

Special Economic Zone:

- ✓ An SEZ is a territory within a country that is typically duty-free (Fiscal Concession) and has different business and commercial laws chiefly to encourage investment and create employment.

- ✓ SEZs are created also to better administer these areas, thereby increasing the ease of doing business.
- ✓ Objectives of the SEZ Act:
 - To create additional economic activity.
 - To boost the export of goods and services.
 - To boost investments.
 - To generate employment.
 - To develop infrastructure facilities.
- ✓ Asia's first EPZ (Export Processing Zones) was established in 1965 at Kandla, Gujarat.
- ✓ The Baba Kalyani led committee was constituted by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to study the existing SEZ policy of India and had submitted its recommendations in November 2018.

2.32 News: Digital currency to arrive in new fiscal, to use blockchain technology

Blockchain technology



- ✓ blockchain is a digital ledger.
- ✓ Ledger is a book containing accounts to which debits and credits are posted from books of original entry.

- ✓ A blockchain is a digitized, decentralized, public ledger
- ✓ The blockchain is an incorruptible digital ledger of transactions that can be programmed to record virtually everything of value.
- ✓ Each list of record in a blockchain is called block.
- ✓ So a blockchain is a continuously growing list of records called blocks, which are linked and secured.

Digital Currency

- ✓ Digital currency is a form of currency that is available only in digital or electronic form.
- ✓ It is also called digital money, electronic money, electronic currency, or cybercash.
- ✓ It does not have physical attributes and is available only in digital form.
- ✓ The transactions involving digital currencies are made using computers or electronic wallets connected to the internet or designated networks.
- ✓ Example: Crypto currency, Virtual Currency, Central Bank Digital Currencies

2.33 News: Indian Exim Bank and Srilanka Sign \$500 Loan Agreement

Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank)

- ✓ Exim Bank was established by the Government of India, under the Export-Import Bank of India Act, 1981 as a purveyor of export credit, mirroring global Export Credit Agencies.

- ✓ Exim Bank serves as a growth engine for industries and SMEs through a wide range of products and services.
- ✓ This includes import of technology and export product development, export production, export marketing, pre-shipment and post-shipment and overseas investment.
- ✓ Exim Bank extends Lines of Credit (LOCs) to overseas financial institutions, regional development banks, sovereign governments and other entities overseas, to enable buyers in those countries to import developmental and infrastructure projects, equipment, goods and services from India, on deferred credit terms.

2.34 News: Creating jobs by Increasing Capex

- ✓ **Capital Expenditure** includes payments on assets like land, buildings, machinery, and equipment, as well as investments in shares, loans, and advances made by the federal government to state and union territory governments, government companies, corporations, and other parties.

2.35 News: Universalise maternity benefit scheme, say activists – Govt. has said

PMMVY will cover second child only when it is a girl

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
(PMMVY)



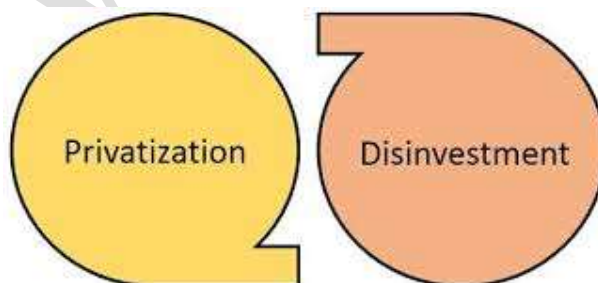
- ✓ Its a maternity benefit programme being implemented in all districts of the country with effect from 1st January, 2017.
- ✓ It is a centrally sponsored scheme being executed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- ✓ Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme: Cash benefits are provided to pregnant women in their bank account directly to meet enhanced nutritional needs and partially compensate for wage loss.
- ✓ All Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM), excluding those who are in regular employment with the Central Government or the State Governments or PSUs or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force.
- ✓ Beneficiaries receive a cash benefit of Rs. 5,000 in three installments on fulfilling the following conditions:
 - Early registration of pregnancy
 - Ante-natal check-up
 - Registration of the birth of the child and completion of first cycle of vaccination for the first living child of the family.
- ✓ The eligible beneficiaries also receive cash incentive under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). Thus, on an average, a woman gets Rs. 6,000.

2.36 News: Tax incentives for philanthropy

- ✓ A systematic study of the impact of tax incentives on charitable donations is the need of the hour.
- ✓ **Tax planning** is an umbrella term which not only covers the various aspects of tax-filing but focuses deeper on the need of reducing one's tax liability and saving tax
- ✓ **Tax Evasion.** Tax Evasion is an illegal way to minimize tax liability through fraudulent techniques like deliberate under-statement of taxable income or inflating expenses. It is an unlawful attempt to reduce one's tax burden.
- ✓ **Tax Avoidance.** Tax avoidance is an act of using legal methods to minimize tax liability. In other words, it is an act of using tax regime in a single territory for one's personal benefits to decrease one's tax burden.

2.37 News: It's time to take a relook at privatisation

Disinvestment



Minority 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.

Majority Disinvestment

- ✓ 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

- ✓ privatisation is a form of majority disinvestment wherein 100% control of the company is passed on to a buyer.

2.38 News.Improvements in agri-credit system can revive agriculture

Kisan Credit Card



- ✓ The scheme was introduced in 1998 for providing adequate and timely credit support from the banking system, under a single window with flexible and simplified procedure to the farmers for their cultivation and

other needs like purchase of agriculture inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. and draw cash for their production needs.

- ✓ The scheme was further extended for the investment credit requirement of farmers viz. allied and non-farm activities in the year 2004.
- ✓ In the Budget-2018-19, government announced the extension of the facility of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to fisheries and animal husbandry farmers to help them to meet their working capital needs.
- ✓ Implementing Agencies: Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Cooperatives.

2.39 Taxation On Virtual Digital Assets

- ✓ Recently, the Finance Minister, in her Budget 2022 announced a 30% tax on income from virtual digital assets. Additionally, she also proposed a Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) on payment made in relation to the transfer of virtual digital assets at 1% above a monetary threshold.



Tax Deduction at Source (TDS)

- ✓ A person (deductor) who is liable to make payment of specified nature to any other person (deductee) shall deduct tax at source and remit the same into the account of the Central Government.

Virtual digital asset

- ✓ The finance bill defined the term “virtual digital asset” by entering a new clause (47A).
- ✓ As per the proposed new clause, a virtual digital asset is proposed to mean any information or code or number or token (not being Indian currency or any foreign currency), generated through cryptographic means.

2.40 GOI planned to issue sovereign ‘green bonds’, to achieve carbon neutrality.

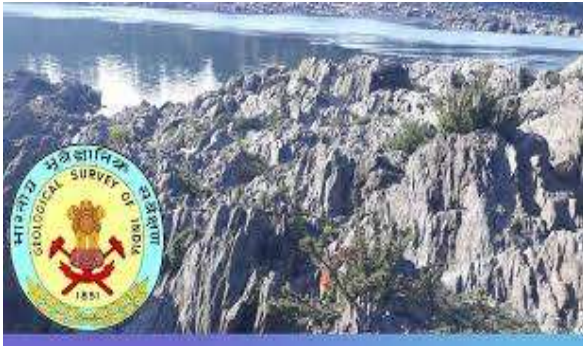
Green Bond

- ✓ A green bond is a type of fixed-income instrument that is specifically earmarked to raise money for climate and environmental projects.
- ✓ These bonds are typically asset-linked and backed by the issuing entity's balance sheet, so they usually carry the same credit rating as their issuers' other debt obligations.



3.INDIAN ENVIRONMENT

3.1 News: India's first geological park will be built in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh



✓ This First geopark approval was given by the Geological Survey of India, under the ministry of mining.

✓ The geological park will be built in Lamheta, because this place is among significant places in the world, from a geological point of view.

- ✓ In 1928, William Henry Sleeman had discovered Dinosaur fossils from this area.
- ✓ UNESCO has also recognised Lamheta as a geo heritage site.
- ✓ Geopark is a unified area, which advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable manner. It also promotes the economic well-being of the people living there.

3.2 News:World Wetlands Day observed on 02 February



- ✓ World Wetlands Day is observed every year on February 2 all over the world. 2022 marks 51 years of the Convention on Wetlands.
- ✓ The international theme for World Wetlands Day 2022 is ‘Wetlands Action for People and Nature’.

3.3 News: Sanctuaries in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh listed as Ramsar sites

- ✓ The Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary near Jamnagar in Gujarat and Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh have been listed as Wetlands of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention.

1.**Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary:** is a bird sanctuary located in Jamnagar district of Gujarat, India. About 300 species of migratory birds have been recorded here. In 2022, on World Wetlands Day (2 February) it was declared as a Ramsar site.

2.**Bakhira Bird Sanctuary:** is the largest natural flood plain wetland of India which is located in Uttar Pradesh. The sanctuary was established in 1980. It is designated as a Ramsar Site on World Wetlands Day (2 February 2022).

3.4 News: IUCN designates Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram



- ✓ The Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram, Haryana, has been declared as India's first "other effective area-based conservation measures" (OECM) site. This was informed by the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change on the occasion of World Wetlands Day.
- ✓ The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) gives OECM tag to those areas that are not protected but support rich biodiversity. The tag designates the area as a biodiversity hotspot on the international map.
- ✓ OECM is a status for a place that has achieved effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity outside protected areas like forests.

3.5 News: SIDBI launches 'waste to wealth creation' programme 2022



- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched the 'Waste to Wealth Creation' programme.

- ✓ The program is designed for women in the Sundarbans in West Bengal.
- ✓ In this, the women will make ornaments and showpieces from the fish scales.
- ✓ SIDBI will extend benefits to 50 women indirectly generating revenues from alternate livelihoods.
- ✓ In this programme, women are expected to become a trainer for replicating and disseminating the knowledge among other aspirants.
- ✓ This is a part of mission Swavalamban of SIDBI that aims to support artisans to become sustainable.

3.6 News: TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit begins

- ✓ The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship event of TERI. It was earlier known as Delhi Sustainable Development Summit. Instituted in 200.
- ✓ It is the only Summit on global issues, taking place in the developing world.

Objective.

- ✓ It has been conceptualized as a single platform to accelerate action towards sustainable development and climate change.

- ✓ It aims to bring together global leaders and thinkers in the fields of sustainable development, energy and environment sectors on a common platform

TERI

- ✓ TERI is a non-profit research institute.
- ✓ It conducts research work in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development for India and the Global South.
- ✓ It was established in 1974 as Tata Energy Research Institute and renamed to The Energy Resources Institute in 2003.

3.7 News: Himachal Pradesh gets 1st Biodiversity Park at Mandi



- ✓ Himachal Pradesh gets the first biodiversity park to make its contribution towards the conservation of endangered Himalayan herbs.
- ✓ This park is set to come up at Mandi's Bhulah valley.

3.8 News: A new genus of a parasitic flowering plant named “Septemeranthus” has recently been discovered from the Nicobar group of islands.

Parasitic Plant

- ✓ The plant that obtains all or part of its nutrition from another plant (the host) without contributing to the benefit of the host and, in some cases, causing extreme damage to the host.
- ✓ The defining structural feature of a parasitic plant is the haustorium, a specialised organ that penetrates the host and forms a vascular union between the plants.



3.9 News: The US East Coast is bracing itself for a “bomb cyclone” that is on course to barrel in from the mid-Atlantic.

Bomb cyclone

- ✓ Its actually used by meteorologists to indicate a mid-latitude cyclone that intensifies rapidly.
- ✓ It is a massive winter storm hammering the coast, bringing strong winds, flooding, ice and snow. It is a combination of rapidly declining pressure and extreme cold.



- ✓ This particular storm is the most explosive ever, observed on the east coast. It is called bomb cyclone, a dramatic name for what happens when the storm explosively strengthens while the pressure plummets.

3.10 News.Explained: What are Ramsar Sites, and what is the significance of the listing?

- ✓ A Ramsar site is a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, which is also known as the ‘Convention on Wetlands’ — an intergovernmental environmental treaty established by UNESCO in 1971, and named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed that year.
- ✓ Ramsar recognition is the identification of wetlands around the world, which are of international importance, especially if they provide habitat to waterfowl
- ✓ There is international interest and cooperation in the conservation of such wetlands and a judicious use of their resources.
- ✓ Sundarbans in West Bengal is the largest Ramsar site in India.
- ✓ Wetlands: Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently. They include mangroves, marshes, rivers, lakes, deltas, floodplains and flooded forests, rice-fields, coral reefs, marine areas no deeper than 6 metres at low tide, as well as human-made wetlands such as waste-water treatment ponds and reservoirs.

3.11 News: Villagers resist Sanctuary tag for langur habitat

- ✓ Neighbours of a golden langur habitat in western Assam's Bongaigaon district have opposed a move by the State government to upgrade it to a wildlife sanctuary.
- ✓ Kakoijana Reserve Forest is one of the better-known homes of the golden langur found only in Assam and Bhutan and a Schedule-I species under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.
- ✓ It is listed as among the world's 25 most endangered primates



Kakoijana reserved forest

- ✓ Its located near Abhayapuri in Bongaigaon district of Assam.
- ✓ The forest is famous for golden langur.
- ✓ Golden langurs are listed in the category of "rare species" in the Red Data Book of International Union for Conservation of Nature.

3.12 News: Rare Insects Sighted in Sheshachalam

Black Percher

- ✓ Its a dragon fly species sighted in Seshachalam Hill for the first time.
- ✓ It is a species of dragon fly.



- ✓ **Conservation status.** It is labelled as of 'least concern' the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List of threatened species.
- ✓ **Habitat and distribution.** It is a common species native of Africa and southern Eurasia. It can be found in almost any type of freshwater habitat.

Seshachalam Hill.

- ✓ They are hilly ranges part of the Eastern Ghats in southern Andhra Pradesh state, in southeastern India.
- ✓ The Seshachalam hill ranges are predominantly present in Tirupati district of the Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh, India.

3.13 News: For 'climate smart' agriculture

- ✓ Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) is a method for assisting those in charge of managing agricultural systems in efficiently responding to climate change.
- ✓ The CSA strategy aims to achieve three goals: increasing production and earnings sustainably, adapting to climate change, and lowering greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible.
- ✓ It's an innovative approach of mapping out development paths that can make agriculture more productive and sustainable, as well as better suited to serve climate change mitigation and adaptation.

4.INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

4.1 News: ADB lends record USD 4.6 bn loans to India in 2021

The Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- ✓ Its a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the Manila, Philippines. The bank is to promote social and economic development in Asia.
- ✓ The bank admits the members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, formerly the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East or ECAFE) and non-regional developed countries.
- ✓ From 31 members at its establishment, ADB now has 68 members.
- ✓ The ADB was modeled closely on the World Bank, and has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions.
- ✓ As of 31 December 2020, Japan and the United States each holds the largest proportion of shares at 15.571%.

4.2 News: PM Narendra Modi address high-level segment of One Ocean Summit



- ✓ The summit was organised by France in Brest, France in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank.
- ✓ The summit was addressed by various other Heads of State and Governments from countries like Germany, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Japan, Canada among others.
- ✓ The goal of the One Ocean Summit is to raise the collective level of ambition of the international community on marine issues.
- ✓ Commitments will be made towards combating illegal fishing, decarbonising shipping and reducing plastic pollution.
- ✓ Will also focus on efforts to improve governance of the high seas and coordinating international scientific research.

4.3 News: GoI launches mission named Operation Ganga to evacuate nationals from Ukraine

- ✓ The Government of India has launched a ‘multi-pronged’ initiative named ‘Operation Ganga’.
- ✓ A dedicated Twitter handle ‘OpGanga Helpline’ to assist Indian evacuation from Ukraine has also been announced.
- ✓ The tensions between Russia and Ukraine are currently heightened, with war erupting in Ukraine after the Russian military launched a series of attacks recently.

4.4 News: New Development Bank 1st multilateral agency to open office in Gift City

- ✓ It is a multilateral development bank jointly founded by the BRICS countries at the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil in 2014.
- ✓ It was formed to support infrastructure and sustainable development efforts in BRICS and other underserved, emerging economies for faster development through innovation and cutting-edge technology.
- ✓ It is headquartered at Shanghai, China.
- ✓ In 2018, the NDB received observer status in the United Nations General Assembly, establishing a firm basis for active and fruitful cooperation with the UN.

Objectives:

- ✓ Fostering development of member countries.
- ✓ Supporting economic growth.
- ✓ Promoting competitiveness and facilitating job creation.
- ✓ Building a knowledge sharing platform among developing countries.
- ✓ To fulfill its purpose, the Bank supports public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments.

4.5 News: Burkina Faso suspended from AU following coup**Burkina Faso**

- ✓ It is a landlocked country in West Africa bordered by Mali to the northwest, Niger to the northeast, Benin to the southeast, Togo and Ghana to the south, and the Ivory Coast to the southwest.
- ✓ Previously called Republic of Upper Volta
- ✓ Its capital and largest city is Ouagadougou.

**About African Union:**

- ✓ The African Union (AU) is a continental union consisting of 55 countries of the continent of Africa, with exception of various territories of European possessions located in Africa.
- ✓ The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched on 9 July 2002 in South Africa.

4.6 News: China, Pak. ink new CPEC agreement

China Pakistan Economic Corridor

- ✓ CPEC is a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan.
- ✓ It is a bilateral project between Pakistan and China, intended to promote connectivity across Pakistan with a network of highways, railways, and pipelines accompanied by energy, industrial, and other infrastructure development projects.
- ✓ It will pave the way for China to access the Middle East and Africa from Gwadar Port, enabling China to access the Indian Ocean and in return China will support development projects in Pakistan to overcome the latter's energy crises and stabilising its faltering economy.
- ✓ CPEC is a part of the Belt and Road Initiative.
- ✓ The BRI, launched in 2013, aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes.

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. It encompassed five kinds of activities:

- Policy coordination

- Trade promotion
- Physical connectivity
- Renminbi internationalisation
- People to people contacts.

✓ **Routes of BRI:**

- **New Silk Road Economic Belt:** It encompasses trade and investment hubs to the north of China; by reaching out to Eurasia including a link via Myanmar to India.
- **Maritime Silk Road (MSR):** It begins via the South China Sea going towards Indo-China, South-East Asia and then around the Indian Ocean thus reaching Africa and Europe.

4.7 News: Quad Ministers set to meet in Australia

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD)

- ✓ Its a strategic security dialogue between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States that is maintained by talks between member countries.
- ✓ The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with the support of Australian Prime Minister John Howard, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney.
- ✓ The dialogue was paralleled by joint military exercises of an unprecedented scale, titled Exercise Malabar.

- ✓ The diplomatic and military arrangement was widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power, and the Chinese government responded to the Quadrilateral dialogue by issuing formal diplomatic protests to its members, calling it "Asian NATO".

4.8 News: China parading Galwan soldier at Winter Games is indefensible

The Galwan River

- ✓ It flows from the disputed Aksai Chin area administered by China to the Ladakh Union Territory of India.
- ✓ It originates on the eastern side of the Karakoram range and flows west to join the Shyok River.
- ✓ Shyok River itself is a tributary of the Indus River, making Galwan a part of the Indus River system.
- ✓ The narrow valley of the Galwan River as it flows through the Karakoram mountains has been a flashpoint between China and India in their border dispute.
- ✓ In 1962, a forward post set up by India in the upper reaches of the Galwan Valley caused an "apogee of tension" between the two countries.



4.9 News:India lacks solar waste handling policy

IRENA has estimated that global photovoltaic waste will touch 78 million tonnes by 2050

- ✓ The **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)** is an intergovernmental organization mandated to facilitate cooperation, advance knowledge, and promote the adoption and sustainable use of renewable energy.
- ✓ It is the first international organisation to focus exclusively on renewable energy, addressing needs in both industrialised and developing countries.
- ✓ It was founded in 2009 and its statute entered into force on 8 July 2010.
- ✓ The agency is headquartered in Masdar City, Abu Dhabi
- ✓ IRENA is an official United Nations observer

5.INTERNAL SECURITY

5.1 News:Ministry of Defence begins Home Delivery of medicines under SeHAT scheme

- ✓ Ministry of Defence (MoD) has launched services for home delivery of medicines for veterans and serving military personnel services under an online medical consultation platform named Services e-Health Assistance and Teleconsultation (SeHAT).
- ✓ It is the tri-services teleconsultation service of the MoD designed for all entitled personnel and their families.
- ✓ As part of the Government's commitment to Digital India and e-Governance, the Defence Minister launched SeHAT in May 2021.
- ✓ It aims to provide healthcare services to patients in their homes.
- ✓ SeHAT Stay Home OPD is based on the lines of eSanjeevani a similar free OPD service run by the MoHFW (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) for all citizens.
- ✓ SeHAT OPD is a patient to doctor system where the patient can consult a doctor remotely through the internet.

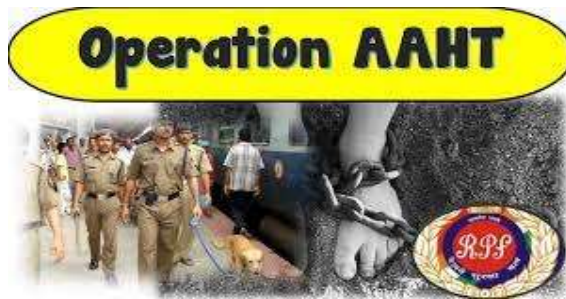
5.2 News:Indian Coast Guard celebrates its 46th Raising Day 2022

- ✓ Indian Coast Guard is celebrating its 46th Raising Day on 01 Feb 2022.

As the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world, the Indian Coast Guard

has played a significant role in securing the Indian Coasts and enforcing regulations in the Maritime Zones of India.

5.3 News: Railway Protection Force (RPF) launches nationwide “AAHT operation” to curb human trafficking



- ✓ The Indian Railways largest, fastest and most reliable carrier for suspects who trafficked scores of women and children.
- ✓ Under Operation AAHT, the infrastructure and intelligence network of the force could be utilised to collect, collate and analyse clues on victims, source, route, destination, popular trains used by suspects, the identity of carriers/agents, kingpins etc and shared with other law-enforcing agencies.
- ✓ Under this, the RPF could act as a bridge cutting across States to assist the local police in the mission to curb the menace.
- ✓ Also, cyber cells would start patrolling the web/social media to look for digital footprints of Human Trafficking and the focus would be more on trains originating from districts bordering Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

5.4 News: US–Bangladesh to conduct joint air exercise ‘Cope South 22’

- ✓ The air forces of Bangladesh and the United States will conduct a joint tactical airlift exercise ‘Cope South 22’.



- ✓ The six days exercise has been sponsored by Pacific Air Forces (PACAF). The bilateral exercise will be held at Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) Kurmitola Cantonment, Dhaka; and Operating Location–Alpha, Sylhet, Bangladesh.
- ✓ The goal of the exercise is bolstering bilateral ties between the two countries through tactical airlift sorties and subject-matter expert exchanges.

5.5 News: India and Oman begins Eastern Bridge–VI Air Exercise

- ✓ the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Force of Oman began a five-day bilateral exercise at the Jodhpur air force station. The exercise is named Eastern Bridge VI, as is in its sixth edition.
- ✓ The exercise seeks to promote professional interaction, exchange of experiences and enhancement of operational knowledge, besides strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

- ✓ The Exercise Eastern Bridge V was held in October 2019 at the Air Force Base Masirah, Oman.

5.6 News: Exercise Cobra Warrior 22: India to participate in multi-nation Exercise in March

- ✓ About Ex Cobra Warrior 22: It is one of the largest annual Royal Air Force exercises (United Kingdom) and aims to train both pilots and other air specialists in planning and executing complex airborne missions.
- ✓ Other Joint Exercises between India and the UK:
 - Navy: Konkan
 - Air Force: Indradhanush
 - Army: Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR

5.7 News: Indian Navy's multilateral exercise Milan 2022 kick-off

MILAN 22:

- ✓ MILAN 22 will witness its largest ever participation, with more than 40 countries sending their warships/ high level delegations.
- ✓ This edition of MILAN will be larger in 'scope and complexity' with focus on exercises at sea including exercises in surface, sub-surface and air domains and weapon firings.
- ✓ Theme 2022: 'Camaraderie – Cohesion – Collaboration'.

MILAN:

- ✓ MILAN is a biennial multilateral naval exercise incepted by Indian Navy in 1995 at Andaman and Nicobar Command.
- ✓ Starting with the participation of only four countries, viz Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand, in the 1995 edition, the exercise has since transitioned leaps and bounds in terms of number of participants and complexity of exercises.
- ✓ Originally conceived in consonance with India's 'Look East Policy', MILAN expanded in ensuing years with India's 'Act East policy' and Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative, to include participation from island nations in the Western IOR (Indian Ocean Region) as also IOR littorals.

5.8 News: Third India–Japan joint exercise 'EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022'

- ✓ Recently, a Joint Military Exercise, "Exercise Dharma Guardian-2022", between India and Japan will be conducted at foreign training node, Belagavi (Belgaum, Karnataka) from 27th February to 10th March 2022.

Dharma Guardian

- ✓ The joint exercise schedule includes house interventions drills, raid on terrorist hideouts in semi urban terrain, combat first aid, unarmed combat & close quarter combat firing where both sides will jointly train,

plan and execute a series of well-developed tactical drills for neutralisation of likely threats.

- ✓ Special emphasis is being laid on enhancing tactical skills to fight global terrorism and on enhancing inter-operability between the forces and to promote Army to Army relations.
- ✓ **Other Military Exercises between India and Japan**
 - Malabar: India and Japan with the United States and Australia participate in the naval wargaming exercise named Malabar.
 - JIMEX (naval)
 - SHINYUU Maitri (Air Force)

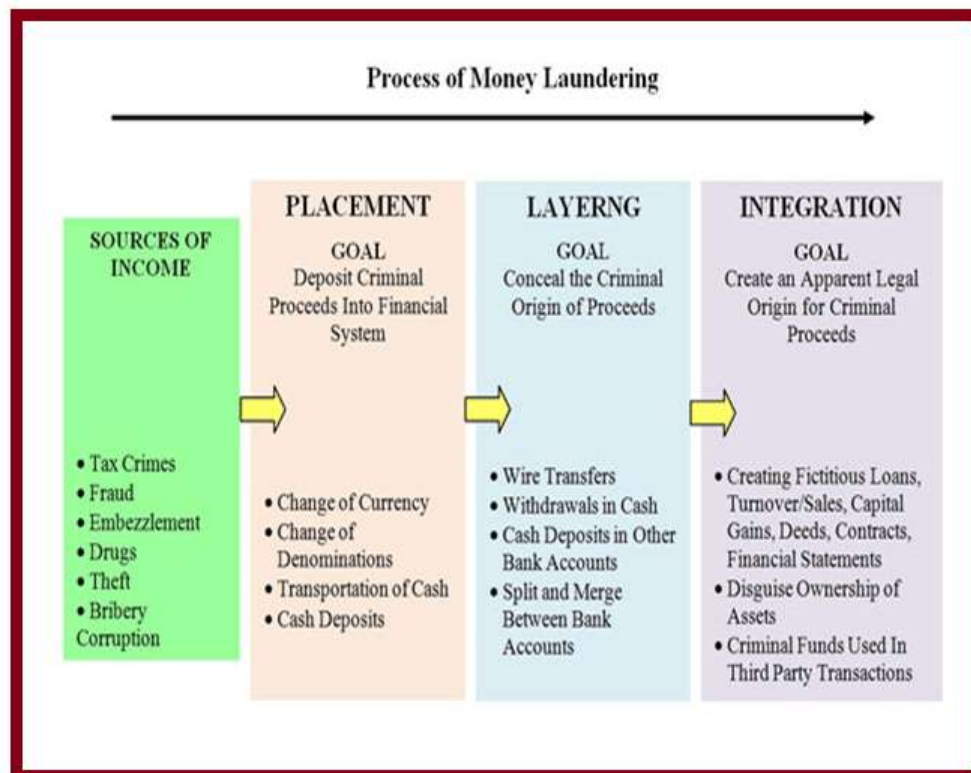
5.9 News: IAF pulls out of multilateral air Exercise ‘Cobra Warrior 22’ in UK Amid Ukraine Crisis

- ✓ Cobra Warrior is a multi-nation air exercise, that will be held at Royal Air Force (station) Waddington in United Kingdom.
- ✓ Cobra Warrior Exercises are the largest joint military exercises, which are conducted by Royal Air Force (RAF) in United Kingdom for more than a decade.
- ✓ These exercises are the most challenging training for aircrew.
- ✓ It is also the final step for aircrew that seek to qualify as Qualified Weapons Instructors (QWI), QWI Intelligence, Qualified Multi-engine

Tactics Instructors, Surveillance & Reconnaissance and Qualified Space Instructors Course.

5.10 News: SC examines allegations of rampant misuse of PMLA

Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002




- ✓ Money Laundering refers to the conversion or misrepresentation of money which has been illegally obtained by unlawful sources and methods.
- ✓ It is a criminal offence in India and charges in this instance refer to statutory provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

- ✓ The PMLA was enacted in response to India's global commitment (Vienna Convention) to combat the menace of money laundering. These include:
- ✓ United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 1988
- ✓ Basle Statement of Principles, 1989
- ✓ Forty Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, 1990
- ✓ Political Declaration and Global Program of Action adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1990
- ✓ The PMLA is applicable to all persons which include individuals, companies, firms, partnership firms, associations of persons or incorporations and any agency, office or branch owned or controlled by any of the above-mentioned persons.

6.SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

6.1 News.IISc. commissions one of India's most powerful supercomputers

'Param Pravega'

- ✓ Recently, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru installed the supercomputer 'Param Pravega'. It has a supercomputing capacity of 3.3 petaflops.
- 
- ✓ It has been installed under the government's National Supercomputing Mission.
 - ✓ The National Supercomputing Mission is intended to indigenise the development and manufacturing of powerful computers.
 - ✓ A supercomputer is a computer that performs at or near the currently highest operational rate for computers.
 - ✓ India's first supercomputer was PARAM 8000.
 - ✓ PARAM Shivay, the first supercomputer assembled indigenously, was installed in IIT (BHU), followed by PARAM Shakti, PARAM Brahma, PARAM Yukti, PARAM Sanganak at IIT-Kharagpur, IISER, Pune, JNCASR, Bengaluru and IIT Kanpur respectively.
 - ✓ In 2020, PARAM Siddhi, the High-Performance Computing-Artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer, achieved global ranking of 62nd in Top 500 most powerful supercomputer systems in the world.

6.2 News: NASA will retire International Space Station in 2031

- ✓ The International Space Station (ISS) is a space station, or a habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit.
- ✓ Its first component launched into orbit in 1998, and the ISS is now the largest human-made body in low Earth orbit.
- ✓ It circles the Earth in roughly 92 minutes and completes 15.5 orbits per day.
- ✓ The ISS programme is a joint project between five participating space agencies:
 1. NASA (United States),
 2. Roscosmos (Russia),
 3. JAXA (Japan),
 4. ESA (Europe), and
 5. CSA (Canada)
- ✓ Its ownership and use has been established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements.
- ✓ Continuous presence at ISS has resulted in the longest continuous human presence in low earth orbit.
- ✓ It is expected to operate until 2030.
- ✓ NASA plans to decommission it in 2031.

6.3 News: ISRO decommissioned INSAT-4B through 11 Re-orbiting manoeuvres



✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has decommissioned INSAT-4B

✓ INSAT-4B was launched on 12 March 2007 for DTH and other communication services.

- ✓ After completing nearly 14 years of on-orbit operations, the C band and Ku band payload services of INSAT-4B were migrated to other GSATs before commencement of the post mission disposal(PMD).
- ✓ INSAT-4B is the 21st Indian GEO satellite to undergo PMD.

6.4 News: World Pulses Day 2022: Observed On 10 February

- ✓ World Pulses Day 2022: It is a global event and is celebrated on 10 February to highlight the importance of pulses as a worldwide food.
- ✓ They are known as legumes. Pulses are the edible seeds of leguminous plants that are cultivated for food. The most commonly consumed pulses are dried beans, lentils, and peas. Also, Staple dishes and cuisines feature pulses from across the world.
- ✓ The theme of World Pulses Day 2022 is "Pulses to empower youth in achieving sustainable agrifood systems".

- ✓ The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on 20 December 2013 proclaiming 2016 as the International Year of Pulses. The celebration of the year was led by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. The General Assembly proclaimed 10 February to be observed as World Pulses Day in 2019 by passing a resolution

6.5 News: ISRO successfully launches earth observation satellite, EOS-04

Earth Observation Satellites

- ✓ Earth observation satellites are the satellites equipped with remote sensing technology. Earth observation is the gathering of information about Earth's physical, chemical and biological systems.
- ✓ Many earth observation satellites have been employed on sun-synchronous orbit.
- ✓ Other earth observation satellites launched by ISRO include RESOURCESAT- 2, 2A, CARTOSAT-1, 2, 2A, 2B, RISAT-1 and 2, OCEANSAT-2, Megha-Tropiques, SARAL and SCATSAT-1, INSAT-3DR, 3D, etc.

EOS-04:

- ✓ EOS-04 weighing 1,710 kg and with a mission life of ten years designed to provide high quality images under all weather conditions for

applications such as Agriculture, Forestry and Plantations, Soil Moisture and Hydrology and Flood mapping.

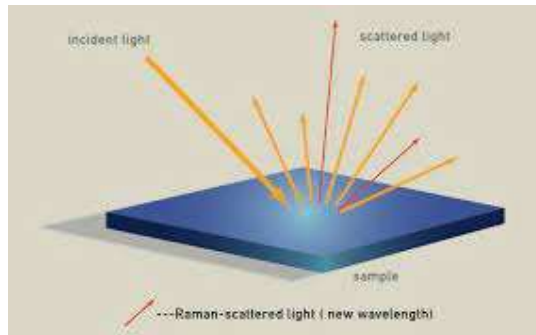
- ✓ It will complement the data from Resourcesat, Cartosat and RISAT-2B series of satellites that are already in orbit.
- ✓ The first of these newly named satellites, EOS-01, launched in November 2020, is in orbit right now. EOS-02, a micro-satellite to be flown on a new launch vehicle called SSLV (Small Satellite Launch Vehicle) is yet to be launched, while launch of EOS-03 had ended in a failure in August, 2021.
- ✓ It will be placed in a sun synchronous polar orbit of 529 km, is a radar-imaging satellite which would have made it a part of the RISAT series earlier.

6.6 News: National Science Day 2022: 28 February

- ✓ The National Science Day is celebrated on 28 February each year in India to spread the message about the importance of science in the daily life of the people. On this day, Sir CV Raman had announced the discovery of the Raman Effect for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930. The government of India designated 28 February as National Science Day (NSD) in 1986.

- ✓ The National Science Day theme for 2022: 'Integrated Approach in S&T for Sustainable Future'. The day also commemorates the discovery of the Raman effect.

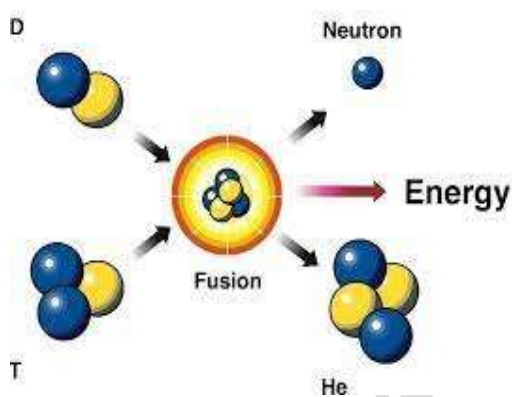
Raman Effect



- ✓ Some part of light beam after passing through a transparent medium gets scattered.
- ✓ This phenomenon of scattering of light is termed as Raman Scattering and the cause of scattering is called the Raman Effect.
- ✓ The wavelength of these scattered rays is different from that of the incident rays of light.
- ✓ This phenomenon was explained/discovered by Indian physicist Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman (CV Raman) on February 28, 1928.
- ✓ This discovery was awarded with the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
- ✓ Feb 28 is observed as National Science Day in India.
- ✓ In the Raman effect, when light is scattered off an object, say a molecule, two bands are observed, with higher and lower frequency than the original light, called the Stokes and anti-Stokes bands, respectively.

- ✓ By studying the relative intensity of the two bands, it is possible to estimate the temperature of the object which scatters the light. This principle is used in Raman Thermometry.

6.7 News: Explained: Breakthrough in nuclear fusion, and why it is significant



- ✓ Scientists in the United Kingdom have managed to produce the largest amount of energy so far from a nuclear fusion reaction, the same process that makes the Sun, and all other stars, shine and emit energy. This result is being seen as a major breakthrough in the ongoing global efforts to produce a fusion nuclear reactor.
- ✓ **Nuclear Fusion** reactions power the Sun and other stars.
- ✓ In a fusion reaction, two light nuclei merge to form a single heavier nucleus.
- ✓ The process releases energy because the total mass of the resulting single nucleus is less than the mass of the two original nuclei. The leftover mass becomes energy.

6.8 News: ISRO puts 3 satellites into orbit aboard PSLV C-52

PSLV-C52/EOS-04 Mission

- ✓ PSLV-C52 India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C52 injected Earth Observation Satellite EOS-04, into an intended sun synchronous polar orbit of 529 km altitude from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR, Sriharikota.

Earth Observation Satellites

- ✓ Earth observation satellites are the satellites equipped with remote sensing technology.
- ✓ Earth observation is the gathering of information about Earth's physical, chemical and biological systems.
- ✓ Many earth observation satellites have been employed on sun-synchronous orbit.
- ✓ Other earth observation satellites launched by ISRO include RESOURCESAT- 2, 2A, CARTOSAT-1, 2, 2A, 2B, RISAT-1 and 2, OCEANSAT-2, Megha-Tropiques, SARAL and SCATSAT-1, INSAT-3DR, 3D, etc.

6.9 News: Phensedyl smuggling a challenge for BSF

- ✓ Phensedyl is a codeine-based cough syrup.
- ✓ Phensedyl is a schedule H drug and can only be sold on a doctor's prescription.

- ✓ It is consumed in large quantities against the recommended small dose to “get a kick”.
- ✓ It is smuggled from India and abused as an intoxicant in Bangladesh that follows liquor prohibition.

WE4UIAS

7.CULTURE

7.1 News: Torgya Festival celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh 2022



- ✓ The three days long Torgya Festival of the Monpa tribal community of Arunachal Pradesh is celebrated at Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ The main attraction of the festival is the ‘Sha-na Cham’, the ritual dance performed by monks.

Monpa Tribes

- ✓ They are major tribe of Arunachal Pradesh in northeastern India.
- ✓ The Monpa are believed to be the only nomadic tribe in Northeast India - they are totally dependent on animals like sheep, cow, yak, goats and horses.
- ✓ The Monpa have a very close affinity with the Sharchops of Bhutan.
- ✓ Their languages are Tibeto-Burman languages written with the Tibetan alphabet.

7.2 News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled 'Statue of Equality' in Hyderabad, Telangana.



- ✓ Ramanuja was an advocate of social equality among all sections of people centuries ago, and encouraged temples to open their doors to everyone irrespective of caste or position in society at a time when people of many castes were forbidden from entering them.
- ✓ He took education to those who were deprived of it. His greatest contribution is the propagation of the concept of “vasudhaiva kutumbakam”, which translates as “all the universe is one family”.
- ✓ It is a 216-foot tall statue, which is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals: gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc.
- ✓ The statue is mounted on a 54-foot high base building named 'Bhadra Vedi'.

Ramanujacharya

- ✓ Born in 1017 in Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu, Ramanujacharya is revered as a Vedic philosopher and social reformer.
- ✓ He was named Lakshmana at the time of his birth. He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one.
- ✓ He traveled across India, advocating equality and social justice.

- ✓ He revived the Bhakti movement, and his preachings inspired other Bhakti schools of thought. He is considered to be the inspiration for poets like Annamacharya, Bhakta Ramdas, Thyagaraja, Kabir, and Meerabai.
- ✓ He is famous as the chief proponent of Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedānta.
- ✓ VishishtAdvaita (literally "Advaita with uniqueness; qualifications") is a non-dualistic school of Vedanta philosophy.
- ✓ He went on to write nine scriptures known as the navaratnas, and composed numerous commentaries on Vedic scriptures.
- ✓ Ramanuja's most important writings include his commentary on the Vedanta Sutras (the Sri Bhasya) and his commentary on the Bhagavad-Gita (the Gitabhasya).
- ✓ His other writings include the Vedartha Samgraha (Summary of the Meaning of the Veda), the Vedantasara (Essence of Vedanta), and Vedantadipa (Lamp of Vedanta).
- ✓ He has also stressed the need of being in tune with nature and not to over-exploit.

7.3 News: National Women's Day of India 2022

- ✓ We celebrate National Women's Day on the occasion of Sarojini Naidu's birthday on 13 February 1879.

- ✓ She was a gifted national leader, a freedom fighter, and a celebrated poet. She was known as the 'Nightingale of India' and 'Bharat Kokila'.
- ✓ Her birth anniversary was chosen to commemorate Indian women and their contribution to the nation in every sphere of life.

Significant contributions:

- ✓ In 1905, she joined the Indian National Movement and began her political career. She became a follower of Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy of swaraj.
- ✓ She joined the Home Rule movement launched by Annie Besant.
- ✓ She was arrested, along with other Congress leaders including Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Madan Mohan Malaviya for participating in the 1930 Salt March.
- ✓ Sarojini was one of the major figures to have led the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Quit India Movement.
- ✓ Sarojni Naidu also accompanied Mahatma Gandhi to London for the Second Round Table Conference for Indian–British cooperation in 1931.
- ✓ She was instrumental in establishing the Women's India Association, founded by Annie Besant in 1917.
- ✓ She was appointed the President of the Indian National Congress in 1925 and later became the Governor of the United Provinces in 1947, becoming the first woman to hold the office of Governor in the Dominion of India.

- ✓ Wrote the 1300-line poem, 'Lady of the Lake' at a very young age.
- ✓ She gained international acclaim for her Persian-language play 'Maher Muneer.'

7.4 News: GoI allocates Rs 2.26 Crores for Telangana's Medaram Jatara Festival 2022

- ✓ Asia's Largest Tribal Festival, the Medharam Jathara commences with traditional fervour in Telangana
- ✓ Ministry of Tribal Affairs is proactively supporting and covering the events of the festival
- ✓ Promoting Tribal Culture, Traditions, Festivals and Heritage central to the essence of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- ✓ The celebrations of the First Day of the auspicious and much-awaited biennial "Medaram Jathara" commenced on the 16th of February 2022 as the arrival of Saralamma on to the 'Medaram Gaddhe' (Platform) was undertaken by the Koya Tribe of Telangana.
- ✓ Medaram Jatara is the second-largest fair of India, after the Kumbh Mela, celebrated by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana- the Koya tribe for four days.
- ✓ It is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saralamma.

- ✓ It is celebrated once in two years in the month of 'Magha' (February) on the full moon day. Saralamma was the daughter of Sammakka.
- ✓ Her idol, according to the rituals, is installed in a temple at Kannepalli, a small village near Medaram.

7.5 News Maru Mahotsav or Jaisalmer Desert Festival celebrated in Rajasthan.

- ✓ The renowned Jaisalmer Desert Festival, also known as Maru Mahotsav of the Golden City started from 13 to 16 February 2022 at Pokaran village in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. It is a four-day-long annual event. Regional folk dances such as Kalbelia, Kachhi Ghodi, Gair will be performed.

7.6 News: International Mother Language Day observed on 21 February

- ✓ International Mother Language Day 2022: It is observed on 21 February to spread awareness about the importance of linguistic, cultural diversity, and multilingualism. Check below the theme of the day, its history behind celebration, significance,
- ✓ In November 1999, the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) proclaimed International Mother Language Day .

- ✓ The theme of International Mother Language Day 2022 is "Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities".

7.7 News: G Kishan Reddy inaugurate a conference on Indian temple architecture 'Devayatanam'

- ✓ DEVAYATANAM: Conference on Indian Temple Architecture

- ✓ About: In a celebration under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the



- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is organizing a two-day international conference 'Devayatanam- An odyssey of Indian temple architecture.
- ✓ The Conference on Indian Temple Architecture is in line with 5 V's, i. e. Vikas (development), Virasat (heritage), Vishwas (trust), Vignan (knowledge).
- ✓ These are expected to lead us to become a vishwaguru so that India shows the world the way.
- ✓ Importance: Conference on Indian Temple Architecture deliberated upon the philosophical, religious, social, economic, technical, scientific, art and architectural aspects of the temple.

7.8 News: Hoysala temples nominated

- ✓ The Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala — the famed Hoysala temples of Belur, Halebid and Somananthpura in the State — has been finalised as India's nomination for consideration as World Heritage for 2022-23.

Hoysala architecture



- ✓ It is the building style developed under the rule of the Hoysala Empire between the 11th and 14th centuries, mostly concentrated in southern Karnataka.
- ✓ Hoysala temples are sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style seems between Dravida and Nagara styles.
- ✓ They are made out of soapstone which is a relatively soft stone.
- ✓ Star-like ground-plans and a profusion of decorative carvings.
- ✓ Some of the famous temples are:
 1. Hoysaleswara temple at Halebid, Karnataka (AD 1150)
 2. Chennakeshava temple in Somnathpura, Karnataka (AD 1268)
 3. Kesava temple at Belur, Karnataka (AD 1117)