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LawEx

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[Cover story]

DELHI VS CENTRE DISPUTE



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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 Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favour of the Delhi government on the issue of who controls the bureaucracy in the national capital, a panel formed by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has recommended a ban on the use of diesel-powered four-wheel vehicles by 2027 in cities with a population of more than 1 million, in the 2023 edition of the World Press Freedom Index, India has slipped 11 places to the 161st rank out of 180 countries. For more information, keep reading.

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The Question Bank



**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM
INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK BOOSTERS



DELHI VS CENTRE DISPUTE

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favour of the Delhi government on the issue of who controls the bureaucracy in the national capital.

Background

- The issues of distribution of power between the Delhi government and the Centre first arose from a reference made by a two-judge Bench of the SC in 2019, which, while deciding on the distribution of powers between the Delhi government and Centre, left the question of who will have control over the administrative services for consideration by a larger Bench.
- The Delhi government challenged the constitutional validity of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act of 2021, which provided that the term "government" referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly of Delhi will imply the Lieutenant Governor (L-G).
- The current proceedings have their genesis in the Delhi High Court judgment of August 4, 2017, in which it held that for the purposes of administration of the NCT of Delhi, the L-G was not bound by the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers in every matter.

Article 239AA of the Constitution

- Article 239 AA was inserted in the Constitution by The Constitution (69th Amendment) Act, 1991 to give Special Status to Delhi following the recommendations of the S Balakrishnan Committee that was set up to look into demands for statehood for Delhi.
- It says that the NCT of Delhi will have an Administrator and a Legislative Assembly. Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, the Legislative Assembly "shall have power to make laws for the whole or any part of the NCT with respect to any of the matters in the State List or Concurrent List in so far as any such matter is applicable to Union territories" except on the subject of police, public order, and land.

Key Highlights

- The Supreme Court clarified that the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) does not have sweeping executive powers over the national capital, and the Centre should be mindful of the unique "asymmetric federal model" of governance adopted for Delhi.
- A Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud held that the L-G can exercise executive power on behalf of the Centre only in the three areas of public order, police and land in Delhi as mentioned in Article 239AA(3)(a).
- If the L-G differed with the Council of Ministers of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD), he should act in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Transaction of Business Rules.
- However, in case the Parliament enacts a law granting executive power on any subject which is within the domain of NCTD, the executive power of the L-G can be modified to the specific extent provided in that law. This means that any change in the L-G's ambit of power should be supported by a parliamentary legislation which is subject to judicial review by the court.
- The court referred to Section 49 of the GNCTD Act which mandates the L-G and the Delhi Council of Ministers to "comply with particular directions issued by the President on specific occasions".
- The court noted the 'sui generis' or special status given to Delhi, and said "cooperative federalism" was the key to meaningful governance of the capital.



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NATIONAL MEDICAL DEVICES POLICY, 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Union Cabinet recently approved the National Medical Devices Policy, 2023, which is expected to facilitate an orderly growth of the medical device sector to meet the public health objectives of access, affordability, quality, and innovation.

Salient Features of the Policy

- Vision:** Accelerated growth path with a patient-centric approach and to emerge as the global leader in the manufacturing and innovation of medical devices by achieving a 10-12% share in the expanding global market over the next 25 years. The policy is expected to help the Medical Devices Sector grow from \$11 Bn to \$50 Bn by 2030.
- Regulatory Streamlining:** In order to enhance ease of doing research and business and further to balance patient safety with product innovation measures such as the creation of a 'Single Window Clearance System' for Licensing of Medical Devices coopting all the stakeholder departments / organisations such as AERB (Atomic Energy Regulatory Board), MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology), DAHD (Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying), etc., enhancing the Role of Indian Standards like BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) and designing a coherent pricing regulation, will be followed.
- Enabling Infrastructure:** Establish and strengthen large medical device parks, clusters equipped with world-class common infrastructure facilities in proximity to economic zones with requisite logistics connectivity as envisioned under the National Industrial Corridor Program and the proposed National Logistics Policy 2021 under the ambit of PM Gati Shakti.
- Facilitating R&D and Innovation:** The policy envisages to promote Research & Development in India and complement the Department's proposed National Policy on R&D and Innovation in the Pharma- MedTech Sector in India. It also aims at establishing Centres of Excellence in academic and research institutions, innovation hubs, 'plug and play' infrastructures and support to start-ups.
- Attracting Investments in the Sector:** Along with recent schemes and interventions like Make in India, Ayushman Bharat program, Heal-in-India, Start-up mission, the policy encourages private investments, series of funding from Venture Capitalists, and also Public-Private Partnership(PPP).
- Human Resources Development:** For the steady supply of skilled workforce across the value chain such as scientists, regulators, health experts, managers, technicians, etc., the policy will leverage the available resources in Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Brand Positioning and Awareness Creation:** The policy envisages the creation of a dedicated Export Promotion Council for the sector under the Department, which will be an enabler to deal with various market access issues.

DID YOU KNOW?

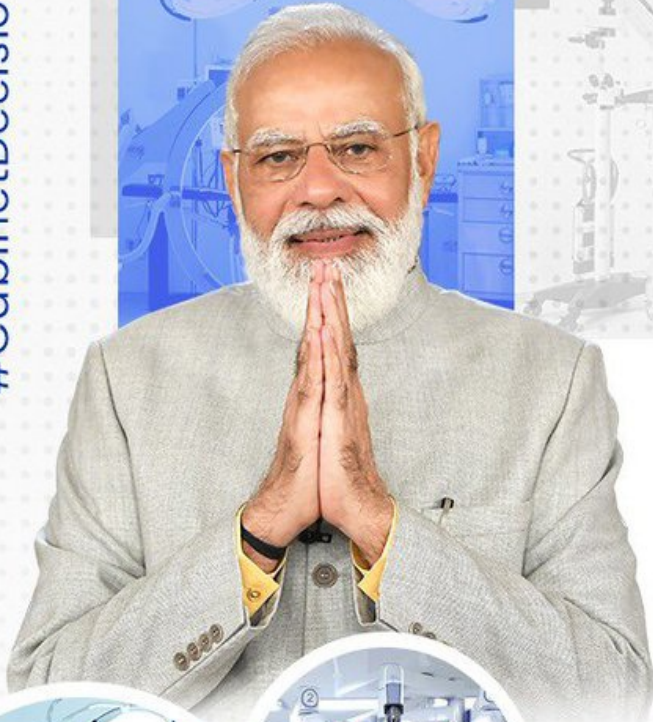
- India's medical devices sector is primarily regulated by the Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940.
- In February 2020, the Centre notified changes in the Medical Devices Rules, 2017, to regulate medical devices on the same lines as drugs under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.
- India's current market share in the medical device category is 1.5 per cent of the global space or \$11 billion (that is ₹90,000 crore) in 2020. Apparently, US dominates the global market with a 40 per cent market share, followed by Europe and Japan at 25 and 15 per cent, respectively.
- India is the 4th largest Asian medical devices market after Japan, China, and South Korea, and among the top 20 medical devices markets globally.

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#CabinetDecisions



NATIONAL MEDICAL DEVICES POLICY 2023

Strengthening India's Medical Devices Manufacturing Industry



 Vision:



Accelerated Growth Path With a Patient-Centric Approach



Global Leader in the Manufacturing and Innovation of Medical Devices by Achieving 10-12% Share Over the Next 25 Years



Help the Medical Devices Sector to Grow From Present \$11 Billion to \$50 Billion in the Next Five Years



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COMMAND CYBER OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT WINGS

WHY IN NEWS?

- In the recently held Army Commanders Conference (ACC), the Indian Army decided to operationalise Command Cyber Operations and Support Wings (CCOSWs) in the immediate future with the current focus on net-centric operations.

What is CCOSWs?

- The CCOSWs are a specialised unit of the Indian Army. These units will assist the formations to undertake the mandated cyber security functions to strengthen the cyber security posture of the Army.
- Cyberspace has emerged as an important component of military domain both in grey-zone warfare as well as conventional operations. The expansion of cyber warfare capabilities by our adversaries has made the cyber domain more competitive and contested than ever before.
 - Grey zone warfare refers to employing aggression and other actions to achieve national objectives below the threshold of armed conflict and the ambiguity it creates.
- The migration towards network centrality and increased reliance on modern communication systems make the CCOSWs important.

Other Decisions Made in ACC

- Technical Entry Scheme - Transitioning from the existing (5-year) 1+3+1 years Technical Entry Scheme (TES) model to a (4-year) 3 + 1 TES model from January 2024 onwards. With three years devoted to technical training at Cadet Training Wings (CTWs), followed by one year of Basic Military Training (BMT) at IMA, Dehradun.
 - The five-year Technical Entry Scheme (TES) model currently for officers' entry as B. Tech graduates has been in place since 1999. Under this, one year of military training is imparted at the Officers Training Academy (OTA), Gaya, followed by three years' B. Tech degree at the CTWs, followed by one year at the three engineering colleges of the Army - College of Military Engineering (CME), Pune; Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow; and Military College of Mechanical and Electronics Engineering (MCEME), Secunderabad.
- On the training of soldiers who are battle and physical casualties for Paralympic events, the Indian Army will identify potential talent for Athletics, Rowing, Archery, Swimming, Shooting, Para-lifting, Kayaking, and Canoeing.
- Indian Army is also planning to double the sustenance allowance to specially-abled children of personnel killed in the line of duty through the Army General Insurance Fund (AGIF).

DID YOU KNOW?

- India's Initiatives in Cyber Warfare
 - Defence Cyber Agency
 - Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)
 - National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)
 - Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre)



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MILLETS EXPERIENCE CENTRE

WHY IN NEWS?

- In collaboration with NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India), the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched the first of its kind, 'Millets Experience Centre (MEC)' to raise awareness on

Key Points

- The MEC would not only promote the dietary benefits of the ancient grain but also popularise millets or Shree Anna as a nutritional powerhouse fit for cooking a variety of dishes like Millets dosa, Millets pasta etc.
- The MEC is a unique concept that will help in recognition of the immense potential of millet as a versatile and healthy grain. The centre will enable the consumers to enjoy an expansive Millet menu and an 'in-store' shopping experience featuring a wide variety of millet-based products developed by homegrown start-ups- all under one roof.

Significance

- India is gearing towards becoming a 'Global Hub' for Millets, and setting up of the MEC is a step in that direction.
- The MEC would help widen the horizon for consumers actively seeking healthier alternatives and bring visibility to India's robust millet-based start-up community.
- The year-long celebrations for millets will entail myriad activities aimed at creating awareness around the environmental, health and economic benefits of millet farming.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The proposal of India was supported by 72 countries and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as International Year of Millets (IYOM) in March, 2021.
- Millet is called 'Shree Anna' in Union Budget 2023-24.
- The government of India celebrated the National Year of Millets in 2018.
- Millets are fundamentally grasses. They are cultivated worldwide, but especially in the tropical parts of Africa and Asia, as cereal crops. Some of the more common varieties include pearl millet (*Cenchrus americanus*), barnyard millet (*Echinochloa utilis*), finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), and foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*).
- According to the Agricultural and Processed Foods Development Authority, India is the world's largest producer of millets. In 2021-2022, the country accounted for 40.51% of the world's pearl millet production and 8.09% of sorghum. Within the country, pearl millet made up 60% of all the millet production, sorghum 27%, and ragi 11%.
- Sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*), adlay millet (*Coix lacryma-jobi*), and teff (*Eragrostis tef*) – among others – are some grasses that differ in some respects from the millets but are grouped together with them.

“India is honoured to be at the forefront of popularising Millets. Millet consumption furthers nutrition, food security and welfare of farmers”

INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF
MILLETS
2023



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NATIONAL HEALTH ACCOUNTS ESTIMATES FOR INDIA 2019-20

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has released the 7th National Health Accounts (NHA) Estimates for India (2019-20).

Key Findings

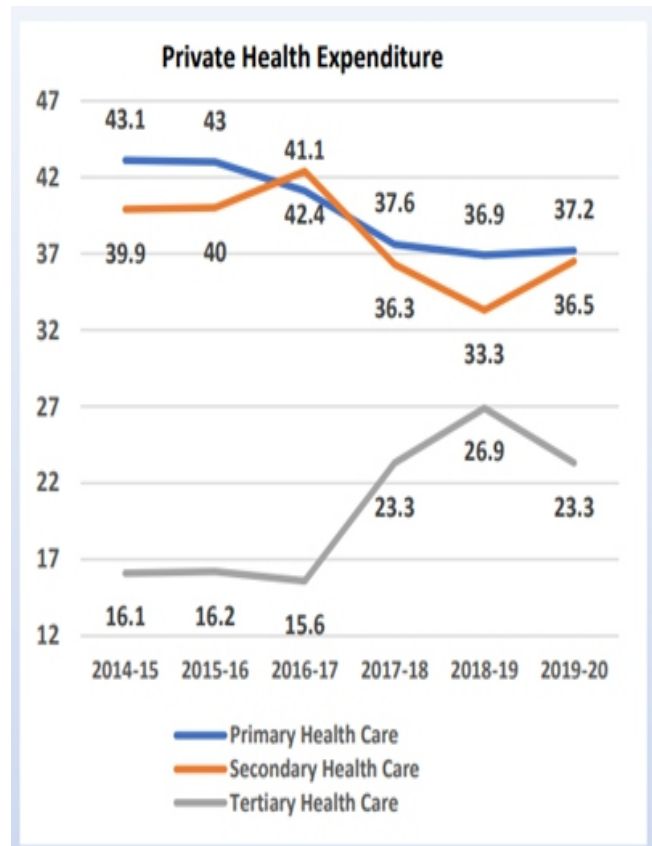
- The share of out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) in total health expenditure has declined from 62.6% in 2014-15 to 47.1% in 2019-20. OOPE is the money paid directly by households, at the point of receiving health care.
- The Government Health Expenditure's (GHE) share in the country's total GDP increased from 1.13% (2014-15) to 1.35% (2019-20).
 - In per capita terms, GHE has doubled from Rs. 1,108 to Rs. 2,014 between 2014-15 to 2019-20.
 - In General Government Expenditure (GGE), the share of health sector spending has steadily increased from 3.94% to 5.02% between 2014-15 and 2019-20.
- In the Total Health Expenditure (THE) of the country between 2014-15 and 2019-20, the share of GHE has increased from 29% to 41.4%.
- The share of primary healthcare in Current Government Health Expenditure (CGHE) has increased from 51.3% in 2014-15 to 55.9% in 2019-20.
- Another positive trend in the country's health financing space is the increase in Social Security Expenditure (SSE) on healthcare. This increase in social security has a direct impact on reducing out-of-pocket payments.
 - The share of SSE on health, which includes government-funded health insurance, medical reimbursement to government employees, and social health insurance programs, in THE, has increased from 5.7% in 2014-15 to 9.3% in 2019-20.

About National Health Account (NHA) Estimates

- The National Health Account (NHA) estimates for India 2019-20 is the seventh consecutive NHA estimates report prepared by NHSRC (National Health Systems Resource Centre).
- The NHA estimates are prepared by using an accounting framework based on the internationally accepted standard of System of Health Accounts, 2011, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Fifteenth Finance Commission recommends that the public health expenditure of the Union and States should be increased together to reach 2.5% of GDP (Growth Domestic Product) by 2025.
- Currently, 20% of the population has social and private health insurance, while the remaining 30%, known as the "missing middle," have no health insurance.
- The National Health Policy 2017 (NHP, 2017) aims to achieve universal health coverage and deliver quality healthcare services at affordable costs.



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SUPREME COURT AND DIVORCE ON IRRETRIEVABLE BREAKDOWN

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court ruled that it can exercise its plenary power to do “complete justice” under Article 142(1) of the Constitution to dissolve a marriage on the ground that it had broken down irretrievably, without referring the parties to a family court where they must wait 6-18 months for a decree of divorce by mutual consent.
- The Bench led by Justice S K Kaul held that the court could, in the exercise of this power, waive the mandatory six-month waiting period for divorce under The Hindu Marriage Act (HMA), 1955, and allow the dissolution of the marriage on grounds of irretrievable breakdown even if one of the parties was not willing. (Shilpa Sailesh vs Varun Sreenivasan case).

Current Procedure for Divorce under the Hindu Marriage Act

- Under the Hindu Marriage Act, a couple seeking divorce by mutual consent must wait for at least six months after filing the first motion, for further proceedings in the matter.

Irretrievable Breakdown

- The first and most “obvious” condition is that the court should be fully convinced and satisfied that the marriage is “totally unworkable, emotionally dead and beyond salvation and, therefore, dissolution of marriage is the right solution and the only way forward”.

Implications of the Judgement

- The judgment does not mean people can rush straight to the Supreme Court for a quick divorce. The grant of divorce by the Supreme Court on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage was “not a matter of right, but a discretion which is to be exercised with great care and caution.
- The court also said that the party cannot file a writ petition under Article 32 (or Article 226) of the Constitution of India and seek relief of dissolution of marriage on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage directly from it.



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What is Article 142 of the Constitution?

- Under Subsection 1 of Article 142, the Supreme Court “may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter..., and any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India”.
- The decision to exercise the power under Article 142(1) must be “based on considerations of fundamental general and specific public policy”.
- The fundamental general conditions of public policy refer to the fundamental rights, secularism, federalism, and other basic features of the Constitution; specific public policy was defined by the court to mean “some express pre-eminent prohibition in any substantive law, and not stipulations and requirements to a particular statutory scheme”.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Law Commission of India, in its reports in 1978 and 2009 recommended adding irretrievable breakdown as an additional ground of divorce.
- The Hindu Marriage Act 1955 (HMA) applies to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and anyone who is not a Muslim, Christian, Parsi, or Jew by religion.
- India has a low annual divorce rate of 1.1 per 1,000 people, with only 13 out of every 1,000 marriages resulting in divorce, and men are usually the initiators.



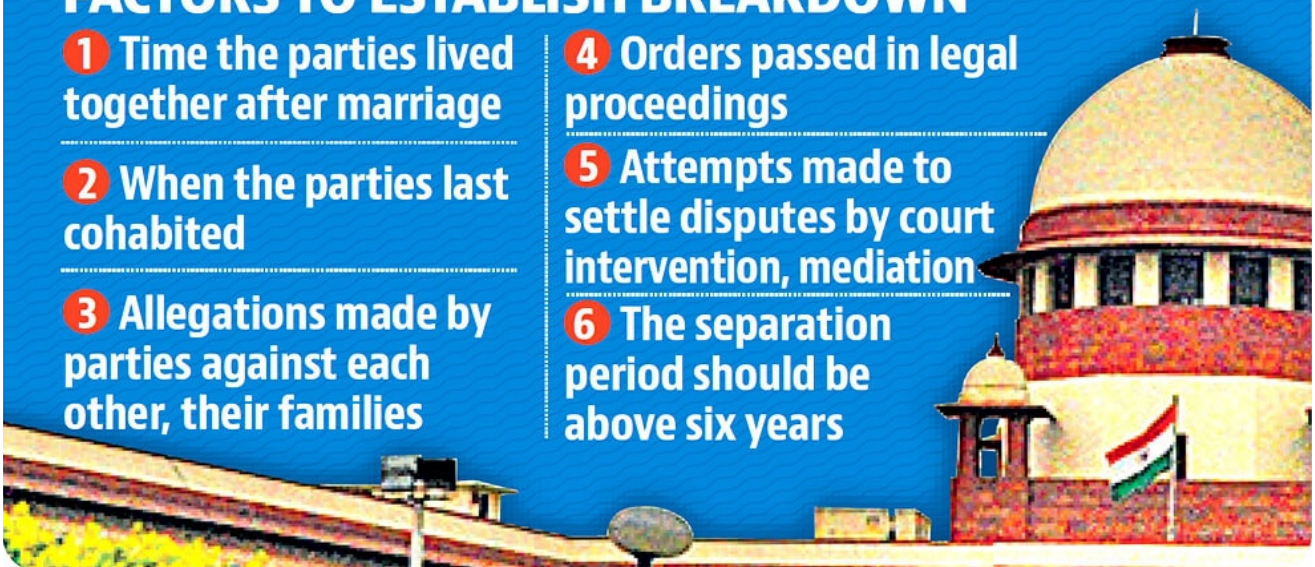
Larger public, personal interest

'IRRETRIEVABLE BREAKDOWN OF MARRIAGE'

“Court should be fully convinced... the marriage is totally unworkable, emotionally dead and beyond salvation and, thus, dissolution of marriage is... the only way forward. That the marriage has irretrievably broken down is to be factually determined and firmly established.”

FACTORS TO ESTABLISH BREAKDOWN

- 1 Time the parties lived together after marriage
- 2 When the parties last cohabited
- 3 Allegations made by parties against each other, their families
- 4 Orders passed in legal proceedings
- 5 Attempts made to settle disputes by court intervention, mediation
- 6 The separation period should be above six years



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ACTION AGAINST ONLINE BETTING AND GAMBLING PLATFORMS

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Central Government has asked States to take action against online betting and gambling platforms using outdoor media, such as hoardings and posters, to promote their websites and applications.

Key Points

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had noticed that advertisements of online betting websites and platforms were being published or broadcast through print, electronic and online media.
- As per Ministry, such advertisements were prima facie observed to be misleading and not in strict conformity with the Consumer Protection Act. Since betting and gambling are illegal in most parts of the country, they pose a financial and social economic risk for consumers, especially youth and children.
- In order to curb the practice of surrogate advertising of online betting and gambling, the Ministry had also issued two advisories on October 3, 2022, asking private satellite television channels, digital news publishers and OTT (over-the-top or streaming) platforms to refrain from broadcasting or publishing advertisements of such platforms and/or any of their surrogate products.

What is Online Gambling?

- Online gambling generally means the use of the internet to place bets and earn money. It is similar to playing in a casino, but the difference is that it is held in a virtual environment.
- This includes playing of poker, sport games, casino games, etc. Users can place bets through online payment modes such as credit, debit card, internet banking or UPI (most preferred). After placing a bet, wins or losses are paid or collected accordingly.

Difference Between Online Gaming and Gambling

- There is a very thin line between online gaming and online gambling. Under the law, the distinction between gaming and gambling depends on the element of skill involved. If an online activity does not require skill, it will be considered gambling rather than gaming.
- Most of online games are free and do not require any money to play, whereas online gambling requires users to bet (pay) first and then play the game.



More Power to the Consumer!



Consumer Protection Act, 2019 Comes into Force (1/4)



Consumer Protection Act, 2019 replaced the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 to provide timely administration & settlement of consumers' dispute



The new Act empowers & protect the rights of consumers through various notified rules & provisions related to:

- Consumer Protection Councils
- Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions
- Mediation
- Product Liability
- Rules on e-commerce and direct selling
- Penalty for adulterant & spurious goods

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REPORT ON CURRENCY & FINANCE 2022-2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Department of Economic and Policy Research (DEPR) released a report titled 'Report on Currency & Finance 2022-23' to estimate the cumulative total expenditure for adapting to climate change in India.

About the Report

- The theme of the report is "Towards a Greener Cleaner India".
- The report covers four major dimensions of climate change to assess future challenges to sustainable high growth in India, the unprecedented scale and pace of climate change; its macroeconomic effects; implications for financial stability; and policy options to mitigate climate risks.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Without any policy action, India's carbon dioxide emission levels will rise from 2.7 gigatonnes in 2021 to 3.9 gigatonnes by 2030.
- India committed to net zero by 2070 at the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- India also has committed to reduce its Carbon intensity of its economy by 45% by 2030.
- According to the NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand are lagging behind in terms of overall scores among larger states, While Gujarat, followed by Punjab, is the best performer due to its electricity distribution companies faring well regarding infrastructure and financial position.
- Among the smaller states and Union Territories, Chandigarh, Goa, and Delhi are the highest performers, while a lot needs to be done in Lakshadweep and Arunachal Pradesh.

Key Findings

- As per the report, India's cumulative expenditure for adapting to climate change is estimated to be Rs 85.6 lakh crore (at 2011-12 prices) by 2030.
- India's goal of achieving the net zero target by 2070 would require an accelerated reduction in the energy intensity of GDP by about 5% annually and a significant improvement in its energy-mix in favour of renewables to about 80% by 2070-71.
- India's green financing requirement is estimated to be at least 2.5% of GDP annually till 2030 to address the infrastructure gap caused by climate events, and the financial system may have to mobilise adequate resources and also reallocate current resources to contribute effectively to the country's net-zero target.
- Different sectors of the economy have different emission intensities, it is advisable to not have a uniform climate mitigation strategy across sectors.
- Results of a climate stress test reveal that public sector banks (PSBs) may be more vulnerable than private sector banks. Globally, however, the measurement of climate-related financial risks remains a work in progress.
- A balanced policy intervention with progress ensured across all policy levers would enable India to achieve its green transition targets by 2030, making the net zero goal by 2070 attainable.



RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

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Annex I.1: Major Global Interventions for Climate Change

Year	Global Intervention	Issues Addressed/Initiatives
1972	Stockholm International Summit	Led to the creation of UNEP
1979	World Climate Conference I	Endorsed plans to establish a World Climate Programme (WCP) under WMO, UNEP, and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), focusing on climate data, climate applications, climate research and climate impact study programmes
1987	Montreal Protocol	Focused on global reduction of production of substances damaging the ozone layer, such as CFCs
1988	Creation of IPCC	Established for inter-governmental assessment of the science, impacts and response options for climate change
1992	UN Conference on Environment and Development or the “Earth Summit”	Adoption of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A plan of action at the global, national and local levels to address human impact on the environment (UN, 1992) (b) Rio Declaration on Environment and Development aimed at working towards international agreements to “protect the integrity of the global environmental and developmental system”
1992	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	Establishment of Conference of the Parties (COP) for international discussions on stabilisation of GHG concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system
1995	First Meeting of UNFCCC COP (COP1)	Aimed at an annual review of the Convention and to take decisions to promote its implementation
2005	Kyoto Protocol	The first legally binding climate treaty that required developed countries to reduce emissions by an average of 5 per cent below the 1990-levels over 2008-2012
2009	Copenhagen Accord	Agreement to reduce global emissions to hold the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius (UN, 1992)





THE CLIMATE STRIKES BACK

Year	Global Intervention	Issues Addressed/Initiatives
2016	Paris Agreement	<p>The Agreement focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reduction of GHG emissions to limit the global temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius and further to 1.5 degrees Celsius; b) Provision of financing to developing countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation
2021	COP26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Phase down of coal power and phaseout of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies; b) Delivering on climate finance pledge of US\$ 100 billion by developed countries; c) Launching “Glasgow dialogue” to address loss and damage associated with climate change
2022	COP27	<p>Reaffirming the commitments of global average temperature reduction, it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Marked a breakthrough agreement on “Loss and Damage” fund including damage to crops, homes or infrastructure, human health, etc.; b) Urged countries to integrate water into their adaptation efforts

Source: Authors' compilation.





BAN ON DIESEL VEHICLES IN INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- A panel formed by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has recommended a ban on the use of diesel-powered four-wheel vehicles by 2027 in cities with a population of more than 1 million, and instead transition to electric and gas-fuelled vehicles.
- The Energy Transition Advisory Committee, headed by former petroleum secretary Tarun Kapoor, has also recommended that city transport should be a mix of Metro trains and electric buses by 2030.

Key Points

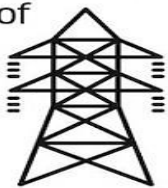
- The panel's recommendations come in the wake of the government's stated aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to produce 40% of its electricity from renewables as part of its 2070 net zero goal.
- Diesel currently accounts for about 40% of India's petroleum products consumption, according to estimates by the Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell.
- The higher compression ratio of diesel engines means there are increased emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx), which is one of the main drawbacks of diesel engines versus petrol.
- The government's decision to leapfrog directly from BS-IV to BS-VI is the reason carmakers cite for the unviability of retaining diesel in their portfolio. For diesel vehicles, the upgradation from BS-IV to BS-VI is more complicated and entails higher costs.
- The panels said new registrations of only electric-powered city delivery vehicles should be allowed from 2024 and suggested for higher use of railways and gas-powered trucks for the movement of cargo. The railway network is expected to be fully electric in two to three years.
- The panel said India should consider building underground gas storage, equivalent to two months' demand as demand is expected to rise at compound average growth rate of 9.78% between 2020 and 2050. It suggested the use of depleted oil and gas fields, salt caverns and aquifers for building gas storage with the participation of foreign gas-producing companies.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India aims to raise the share of gas in its energy mix to 15% by 2030 from 6.2% now.
- Petrol and diesel demand in India is expected to peak in 2040 and decline post that due to electrification of vehicles.
- The level of ethanol blending in petrol in India has reached 9.99%. The target for 20% ethanol blending in petrol (also called E20) has been advanced to 2025 from 2030.
- Under FAME Scheme, the government of India aims to achieve 30% EV penetration by 2030.

Clean Energy

By 2035, share of grid power in India's energy use must rise to **40%** from current **18%**



Set up natural gas storage facilities to meet up to two months of national consumption



From 2024, all new registrations for city delivery vehicles to be only electric

Add no diesel city buses in urban areas

In 15 years, the share of railways should rise to 50% in national freight from 23% now



Blend LPG with alternatives such as compressed biogas & hydrogen



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'POSHAN BHI, PADHAI BHI' PROGRAMME

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Ministry for Women and Child Development launched the Centre's flagship programme, 'Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi', which will focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at anganwadis across the country.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Close to 13.9 lakh operational Anganwadi centres across the country are providing supplementary nutrition and early care and education to around 8 crore beneficiary children under the age of 6 years, making it the largest public provisioning of such services in the world.
- National Education Policy, 2020 (NEP 2020) aim to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) to 100% in preschool to secondary level by 2030 whereas GER in Higher Education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035.
- The two earlier education policies were brought in 1968 and 1986.
- Under NEP 2020, the current 10+2 system will be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years, respectively.

Key Points

- The ECCE is an important component of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) and envisaged under the National Education Policy.
- The ministry has allocated Rs 600 crore for the training of anganwadi workers to implement the ECCE.
- The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) has been roped in for the training of Anganwadi workers.
- The objective of the program is to transform anganwadi centers into not just nutrition hubs but also education-imparting centers.
- The ECCE program will prioritize education in the mother tongue, aligning with the principles of the New Education Policy.
- Through the changes introduced by the "Poshan bhi, Padhai bhi" ECCE policy, every child would be provided with at least two hours of high-quality preschool instruction daily that will be delivered in the mother-tongue and aligned through state curricula to the National Curriculum Framework.

POSHAN BHI PADHAI BHI



"This Poshan Maah
celebrate Anganwadis
as centres of
learning"



#PoshanBhiPadhaiBhi



#PoshanMaah2022

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ONE YEAR OF INDIA-UAE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (CEPA)

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) completed one year of implementation.

Key Achievements

- During the past one year, CEPA has made a significant impact on India's Bilateral Trade with the UAE and particularly India's Exports to the UAE (Oil and Non-Oil).
- The Bilateral Trade between India and the UAE has touched historic highs during FY 2022-23. Trade has increased from US\$ 72.9 billion (Apr 21-Mar 2022) to US\$ 84.5 billion (Apr 22-Mar 2023).
- Exports from India to the UAE have also registered a multiyear high. During April-March period, Indian exports to the UAE increased from US\$ 28 bn to US\$ 31.3 bn.
- Some of the key sectors, including labour-intensive sectors, that have witnessed significant export growth on account of the CEPA include: Mineral Fuels; Electrical Machinery (particularly telephone equipment); Gems & Jewellery; Automobiles (Transport vehicles segment); Essential Oils/Perfumes/Cosmetics (Beauty/Skin care products); Other Machinery; Cereals (Rice); Coffee/Tea/Spices; Other Agri Products; and Chemical Products.
- Under the India-UAE CEPA in the Goods Domain, the UAE eliminated duties on 97.4% of its tariff lines corresponding to 99% of imports from India.
- In the Services Domain, broader and deeper

DID YOU KNOW?

- UAE is India's 3rd largest trading partner (after US, China).
- UAE is the 7th largest investor in India with cumulative FDI inflows of US\$ 15,179 million from April 2000 – September 2022.
- India has joined Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) to accelerate investment and support for climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation.
- AIM4C was launched by the US and the UAE in November 2021.

About CEPA

- CEPA, free trade agreement, is a full and deep Agreement signed on February 18 2022 and entered into force on May 1 2022.
- CEPA is expected to increase the total value of bilateral trade in goods to over US\$100 billion and trade in services to over US\$ 15 billion within five years.
- The India-UAE CEPA is a landmark free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries. It covers trade in goods, services, investment, and other areas of economic cooperation.



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INDIA TO JOIN INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION IN CIVIL AVIATION

WHY IN NEWS?

- Recently, the Ministry of Civil Aviation announced that India will start participating in the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) and the Long-Term Aspirational Goals (LTAG) in 2027.

Key Points

- The ICAO has been tasked to reduce carbon emissions from international civil aviation as one of its focus areas. In order to mitigate carbon emissions from aviation and its impact on climate change, the global body has adopted several key aspirational goals.
- Among them are a two per cent annual fuel efficiency improvement through 2050, carbon neutral growth and net zero by 2050. The ICAO has clubbed them under CORSIA and LTAG.
- As per the Ministry, Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) will be implemented in three phases. It will enable airlines of developing countries like India to get time to grow more so that they do not face any adverse financial consequences due to CORSIA.
- Financial implications due to offsetting have to be borne by individual airlines, depending upon their international operations. CORSIA is applicable only to flights originating from one country to another.
- CORSIA is a global scheme established by the ICAO to address the growth in CO₂ emissions from international aviation.
- It aims to stabilise net CO₂ emissions at 2020 levels through a combination of measures, including carbon offsetting, carbon credits, and sustainable aviation fuel.
- CORSIA is applicable only to flights originating from one country to another.
- Long-Term Aspirational Goals (LTAG) was adopted in the 41st ICAO Assembly for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 in support of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement's temperature goal.

About ICAO

- ICAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations which is funded and directed by 193 national governments to promote safe, secure, and efficient air transportation around the world.
- ICAO was created in 1944 as per the Chicago Convention.
- ICAO develops policies and Standards, undertakes compliance audits, performs studies and analyses, provides assistance and builds aviation capacity through many other activities and the cooperation of its Member States and stakeholders.

DID YOU KNOW?

- India committed to net zero by 2070 at the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- India also has committed to reduce its Carbon intensity of its economy by 45% by 2030.
- National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016 includes a goal of developing a sustainable aviation framework that promotes the use of alternative fuels, energy-efficient aircraft, and infrastructure, among others.
- Tata-SIA airline Vistara became the first Indian carrier to operate a commercial domestic flight on a wide-body aircraft using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).
- To research, develop, and deploy sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs), Tata airlines (Air India, AirAsia India, and Vistara) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - Indian Institute of Petroleum. The focus of the partnership is the exploration of Single Reactor HEFA Technology for Drop-in liquid Sustainable Aviation and Automotive Fuel (DILSAAF).
- There are currently 148 airports in India, and it is the third-largest domestic market in the world in terms of seat capacity.



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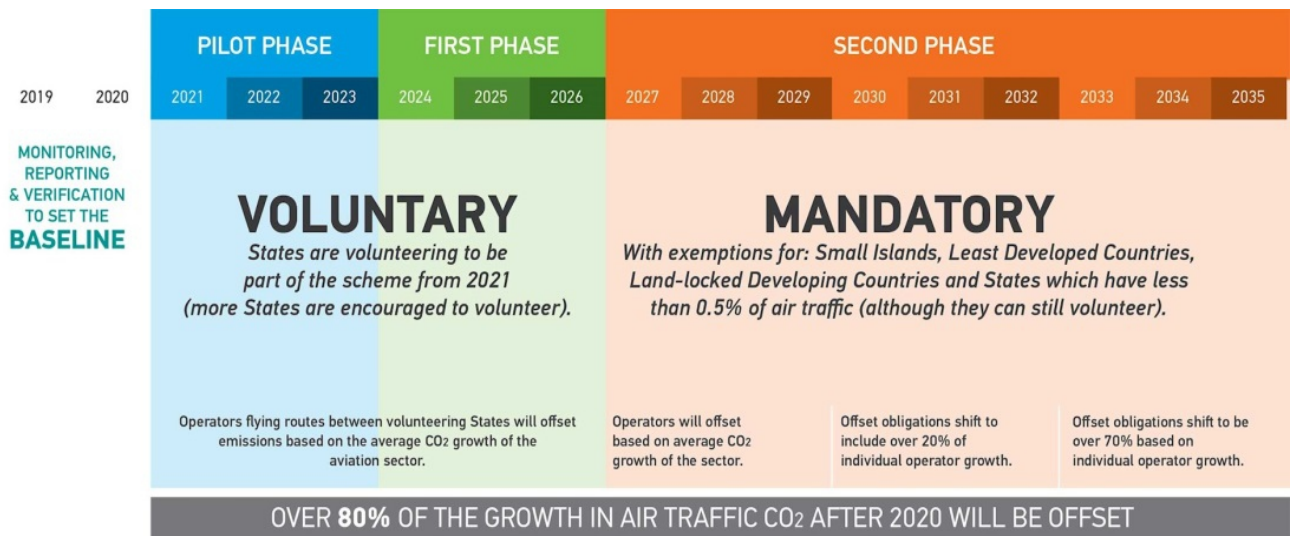


3 PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION



PILOT PHASE 2021 – 2023	FIRST PHASE 2024 – 2026	SECOND PHASE 2027 – 2035
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- Participation of States in the pilot phase (2021 to 2023) and the first phase (2024 to 2026) is voluntary.
- For the second phase from 2027, all States with an individual share of international aviation activity in year 2018 above 0.5% of total activity or whose cumulative share reaches 90% of total activity, are included. Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States and Landlocked Developing Countries are exempt unless they volunteer to participate.



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WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- In the 2023 edition of the World Press Freedom Index, India has slipped 11 places to the 161st rank out of 180 countries.

Key Findings

- Norway, Ireland and Denmark occupied the top three positions in press freedom, while Vietnam, China and North Korea constituted the bottom three.
- Among its neighbours, India is ranked below Pakistan (150th), Afghanistan (152nd), Sri Lanka (135th) and Nepal (95th). It fares better than Bangladesh (163rd) and China (179th).
- The situation has gone from 'problematic' to 'very bad' in three other countries - Tajikistan (down 1 at 153rd), India (down 11 at 161st) and Turkey (down 16 at 165th).
- The reasons behind the fall in ranking of India is the increased violence against journalists and a politically partisan media.
- The other phenomenon that dangerously restricts the free flow of information is the acquisition of media outlets by oligarchs who maintain close ties with political leaders.

About Index

- The Index has been published every year since 2002 by Reporters Without Borders.
- Reporters Without Borders or Reporters Sans Frontiers (in French) is a global media watchdog headquartered in Paris, France.
- It evaluates press freedom in countries on the basis of five indicators – political, economic, legislative, social and security.

OVERALL RANKING

161/180

India's
position in '22

Where India
stands now

150/180

HOW NEIGHBOURS FARE

Bhutan – **90**

Sri Lanka – **135**

Pakistan – **150**

Afghanistan – **152**

Bangladesh – **163**

IN SECURITY INDICATOR

172/180

Only **China, Mexico, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, Ukraine & Myanmar** below India

World Press Freedom Day

- World Press Freedom Day is celebrated every year on May 3 to raise awareness about the state of press freedom globally as well the responsibilities and perils of the job.
- The Windhoek Declaration was adopted on May 3, the last day of the seminar. It consisted of 19 principles related to "independent, pluralistic, and free press". Later, in 1993, May 3 was proclaimed as World Press Freedom Day by the UN.
- The Declaration builds on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which relates to the right to freedom of opinion and expression. According to the Windhoek Declaration, a free press is essential for democracy as well as economic development.
- 2023 marks the 30th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day.
- The theme for 2023 is "Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of Expression as a Driver for All Other Human Rights".



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INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Government of India rejected a US Commission on International Religious Freedom's (USCIRF) report – "International Religious Freedom Report 2023", as "biased" and "motivated".

Key Findings of the Report

- The report highlighted that the Indian government at the national, state, and local levels promoted and enforced religiously discriminatory policies, including laws targeting religious conversion, interfaith relationships, the wearing of hijabs, and cow slaughter, which negatively impact Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and Adivasis (indigenous peoples and scheduled tribes).
- It also said that the Indian government also continued to suppress critical voices — particularly religious minorities and those advocating on their behalf — including through surveillance, harassment, demolition of property, and detention under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and by targeting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).
- It has criticised the US State Department for not having designated India as a Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) and has called for sanctions on Indian government agencies and officials.
- USCIRF has been recommending India's designation as a country of particular concern since 2020, but it has not been accepted by the US government so far.

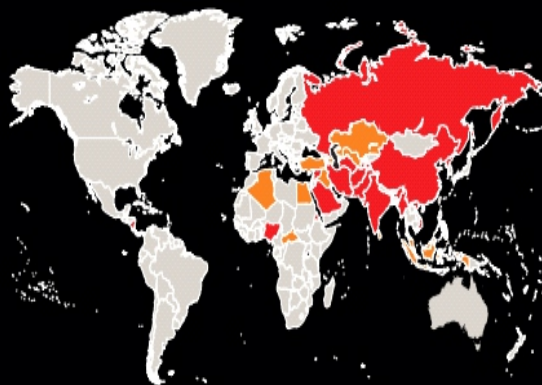
Key Recommendations

- USCIRF recommended that the State Department should -
- Redesignate countries like Burma, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as CPCs.
- Also, designate five additional countries, Afghanistan, India, Nigeria, Syria, and Vietnam as CPCs.
- Maintain on the Special Watch List (SWL): Algeria and the Central African Republic (CAR);
- Include on the SWL: Azerbaijan, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Uzbekistan;
- Redesignate as Entities of Particular Concern (EPCs): Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the Houthis, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP also referred to as ISIS-West Africa), and Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM).

DID YOU KNOW?

- USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan US federal government commission and acts as an advisory body to the US Congress. It is Headquartered in Washington, DC.
- Freedom of religion in India is a fundamental right guaranteed by Articles 25-28 of the Constitution of India.
- Articles 29 and 30 of the Indian Constitution deal with the protection of the interests of minorities.

2023 USCIRF RECOMMENDATIONS



■ COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN

Afghanistan	India	Pakistan	Turkmenistan
Burma	Iran	Russia	Vietnam
China	Nicaragua	Saudi Arabia	
Cuba	Nigeria	Syria	
Eritrea	North Korea	Tajikistan	

■ SPECIAL WATCH LIST COUNTRIES

Algeria	Egypt	Kazakhstan	Turkey
Azerbaijan	Indonesia	Malaysia	Uzbekistan
Central African Republic	Iraq	Sri Lanka	

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ARAB LEAGUE REINSTATED THE MEMBERSHIP OF SYRIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- On May 7, the Arab League voted to reinstate Syria's membership after its suspension more than 10 years ago, underlining the thawing relations between Damascus and other Arab countries.

Background

- Syria was ousted from the Arab League in 2011 following President Bashar al-Assad's brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protests, which led to the ongoing civil war in the country.
- The conflict has since killed around half of a million people and displaced about 23 million.

About Arab League

- The Arab League, formally known as the League of Arab States, was established in 1945 with initially just six nations: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.
- Currently, it has 22 member states. These are - Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.
- Headquarters - Cairo, Egypt

Reasons behind the Restoration of Syria's Membership

- The Arab League's decision is the culmination of Assad's diplomatic efforts to return to the fold, which gained momentum after this February's massive earthquake in Turkey and Syria.
- The devastating disaster that killed thousands helped the president rebuild ties, seeking humanitarian aid, with rival Arab countries and gain their support while pushing for an end or ease of sanctions imposed on Syria by the Western nations.
- Syria has received a favourable response from several Arab nations like Egypt and Oman, not just because they wanted to help the earthquake victims but these countries have realised they need to end Damascus' isolation for the stability of West Asia.
- Moreover, they want some sort of repatriation of refugees back into Syria and curb the trade of captagon, a highly addictive amphetamine produced in the country. According to the reports, nations such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan are facing a big addiction problem due to Syria's sprawling multi-billion dollar drug industry.



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PETERSBERG DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2023

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Petersberg Dialogue on Climate Change was held in Berlin from May 2-3, 2023.
- It was hosted by Germany and the United Arab Emirates, which is hosting the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Key Highlights

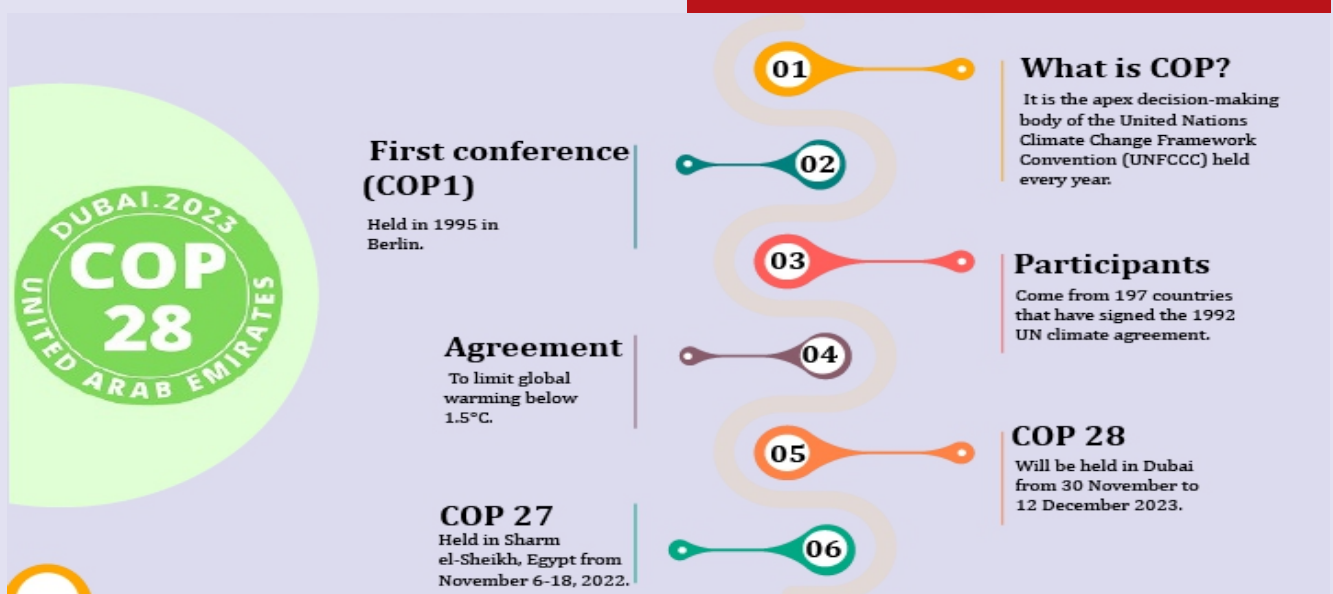
- The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres emphasised the need for “cleaning up our economies — breaking our fossil fuel addiction and driving decarbonisation in every sector” to achieve a 1.5 degree global warming pathway.
- German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C, the world needs to make sharp cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions.
- COP28 President-Designate Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber called on meeting participants to ramp up renewable energy capacity building. He called for a tripling of renewable energy capacity by 2030 followed by a doubling in 2040.
- The developed countries are “on a good track” to deliver the USD 100 billion per year they had promised to mobilize by 2020 during COP15 in 2009.
- However, a recent estimate pegs climate finance needs at 1 trillion USD annually by 2030 for emerging markets alone, highlighting the urgent need for financial reparations.

Global Stocktake

- 2023 is the year for the Global Stocktake, which is essentially a periodic review of global climate action which aims to assess whether current efforts will enable us to reach the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement.
- This is the first Global Stocktake year since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 and the report has been underway for the past two years. It is set to be released in September of 2023.
- The stocktake will help the world determine whether it needs to do more — and how much more.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Petersberg Climate Dialogue was launched in 2010 by former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and brings together selected states on an annual basis to prepare the ground for successful negotiations at the UNFCCC climate change conferences.
- The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27), was held in 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.
- The 2023 UN Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27) will convene in 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).



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DEMAND OF MEITEI TRIBE FOR ST STATUS

WHY IN NEWS?

- Violent clashes broke out at various places in Manipur during the course of a 'Tribal Solidarity March' by the All Tribal Students' Union of Manipur (ATSUM) to oppose the longstanding demand that the Meitei community be included in the list of the state's Scheduled Tribes (ST), which received a boost from an order of the Manipur High Court last month.

Major Communities in Manipur

- The Meiteis are the largest community in Manipur. There are 34 recognised tribes, which are broadly classified as 'Any Kuki Tribes' and 'Any Naga Tribes'.
- The central valley in the state accounts for about 10% of the landmass of Manipur, and is home primarily to the Meitei and Meitei Pangals, who constitute roughly 64.6% of the state's population.
- The remaining 90% of the state's geographical area comprises hills surrounding the valley, which are home to the recognised tribes, making up about 35.4% of the state's population.

Why does the Meitei Community want ST Status?


- There has been an organised push in support of this demand for at least since 2012, led by the Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur (STDCM).
- In various pleas to the state and central governments, the STDCM has stated that as a result of being left out of the ST list, "the community has been victimised without any constitutional safeguards to date.
- The Meitein/Meetei have been gradually marginalised in their ancestral land. Their population, which was 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951, has now been reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data".

Why are tribal groups opposing this order?

- The demand for ST status for the Meitei community has long been opposed by the state's tribal groups.
- One of the reasons cited for the opposition is the dominance of the Meiteis, both in population and in political representation, since 40 out of 60 Assembly constituencies of the state are in the valley.
- Other arguments against the demand have been that the Manipuri language of the Meiteis is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and that sections of the Meitei community — which is predominantly Hindu — are already classified under Scheduled Castes (SC) or Other Backward Classes (OBC), and have access to the opportunities associated with that status.

Manipur's ethnic faultlines: Kuki-Meitei divide & recent unrest

There are 16 districts in Manipur, but the state is commonly thought of as divided into 'valley' and 'hill' districts.



In these hill areas, which comprise the bulk of Manipur's geographical area, live 15 Naga tribes and the Chin-Kuki-Mizo-Zomi group.

Imphal (East and West)

Kukis and Nagas point out that tribal areas are 90% of state's geographical area, but the bulk of its budget and development work is focused on the Meitei-dominated Imphal valley.

The Manipur valley is encircled by skirts of low hills that spread into Nagaland and Mizoram.

While tribals can buy land in the valley, Meiteis are prohibited from buying land in the hills

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**CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE
FROM INDIA AND THE WORLD**

QUICK FACTS



1. The Government of India is in the process of bringing in a **star rating system for water fixtures** similar to the ratings of electrical appliances. The new rating system would have **3, 4 and 5-star water fixtures based on their water efficiency**, and this rating system would come under one umbrella called Bharat Tap.
2. Centre of Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES), a Delhi-based laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) designed and developed a **Vertical Shaft based Underground Ammunition Storage Facility**. It enables upward vertical dissipation of blast effects, considerably reducing the blast effect on surrounding utilities. The instrumented blast trial was carried out in the presence of the Armed Forces by detonating 5,000 kgs of TNT in one of the chambers of the underground facility.
3. Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of **'ADC-150' from IL 38SD aircraft**. 'ADC-150' is an indigenously designed and developed Air Droppable Container with 150 kg payload capacity. The trial was conducted to enhance the naval operational logistics capabilities by providing quick response to meet the requirement of critical engineering stores to ships (under distress), which are deployed more than 2,000 kms from the coast. It reduces the requirement of ships to come close to the coast to collect spares and stores.
4. **India's first undersea twin tunnels in south Mumbai** are close to completion. Set to open in November, the 2.07-km tunnels are a part of the Rs 12,721-crore Mumbai Coastal Road Project (MCRP) being built by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). The 10.58-km MCRP links Marine Drive to the Bandra-Worli Sea Link and is just one part of the Coastal Road project. The high-speed coastal road aims to cut down the 45-minute commute from Girgaon to Worli during peak hours to just 10 minutes.
5. At least 11 people were killed and four others are reported unconscious in an **incident of gas leakage** from a local factory unit in **Punjab's Ludhiana** on April 30. Forensic experts have suspected **Hydrogen Sulphide – a neurotoxic gas** – to be responsible for the tragedy. Neurotoxins are poisonous substances which can directly affect the nervous system. Methane, hydrogen sulphide, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide are common neurotoxic gases.
6. A **new low-cost star sensor, StarBerrySense**, developed by astronomers from off-the-shelf components was recently launched by ISRO. "StarBerrySense was mounted on ISRO's PSLV Orbital Experimental Module (POEM), which provides a stable platform for our payload to operate from. POEM is a unique initiative by ISRO that utilizes the spent 4th stage of the PSLV as an orbital platform for carrying out scientific experiments. It is an excellent opportunity to conduct short-term scientific experiments in space.
7. **Karnataka ranked the most 'innovative' State by the National Manufacturing Innovation Survey 2021-2022**. The Survey found that **Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu** had the highest share of innovative firms, while **Odisha, Bihar, and Jharkhand had the lowest share**. The findings are part of the National Manufacturing Innovation Survey (NMIS) 2021-22, a joint study by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), to evaluate the innovation performance of manufacturing firms in the India.
8. A **rare black (pseudo-melanistic) tiger** has been found dead in the **Similipal National Park (STR)** in Mayurbhanj district of **Odisha**. The rare big cats with distinctive dark stripe patterns are Bengal tigers with a gene mutation and are only found in the region. Similipal Tiger Reserve is the only place in the world to house rare black tigers. It was declared one of the nine Tiger Reserves of India in 1973. It is the **second-largest biosphere reserve in Asia** and is listed under the **UNESCO network of biosphere reserves**.
9. The **Centre informed** the Supreme Court on May 3 that it is **willing to form a committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary** to consider administrative measures for addressing "genuine, human concerns" faced by same-sex couples in their daily lives in areas such as banking, insurance, etc, without delving into their plea **for legal recognition of same-sex marriage**.
10. The **network of Organ & Tissues Transplant Organizations at National (NOTTO)** is working on a Transplant Manual as a step-by-step guide for the implementation of Organ Donation and Transplantation Programme in Hospitals and also on a Standard Course for the training of Transplant Coordinators. Four verticals for coordination, IEC, Training and HR/accounts have been created in the NOTTO for better programme implementation.





11. **Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)**, a Central Public Sector Enterprises of the Ministry of Railways, has **been granted Navratna Status**. The company was granted Mini-Ratna status in September 2013. RVNL was incorporated as PSU on January 24, 2003, with the twin objectives of the implementation of projects relating to the creation and augmentation of capacities of rail infrastructure on a fast track basis and raising of extra-budgetary resources for SPV projects.
12. A new **smart gel-based sheet** using **three-dimensional (3D) printing technology** that can self-roll into a tube during surgery to form a nerve conduit could help reduce the complexity of surgeries and aid rapid healing of nerve injuries. The gold standard for the treatment of peripheral nerve injuries is still autografts. Bioresorbable polymer-based conduits are being explored for clinical use as alternatives. But these treatment strategies suffer from several limitations, such as donor site morbidity in the case of autografts and the necessity for sutures that demand highly skilled microsurgeries, and additional complications posed by sutures.
13. National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in association with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) organized the '**River-Cities Alliance (RCA) Global Seminar: Partnership for Building International River-Sensitive Cities**'. The purpose of the RCA Global Seminar was to provide a platform for officials of member cities and international stakeholders to discuss and learn good practices for managing urban rivers.
14. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has **renamed the existing National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) programme** as the **National Programme for Prevention & Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD)** amid widening coverage and expansion. The four major NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs) and diabetes which share four behavioural risk factors – unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, and use of tobacco and alcohol. Further, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has renamed the Comprehensive Primary Healthcare Non-Communicable Disease (CPHC NCD IT) system as the National NCD Portal to cover a wider population for screening and management of non-communicable diseases.
15. The **Ministry of Environment**, Forest and Climate Change in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme/ Convention on Migratory Species (**UNEP/CMS**) had organized a meeting of **Range Countries to strengthen** conservation efforts for migratory birds and their habitats in the **Central Asian Flyway (CAF)** from 2nd to 4th May, 2023 in New Delhi. CMS is an intergovernmental treaty under the UNEP- popularly known as Bonn Convention. It was signed in 1979 and in force since 1983.
16. On April 29, the Advertisement Monitoring Committee at the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (**FSSAI**) **flagged 32 fresh cases of food business operators (FBOs)** making misleading claims and advertisements. They were found to be in contravention of the Food Safety and Standards (Advertisements & Claims) Regulations, 2018. The alleged violators include manufacturers and/or marketers of nutraceutical products, refined oils, pulses, flours, millet products, and ghee. Making deceptive claims or advertisements are punishable **offences under Section-53 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**.
17. The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and the Ministry of Railways jointly signed an MoU with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for '**Station Area Development along Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail**' (**Project-SMART**). Project-SMART envisages to develop of surrounding areas of Mumbai - Ahmedabad High Speed Railway (MAHSR) Stations to enhance accessibility and convenience of commuters & other stakeholders and to promote economic activities in the vicinity of station areas. The MoU was inked for four High-Speed Rail Stations- Sabarmati, Surat in Gujarat and Virar and Thane in Maharashtra; out of 12 stations in-route. Surat, Virar and Thane are Green fields, while Sabarmati is a Brownfield development.
18. According to the recent data of the **Reserve Bank of India**, **it's gold reserves** increased by 34.22 tonne year-on-year to **reach 794.64 tonne at March-end 2023**. While 437.22 tonne of gold is held overseas in safe custody with the Bank of England and the Bank of International Settlements (BIS), 301.10 tonne of gold is held domestically. Forex reserves comprise foreign currency assets, gold, special drawing rights and reserve tranche position in the International Monetary Fund. Although both the US dollar and Euro are intervention currencies and the Foreign Currency Assets (FCA) are maintained in major currencies, the foreign exchange reserves are denominated and expressed in US dollar terms.



19. The **Army** has decided that brigadiers and above rank officers will have a **common uniform from August 1 irrespective of their parent cadre and appointment**. The headgear, shoulder rank badges, gorget patches, belt and shoes of senior officers will be standardized as part of the decision. In the Indian Army, brigadiers and above officers are those who have already commanded units, battalions and are mostly posted at headquarters or establishments where officers from all arms and services work and function together. The sources said a standard uniform will ensure a common identity for all senior-rank officers, while reflecting the true ethos of the Indian Army. Different types of uniform and accoutrements have specific association to respective arms, regiments and services in the Indian Army.
20. A **first-of-its-kind analysis** of the **sludge found in Indian sewage treatment plants (STP)**, set up to treat polluted water from the Ganga found that most of it had **“high potential” for use as fertilizer** but required treatment before it could be used unrestricted in farms, or as a potential biofuel. An emerging initiative of the National Mission for Clean Ganga, a flagship programme of the government to establish treatment facilities and prevent pollution of the river, is to derive livelihood opportunities from the river rejuvenation programme. One of the measures under this **'Arth Ganga' (economic value from Ganga)**, is to “monetize” and reuse treated wastewater and sludge.
21. **Three social security (Jan Suraksha) schemes** — Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) — completed **8 years of providing social security cover**. PMJJBY, PMSBY and APY were launched by Prime Minister on **9th May, 2015** from Kolkata, West Bengal. In order to ensure that the people from the unorganized section of the country are financially secure, the Government launched two insurance schemes — PMJJBY and PMSBY; and also introduced APY to cover the exigencies in the old age.
22. The country has achieved yet another major milestone under the **Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin (SBM-G)** with **half of the total villages in the country i.e., 50% villages achieving ODF Plus status under phase II of the Mission**. An ODF Plus village is one which has sustained its Open Defecation Free (ODF) status along with implementing either solid or liquid waste management systems. The top performing states in terms of percentage of ODF Plus villages are - Telangana (100%), Karnataka (99.5%), Tamil Nadu (97.8%) & Uttar Pradesh (95.2%) among the big states and Goa (95.3%) and Sikkim (69.2%) among small states, are the top performer. Among UTs – Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra Nagar Havelli & Daman Diu and Lakshadweep have 100% ODF Plus Model villages.
23. In a significant development a **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed between the **Ministry of Ayush and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** to promote and collaborate on integrative health research. This cooperation will focus on identified areas of national importance in healthcare for promoting high-impact research to generate evidence utilizing modern scientific methods. This MoU will also strengthen research capacity through the training of Ayush researchers.
24. **Three Indian boxers, Deepak Bhoria, Hussamuddin, and Nishant Dev**, have created history by ensuring India's best-ever haul of three medals in the Men's World Boxing Championships held in Tashkent. **Deepak Bhoria (51kg) won silver, Hussamuddin (57kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg) won bronze medals** in the semifinals.
25. To meet the larger vision of achieving the **Zero Carbon Emission Goal**, the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways has launched 'Harit Sagar', the Green Port Guidelines**. Harit Sagar Guidelines - 2023 envisages ecosystem dynamics in port development, operation and maintenance while aligning with the 'Working with Nature' concept and minimizing the impact on biotic components of the harbour ecosystem. Sagar Shreshtha Samman awards were also conferred to major ports for their exceptional achievements in various operational parameters. The award for the best Absolute Performance for the year 2022-23 was conferred to the Deendayal Port, Kandla. The Jawaharlal Nehru Port received an award for achieving a major milestone in Turn Around Time, while Paradip Port got a performance shield on Ship Berth Day Output. The Kamarajar Port got recognized in pre-berthing detention time, while Cochin Port received a performance shield in turn-around time (non-container port).
26. **National Technology Day** is observed every year on **May 11** to mark the anniversary of the Pokhran nuclear tests conducted in 1998. On **May 11, 1998**, India conducted nuclear tests at the Indian Army's Pokhran test range in Rajasthan. After the successful tests, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared India a nuclear state, making it the **sixth country to enter** the elite nuclear club. **The theme for 2023 is “School to Startups- Igniting Young Minds to Innovate”**.

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27. **Sarabjot Singh and T.S. Divya beat World champions Zorana Arunovic and Damir Mikec of Serbia 16-14 to clinch the mixed air pistol gold in the World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan.** It was the second medal for India, following the women's air pistol bronze by Rhythm Sangwan. India was second in the medals table behind China which had one gold and one silver.
28. The **Supreme Court**, in a rather unusual order on May 12, **directed lower courts to decide pending default bail applications** without relying on its own judgment of April 26. A judgment of the Supreme Court is considered the law of the land. Article 141 of the Constitution provides that the law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all courts within India.
29. As a **part of India's G20 Presidency**, the **Youth 20 (Y20) group's Y20 Consultation was held at University of Kashmir** from 10th – 11th May, 2023 to consult the youth of the nation on ideas for a better tomorrow and draft an agenda for action on 'Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making Sustainability a Way of Life', one of the five Y20 themes.
30. **Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh has become the first city in India to adopt the localisation of the United Nations-mandated sustainable development goals (SDG).** It has become the first city in India to adopt voluntary local reviews (VLR) to demonstrate its commitment and capacity to achieving the SDGs. Bhopal's VLR is the result of a collaboration between the Bhopal Municipal Corporation, UN-Habitat and a collective of over 23 local stakeholders to measurably demonstrate the city's aspirations for a sustainable and inclusive urban transformation. **New York City was the first to present its VLR** to the HLPF in 2018, and as of 2021, 33 countries had made 114 VLRs or similar review documents publicly available.
31. The **4th edition of the India-Indonesia Bilateral exercise, Samudra Shakti-23, was held in Indonesia.** INS Kavaratti, an indigenously designed and built ASW Corvette, participated in the exercise. The other exercise between India and Indonesia are Garuda Shakti, a joint military exercise, and India-Indonesia CORPAT, an ordained patrol between the navies of India and Indonesia.



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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

QUICK FACTS



1. **Uganda's parliament** recently passed **one of the world's strictest anti-LGBTQ bills**. The legislation includes the death penalty for certain same-sex acts and a 20-year sentence for "promoting" homosexuality, which activists say could criminalize any advocacy for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer citizens. The bill also includes measures to "rehabilitate" gay people.
2. A **new portal dedicated to leopards** (*Panthera pardus*) was launched by the **Global Leopard Conference (GLC)** on **International Leopard Day (May 3, 2023)** to promote and celebrate leopards worldwide. As per the 'Status of leopards in India, 2018' report released by MoEF&CC, there has been a "60% increase in the population count of leopards in India from 2014 estimates". The 2014 estimates placed the population of leopards at nearly 8,000, which has increased to 12,852. The largest number of leopards have been estimated in **Madhya Pradesh (3,421) followed by Karnataka (1,783) and Maharashtra (1,690)**.
3. **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Maldivian counterpart Mariya Didi** on May 3 laid the foundation stone for the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) Coast Guard 'Ekatha Harbour'. The development of the Coast Guard Harbour and repair facility at Sifavaru is one of the biggest grant-in-aid projects of India.
4. **Niloofer Hamed, Elaheh Mohammadi and Narges Mohammadi have been named as the laureates of the 2023 World Press Freedom Prize**. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization World Press Freedom Prize is named for Guillermo Cano, a Colombian journalist who was assassinated in front of the offices of his newspaper El Espectador in Bogota on December 17, 1986. UNESCO has awarded the prize to coincide with World Press Freedom Day on May 3 since 1997.
5. The **inaugural ASEAN India Maritime Exercise (AIME-2023)** successfully culminated in the **South China Sea on 08 May 2023**. India's indigenously designed and built ships-destroyer INS Delhi & stealth frigate INS Satpura, maritime patrol aircraft P8I and integral helicopters exercised with ASEAN naval ships from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The **harbour phase of the exercise was held in Singapore from 02 – 04 May 2023**.
6. A **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Industrial Research and Development Cooperation** was signed between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (**CSIR**) under the **Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST)** of the Republic of India and the **Directorate of Defense Research and Development (DDR&D)**, under the **Ministry of Defense of the State of Israel**. It aims to work together on research and development projects in various fields such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Quantum and semiconductors, synthetic biology, Sustainable Energy, Healthcare, and Agriculture. They will focus on implementing specific projects in mutually agreeable areas.
7. On April 25, **South Korean** President Yoon Suk Yeol arrived in **the US** to commemorate the 70th anniversary of U.S.-South Korea bilateral relations. A highlight of the visit was the signing of the **"Washington Declaration" as a nuclear deterrence strategy**. It aims to reinforce the strategic partnership between the two countries against regional aggression by North Korea. Prompted by North Korea's successful launch of the Hwasong-8 solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the agreement outlines cooperation towards deterrence, including deploying an American nuclear ballistic submarine in the Korean peninsula, forming a nuclear consultative group, and providing South Korea with intelligence regarding nuclear advancements. However, South Korea has reaffirmed its commitment to the non-proliferation Treaty and would not venture into creating its own nuclear capabilities.
8. **World Pulmonary Hypertension Day** is an annual global event observed on **May 5** to raise awareness of pulmonary hypertension (PH), a severe condition affecting the lungs and heart. The **theme for 2023 is "Together We Are Stronger,"** emphasizing the importance of coming together to raise awareness, support patients and their families, and advocate for increased access to care and treatments. PH is a type of high blood pressure that affects the arteries in the lungs and the right side of the heart.
9. **Cyclone Mocha** made **landfall in Myanmar and Bangladesh**. Cyclone Mocha was a very severe cyclonic storm that formed in the Bay of Bengal on May 10, 2023. The **name - Mocha - proposed by Yemen after the Yemini city Mocha (Mokha) located on the Red sea coast**.





10. The Executive Directors of the **World Bank selected Ajay Banga as the 14th President of the bank** for a five-year term beginning June 2. He became the first-ever Indian-American to head the Washington-based bank and will replace David Malpass. In addition to being the President of the World Bank Group, Banga will also serve as the Chair of the Executive Directors Board of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and as the ex-officio Chair of the Board of Directors of the International Development Association (IDA), International Finance Corporation (IFC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and Administrative Council of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).
11. Recently, **Saudi Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad Bin Salman** hosted a special meeting of the **National Security Advisers (NSAs) of India, the US and the UAE**, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in what is being billed as another important **"Quad" in West Asia**. I2U2 is a new grouping formed by India, Israel, the UAE, and the US. It is also referred to as the West Asian Quad. I2U2 was initially **formed in October 2021** following the **Abraham Accords**. The Abraham Accords normalized relations between Israel and a number of Arab Gulf countries.
12. **India and Myanmar** inaugurated the Sittwe Port in Rakhine State, marking a significant milestone in enhancing bilateral and regional trade. The **Sittwe Port** is part of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, funded by the Indian government. The project envisages highway/road transport from Mizoram to Paletwa in Myanmar, followed by Inland Water Transport (IWT) from Paletwa to Sittwe, and finally maritime shipping from Sittwe to any port in India.
13. **IBM in collaboration with NASA**, unveiled a new geospatial foundation model **designed to convert satellite data into high-resolution maps of floods, fires, and other landscape changes to reveal the planet's past and hint at its future**. This model would be part of **IBM's watsonx.ai**, a nextgen enterprise studio, expected to be generally available in July, for AI builders to train, test, tune, and deploy both traditional machine learning and new-generation AI capabilities.
14. Starting this October, the **European Union (EU)** proposes to introduce a framework for levying a **carbon tax on imports of products that rely on non-green or sub-optimally sustainable processes** and where carbon emissions are deemed to have not been adequately priced. This Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) will begin with an import monitoring mechanism and culminate in the levy of duties as determined from January 2026.
15. After two successful editions in virtual mode, **Startup India**, Department of Promotion for Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce organized the **third edition in the form of first-ever physical Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Startup Forum in New Delhi** recently. The engagement aimed at expanding the startup interactions amongst the SCO Member States, nurturing the spirit of innovation, generating more employment and encouraging young talent to build innovative solutions. SCO was established in 2001. India and Pakistan joined in 2017, and Iran is set to become a permanent member in 2023. Saudi Arabia became the latest observer state of the SCO.
16. The **World Health Organization** declared that **mpox no longer constitutes a global health emergency**, almost exactly a year after the disease formerly known as monkeypox started spreading globally. After the emergency status was lifted for Covid and mpox, there is now just one WHO-declared public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) -- for poliovirus, which was declared in May 2014. The **monkeypox virus -- which causes mpox disease --** is transmitted through close contact with infected humans or animals, as well as via materials such as contaminated sheets. It was first discovered in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
17. **India and Canada held the sixth Ministerial Dialogue on Trade & Investment (MDTI) in Ottawa** on May 8, 2023. The Ministers emphasised the solid foundation of the trade and economic relationship between India and Canada and recognized the significant opportunity to deepen bilateral ties and economic partnership. Canada expressed its support for India as G20 Chair, and the priorities pursued by India in the G20 Trade and Investment Working Group.
18. The **18th session of the UN Forum on Forests was held from 8 to 12 May 2023 at UN Headquarters in New York**. It brought together delegates from around the world to discuss the relationship between sustainable forest management (SFM), energy, and the achievement of the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
19. Speaking at the inaugural UAE Climate Tech summit, **COP28 President Designate Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber called upon the oil and gas industry to phase out methane emissions by 2030 and align in favour of comprehensive net-zero emission plans by or before 2050**. COP28, or the 28th United Nations Climate Change conference is scheduled to be held between November 30 and December 12 in the UAE.





20. A baby in the UK has been created using an IVF procedure with the DNA of three people in a bid to prevent children from inheriting incurable diseases. Known as Mitochondrial donation treatment (MDT), the procedure involves the development of an embryo combining sperms and eggs from the biological parents along with the mitochondria from the donor's eggs. This isn't the first time, a three-parent baby has been born. A US doctor in 2016 is credited with world's first MDT birth after a Jordanian woman carrying mitochondrial mutations that could cause a fatal condition called Leigh syndrome was treated.
21. **World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) was observed on May 13, 2023, with the theme "Water and its importance for Migratory Bird".** World Migratory Bird Day is a global event held twice a year on the second Saturday of May and October. In the run-up to World Environment Day, several mass mobilization activities were organized across India under the Mission LIFE program. **World Environment Day is celebrated on 5th June every year.**



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**ARTS & CULTURE AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
OF CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE**

QUICK FACTS



1. An **unfinished painting** by **Raja Ravi Varma**, who redefined Indian art traditions during the colonial times, will soon be in the public domain. The **painting 'Parsi Lady'**, now owned by the Kilimanoor Palace Trust, was the last painting (unfinished) by the legendary artist. He died on October 2, 1906, inside 'Chithrashala,' the artist's studio at Kilimanoor Palace, leaving the painting unfinished. Ravi Varma was born into the aristocracy at Kilimanoor in the erstwhile Travancore on April 29, 1848.
2. The **Kondh tribe in Odisha's** Nayagarh district celebrated **Bihan Mela, the seed festival**. Preparations begin as soon as farmers have harvested Kharif crops, which include both hybrid and indigenous varieties of paddy, millets, maize and sorghum. Women, who are at the helm of this festival, carefully collect seeds of the indigenous varieties and store them in earthen pots. Then, on a designated day in December, they decorate the pots with red and white motifs, place them in a bamboo basket and carry it on head to the village where the fair is being organized. Along the way, they are accompanied by men beating drums and other traditional instruments.
3. The **Delhi Tourism Department** launched its much-awaited '**haunted walks**' recently, and the first destination is the **Malcha Mahal**. The Tughlaq-era hunting lodge, **built by Feroz Shah Tughlaq in the 14th century**, is situated 1.5 km from the main road, deep inside a forest in Chanakyapuri. It is named after Malcha Marg, which houses the elite of the city, including diplomats, businessmen and authors. Feroz Shah Tughlaq was a Sultan of Delhi from the Tughlaq dynasty who ruled from 1351 to 1388.
4. **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the nation's first Indian Air Force Heritage Centre in Chandigarh's** Sector 18. Spread across 17,000 sqft at the Government Press Building, the heritage centre highlights the IAF's role in various wars. It houses five vintage aircraft and will provide visitors with cockpit exposure and an experience with flight simulators. It also houses the first IAF-made patent aircraft Air Force 'Kanpur-1 Vintage Prototype Aircraft', a single-engine indigenous flying machine designed and built by the late Air Vice Marshal Harjinder Singh in 1958 at Base Repair Depot Kanpur.
5. The **Indian Railways** has taken up the renovation of the **historic Paralakhemundi railway station, one of India's oldest and the first in Odisha's Gajapati district**. However, there are concerns that the 124-year-old station might be demolished to pave the way for new structures. Experts have raised red flags and sought heritage status for the structure.
6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **May 9, 2022, paid tributes to Rabindranath Tagore. Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Mewar king Maharana Pratap on their birth anniversaries**. Remembering Tagore, born in 1861, was the first non-European Nobel Prize laureate in Literature in 1913. Maharana Pratap, born on 9th May 1540 in Kumbhalgarh, Rajasthan, was the 13th King of Mewar. He is known for his valiant efforts in the Battle of Haldighati, fought against the Mughal forces in 1576. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, born on 9th May 1866, was associated with the Moderate Group of the Indian National Congress and played a key role in framing the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909.
7. Recently, the **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) recommended the inclusion of Santiniketan in UNESCO's World Heritage List**. Santiniketan was built by Debendranath Tagore in 1863 and later expanded by his son, Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore. It is also the location of Visva-Bharti University. If Santiniketan's nomination is accepted, it will become India's 41st world heritage site and Bengal's third after Darjeeling Himalayan Railways(1999) and Sundarbans National Park (1987).
8. With the **next Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj scheduled in January 2025**, the **Uttar Pradesh government** is trying to complete the **594-km Ganga Expressway**, one of the largest expressway projects in the country, a year before its deadline so that the road could be thrown open to the public before the mega fair kicks off. The state government is making grand preparations to showcase the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela as a grand event. The expressway straddling 12 districts of the state from Meerut to Prayagraj is being developed on public private partnership (PPP) model at an estimated cost of Rs 36,000 crore.

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TEST ZONE



PASSAGE - 1

The Supreme Court today (May 11) ruled unanimously in favour of the Delhi government on the issue of who controls the bureaucracy in the national capital. The 5-judge constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, held that the legislature has control over bureaucrats in the administration of services, except in areas outside the legislative powers of the National Capital Territory (NCT). There are three areas outside the control of the Delhi government: '[1]', police and land.

The CJ said an ideal conclusion would be that the Delhi government ought to have control over services, subject to the exclusion of subjects which are out of its legislative domain. If services are excluded from its legislative and executive domain, the ministers and the executive, who are charged with formulating policies in the territory of NCTD, would be excluded from controlling the civil service officers who implement such executive decisions, he said.

The question of the regulation of services was a major part of the overall dispute between the elected government in Delhi and the Lieutenant Governor (LG) nominated by the Centre. The legal battle has been protracted, and the verdict of the Supreme Court will have far-reaching implications. Almost five years ago, another Constitution Bench of the court had ruled in favour of the Aam Aadmi Party-led state government in a similar tussle.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: "Supreme Court rules in favour of Delhi Govt in tussle with Centre: Here's what the case was about, Khadija Khan, The Indian Express]

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

A Public order

C Education

B Administrative services

D Health

2. Article 239 AA was inserted in the Constitution to give Special Status to Delhi following the recommendations of the S Balakrishnan Committee that was set up to look into demands for statehood for Delhi. Article 239 AA was inserted through-

A 47th Constitution Amendment Act

C 99th Constitution Amendment Act

B 69th Constitution Amendment Act

D 109th Constitution Amendment Act

3. What is the full-sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court of India?

A 30

C 34

B 32

D 36

4. Apart from Delhi, which Union Territory is provided with a legislative assembly and a Council of Ministers headed by a Chief Minister?

A Ladakh

C Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu

B Chandigarh

D Puducherry

5. Which state/UT launched 'Bal Mitra'- a WhatsApp chatbot service - as a source of authentic information regarding children and their rights?

A Jammu and Kashmir

C Delhi

B Haryana

D Uttar Pradesh

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

Answers

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PASSAGE - 2

The Petersberg Dialogue on Climate Change was held in Berlin from May 2-3, 2023. It was hosted by Germany and [1]. Ministers from 40 countries attended the conference to discuss the way forward towards COP28. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, COP28 President-Designate Sultan Al Jaber and Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley spoke at the inaugural address.

In a video message, Guterres emphasised the need for “cleaning-up our economies — breaking our fossil fuel addiction and driving decarbonisation in every sector” to achieve a 1.5 degree global warming pathway.

Speaking at the inaugural address, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C, the world needs to make sharp cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions. She also initiated discussions around a potential global target for renewables at the next climate conference.

COP28 President-Designate Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber called for a tripling of renewable energy capacity by 2030 followed by a doubling in 2040, but his address focused on reducing fossil fuel 'emissions'. He was tight-lipped about the phaseout of fossil fuels.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: “Some key takeaways from the Petersberg Climate Dialogue”, Ananya Anoop Rao, Down to Earth]

1. Which country's name has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

A United Arab Emirates

B India

C Japan

D Saudi Arabia

2. Which country is going to host the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change later this year?

A Germany

B United Arab Emirates

C Saudi Arabia

D Egypt

3. Which year is the year for the Global Stocktake, which is essentially a periodic review of global climate action under the Paris Agreement?

A 2021

B 2022

C 2023

D 2024

4. The Petersberg Climate Dialogue, an annual high-level political and international forum held before the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP), was initiated by –

A Narendra Modi

B Francois Hollande

C Angela Merkel

D Joe Biden

5. Which country/ international organisation is introducing the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) from October 1, 2023?

A United States

B European Union

C Germany

D BRICS

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

Answers

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PASSAGE - 3

The Manipur government on May 4 issued a shoot-at-sight order in “extreme cases”, as escalating ethnic violence following a tribal solidarity march displaced more than 9,000 people in the State. There was no official confirmation of the number of people killed or injured in the violence, but Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh admitted that “some precious lives were lost”.

Clashes initially broke out during the course of Wednesday's solidarity march, called by the All Tribal Students' Union, Manipur. Scheduled Tribe communities, mostly from the Kuki-Zomi tribal group, are protesting a move to grant a long-standing demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the [1], which makes up the majority of the State's population. On April 19, the Manipur High Court directed the State government to submit its recommendation to include the [1] in the ST list to the Union Tribal Affairs Ministry by May 29.

Admitting “some precious lives were lost”, CM N. Biren Singh appealed to the people to maintain peace and harmony, soon after updating Home Minister Amit Shah on the ground situation. Hundreds of houses, churches, temples, and vehicles were either vandalised or set ablaze across five districts: Imphal, Churachandpur, Bishnupur, Kangpokpi, and Tengnoupal. Curfew remained imposed in some districts, while internet services were suspended for the second successive day.

[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from: “Many killed in Manipur riots; State government issues shoot-at-sight order”, Rahul Karmakar, The Hindu]

1. Which community's name has been replaced with '[1]' in the passage above?

A Nagas

B Kuki

C Meitei

D Abor

2. The language of the Meitei people is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. How many languages are listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution?

A 20

B 21

C 22

D 23

3. The Manipur cabinet has decided to withdraw the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreements signed with insurgent groups Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) with immediate effect. These Suspension of Operations agreements were signed in –

A 2008

B 2012

C 2016

D 2020

4. Which Schedule of the Indian Constitution provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram to safeguard the rights of the tribal population in these states?

A Fifth

B Sixth

C Seventh

D Eighth

5. Which is the sole authority to notify tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes as per the Constitution of India?

A Chief Minister of the concerned state

B Governor of the concerned state

C President of India

D None of the above

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

Answers



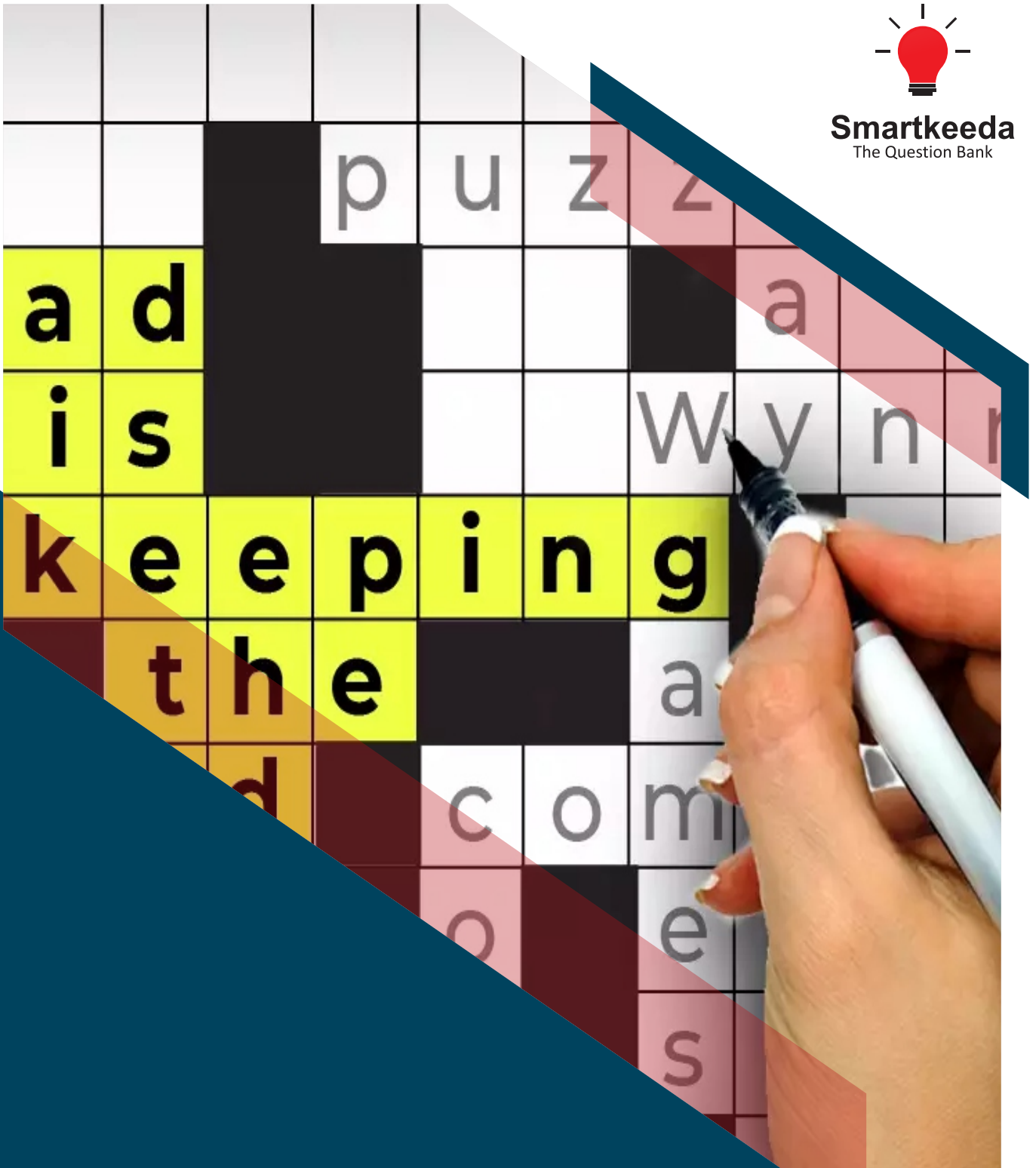
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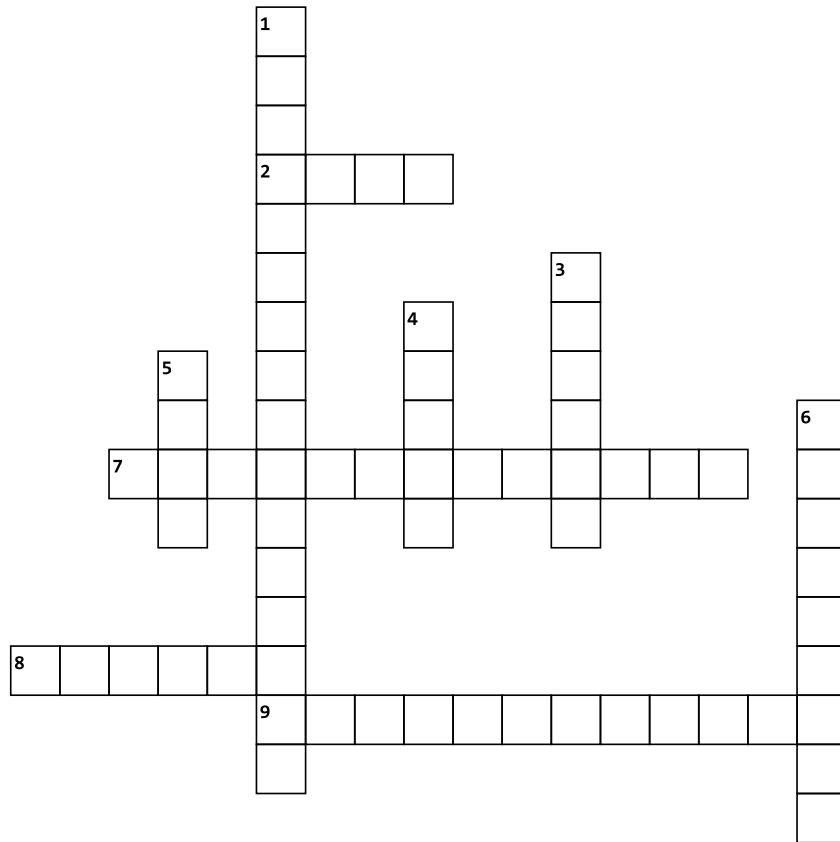
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CROSSWORD CORNER



CROSSWORD - 1



Across

- 2.** CPSE recently recieved Navratna Status
- 7.** Bilateral exercise between India and Indonesia
- 8.** India's first undersea twin tunnels is being built
- 9.** Won a silver medal in the Men's World Boxing Championships in 51kg category

Down

- 1.** Suspected gas behind the incident of gas leak in Ludhiana
- 3.** First city in India to adopt the localisation of the UN -mandated SDGs
- 4.** National Technology Day
- 5.** International Leopard Day
- 6.** Most 'innovative' State by the National Manufacturing Innovation Survey 2021-2022

Answers

9 DeepakBhoria

8 Mumbai

7 Samudrasakti

6 Karnataka

5 3May

4 11May

3 Bhopal

2 RVNL

1 Hydrogensulphide

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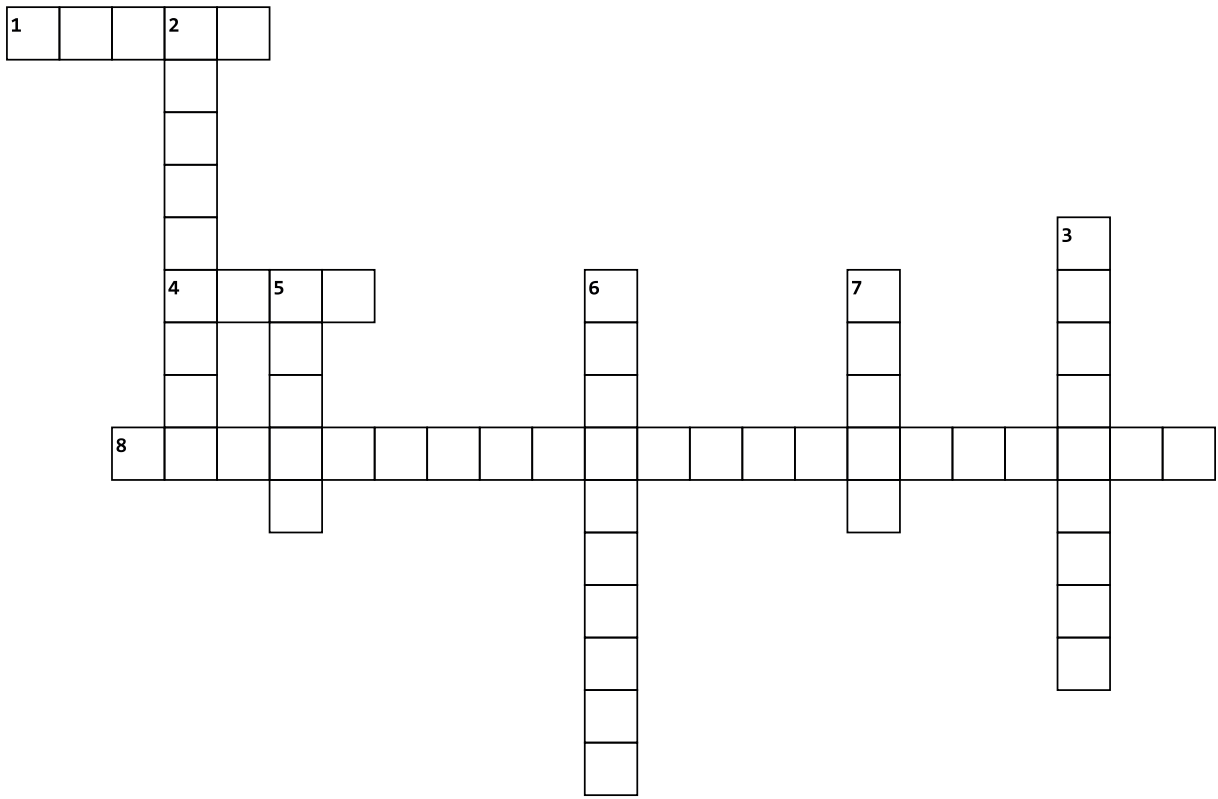
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CROSSWORD - 2



Across

1. World Migratory Bird Day 2023
4. Inaugural ASEAN India Maritime Exercise held in 2023
8. A nuclear deterrence strategy between South Korea and the US

Down

2. 14th President of the World Bank
3. Unfinished painting by Raja Ravi Varma
5. Name was given by Yemen to a tropical cyclone formed in the Bay of Bengal
6. A place where India's first Indian Air Force Heritage Centre was inaugurated
7. COP28, or the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference is scheduled to be held in 2023

Answers

8 Washington Declaration
7 Dubai
6 Chandigarh
5 Mocha

4 AIME
3 Parsi Lady
2 Ajay Banga
1 13 May

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