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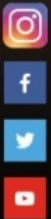01-15 SEP, 2023   ISSUE - 14

G20
भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

18TH G20
SUMMIT

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About Magazine

"LawEx" is a carefully curated set of Current Events designed specifically for CLAT aspirants. To take you one step closer to realizing your dream, "LawEx" provides a fortnightly overview of the most significant current events related to politics, economics, science and technology, & sports with a wide range of infographics to ensure a smoother learning experience and enhanced retention of information.

Editor's Note

The 18th G20 Summit was held in New Delhi, India on September 9th and 10th, 2023. The summit was the first time India hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit. United Nations Biodiversity (UN Biodiversity) has urged people globally to use the word 'funga' whenever they say 'flora and fauna', in order to highlight the importance of fungi. On September 1, the Central government set up a panel headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind to explore the feasibility of the 'one nation, one election' (ONOE) plan. Invitations sent by President Droupadi Murmu to the heads of states and government and the Chief Ministers of Indian States for an official banquet on the occasion of the G-20 Summit in New Delhi created a flutter as the word "India" was replaced with "Bharat". To know more, keep reading.

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18th G20 SUMMIT IN NEW DELHI

WHY IN NEWS?

- The 18th G20 Summit was held in New Delhi, India on September 9th and 10th, 2023.

> - Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed a virtual session of the G-20 around the end of November to take stock of the suggestions and decisions made at the leaders' summit that concluded on September 10.
> - India's presidency of G-20 would officially continue till November 30.
> - Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over the gavel and offered best wishes to Brazil for the presidency.
> - Brazil officially will take over the mantle of the presidency of the elite grouping on December 1 this year.

Key Outcomes

- The leaders of G20 countries have reached a consensus on New Delhi G20 Leaders Declaration.
- The G20 leaders agreed to include the African Union as a permanent member of the G20. The grouping represents 55 countries.
- During the G20 Summit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed among the governments of India, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, the European Union, the UAE, France, Germany, and Italy to establish the India – Middle East – Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).
    - IMEC is envisioned as a network of transportation routes encompassing railways and sea lanes. Its primary objective is to promote economic development by fostering integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe.
    - IMEC is part of a broader initiative called the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII). The PGII was initially introduced during the G7 summit in the UK in June 2021.
- The G20 leaders launched the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) to facilitate the adoption of biofuels, thereby unlocking bioenergy access in emerging economies. The GBA members include 19 countries and 12 international organisations.
    - The G20 member countries supporting the alliance include Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, Italy, South Africa and the US.
    - While the four G20 Invitee countries supporting GBA are Bangladesh, Singapore, Mauritius and the UAE.
    - Similarly, the eight non-G20 countries supporting GBA are Iceland, Kenya, Guyana, Paraguay, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Finland.

- International organisations supporting the alliance include the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, World Economic Forum, World LPG Organisation, International Energy Agency, International Energy Forum, International Renewable Energy Agency and World Biogas Association.
- The G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion document prepared by the World Bank has lauded the transformative impact of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in India over the past decade under the Central Government.
- Marking a major step forward in climate action, the G20 countries promised to work towards tripling the global renewable energy capacity by 2030.
    - If met, this single step could avoid carbon dioxide emissions by seven billion tonnes between now and 2030.
    - The declaration acknowledges that current climate action is insufficient and highlights the need for trillions of dollars in financial resources to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement.
- The G20 leaders recognize the importance of addressing rising commodity prices, including food and energy prices, which contribute to cost-of-living pressures.
- The G20 Declaration refers to the negative impact of the Ukraine conflict on supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation and growth.
    - The G20 leaders also highlighted human suffering and the negative added impacts of war in Ukraine with regard to global food and energy security.
- The G20 leaders called for the full, timely implementation of the Black Sea grain initiative.

- Leaders also pledged to combat global hunger and malnutrition, as outlined in the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration.
  - The commitment aligns with the 2023 G20 Deccan High-Level Principles on Food Security and Nutrition and the Millet initiative called MAHARISHI.
- The chapter on "Multilateral Institutions for the 21st Century", speaks of reforming international financial institutions.
  - One of the most important elements is that reform of the UN Security Council was agreed to for the first time in the G20; and there was a strong push towards reforms for better, bigger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).
- The 2023 New Delhi Declaration builds upon previous G20 declarations, especially the 2015 Turkiye Declaration, which strongly denounced terrorism.
  - Unlike the 2022 G20 Bali Leaders Declaration, which primarily focused on the financing of terrorism and the strengthening of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the New Delhi Declaration encompasses a wider range of concerns.
- In the chapter on "Gender Equality and Empowering all Women and Girls", the Declaration promotes equal rights to economic resources, property ownership, financial services, and inheritance for women, while supporting women's organisations and networks, and closing gender gaps in agricultural access.
  - Under India's G20 Presidency, a decision to create a full-fledged working group on women's empowerment has been made.
- In the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, all three health priorities of India's G20 presidency are mentioned.
  - These are building a resilient healthcare system; creating a platform for improving access to medical countermeasures such as vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics across the world; and creating a platform for sharing digital goods between countries.
- India and Brazil agreed to work together for the expansion of India-Mercosur PTA to promote economic ties.
  - Mercosur is a trading bloc in Latin America, comprising Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.

- The 2023 New Delhi Declaration - unlike that adopted by G20 leaders in Indonesia - does not name Russia in connection with the war.
  - It merely calls on all states to refrain from acting against the territorial integrity of any nation and that "the G20 is not the platform to resolve geopolitical and security issues... (which) can have significant consequences for the global economy".
- The G20 leaders emphasize the importance of strengthening the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) and the Group on Earth Observations Global Agricultural Monitoring (GEOGLAM) for greater transparency.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The summit was the first time India hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit.
- The G20 consists of two parallel tracks: the Finance Track and the Sherpa Track. Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors lead the Finance Track, while Sherpas lead the Sherpa Track.
- The theme of India's G20 Presidency - "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth · One Family · One Future" - is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad.
- India's special invitee guest countries are Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and UAE.
- G-20's invited international organisations are the UN, IMF, World Bank, WHO, WTO, ILO, FSB, OECD, AU Chair, NEPAD Chair, ASEAN Chair, ADB, ISA and CDRI.
- The Group of Twenty (G20) is an intergovernmental forum comprising 19 countries - Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States and the European Union.

FLORA, FAUNA AND FUNGA

WHY IN NEWS?

- United Nations Biodiversity (UN Biodiversity) has urged people globally to use the word 'funga' whenever they say 'flora and fauna', in order to highlight the importance of fungi.

Key Points

- According to the UN Biodiversity, it is time for fungi to be recognised and protected on an equal footing with animals and plants in legal conservation frameworks.
- This is not the first time when a request has been made to include fungi along with flora and fauna.
- Two years ago, the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced that it would use "mycologically inclusive" (referring to fungi) language in its internal and public-facing communications ("fauna, flora and funga" and "animals, fungi and plants").
- There would be no life on Earth without fungi: the yeasts, molds and mushrooms that are critical to decomposition and forest regeneration, mammalian digestion, carbon sequestration, the global nutrient cycle, antibiotic medication, and the bread, beer and chocolate we consume. Trees would not be able to live on land without fungi.

What is Fungus?

- A fungus (plural: fungi) is a type of eukaryotic organism belonging to the kingdom Fungi, alongside plants, animals, protozoa, and monera.
- Fungi are incredibly diverse, with commonly encountered forms including yeast, molds, truffles, and mushrooms.
- Some fungi are single-celled, while others are multicellular. Single-celled fungi are called yeast.
- Some fungi alternate between single-celled yeast and multicellular forms depending on what stage of the life cycle they are in. Fungi cells have a nucleus and organelles, like plant and animal cells do.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The UN Biodiversity Conference, COP15, concluded in Montreal, Canada, with a landmark agreement to protect 30 per cent of the planet's lands, coastal areas and inland waters by the end of the decade.
- The 15th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the "Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework" (GBF), including four goals and 23 targets for achievement by 2030.
- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework also aims to cut food waste in half.
- COP15 was originally set to be held in Kunming, China, in October 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- CBD is a legally binding treaty to conserve biodiversity that has been in force since 1993 and has been ratified by 196 nations.

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SUPER BLUE MOON 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- On August 30, 2023, the night sky experienced a rare trifecta of astronomical events - "blue moon" and a "super moon" and therefore, a "Super Blue Moon".

What is a Super Moon?

- The orbit of the moon around the earth is not circular; it is elliptical, that is, an elongated or stretched-out circle. It takes the moon 27.3 days to orbit the earth.
  - It is 29.5 days from new moon to new moon, though. This is because while the moon is orbiting the earth, both the earth and the moon are also moving around the sun — and it takes additional time for the sun to light up the moon in the same way as it does at the beginning of every revolution around the earth.
  - The new moon is the opposite of the full moon — it is the darkest part of the moon's invisible phase, when its illuminated side is facing away from the earth.
- The point closest to earth in the moon's elliptical orbit is called perigee, and the point that is farthest is called apogee. A super moon happens when the moon is passing through or is close to its perigee, and is also a full moon. (This happens with a new moon as well, just that it is not visible.)
- A full moon occurs when the moon is directly opposite the sun (as seen from earth), and therefore, has its entire day side lit up.
  - The full moon appears as a brilliant circle in the sky that rises around sunset and sets around sunrise. The moon appears 'full' not just on Purnima, but also on the night before and after the full moon night.

What is a Blue Moon?

- Though the expression "once in a blue moon" implies a rare or unusual occurrence, a blue moon is not that rare an astronomical phenomenon.
- There are a couple of definitions of a blue moon, but the one that is most commonly understood — and is endorsed by NASA — describes the situation when a full moon is seen twice in a single month.
- Because the new moon to new moon cycle lasts 29.5 days, a time comes when the full moon occurs at the beginning of a month, and there are days left still for another full cycle to be completed.
- Such a month, in which the full moon is seen on the 1st or 2nd, will have a second full moon on the 30th or 31st. According to NASA, this happens every two or three years.
- The first full moon of August 2023 occurred on August 1. That was also a super moon, but the super moon of August 30-31 will be bigger because the moon is now closer to the perigee.

Sometimes, smoke or dust in the air can scatter red wavelengths of light, as a result of which the moon may, in certain places, appear more blue than usual. But this has nothing to do with the name "blue" moon.

Speaking of colours, you may have noticed that the moon appears more yellow/ orange when it is lower in the sky (closer to the horizon). This is because moonlight travels for longer through the atmosphere at this stage, and along the way, more of the shorter, bluer wavelengths of light are scattered, leaving more of the longer, redder wavelengths. The NASA explainer points out that dust or pollution can end up deepening the reddish colour of the moon.

According to NASA, a full moon at perigee (super moon) is about 14% bigger and 30% brighter than a full moon at apogee (called a "micro moon").

KIDS OF 'INVALID MARRIAGES' HAVE RIGHT TO PROPERTY SHARE: SC

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Supreme Court on September 1 held that a child born of a void or voidable marriage can inherit the parent's share in a joint Hindu family property governed by the Mitakshara law.
- However, the three-judge Bench clarified that such a child would not be entitled to rights in or to the property of any other person in the family.

Background

- The case before the three-judge Bench was focussed on an amended provision in the Hindu Marriage Act, Section 16(3).
- In Revanasiddappa vs Mallikarjun, 2011), the division bench held that children born out of void/voidable marriages are entitled to inherit their parents' property, whether self-acquired or ancestral.

- Section 16 of the Hindu Marriage Act has statutorily conferred legitimacy to children born out of void or voidable marriages.
- In fact it stipulates that children from void and voidable marriages would have a right to their parents' property.

DID YOU KNOW?

- A voidable marriage is one that is made invalid by the husband or wife through a decree.
- A void marriage is invalid at the very inception as if it never existed in the eyes of the law.
- Mitakashara law of succession governing Hindu Undivided Families applies to the whole of India except West Bengal and Assam.
- In West Bengal and Assam the Dayabhaga law of succession is observed.
- Mitakshara coparcenary is one of the Hindu law schools that governs the succession of property in a Hindu family.
- The Mitakshara school of thought holds that the son, grandson, and grandson's son have a right to the family property through birth.
- The term 'Coparcenary' is used in Hindu succession law. It is a smaller division or organisation inside a Joint Hindu Family that only deals with property issues, specifically the coparcenary property of a Joint Hindu Family.

Key Highlights of Judgment

- Chief Justice Chandrachud said the first step to inheritance of a child from a void or voidable marriage would be to ascertain the exact share of his parent in the ancestral property.
    - This could be done by means of conducting a "notional partition" of the ancestral property and calculating how much of the property the parent would have got immediately before his death.
- For the purpose of ascertaining the interest of a deceased Hindu Mitakshara coparcener (a person who acquires a legal right to his ancestral property through birth in a Hindu Undivided Family), the law mandates the assumption of a state of affairs immediately prior to the death of the coparcener, namely, a partition of the coparcenary property between the deceased and the other members of the coparcenary.
    - Once the share of the deceased parent in the property is ascertained through such a notional partition, his heirs, including his children by means of void or voidable marriage, would be entitled to their portions in the share.
- The court said the intent of granting legitimacy to such children in the Hindu Marriage Act should also be reflected in the Hindu Succession Act, which governs inheritance.
- Children from void or voidable marriages come within the ambit of "legitimate kinship" and cannot be regarded as illegitimate by the Hindu Succession Act when it comes to inheritance.
- The court also noted that after the enactment of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005, the share of a deceased person in a joint Hindu family governed by Mitakashara law can be devolved to his heirs by testamentary or intestate succession.
- Prior to the amendment, the devolution was only through survivorship. Besides, the amendment gave equal rights of succession to women as well as men.

ONCOLOGIST R RAVI KANNAN WON RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- Oncologist Ravi Kannan, a recipient of India's fourth-highest civilian award Padma Shri and the director of Assam's Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (CCHRC), has been named one of the four winners of the 2023 Ramon Magsaysay Award, Asia's equivalent of the Nobel prize.
- He is credited with revolutionising cancer treatment in Assam through people-centric and pro-poor healthcare.

Other recipients are Bangladeshi educationist Korvi Rakshand, Timorese environmentalist Eugenio Lemos, and Filipino peace negotiator Miriam Coronel Ferrer.

About the Ramon Magsaysay Award

- The Ramon Magsaysay Award, Asia's premier prize and highest honour, recognizes the greatness of spirit shown in selfless service to the people of Asia.
- From 1958 to 2008, the Award was given in six categories annually. These are - government service; public service; community leadership; journalism, literature and creative communication arts; peace and international understanding; and emergent leadership.
- The category of Emergent Leadership was inaugurated in 2000 and is supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation.
- Starting in 2009, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is no longer being given in fixed Award categories, except for Emergent Leadership.
- The Ramon Magsaysay Award is presented in formal ceremonies in Manila, Philippines on August 31st, the birth anniversary of the much-esteemed Philippine President whose ideals inspired the Award's creation in 1957.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Vinoba Bhave was the first Indian Ramon Magsaysay Award winner. He won the award in the year 1958 for community leadership.
- Mother Teresa, Arun Shourie, Maheshweta Devi, Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, Ravish Kumar, Sonam Wagnchuk, and social entrepreneur Anshu Gupta are some of the notable recipients of the award from India.

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THE DEBATE AROUND 'ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION'

WHY IN NEWS?

- On September 1, the Central government set up a panel headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind to explore the feasibility of the 'one nation, one election' (ONOE) plan.

Concept of ONOE

- The idea of ONOE centres around the concept of synchronising the timing of Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections across all States to reduce the frequency of polls throughout the country.

Historical Background

- After the enforcement of the Constitution on January 26, 1950, the first-ever general elections to Lok Sabha and all State Assemblies were conducted simultaneously in 1951-1952.
- The practice continued into the three subsequent Lok Sabha elections until 1967, after which it was disrupted.
- The cycle was first broken in 1959 after the Centre invoked Article 356 (failure of constitutional machinery) of the Constitution to dismiss the then-Kerala government.
- Subsequently, due to defections and counter-defections between parties, several Legislative Assemblies dissolved post-1960, which eventually led to separate polls for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- Currently, the assembly polls in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are held together with the Lok Sabha elections.

Global Examples

- The department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice in its 79th report highlighted that in South Africa, elections to national as well as provincial legislatures are held simultaneously for five years and municipal elections are held two years later.
- In Sweden, elections to national legislature (Riksdag) provincial legislature/county council (landsting) and local bodies/municipal assemblies (Kommunfullmaktige) are held on a fixed date -- second Sunday in September for four years.
- In the UK, the term of Parliament is governed by the Fixed-term Parliament Act, 2011.

Early Explorations of the Idea

- More than 35 years ago, in 1983, the Election Commission had suggested simultaneous elections.
- The Law Commission headed by Justice B P Jeevan Reddy, in its 170th Report in May 1999, also advocated for simultaneous elections.
- In 2015, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, headed by E M Sudarsana Natchiappan, prepared a report on the 'Feasibility of Holding Simultaneous Elections to House of People (Lok Sabha) and State Legislative Assemblies'.
  - This report is also advocated for simultaneous elections.
- In August 2018, the Law Commission of India (LCI), chaired by Justice B. S. Chauhan, released a draft report on simultaneous elections, wherein the constitutional and legal questions related to the issue were analysed.
  - Notably, the Commission submitted that simultaneous elections are not feasible within the existing framework of the Constitution.
  - It said that the Constitution, the Representation of the People's Act 1951 and the Rules of Procedure of Lok Sabha and State Assemblies would require appropriate amendments to conduct simultaneous polls.
  - The commission also recommended it receive ratification from at least 50% of the States.
  - However, with respect to the advantages of holding simultaneous polls, the commission said that ONOE will lead to the saving of public money, reducing the strain on the administrative setup and security forces, timely implementation of government policies, and administrative focus on development activities rather than electioneering.

One Nation, One Election

DID YOU KNOW?

- According to a discussion paper titled 'Analysis of Simultaneous Elections: The What, Why, and How', Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai of NITI Aayog pointed out that the general elections of 2009 had cost the exchequer about Rs 1,115 crore, and the 2014 elections about Rs 3,870 crore.
- The total expenses, including spends by the parties and candidates, would be several times more.
- 17 Lok Sabhas since 1952, seven were dissolved ahead of schedule (in 1971, 1980, 1984, 1991, 1998, 1999 and 2004).
- Simultaneous polls would require amendments in at least five articles of the Constitution -- Article 83 relating to the duration of Houses of Parliament, Article 85 relating to the dissolution of Lok Sabha by the President, Article 172 relating to the duration of the state legislatures, Article 174 relating to dissolution of the state legislatures, and Article 356 relating to the imposition of President's Rule in states.
- Approximately 30 lakh Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines would be needed for simultaneous elections.

ADITYA–L1

WHY IN NEWS?

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on September 2 launched the country's ambitious Solar mission, Aditya-L1 eyeing history again after its successful lunar expedition, Chandrayan-3 a few days ago.

Key Points

- The scientific objectives of the Aditya-L1 mission include the study of coronal heating, solar wind acceleration, Coronal Mass Ejections (CME), dynamics of the solar atmosphere and temperature anisotropy.

Our Sun

- Our Sun is the nearest star and the largest object in the solar system. The estimated age of Sun is about 4.5 billion years.
- It is a hot glowing ball of hydrogen and helium gases.
- The distance to the sun from the earth is about 150 million kilometres, and is the source of energy for our solar system.
- The gravity of the sun holds all the objects of the solar system together.
- At the central region of the sun, known as 'core', the temperature can reach as high as 15 million degree Celsius.
- At this temperature, a process called nuclear fusion takes place in the core which powers the Sun.
- The visible surface of the Sun known as photosphere is relatively cool and has temperature of about 5,500°C.

Illustration of Lagrange points of the Sun-Earth system

ADITYA-L1 TRAJECTORY TO L1

Halo orbit insertion in L1

Cruise Phase

Earth SOI Exit

L1 ← 1.5 million km

Earth centered orbit transfer

Aditya-L1 trajectory from Earth to L1.

- Aditya L1 is the first space-based observatory class Indian solar mission to study the Sun.
- The spacecraft is planned to be placed in a halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system, which is about 1.5 million km from the Earth.
- A satellite placed in the halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/ eclipse.
  - This will provide a greater advantage of observing solar activities continuously.
- The spacecraft carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere, and the outermost layers of the Sun (the corona) using electromagnetic and particle detectors.
- Using the special vantage point of L1, four payloads directly view the Sun and the remaining three payloads carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at the Lagrange point L1.
- Aditya L1 payloads are expected to provide the most crucial information to understand the problems of coronal heating, Coronal Mass Ejection, pre-flare and flare activities, and their characteristics, dynamics of space weather, study of the propagation of particles, and fields in the interplanetary medium etc.

What are Lagrange Points?

- For a two-body gravitational system, the Lagrange Points are the positions in space where a small object tends to stay if put there.
- These points in space for two body systems such as the Sun and Earth can be used by spacecraft to remain at these positions with reduced fuel consumption.
- Technically at Lagrange point, the gravitational pull of the two large bodies equals the necessary centripetal force required for a small object to move with them.
- For two-body gravitational systems, there are a total of five Lagrange points denoted as L1, L2, L3, L4 and L5.
- The Lagrange points for the Sun-Earth system are shown in the figure. The Lagrange point L1 lies between the Sun-Earth line. The distance of L1 from Earth is approximately 1% of the Earth-Sun distance.
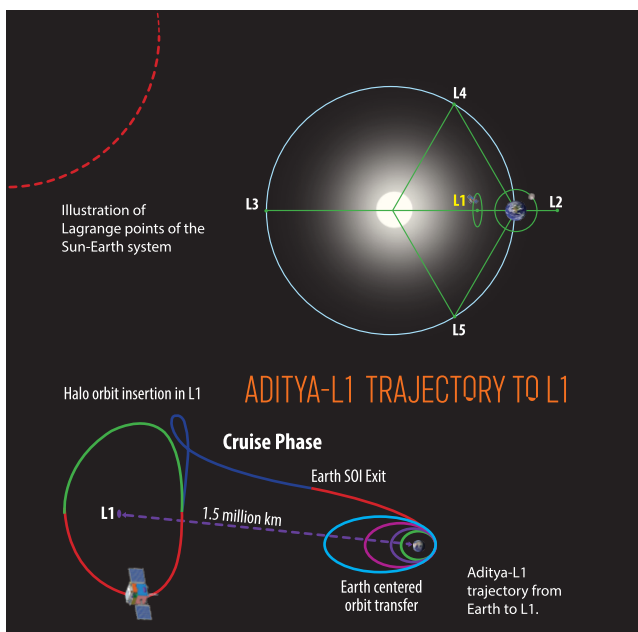
ADOPT A HERITAGE 2.0 PROGRAMME

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) launched the "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" programme on 4th September 2023.

Key Points

- Under this programme, ASI invites corporate stakeholders to enhance the amenities at the monuments by utilizing their CSR funds.
- The programme is a revamped version of the earlier scheme launched in 2017 and clearly defines the amenities sought for different monuments as per the AMASR Act, 1958.
- The stakeholders can apply for adopting a monument or specific amenities at a monument through a dedicated web portal containing details of monuments sought for adoption along with gap analysis and financial estimation of amenities.
- The 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0' programme seeks to foster collaboration with corporate stakeholders through which they can contribute in preserving these monuments for our upcoming generations.
- The selected stakeholders will develop, provide and maintain amenities in hygiene, accessibility, safety and knowledge categories. In doing so, they will get an opportunity to be recognized as a responsible and heritage-friendly entity.

- The term of the appointment will be for a period of five years initially, which may be further extended up to five years.
- A mobile app, named 'Indian Heritage' was also launched, which will showcase the heritage monuments of India.
- The app will feature state-wise details of monuments along with photographs, a list of public amenities available, a geo-tagged location and a feedback mechanism for citizens.
- An e-permission portal for obtaining permission for photography, filming and developmental projects on monuments was also launched.
- The portal will fast-track the process of obtaining various permissions and solve operational and logistical bottlenecks involved.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The 'Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan' scheme was launched in September 2017 on World Tourism Day.
- World Tourism Day has been held on 27 September each year since 1980. The date marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Statutes of the Organization in 1970, paving the way for the establishment of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) five years later.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and the Archaeological Survey of India.

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

ADOPT A HERITAGE 2.0
Apni Dharohar Apni Pehchaan

| An initiative by Archaeological Survey of India to enhance visitors' experience at heritage sites. | Inviting corporate stakeholders to enhance amenities at heritage sites through CSR funds. |

Visit www.indianheritage.gov.in for more information

ADOPT A HERITAGE
अपनी धरोहर - अपनी पहचान

'INDIA VS BHARAT' DEBATE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Invitations sent by President Droupadi Murmu to the heads of states and government and the Chief Ministers of Indian States for an official banquet on the occasion of the G-20 Summit in New Delhi created a flutter as the word "India" was replaced with "Bharat".
- Instead of the usual "President of India", the invitation cards said "President of Bharat".

The Name 'Bharat'

- The roots of "Bharat", "Bharata", or "Bharatvarsha" are traced back to Puranic literature, and to the epic Mahabharata.
- The Puranas describe Bharata as the land between the "sea in the south and the abode of snow in the north".
- 'Bharata' refers to the "supraregional and subcontinental territory where the Brahmanical system of society prevails".
- Bharata is also the name of the ancient king of legend who was the ancestor of the Rig Vedic tribe of the Bharatas, and by extension, the progenitor of all peoples of the subcontinent.

Constitutional Background

- During the Constituent Assembly debates the "Name and Territory of the Union" was taken up for discussion on September 17, 1949.
- Right from the time the first article was read out as "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States", a division arose among the members.
- There were quite a few members who were against the use of the name 'India', which they saw as being a reminder of the colonial past.
    - Hari Vishnu Kamath suggested that the first article should read, "Bharat, or in the English language, India, shall be and such".
    - Seth Govind Das, representing the Central Provinces and Berar, proposed: "Bharat known as India also in foreign countries".
    - Hargovind Pant, who represented the hill districts of the United Provinces, made it clear that the people of Northern India "wanted Bharatvarsha and nothing else".

The Name 'India' and 'Hindustan'

- The name Hindustan is thought to have derived from 'Hindu', the Persian cognate form of the Sanskrit 'Sindhu' (Indus), which came into currency with the Achaemenid Persian conquest of the Indus valley (northwestern parts of the subcontinent) that began in the 6th century BC (which was the time of The Buddha in the Gangetic basin).
- The Achaemenids used the term to identify the lower Indus basin, and from around the first century of the Christian era, the suffix "stan" came to be used with the name to create "Hindustan".
- The Greeks, who had acquired knowledge of 'Hind' from the Achaemenids, transliterated the name as 'Indus'. By the time the Macedonian king Alexander invaded India in the 3rd century BC, 'India' had come to be identified with the region beyond the Indus.
- By the time of the early Mughals (16th century), the name 'Hindustan' was used to describe the entire Indo-Gangetic plain.
- From the late 18th century onwards, British maps increasingly began to use the name 'India', and 'Hindustan' started to lose its association with all of South Asia.

THE MANY NAMES OF INDIA

MELUHA — Appears in ancient texts of Mesopotamia to refer to the Indus Valley Civilization

BHARAT/ BHARATVARSHA — Appears in Puranas as the land between the 'sea in the south and the abode of snow in the north'.

ARYAVARTA — Appears in the Manusmriti as the land occupied by the Indo-Aryans

JAMBUDVIPA — Appears in Vedic texts and is still used in a few Southeast Asian countries to describe subcontinent.

HIND/HINDUSTAN — First used by Persians to refer to the land across river Sindhu.

INDIA — First used by the Greeks, who transliterated 'Hind' as 'Indus'

FRANCE BANNED THE ABAYA IN ITS PUBLIC SCHOOL

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the French government announced that the practice of wearing an abaya would be banned in state-run schools as it violated the principle of Laïcité, which is the French idea of secularism.

What is the Abaya?

- A loose-fitting dress, the Abaya is worn by women. As per a Le Monde report, it is similar to some other free-flowing garments that are worn in parts of Africa and West Asia.
- Over the years there have been variations in its designs, with open Abayas worn on top of long skirts and pants and styles being made available in lighter colours.
- While associated with some regions of the world, Abaya is also described as clothing specific to Muslim women and draws comparisons to the Burqa (which is similar but also has a veil for the face) and the Chador (which is tied slightly differently).
- The garment has been common among women in Saudi Arabia, where conservative dressing in public is strictly enforced.

The Concept of Laïcité

- Coined in the 19th century, Laïcité is a complicated and politically charged term.
- It is understood as a formal separation of the State and Church. It involves the complete removal of religious values from the public sphere and their replacement with secular values such as liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- The underlying goal of Laïcité is to implant tolerance and assimilate people. As per the principle, religion is to be confined to the private sphere. It is important to note here that the state plays an important role in ensuring that affairs are run according to the principle of Laïcité.
- Laïcité, a product of the struggle of anti-clerical Republicans against the power of the Catholic Church, was an abstract idea following the French Revolution in 1789.
- It took a concrete shape in the form of The Law of 1905 in the Third Republic when state-run secular schools were established.
- The Law of 1905 guarantees freedom of conscience and freedom of worship except when it clashes with public order. It states that the Republic would neither pay for nor subsidise any form of worship.
- Today, while there are publicly funded Catholic schools in France, most children attend public schools which are secular spaces and free of cost.

DID YOU KNOW?

- France passed a law in 2004 prohibiting the wearing of "ostentatious" symbols that have a clear religious meaning, such as a Catholic dress, a Jewish kippah, or a Muslim headscarf, in public spaces.
- In 2011, France banned the wearing of face-covering veils in public places.
- The 42nd Constitution Amendment Act of 1976 added the term 'Secular' to the preamble of the Indian Constitution.
- "Sarva Dharma Sambhava" is the Indian philosophy of secularism. It means equal respect for all religions.

MYANMAR NOT ALLOWED TO CHAIR THE 2026 ASEAN MEET

WHY IN NEWS?

- The leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations decided that Myanmar won't take over the rotating leadership of their regional bloc as scheduled in 2026.
- The Philippines agreed to take over the regional bloc's chairmanship in 2026 at an ASEAN summit hosted by Indonesia.

Background

- On 1 February 2021, Myanmar's military took power in a coup, abruptly halting the country's fragile transition towards democracy.
- It justified the coup by alleging widespread fraud in the 2020 election – which Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won by a landslide. Independent observers have rejected such claims.
- Aung San Suu Kyi has been detained since the coup and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Further cases against her, which could lead to decades more prison time, are ongoing.
- Western governments led by the United States have condemned the Myanmar army's ouster of Aung San Suu Kyi's democratically elected government in 2021 and have demanded her immediate release from years-long detention along with other officials.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The First ASEAN Summit was held in Bali, Indonesia on 23-24 February 1976.
- The region has one of the largest economies in the world, and it is believed that by 2050, it will have the 4th-largest economy in the world.
- ASEAN Day is observed on the 8 August every year.
- ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta
- The 43rd ASEAN Summit was concluded on 7 September in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- Lao PDR will assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2024.
- India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of her foreign policy and the foundation of Act East Policy.

Consequences

- Almost 700,000 people have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict since the coup, meaning more than 1.2 million are currently displaced. The economy is in crisis, and public services have collapsed.
- More than 15,500 people have been arrested as of September 2022 – a number that continues to rise. Reports of torture in prisons are common.
- Myanmar's economy has collapsed with nearly half of the population now living below the poverty line.

What is ASEAN?

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- Brunei Darussalam joined ASEAN on 7 January 1984, followed by Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN.
- The ASEAN Summit is the highest policy-making body in ASEAN comprising the Heads of State or Government of ASEAN Member States.
- ASEAN members are - ten Southeast Asian states – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – into one organization.

SWACHH VAYU SARVEKSHAN 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- Union Ministery for Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced the awards of Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan 2023 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Key Findings

- Under the 1st category (million plus population) Indore ranked first followed by Agra and Thane.
  - Madurai (46), Howrah (45) and Jamshedpur (44) are the worst performers.
  - Bhopal stood fifth while Delhi took the ninth spot.
- In the second category (3-10 lakhs population), Amravati secured first rank followed by Moradabad and Guntur.
  - Jammu (38), Guwahati (37) and Jalandhar (36) are the worst performers.
- Similarly, for the third category (less than 3 lakhs population) Parwanoo secured first rank followed by Kala Amb and Angul, while Kohima was ranked last – 39.
- In 2022, the first three spots (million-plus category) were secured by cities in Uttar Pradesh — Lucknow (1), Prayagraj (2) and Varanasi (3).

DID YOU KNOW?

- Under NCAP, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also launched "PRANA" a portal for monitoring implementation of NCAP.
- During the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - COP 26 held in Glasgow in 2021 the Prime Minister of India launched the "Mission LiFE" which means Lifestyle for Environment.
- The current guidelines state that annual average concentrations of PM2.5 should not exceed 5 µg/m3.
- The recommended guideline levels for the other key pollutants are:
  - PM10 (particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less) concentrations of 15 µg/m3 annual mean, 45 µg/m3 24-hour mean.
  - Ozone (O3) concentrations of 100 µg/m3 8-hour mean.
  - Nitrogen dioxide (NO2) concentrations of 10 µg/m3 annual average and 25 µg/m3 24-hour mean.
  - Sulphur dioxide (SO2) concentrations of 40 µg/m3 24-hour mean.
  - Carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations of 7 µg/m3 24-hour mean.
- The SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) scheme of the Government aims to set up Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) production plants and make CBG available in the market for use as a green fuel.

About Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan

- The Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan to promote the ranking of 131 cities in the country for implementing City Action Plans prepared as part of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) for reducing air pollution up to 40% by 2025-26.
- 131 cities are categorized into three groups based on population. 47 cities are in the first group having a population of more than 10 lakh. 44 cities are in the second group having a population between 3 to 10 lakh. The third group consists of 40 cities having a population of less than 3 lakh.
- The cities were assessed on eight major points:
  - I. Control of biomass
  - II. Municipal solid waste burning
  - III. Road dust
  - IV. Dust from construction and demolition waste
  - V. Vehicular emissions
  - VI. Industrial emissions
  - VII. Public awareness
  - VIII. improvement in PM10 concentration
- Cities are declared non-attainment if over a 5-year period, they consistently do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM10 or NO2.

NCAP

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 131 cities (non-attainment cities and Million Plus Cities).
- The programme envisages to achieve reductions up to 40% or achievement of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter10 (PM 10) concentrations by 2025-26.
- NAAQs are the standards for ambient air quality with reference to various identified pollutants notified by the CPCB under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
- List of pollutants under NAAQS: PM10, PM2.5, SO2, NO2, CO, NH3, Ozone, Lead, Benzene, Benzo-Pyrene, Arsenic and Nickel.

NATARAJA ARTISTRY OF LORD SHIVA

WHY IN NEWS?

- The 28 feet of Shiva Nataraja, the Lord of dance, was installed in front of Bharat Mandapam, at the time of the G20 Presidency.

Key Highlights of the Statue

- The statue, believed to be the world's tallest, weighs 19 tonnes and is made of ashtadhatu (eight metals) - gold, silver, lead, copper, tin, mercury, iron and zinc.
- The statue was crafted by sculptors from Swamimalai, sons of legendary sculptor Devasenapathy Stapathi, in the Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu.
- The design of the statue draws inspiration from three revered Nataraja idols — the Thillai Nataraja Temple in Chidambaram, the Uma Maheswarar Temple in Konerirajapuram, and the Brihadeeswara (Big) Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in Thanjavur.

The Cholas and Nataraja

- All three temples the Bharat Mandapam Nataraja statue is inspired from were originally constructed by the Cholas, who at their peak around the 9th-11th centuries AD, ruled over much of peninsular India. The Cholas were great patrons of art and high culture.
- The Cholas were devout Shaivites, building elaborate Shiva temples (like the one in Thanjavur) across their territories.
- Although Shiva was first portrayed in sculpture as Nataraja in the fifth century AD, its present, world-famous form evolved under the Cholas.
- Chola bronzes are unique and occupy a prestigious place in the art world for their beauty and craftsmanship.

Shiva as the Lord of Dance

- Shiva, as he is worshipped today, evolved from the Vedic deity Rudra. In many ways, he is the most complex god of the Puranic pantheon.
- Shiva is death and time (Mahakala) which destroys all things. But he is also a great ascetic and the patron of ascetics generally.
- Shiva is also the 'Lord of Dance' or Nataraja, who is said to have "invented no less than 108 different dances, some calm and gentle, others fierce, orgiastic and terrible," Basham wrote.
- In a typical portrayal, Nataraja is encompassed by a flaming aureole or halo, which is interpreted as "the circle of the world which he (Nataraja) both fills and oversteps.
- The Lord's long dreadlocks flare out due to the energy of his dance, and he strikes a rhythmic pose with his four arms.
- In his upper right hand, he holds a damru (a hand drum), whose sounds "draw all creatures into his rhythmic motion", and in his upper left arm, he holds agni (fire), which he can wield to destroy the universe.
- Yet, amidst all the destructive symbolism, Nataraja also reassures and shows Shiva as the Protector. With his front right hand, he makes the 'abhayamudra' (a gesture that allays fear), and with his raised feet, and with his front left arm he points to his raised feet, asking his devotees to seek refuge at his feet. Strikingly, Nataraja almost always wears a broad smile.

The Lost-wax Method

- Sculptors follow the 'lost-wax' casting method to make these statues: the 28-ft Nataraja was also made following this method. This is a time-tested method, used since the days of the Cholas.
- Notably, the Dancing Girl of Mohenjo Daro was also crafted using this technique.
- the lost-wax method can be dated back to at least 6,000 years back — a copper amulet crafted using this method at a neolithic site in Mehrgarh, Balochistan (present day Pakistan) is dated to circa 4,000 BC.
- In this method, first, a detailed wax model is made. This is then covered with a paste made of alluvial soil found on the banks of the Cauvery river that runs through the heart of what was Chola country.
  - After this coating, applied multiple times, has dried, the figure is be exposed to high heat, causing the wax to burn away, leaving a hollow, intricately carved mould. This is ultimately filled by molten metal to produce the sculpture.

WEST BENAL DECLARED POILA BAISAKH AS STATEHOOD DAY

WHY IN NEWS?

- The West Bengal Legislative Assembly recently passed a resolution declaring 'Poila Baisakh', the first day of the Bengali calendar, as 'Bangla Dibas' or West Bengal Foundation Day.
- Along with the decision to observe 'Poila Baisakh' as 'Bangla Dibas' the State Assembly also passed a proposal of making Rabindranath Tagore's 'Banglar Mati Banglar Jol' (Bengal's soil and Bengal's water) the official song of West Bengal.

Background

- A controversy over the West Bengal Foundation Day had erupted earlier this year when Raj Bhavan had observed June 20, as the State Foundation Day.
- The Chief Minister of West Bengal argued that June 20, which carries associations with the partition, lacks relevance to the state's establishment.

DID YOU KNOW?

- June 20 marks the day in 1947 when the Bengal Assembly saw two separate meetings of legislators. One set voted to stay in India while the other to go with Pakistan.
- June 20 marks the division of Bengal into West Bengal and East Pakistan (later, Bangladesh) – and should not be marked as Bengal Foundation Day.
- Bengal was partitioned by Curzon in 1905 to break the unity of the Bengali-speaking people and also to create a separate province with a Muslim majority.
- Rabindranath Tagore's 'Banglar Mati Banglar Jol' was written in 1905 in the context of Viceroy Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal. The song became an anthem for those fighting against Britain's divide and rule policy.

What is Poila Baisakh?

- Poila Baisakh is also known as Pohela Boisakh. Pohela Boisakh is a prominent festival for the people who belong to the Bengali community. This day is celebrated as Nobo borsho or Bengali New Year.
- This day is celebrated in different regions, West Bengal, Tripura, Jharkhand and Assam.
- In the year 2023, Bengali New Year is being celebrated today, i.e., April 15, 2023.
- The word Nobo refers to new and borsho means year. They celebrate it with great grandeur.

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VIDYA SAMIKSHA KENDRAS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Under the National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR), the Ministry of Education is pushing States to open Vidya Samiksha Kendras (VSKs), a data repository which will have data from all schemes run by the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- Currently, at the Central level, a VSK centre is housed in the Central Institute of Educational Technology building in the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) campus.

Key Points

- VSK is aimed at leveraging data and technology to bring a big leap in learning outcomes.
  - This will cover data of more than 15 Lakh schools, 96 Lakh teachers and 26 Crore students and analyze them meaningfully using big data analysis, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning in order to enhance the overall monitoring of the education system and thereby improving learning outcomes.
- The data repository will include regularly updated data from the –
  - PM-POSHAN mid-day meal programmes;
  - Teacher training data from the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement portal;
  - Textbook content from Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing; school dropout and attendance-related data on Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+);
  - Students' learning outcomes from the National Achievement Survey;
  - Performance Grading Index which evaluates school education system at the State/U.T. level.
- Currently, the data are fed on the platform manually, and available in downloadable Excel format for anyone to access and use, to visualise and analyse trends.
- This is in line with the National Education Policy, 2020 talking about developing operational standards for making data open source.

Significance

- The idea of developing VSKs is also to map the school location layer with the population layer to assess the Gross Access Ratio, which can help plan for new schools, or for industry clusters to understand the skilling requirements of the area, and help plan higher educational institutions based on demand and future scenarios.
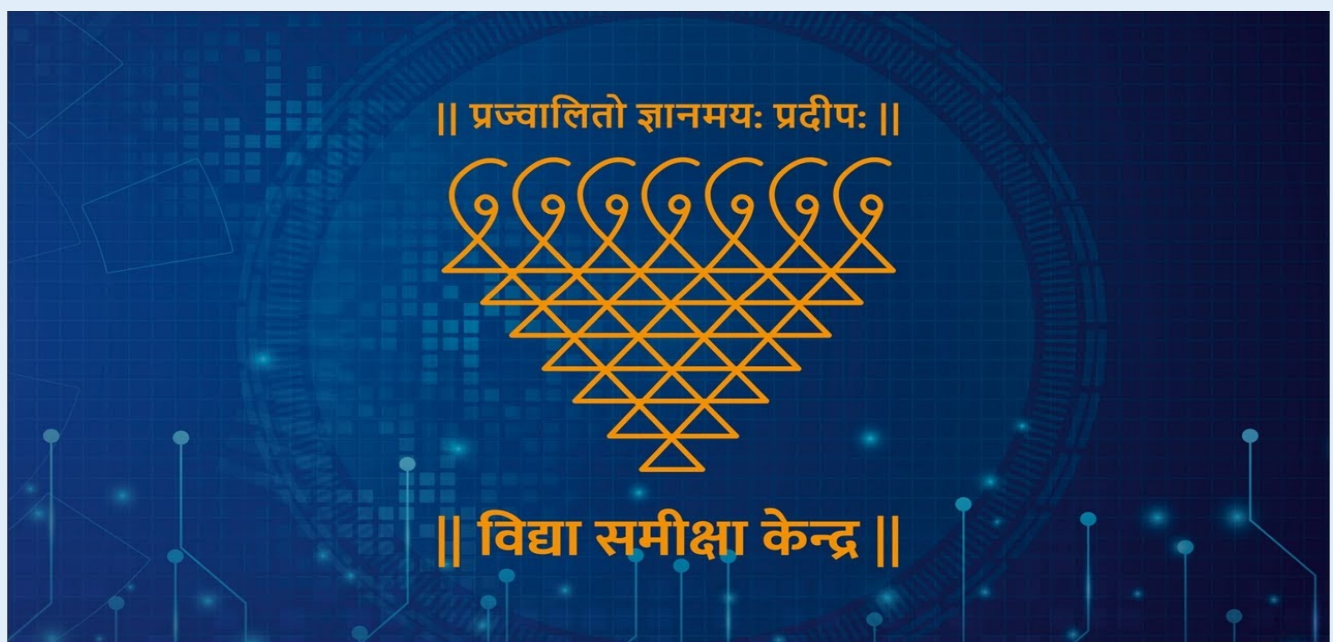
CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM INDIA AND THE WORLD

QUICK FACTS

1. CSIR's Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (**CSIR-CMERI**) has indigenously designed and developed a compact **100% Pure Electric Tractor** named CSIR PRIMA ET11 mainly to cater to small and marginal farmers of India.

2. **India's first indigenously developed** nuclear power plant unit in **Gujara**t has started operations at full capacity. The Kakrapar Unit-3 is an expansion of the existing nuclear power plant, which already had two operational units, KAPS-1 and KAPS-2, each with a capacity of around 220 MWe (megawatts electrical). The third unit is larger and more advanced compared to the first two. Another unit (KAPP 4) has also been constructed and operation here is expected to begin by March 2024.

3. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is celebrating the **6th Rashtriya Poshan Maah** throughout September 2023. This year, the objective is to comprehensively tackle malnutrition through a life-cycle approach, the cornerstone of Mission Poshan 2.0. Anchored in this approach, the focal point of Poshan Maah 2023 is to cultivate widespread awareness concerning critical human life stages: pregnancy, infancy, childhood, and adolescence. The aim is to foster nutritional understanding across India through a theme centred on "Suposhit Bharat, Sakshar Bharat, Sashakt Bharat" (Nutrition-rich India, Educated India, Empowered India).

4. The **Ministry of Education** unveiled a new comic book, "**Let's Move Forward**", developed jointly by NCERT and UNESCO in New Delhi. The comic book is aligned with the School Health and Wellness Programme (SHWP) initiated under Ayushman Bharat. SHWP, a collaborative effort of the Ministry of Education and Health and Family Welfare, aims to provide health education, disease prevention, and better access to healthcare services in schools. The "Let's Move Forward" comic book covers essential themes related to adolescent health and wellbeing.

5. The **63rd Foundation Day** of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was recently observed in New Delhi. The Ministry of Education has granted deemed-to-be-university status to the NCERT.

6. The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has launched its annual mega training exercise, Trishul, with the activation of all combat assets under the Western Air Command (WAC). The exercise is aimed at testing the command's operational preparedness and given its scale and complexity, a high-level of coordination and preparedness involved.

7. **Reserve Bank of India** (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said the adoption of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or **digital currency**, can help in making cross-border payments more efficient. India is one of the few countries that has launched CBDC or e-rupee pilots in wholesale and retail segments.

8. Union Minister for Education launched the **Malaviya Mission - Teachers Training Programme** by the University Grants Commission. The program aims to enhance the quality of education by providing customised training for teachers in higher educational institutions. It aspires to equip 15 lakh teachers across India with the skills needed to meet the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP).

9. Hitachi Payment Services, a subsidiary of Japan-based Hitachi, launched **India's first UPI-ATM** in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) at the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai, to enable customers to withdraw cash without a debit or credit card.

10. The Union government has urged the Supreme Court to issue directives to all **13 Himalayan states and Union territories** to immediately assess the carrying capacity of mountainous regions while proposing to form a new panel that would evaluate the action plans mooted by the states. The carrying capacity is the maximum population size that an ecosystem can sustain without getting degraded.

11. President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the **Biennial Conference of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) of Asia Pacific** in New Delhi. The conference was organised by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC- India), in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Forum (APF). India had hosted international conferences in 2002 and 2014. The Asia Pacific Forum was founded in 1996 with the support of five NHRIs, including the NHRC, India.

12. The first time a **leucistic sambar** has been observed in the **Sangama range of Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary**. A White Sambar Deer was previously recorded in Bandipur Tiger Reserve in 2014. Leucism is a condition in which the pigmentation of an animal's skin is missing, causing white or pale skin. This condition can occur naturally from birth due to a phenotype (a trait of any living being) that may have formed from a defect in the animal's development.

13. The Prime Minister of India paid homage to **Acharya Vinoba Bhave** on his birth anniversary. He was the inaugural recipient of the international Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1958 and posthumously received the Bharat Ratna in 1983.

14. The **Bureau of Indian Standards** (BIS) has embarked on a mission to create awareness and promote compliance with Indian standards at the grassroots level. In an endeavour to ensure the effective implementation of government programs and schemes in villages, BIS has undertaken a comprehensive initiative to sensitize Gram Panchayat Presidents and Secretaries across the country. BIS, the National Standards Body of India, plays a pivotal role in formulating standards and conducting conformity assessments of products and services.

15. The President of India inaugurated the first **'Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights' (GSFR**) at the ICAR Convention Centre, National Agricultural Science Centre Complex in New Delhi. The essential role of farmers as 'anna daatas' (providers of food) was highlighted and called for the protection of their rights and future.

16. CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (CSIR-NIScPR) concluded its extremely successful **"One Week One Lab (OWOL)" programme**. The One Week One Lab programme of CSIR-NIScPR, aimed at fostering public engagement with sciences and science policy and showcasing the achievements of CSIR-NIScPR, has been a resounding success, thanks to the dedication and hard work of the participants and the organizers.

17. The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, in partnership with the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), organized a multi-sectoral workshop **"Risk-based management of spillover events in wildlife in India**" at Hyderabad. The workshop aimed at enhancing stakeholder knowledge about wildlife-origin disease risk analysis.

18. The state government of **Maharashtra** is considering sterilizing leopards due to a rise in population and conflicts with humans. The government is preparing a proposal to be sent to the central government for approval. Maharashtra has the third highest population of leopards in India.

19. The National Green Tribunal (**NGT**) recently ordered the Madhya Pradesh state government to stop the operation of cruise vessels as well as other motor-propelled boats in the **Bhoj wetland** on account of the drastic damage being done to water bodies.The Bhoj Wetland, also known as Bhopal Lake is a designated Ramsar site and hence, a wetland of international importance (Ramsar Convention 1971).

20. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the extension of the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** (PMUY) for the release of 75 lakh LPG connections over three years from Financial Year 2023-24 to 2025-26.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

QUICK FACTS

1. The **International Solar Alliance** (ISA) hosted its 5th regional meeting in **Kigali, Rwanda**. During the meeting, a report titled "Roadmap of Solar Energy for Universal Energy Access", was unveiled. Nine solar power demonstration projects across three countries: 4 in Uganda, 2 in Comoros and 3 in Mali, were virtually inaugurated in the meeting.

2. **World Organ Donation Day** is observed every year on **August 13** to spread awareness about the importance of organ donation and bust myths around it. India's National Organ Donation Day was celebrated annually on November 27, however, in 2023 the day has been shifted to 3rd August to commemorate the first successful deceased heart transplant in India on 3rd August 1994.

3. **World Health Organization** (WHO) has released the outcome document of the first WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit 2023 in the form of the "**Gujarat Declaration**". The declaration reaffirmed global commitments towards indigenous knowledge, biodiversity and traditional, complementary and integrative medicine. India hosted the first WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Gujarat.

4. **Israeli Prime Minister** Benjamin Netanyahu has proposed the **construction of infrastructure projects**, such as a fibre optic cable, linking Asia and the Arabian Peninsula with Europe through Israel and Cyprus. This proposal extends Israel's collaboration with Cyprus and Greece on energy projects, such as the EurAsia Interconnector, a 2,000-megawatt undersea electricity cable.

5. **Ministry of Tourism, Government** of India, in collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), unveiled the **G20 Tourism and SDG Dashboard**. The G20 Tourism and SDG Dashboard serves as a comprehensive online public platform, amalgamating the collective knowledge of the G20 Tourism Working Group. It consolidates the GOA Roadmap, survey results, case studies, and best practices from G20 countries. The dashboard offers insights into sustainable tourism practices and also provides a platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and growth.

6. **Hong Kong's** top court ruled in favour of recognising same-sex partnerships and gave the government two years to come up with a legal framework, but stopped short of granting full marriage rights to the city's LGBTQ community. Hong Kong has enjoyed a semi-autonomous status that allows it more freedoms than in the mainland since the city was handed back to China in 1997 and its legal system is governed under a common law system.

7. Scientists recently unearthed in Fujian Province the fossil of a Jurassic Period dinosaur they named **Fujianvenator prodigiosus** - a creature that sheds light on a critical evolutionary stage in the origin of birds. About 148 to 150 million years ago, a strange pheasant-sized and bird-like dinosaur with elongated legs and arms built much like wings inhabited southeastern China, with a puzzling anatomy suggesting it either was a fast runner or lived a lifestyle like a modern wading bird.

8. INS Sumedha participated in **'Exercise BRIGHT STAR- 23'**. 34 countries participated in this edition of the multinational Tri-Services military exercise. It was the largest-ever joint military exercise in the Middle East & North Africa region. This was the maiden participation of the Indian Navy in Ex Bright Star.

9. **World EV Day**, celebrated every year on September 9, serves as a reminder for electric vehicle (EV) stakeholders to strive for a safer, cleaner, and better connected ecosystem. The Sustainability Media Company GreenTV initiated World Electrical Vehicle Day, and the inaugural World EV Day was observed in the year 2020.

10. The James Webb Space Telescope (**JWST**) captured an image of **SN1987A, a supernova** - a star that exploded - that exploded decades ago, offering new insights into its history and evolution. It is situated just 170,000 light-years away from Earth in the Large Magellanic Cloud, a neighbouring dwarf galaxy.

11. Sometimes, the canopy of trees in a forest suggests that the treetops are locked together in a mosaic of leaves separated by thin grooves of sky. This slender separation is called **crown shyness** – a phenomenon common in temperate deciduous forests, where the trees vary in age and species. Crown shyness is also primarily observed in certain species, including eucalyptus, pine, and oak.

12. **Phase II of the 21st edition of Varuna (Varuna-23)** bilateral exercise between the Indian and French Navy was conducted in the Arabian Sea. The first phase of 'Varuna-2023' was conducted off India's Western Seaboard from 16 to 20 Jan 23. Indian & French Navy bilateral naval

exercise was initiated in 1993. The exercise was later christened as 'Varuna' in 2001 and has since become a hallmark of the robust India-France strategic bilateral relationship.

13. Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change participated in the virtual **'High-Level Dialogue on Human Health and Environment'** convened under the 2nd Berlin Forum on Chemicals and Sustainability – Just Transition Towards a Pollution-free Planet.

14. India is set to expand its presence for cross-border bill payments in the UK through the **Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS)** after having operationalised it in four countries in the Middle East countries as Oman, Kuwait, UAE, and Bahrain.

15. **Novak Djokovic** wins his **24th Grand Slam title** at the US Open, defeating Daniil Medvedev in three sets and becomes the first player in the Open era to reach that milestone. The Grand Slam itinerary consists of the Australian Open in mid-January, the French Open from around late May to early June, Wimbledon in June–July, and the US Open in August–September.

16. **World Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Day** is observed on the Seventh of September each year to raise awareness about Duchenne muscular dystrophy. The purpose of the day is to support efforts that will improve the quality of life for those who have dystrophinopathies through education, advocacy, and social inclusion. This year's World Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Day theme is Duchenne: Breaking Barriers.

17. The Solar Orbiter recently captured extreme ultraviolet images of the Sun, revealing a multitude of small-scale jets known as **"picoflare" jets** within a coronal hole, raising questions about their role in powering the solar wind and impacting space weather.

MOST MEN'S GRAND SLAM SINGLES TITLES

Novak Djokovic — 24
Rafael Nadal — 22
Roger Federer — 20
Pete Sampras — 14

ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE

QUICK FACTS

1. The Prime Minister paid tributes to **Sree Narayana Guru** on his Jayanti. Guru's philosophy emphasized, "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All" (Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam, Manushyanu) promoting harmony among different communities. He became one of the greatest proponents and re-evaluators of Advaita Vedanta, the principle of non-duality put forward by Adi Shankara.

2. **Noted Rudra Veena** exponent, **Ustad Ali Zaki Hader** recently passed away. Ustad Ali Zaki Hader, a disciple of Ustad Asad Ali Khan, was the last exponent of the Khandarbani style of the Jaipur Beenkar gharana of Dhrupad. The Khandarbani style of the Jaipur Beenkar gharana of Dhrupad is a musical tradition that originated in the 18th century by Shahaji Saheb.

3. As part of showcasing India's cultural diversity and heritage, a wall depicting the mural of the historic **Konark Wheel of Odisha's Sun Temple** is placed as the backdrop for welcoming world leaders at the summit venue. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984, the Konark Sun Temple is also a major pilgrimage site.

4. On September 11, 1948, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru sent a telegram to Pakistan, signaling the launch of military action to take over Hyderabad, then a princely state. **'Operation Polo'** was launched on September 13, 1948, and the Nizam offered a ceasefire on September 17. This is the 75th year of Hyderabad's liberation.

5. **Hindi Diwas** is celebrated every year on **September 14** in India to commemorate the adoption of Hindi as one of the official languages of the country. On September 14, 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India took a significant step by adopting Hindi as one of the official languages of India. It is now considered one of the two official languages of the country, alongside English. **World Hindi Day** is observed on **10 January**. It commemorates the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference held in Nagpur on 10th January 1975.
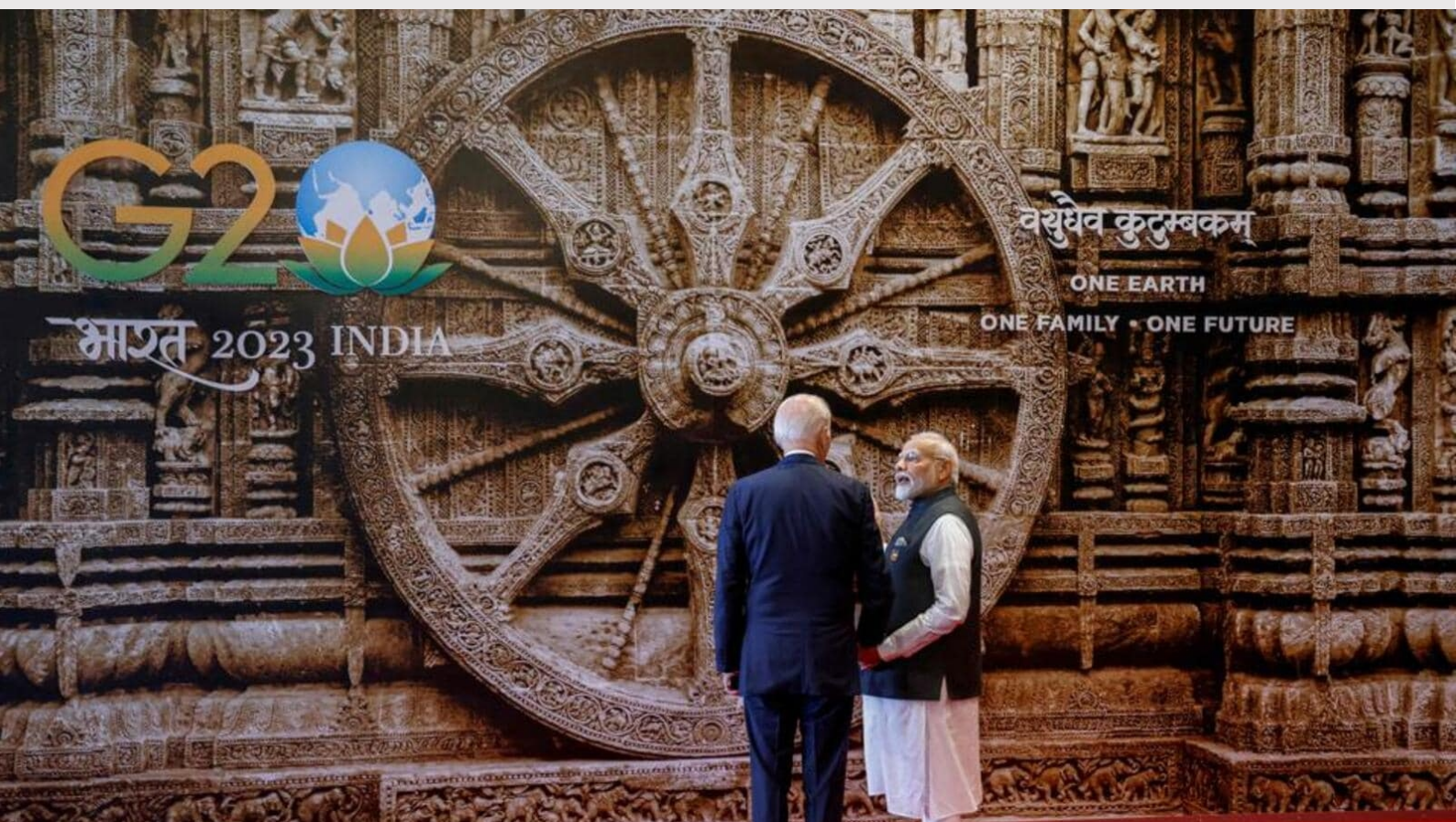
PASSAGE - 1

ISRO launched the country's ambitious Solar mission, Aditya L1 eyeing history again after its successful lunar expedition, Chandrayan 3 a few days ago. According to ISRO, Aditya-L1 is the first space-based observatory to study the Sun. The spacecraft, after travelling about 1.5 million km from the Earth over 125 days, is expected to be placed in a Halo orbit around the Lagrangian point L1 which is considered closest to the Sun. Among others, it will send pictures of the sun for scientific experiments.

According to scientists, there are five Lagrangian points (or parking areas) between the Earth and the Sun where a small object tends to stay if put there. The Lagrange Points are named after Italian-French mathematician Joseph-Louis Lagrange for his prize-winning paper -- "Essai sur le Problème des Trois Corps, 1772." These points in space can be used by spacecraft to remain there with reduced fuel consumption. At a Lagrange point, the gravitational pull of the two large bodies (the Sun and the Earth) equals the necessary centripetal force required for a small object to move with them.

Explaining the reasons to study the Sun, ISRO said it emits radiation in nearly all wavelengths along with various energetic particles and magnetic fields. The atmosphere of the Earth as well as its magnetic field acts as a protective shield and blocks harmful wavelength radiations. In order to detect such radiation, solar studies are carried out from space. The major objectives of the mission include understanding the Coronal Heating and Solar Wind Acceleration, the initiation of Coronal Mass Ejection (CME), near-earth space weather and the solar wind distribution.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Aditya L1 lifts off successfully, Moon done for India, over to the Sun now", The Hindu Business Line]

Q.1 Aditya-L1 is ISRO's second astronomy observatory-class mission after -

| A | Chandra X-ray Observatory | C | INSAT |
| B | AstroSat | D | Juno |

Q.2 Which of the following processes takes place in the core of the sun to power it?

| A | Nuclear Fusion | C | Nuclear Decay |
| B | Nuclear Fission | D | Nuclear Transmutation |

Q.3 The L1 point is home to the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory Satellite (SOHO), an international collaboration project of NASA and the –

| A | CSA | C | ESA |
| B | JAXA | D | Roscosmos |

Q.4 Parker Solar Probe spacecraft was launched in 2018 and officially touched the sun in December 2021. Which space agency launched the Parker Solar Probe?

| A | ESA | C | JAXA |
| B | CSA | D | NASA |

Q.5 The James Webb Space Telescope orbits the Sun near Sun-Earth –

| A | L1 | C | L3 |
| B | L2 | D | L4 |

Answers

Q.1 (B) Q.2 (A) Q.3 (C) Q.4 (D) Q.5 (B)

PASSAGE - 2

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) launched a revamped version of the 'Adopt a Heritage' programme apart from an Indian Heritage app and an e-permission portal. Initially launched in [1] under the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with the ASI which invited corporate stakeholders to adopt from over 3,000 protected monuments spread across the country, 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0', is the upgraded version of the 'Adopt a Heritage' programme. The programme encourages corporate stakeholders to utilise their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds to enhance facilities at historically important monuments. The app, on the other hand, provides a comprehensive guide to monuments under ASI's ambit. It lists historical structures along with pictures, public facilities available on site and geo-tagged locations.

Adopt a Heritage 2.0 has incorporated a host of changes to the programme after a leaner management and supervision structure for the partner agencies, clear guidelines for semi-commercial activities and a detailed scope of work and amenities required for monuments was proposed in the earlier version. 1,000 additional monuments have also been added to the list for adoption. Earlier, the corporate partners' proposed visions and expressions of interest would go through two levels of scrutiny via three committees. Corporate partners were also encouraged to adopt smaller monuments or "low visibility sites" along with the monuments they adopted. However, according to the Additional Director General of the ASI, Gurmeet Chawla, these policies were not met with enthusiastic response and would often prevent companies from adopting monuments altogether.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "ASI launches revamped 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0' programme", by Upasika Singhal, The Indian Express]

Q.1 Which year has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

| A | 2014 | C | 2016 |
| B | 2015 | D | 2017 |

Q.2 What is the theme of the 2023 World Tourism Day?

| A | Tourism and Green Investment | C | Tourism for Inclusive Growth |
| B | Rethinking Tourism | D | Tourism and Rural Development |

Q.3 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the _____, is the premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.

| A | Ministry of Tourism | C | Ministry of Culture |
| B | Ministry of Finance | D | Ministry of Corporate Affairs |

Q.4 Hoysala Empire temples have been inscribed in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites as the 42nd addition of India to the list. Hoysala Empire temples are located in -

| A | Tamil Nadu | C | Andhra Pradesh |
| B | Karnataka | D | Telangana |

Q.5 Which of the following countries is the first country in the world to mandate CSR spending along with a framework to identify potential CSR activities?

| A | United States | C | Norway |
| B | Russia | D | India |

HAVE ANY DOUBT REGARDING YOUR CLAT PREPARATION?

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PASSAGE - 3

Under the National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR), the Ministry of Education is pushing States to open Vidya Samiksha Kendras (VSKs), a data repository which will have data from all schemes run by the Ministry of Education (MoE). This will include regularly updated data from the PM-POSHAN mid-day meal programmes; teacher training data from the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement portal; textbook content from Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing; school dropout and attendance-related data on Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+); students' learning outcomes from National Achievement Survey; and Performance Grading Index which evaluates school education system at the State/U.T. level.

Currently, at the Central level, a VSK centre is housed in the Central Institute of Educational Technology building in the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) campus with multi-national IT company Ernst and Young, managing its operations. It is an open-source platform run on C-Qube software. EkStep Foundation, which is a non-profit organisation co-founded by former Chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India, Nandan Nilekani, is on board in an advisory role for implementing the VSK project, MoE officials said.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Education Ministry asks States to bring all data under one platform", by Maitri Porecha, The Hindu]

Q.1 PM-POSHAN replaced the national programme for mid-day meals in schools or the Mid-day Meal Scheme in 2021. Mid-day Meal Scheme works under the –

A Ministry of Education

B Ministry of Women and Child Development

C Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

D Ministry of Food Processing Industries

Q.2 The National Council of Educational Research and Training has been granted deemed-to-be-university status in –

A August 2022

B March 2023

C August 2023

D September 2023

Q.3 Which of the following schemes was renamed as the 'Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman' scheme (PM Poshan Scheme) in 2021?

A Anemia Mukt Bharat Abhiyan

B PRAGYATA

C Mid-Day Meal Scheme

D Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

Q.4 Jadui Pitara is a play-based learning-teaching material tailored for children between the age group of –

A 3-6 years

B 3-8 years

C 8-11 years

D 11-14 years

Q.5 Which Constitutional Amendment Act made education an enforceable right under Article 21A?

A 82nd

B 84th

C 86th

D 88th
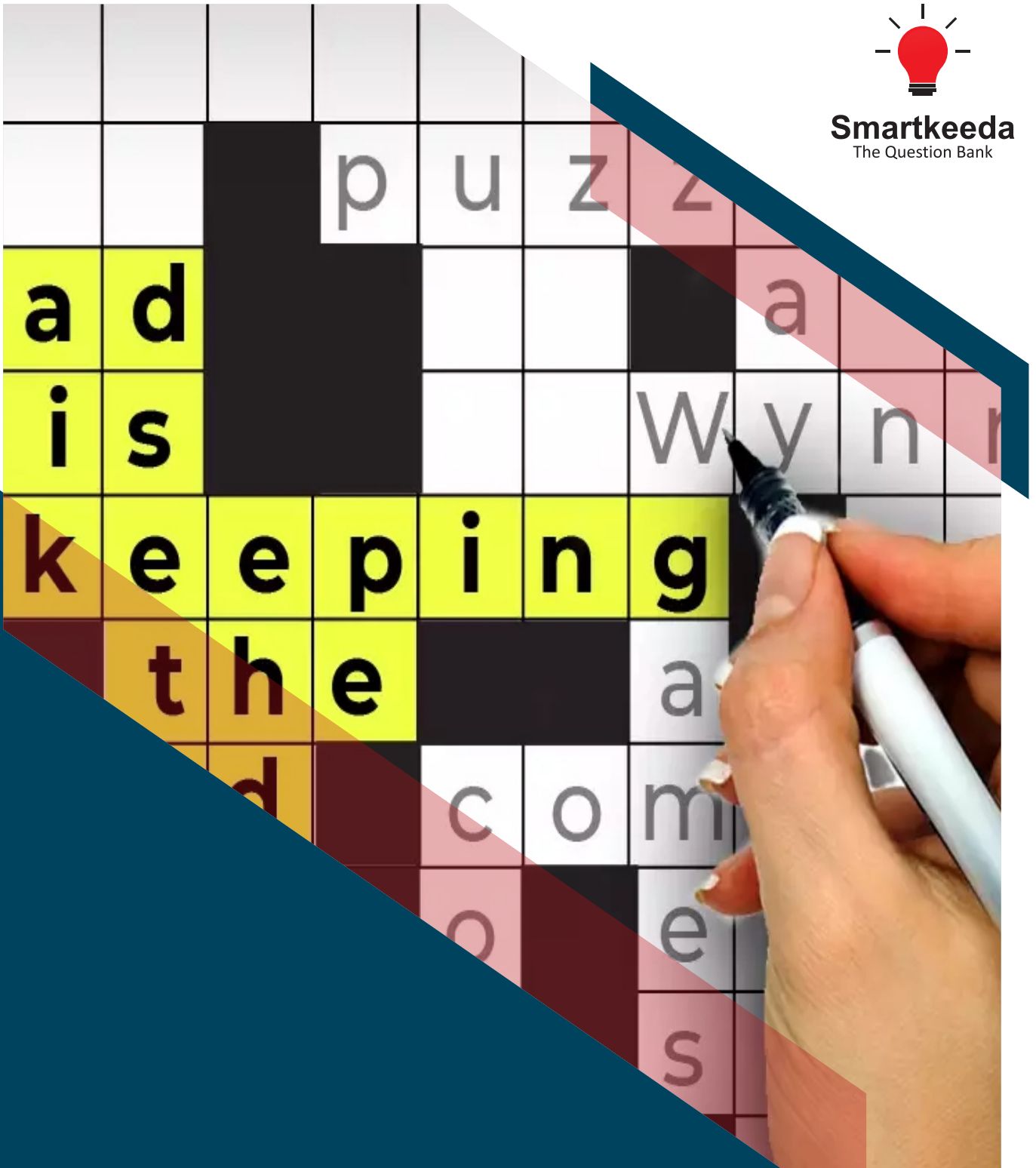
CROSSWORD - 1
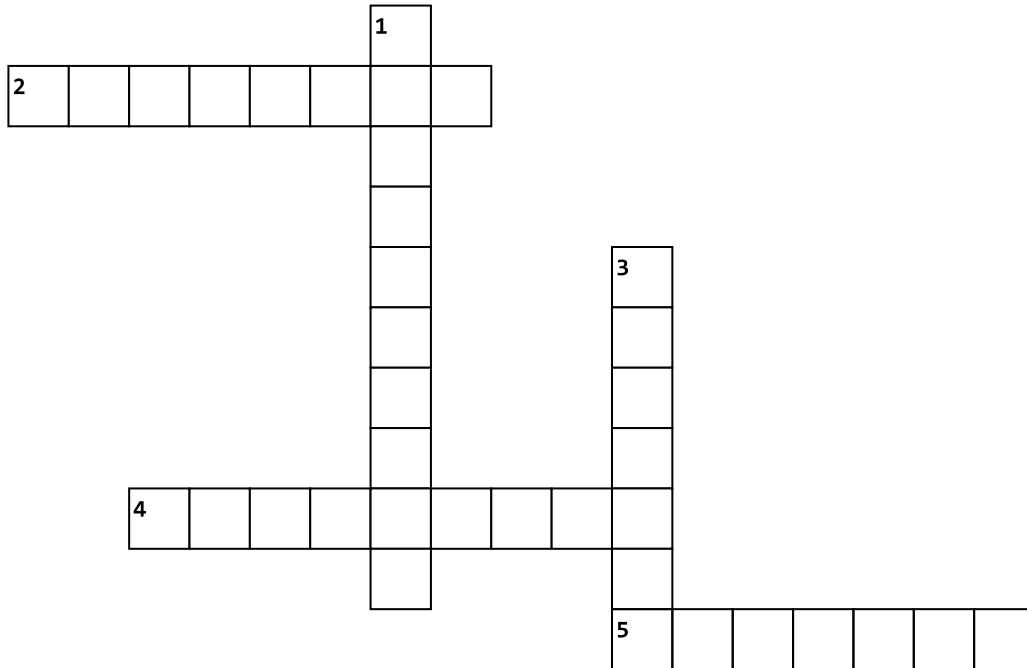
Across

2. World Organ Donation Day

4. 6th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2023

5. Annual mega training exercise of Indian Air Force (IAF)

Down

1. World EV Day

3. Location of India's first indigenously developed nuclear power plant unit

Answers

1 9 September
2 13 August
3 Gujarat
4 September
5 Trishul

CROSSWORD - 2

(crossword grid with numbered cells 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
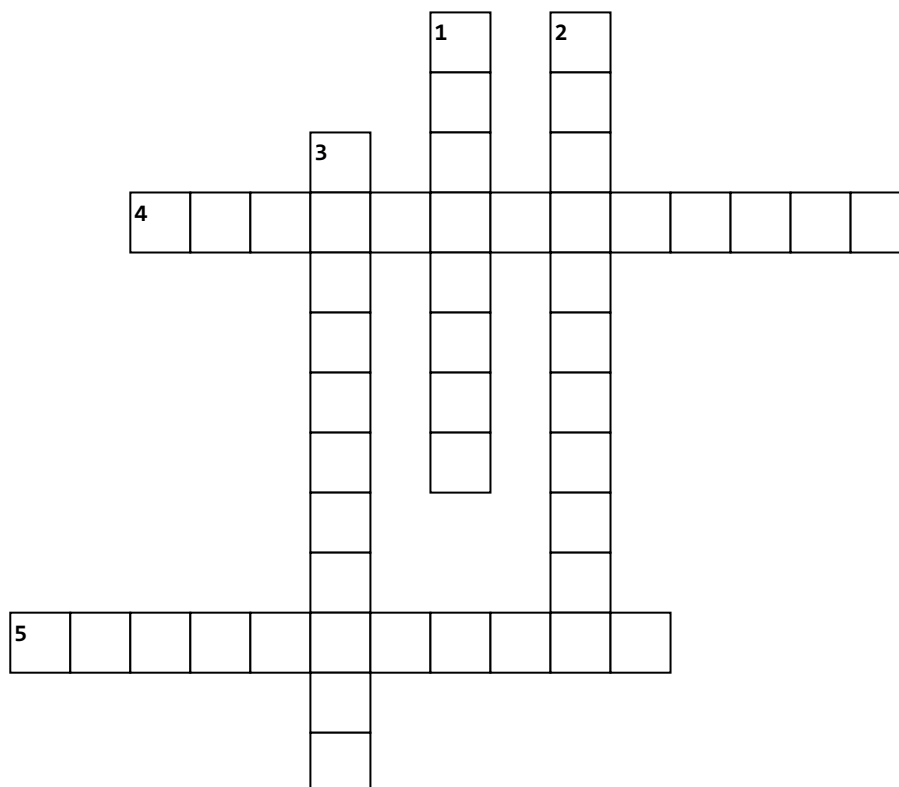
Across

4. Winner of the US Open 2023 and 24th Grand Slam title

5. Hindi Diwas

Down

1. First 'Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights' (GSFR) was held

2. Inaugural recipient of the international Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1958

3. State considering sterilization of leopards due to a rise in population

Answers

3 Maharashtra

5 14 September

2 VinobaBhave

4 NovakDjokovic

1 NewDelhi