



# Current Affairs

## Monthly Compilation for IAS/PCS Exams July 2018

Powered by :



gradeup



## Daily Current Affairs for UPSC IAS Preparation

**02 July 2018**

### 1. India gets its 37th World Unesco World Heritage Site

- India's nomination of the "Victorian and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai " has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.
- The decision was taken at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO at Manama in Bahrain.
- As recommended by the World Heritage Committee, India accepted the renaming of the ensemble as "Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai".
- This makes Mumbai city the second city in India after Ahmedabad to be inscribed on the World Heritage List.
- India now has overall 37 World Heritage Inscriptions with 29 Cultural, 07 Natural and 01 Mixed sites.
- India stands second largest in number after China in terms of the number of World Heritage properties in ASPAC (Asia and Pacific) region, it is overall sixth in the world.
- The Ensemble consists of 94 buildings primarily of 19th-century Victorian Gothic revival and early 20th century Art Deco style of architecture with the Oval Maidan in the centre.
- The inscription has been done under Criteria (ii) and (iv) as defined in the UNESCO's Operational Guidelines.
- Criterion (ii) refers to the important interchange of human values, over a span of time on development of architecture, monumental arts, town planning and landscape.
- Criterion (iv) refers to being an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates a significant stage (s) in human history.
- Currently, 42 sites from the country figures in the Tentative List of World Heritage.

- The Ministry of Culture recommends one property every year for nomination to UNESCO.

### **Related Information**

#### **Criteria for Selection of World Heritage Sites-**

- These criteria are explained in the World Heritage Convention, 1972.
- These criteria are regularly revised by the World Heritage Committee to reflect the evolution of the World Heritage concept itself.

#### **Tentative lists of Heritage Sites-**

- All countries are required to submit their Tentative Lists of places which they consider to be a cultural or natural heritage of outstanding universal value and therefore suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- If any site is listed in World Heritage Sites, then it must be removed from the tentative list.

#### **World Heritage Sites in India-**

- There are 37 (27 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed) World Heritage Sites in India after the inclusion of "Victorian and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai" in July 2018.
- In 2016, following three sites have been listed in World Heritage Sites-
  - (i) Nalanda Mahavihara University, Bihar
  - (ii) Capitol Building Complex- Chandigarh
  - (iii) Khangchendzonga National Park, Sikkim
- In July 2017, Ahmedabad became India's first city to be listed in World Heritage Sites.
- In July 2018, Victorian and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai listed as 37<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Sites from India.
- Only one mixed-criteria site in India is Khangchendzonga National Park, Sikkim.

Topic- GS-1- Art and Culture

Source-PIB

2. **Asia's first patent arbitration centre to open in Tokyo**

- Asia's first arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property is slated to open in Tokyo to resolve the growing number of disputes in the region.
- The International Arbitration Centre in Tokyo (IACT) is set to have around a dozen arbitrators from around the world, who would try to resolve disputes within a period of one year.
- The IACT is due to handling disputes between non-Japanese companies also if both parties agree.

Topic- GS-2- International Affairs

Source- Business Standards

3. **Maharashtra govt announced 'Kanya Van Samruddhi Yojana'**

- The Maharashtra government announced a new scheme called 'Kanya Van Samruddhi Yojana', wherein farmers families where girl children are born will be given saplings for plantation.
- The scheme is aimed at empowering women and promoting tree plantation.
- A farmer family blessed with a girl child between April 1 and March 31 can make an application with the gram panchayat after which they will get 10 saplings free of cost from the forest department.
- It is expected that the income from these trees will be utilised for safeguarding the future of the girls.
- The saplings will be of different varieties, including teakwood, mango, jackfruit, black plum and tamarind.
- The scheme will be applicable for the maximum of two girls.

Topic- GS-2- Schemes

Source- Business Standards

4. **'Black Beauty' meteorite reveals when life may have existed on Mars**

- Researchers from Natural History Museum of Denmark found new evidence for this rapid crystallisation and crust formation on Mars.

- The study, based on the analysis of the rare Mars meteorite **Black Beauty**, significantly expands the window for when life might have existed on Mars.
- Crust formation is an important step in the development of terrestrial planets, and what makes Black Beauty special and expensive is that it contains small pieces of the crust from Mars.
- More precisely, Black Beauty contains the rare mineral zircon, in which researchers have found a high concentration of hafnium.
- Zircon is a very robust mineral that is ideally suited to provide absolute ages.
- Zircon also acts as a small time capsule as it preserves information about the environment where and when it was created.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- DD News

5. **PM meets members of Mission Shaurya Team**

- The Prime Minister met a group of ten tribal students from Maharashtra.
- The students were a part of a team of the "Mission Shaurya" initiative of the Adivasi Vikas Vibhag of the Maharashtra State Government.
- Five students out of this group successfully scaled Mt. Everest in May 2018.

Topic- Important for PCS Exams

Source- PIB

6. **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) recovered smuggled Exotic Birds**

- Illegal import of wildlife which is in violation of the Wild Life Protection Act automatically becomes a violation of the Customs Act by virtue of Section 111(d) of the Customs Act.
- All the birds have consequently been seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 read with the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972.
- DRI is committed to combating Wild Life Crime including cross-border crime such as trafficking in wildlife art-crafts.

## Related Information

### Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)

- The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) is an Indian intelligence agency.
- It is India's chief anti-smuggling intelligence, investigations and operations agency.
- The Directorate is run by officers from the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

Topic- GS-3- Indian Economy

Source-PIB

### 7. Suresh Prabhu launched Mobile App 'ReUnite'

- Union Minister Suresh Prabhu launched a mobile application called **ReUnite** which helps to track and trace missing and abandoned children in India.
- The App is developed by the NGO "BachpanBachaoAndolan&Capgemini".
- The app is multiuser where parents and citizens can upload pictures of children, and provide detailed description like name, birthmark, address, report to the police station, search and identify missing kids.

## Related Information

### BachpanBachaoAndolan (BBA)

- BBA is India's largest movement for the protection of children and works along with law enforcement agencies and policymakers.
- BBA has played a very important role in the formulation of several laws for the protection of child's rights.

Topic- GS-2- The role of NGOs

Source-PIB

**03 July 2018**

### 1. Sashakt: the 5-pronged strategy for NPAs

- Finance minister Piyush Goyal said that government has accepted a report submitted by a committee of bankers led by Punjab National Bank chairman Sunil Mehta.
- The committee has recommended a five-pronged strategy -- Project 'Sashakt'.

- 'SASHAKT' stands for strengthening and the whole objective was to strengthen the credit capacity, credit culture and portfolio of public sector banks.
- The panel has recommended the creation of an AMC (Asset Management Company) under the framework of an alternative investment fund (AIF) to deal with NPA cases of more than 500 crore rupees,
- The resolution process which will be entirely led by banks.

Topic- GS-3- Indian Economy

Source- DD News

### 2. Four species added to recovery programme by Wildlife Board

- The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) recently added four species-  
(a) The Northern River Terrapin,  
(b) Clouded Leopard,  
(c) Arabian Sea Humpback Whale,  
(d) Red Panda  
to a Recovery Programme for Critically Endangered Species on the recommendation of a Standing Committee.
- The programme is one of the three components of the centrally funded scheme, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH).
- So far, 17 species have been identified under the recovery programme.
- These are the Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), Dolphin, Hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, Marine Turtles, Dugongs, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.

## Related Information

### Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH)

- It is started in 2008-09 for providing support to protected areas, protection of wildlife outside protected areas and recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats.

### **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)**

- National Board for Wild Life is a "Statutory Organization" constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- The board is "advisory" in nature and advises the Central Government on framing policies and measures for conservation of wildlife in the country.
- It serves as an apex body to review all wildlife-related matters and approve projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries.
- The National Board for Wildlife has 47 members with the Prime Minister in the Chair.
- The Minister in charge of the Ministry of Environment & Forests in the Central Government is the Vice-Chairperson.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Down To Earth

#### **3. Century's longest total lunar eclipse to be seen in Dubai on July 27**

- Dubai is all set to witness a total lunar eclipse on the night of July 27, an observatory in Dubai has announced.
- According to the Dubai Astronomy Group, the eclipse will last for about one hour and 43 minutes, the longest in the century, and will also feature a "blood moon".

### **Related Information**

#### **Eclipse**

- An eclipse happens when a planet or a moon gets in the way of the sun's light. we can experience two kinds of eclipses: solar eclipses and lunar eclipses.

#### **Solar Eclipse-**

- A solar eclipse (as seen from the planet Earth) is a type of eclipse that occurs when the **Moon passes between the Sun and Earth**, and when the Moon fully or partially blocks ("occults") the Sun.
- This can happen only at new moon when the Sun and the Moon are in conjunction as seen from Earth in an alignment referred to as syzygy.

- In a total eclipse, the disk of the Sun is fully obscured by the Moon. In partial and annular eclipses, only part of the Sun is obscured.

#### **Lunar Eclipse**

- During a lunar eclipse, **Earth gets in the way of the sun's light hitting the moon.**
- That means that during the night, a full moon fades away as Earth's shadow covers it up.
- **Blood Moon or Copper Moon-** During a lunar eclipse the moon looks reddish because Earth's atmosphere absorbs the other colours while it bends some sunlight toward the moon. It is Known as Blood Moon or Copper Moon

#### **What is a blue moon**

- When a full moon occurs twice in a month, the second full moon is called a blue moon.

#### **Super Moon**

- The coming lunar eclipse will be more spectacular because, during the eclipse, the Moon will be near its perigee and hence it will look larger than an average full Moon and is termed a Super Moon.

Topic- GS-1-Physical Geography

Source- DD News

#### **4. Himachal gets the national award for best performance under PMSMA'**

- Himachal Pradesh has been adjudged first among states for its performance under the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritav Abhiyan (PMSMA) in the country.
- The Union government has conferred the award upon Himachal Pradesh for bringing the maximum number of women for the ante-natal check-up to the PMSMA clinics.

### **Related Information**

#### **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)**

- The PMSMA programme was launched in 2016 to fulfil his vision and ensure comprehensive and quality antenatal checkups to pregnant women across India.

- The Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan has been launched by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India.
- The program aims to provide assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care, free of cost, universally to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month.

Topic- GS-2- Schemes

Source- Business Standard

5. **UNESCO declares Colombia's Chiribiquete park world heritage site**

- UNESCO has placed Colombia's Chiribiquete national park on its list of world heritage sites.
- It is also famous for its table-top rock formations known as tepuis, which rise out of the forest.
- It is the ninth site in Colombia to be given world heritage status.

Topic- GS-1-Art and Culture

Source- BBC

## 04 July 2018

1. **Interpol and its different notices**

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have approached the Interpol to bring back fugitive economic offenders such as Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi and Vijay Mallya, who are living abroad.

### **What is Interpol?**

- Interpol is the shorter and better-known name of the International Criminal Police Organization, a network comprising 192-member nations, including India.
- The agency, with its headquarters in Lyon, France, was established in 1923.
- The Interpol basically connects police across the world even if these individual member nations do not have diplomatic relations.

### **India and Interpol**

- India has been a member since 1956.

- India maintains a National Central Bureau which serves as the national platform for cooperation between domestic law enforcement units and the international police community.
- India has collaborated with the Interpol in tackling a myriad of organised crimes such as poaching, wildlife trafficking, spurious drugs and fake medicine rackets, among others.

### **What does Interpol do?**

- The Interpol facilitates information exchange, knowledge sharing and research between nations.
- This is done by issuing colour-coded 'notices' in four languages -
  - (a) English,
  - (b) Spanish,
  - (c) French and
  - (d) Arabic
- The Interpol doesn't have law enforcement powers such as arrest.
- When a member nation approaches it with a specific request backed with court orders, the Interpol sends it out to other countries. The information received is sent back to the country.

### **What are different Interpol notices?**

#### **Red Notice**

- A Red Notice is a request to locate and provisionally arrest an individual pending extradition.
- It is issued by the General Secretariat at the request of a member country or an international tribunal based on a valid national arrest warrant.
- However, the arrest of the fugitive is based on the rule of the member nation where he or she is located.

#### **Yellow Notice**

- A Yellow Notice is issued to help locate missing persons, often minors, or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
- This is highly useful in cases of human trafficking or in case of missing persons due to calamities

#### **Blue Notice**

- A Blue Notice is issued to collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime. This does not guarantee extradition or arrest of the person.

### Black Notice

- A Black Notice is a request to seek information on unidentified bodies in member nations.

### Green Notice

- A Green Notice is issued to provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries.

### Orange Notice

- An Orange Notice is issued to provide warnings about warn of an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.

### Purple Notice

- A Purple Notice is a request to seek or provide information on the modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals.

### INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notice

- It is issued for individuals and entities that are subject to sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council.
- Its principal function is to alert national law enforcement authorities that sanctions such as assets freeze, arms embargo, and travel ban apply to designated individuals and entities.

Topic- GS-2- Important International institutions

Source- The Hindu

#### 2. Bengaluru to get India's first e-waste plant

- The country's first e-waste recycling unit will come up in Bengaluru.
- The unit to be set up by the ministry of chemicals and fertilisers.

### Related Information

- The country's e-waste generation is on the rise and estimated to reach 52 lakh tonnes in 2020.
- A 2016 study by Assocham and KPMG ranked India among the top five countries in e-waste generation, with an estimated 1.85 million tonnes generated annually.

- According to the study, computers comprised 70% of the total e-waste and telecommunication equipment accounted for 12%.
- Bengaluru ranked third after Mumbai and Delhi and generated nearly 92,000 tonnes of e-waste annually.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Times of India

#### 3. An app "Nutrify India Now" to measure nutrition content of Indian food

- The Indian Council of Medical Research's Hyderabad-based National Institute of Nutrition has launched a mobile App "Nutrify India Now" that offers comprehensive nutrition related information on a wide range of Indian food articles.
- The app is based on authentic and well-researched India-specific databases and uses guidelines prescribed by ICMR, the apex medical research body of the country.
- It also provides information on several parameters such as protein, vitamin and mineral content of the food items, besides their calorific value.
- One can search in as many as 17 languages and six food groups are covered.

Topic-GS-2-E-governance

Source- Down to Earth

#### 4. Indian scientists discovered exoplanet 600 light years away

- Indian scientists at Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, found a sub-Saturn or super-Neptune size planet about 600 light years away from the Earth.
- The discovery was made by measuring the mass of the planet using the indigenously designed "PRL Advance Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search" (PARAS) spectrograph.
- The discovery is important for understanding the formation mechanism of sub-Saturn and super-Neptune like planets that are too close to host star.

### PARAS (PRL Advance Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search)

- The spectrograph is the first of its kind in the country which can measure the mass of a planet going around a star.
- They measured the mass of the planet using the indigenously designed PARAS spectrograph integrated with the 1.2-metre telescope located at PRL's Gurushikhar Observatory in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- DD News

5. **"Behdienkhlam" festival at Jowai, Meghalaya**

- Most popular festival of the Jaintia tribe, Behdienkhlam is celebrated in the month of July for good health, property and bumper harvest.
- Although Behdienkhlam is celebrated all over the Jaintia hills, the main spectacle happens in the town of Jowai, about 64 km away from Shillong.
- The non-Christian 'Pnar' people who believe either in the traditional faith of 'Niamtre' or Hinduism observe this festival.

Topic- GS-1-Art and Culture

Source- Times of India

6. **MP govt launched power bill waiver scheme 'Sambal'**

- Madhya Pradesh government has launched an outstanding power bill waiver scheme and subsidised power scheme 'Sambal' for labourers and poor families.
- Under the scheme, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of 200 rupees per month.
- The objective of this scheme to make sure that all the households have power facility in the state.

Topic- GS-2- Schemes

Source- AIR

**05 July 2018**

**1. Cabinet approved accession to WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT), 1996 and WIPO Performance and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT), 1996**

- These treaties will extend coverage of copyright to the internet and the digital environment.

- The approval is a step towards the objective laid in the National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy adopted by the Government on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

**National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy-**

aims to get value for IPRs through commercialization by providing guidance and support to EPR owners about commercial opportunities of e-commerce through the Internet and mobile platforms.

- Both the treaties provide the framework for creators and rights owners to use technical tools to protect their works and safeguard information about their use i.e. Protection of Technological Protection Measures (TPMs) and Rights Management Information (RMI).

**Related Information**

**Copyright Act, 1957**

- The Copyright Act, 1957 was amended in 2012 to bring it in conformity, with WCT and WPPT.
- These include the amendment in the definition of "Communication to the public" to make it applicable to the digital environment (Section 2(ff)) as also introduced provisions related to Technological.
- Other Important sections of the acts are-
  - (a) Protection Measures (Section 65A) &
  - (b) Rights Management Information (Section 65B)
  - (c) Moral rights of performers (Section 38B);
  - (d) Exclusive rights of the performers (Section 38A);
  - (e) Safe harbour provisions over electronic medium (Section 52 (1) (b) and (c))

**WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT)**

- The treaty came in force on March 6, 2002, and has been adopted by 96 contracting parties till date.
- It is a special agreement under Berne Convention (for protection of literary and artistic works).



- It has provisions to extend the protection of copyrights contained therein to the digital environment.
- Further, it recognises the rights specific to the digital environment, of making work available, to address "on-demand" and other interactive modes of access.

### **WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT)**

- It came in force on May 20, 2002, and has 96 contracting parties as its members.
- WPPT deals with rights of two kinds of beneficiaries, particularly in the digital environment
  - (i) Performers (actors, singers, musicians etc.)
  - (ii) Producers of Phonograms (Sound recordings).
- The treaty empowers right owners in their negotiations with new digital platforms and distributors.
- It recognizes the moral rights of the performers for the first time & provides exclusive economic rights to them.

Topic- GS-3- Intellectual property rights

Source- PIB

### **2. Koala bear genome decoded for the first time**

- More than 50 researchers in seven countries uncovered 26,558 koala genes, yielding vital DNA clues for vaccines against diseases such as sexually transmitted chlamydia.
- The genome has allowed us to understand the koala immune genes in detail for the first time.

### **Related Information**

#### **Koala**

- The koala is an arboreal herbivorous marsupial native to Australia.
- The koala is found in coastal areas of the mainland's eastern and southern regions, inhabiting Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature qualifies the koala's protection status as "vulnerable".

Topic- GS-3- Biodiversity

Source- Times of India

### **3. ISRO's first 'pad abort' test successful**

- The first 'pad abort' test critical for a future human space mission was conducted successfully.
- The test was conducted at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- The Pad Abort Test (PAT) demonstrated the safe recovery of the crew module in case of any exigency at the launch pad.
- The PAT (pad abort test) is the first in a series of tests to qualify a crew escape system technology of a manned mission in the future.
- The Crew Escape System is an emergency escape measure to quickly pull the crew module — the astronaut cabin — along with astronauts out to a safe distance from the launch vehicle in the event of a launch abort.
- The rockets are solid-fuel powered and specially designed for quickly ejecting the crew module and astronauts to a safe distance without exceeding the safe G-levels.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

### **4. 'Khan Prahari' App and Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS)**

- The Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal has launched the CMSMS and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari'.
- The basic objective of CMSMS is reporting, monitoring and taking suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities.
- The CMSMS is a web-based GIS application through which location of sites for unauthorised mining can be detected.
- The leasehold boundary of all the coal mines is displayed on this map.
- The system will use satellite data to detect changes by which unauthorised mining activity extending beyond the allotted lease area can be detected and suitable action can be taken on it.
- The system also uses information provided by responsible citizens using smartphones using the mobile application "Khan Prahari".

- Khan Prahari is a tool for reporting any activity taking place related to illegal coal mining like rat-hole mining, pilferage etc.
- Hence, both satellite data and human information will be used to capture information on the unauthorised mining activities.

Topic- GS-2- E-governance

Source-PIB

### **5. Agartala Airport to be named after Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manikya Bahadur**

- Tripura government announced to rename Agartala Airport as Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manika Bahadur.
- Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishor Manikya Bahadur sowed the seeds for the development of a modern Tripura.

Topic-Important for PCS Exams

Source- AIR

### **6. Sports Authority of India renamed as Sports India**

#### **Related Information**

- The Sports Authority of India (SAI) is an apex National Sports body established in 1984 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of Government of India for the development of sport in India.

Topic- GS-2-Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies

Source- AIR

### **7. NITI Aayog to organise India's First Global Mobility Summit**

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with various ministries and industry partners, is organising 'MOVE: Global Mobility Summit' in New Delhi on 7th and 8th September 2018.
- This Summit will help drive Government's goals for vehicle electrification, renewable energy integration and job growth and also speed up India's transition to a clean energy economy.
- The Summit will constitute three designated components - The Conclave, the Expo and the Featured Events.

Topic- GS-2-Governance

Source-PIB

**06 July 2018**

### **1. Uttarakhand HC order declared animals as legal entities**

- The Uttarakhand High Court has declared that "all members of the animal kingdom including birds and aquatic life have similar rights as humans".
- It has also ordained that animals throughout Uttarakhand should be treated as "legal entities having a distinct persona with corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person."
- The court directed the government to constitute societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals in each district and to appoint infirmaries for the treatment and care of animals.
- It also directed the government to "enforce the provisions of the Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals Act, 2009."

#### **Related Information**

- The Uttarakhand HC had in March last year in a similar order declared the rivers Ganga and Yamuna as legal entities but the order was stayed by the Supreme Court three months later.

Topic- GS-3- Biodiversity

Source- Down to Earth

### **2. Cabinet approved DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018**

- The primary intended purpose for enactment of "The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill" is for expanding the application of DNA-based forensic technologies to support and strengthen the justice delivery system of the country.
- The utility of DNA based technologies for solving crimes, and to identify missing persons, is well recognized across the world.

#### **Background**

#### **Law Commission report**

- In 2017, the Law Commission of India, in its 271st report, prepared the draft Bill named The DNA Based Technology (Use and Regulation) Bill, 2017 after examining various judicial pronouncements and constitutional provisions.
- The exercise was initiated by the Commission after the Department of Biotechnology forwarded its draft of 'The Use and Regulation of DNA based Technology in Civil and Criminal Proceedings, Identification of Missing Persons and Human Remains Bill, 2016'.

### Related Information

#### DNA Profiling (DNA fingerprinting, DNA testing, or DNA typing)

- DNA profiling is the process where a specific DNA pattern, called a profile, is obtained from a person or sample of bodily tissue.
- Even though we are all unique, most of our DNA is actually identical to other people's DNA.
- However, specific regions vary highly between people. These regions are called polymorphic.
- Differences in these variable regions between people are known as polymorphisms.
- Each of us inherits a unique combination of polymorphisms from our parents.
- DNA polymorphisms can be analysed to give a DNA profile.

#### Short tandem repeats method for DNA Profiling

- One of the current techniques for DNA profiling uses polymorphisms called short tandem repeats.
- Short tandem repeats (or STRs) are regions of non-coding DNA that contain repeats of the same nucleotide sequence.
- For example, GATAGATAGATAGATAGATA is an STR where the nucleotide sequence GATA is repeated six times.
- STRs are found at different places or genetic loci in a person's DNA.

- To produce a DNA profile, scientists examine STRs at ten, or more, genetic loci. These genetic loci are usually on different chromosomes.

#### Application of DNA Profiling

- Identify the probable origin of a body fluid sample associated with a crime or crime scene
- Reveal family relationships
- Identify disaster victims

Topic- GS-3- Biotechnology

Source-PIB

#### 3. Bru tribals

- Recently, Home Ministry announced a "historic agreement" had been signed among the governments of Mizoram and Tripura and the Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum.
- The agreement brought to an end a 21-year wait for over 32,000 Bru tribals, who had been displaced from Mizoram and were living in Tripura.

#### Bru People

- The Bru are an ethnic group living in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam.
- They are closely linked linguistically and culturally to the Mountain Khmer but are heavily influenced by Laos.

#### Bru (or Reang) tribe in India

- Bru (or Reang) tribals inhabit parts of some Northeastern states.
- In Mizoram, they are largely restricted to Mamit and Kolasib districts.
- Thousands of Brus fled Mizoram and migrated to Tripura after Bru militants gunned down a forest guard inside the Dampa Tiger Reserve on October 21, 1997.

Topic- GS-1- Indian Geography

Source- Indian Express

#### 4. UNESCO to set up Gaming University in Andhra Pradesh

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is going to set up a 'Design University for Gaming' in Visakhapatnam.
- They will develop edutech gaming in the state, with the target of providing 50,000 jobs in 10 years.

Topic- Important for PCS Exams

Source- Business Standard

5. **Ketogenic diet may improve the efficacy of cancer drugs**

- A ketogenic diet, which is low in carbohydrates and high in fat, may improve the effectiveness of an emerging class of cancer drugs, scientists.
- Researchers found a strategy to boost the tumour-killing potential of therapies targeted on the insulin-activated enzyme, phosphatidylinositol-3 kinase (PI3K).  
**Note-**  
**Phosphatidylinositol-3 kinase (PI3K)**- a family of enzymes involved in cellular functions such as cell growth, proliferation and differentiation.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- DD News

6. **Pandharichi Wari**

- "Pandharichi Wari" is Maharashtra's 700 years old tradition in which devotees of Lord Vitthala called Varkari trace the route to Pandharpur.
- For this holy function Devotees from all over state gathers in Dehu and Alandi, the native places of Sant Tukaram Maharaj and sant Dnyaneshvar Maharaj in Pune district and the procession starts for its final destination, Pandharpur.

Topic- GS-1- Art and Culture

Source- AIR

7. **Election Commission of India launched 'cVigil' app**

- The Election Commissioner of India has launched an Android-based mobile application 'cVigil' for Indian citizens to report any violation of the model code of conduct during elections.
- The app will help voters to share malpractice proof with the authorities.

Topic- GS-2- E-governance

Source-PIB

**07 July 2018**

1. **Indigenous "CUSAT Stratosphere-Troposphere Radar" to track monsoon winds now functional**

- The new radar named - CUSAT Stratosphere-Troposphere Radar (CUSAT ST-205 Radar)- throws 205 MHz radio waves to detect the atmospheric perturbations.
- The radar designed and fabricated in India adds to the already available radars and Sonars to keep a close watch on the way winds move in the **upper atmosphere**.
- Weather radars detect perturbations in wind and water content of the atmosphere using the same principle.
- The radar scans the sky horizontally and vertically in small steps of 1 degree thus getting a three-dimensional picture of the atmosphere.
- While scanning it throws a pulse of radio waves of 200 to 205 MHz frequency at the atmosphere and waits for it to bounce back.
- The radar situated in Cochin University of Science and Technology in Cochin- a strategic place where the monsoon makes the first entry into the subcontinent, the new radar will add to further the precision of weather, especially the monsoon, in India.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- Down to Earth

2. **Uttar Pradesh grants 3 forest villages revenue status under FRA**

- Three villages inhabited by the Tongia Scheduled Tribe in and around forests in Saharanpur district, Uttar Pradesh will be given the status of revenue village under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, (FRA).
- Kaluwala, Sodhinagar and Bhagwatpur were given the revenue status, which means that the village area will come under the revenue department instead of forest department.

- The FRA has a provision for turning forest villages into revenue villages so that civic facilities reach these areas.

### Related Information

#### Forest Rights Act (FRA)

- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on 18 December 2006.
- It has also been called the Forest Rights Act, the Tribal Rights Act, the Tribal Bill, and the Tribal Land Act.
- Eligible People-
  - (a) Those who "primarily reside in forests" and who depend on forests and forest land for a livelihood.
  - (b) Either the claimant must be a member of the Scheduled Tribes scheduled in that area or must have been residing in the forest for 75 years.

#### Rights have given under the Forest Rights Act

##### (a) Title rights

- Ownership - to land that is being farmed by tribal or forest dwellers as on 13 December 2005, subject to a maximum of 4 hectares
- ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family as on that date, meaning that no new lands are granted.

##### (b) Use rights

- To minor forest produce (also including ownership), to grazing areas, to pastoralist routes, etc.

##### (c) Relief and development rights

- To rehabilitation in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection.

##### (d) Forest management rights

- To protect forests and wildlife

Topic- GS-2- Vulnerable Groups

Source- Down to Earth

3. **UN member states approved USD 6.69 billion for 13 peacekeeping operations in 2018-19**

- The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) of the General Assembly recommended authorisation of USD 6.69 billion to finance 13 peacekeeping missions from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019.
- The missions include-
  - (a) MINUJUSTH (United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti),
  - (b) MINURSO (Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara),
  - (c) MINUSCA (Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic),
  - (d) MONUSCO (Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and UNIFIL (Interim Force in Lebanon).
- The Committee also approved significant management reforms including the creation of two new departments focused on political and peacebuilding affairs and four stand-alone divisions for Africa.
- Affirming "Middle East Division" as the name of the related new regional division, the lead responsibility for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) would be placed in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.
- The United States is the biggest contributor to the United Nations. China is the other top contributor with 10.3 per cent and Japan with 9.7 per cent.

Topic- GS-2- Important International institutions

Source- Indian Express

4. **PM to inaugurate the statue of unity on October 31**
  - Prime Minister will inaugurate the Statue of Unity on 31st October, the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
  - The Statue of Unity, being built near the Sardar Sarovar dam on the Narmada river, in memory of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
  - The construction of plinth and pillars of the 182m tall structure is over.

- The ambitious Statue of Unity, supposed to be the tallest statue in the world.

Topic- GS-1-Indian Geography

Source- DD News

5. **Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel appointed as chairman of National Green Tribunal**

- Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel was appointed as the chairperson of National Green Tribunal.
- He is best remembered for passing the controversial judgment on diluting provisions of the SC/ST Act.
- Justice Goel and his colleague UU Lalit's decision allowing anticipatory bail for the accused in certain cases registered under the SC/ST Act had led to widespread protests and violence by Dalit groups across the nation and led to seven deaths.
- With the retirement of Goel, the strength of the Supreme Court goes down to 22 against a maximum of 31 judges.

**Related Information**

**National Green Tribunal**

- NGT Act, 2010 is an Act of the Parliament of India which enables the creation of a special tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.
- It draws inspiration from India's constitutional provision of Article 21, which assures the citizens of India the right to a healthy environment.
- The Tribunal has Original Jurisdiction on matters of "substantial question relating to environment" & "damage to the environment due to specific activity".
- The first chairperson of the tribunal was Justice Lokeshwar Singh Pant.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Indian Express

6. **Malappuram set to become first cyber-literate district**

- Malappuram, Kerala is set to achieve a new distinction of being the first cyber-literate district in the country.

Topic- Important for PCS Exams

Source- The Hindu

7. **AAI to set up Civil Aviation Research Organisation**

- State-run Airports Authority of India (AAI) will set up a Civil Aviation Research Organisation (CARO) aimed at "finding indigenous solutions" to meet the challenges posed by the growing air traffic.
- CARO will be set up at Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad.

Topic- Important for PCS Exams

Source- Business Standard

**09 July 2018**

1. **Biodegradable plastic made from tree glue**

- Scientists have found that a natural 'tree glue' which stiffens plant cells can be turned into a strong, biodegradable plastic.
- The natural glue called **lignin** holds cellulose fibres together.
- Researchers from the University of Warwick in the UK genetically modified some bacteria called **Rhodococcus Jostii** to turn lignin into useful chemicals.
- There are only a small number of organisms that can break down lignin.
- Plastic is notoriously difficult to recycle - and only 12 Percent of household waste is reprocessed.
- The rest is either burnt or goes to landfill.

**Related Information**

- Lignin is a by-product of the papermaking process.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

2. **India to control Mattala airport**

- India has agreed to form a joint venture with Sri Lanka to operate the loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota, Sri Lanka.
- The \$210 million facility, 241km south-east of Colombo, is dubbed the "world's emptiest airport" due to a lack of flights.
- The joint venture would see India gain a major stake of the airport.
- Mattala airport, named after former president Mahinda Rajapaksa.

### Related Information

- The seaport built in Hambantota has been leased to China to set off Chinese loans as equity.

Topic- GS-2- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests

Source- Livemint

#### 3. **Indian warship INS Trikand reaches Sri Lanka in goodwill visit**

- India's latest frontline warship INS Trikand has reached Sri Lanka in a goodwill visit.
- INS Trikand is a state-of-the-art warship of the Indian Navy equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors capable of addressing threats in all three dimensions - air, surface and sub-surface.

### Related Information

#### **INS Trikand**

- INS Trikand (F51) is a Talwar-class frigate of the Indian Navy.
- She is the third and final ship of the second batch of Talwar-class frigates ordered by the Indian Navy.
- It was built by the Yantar shipyard in Kaliningrad, Russia.

#### **Talwar Class Frigates or Project 11356**

- These are a class of guided missile frigates designed and built by Russia for the Indian Navy.
- The Talwar-class guided missile frigates are the improved versions of the Krivak III-class (Project 1135) frigates used by the Russian Coast Guard.

Topic- GS-3- Defence

Source- Economic Times

#### 4. **Cosmic collision with 'Sausage' galaxy reshaped Milky Way**

- Astronomers have discovered an ancient cosmic collision with an object, dubbed the "Sausage" galaxy, that reshaped the structure of the Milky Way galaxy.
- It is observed using data from the European Space Agency's Gaia satellite.
- Scientists propose that around 8 billion to 10 billion years ago, an unknown dwarf galaxy smashed into our own Milky Way.

- Sausage debris was scattered all around the inner parts of the Milky Way, creating the 'bulge' at the galaxy's centre and the surrounding 'stellar halo.'
- The orbits are further elongated by the growing Milky Way disk, which swells and becomes thicker following the collision.
- The Milky Way continues to collide with other galaxies, such as the puny Sagittarius dwarf galaxy.
- However, the Sausage galaxy was much more massive. Its total mass in gas, stars and dark matter was more than 10 billion times the mass of our Sun.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- Indian Express

#### 5. **How Ethiopia and Kenya have put a world heritage site in danger**

- Lake Turkana is the world's largest desert lake- located in Kenya's remote northern arid lands and is the most saline of Africa's great lakes.
- Its ecology supports a host of local and migratory bird and wildlife populations.
- It's also home to unique fossil and archaeological discoveries.
- In 1973, Sibiloi National Park was created on the north-eastern lakeshore to conserve these remarkable discoveries that have contributed so much to our understanding of human evolution.
- And in 1983 and 1985, the lake's South and Central Islands were designated national parks because of their outstanding wildlife breeding habitats, notably for the Nile crocodile.
- These three national parks were inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1997 for their "geological and fossil records" and "diverse aquatic and terrestrial habitats".

### Related Information

- There are 1,092 UNESCO World Heritage sites in the world, five of which are within Kenya.
- Once inscribed, the sites are protected according to local legislation and international treaties.

- Under the convention guidelines, state parties are obliged to submit reports every six years on each of their World Heritage sites.
- If a site comes under threat, the World Heritage Committee can initiate the agreed process of "reactive monitoring" – an independent mission to review and produce a report on the state of conservation of the site.
- If the site is found to be facing danger, the mission can recommend it be placed on the "List of World Heritage in Danger".

#### **Why the lake was put on the danger list**

- Threats were identified as the Gibe dams and irrigation plantation developments on Ethiopia's Omo River.
- More than 80% of the lake's freshwater inflow is provided by the Omo River and so these projects affect the lake's ecology.
- The committee requested that Ethiopia suspend construction works on the Gibe III dam and submit assessments on the dam and irrigation development plans.

#### **Next steps**

- The World Heritage Committee has now requested Kenya to invite a reactive monitoring mission to review what's happened and to propose a way forward to remove the Lake Turkana National Parks from the "List of World Heritage in Danger".

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Down to Earth

6. **PM Modi inaugurated the world's largest mobile factory in Noida**
  - Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Moon inaugurated the New Mobile Manufacturing Plant of Samsung at Noida.
  - With the beginning of this New Plant, India's Make In India and Skill India Will get a major Push in the country.

Topic-Important for PCS Exams

Source- DD News

7. **17th World Sanskrit Conference inaugurated at Vancouver in Canada**

- HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the 17th World Sanskrit Conference in Vancouver, Canada.
- The purpose of this conference is to promote, preserve and practice the Sanskrit language all over the world by the people.
- The World Sanskrit Conference is being held in various countries across the globe once in every three years and so far, it has been held thrice in India.

Topic- GS-1- Art and Culture

Source- AIR

**10 July 2018**

#### 1. **NASA Funding Project "RAMA" to Turn Asteroids into Spaceships**

- NASA has announced it would give funds to a California-based 3D printing company for finding ways to turn asteroids into giant, autonomous spacecraft, which could fly to outposts in space.
- The project is named as RAMA (Reconstituting Asteroids into Mechanical Automata).
- The company plans to use 3D printing to turn the asteroids into self-flying vehicles by 2030.
- The company is considering sending an advanced robotic "Seed Craft" out to rendezvous with a succession of near-Earth asteroids in space, as part of its long-term project.
- The Seed Craft would harvest material from the space rocks, then use this feedstock to construct propulsion, navigation, energy-storage and other key systems onsite with the aid of 3D printing and other technologies.
- Thus, transformed into autonomous spacecraft, the asteroids could be programmed to fly to a mining station in Earth-moon space, or anywhere else they're needed.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- NDTV

2. **Niti Aayog wants states to promote zero budget natural farming**



- NITI Aayog made a case for promoting Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) in states, saying it would help in doubling farmers' income by 2022.

### **Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF)**

- Under ZBNF, neither fertilizer nor pesticide is used and only 10 per cent of water is to be used for irrigation as compared to traditional farming technique.
- Farmers use only local seeds and produce their own seeds.
- The cost of biological pesticides and fertilizers is almost negligible compared to chemical fertilizers. So, this method of natural farming also called Zero Budget Farming.
- These biological pesticides and fertilizers include earthworms, cow dung, urine, plants, human excreta etc.
- The states can promote ZBNF under the two farm sector schemes- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

### **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana-**

- Launched in 2016.
- Improve organic farming and soil health.
- Also known as Traditional Farming Improvement Programme.

### **Note-**

- **Sikkim** has become India's first fully organic state by implementing organic practices on around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land.

### **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**

- Launched in 2007 to achieve 4 Percent annual growth in the agricultural sector during the 11th five-year plan.
- Incentivize the states to increase their investment in Agriculture.

Topic- GS-3- Agriculture

Source- Indian Express

3. **India focusing more on the e-visa scheme**

### **e-visa scheme**

- The Government of India had launched the e-Visa scheme on November 27, 2014.

- The scheme has been extended to 163 Countries/Territories. 25 Indian airports and 5 Indian Ports have been designated for providing e-visa service.
- e-Visa has been sub-divided into 3 categories i.e.
  - (a) e-tourist visa,
  - (b) e-Business visa and
  - (c) e-Medical visa
- This facility is available to Foreigners whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sight-seeing, short duration medical treatment, casual business visit, etc. and not valid for any other purpose/activities.
- Applicants of the eligible countries/territories may apply online minimum 4 days in advance of the date of arrival with a window of 120 days.
- e-Visa will be valid for 60 days stay in India from the date of arrival in India.
- e-Visa can be availed for the maximum of two times in a calendar year i.e. between January to December.
- The Home Ministry has decided to enhance the e-visa scheme by including e-conference and e-medical attendant visa as well.

Topic- GS- 2- E-governance

Source- Indian Express

4. **China successfully launched two remote-sensing satellites for Pakistan**
- China successfully launched two remote sensing satellites for Pakistan, marking the first international commercial launch for the Long March-2C rocket in about 19 years.
  - The satellites (a) PRSS-1 and (b) PakTES-1A - were launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China.
  - The PRSS-1 is China's first optical remote sensing satellite sold to Pakistan.
  - A scientific experiment satellite, PakTES-1A, developed by Pakistan, was sent into orbit via the same rocket.

- It is another space cooperation between China and Pakistan since the launch of PAKSAT-1R, a communication satellite, in August 2011.

Topic- GS-3- Defence

Source- Business Standard

5. **Only one male Great Indian Bustard left in Gujarat**

- There being only one male Great Indian Bustard (GIB) left in Gujarat's Kutch district have been confirmed by experts.

### Related Information

#### Great Indian Bustards

- Found mostly in India and some regions of Pakistan, the GIB is considered a "**critically endangered**" bird in the **IUCN Red List** of threatened species.
- Currently, it is found in only six states in the country — **Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka.**
- **Rajasthan has the maximum number** of GIBs and the bird is found in Jaisalmer, Barmer and Bikaner districts.
- The GIB plays a role in the germination of seeds in grasslands, and it is also a friend to farmers as it keeps a check on insects that destroy standing crops."
- GIB was found **only in the Indian subcontinent**. Hence, once the species is lost, there will be no other species to replace it, and that will destabilise the ecosystem of the grassland and affect critical bio-diversities, as well as blackbucks and wolves, who share their habitat with the GIB.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Down to Earth

6. **Fish samples in Chennai test positive for formalin**

- As many as 11 out of 30 samples of fish species purchased from Chinthadripet and Kasimedu, the two major fish markets in Chennai, have tested positive for formalin, a cancer-inducing chemical used illegally to preserve fish.

- Fish industry experts said formalin or formaldehyde is sprayed on the fish or injected into the fish or the fish is dipped into the solution.
- This helps keep the fish fresh for a longer time.

### Related Information

#### Formalin

- A clear aqueous solution of formaldehyde and methanol used especially as a preservative.
- Formalin causes irritation in the eyes, throat, skin and stomach.
- In the long run, continued exposure causes harm to the kidneys, liver and can even cause cancers.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

7. **ADB accords approval for lining project of the Son canal in Shahabad- Bhojpur region of Bihar**

- ADB representatives informed that ADB had accorded approval for this project.
- The estimated cost of this project is USD 503 million out of which USD 352 million is being provided by ADB.
- This project will bring immense benefits to the agriculture sector of Shahabad- Bhojpur region of Bihar.

### Related Information

#### Asian Development Bank

- It is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the city of Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines.
- From 31 members at its establishment, ADB now has 67 members, of which 48 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.
- ADB is an official United Nations Observer.
- Japan and United States hold the largest proportion of shares.

### Related Information

#### Son River

- Son River of central India is the second largest of the Ganges' southern tributaries after Yamuna River.
- The Son originates near Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh.

- The Son parallels the Kaimur hills, flowing east-northeast through Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar states to join the Ganges just west of Patna.
- Its chief tributaries are the Rihand and the North Koel.

Topic- GS-3- Infrastructure

Source- PIB

**11 July 2018**

1. **FSSAI launches “Eat Right campaign” to curb consumption of sugar, salt and fat**

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has initiated a campaign “Eat Right”, wherein the key stakeholders like food processing industries and restaurants will volunteer to reduce the percentage of salt, sugar and fat content in food.
- As a part of the campaign, edible oil industries took a pledge to reduce trans-fat content by 2 Percent by 2022.
- Later, food companies also took a pledge to reformulate packaged foods with the reduced level of salt, sugar and saturated fat.
- This Eat Right Movement is a collaborative move with stakeholders—on both the demand and supply side—coming together.
- On the demand side, the campaign focuses on empowering citizens to make the right food choices.
- On the supply side, it nudges food businesses to reformulate their products, provide better nutritional information to consumers and make investments in healthy food as responsible food businesses.
- This is a voluntary movement from both the sides.

**Related Information**

**Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**

- It is an **autonomous body** established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

- FSSAI was established by Government of India on 5 September 2008 under **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**.

- FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.

- The FSSAI consists of a chairperson & 22 members.

- The FSSAI has its headquarters at New Delhi.

- In May 2018, FSSAI launched the SNF@Workplace initiative (safe and nutritious food at the workplace) to improve the nutrition of millions of office going Indians.

- To aid workplaces and build a policy framework, FSSAI has also released **The Orange Book: Your Guide to Safe and Nutritious Food at the Workplace**.

Topic- GS-2- Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies

Source- Down To Earth

2. **Global Innovation Index ranks India the 57th most innovative nation**

- The Global Innovation Index (GII) has ranked India as the 57th most innovative nation in the world.

- The country has improved its ranking from 60th position last year.

- Meanwhile, China improved its ranking from 22 in 2017 to 17 this year.

- The GII is being developed jointly by Cornell University, Insead and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Geneva.

- GII ranks 126 economies based on 80 indicators.

- Since 2011, Switzerland has been ranked at the top every year.

- This year, the Netherlands follows at second place and Sweden at third.

- The US drops down to sixth from fourth last year.

- Although ranked at 57, India is a top performer in the lower middle-income group, where it is ranked at fifth position.

- It is the most innovative country in its region of central and southern Asia.

**Related Information**

**World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

- The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).
- WIPO was created in 1967 "to encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- WIPO currently has 191-member states.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Topic- GS-2- Economic Development

Source- Economic Times

3. **Andhra Pradesh tops government's ease of doing business**

- Andhra Pradesh has topped the ease of doing business rankings, while Telangana is in second and Haryana is in third position.
- Jharkhand, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and West Bengal are in the top ten list.
- DIPP in collaboration with the World Bank conducts an annual reform exercise for all States/UTs under the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP).
- A large number of states have made significant progress in reforms suggested in Business Reform Action Plan 2017.

**Related Information**

**DIPP (Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion)**

- The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion was established in 1995 and has been reconstituted in the year 2000 with the merger of the Department of Industrial Development.
- **Role and Functions-**
  - (a) Formulation and implementation of industrial policy
  - (b) Formulation of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Policy and promotion, approval and facilitation of FDI

- (c) Formulation of policies relating to Intellectual Property Rights etc.

Topic- GS-3- Economic Development

Source- AIR

4. **India becomes world's sixth largest economy**

- India has become the world's sixth-biggest economy, pushing France into seventh place, according to updated World Bank figures for 2017.
- India's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to \$2.597 trillion at the end of last year, against \$2.582 trillion for France.
- The country's economy rebounded strongly from July 2017, after several quarters of slowdown.
- India, with a population of around 1.34 billion, is poised to become the world's most populous nation, whereas the French population stands at 67 million.
- This means that India's per capita GDP continues to amount to just a fraction of that of France which is still roughly 20 times higher, according to World Bank figures.
- India has doubled its GDP within a decade and is expected to power ahead as a key economic engine in Asia, even as China slows down.
- At the end of 2017, Britain was still the world's fifth-biggest economy with a GDP of \$2.622 trillion.
- The US is the world's top economy, followed by China, Japan and Germany.

Topic- GS-3- Indian Economy

Source- Times of India

5. **UNSC adopts resolution 2427 to protect children in armed conflict**

- The UN Security Council has adopted a resolution aimed at a framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle.
- The resolution strongly condemns the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and abductions.

- It demands that all relevant parties immediately put an end to such practices and take special measures to protect children.
- The resolution also emphasizes the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children.

Topic- GS-2- Important International institutions

Source- Business Standard

6. **Bright pink is the oldest colour, according to scientists**

- Scientists have discovered the world's oldest colours in the geological record.
- Bright pink pigments taken from marine black shales of the Taoudeni Basin in Mauritania, West Africa, were more than half a billion years older than the previous pigment discoveries.
- The fossils range from blood red to deep purple in their concentrated form, and bright pink when diluted.
- The bright pink pigments are the molecular fossils of chlorophyll that were produced by ancient photosynthetic organisms inhabiting an ancient ocean that has long since vanished.

Topic-GS-3-Science and Technology

Source- DD news

**12 July 2018**

1. **Niti Aayog proposed a 15-point action plan 'Breathe India' to combat air pollution in ten most polluted cities**

- Niti Aayog has proposed a 15-point action plan to combat air pollution in ten most polluted cities in the country, including Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi.
- The draft action plan titled 'Breathe India' includes encouraging electric vehicles, phasing out private diesel vehicle and development of crop residue utilisation policy.

- The action plan also includes expediting strategic decommissioning of old and inefficient power plants and implementation of a large-scale feebate programme from 2020 onwards.
- The report also said there is a need to enact strong measures to curb vehicular emissions.
- It also called for concerted action from all levels of governance, cutting across ministries and departments.

**Related Information**

- According to a recent WHO database (2018), Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Varanasi, Agra, Gurgaon, Muzaffarpur, Lucknow and Patna are the top ten most polluted cities in India.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- AIR

2. **Gujarat government gave approval for Rs 39-crore 'Seema Darshan' project**

- Gujarat government has given in-principle approval for the 39-crore rupees 'Seema Darshan' project.
- The project is for developing more infrastructure facilities from T-Junction to Zero Point at Nadabet near Suigam in Banaskantha district to instil patriotism through a unique Gujarat initiative for border tourism.
- The project being developed on Wagah Border pattern, entails an exhibition hall, a parade ground with the amphitheatre for 5,000 people.
- They decided to send a proposal to the Union Home and Tourism Ministries for financial assistance.
- The phase-1 of the project worth 22-crore was launched on December 24, 2016.
- The project demonstrates BSF jawans' tryst with protecting the border as round-the-clock sentinels.
- The project will encourage local economic activity in the Rann region, alongside the visit to adjoining flamingo and wild ass sanctuaries.

Topic- GS-2- Schemes

Source- AIR

3. **India's first private UAV factory to come up in Kota**

- India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned air vehicles (UAV) and light bulletproof vehicles (LBPV) will be set up by DCM Shriram Industries Group on the campus of Shriram Rayons in Kota.
- These UAVs and LBPVs are likely to be used by defence and para-military forces in the country.
- The UAVs will be able to fly to a height of 500 to 2000 km, while LBPVs can operate in difficult terrains and has off-road abilities.

**Related Information**

- In April 2018 the Central govt set up a 13-member task force to prepare a roadmap and fast-track the implementation of UAV technology headed by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha.

**Important UAV in India**

- DRDO Abhyas
- DRDO AURA
- DRDO Lakshya
- DRDO Netra
- DRDO Nishant
- DRDO Rustom
- DRDO Uka
- Gagan UAV Israeli model
- Pawan UAV

**Rustom**

- The Rustom is a Medium Altitude Long Endurance unmanned air vehicle (UAV) being developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation for all three services.
- Rustom is derived from the NAL's LCRA (Light Canard Research Aircraft) developed by a team under the leadership of late Prof Rustom Damania in the 1980s.

Topic- GS-3- Defence

Source- Hindustan Times

4. **Net Neutrality rules approved by Telecom Commission**

- India's Internet will be governed by the rules of net neutrality as the Telecom Commission has accepted the recommendations made by regulatory body TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Association of India).

- The net neutrality rules mean that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) cannot discriminate against Internet content and services by blocking, throttling or granting them higher speed access.
- India's acceptance of Net Neutrality is a big victory for the open Internet movement.
- It also means that zero-rating packages like says a Facebook Free Basics, where certain content is provided for free like access to Facebook, also remain illegal in India.

**US and Net Neutrality**

- In the United States, the Net Neutrality rules expired recently after the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted against them in November 2017.
- In the US, with no Net Neutrality, it is no longer illegal for ISPs to slow, block or offer "paid prioritisation" to some websites as long as they disclose these practices.
- This reversed the initial pro-Net Neutrality rules from 2015.

**What is out of the purview of Net Neutrality?**

- The Telecom Commission has kept some mission-critical applications or services like remote surgery and autonomous cars out of the purview of this framework.
- TRAI in its recommendations had also kept CDN or content delivery networks out of the purview of Net Neutrality.
- CDNs allow a telecom company to deliver content on their network, without accessing the public internet.
- In order to access the content provided by them, the user has to be on the respective network.

Topic- GS-3- Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies

Source- Indian Express

5. **Nepal, India to expedite Raxaul-Kathmandu rail project**

- Nepal and India have agreed to seal an agreement for preliminary engineering cum traffic survey for building a rail link that will connect Raxaul in Bihar to the Nepalese capital.
- This agreement was signed weeks after Nepal and China agreed on a feasibility study for a railway line connecting Tibet with the Himalayan nation.
- Apart from Raxaul-Kathmandu railway line, India has already started building five cross-border railway lines between Nepal and India.

Topic-GS-2- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests

Source- Indian Express

6. **Satyarup Siddhanta scales world's highest volcano**

- Satyarup Siddhanta has become the 2nd Indian mountaineer (first- Malli Mastan Babu) to climb the highest volcano in the world, Mt Ojos del Salado.
- Nevado Ojos del Salado is a stratovolcano in the Andes on the Argentina-Chile border.
- It is the highest active volcano in the world at 6893 metres.

Topic- GS-1-Indian Geography, Important for PCS Exams

Source- Times of India

**14 July 2018**

1. **Pakistan's Buddha of Swat smiles restored to original form**

- The iconic Buddha of Swat, carved on a cliff in the 7th century, has been restored to its almost original form with Italian assistance in northwestern Pakistan, nearly 11 years after it was dynamited by Taliban.
- The holy figure depicted in a lotus position at the base of a granite cliff in northern Pakistan.
- The Buddha seated in a meditative posture considered one of the largest rock sculptures in South Asia.

**Related Information**

- The Swat Valley in Pakistan has many Buddhist carvings and stupas, and Jehanabad contains a Seated Buddha statue.
- Kushan era Buddhist stupas and statues in Swat valley were demolished by the Taliban.
- **Only the Bamiyan Buddhas (Afghanistan) were larger than the carved giant Buddha statue in Swat near Mangalore which the Taliban attacked.**

Topic- GS-1- Art and Culture

Source- The Hindu

2. **Telangana govt puts restrictions on glyphosate sale**

- The Telangana government's Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Family Welfare put restrictions on the sale of glyphosate on July 10, 2018.
- It is India's most popular broad-spectrum herbicide, in a bid to curb the illegal use of herbicide-tolerant BT cotton.
- Though the herbicide is recommended for use only in tea plantations and non-crop areas, it is used across India to kill weeds.
- In India, the health impact has not been studied.
- However, the states have taken this action due to well-known adverse health impacts across the world.

**Related Information**

**Glyphosate**

- Glyphosate is a broad-spectrum systemic herbicide and crop desiccant.
- It is an organophosphorus compound, specifically a phosphonate.
- It is used to kill weeds, especially annual broadleaf weeds and grasses that compete with crops.
- It was discovered to be a herbicide by Monsanto chemist John E. Franz in 1970.
- Efforts to ban this chemical labelled carcinogenic, are on across the world.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- Down to Earth

3. **The first round of bidding under new Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) completed**

- The Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) announced the completion of the first round of bidding under its new Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), a part of the revamped Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP).

**Related Information**

**Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP)-**

- Four main facets of this policy are:
  1. Uniform license for exploration and production of all forms of hydrocarbon,
  2. An open acreage policy,
  3. Easy to administer revenue sharing model and
  4. Marketing and pricing freedom for the crude oil and natural gas produced.
- The uniform licence will enable the contractor to explore conventional as well as unconventional oil and gas resources including CBM, shale gas/oil, tight gas and gas hydrates under a single license.
- The concept of Open Acreage Policy will enable E&P companies to choose the blocks from the designated area.

Topic- GS-3- Energy

Source- The Hindu

4. **Railways launched its first consolidated Bridge Management System**

- The Railways has launched its first consolidated Bridge Management System, a web-enabled IT application to store data on its one lakh 50 thousand bridges.
- Railways Minister launched the service in New Delhi for "meaningful assimilation, analysis and dissemination of information related to various activities" about its bridges.

Topic-GS-2-E-governance

Source- The Hindu

5. **SpiNNaker: Novel computer mimics human brain networks**

- Scientists have developed a computer "SpiNNaker" that mimics the brain's neural networks and could overcome the speed and power consumption problems of conventional supercomputers.
- The researchers compared the accuracy, speed and energy efficiency of SpiNNaker with that of NEST - a specialist supercomputer software currently in use for brain neuron-signalling research.
- The system may help advance our knowledge of neural processing in the brain, to include learning and disorders such as epilepsy and Alzheimer's disease.
- The ability to run large-scale detailed neural networks quickly and at low power consumption will advance robotics research and facilitate studies on learning and brain disorders.
- The human brain is extremely complex, comprising 100 billion interconnected brain cells.

Topic- GS- Science and Technology

Source- India Today

6. **Eight endangered black rhinos die in Kenya in botched relocation**

- Eight black rhinos have died in Kenya while being transported by the state wildlife service between two national parks.
- The rhinos, who are part of a critically endangered species, died at Tsavo East National Park.
- Kenya had a rhino population of 1,258 in 2017 of which 745 are black rhinos, 510 are southern white rhinos and three were northern white rhinos, having grown from less than 400 rhinos in the 1980s.
- The white rhino is a near threatened species.

Topic- GS-3- Biodiversity

Source- DD News

7. **Indian naval ship INS Sumitra became the first-ever warship to enter the port of Sabang in Indonesia**

- Indian naval ship INS Sumitra became the first-ever warship to enter the port of Sabang in Indonesia.



- The warship was deployed in Malacca Straits.
- During Indian Prime Minister visit to Jakarta in May 2018, in a meeting with Indonesian President, it was decided that New Delhi will develop the strategically important Indonesian port Sabang in the Indian Ocean, close to the Andamans.

### Related Information

#### INS Sumitra

- INS Sumitra is the fourth and last Saryu class patrol vessel of the Indian Navy, designed and constructed by Goa Shipyard Limited.

#### Saryu-class patrol vessel

- The Saryu class of offshore patrol vessels (OPV) are advanced patrol ships of the Indian Navy built at the Goa Shipyard Limited.
- Ships of Saryu-class-
  - (a) INS Saryu
  - (b) INS Sunayna
  - (c) INS Sumedha
  - (d) INS Sumitra

Topic- GS-3- Defence

Source- AIR

**16 July 2018**

#### 1. **'Paudhagiri' campaign launched in Haryana**

- Haryana Chief Minister launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign, aimed at increasing the green cover in the state.
- Under this campaign, 22 lakh students from class 6 to 12 of all government and private schools in Haryana will plant a sapling each during three months of the monsoon - July, August and September.
- The CM launched the 'Paudhagiri' campaign by planting a 'maulsari' sapling in the Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex premises of Gurgaon.
- They can name the plant according to their likes, maybe after the name of great personalities of the country, freedom fighters or after the name of any of their family members or their ancestors.

- Every student planting a sapling will have to take care of it for the next three years.
- In every six months, the student is required to upload his selfie with his or her plant on the App and he or she will be given an incentive of Rs 50 in every six months from the government.
- Thus, the student will get Rs 300 in the next three years for looking after a sapling planted by him or her.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Business Standard

#### 2. **India became regional head of the Asia Pacific region of the World Customs Organisation**

- India took over as head of the Asia Pacific region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO).
- Delegates from 33 countries of Asia-Pacific Region and customs officers from different ports in India are participating in the day-long event which includes Heads of Customs from Japan and Fiji, and senior officials from Korea, Singapore and China.

### Related Information

#### World Customs Organization (WCO)

- It is an intergovernmental organization headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
- WCO represents 182 customs administrations across the world that collectively process approximately 98 Percent of world trade.
- **The WCO has divided its membership into six regions whereby each region is represented by an elected vice-chairperson to the WCO Council.**
- Being the Vice-Chair of Asia Pacific Region of WCO will enable India to take on the leadership role.
- The Goals of the WCO-
  - (a) Ensure growth by securing and promoting economic competitiveness.
  - (b) Promote fair, efficient, and effective Revenue collection
  - (c) Promote information exchange between all stakeholders etc.

Topic- GS-2-Important International institutions

Source- AIR

3. **PM Modi launched several development projects in Mirzapur**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the Bansagar Canal Project to the Nation in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh.
- This project will provide a big boost to irrigation in the region and will be greatly beneficial for the farmers of Mirzapur and Allahabad districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- The total canal network under it is 171 km long.
- Canals will bring waters from Shahdol district in Madhya Pradesh for Adwa Barrage, Meza Dam and Jirgo reservoir.

**Related Information**

**Bansagar Dam**

- It is a multipurpose river Valley Project on Sone River situated in the Ganges Basin in Madhya Pradesh, India with both irrigation and 435 MW of hydroelectric power generation.
- The bansagar Dam project is a joint venture of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

**Son River**

- Son River of central India is the second largest of the Ganges' southern tributaries after Yamuna River.
- The Son originates near Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh.

Topic- GS-1- Indian Geography

Source- DD News

4. **Scientists discovered a new source of neutrinos in space**

- Neutrinos – extremely light, ghostly particles that barely interact with matter – have so far only been observed originating from supernovae (exploding stars) and the sun.
- Now a giant detector at the South Pole has discovered that a “blazar”, a galaxy with a supermassive black hole at its centre, also produce neutrinos.

**Related Information**

**Neutrino**

- A neutrino is a subatomic particle that is very similar to an electron but has **no electrical charge and a very small mass, which might even be zero.**

- Neutrinos are one of the fundamental particles which make up the universe.
- These are only particle other than gravitational waves that can zip through the universe at speeds very close to that of light.
- The largest nuclear reactor that most life on earth derives energy from is the sun.
- Like all nuclear reactors, in addition to giving out energy, the sun also emits neutrinos.
- There are three types of neutrinos differing based on mass, these are-  
(a) Electron neutrinos (ve)  
(b) Muon neutrinos(vu)  
(c) tau neutrinos(vT)

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- Down To Earth

5. **Nepal's Muktinath Temple**

- Nepal's Muktinath is a sacred place for the Hindus and Buddhists.
- The famous Muktinath temple is situated in the Annapurna mountain range in Mustang district of Nepal.
- It is one of the most ancient temples of Lord Vishnu.
- The Hindus call it Mutki Kshetra, the place of salvation.
- The Muktinath temple is considered as one of the 108 Divya Desam or holy places of worship Lord Vishnu. It is also one of the 51 Shaktipeeth.
- The uniqueness of the temple is that Buddhist nuns look after the temple and they conduct worship.

Topic- GS-1-Art and Culture

Source- DD News

6. **Golden jackal faces threat in its habitat**

- Destruction of mangrove cover in the Bandar Reserve Forest is forcing the golden jackal out of its habitat, triggering a conflict with the local communities.
- The conservation status of the animal is the 'least concern' and it preys on wild crab and fish.
- Golden Jackal are mainly found in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh Rajasthan and Haryana.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- The Hindu

7. **India unveiled the world's largest visa centre in Bangladesh**

- Indian Home Minister inaugurated the world's largest state-of-the-art visa centre in Dhaka with modern facilities, promising shorter waiting times for applicants.
- Bangladeshis constitute one of the largest numbers of visitors from a single country to India.

Topic- GS-2- Bilateral, regional and global groupings

Source- Economic Times

**17 July 2018**

1. **Bihar to get world's cheapest clean drinking water with the launch of "Sulabh Jal"**

- Bihar will soon provide the cheapest drinking water in the world with the launch of cost-effective innovative water project "Sulabh Jal".
- The first of such a water project was launched in Bihar's Darbhanga district by Sulabh International.
- With the help of this project, the people will easily be able to get pure and clean water only in 50paise/litre.
- The 'Sulabh Jal' project converts contaminated pond and river water into safe drinking water.

Topic- GS-2- Programs and Schemes

Source- Business Standard

2. **IIT-Madras unveiled the world's first remote "LEAP" microscope**

- IIT Madras has launched "world's first" remotely operatable microscope that would enable a precise atom-by-atom view of a material.
- The Local Electrode Atom Probe (LEAP) was developed in a collaborative exercise involving eight top research institutions headed by IIT Madras.
- It was developed at a cost of Rs 40 crore.
- The microscope also enables a true 3D atomic scale reconstruction which would impart a major thrust to research in nanotechnology, among other fields.

- The partnering institutions in the collaborative include - IITs of Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Ropar along with Nuclear Sciences and Department of Science and Technology, International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI).

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- Deccan Chronicle

3. **Upgraded Vikas engine will soon boost ISRO's rockets**

- All three satellite launch vehicles (PSLV, GSLV, GSLV MK-III) of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) are set to add muscle to their spacecraft lifting power in upcoming missions.
- The Vikas engine will improve the payload capability of PSLV, GSLV and GSLVMK-III launch vehicles.
- The main beneficiary of the high-thrust Vikas engine is said to be the heavy-lifting GSLV-Mark III launcher, which ISRO expects will now put 4,000-kg satellites to space.
- This would be the third Mk-III and the first working one to be designated MKIII Mission-1 or M1.

**Note-**

The first MKIII of June 2017 started with a 3,200-kg satellite and the second one is being readied for lifting a 3,500-kg spacecraft.

Topic- GS-3- Science and Technology

Source- The Hindu

4. **Andamans request delisting of saltwater crocodile from Schedule 1 of Wildlife Protection Act**

- The government of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has sent a proposal to the Central government requesting that saltwater crocodiles be delisted from Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972.
- The request has been raised in order for the Andaman authorities to control the growing saltwater crocodile population in the islands and the resultant rise in human-croc conflicts.
- The proposal was sent three months ago and is awaiting consideration.

**Related Information**

**Wildlife Protection Act 1972**

- The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted for the protection of plants and animal species.
- It extends to the whole of India, except the State of Jammu and Kashmir which has its own wildlife act.
- It has six schedules which give varying degrees of protection.
- Schedule I and part II of Schedule II provide absolute protection - offences under these are prescribed the highest penalties.
- Species listed in Schedule III and Schedule IV are also protected, but the penalties are much lower.
- Schedule V includes the animals which may be hunted.
- The specified endemic plants in Schedule VI are prohibited from cultivation and planting.

#### Look Further

- Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, states can request the Centre to declare some species as “**vermin**” if their population becomes unmanageable, thereby removing protections assured by the Act.
- Essentially, the species can then be hunted or culled.
- The Central Government may declare any wild animal other than those specified in Sch. I and part 11 of Sch. H to be vermin for any area, **so long as such notification is in force, such wild animal shall be deemed to have been included in Sch. V.**
- The National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-31) calls for “comprehensive, science-based species-specific and region-specific, conflict mitigation plans that can help in the prevention of human-wildlife conflict situations.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Down To Earth

#### 5. Red sanders not endangered anymore

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has now reclassified red sander as ‘near threatened’ from the earlier ‘endangered’.

- After being classified as ‘endangered’ in 1997 and added to the Red List, this is the first time that red sanders have been shifted to a better-conserved category.
- Red sanders wood fetches huge prices in the international market for its use in making luxury products, musical instruments and medicine.
- However, as the species is endemic to India and had been considered endangered, the Foreign Trade Policy of India doesn’t allow its export.
- This ban, coupled with its high demand, made an illegal trade of red sanders rampant in states where it is found like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

#### Related Information

#### IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)-

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is an international organization working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- The organization is best known to the wider public for compiling and publishing the **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.**
- IUCN has an observer and consultative status at the United Nations.
- Its headquarter is located in Gland, Switzerland.
- The species which come under ‘critically endangered’, ‘endangered’ and ‘vulnerable’ categories are considered threatened.

Topic- GS-3- Environment

Source- Down to Earth

#### 6. IFFCO launched e-commerce platform “iMandi” for farmers

- Fertiliser major IFFCO has partnered with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi to start an e-commerce platform for farmers with an investment of about Rs 80 crore.
- An e-commerce app, 'IFFCO iMandi', has been launched that would cater to 5.5 crore farmers already associated with the cooperative.
- A web portal has also been developed.

- Under the agri inputs marketplace, the farmer can presently buy all IFFCO products, including fertilisers, agrochemicals and seeds at a discounted price and get free delivery at their doorstep.

Topic- GS-3- Agriculture

Source- Economic Times

**18 July 2018**

### **1. Google has partnered with UNEP for monitoring human activity on global ecosystem**

- The UN has entered into a partnership with Google to monitor the impacts of human activity on global ecosystems by using sophisticated online tools.
- Aim to develop a platform to enable governments, NGO's and the public to track specific environment-related development targets with a user-friendly Google front-end.
- Its initial focus will be on freshwater ecosystems including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.
- This will help in achieving the UN sustainable developmental goals(UN SDGs) and also use of most sophisticated online technologies available for global climate sustainability.

#### **Related Information**

##### **UNEP**

- UNEP is under the aegis of the UN.
- It was founded as a result of United Nations Conference on Human Environment in June 1972.
- Headquarter in Nairobi, Kenya.
- It is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

Source- Economic Times

Topic – GS-4 – Environment

### **2. WCD Ministry set to move Cabinet to make child marriage void**

- In India, child marriage between a man under 21 years and a woman under 18 are merely voidable at the behest of the contracting parties.
- UNICEF's 2014 report puts India at 6th spot, among the top-10 countries, regarding high rates of child marriage among women.
- The present law on child marriage PCMA- the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, does not invalidate child marriages.
- It only gives the child bride and the groom the option of annulling it if a case is filed in a district court by either of the two contracting parties within two years of becoming adult, or through a guardian in case, they are still minors.

#### **Note**

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, (for Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains) and the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, do not still hold child marriages to be void.

#### **Related information**

##### **The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**

- PCMA came into force on 1st November 2007 by replacing the earlier legislation of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.
- The object of the Act is to prohibit solemnization of child marriage and connected incidental matters. This new Act is armed with enabling provisions to prohibit for child marriage, protect and provide relief to the victim and enhance punishment for those who abet, promote or solemnize such marriage.

Source- Indian Express

Topic: GS 1- Role of women and women organization

### **3. Supreme Court asks the Parliament to make lynching a separate offence**

- The SC condemned lynching and recommended the Parliament to enact a separate law to punish offenders participating in the lynching.
- It noted that 'There cannot be a right higher than the right to live with dignity (article 21) and further to be treated with humaneness that the law provides'.

- SC orders state to designate the officer of SP rank as the nodal officer in each district to prevent mob violence
- Other directions include asking Centre, states to broadcast radio, TV and online warning messages; Fast track court in each district and compensation schemes for lynching in states

Source- The Hindu

Topic- GS – 2 - Communalism, regionalism and secularism

#### **4. UP plans foreign language course in tourist destinations**

- The Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to introduce an optional three-month foreign language course in 50 schools in seven districts.
- The pilot project will see the selected schools in Lucknow, Allahabad, Agra, Mathura, Varanasi, Gorakhpur and Ghaziabad offer training in at least two of the four foreign languages – French, German, Spanish and Japanese – depending on the number of students applying for the same.
- This programme is funded under the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan will be offered free of cost to class IX students.

Source-Indian Express

Topic- GS- 3- Development Processes

#### **5. Government seeks power to fix salary, the tenure of information commissioners**

- The government proposes to change 3 sections of the RTI Act (relating to **ranks, salaries, allowances and tenure**) of the Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners of the Centre and states.
- The proposed amendments say that the tenure, rank and perks of Central and State Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners will be decided by the central government.

**Related information**  
**CIC (Central Information Commission)**

- The Central Information Commission (CIC) set up under the RTI Act is the authorized body, established in 2005, under the Government of India.
- The Chief Information Commissioners are appointed by the President of India for a tenure of 5 years or 65 years of age (whichever is earlier).
- They act upon complaints from those individuals who have not been able to submit information requests.

Source- Indian Express

Topic- GS- 2- Separation of power between various organs

#### **6. Plants may soon create own fertilizer from thin air**

- Researchers said that it will soon be possible for the Engineer plants that develop their own fertilizer by using atmospheric nitrogen to create chlorophyll for photosynthesis.
- The bacteria used in this research, Cyanobacteria is able to fix nitrogen because it has a circadian rhythm.
- Circadian rhythm means that they follow the human sleep cycle and fix nitrogen only at night, after converting sunlight to chemical energy during the day.
- The plants will be able to utilize the nitrogen present in the air will be most effective for subsistence farmers and the annual expenditure on chemical fertilizers will be reduced substantially

Source – The Hindu

Topic- GS -4- Environment

#### **7. Army to resume M777 trials**

- The Army will resume the trials of the U.S.-made M777 Ultra-Light Howitzer (ULH) in Pokhran firing range.

#### **Related Information**

- In November 2016, India signed a deal with the U.S. government under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme for 145 M777 guns at a cost of \$737 million.
- The M777 is also used by the ground forces of Australia, Canada, India and Saudi Arabia.

Topic- GS-3 Defence

Source- The Hindu

### **8. Odisha to get country's 1st skill training centre**

- Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated India's 1<sup>st</sup> skill training centre at Barang near Bhubaneswar.
- The centre is planning to set up one National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) in every State to meet the rising demand for skilled manpower in the country.
- It will empower the youth of the State and make them job ready for industries.
- This will also help in addressing the issue of migration.

Topic- GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source- New Indian Express

**19 July 2018**

1. **Indian Air Force for the first time participating in Ex Pitch Black 2018**
  - From 24<sup>th</sup> July to 18<sup>th</sup> August, IAF will be participating in the mega exercise, which will involve over 100 aircraft from around the globe in **Australia**.
  - This is the first time IAF will be participating in the event.
  - The IAF contingent consists of 145 air-warriors including Garud team, 04 X Su-30 MKI, 01 X C-130 and 01 X C-17.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Ex Pitch Black**

- Ex Pitch Black is a biennial multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).
- The aim of the exercise is to practice Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Defensive Counter Air (DCA) combat, in a simulated war environment.
- The first Pitch Black exercises took place on 15-16 June **1981**.

Topic- GS-3 – Defense

Source-PIB

### **2. First Global Compact for Migration**

- First time United Nations member states, **except the US**, have agreed on a deal to create Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.
- It is the first intergovernmental negotiated agreement to cover all dimensions of migration.
- It will be formally adopted by world leaders in **Morocco in December**.
- It is **non-binding** and was signed by adopting "New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants" in 2016.
- It does not encourage migration, nor does it aim to stop it.
- The objective is to address the challenges for migration, strengthen migrant rights.

Topic- GS – 3- International Institutions and agencies

Source - The Hindu

### **3. India has not done much to address antimicrobial resistance: Global report**

- A survey by FAO, OIE and WHO has found wide discrepancies in countries' efforts toward tackling AMR.
- There is no effort to train stakeholders such as farmers, farm workers, extension workers, food and feed processors and retailers, and environmental specialists on AMR.
- India also does not have a national plan or system for monitoring sales and use of antimicrobials in animals and plants.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**

- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is the ability of a microorganism (like bacteria, viruses, and some parasites) to stop an antimicrobial (such as antibiotics, antivirals and antimalarials) from working against it. As a result, standard treatments become ineffective, infections persist and may spread to others.

Topic- GS – 3 –Science and Technology

Source- Down to earth

### **4. Special Remission Scheme for prisoners.**

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval to grant Special Remission to Prisoners as part of Commemoration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- State Governments will place the recommendations of the Committee before Governor for consideration and approval under Article 161 of the Constitution.

**Special remission will be given to:**

- **Women and Transgender convicts:** Of 55 years of age and above, who have completed 50 per cent of their actual sentence period.
- **Male convicts:** Of 60 years of age and above, who have completed 50 per cent of their actual sentence period.
- **Physically challenged/disabled convicts:** With 70 per cent disability and more, who have completed 50 per cent of their actual sentence period.
- **Terminally ill convicts and convicted prisoners:** Who have completed 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of their actual sentence period.

**Special remission will not be given to:**

- Prisoners who have been convicted for the death sentence.
- Cases involving in serious and heinous crimes like rape, human trafficking, dowry death and convicted under UAPA, POTA, TADA, FICN, POCSO, etc.

Topic – GS- 2- Social Justice

Source- The Hindu

5. **Chandrayaan-II Mission**

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to deploy a rover on the lunar surface through the Chandrayaan-2 mission.
- The instruments on Rover will conduct an in-situ analysis of elements such as **Na, Mg, Al, Si**, etc; in the vicinity of the landing site.

**Related Information**

- Chandrayaan-2 will be the **first-ever mission to land a rover near the lunar south pole.**
- India's **second lunar exploration mission** after Chandrayaan-1.

- It is planned to be launched to the moon by a Geosynchronous satellite launch vehicle (GSLV Mk II).
- It includes a lunar **orbiter, lander and rover**, all developed by India.

Topic- GS-3- Indigenization of technology and developing new technology

Source-PIB

6. **Cabinet approves the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018**

**Features of the bill**

- It takes into consideration **aggravated forms of trafficking**, which includes trafficking for the purpose of forced labour, begging, trafficking of a woman or child for the purpose of marriage or under the pretext of marriage or after marriage etc.
- It deals with **punishment for promoting or facilitating trafficking of the person.**
- It deals with the confidentiality of victims/ witnesses and complainants by not disclosing their identity.
- The **confidentiality of the victims** is maintained by recording their statement through video conferencing (this also helps in trans-border and inter-State crimes).
- **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** will perform the tasks of Anti-Trafficking Bureau at the national level present under the MHA.
- Punishment ranges from rigorous minimum 10 years to life and fine not less than Rs. 1 lakh.
- The **National Anti-Trafficking Bureau** will perform the functions of international coordination with authorities in other countries.

Topic- GS -1 – Issues related to women

Source- The Hindu

7. **First all-women branch of Jammu and Kashmir bank**

- The first all-women branch of Jammu & Kashmir Bank was inaugurated by the first lady Usha Vohra at an event at in Srinagar.



- Special services for women customers are Pink Gold Saving Scheme, Pink Platinum Saving Scheme, Special Loan facility for Women Entrepreneurs, Pink Gold Debit Card and Pink Platinum Credit Card.
- This step will help in broadening the financial inclusion of women.
- It will also help in doorstep delivery and facility to women living in remote areas.

Topic – GS- 1 – Social empowerment

Source- Firstpost

#### 8. **Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane**

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for the 2018-19 period.
- It hiked Rs. 20 per quintal (higher by 77.42% over production) in the FRP of sugarcane at Rs. 275 per quintal for the basic recovery rate of 10%.
- The cost of production of sugarcane for the sugar season 2018-19 is Rs. 155 per quintal.
- This ensures that the farmers get the return of more than 50% over their production cost.
- The Government with a view to protecting the interest of farmers has also decided that there shall not be any deduction in case of mills where recovery is below 9.5%. Such farmers will get Rs. 261.25 per quintal for sugarcane in place of Rs. 255/qtl in the current season.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Fair and Remunerative Price**

- The FRP has been determined on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other stakeholders.
- Recommended FRP is arrived by taking into account various factors such as the cost of production, overall demand-supply situation, domestic and international prices, inter-crop price parity, terms of trade prices of primary by-products, and likely impact of FRP on the general price level and resource use efficiency.

#### **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs**

- The Prime Minister is the head of this committee.
- Cabinet ministers of various ministries are its members.
- Its important functions include coordinating the governmental activities in the economic sphere, deciding issues pertaining to the World Trade Organization, the Unique Identification Authority of India and monitoring general prices, assess availability and export of essential and agricultural commodities and taking measures for efficient Public Distribution System.

Topic- GS – 3 - Agriculture

Source- The Hindu

#### 9. **Scientists discovered 12 new moons orbiting Jupiter**

- Scientists have discovered 12 new moons orbiting Jupiter, bringing the grand total of known Jovian satellites to 79.
- The mere existence of these newly discovered moons provides missing clues about the formation of the solar system.
- The discovery includes 11 normal outer moons and one oddball.
- Jupiter's satellites orbit the planet at three different distances. Out of the new moons, 9 are part of a distant outer swarm of moons orbiting in the retrograde (opposite direction of Jupiter's spin rotation).
- Of them, the 2 new discoveries are part of a closer, inner group of moons that orbit in the prograde (same direction as Jupiter's rotation).
- The researchers named the wayward moon Valetudo, after the Roman god Jupiter's great-granddaughter. It was the faintest of the objects, which makes it not only the palest Jovian moon ever discovered, but likely the smallest, as well.

Topic – GS- 3 - Technology

Source – The Wired

20 July 2018

1. **Samagra Shiksha - an Integrated Scheme for School Education**

- Under the **Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development** as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, implemented with effect from **2018-19**.
- This programme subsumes the three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE)**.
- Extending from **pre-school to class XII**.
- The main emphasis is on improving the quality of school education and the strategy for all interventions would be to enhance the Learning Outcomes at all levels of schooling.

**Related information**

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by Government of India in partnership with State Governments, is India's main programme for **universalising elementary education**.
- The scheme was started in **2001** by Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.
- **86th amendment** gave legal and constitutional backing, which made **free and compulsory Education** to the Children from 6-14 years age, a Fundamental Right.

**Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)**

- This scheme was launched in March 2009 with the objective to increase demand for **secondary schooling**.
- It aims to ensure GER of 100% by 2017 and universal retention by 2020.

Topic- GS-2- Schemes

Source-PIB

2. **Dolphin population declines in India's only dolphin sanctuary**

- Dredging, freight transport, pollution, and a lack of management plan leaves India's only dolphin sanctuary, **Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS) in Bihar's Bhagalpur district**, under threat.
- The number of dolphins in the sanctuary had declined to 154 from 207 in 2015.
- Dredging activity has increased manifold in recent years because the current Indian government has declared the stretch of the Ganga from Varanasi to Haldia in West Bengal **National Waterway- 1**.
- The experts involved in the survey blamed increasing pollution, human interference, siltation and decreasing water flow and water level in the river.

**Related Information**

**Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary**

- Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS), a 65km stretch of the Ganga River between Sultanganj and Kahalgaon towns in Bhagalpur, Bihar, India.
- It is a protected area established in 1991 to protect the endangered Gangetic river dolphin.

**Gangetic Dolphin**

- Endangered under IUCN
- Endemic to India's Ganga-Brahmaputra belt
- Found in freshwater habitat

Topic- GS - 3- Environment

Source- Down to earth

3. **Setting up of Ten Indigenous Nuclear Power Reactors**

- Reactors of indigenous technology are being set up by **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)**, a wholly owned PSU of Government of India under the administrative control of **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)**.
- These reactors are proposed to be set up at the following locations:

Location & State	Project	Capacity (MW)
Chutka, Madhya Pradesh	Chutka -1 & 2	2 X 700
Kaiga, Karnataka	Kaiga - 5 & 6	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 1 & 2	2 X 700
Gorakhpur, Haryana	GHAVP - 3 & 4	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 3 & 4	2 X 700

### Related Information

#### Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)

- Came into force on August 3, 1954.
- Headed by Prime Minister.
- In Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Engaged in the development of nuclear power technology, applications of radiation technologies in the fields of agriculture, medicine, industry and basic research.

Topic- GS- 3 – Science

Source-PIB

#### 4. Toxins found yet again, this time in PET bottles of five soft drinks brands

- At least 5 different toxins have been found in soft drinks produced by two multinational beverage companies—PepsiCo and Coca-Cola.
- A government-led study, commissioned by the **Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB), which comes under the Health Ministry**, has revealed the presence of heavy metals like **antimony, lead, chromium and cadmium along with the compound DEHP or Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate** in samples of Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Mountain Dew, Sprite and 7Up.
- All these samples were taken from the **Polyethylene terephthalate (PET)**.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), lead and cadmium are among the top ten chemicals of “major public health concern”.

- These beverages cause deaths to about 200,000 people every year due to diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancers.

### Related Information

- Lead can have serious consequences for children as it attacks the **brain and central nervous system**, causing coma, convulsions and even death. Survivors of lead poisoning may live with mental retardation and behavioural disorders
- Cadmium, on the other hand, affects the **kidneys, skeletal system and respiratory system**. It is also considered a human carcinogen.
- Antimony, chromium and DEHP are known to cause serious side effects on the body.

### Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB)

- Highest statutory decision-making body on **technical matters related to drugs**.
- Constituted as per the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
- Part of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Topic – GS- 2- Health

Source – Down to Earth

#### 5. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill, 2017

- The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed a Bill to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act to abolish the “**no-detention**” policy in schools. No student can be detained up to class 8, under current provisions of the Act.
- The Bill amends this provision to state that a regular examination will be held in class 5 and class 8 at the end of every academic year.
- If a child fails the exam, he will be given additional instruction, and take a re-examination.
- If he fails in the re-examination, the relevant central or state government may decide to allow schools to detain the child.

### Related Information

#### No -Detention Policy

- No- Detention policy states that no child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class.
- **S. R. Subramanian committee** has recommended that the no detention policy must be continued for young children until completion of class V when the child will be 11 years old.
- Schools are supposed to hold Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluations (CCE) for every child, instead of exams.

Topic - GS- 2- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Source- The Hindu

6. **Cabinet relaxes NELP, pre-NELP pact rules**

- The Union Cabinet on Wednesday eased the policies related to hydrocarbon exploration further by relaxing production sharing contracts (PSC) of Pre-New Exploration Licensing Policy (Nelp) and Nelp blocks.
- From payment of 100 per cent royalty, these companies will now have to pay an amount depending on their equity in the project.

**Related Information**

<b>New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)</b>	<b>Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP)</b>
1997	2016
No uniformity Equal platform to both Public and Private sector companies in exploration and production of hydrocarbons. Profit sharing PSCs (Production Sharing Contracts)	Uniform license for exploration and production of all forms of hydrocarbon, Revenue Sharing Contract, An open acreage policy, Easy to administer revenue sharing model Marketing and pricing freedom for the crude oil and natural gas produced.

Topic- GS- 3- Investment models

Source- The Hindu

7. **Jana Small Finance Bank starts commercially operating**

- Jana Small Finance Bank formerly known as Janalakshmi Financial Services started operating from 19<sup>th</sup>
- It had got its license in March 2018
- Headquarters are in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

**Related Information**

<b>Small Finance Banks (SFBs)</b>	<b>Payment Banks</b>
Niche banks that focus and serve the needs of a certain demographic segment of the population.	A payments bank is like any other bank, but operating on a smaller scale without involving any credit risk.
Can give loans and advances	Cannot offer loans or advances
Can offer credit cards	Cannot offer credit cards
Mainly for the growth of agriculture and Micro, Small and Medium industries.	Mainly for the growth of individual/weaker section and etc.

Topic - GS- 3 - Inclusive Growth

Source- Economic Times

**21 July 2018**

1. **India to expand polar research to the Arctic as well**

- Three decades after its first mission to Antarctica, the government is refocusing priorities to the Arctic — because of opportunities and challenges posed by climate change.
- Recently India has renamed the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) as the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research.

**Note-**

**NCAOR-** Since 1998, charged with conducting expeditions to India's base stations to the continent.

- It's also in talks with Canada and Russia, key countries with the presence in the Arctic circle, to establish new observation systems, according to a source.

- Now, India only has one Arctic observation station near Norway.
- India is already an observer at the Arctic Council.

#### **Note- Arctic Council**

- It is a forum of countries that decide on managing the region's resources and popular livelihood.
- In 2015, India set up an underground observatory, called IndARC, at the Kongsfjorden fjord, halfway between Norway and the North Pole.

#### **Why does India concern?**

- A big worry for India is the impact of melting sea ice on the monsoon.
- Over the years scientists across the world are reporting that the rapid ice-melt in the Arctic is leading to large quantities of fresh water into the seas around the poles.
- This impedes the release of heat from the water and directs warm water into the seas around India, the theory goes, and eventually weakens the movement of the monsoon breeze into India.

#### **Research Stations in the Arctic**

- Himadri

#### **Research Stations in Antarctica**

- Maitri
- Bharati

**Note-** Dakshin Gangotri Antarctic research base superseded by the Maitri base from 1990.

Topic- GS-1- Indian Geography

Source- The Hindu

#### **2. Myanmar joins International Solar Alliance**

- Myanmar recently joined the India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), becoming the 68th member of the grouping that is aiming at optimum utilisation of solar energy.
- India is a key development aid partner for Myanmar and is implementing a number of infrastructure projects in that country.
- These include-  
(a) The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project connecting Mizoram with Sittwe port in Myanmar

- (b) The Trilateral Highway Project connecting India with Myanmar and Thailand and the Rhi-Tiddim road etc.

#### **Related Information**

##### **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**

- The ISA is an Indian initiative, jointly launched by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and the President of France on 30th November 2015 in Paris, on the side-lines of COP-21, the UN Climate Conference.
- The alliance's primary objective is-  
(a) Work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.  
(b) Mobilise \$1 trillion in funds for the future solar generation, storage and technology across the world.
- The ISA, headquartered in India, has its Secretariat located in the Gwalpahari, Gurgaon, Haryana.
- India has offered to meet ISA Secretariat expenses for initial five years.
- It is open to all 121 prospective member countries falling between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.
- ISA plans to approach multilateral development banks (MDBs) such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to create a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to specifically finance solar projects.
- This SPV aimed at financing \$150 billion would become a **World Solar Bank**.

Topic- GS-2- Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

Source- Business Standard

#### **3. Three in five HIV-carriers now have access to drugs: UN**

- There were 36.9 million people living with the immune system-attacking virus in 2017, of whom 15.2 million were not getting the drugs they need — the lowest number since the epidemic exploded, the joint UN programme on HIV/AIDS reported.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Mission 2020**

##### **The target of 90:90:90**

- The UN goal is for 90% of all HIV-positive people to know their status by 2020. Of these, at least 90% must receive ART, and the HIV virus be suppressed in 90% of those.
- Assessing progress towards the target, UNAIDS said 1.8 million people became newly infected with HIV in 2017.
- This was down from about 1.9 million the year before, and 3.4 million at the peak of the epidemic in 1996.

#### **Antiretroviral therapy (ART)**

- ART are medications that treat HIV.
- The drugs do not kill or cure the virus.
- However, when taken in combination they can prevent the growth of the virus.
- Antiretroviral drugs are referred to as ARV.
- Combination ARV therapy (cART) is referred to as highly active ART(HAART).

Topic- GS-2- Health Issues

Source- The Hindu

4. **4th BIMSTEC Summit to be held in Kathmandu**
  - The fourth BIMSTEC Summit will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal (30 to 31 August 2018).
  - The main focus of the summit will be to increase connectivity between the BIMSTEC nations including roads, airways and transmission lines.

#### **Related Information**

##### **BIMSTEC**

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation involving a group of countries in South Asia and South-East Asia.
- These 7 countries are- Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal.
- The BIMSTEC states are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal.
- Its secretariat is located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Topic-GS-2- Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate

Source- AIR

#### 5. **NMCG Organised "Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan" in Five Ganga Basin States**

- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is running "Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan" in five main stem Ganga basin states – Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.
- The campaign, which has been initiated as part of the Forest Interventions in Ganga (FIG) component of Namami Gange programme, is significant as it aims to bring greater awareness among people and other stakeholders regarding the importance of afforestation for the task of Ganga Rejuvenation.
- A number of schools, colleges and departments have been requested to "Adopt a Plant" for turning this campaign into a people's movement.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Ganga Gram**

- Under the "Namami Gange" Programme, the government plans to develop the villages located along the main stem of river Ganga which have historic, cultural, and religious and/or tourist importance.
- Works related to Ganga Grams will encompass comprehensive rural sanitation, development of water bodies and river ghats, construction/modernization of crematoria etc.

##### **Namami Gange Mission**

- 'Namami Gange Programme', is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014.
- The mission was launched to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.

Topic-GS-2- Schemes and Programs

Source-PIB

**23 July 2018**

### **1. Public Affairs Index 2018**

- The Public Affairs Index 2018 released by Bengaluru-based think-tank Public Affairs Centre (PAC) were as follows:
  1. Kerala
  2. Tamil Nadu
  3. Telangana
  4. Karnataka
  5. Gujrat
- Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar ranked the lowest on the index, indicating higher social and economic inequalities in the states.
- Among smaller states (with the population less than two crores), the ranking was:
  1. Himachal Pradesh
  2. Goa
  3. Mizoram
  4. Sikkim
  5. Tripura
- Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya were ranked at the bottom of the index among small states.

#### **Related Information**

- Released annually since 2016.
- The index examines governance performance in the states through a **data-based framework**, ranking them on social and economic development they are able to provide.
- Founded in **1994** by renowned economist and scholar, **late Samuel Paul**, the think-tank works to mobilise a demand for better governance in the country.

Topic- GS- 3- Growth and development

Source- The Indian Express

### **2. Global Slavery Index 2018**

- In India, the 2018 index estimates that there were around 8 million people living in modern slavery in the country in 2016.
- In terms of prevalence, there were 6.1 victims for every thousand people.
- Among 167 countries, India ranked 53 in terms of prevalence.

- The 10 countries with the largest number of absolute numbers of people in modern slavery include India, China, Pakistan, North Korea, Nigeria, Iran, Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Russia and the Philippines.

#### **Related Information**

- The 2018 Global Slavery Index provides a country by the country ranking of the number of people in modern slavery, as well as an analysis of the actions governments are taking to respond, and the factors that make people vulnerable.
- Published by the Walk Free Foundation.
- Since 2013

Topic- GS- 2- Organizations and agencies

Source- Money Control

### **3. Most advanced System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting (SAFAR) at Chandni Chowk in Delhi.**

- **State-of-the-art** Air Quality and Weather Forecast System– SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) was unveiled at Chandni Chowk
- The giant true colour LED display gives out **real-time air quality index on 24x7 basis with colour coding along with 72-hour advance forecast.**
- The air quality station will also measure **the sun's UV-Index** and will provide the measurement of online automatic ultrafine particles **PM1 and Mercury**, both of which have direct relevance to human health. Based on UVI, skin advisories will be issued on display.
- SAFAR will accelerate public awareness and preparedness of air pollution and weather extremes.
- It will monitor all weather parameters like temperature, rainfall, humidity, wind speed and wind direction.
- In addition to regular air quality parameters like PM2.5, PM10, Sulfur Dioxide, Ozone, Nitrogen Oxides, Carbon Monoxide, the system will also monitor the existence of **Benzene, Toluene and Xylene.**

## Related Information

### Air Quality Index

- Air Quality Index (AQI) is one such tool for effective dissemination of air quality information to people.
- There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe.
- The AQI considers eight pollutants (PM10, PM2.5, NO2, SO2, CO, O3, NH3, and Pb) for which short-term (up to 24-hourly averaging period) National Ambient Air Quality Standards are prescribed.

Topic- GS-3- Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

Source-PIB

### **4. The 10th edition of Delhi Dialogue held in New Delhi, ASEAN-India trade likely to touch 100 billion by 2020.**

- The theme of the two-day DD -10 is "Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation".
- This is the first major event to be organized after the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, that was held in New Delhi in January 2018.

## Related Information

### Delhi Dialogue

- The Delhi Dialogue is a premier annual track 1.5 event to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and ASEAN.
- Since 2009, it is held annually and political leaders, policy makers, senior officials, diplomats, think tanks and academicians from both sides participate in the discussions pertaining to ASEAN-India relations.
- It is aimed at finding a common ground and expanding the scope of cooperation between India and ASEAN nations.
- Union Urban Development and Housing Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the bilateral trade between ASEAN and India has crossed USD 80-billion mark, which not only shows growing confidence but also constitutes the highest volume of trade in goods that ASEAN and India have witnessed since the signing of

the FTA in 2010. If this double-digit trade growth continues, ASEAN-India trade is likely to touch USD 100 billion by 2020.

**Note-** The term track 1.5 diplomacy is used by some analysts to define a situation where official and non-official actors cooperate in conflict resolution.

5. **NDA Government wins No Confidence motion in Lok Sabha, BJP MPs move the privilege notice against Rahul Gandhi for misleading Parliament.**

## Related Information

### No- Confidence Motion

- A motion of no-confidence is a statement or vote which states that a person(s) in a position of responsibility (government, managerial, etc.) is no longer deemed fit to hold that position.
- **Article 75(3)** of our Constitution of India embodies this rule by specifying that Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to Lok Sabha. But there is **no mention of a no-confidence motion in the constitution.**
- As a Parliamentary Motion, it demonstrates to the Head of the state that the elected parliament no longer has confidence in (one or more members of) the appointed Government.

### Privilege motion

- As per the Constitution, all members of the Parliament enjoy certain rights and immunities – this is also referred to as Parliamentary Privilege which is enjoyed both by the Parliament and the members in their individual capacity.
- Privilege motion refers to a notice by any member of either House of a state legislature or Parliament, against anyone members who are accused of breach of privilege.

Topic- GS -2- Indian Constitution

Source- The Hindu

6. **Rani- ki- Vav**
  - The Reserve Bank of India will soon issue a new Rs 100 note in lavender colour having a motif of 'Rani Ki Vav' on the reverse.



### Related Information

- Rani-ki-Vav is an 11th-century old heritage site in **Patan, Gujarat**, on the banks of the Saraswati River, and is a UNESCO heritage site. *The Heritage site was awarded as the cleanest iconic place in India.*
- It is believed that the stepwell (Vav) was built in memory of Bhima by his widowed queen Udayamati.
- The structure is designed as an inverted temple highlighting the sanctity of water.

New Currency	Motif
Rs. 10	Konark Sun Temple
Rs. 50	Hampi with Chariot
Rs. 100	Rani ki vav
Rs. 200	Sanchi Stupa
Rs. 500	Red Fort
Rs. 2000	Mangalyaan

Topic –GS-1- Indian Architecture

Source- The Hindu

#### 7. **First ever Centre for Climate Change in Lucknow.**

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has launched the Centre for Climate Change for accelerating concerted climate action by various stakeholders in government, private, financial and non -government actors.
- It is the first of its kind centre in South East Asia, located in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.**

### Related Information

#### **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is an apex development financial institution in India, headquartered at Mumbai with regional offices all over India.
- It was established in 1982 on recommendations of Shivaraman Committee to implement National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act, 1981.
- The Bank has been entrusted with "matters concerning policy, planning and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India".

- NABARD is active in developing financial inclusion policy and is a member of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion.

Topic- GS- 3- Inclusive growth and issues arising from it

Source- Indian Express

#### 8. **Israel Adopts Jewish Nation-State Law**

- Israel's parliament today adopted a law defining the country as the nation-state of the Jewish people, provoking fears it could lead to blatant discrimination against Arab citizens
- Israel has no constitution. It has the certain Basic law which has some constitutional status.
- The nation-state law is the 14th such basic law.

### Related information

#### **Nationality Bill**

- This would certify as a basic law that Israel is indeed the world's Jewish State.
- It asserts that Hebrew is the country's national language and would demote Arabic to special status.
- It also establishes the flag, the national symbol and anthem.

Topic- GS – 1 -Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism.

Source- Times of India

#### 9. **Govt to ask Micro Small Medium Enterprises to obtain Udyog Aadhaar**

- The government will urge about one crore MSMEs registered under the GST Network to obtain Udyog Aadhaar number to avail benefits of various government schemes.
- The move is aimed convergence of the database of GSTN with Udyog Aadhaar and at procuring the MSMEs' contact details and information about their business verticals, so that government policies can be tailored to match their needs.
- Over 48 lakh MSMEs are presently registered under Udyog Aadhaar, which enables these units to seek information and apply online about various services being offered by all ministries and departments.

## Related Information

### Udyog Aadhaar

- Udyog Aadhaar is 12-digit National Portal for Registration of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises.
- By Ministry of MSME/SSI.
- It is a government registration provided with recognition certification and a unique number, for certifying small/medium business or enterprise.

Topic- GS-2- Welfare schemes

Source- Indian Express

**24 July 2018**

1. **Centre to constitute the high-level committee to deal with mob lynching incidents**

- Two high-level committees have been constituted by the Central government to suggest ways and legal framework to effectively deal with incidents of mob violence and lynching.
- The committees are headed by:  
**(a) Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh** -They will submit their recommendations to the Prime Minister.  
**(b) Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba**- They will submit the recommendations to a ministerial committee headed by the report to the government within four weeks.
- The Secretaries of the **justice, legal affairs, legislative, and social justice and empowerment departments** are members of the committee.
- The government has also decided to constitute a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Home Minister Singh to consider the recommendations of the high-level committee of the Secretaries.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot are members of the Group of Ministers.

## Related Information

- 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Constitutional scheme.
- The State governments are responsible for controlling crime, maintaining law and order, and protecting the life and property of the citizens.
- They are empowered to enact and enforce laws to curb crime in their jurisdiction.

Topic-GS-2- Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions

Source- The Hindu

2. **Army to get K9 Vajra-T artillery guns**

- The Army will be inducting two types of artillery guns into its arsenal. These will be the **first induction of heavy artillery since the Swedish Bofors guns imported in the 1980s**.
- The Army will start taking delivery of the K9 Vajra-T tracked self-propelled artillery guns from **South Korea** in September. It will also receive four M777 ultra-light howitzers from the **S**.
- The first 10 guns will be imported from South Korea and the rest manufactured by L&T in India.
- All the 100 guns will be delivered by November 2020

## Related Information

### K9 Vajra-T

- K9 Vajra-T is a 155-mm, 52-calibre self-propelled artillery gun with a maximum range of 40 km, customised from the original K9 Thunder gun. The fire control system has been **customised for desert conditions** to the requirements of the Army.

### M777

- The M777 is a 155-mm, 39-calibre towed artillery gun and weighs just four tonnes, making it transportable underslung from helicopters.

Topic- GS-3- Indigenization of technology

Source- The Hindu

### 3. **NCERT to introduce QR code in textbooks**

- The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has initiated the process of introducing QR code in textbooks, a move aimed at helping students understand chapters better by watching a film or reading additional content on laptops and digital boards.
- These will be mapped with the content of each textbook from **class 1 to 12** and will be linked with QR code, which will be printed in the textbooks
- The codes are likely to be introduced from the **2019 academic session** by when the required content would have been generated.
- The council is likely to consider a proposal to revise textbooks for young children to include identification of male and female genitalia.

#### **Related Information**

- QR Code is a machine-readable code consisting of an array of **black and white squares**.
- It can be read by Smartphone camera.
- It can rotate 360 degrees with high-speed reading capability.
- It can store up to **7089 digits**.
- It can carry information both horizontally and vertically.
- It has error correction capability.

Topic- GS- 3- Inclusive Growth

Source- The Indian Express

### 4. **Lok Sabha passes National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017.**

- The Lok Sabha passed the National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill to grant retrospective recognition to Central/State institutions that are conducting teacher education courses without NCTE approval.
- NCTE Act is seeking to provide approval to those institutions which are funded by the Centre or states, but do not have recognition under the 1993 law.

#### **Related Information**

- The NCTE Act, 1993, came into force in 1995 and applies to all parts of India, except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is a statutory body to formally oversee standards, procedures and processes in the Indian education system.
- It is located in Delhi under the Department of Teacher Education and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

Topic- GS-2- Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies

Source- The Hindu

### 5. **Lok Sabha passed Negotiable Instruments (Amendment), Bill**

- The Lok Sabha passed the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2017, which provides for allowing a court trying an offence related to **cheque bouncing** to direct the drawer to pay interim compensation to the complainant.
- The bill aims to counter the delaying tactics employed by people who want to avoid paying cheques issued by them.
- The interim compensation may be paid where the drawer pleads not guilty of the accusation.
- The compensation will not exceed **20 Percent** of the cheque amount and will have to be paid by the drawer within 60 days of the court's order.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Negotiable Instruments**

- A negotiable instrument is a document guaranteeing the payment of a specific amount of money, either on demand or at a set time, with the payer usually named on the document.
- Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 defines promissory notes, bills of exchange and cheques.

Topic- GS-2- Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies

Source- The Hindu

### 6. **Odisha police launch drive to bust Pangolin smuggling racket**

A special unit of the Odisha Police has launched a drive to bust an international syndicate with the help of the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) that peddles "endangered" pangolin, one of the world's most illegally traded mammals.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT)**

MLAT is an agreement between nations to exchange information or provide legal assistance for enforcing laws.

##### **Pangolin**

- Pangolin is the most illegally traded vertebrate within its class of mammals.
- Of the eight species of pangolin across Africa and Asia, two are found in India:
  1. **Chinese pangolin**- "critically endangered" by IUCN Red List.
  2. **Indian pangolin**- "endangered" in IUCN Red List.
- They are typically elusive, shy creatures whose bodies are covered in hard, keratin scales.
- The Wildlife Protection Act (1972) categories it under **Schedule 1**.

Topic-GS-3- Conservation

Source- The Hindu

##### 7. **NASA launches online toolkit to promote commercial use of satellite data**

- NASA has launched an online toolkit to make it easier for users to find, analyse and utilise the most relevant satellite data for their research, business projects or conservation efforts.
- The "Remote Sensing Toolkit" provides a simple system that quickly identifies relevant sources based on user input.
- The toolkit is designed to help users search for data, as well as ready-to-use tools and code to build new tools.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Remote Sensing Toolkit**

It is an online toolkit launched with an aim to make it easier for users to find, analyse and utilise the relevant satellite data for their research, business projects or conservation efforts. The toolkit provides a simple system that quickly identifies relevant sources based on user input.

Topic- GS -3- Space

Source- The Hindu

##### 8. **All alien invasive species are guilty until proven innocent**

Scientists believe, that weeding out the invasive and re-introducing the disappeared natives would somehow revive the old rhythms and patterns of the forest.

#### **Related Information**

- An invasive alien species is a species that is not native to a specific location, and that has a tendency to spread to a degree believed to cause damage to the environment, human economy or human health.
- An alien species is a species introduced by humans – either intentionally or accidentally - outside of its natural past or present distribution, however not all alien species have negative impacts.
- Notable examples of alien invasive species :
  1. Water hyacinth
  2. Zebra mussels
  3. Ship rat
  4. Small Indian mongoose
  5. Yellow crazy ant
  6. American Bull FrogComb jellyfish and Zebra mussel

Topic-GS-3- Conservation

Source- Downtoearth

##### 9. **Data breach incidents in India higher than the global average**

- Data breach incidents in India have been higher compared to the global average, according to a survey conducted by defence grade technology maker Thales.
- This year's India Data Threat Report 2018 emphasizes the need for change in security strategies to prevent the continuous increase in data breaches and also highlights privacy and data protection practices.
- The study found that Indian companies are adopting advanced technologies like big data, internet-of-things, mobile payments, blockchain at large levels.
- All companies surveyed in India were using cloud technology, with 92 Percent of respondents sharing sensitive data on the cloud system.

## Related Information

### Internet of things(IoT)

- The term IoT encompasses everything connected to the internet, but it is increasingly being used to define objects that "talk" to each other. Simply, the Internet of Things is made up of devices – from simple sensors to smartphones and wearables – connected together.

### Blockchain

- The blockchain is the technology the underpins digital currency (Bitcoin, Litecoin, Ethereum, and the like). It allows market participants to keep track of digital currency transactions without central recordkeeping. It allows digital information to be distributed, but not copied.

### Big Data

- Big data is data sets that are so big and complex that traditional data-processing application software is inadequate to deal with them.

### Data Security Council of India (DSCI)

- Data Security Council of India (DSCI) is a premier industry body on data protection in India, set up by NASSCOM in August 2008.
- It is committed to making cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cybersecurity and privacy.

Topic- GS-3 - Challenges to internal security

Source- Moneycontrol

**25.07.2018**

#### 1. **AT Kearney FDI Confidence Index**

- India has slipped by three notches to **11th position** in the FDI Confidence Index 2018 of global consultancy firm A T Kearney, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016.
- India in 2018 has fallen out of the top 10 destinations for FDI in terms of its attractiveness.
- The report highlighted several of the reforms — such as removing the Foreign Investment Promotion Board and liberalising FDI limits in key sectors — that have maintained India's high rankings in terms of FDI attractiveness.

- The top 3 countries were:
  - (1) United States
  - (2) Canada
  - (3) Germany
- Its headquarters is in Franklin Center in Chicago, United States.

Topic-GS-2- Organisations and agencies

Source- Economic Times

#### 2. **National Culture Fund**

- As per the latest data, about Rs. 904.80 Lakhs has been received as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) under NCF for development Works at Historic Monuments in last 3 yrs.

## Related Information

### National Culture Fund (NCF)

- National Culture Fund (NCF), under the Ministry of Culture, was set up in 1996, as a Trust under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890, with a view to mobilizing extra resources through Public-Private Partnerships.
- It is headed by Hon'ble Culture Minister for deciding the policies.
- The Executive Committee headed by Secretary, Culture actualizes those policies.
- The donations or contributions under NCF are eligible for 100% tax deduction under the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Topic-GS-2-Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source-PIB

#### 3. **Parliament passes Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill**

- The Lok Sabha passed the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2018 that seeks to punish **bribe-givers and bribe-takers**.
- The Bill provides for jail terms of three to seven years, besides fine, to those convicted of taking or giving bribes to public officials.
- The Bill also extends the ambit of public servants who will be protected by the provision of a prior government sanction for prosecution.

- There is also a provision now to get prior permission for starting an investigation and that has prompted

many to say that the law has been “diluted” from its original draft.



**Bribery**

**What is new**

- Giving a bribe is now an offence, punishable by a 7-year prison term
- Except when one is forced to give a bribe. But it should be reported within seven days
- Bribe is termed ‘undue advantage’, defined as ‘gratification other than legal remuneration’

**What it was**

- No specific provision, except as abetment

*It could empower the public to refuse to give a bribe but seven-day limit may not be enough. As to what happens if citizen's report of coercion is not registered by the police is unclear*



**Pre-investigation approval**

**What is new**

- Police officer cannot begin probe without prior approval of relevant authority or govt (except when caught red-handed)

**What it was**

- No such provision in the Act, but a rule similar to it was struck down by Supreme Court

*Protection formerly available to officials of rank of joint secretary and above (before SC struck it down) is extended to all public servants*



**Sanction for prosecution**

**What is new**

- Sanction needed for prosecuting former officials for offences done while in office
- Centre may notify guidelines for sanction
- Decision on request for sanction within 3 months, which may be extended by a month”

**What it was**

- Sanction was required under PCA for serving officers only

*Sanction for IPC offences covered both serving and retired officers. Guidelines and time-limit may help make sanction process easier*



**Criminal misconduct**

**What is new**

- Only be two forms of criminal misconduct.
- Misappropriation of property entrusted to public servant
- Intentionally enriching oneself illicitly

**What it was**

- There were five kinds: omitted ones are taking bribe habitually, getting anything free or at a concession, obtaining pecuniary advantage for oneself or for another without public interest

*This is to protect public servants from being wrongly prosecuted for official decisions. Earlier it was a crime to “obtain advantage to a private party without public interest”*



**Forfeiture of property**

**What is new**

- Section introduced for Special Court under this Act to attach and confiscate property

**What it was**

- This was not done under the Prevention of Corruption Act, but under a 1944 ordinance through civil courts

*This helps avoid a fresh procedure to confiscate property obtained through corruption, enables court conducting trial to do so itself*

Topic-GS- 2-Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source- The Hindu

4. **The sharp decline in maternal, infant mortality rates in India**
  - India has achieved a remarkable feat in arresting maternal and infant mortality rates and would surpass SDG goals of reducing maternal mortality to 70 per lakh live births by 2025 instead of the target of 2030.
  - The maternal mortality rate (MMR) per lakh live births has reduced to 130 in the country while there has been a significant improvement in checking infant mortality rate (IMR) deaths.
  - Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have shown significant performance.
  - The low performing states are Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Rajasthan, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir.

**Related Information  
Infant Mortality Rate**

- Infant Mortality Rate refers to the deaths of infants under the age of one year per 1,000 live births.

**Maternal Mortality Rate**

- Maternal mortality Rate refers to the number of women who die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth complications per 100,000 live births in a given year.

**Janani Suraksha Yojna (JSY)**

- It was launched on 12 April 2005 by the Prime Minister of India.
- It aims to decrease the neonatal and maternal deaths happening in the country by promoting institutional delivery of babies. This is a safe motherhood intervention under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).
- It is a 100% centrally sponsored scheme it integrates cash assistance with delivery and post-delivery care.

Topic- GS- 3- Inclusive Development

Source- The Indian express

5. **Swachh Survekshan Grameen launched in UP, Jharkhand and Maharashtra**

- The Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) announced by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation on July 13th, 2018, was launched by three States.
- Under the SSG 2018, an independent survey agency will conduct the survey in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018.
- The results will be announced in the form of a ranking of all districts and States on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhata) parameters. The top-performing States and Districts are expected to be awarded on 2nd October 2018.

### Related Information

#### Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018

- Under Ministry of drinking water and sanitation
- It is a rural cleanliness survey to rank all states and districts.
- It is conducted by an independent survey agency.

Topic-GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source-PIB

#### 6. The government reviewed the implementation of ambitious reform initiative for the Indian Army based on recommendations of a committee headed by Lt Gen (retd) DB Shekatkar.

- Shekatkar Committee was tasked with suggesting steps to enhance combat capability of the armed forces.
- Formed by Ministry of Defence in the year 2016.
- Some measures as recommended by the Committee and taken up for implementation include:
  1. Optimization of Signals Establishments
  2. Restructuring of repair echelons in the Army
- Better utilization of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport Units.
  1. Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.

2. Enhancement of standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
3. Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.

Topic-GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source-PIB

#### 7. Khelo-India scholarships

- The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has finalised 734 names under the Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme for training and support.
- The High Powered Committee for the first time also has accredited various private, state and SAI academies for nurturing talent. It has also accredited 21 non-SAI academies as well.
- An annual stipend of ₹1.2 lakh will be given to each player on a quarterly basis to meet their out of pocket expenses, treatment of injuries and other expenses.
- The identified youngsters would be trained at SAI, State-run and private academies with 21 non-SAI academies accredited according to the facilities available.
- The names were cleared by the Sports Ministry's High Powered Committee on the recommendation of the **Talent Identification Committee (TIC) comprising Arjuna and Dronacharya Awardees.**
- The plan is to develop more such academies so that young athletes can get access to the best training without having to travel long distances.

### Related Information

#### Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme

- The scheme was introduced by Ministry of Sports and Youth affairs to revive sports culture in India at the grass-root level.
- The scheme is a unique programme to nurture sporting talent.
- Through this programme, the athletes will get training at government-accredited residential academies.

Topic-GS-3- Inclusive Development  
Source-PIB

8. **The first meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats.**

- India and Bangladesh signed an agreement to set up six new border haats (markets) in the northeastern states adjoining the international border with Bangladesh by March 2019.
- Currently, four border haats are operational, along with the India-Bangladesh border.
- Two border haats are located in **Meghalaya at Kalaichar and Balat** and two are located in **Tripura at Srinagar and Kamalasagar.**

**Related Information**

**Border Haats**

- Border haats means rural market.
- It seeks to organize marketplace for the two countries for one day each week.
- It acts as a reunion spot for families living on both sides of the border.
- The border haats aim at promoting the wellbeing of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders of two countries, by establishing the traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets.

Topic- GS- 2- India and its neighbourhood-relations

Source-PIB

9. **The expediting of 5 major dam projects saw an overall cost escalation of 2,341 per cent: CAG**

- The five are among a total 16 projects approved by the Indian Government as part of 'a Scheme of National Projects' for water resource development and irrigation.
- The 16 projects identified before were languishing due to various constraints and hurdles including land acquisition, inter-state coordination, financial constraints and issues relating to rehabilitation and resettlement of affected populations.

- Only five projects— Indira Sagar Polavaram Project in Andhra Pradesh, Gosikhurd Irrigation Project in Maharashtra, Shahpur Khandi Dam Project in Punjab, Saryu Nahar Pariyojana in Uttar Pradesh and Teesta Barrage Project in West Bengal—with an envisaged irrigation potential of 25.10 lakh hectares, are under implementation.

**Related Information**

**Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP)**

- AIBP was launched by the Centre from 1996-97 for extending loan assistance to states for the incomplete major/medium irrigation projects which were at an advanced stage of completion and to create additional irrigation potential in the country.

Topic- GS-3- Infrastructure

Source-PIB

**26.07.2018**

**1. Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018**

- The bill, replacing the ordinance seeks to deter economic offenders from escaping the country and lays down provisions for escaped offenders to return to India and submit themselves to the process of law.

**Key Features:**

- The bill empowers authorities to attach and confiscate the properties and assets of economic offenders.
- It seeks to target fugitives for offences exceeding **₹100 crore.**
- The bill will extend not only to loan defaulters and fraudsters but also to individuals who violate laws governing taxes, black money, benami properties and financial corruption.
- All individuals attempting to evade the Indian legal process from the date of the enactment of the law will be covered.
- The confiscation of property will not be limited to those acquired through the proceeds or profits of the crime.
- The bill also provides for confiscation of benami properties.



- Those classified as fugitives will also not be able to pursue civil cases in India unless they come back to India and face prosecution.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Fugitive Economic Offender**

- A Fugitive Economic Offender is a person against whom an arrest warrant has been issued in respect of a scheduled offence and who has left India so as to avoid criminal prosecution, or being abroad, refuses to return to India to face criminal prosecution.

##### **Scheduled offence**

- A scheduled offence refers to a list of economic offences contained in the Schedule of the bill.

Topic- GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source- Indian Express

#### **2. Scheme to compensate victims of sexual assaults should include children: SC.**

- The Supreme Court said that a scheme proposed by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) for compensating victims of sexual assault and acid attack should be modified to "some extent" to make it applicable to child victims of such assaults.
- The bench suggested that the **Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes, 2018, proposed by the National Legal Services Authority**, include child victims.

#### **Related Information**

##### **Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/Other Crimes, 2018**

- The National Legal Services Authority's scheme proposes a uniform payment of ₹5 lakh to the maximum of ₹10 lakh to gang-rape survivors in any part of the country.
- In the case of rape and unnatural sexual assault, the victim will get a minimum of ₹4 lakh and the maximum of ₹7 lakh.

- For an acid attack victim minimum of ₹7 lakh in case of disfigurement of a face. The upper limit will be ₹8 lakh.
- In acid attack cases, if the injury is more than 50%, a minimum compensation of ₹5 lakh will be given and the maximum will be ₹8 lakh.

##### **National Legal Services Authority of India (NALSA)**

- NALSA was formed on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1995 under the authority of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- Its purpose is to provide free legal services to eligible candidates and to organize Lok Adalats for speedy resolution of cases.
- The Chief Justice of India is patron-in-chief of NALSA while 2nd most judge of Supreme Court of India is the Executive-Chairman.
- The prime objective of NALSA is speedy disposal of cases and reducing the burden of the judiciary.

Topic- GS-2- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections

Source- The Hindu

#### **3. The 19th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas being celebrated.**

- It marks India's victory over Pakistan in the 1999 Kargil War and remembers those who sacrificed their lives for the country.
- The three-day celebrations began at the Drass War Memorial in Kargil town in Jammu and Kashmir.

#### **Related Information**

- On 26th July 1999, India successfully took command of the high outposts which had been lost to Pakistani intruders. The war was fought for more than 60 days.
- In India, the conflict is also referred to as Operation Vijay which was the name of the Indian operation to clear the Kargil sector.

Topic- GS-3- Security challenges and their management in border areas.

Source-PIB

#### **4. Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India.**

### Related Information

- The scheme is being implemented through Sangeet Natak Akademi, an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture.
- With the objective of reinvigorating and revitalizing various institutions, groups, individuals etc. so that they may engage in activities/ projects for strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.
- It covers all recognized domains such as oral traditions and expressions, including language, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, traditional craftsmanship etc.

### Related information

#### Sangeet Natak Akademi

- Sangeet Natak Akademi is the national level academy for performing arts set up by the Government of India.
- Founded on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1952
- Headquarters in New Delhi
- The academy functions as the apex body of the performing arts in the country to preserve and promote the vast cultural heritage of India expressed in music, dance and drama.

Topic- GS- 2- Developmental Process

Source-PIB

#### 5. Girinka Programme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented 200 cows to poor villagers in Rwanda to support President Paul Kagame's ambitious initiative for poverty reduction and tackling childhood malnutrition.

### Related Information

- The Girinka programme was initiated by president Kagame in **2006** to provide one cow per poor family for their nutritional and financial security.
- The word Girinka can be translated as '**may you have a cow**' and describes a centuries-old cultural practice in Rwanda whereby a cow was given by one person to another as a sign of respect and gratitude.

- It was in response to the alarmingly high rate of childhood malnutrition and as a way to accelerate poverty reduction and integrate livestock and crop farming.

Topic- GS- 2- India and its neighbourhood-relations.

Source-PIB

#### 6. 10th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg.

The theme of this year's summit is, 'BRICS in Africa - collaboration for inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the 4th industrial revolution'.

### Related Information

#### BRICS

- BRICS is the acronym coined by British Economist Jim O'Neill meant for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (or "the BRICs"), before the induction of South Africa in 2010.
- The BRICS members are known for their significant influence on regional affairs; all are members of G20.
- The first summit was in Yekaterinburg, Russia in 2009.
- China hosted the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS summit in Xiamen.
- Brazil will host the 11<sup>th</sup> BRICS summit in 2019.

Topic- GS- 2- Important International institutions, agencies.

Source- AIR

#### 7. World's fastest man-made spinning object developed.

- Scientists have developed the fastest man-made rotor in the world, which they believe will help them study quantum mechanics.
- At more than 60 billion revolutions per minute, this machine is more than 100,000 times faster than a high-speed dental drill.
- The team synthesized a tiny dumbbell from silica and levitated it in the high vacuum using a laser.
- The laser can work in a straight line or in a circle - when it is linear, the dumbbell vibrates, and when it is circular, the dumbbell spins.

- A spinning dumbbell functions as a rotor, and a vibrating dumbbell functions like an instrument for measuring tiny forces and torques, known as a torsion balance.
- As they become more advanced, they will be able to study things like quantum mechanics and the properties of the vacuum.

### Related Information

#### Quantum mechanics

- Quantum mechanics is a fundamental theory in physics which describes nature at the smallest scales of energy levels of atoms and subatomic particles.

Topic –GS- 3- Science

Source- The Hindu

#### **8. Government amends the definition of hydrocarbon to include shale.**

- The government has amended the **Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 1959** to include shale in the definition of petroleum, a change that would allow private companies to explore and produce the resource in the blocks they already operate.
- It would help in enhancing domestic exploration and production of hydrocarbons and increasing India's energy security and reducing dependency on imports.
- It would open up exploration of all hydrocarbons in existing fields which is in line with the new Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP)

### Related Information

#### Amended definition of Petroleum

- Petroleum means naturally occurring hydrocarbons, whether in the form of natural gas or in a liquid, viscous or solid form, or a mixture thereof, but does not include coal, lignite, and helium occurring in association with petroleum or coal or shale.

#### Shale

- Shale is a fine-grained, clastic sedimentary rock composed of mud that is a mix of flakes of clay minerals and tiny fragments (silt-sized particles) of other minerals, especially quartz and calcite.

#### Shale Gas

- Shale gas is natural gas that is found trapped within shale formations. It is colourless, odourless gas, lighter than air.
- It is cheaper than natural gas, releases lesser carbon dioxide.
- It is an unconventional source of methane.

Topic –GS-3- Environment

Source- Economic Times

#### **9. Lake found on Mars by scientists.**

- Using a radar instrument on an orbiting spacecraft, scientists have spotted a sizeable salt-laden lake under the ice on the southern polar plain of Mars, a body of water they called a possible habitat for microbial life.
- The reservoir they detected — roughly 20 km in diameter, shaped like a rounded triangle and located about 1.5 km beneath the ice surface — represents the first stable body of liquid water ever found on Mars.
- The location's radar profile resembled that of subglacial lakes found beneath Earth's Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets.
- The detection was made using data collected between May 2012 and December 2015 by an instrument aboard the European Space Agency's Mars Express spacecraft that transmits radar pulses, which penetrate the Martian surface and ice caps.
- Because it is located beneath the polar ice cap, the temperature in the lake is expected to be below the freezing point of pure water.

### Related Information

#### **MARSIS (Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding)**

- MARSIS is a low frequency, pulse-limited radar sounder and altimeter used on the European Space Agency, Mars Express mission.
- It features ground-penetrating radar capabilities, which uses synthetic aperture techniques and a second receiving antenna to isolate subsurface reflections

- MARSIS was funded and developed by ASI (Italy) and NASA (USA).

Topic-GS- 3- Science

Source- The Hindu

**27.07.2018**

1. **24 new sites join UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves**

- Khangchendzonga became the 11th Biosphere Reserve to be added to UNESCO's World Network.

**Related Information**

**Biosphere reserves**

- Biosphere reserves are sites destined to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity and human activity through the sustainable use of natural resources.
- One of their objectives is to give rise to innovative sustainable development practices.
- New reserves are designated every year by the **International Co-ordinating Council for the MAB Programme**, a body with a rotating elected membership of 34 UNESCO member states.

**Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) Programme**

- Launched in **1971**, UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) is an Intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments.
- Its World Network of Biosphere Reserves currently counts 686 sites in 122 countries all over the world, including 20 transboundary sites.

**List of Biosphere reserves in MAB Programme**

1. Nilgiri Biosphere- Oldest entry from India in the list in 2000
2. Gulf of Mannar
3. Sundarban
4. Nanda Devi
5. Nokrek
6. Simlipal
7. Pachmarhi
8. Achanakamar- Amarkantak

9. Great Nicobar
10. Agasthyamalai- added in 2016
11. Khangchendzonga

**Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve**

- The Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve falls within the Himalaya global biodiversity hotspot.
- It has been identified as **the biggest Important Bird Area in Sikkim**
- It is home for many of the globally threatened fauna including **Musk deer, snow leopard, red panda and Himalayan Tahr.**
- It is also home to many ethnic communities including **Lepcha, Nepalese, and Bhutia.**
- It includes the third highest peak in the world, Mount Khangchendzonga.

Topic-GS- 3- Environment

Source- Down to earth

2. **Innovate India Platform**

- Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog & MyGov launched "Innovate India Platform".
- The portal will serve as the common point for all the innovation happening across the nation.
- With the launch of the platform Indians will be able to upload and rate their/organizations innovation on the platform.

**Related Information**

**Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is the Union Government's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.
- AIM is mandated to create an umbrella structure to oversee innovation ecosystem of the country.
- AIM envisions the creation of a collaborative ecosystem, where students, teachers, mentors and industry partners work to facilitate innovation, foster scientific temper and an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs), Atal Incubation Centre and Established Incubation Centre will take the innovations to the market and a network of incubators will help create enterprises around these innovations.

### MyGov platform

- MyGov is a web platform that was created to facilitate citizen engagement in good governance.
- MyGov enables the citizens especially the youth to volunteer for specific tasks and projects at the grassroots level.
- It will allow the common people to reach the government with ideas and suggestions.
- The platform is managed by National Informatics Centre (NIC), Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY).

Topic- GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source-PIB

### 3. Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018.

- The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Women and Child Development, Ms. Maneka Gandhi.
- It provides for the establishment of a **National Anti-Trafficking Bureau** to investigate trafficking cases. The Bureau will comprise of police officers, and any other officers as required. It may take over the investigation of any offence under the Bill, that has been referred to it **by two or more states**.
- It also provides for the setting up of **Anti-Trafficking Units (ATUs)** at the district level which will deal with the investigation, prevention, rescue, and protection of victims and witnesses.
- A rehabilitation fund with an initial corpus of **10 crore rupees** will be created for the **first time** which will be used for the physical, psychological and social well being of the victims and also there will be designated courts in each district for speedy trial of the cases.

- The Bill provides for the establishment of **Anti-Trafficking Relief and Rehabilitation Committees (ATCs)** at the national, state, and district levels.

Topic- GS- 2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Source- The Hindu

### 4. 2018 Ramon Magsaysay Award

- Two Indians, **Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk**, are among six who have been declared winners of this year's Ramon Magsaysay Award.
- Bharat Vatwani is a psychiatrist who works for mentally-ill people living on the streets and Sonam Wangchuk, known for his reforms in the education sector in Ladakh, started a movement to help poor village students clear examinations.
- Youk Chhang from Cambodia, Maria de Lourdes Martins Cruz from East Timor, Howard Dee from the Philippines and Vo Thi Hoang Yen from Vietnam are other winners of the award.

### Related Information

#### The Ramon Magsaysay Award

- It is named after Ramon Magsaysay, the seventh President of the Philippines.
- The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation gives the prize to Asian individuals achieving excellence in their respective fields.
- The awards were given in six categories, five of which were discontinued in 2009.
- The award is internationally-recognized as Asia's Nobel Prize counterpart and is the highest award given to Asian individuals and organizations
- The first award was given in **1958**.
- **Acharya Vinoba Bhave** was the first Indian to win this award in 1958.

Topic- GS-2- Important International institutions.

Source- The Indian Express

### 5. Global Disability Summit 2018

- The first ever Global Disability Summit was held in London.

- Hosted by the Department for International Development, the Kenyan government and the International Disability Alliance, the summit marked the first time the humanitarian and development sectors have come together formally to plan action on making aid more inclusive of people with disabilities.
- The objectives were to raise global attention and focus on a neglected area, bring in new voices and approaches to broaden engagement, mobilise new global and national commitments on disability; and showcase best practice and evidence from across the world.
- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment represented India.

Topic-GS- 2- Important International institutions

Source- The Guardian

#### 6. **Green Mahanadi Mission**

- A total of two crore saplings will be planted on the banks of the Mahanadi, Tel and Ib rivers under the Green Mahanadi Mission.
- The objective of the mission is to stop soil erosion on river banks and recharge the groundwater reserve.
- The volunteers will plant fruit-bearing trees like mango, jackfruit and jamun within one km radius of the river
- The plantation drive will be implemented jointly by the departments of Forest, Horticulture and Watershed Development.

#### **Related information**

##### **Mahanadi River**

- The Mahanadi is one of the largest Indian peninsular rivers that drain into the Bay of Bengal.
- It originates in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh and flows through the eastern state of Orissa before meeting the sea.
- The major tributaries of Mahanadi are Seonath, Jonk, Hasdo, Mand, Ib, Ong, Tel etc.

Topic- GS- 3- Conservation and related issues

Source- The Hindu

#### 7. **India's Magna Carta**

- This month marks the 100th year of the publication of the 'Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms', commonly known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Report (MCR).
- Edwin Montagu was the Secretary of State for India.
- Lord Chelmsford was the Viceroy of India.
- The MCR stands out for proposing some of the most radical administrative changes and for giving provincial legislatures the mantle of self-governance.
- The 1919 Act went on to become the basis for the Government of India Act, 1919 and 1935, and, ultimately, the Constitution.
- Some of the features include dyarchy, bicameralism, the principle of communal representation, the establishment of public service commission and statutory commission.

Topic- GS- 1- The Freedom Struggle

Source- The Hindu

#### 8. **Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme**

- From 2017-18 up to 2019-20.
- To empower rural women through community participation.
- The Scheme is implemented with the cost-sharing ratio of 60:40 between centre and states except for North East and the Special Category States where the ratio is 90:10.
- The scheme is envisaged to work at various levels and at the national level (domain based knowledge support) and state level (State Resource Centre for Women) technical support to the respective governments on issues related to women is provided.
- These centres to serve as a link between the village, block and state level in facilitating women-centric schemes and also give the foothold for Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme at the district level.

Topic-GS- 2- Welfare Schemes

Source-PIB

#### 9. **West Bengal Assembly passes the resolution to rename State as 'Bangla'**

- The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to change the name of the State as 'Bangla' in three languages – Bengali, English and Hindi.
- The state will now have to wait for a nod from the Union home ministry for the resolution's final approval.
- The move was aimed at climbing the alphabetical sequence of state names in which West Bengal appears last in the list now.

#### Note

- When the fresh proposal comes to the Home Ministry, it will prepare a note for the Union Cabinet for an amendment to the **Schedule 1** of the Constitution. Thereafter, a Constitution Amendment Bill will be introduced in Parliament, which has to approve it with a simple majority, before the President gives his assent to it.

Topic-GS-2- Separation of powers between various organs.

Source- The Hindu

**28.07.2018**

1. **National Achievement Survey**
  - The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is the largest ever national assessment survey in the country and is amongst the largest in the world.
  - NAS is a representative sample of schools from all districts in India aimed at understanding the health of the education system in government and government-aided schools.
  - National Achievement Survey is conducted by **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** and supported by Ministry of Human Resource and Development.
  - It assesses the learning levels of the students in Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10.
  - The survey tool uses multiple test booklets in Mathematics, Modern Indian Language, English, Sciences and Social Sciences.
  - In order to increase focus on the quality of elementary education, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) Act,

2009 has been amended to include the reference on class-wise, subject-wise Learning Outcomes.

- The design and implementation of the survey included in its ambit the school leaders, teachers and the whole network of officials at the Cluster, Block, District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and the Directorates of Education in the different States/ UTs.

Topic-GS-2- Welfare schemes

Source-PIB

2. **India-UK Science & Innovation Council**

- The 6th India-UK Science & Innovation Council (SIC) meeting held in New Delhi discussed a range of issues on S&T cooperation between the two countries.
- Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences & Environment, Forests and Climate Change, India and Mr Sam Gyimah, Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, UK led the Indian and UK delegations respectively.
- The objective is to address challenges, such as water pollution, life-threatening diseases and climate change.
- India also pitched for collaboration between the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, CSIR, and its UK equivalent to expand cooperation.
- India and UK are jointly delivering cutting-edge science and Technology solutions to societal challenges through Newton Bhabha partnership.

Topic-GS- 2- Important International institutions

Source-PIB

3. **New Ebola species is reported for the first time in a decade.**

- The government of Sierra Leone has announced that a new species of Ebola, the sixth, has been discovered there in bats. It has been called, provisionally, the **Bombali virus**, after a district in the north of the country where it was found.

- Researchers working in joint US-West African study funded by US Aid have discovered the new strain of Ebola virus in bats in northern Bombali region of Sierra Leone.
- It's not known whether the new strain can develop into the deadly Ebola disease if transmitted to humans.
- There's no evidence the new virus has infected people, although EcoHealth Alliance, an environmental nonprofit group involved in the discovery, said that it has the potential to infect human cells.

### Related Information

- The worst-ever Ebola outbreak started in December **2013** in **southern Guinea** before spreading to Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- The West African outbreak was caused by the **Zaire species**, which has historically been the most deadly in humans since it was first identified in **1976**.
- Sierra Leone is one of three in West Africa that was engulfed in a devastating Ebola outbreak in **2014 and 2015**. The outbreak was caused by the ebolavirus known as **Zaire ebolavirus**.
- There are five known species of Ebola: **the Zaire virus, sometimes simply called Ebola; Sudan ebolavirus; Bundibugyo; Tāi Forest; and Reston**.
- Bats are believed to be the natural reservoir of all Ebola species, but to date, no one has managed to isolate live Ebola viruses from bats.

### Ebola Virus

Ebola virus is a highly fatal haemorrhagic fever that is spread through contact with bodily fluids from infected persons and animals which include non-human primates, bats and forest antelope. Zaire strain of Ebola virus is the most deadly strain known.

Topic- GS- 3- Health

Source- The Hindu

4. **Justice Srikrishna committee submits the report on data protection**

- The draft personal data protection Bill 2018, submitted by the Justice B.N. Srikrishna-headed expert panel, has proposed that critical personal data of Indian citizens be processed in centres located within the country.
- The Justice BN Srikrishna committee has stated that regulations suggested in the draft data protection bill will require the government to make changes to the Aadhaar Act.

### Key recommendation:

1. It has left it to the Central government to notify categories of personal data that will be considered as critical.
2. Other personal data may be transferred outside the territory of India with some riders.
- The committee has recommended two changes to the Aadhaar Act:
  1. Better safeguarding of Aadhaar data.
  2. Autonomy of the UIDAI.
  3. At least one copy of the data will need to be stored in India.
4. The draft also provides for penalties for data processor as well as compensation to data principal to be imposed for violations of the data protection law.
5. It has suggested a penalty of ₹15 crore or 4% of the total worldwide turnover of any data collection/processing entity, for violating provisions.
- Failure to take prompt action on a data security breach can attract up to ₹5 crore or 2% of turnover as a penalty.
- The draft Bill, which has recommended that a Data Protection Authority be set up to prevent misuse of personal information, also provides for setting up an Appellate Tribunal.

### Related Information

#### UIDAI(Unique Identification Authority of India)

- UIDAI is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies,



Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 ("Aadhaar Act 2016") on 12 July 2016 by the Government of India, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.

- The UIDAI or is the nodal agency that manages the **Aadhaar biometric identification system**.
- The first UID number was issued on 29 September **2010** to a resident of Nandurbar, Maharashtra.

Source- The Indian Express

5. **NCPCR mediation cell for women fleeing with kids from abroad to escape domestic violence.**

- A mediation cell has been opened on the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) website to register complaints of Indians who have fled with their children from abroad to escape domestic violence or some other issue.
- The cell consisting of members of the Ministry of External Affairs and the NCPCR, would contact the embassies of the respective countries and try to reach a solution after consultations with them.
- Maneka Gandhi recommended members of the women commissions to follow three things — release a book on the performance every year, identify single cases and try to solve them and hire lawyers for women who cannot afford it.

### **Related Information**

#### **The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)**

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is a **statutory body** under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.
- The objective of this commission is to protect, promote and defend the child rights in India including the rights adopted in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children, 1989**, ratified by India in 1992.

- This convention defines the child as a human being below 18 years of age.
- This commission has a chairperson and six members of which at least two should be women.
- All of them are appointed by the Central Government for three years.
- The maximum age to serve in commission is 65 years for Chairman and 60 years for members.

### **The Hague Convention**

- The Hague Convention is a multi-national treaty that seeks to protect children wrongfully removed by one of the parents from the custody of the other parent.
- Located in The Netherlands.
- Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> December 1983.
- There are 98 member countries.
- India is not a member of the Hague Convention.

Topic-GS- 2- Important International institutions

Source- The Money Control

6. **Inter-State Bridge on Ban Ganga in Madhya Pradesh.**

- Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has accorded in principle approval for the inter-state high-level bridge on the Banganga river.

### **Related Information**

#### **Banganga River**

- Banganga River originates from the Aravalli hills and drains into the Yamuna.
- The main tributaries are Gumti Nalla and Suri River, joining the river on its right bank, and Sanwan and Palasan Rivers, meeting the river on its left bank.
- Its basin extends over parts of Alwar, Jaipur, Dausa, Sawai Madhopur and Bharatpur Districts.
- Its eastern edge borders the Yamuna River Basin in Uttar Pradesh.

Topic-GS-1- Physical Geography

Source-PIB

7. **Mukhyamantri Agriculture-cum-Solar Scheme**

- By Delhi Government
- The scheme which attempts to increase solar installations while consequently providing relief to Delhi's agricultural sector, offers very little for any of the stakeholders involved other than well-off, large landowning farmers.
- The scheme aims to hit two birds with one stone by attempting to increase solar installations while providing relief to Delhi's agricultural sector at the same time.
- It aims is to entice solar developers to build power generating plants on agricultural holdings. The farmers are to be paid Rs 1lakh/acre by the developers for leasing the land, with a 6 per cent annual escalation.
- The premise of the scheme is to supplement farmers' income, currently estimated at Rs 20,000–30,000/acre. Additionally, they are allowed 1000kWh/acre of free electricity generated by the system.

Topic-GS-2- Welfare schemes

Source- Down to earth

**30.07.2018**

1. **UN E-Government Development Survey**

- With an EGDI index score of 0.5669, India is just above the world average of 0.55.
- It scored a rank of 96 among 193 countries.

**Related Information**

- The UN E-Government Development Survey is the only global initiative to measure and track how governments are faring on the e-governance front.
- Prepared by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs(UN-DESA)
- It conducts a bi-annual e-government survey.
- It is a comparative ranking of 193 countries of the world according to three primary indicators: 1. The OSI - Online Service Index that measures the online presence of the government in terms of service delivery.

2. The TII - Telecommunication Infrastructure Index.

- HCI -Human Capital Index.
- **Top 4 Countries:**

1.	Denmark	0.9150
2.	Australia	0.9053
3.	Republic of Korea	0.9010
4.	United Kingdom	0.8999

Topic-GS-2- International agencies

Source- The Hindu

2. **National Consultation for Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition.**

- National Consultation for Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition organised by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation was inaugurated by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu to address the persistent problem of malnutrition in the country.
- Calorie deficiency, protein deficiency and micro-nutrient deficiency are the kinds of nutritional deficiency observed in India which has adopted the National Nutrition Strategy in September 2017 to address malnutrition.

**Related Information**

**National Nutrition Strategy**

- National Nutrition Strategy was launched by the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog on 6<sup>th</sup>September 2017 aimed at **Kuposhan Mukh Bharat.**
- It intends at bringing nutrition to the centre-stage of National Development Agenda.
- The nutrition strategy envisages a framework wherein the four proximate determinants of nutrition – uptake of health services, food, drinking water & sanitation and income & livelihoods – work together to accelerate the decline of undernutrition in India.

Topic-GS-3- Health

Source- AIR

3. **Unified Commanders' Conference 2018.**

- A two-day Unified Commanders' Conference will begin in New Delhi to review external security challenges as well as the country's preparedness.
- The Conference will be conducted under the tutelage of **Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS)** and will be attended by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, State Defence Minister, National Security Advisor, the Chiefs of Army, Navy and Air Force and other Senior Military and Civil Officials of the Ministry of Defence and Tri-Service Organisations/Institutions.

#### **Related Information**

- The Annual Conference provides a platform for discussions at the Apex Level on all 'Joint Issues' amongst the three Services and Ministry of Defence and enables stock-taking of the previous year and planning the way ahead for the next year.
- The scope of this conference has been enhanced this year to enable the forum to facilitate joint stock-taking of the previous year's performance of all Services and Departments of Ministry of Defence and jointly chart the course for the next year.

Topic-GS-3- Security

Source- AIR

4. **Indian Railways launches Mission Satyanishtha on ethics in public governance for its employees**

In **first of its kind event held by any government organisation**, the Indian Railways organised a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and launched "Mission Satyanishtha" held at National Rail Museum, New Delhi.

#### **Related Information**

- "Mission Satyanishtha" launched on July 27 aims at sensitizing all railway employees about the need to adhere to good ethics and to maintain high standards of integrity at work.
- The objectives of the Mission are:
  1. To train every employee to understand the need and value of ethics in Personal and Public life.
  2. To deal with ethical dilemmas in life and Public Governance.

3. To help understand the policies of Indian Railways on ethics and integrity and the employee's role in upholding the same.
4. To develop inner governance through tapping inner resources.

Topic -GS- 4 -Ethics and Governance

Source-PIB

5. **National Viral Hepatitis Control Program**

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Mr J P Nadda, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program to mark the World Hepatitis Day, 2018.
- It is a part of the National Health Mission.
- The goal is to end viral hepatitis as a **public health threat by 2030**.
- The aim of the initiative is **to reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis**.
- The key strategies include:
  1. Preventive and promotive interventions with the focus on awareness generation.
  2. Safe injection practices and sociocultural practices.
  3. Sanitation and hygiene.
  4. Safe drinking water supply.
  5. Infection control and immunization.
- Treatment centres will be designated to provide free anti-viral to hepatitis C patients and hepatitis B vaccine to babies born to mothers carrying the virus within 24 hours of birth.

#### **Related information**

##### **National Health Mission**

- National Health Mission was launched by the government of India in 2013 subsuming the National Rural Health Mission and the National Urban Health Mission. It was further extended in March 2018, to continue till March 2020.
- NHM envisages achievement of universal access to equitable, affordable & quality health care services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.
- It seeks to ensure the achievement of the following indicators.

1. Reduce Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) to 1/1000 live births
2. Reduce Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) to 25/1000 live births
3. Reduce Total Fertility Rate (TFR) to 2.1
4. Prevention and reduction of anaemia in women aged 15–49 years
5. Prevent and reduce mortality & morbidity from communicable, non-communicable; injuries and emerging diseases
6. Reduce household out-of-pocket expenditure on total healthcare expenditure
7. Reduce annual incidence and mortality from Tuberculosis by half
8. Reduce the prevalence of Leprosy to <1/10000 population and incidence to zero in all districts
9. Annual Malaria Incidence to be <1/1000
10. Less than 1 per cent microfilaria prevalence in all districts
11. Kala-azar Elimination by 2015, <1 case per 10000 population in all blocks

### World Hepatitis Day

- World Hepatitis Day, observed on July 28 every year, aims to raise global awareness of hepatitis — a group of infectious diseases known as **Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E** — and encourage prevention, diagnosis and treatment.
- Hepatitis causes acute and chronic disease.

**Note-** Hepatitis refers to an inflammatory condition of the liver. It's commonly caused by a viral infection.

Topic- GS-3- Health

Source-PIB

6. **Govt to roll out DigiYatra offering for air passengers soon.**

Having worked on the DigiYatra project for over a year, the Ministry of Civil Aviation is close to rolling out this service at airports in a few months.

### Related Information

#### DigiYatra

- DigiYatra is an industry-led initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in line with Digital India programme.

- It aims to transform the flying experience for passengers and position Indian Aviation amongst the most innovative aviation networks in the world.
- The basic objective is to reduce queues at airports and bring efficiency to the boarding process
- The facility will use digital technology to enhance air passenger experience all the way from ticket booking to airport entry check, security check and aircraft boarding.
- This will also facilitate walk-through security scanners swiftly owing to advanced biometric security solutions.
- The DigiYatra programme is expected to be initially rolled out at airports in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Varanasi and Vijayawada.

Topic-GS-3- Infrastructure

Source- The Hindu

7. **SEBI has recently proposed allowing investors to use the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) while bidding for shares in initial public offerings.**

The aim is to reduce the timeline of public issues to T+3, wherein the equity shares would be listed on the exchanges on the third day from the day the IPO closes for the subscription.

### Related Information

#### UPI(Unified Payments Interface)

- Unified Payments Interface is a payment system through which investors can link more than one bank account in their smartphone app and make fund transfers instantly without having to provide IFSC code or account number.
- An investor will only have to use a virtual address, known as a Virtual Payment Address (VPA), which is like our email ID, to carry out the transaction. *VPA is an identifier that is created by the user by linking his bank account to the mobile payment application.*
- UPI, which was developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, is regulated by the RBI.

- Some of the UPI apps available are BHIM, PhonePe and Google Tez.

Topic-GS-3- Technology

Source- The Hindu

8. **India to give flash flood warning to Asian nations.**

- India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- That means India will have to develop a customised model that can issue an advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.
- IMD would be working to customise a weather model, developed by the United States and donated to the WMO, to warn of flash floods at least six hours in advance.
- The proposed model would provide forecasts by computing the likelihood of rainfall and the soil moisture levels to warn of possible floods, he said. *Though Pakistan was among the list of countries that would benefit from the forecast, it had refused to participate in the scheme.*

### **Related information**

#### **Central Water Commission**

- In India, the Central Water Commission monitors India's dams, warns of rising water levels in the reservoirs, which are usually taken to be signs of imminent floods.
- It was formed in 1945.
- Under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation.
- To promote integrated and sustainable development and management of India's Water Resources by using state-of-art technology and competency and coordinating all stake holders.

**Note-**The organisation has recently tied up with Google to develop a software application to visualise rising water levels during heavy rains.

#### **World Meteorological Organization**

- The World Meteorological Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
- With a membership of 191 Member States and Territories.

- It originated from the **International Meteorological Organization, which was founded in 1873.**

- It is for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical science.

- Formed in 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1950.

- Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Topic- GS- 2- International Organization

Source- The Hindu

**31.07.2018**

1. **Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018.**

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018 which replaces the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on April 21 this year.

- The bill stipulates stringent punishment for perpetrators of rape, **particularly of girls below 12 years and the death sentence has been provided for rapists of girls under 12 years.**

- In case of rape of a girl under 16 years, the minimum punishment has been increased from 10 to 20 years, extendable to life imprisonment.

- The punishment for the gangrape of a girl below 16 years will invariably be imprisonment for the rest of life of the convict. The measure also provides for speedy investigations and trial.

- The time limit for the investigation of all cases of rape has been prescribed, which has to be mandatorily completed within two months.

- The deadline for the completion of the trial in all rape cases will be two months.

- A six-month time limit for the disposal of appeals in rape cases has also been prescribed

- It has also been prescribed that a court has to give notice of 15 days to a public prosecutor and the representative of the victim before deciding on bail applications in case of rape of a girl under 16 years of age.

Topic- GS-2- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.

Source-AIR

2. **The United States elevates India's status to ease export controls for high-technology product sales.**

- The US has eased export controls for high-technology product sales to India by designating it as a **Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1)**

**Related Information**

- The granting of STA-1 status to India comes after the US recognised India as a Major Defence Partner in 2016, a designation that allows India to buy more advanced and sensitive technologies from America at par with that of the US closest allies and partners, and ensures enduring cooperation into the future.
- The designation authorises the export, re-export and transfer of specified items on the Commerce Control List (CCL) to destinations posing a low risk of unauthorised or impermissible uses.
- Currently, there are 36 countries on the STA-1 list.
- India is the only South Asian country to be on the list.
- Other Asian countries designated as STA-1 are **Japan and South Korea.**

Topic-GS-3- Defence

Source- AIR

3. **Deep Ocean mission**

- Centre has drawn up a five-year, ₹8,000 crore plan to explore the deep recesses of the ocean.
- The Union Earth Sciences Ministry unveiled a blueprint of the 'Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)'.
- The focus will be on technologies for deep-sea mining, underwater vehicles, underwater robotics and ocean climate change advisory services, among other aspects.
- The mission proposes to explore the deep ocean similar to the space exploration started by ISRO about 35 years ago.
- India has been allotted a site of 75,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN).

- These are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt.

**Related Information**

**International Seabed Authority (ISA)**

- International Seabed Authority (ISA) is a UN body set up to regulate the exploration and exploitation of marine non-living resources of oceans in international waters.
- It was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Its headquarters are in Kingston, Jamaica.
- India actively contributes to the work of the International Seabed Authority.
- India was re-elected as a member of Council of ISA in 2016.

**Polymetallic Nodules**

- Polymetallic nodules, also called manganese nodules, are rock concretions on the sea bottom formed of concentric layers of iron and manganese hydroxides around a core.
- The core may be microscopically small and is sometimes completely transformed into manganese minerals by crystallization.

Topic-GS-2- International Organizations

Source- The Hindu

4. **National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II (NASAMS-II).**

- India is in talks with the U.S. to procure an advanced air defence system to defend the National Capital Region (NCR) from aerial attacks. The process for procuring the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II (NASAMS-II), estimated at \$1 billion, has been initiated.
- This system will help in preventing 9/11-type attacks [when terrorists flew hijacked planes into New York's World Trade Center] on Delhi. It is in the Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) stage now.
- It is the state-of-the-art defence system that has the ability to quickly identify and destroy enemy aircraft, UAV or emerging cruise missile threats.

## Related Information

### NASAMS

- The NASAMS was developed by Raytheon in partnership with KONGSBERG Defence and Aerospace of Norway.
- The NASAMS, armed with the three-dimensional Sentinel radars short and medium-range missiles, launchers, fire-distribution centres and command-and-control units to quickly detect, track and shoot down multiple airborne threats.
- Part of the air defence network guarding US capital city Washington DC and also deployed in several NATO countries.

### NASAMS-II

NASAMS-II is an upgraded version of the NASAMS and features new 3D mobile surveillance radars and 12 missile launchers for quicker reaction. It has been operational since 2007.

Topic-GS-3- Defence

Source- The Hindu

#### 5. **Manipur People's Protection Bill, 2018.**

- The Manipur People's Protection Bill, 2018 seeks to regulate the entry and exit of "outsiders" on the lines of the British-era inner-line permit system prevalent in three other north-eastern states: **Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland.**
- The bill sets **1951** as the base year to identify locals and prevent an influx of outsiders.
- According to the bill, Manipur people include **Meitis, the Pangal Muslims**, scheduled tribes as listed under the Constitution in terms of Manipur and all those citizens of India who have been living in Manipur before 1951.
- The rest have been put in the category of Non-Manipuris and will have to register themselves within one month of the notification of the law.
- Many people from the Kuki-Zomi groups are believed to have migrated from adjoining Myanmar before and after 1951.

- Trade licences can get a pass extendable up to five years, which will have to be renewed every year. Any outsider visiting Manipur would need a pass.

## Related Information

### Inner Line Permit (ILP)

- Inner Line Permit (ILP) is an official travel document issued by the Government of India to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period.
- It is obligatory for Indian citizens from outside those states to obtain a permit for entering into the protected state.
- Currently, it is operational in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland.
- It can be issued for travel purposes solely. Visitors are not allowed to purchase property in these regions. However, there might be a different set of rules for long-term visitors, though they are not valid for central government employees and security forces.

Topic-GS-3-Security

Source- The Hindu

#### 6. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of country's first Mobile Open Exchange (MOX) zone in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.**

The Uttar Pradesh government had earlier this year signed a MoU with World Trade Center, Noida, to develop a 'tech zone' as a nucleus of the Mobile Open Exchange Zone (MOX).

## Related Information

### MOX Techzone

- MoX Techzone is a dedicated ecosystem for the mobile industry that will provide an integrated platform to manufacturers, research and other allied industries.
- It enables reduced operational costs and enhances profitability through an efficient supply chain system.

Topic-GS-3 – Infrastructure

Source- The Hindu

#### 7. **V-46-6 and V92S2: Made in India tank engines handed over to Indian Army.**

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, handed over two fully indigenous battle tank engines, V-46-6 and V92S2, that power the T-72 Ajeya tank and the T-90 Bhishma tank, produced by the Engine Factory Avadi (EFA), a unit of Ordnance Factory Board, to the Vice Chief of Army Staff.
- The Engine Factory Avadi (EFA) has manufactured more than 12,000 engines since its inception in 1987 for the Indian Army.

### Related Information

#### V-46-6 and V92S2

- V-46-6 and V92S2 engines are based on the Russian design.
- V92S2 is high power diesel engine with 1000 HP capacity and it is fitted in T-90 Battle Tank (Bhisma Tank).
- V46-6 is also high power diesel engines with 780 HP and it is fitted in T-72 Main Battle Tank (Ajeya Tank).
- They are manufactured indigenously with 100% Made in India parts.

Topic-GS-3- Defence

Source- The Hindu

8. **Government constitutes high level empowered committee to revive stressed thermal power plant.**
- The Government has decided to set up a high level empowered committee headed by cabinet secretary **P K Sinha** and representation from the **ministries of railways, finance, power, coal and banks** having major exposure to the power sector to revive stressed thermal power projects.
- The Committee would look into various issues with a view to resolve them and maximise the efficiency of investment including changes required to be made in the fuel allocation policy and regulatory framework.
- It will also look into mechanisms to facilitate the sale of power, ensure timely payments, payment security mechanism, changes required in the provisioning norms/Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), Asset

Restructuring Company regulations and other proposals for the revival of stressed assets so as to avoid such investments becoming NPA.

- Department of Financial Services under the Ministry of Finance in its report had suggested setting up the empowered panel, besides giving operating thermal power.

Topic- GS-2- Government interventions

Source- Economic Times

9. **Arsenic contamination in paddy is rising in Bengal**
- A recent publication by researchers at the School of Environmental Studies (SOES), Jadavpur University, reveals not only rise in arsenic contamination of paddy plants from groundwater in West Bengal but also that concentration of 'arsenic accumulation' depends on the variety of paddy and its stage in the crop cycle.
- Samples for the study were taken from the Deganga block in the State's North 24 Parganas district, an area that's worst affected by groundwater arsenic contamination.
- The study found that arsenic contamination in paddy was higher than in previous studies.
- The study shows that arsenic uptake in the paddy plant reduces from root to grain and that its concentration is related to the variety of the rice cultivated.
- The highest concentration was observed in the initial or vegetative state in the first 28 days. It reduced during the reproductive stage (29-56 days) and again increased in the ripening stage.
- The uptake of arsenic is faster in young roots in a vegetative state than in older tissues with a higher concentration of iron in root-soil in the reproductive phase.

### Related Information

#### Arsenic poisoning



- Arsenic poisoning is a medical condition that occurs due to elevated levels of arsenic in the body.
- If arsenic poisoning occurs over a brief period of time symptoms may include vomiting, abdominal pain,

encephalopathy, and watery diarrhoea that contains blood.

Topic-GS-3- Environment

Source- The Hindu

\*\*\*



# UPSC CSE PRE ONLINE TEST SERIES

## Online Test Series

- Basic Solution as well as short tricks
- Detailed explanation of solutions
- Tricky questions as per exact paper
- Based on latest pattern
- High-quality question
- Available on web & mobile
- All India Rank & Performance Analysis

