



2022



YOJNA IAS

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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06/06/2022 TO 12/06/2022

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022



Operation Mahila Suraksha



- Under Operation Mahila Suraksha, Railway Protection Force (RPF) has arrested 7000 persons who were traveling in coaches reserved for women in an unauthorized manner.
- During this, RPF also saved girls/women from being victims of human trafficking under Operation Aahat (AAHT).

About Operation Women's Safety

- All India campaign "Operation Mahila Suraksha" was organized from 3rd to 31st May, 2022 to ensure the safety of women.

Other campaigns like this:

- A pan India initiative "Meri Saheli" is also being organized with an aim to provide better security to the women passengers traveling by trains throughout their journey.
- Indian Railways has launched "Meri Saheli" initiative to focus on safety of women in all

areas, which aims to provide security to women passengers traveling by trains throughout their journey from station to destination.

Railway Protection Force (RPF)

- RPF is a central armed force. Which works under the Indian Railways, Ministry of Railways.
- RPF originated in the year 1882 when various railway companies appointed their own guards to guard the railway property.
- Railway Protection Force was recognized as a statutory force by an Act of Parliament in the year 1957, which was later declared as an Armed Force of the Union of India in the year 1985.
- The RPF Rules were framed in 1959 and the RPF Regulations were published in 1966. In the same year, by enactment of Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1966, some limited powers were given to this force to apprehend and prosecute offenders involved in railway property case.
- Initially, the RPF was primarily entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding railway property but while the provisions of the RPF Act for effective and disciplined force maintenance were found to be lacking, the RPF rules and regulations were also judicially unreasonable.
- Accordingly, the RPF Act, 1957 was amended by the Parliament in the year 1985 to constitute and maintain this force as an Armed Force of the Union.

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Liquid-mirror telescope



- Recently, the Devasthal Observatory complex owned by Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital in Uttarakhand has set up the International Liquid-Mirror Telescope (ILMT).

Key Features of ILMT:

- It has become the world's first Liquid-Mirror Telescope (LMT) to be authorized for astronomy and the first of its kind to be operational anywhere in the world.
- Asteroids, supernovas, space debris and all other celestial bodies will be observed using ILMT from an altitude of 2,450 meters in the Himalayas.
- The first built telescopes either tracked satellites or were deployed for military purposes.
- ILMT will be the third telescope facility to be built at Devasthal.
- Devasthal is one of the original places in the world to get astronomical observations.
- Devasthal Optical Telescope (DOT) and Devasthal Fast Optical Telescope (DFOT) are the other two telescope facilities at Devasthal.
- Full scale scientific operation of ILMT will be started in October 2022.
- It will work with India's largest operational Devasthal Optical Telescope (DOT).
- The countries involved in the development of ILMT are India, Belgium, Canada, Poland and Uzbekistan.

Differentiation of LMT from Conventional Telescope:

- LMT is a stationary telescope, whereas a conventional telescope works in the direction of 'object of interest' in the sky.
- An LMT will survey all possible celestial bodies such as stars, galaxies, supernova explosions, asteroids and even space debris. However, a conventional telescope is able to see only a fraction of the sky at a given time.
- LMT consists of mirrors along with a reflecting liquid (ILMT contains mercury as the reflecting liquid). On the other hand a conventional telescope uses highly polished glass mirrors.
- The ILMT will obtain images of the sky on all nights, whereas conventional telescopes obtain specific objects in the sky only at certain hours.

Importance of ILMT:

- Large amount of data (10-15 GB/night) will be generated. This will be important to the global scientific community.
- It will deploy latest computational tools like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Big Data Analytics for screening, processing and analysis of data.
- Selected data can be used as base data for further focused research using the in-house DOT-mounted spectrograph, near-infrared spectrograph.

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Shreshtha scheme



Shreshtha scheme – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched 'Shreshtha' scheme. This scheme is known as residential education scheme for high school students in the targeted areas.
- The 'Shreshtha' scheme was formulated with the goal of providing quality education and opportunities to the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes category.

Today Current Affairs

‘ Shreshtha ‘ scheme:

- Its basic objective is to uplift the socio-economic status of the scheduled caste people by providing high quality education to the children in the best private residential schools of the country.
- Admission will be provided in class 9 and class 11 of private schools affiliated to CBSE.

Purpose : The Hindu Analysis

- Ensuring easy access to government initiatives and schemes.
- To create a conducive environment for the socio-economic progress and overall development of the Scheduled Castes.
- Collaborating with voluntary groups in the education sector to bridge the gap in areas dominated by the out-of-service Scheduled Castes (SC).
- Enabling deserving Scheduled Caste (SC) students with high quality education so that

they can take advantage of future opportunities.

Eligibility : The Hindu Analysis

- SC students who are studying in class 8th and 10th in the current academic year (2021-22) are eligible to take advantage of the scheme.
- In this, students belonging to the Scheduled Caste community from the marginal income group with an annual income of up to Rs 2.5 lakh are eligible.
- The selection will be done through a transparent mechanism known as National Entrance Test for Excellence (NETS).
- It will be organized by the National Testing Agency (NTA) for admission to class 9th and 11th.

Beneficiary : The Hindu Analysis

- The government aims that under this system about 3000 students of SC category will be admitted in class 9 and class 11 every year.
- The ministry will bear the entire cost of their education and accommodation fee till they complete their class 12th education.

Other related initiatives for SCs:

Babu Jagjivan Ram Hostel Scheme (BJRCY) : The Hindu Analysis

- Social Justice and Empowerment Department is the nodal agency for the implementation of this scheme.
- Implementing agencies in the private sector under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, namely Babu Jagjivan Ram Hostel Scheme (BJRCY) for construction of new hostels, That is, central assistance is provided for expansion of existing hostel facilities for State Governments/Union Territory Administrations/Central State Universities/Non-Government Organizations/Deemed Universities/Scheduled Castes students.

Post Matric Scholarship Schemes for SCs : The Hindu Analysis

- This scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in the year 2006. It is implemented through the state government and union territory administration.
- The Government is committed to enhance its efforts so that the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Castes in Higher Education reaches national standards within a period of 5 years.

Single National Scholarship Scheme : The Hindu Analysis

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been entrusted with the task of implementing the scheme by conducting a qualifying examination.

- Beneficiaries: Students from Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes (OBC), Denotified, Nomadic and Nomadic Tribes and Economically Backward Castes (EBC) categories will be able to take advantage of the National Scholarship.

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Visit of Indian Vice President to Senegal



Visit of Indian Vice President to Senegal – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the Vice President of India visited Senegal and signed three MoUs for cultural exchange, cooperation in youth affairs and visa-free governance.
- Both countries are celebrating 60 years of their diplomatic relations.

Today Current Affairs

Highlights of the trip:

Visa free arrangement:

- The first MoU pertains to visa-free governance for holders of diplomatic and official passports which will strengthen cooperation between the two countries through seamless travel of officials/diplomats.

Cultural Exchange Programs : The Hindu Analysis

- Cultural Exchange Program (CEP) MoU was renewed for the period 2022-26.
- With the renewal of the CEP, more cultural exchanges will be possible, thereby strengthening people-to-people contacts.

Bilateral Cooperation in Youth Affairs : The Hindu Analysis

- Recognizing that both India and Senegal have relatively large youth populations, this MoU will be mutually beneficial for both countries through exchange of information, knowledge, good practices and youth.

Diversification of Business : The Hindu Analysis

- India-Senegal trade has grown by 37% to US\$ 1.5 billion during the last one year despite the COVID-19 pandemic. India called for diversification of trade especially in the areas of agriculture, oil, gas, health, railways, mining, defence, green energy etc.
- Given the large amount of phosphates that India imports from Senegal, Indian companies, especially those manufacturing heavy equipment (such as cranes, bulldozers, etc.), can offer their expertise in this area.
- Upgradation of Entrepreneurship Training & Development Center : The Hindu Analysis
- Phase II of the upgrade of the Center for Entrepreneurship Training and Development (CEDT) in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, has been approved.
- CEDT was established in Dakar in the year 2002 under Indian grant-in-aid and every year around 1000 youths, mainly located in Senegal and 19 other African countries, train in six different disciplines.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation : The Hindu Analysis

- Senegal, being a French speaking country, is not able to take advantage of the various training/capacity building programs under ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) running in English language, so India has decided on 20 years on English training for Senegalese civil servants. A special ITEC course is offered for individuals.

E-Vidya Bharti and e-Arogya Bharti Initiatives : The Hindu Analysis

- Recognizing that many African students come to India for higher studies, India has launched e-Vidya Bharti and e-Arogya Bharati (E-VBAB) initiatives (Tele-education and Tele-medicine) to benefit Senegalese students has announced to cooperate with Senegal to implement.

Issue of detained Indian citizens : The Hindu Analysis

- India sent four Indian nationals, the ship M.V. Urges the Government of Senegal to take prompt action regarding the release of the crew members of Asso-6, who were arrested

in Senegal in June 2021 on charges of alleged drug trafficking, so that they can return to their homes to return to the family.

Permanent UNSC Membership of India : The Hindu Analysis

- Appreciating Senegal's support for India's permanent UNSC membership, India reaffirmed its unwavering support to Africa as enshrined in the Azulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration and underlined the need to rectify the injustice meted out to the African continent.
- The Azulvini Consensus (2005) is a position on international relations and the reform of the United Nations, agreed upon by the African Union.

Non-Aligned Movement : The Hindu Analysis

- India called for re-energizing and energizing the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and making it more responsive to contemporary issues relevant to developing countries.
- India sought Senegal's support for early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) under the United Nations, describing it as important to tackle the menace of cross-border terrorism.

Presidency of African Union : The Hindu Analysis

- India congratulated Senegal on becoming the President of the African Union.

Key points of India-Senegal relations:

Political Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established at the ambassadorial level in 1962 with a resident Indian mission in Dakar.
- The two countries maintain warm and friendly bilateral relations, sharing the values of democracy, development and secularism.
- They are both members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the G-15 and the International Solar Alliance.
- The G-15 was created essentially as an economic forum designed to promote South-South cooperation.

Commercial Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- Major commodities exported from India include textiles, food items, automobiles and pharmaceuticals. The major items imported from Senegal are phosphoric acid and raw cashew nuts.

Development Assistance Program : The Hindu Analysis

- India has expanded the limits of credit to Senegal in areas such as agriculture and irrigation, transport, rural electrification, fisheries, women's poverty alleviation, information technology training and equipment, medicine, railways, etc.
- India supplied 250 e-rickshaws with lithium-ion batteries to Senegal.

Cultural Cooperation : The Hindu Analysis

- Some of the Indian cultural events held in Senegal in the year 2019 include Tiranga 3.0, Senegal, the third edition of the Festival of India in Dakar; various events related to Tiranga Holi, 4th International Day of Yoga and 150th Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti celebrations.
- India also offers 10 ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) scholarships.

Indian Diaspora : The Hindu Analysis

- The number of Indian community here is about 500. Most of them are working for Indian companies, including those executing development projects under lines of credit given by India, and some are running their own businesses

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Artificial Light: Malaria



Artificial Light: Malaria – Today Current Affairs

- A recent study has shown that artificial light can be used as a weapon to fight malaria.

Today Current Affairs

Key point:

- Light plays an important role in the regulation of biological clocks, such as timing of breeding among birds, hunting by lions and sleeping patterns of humans.
- Due to Earth's rotation the time of day and night has been relatively constant, with such regular day-night cycles that life has evolved on the planet. The Hindu Analysis
- The melatonin hormone is a gene that is responsible for regulating the sleep and wake cycles.
- It is found in plants as well as in animals.
- Rapid changes in natural sleep cycles have been observed due to the increased use of artificial light.
- Currently about 80% of the world's population is living under artificially illuminated skies.

Effect of artificial light on malaria : The Hindu Analysis

- Artificial light can change mosquito biology.
- The malaria-carrying mosquito species "Anopheles" is active at night.
- By using artificial light, mosquitoes can be confused at night by producing the same amount of light as day.
- Light Emitting Diode (LED) reduces the rate of bites by the mosquito "Anopheles" for hours.
- Therefore it reduces the rate of bites and transmission of malaria.

Challenges : The Hindu Analysis

- The first challenge is, it is still not clear how artificial light can be used to reduce the risk of malaria infection.
- The effects of artificial light can be demonstrated in a controlled laboratory medium, but using it as an effective carrier control strategy has yielded completely different results.
- In addition, LED lighting can have negative effects on human health, such as disrupting sleep.

Malaria : The Hindu Analysis

- Malaria is a mosquito-borne blood disease caused by Plasmodium parasites. It is mainly found in tropical and sub-tropical regions of Africa, South America and Asia.

- This parasite is transmitted through the bite of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes.
- After entering the human body, the parasites initially multiply within the liver cells, then destroy the red blood cells (RBCs), resulting in the loss of RBCs. The Hindu Analysis
- There are 5 parasitic species that cause malaria infection in humans, of which 2 species – Plasmodium Falciparum and Plasmodium Vivax, are at the highest risk of malaria infection.
- Symptoms of malaria include fever and flu-like symptoms, including chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness.
- Both prevention and treatment of this disease is possible.

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World food safety day



- Every year 7 June is observed as World Food Safety Day.

Highlights of World Food Safety Day:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations jointly facilitate the observance of World Food Safety Day by member states in collaboration with other relevant organizations.
- It was celebrated for the first time in the year 2019 under “The Future of Food Safety” to

strengthen the commitment to enhance food security made in 2019 by the Addis Ababa Conference and the Geneva Forum.

Target:

- To attract attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks, contribute to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, market access, tourism and sustainable development.

2022 Theme:

- Safer food, better health.

Need:

Foodborne Illnesses:

- Unsafe food is a threat to human health and economies with an estimated 600 million cases of foodborne illnesses annually, disproportionately affecting vulnerable and marginalized people, especially women and children, conflict-affected populations and migrants.

Foodborne disease burden:

- An estimated 420000 people worldwide die each year from eating contaminated food and children under the age of 5 have a 40% burden of foodborne illness with 125 000 deaths each year.

Related Initiatives:

Global:

- The Codex Alimentaris or “Food Code” is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice adopted by the Codex Alimentaris Commission.
- The Codex Alimentarius Commission is an intergovernmental body established jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization.
- At present the number of members of this commission is 189 and India is a member of this commission.

India:

State Food Security Index:

- FSSAI has developed State Food Security Index (SFSI) to measure the performance of states on five parameters of food security.
- The parameters include human resources and institutional arrangements, compliance, food testing – infrastructure and monitoring, training and capacity building and consumer empowerment.

Eat Right India Movement:

- It is an initiative of the Government of India and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to transform the food system of the country to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable food for all Indians.
- Eat Right India is aligned to the National Health Policy 2017 with a focus on flagship programs such as Ayushman Bharat, Poshan Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukht Bharat and Swachh Bharat Mission.

Eat Right Awards:

- FSSAI has instituted the 'Eat Right Awards' to recognize the contribution of food companies and individuals in helping citizens make safe and healthy food choices, which will help improve their health and well-being.

Eat Right Fair:

- Organized by FSSAI, it is an activity to motivate citizens to eat right. It is organized to make citizens aware about the health and nutritional benefits of different types of food.

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Rubber industry



- According to the All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA), the \$2 billion non-tire rubber sector has set a target of doubling its exports by the year 2025.
- The share of rubber products in the global market is currently around \$212 billion, which is expected to increase by the year 2025.
- The government should ensure that micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) get the benefits of internationalization under the terms of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- Since MSMEs are very important for India's economy and commerce, India should incorporate FTA provisions to address the specific concerns, demands and constraints that MSMEs may face while doing business in foreign markets.

All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA):

- The All India Rubber Industry Association (AIRIA) is a not-for-profit body for facilitating rubber industry and trade with the objectives of protecting and promoting the interests of the industry.

Key Features of Rubber:

- Natural rubber is a polymer of isoprene, which is an organic compound.
- Rubber is a cohesive elastic solid material derived from the latex of trees found in tropical regions, the most important of which is *Hevea brasiliensis*.
- These provide economic benefits for about 32 years after the rubber trees are planted.

Source:

- Natural rubber is derived from various sources, the most common being the mercury

rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*). It produces latex for many years with its full development.

- Congo rubber is produced from the vines of the *Landolphia* class. These vines could not be grown in the fields, resulting in large-scale exploitation of wild plants in the Congo.
- Dandelion milk also contains latex which can be used for the production of rubber.

Favorable environment for rubber tree:

Soil:

- These trees grow in soil with good drainage system and weather friendly.
- Laterite, alluvial, sedimentary and non-laterite red soils are best for the growth of these trees.

Rainfall and Temperature:

- At least 100 rainy days a year with evenly distributed rainfall and a temperature range of about 20 to 34°C provide favorable conditions for the growth of the *Hevea* rubber tree.
- About 80% humidity, 2000 hours of sunlight and the absence of strong winds are also essential for best results.

Use:

- Rubber is used for a variety of purposes from erasing pencil marks to manufacturing tyres, tubes and a large number of industrial products.
- Natural rubber is preferred over synthetic rubber due to its high tensile strength and vibration resistant properties along with tear resistance.
- This quality makes it more important for the construction and automobile industries.
- The growth of the automobile market in the countries is anticipated to increase the demand for natural rubber production.
- Growth in demand for latex products, such as catheters, gloves and belts, is also one of the factors that could drive the growth of the rubber market.

Production and Distribution:

- According to the Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOStat) for the year 2019, Thailand is the largest producer of rubber in the world, followed by Indonesia, Malaysia, India and China.

Present Status of Rubber Production in India:

- According to FAOStat 2019, India is the fourth largest producer and consumer of rubber in the world.

Consumption:

- Most of the rubber consumption is in the transport sector, followed by the footwear industry.

Export:

- The quantity of natural rubber exported from India during the financial year 2020 was more than 12 thousand metric tonnes. Major countries that import natural rubber from India include Germany, Brazil, USA and Italy.
- Export products include automotive tires and tubes, footwear, medical goods, coats and aprons.

Distribution:

- The first rubber plantation in India was established in the year 1895 on the hill slopes of Kerala.
- Although the cultivation of rubber on a commercial scale was started in the year 1902.
- Kerala is the largest producer of natural rubber in India.
- Major Regions: Kottayam, Kollam, Ernakulam, Kozhikode all districts of this state produce rubber.

Tamil Nadu:

- Nilgiris, Madurai, Kanyakumari, Coimbatore and Salem are the main rubber producing districts of Tamil Nadu.

Karnataka:

- Chikmagalur and Kodagu are the main producing districts.
- Tripura, Assam, Andaman & Nicobar, Goa etc. are some other rubber producing states.

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Pre-Sampriti-X Exercises



Pre-Sampriti-X Exercises – Today Current Affairs

- India-Bangladesh joint military training exercise 'Purva SAMPRITI-X' (EX SAMPRITI-X) is being organized from June 05 to June 16, 2022 at Jashor Military Station, Bangladesh.

Today Current Affairs

Introduction:

- Exercise Sampriti is an important bilateral defense cooperation conducted by the two countries alternately, with a focus on deepening and widening interoperability and cooperation between the armies of the two countries.

Purpose : The Hindu Analysis

- Strengthening inter-operability between the two armies and understanding each other's tactical exercises and operational techniques.

Representation of India : The Hindu Analysis

- The Indian contingent in this exercise is being represented by a battalion of the Dogra Regiment.

Importance : The Hindu Analysis

- During the joint military exercise, armies of both the countries will share their expertise in multiple scenarios of UN Peacekeeping Force in matters like terrorism, humanitarian aid and disaster relief under UN mandate.
- Participants involved in this joint military exercise will be able to get acquainted with

each other's organizational structure and tactical exercise.

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EX Khan Quest 2022



EX Khan Quest 2022 – Today Current Affairs

- A multinational peace exercise “EX Khan Quest 2022” involving troops of 16 countries has started in Mongolia.
- The Indian Army is represented by a contingent of Ladakh Scouts.
- Nomadic Elephant is another military exercise that is conducted between the two countries.

Today Current Affairs

EX Khan Quest:

- Khan Quest 2022 is a multinational peacekeeping mission held in Mongolia.
- This includes a United Nations Peacekeeping Mission Command Post exercise in the Five Hills Mountain Training Area of the Mongolian Armed Forces and a United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) mission field training exercise. The Hindu Analysis
- The exercise is designed to improve peacekeeping capabilities, strengthen military ties and enhance the UN principle PKO competencies of all participants.
- The 2008 Doctrine reaffirms this and provides a contemporary understanding of how the United Nations can apply three basic peace principles, namely: consent, fairness and non-use of force except in self-defense and the defense of the mandate. The Hindu Analysis

- The exercise will also enable sharing of best practices among the armed forces of the participating countries and will include field training exercises, combat discussions, lectures and demonstrations.
- The military exercise will enhance the level of defense cooperation between the Indian Army and the Armed Forces of the participating countries, especially Mongolia, thereby enhancing the bilateral relations between the two countries.

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India-Bangladesh passenger train services resume



India-Bangladesh passenger train services resume – Today Current Affairs

- India-Bangladesh passenger train services have recently resumed, two years after train services were suspended due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today Current Affairs

Following the resumption of train services, the following trains have been flagged off:

- Maitree Express from Dhaka to Kolkata.
- Mithali Express between New Jalpaiguri to Dhaka.
- Bandhan Express from Kolkata to Khulna.
- Other important rail links between India and Bangladesh : The Hindu Analysis
- Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh)

- Gede (India)-Darshan (Bangladesh)
- Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh)
- Radhikapur (India)-Biorol (Bangladesh)
- Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh)
- Agartala (India) – Akhaura (Bangladesh)

India-Bangladesh Relations:

Historical Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- India made unprecedented cooperation in the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle 50 years ago in the year 1971 as it helped towards the formation of the new nation of Bangladesh.

Defense Cooperation:

Joint practice : The Hindu Analysis

- Sampreeti (Army) exercise
- Table Top (AF)
- IN-BN CORPAT (Navy)
- Bongosagar exercise (Navy)
- SAMVEDNA (Multinational Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise with Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and United Arab Emirates)
- Border Management: India shares the longest land border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km) of any neighboring country.

Economic Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- Bangladesh is India's largest trading partner in the subcontinent, with total bilateral trade between the two countries at US\$9.5 billion (2019-20), an increase of US\$10 billion mark over the previous fiscal (2018-19) has crossed.
- India's exports to Bangladesh account for more than 85% of the total bilateral trade.
- India-Bangladesh CEO Forum was launched in December 2020 to further boost bilateral trade cooperation.
- Bangladesh has appreciated duty-free and quota-free export of goods by Bangladesh to India under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) since 2011.

Connectivity Support : The Hindu Analysis

- In March 2021, a 1.9 km friendship bridge on the Feni river connecting Sabroom in India and Ramgarh in Bangladesh was also inaugurated.
- Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT).

- Negotiations on the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement are underway.

Partnership in multilateral fora : The Hindu Analysis

- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

Other Developments:

Line of Credit : The Hindu Analysis

- India has provided 3 Lines of Credit (LoC) worth USD 8 billion to Bangladesh in the last 8 years for infrastructure development in several sectors including roads, railways, shipping and ports.

COVID-19 Support : The Hindu Analysis

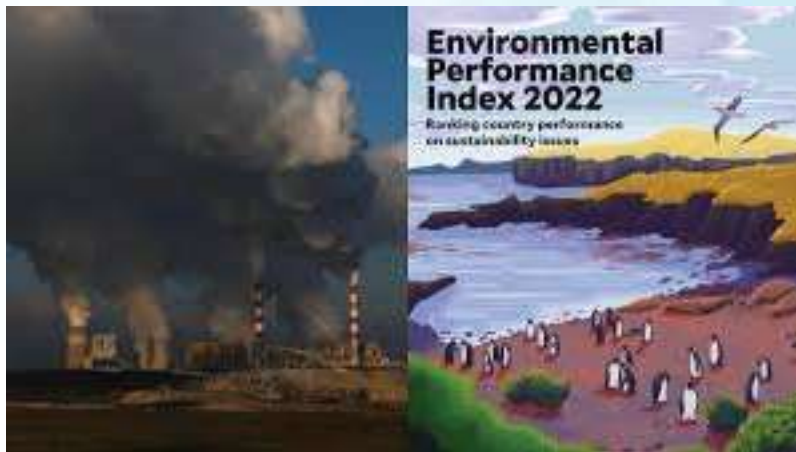
- Bangladesh is the largest recipient of Made in India COVID-19 vaccine doses, accounting for 16% of the total supply.
- India also offered partnership in medical science and cooperation in vaccine production.

Emerging Controversies : The Hindu Analysis

- Bangladesh has already raised concerns over the roll out of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, a detail designed to identify native Indian citizens living in Assam and drive out illegal Bangladeshis.
- Bangladesh is currently an active participant in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which Delhi has not signed.
- Bangladesh is also a major recipient of Chinese military, including submarines, in the security sector.

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Environmental Performance Index-2022



Environmental Performance Index-2022 – Today Current Affairs

- India ranks last among 180 countries in the recently released Environmental Performance Index-2022.

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Environmental Performance Index:

- The Environmental Performance Index is an international ranking system that measures the environmental status and sustainability of countries.
- The Environmental Performance Index was launched as a biennial index by the World Economic Forum in 2002 as the Environmental Sustainability Index in collaboration with the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy and the Columbia University Center for International Earth Science Information Network.

Frame : The Hindu Analysis

- The EPI for the year 2022 is divided into 11 issue categories of 40 performance indicators.
- The distribution of the categories of its publications is aggregated under 3 policy objectives:
- Environmental Health
- Ecosystem Vitality
- Climate change
- These indicators provide an estimate at the national level of how integral countries are setting environmental policy goals.
- The EPI team converts environmental data into indicators that rate countries on a scale of 0-100 (lowest to best).

Major findings : The Hindu Analysis

- Denmark topped the rankings for the year 2022, an achievement that reflects strong performance on all issues tracked by the EPI, along with remarkable leadership in efforts to promote a clean energy future and sustainable agriculture.
- The United Kingdom and Finland are ranked second and third respectively, both of which have earned high scores for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in recent years.
- The United States is ranked 20th out of 22 prosperous/thriving democracies in the global West and 43rd overall. The Hindu Analysis
- India's 180th ranking with a score of 18.9 comes after Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Myanmar.
- According to the EPI, India has also scored low on the parameters of rule of law, control of corruption and government effectiveness.
- India was ranked 168 in the EPI-2020 with a score of 27.6.
- In the EPI-2020, Denmark has been ranked environmental health and sustainability first.

Importance of EPI : The Hindu Analysis

- EPI enables decision makers to identify the drivers of top-notch performance
- Analysis of EPI data shows that financial resources, good governance, human development and regulatory quality are important factors in enhancing the stability of a country.
- By highlighting these relationships, EPI helps promote sustainable development in support of an environmentally safe and equitable future..

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State Food Security Index



State Food Security Index – Today Current Affairs

- On the occasion of World Food Safety Day, the Union Health Minister released the fourth State Food Safety Index (SFSI) of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to measure the performance of states on five parameters of food security.

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State Food Security Index:

- The State Food Security Index was launched from the year 2018-19 with an objective to bring about positive changes in the competitiveness of the food security ecosystem in the country.
- This index has been developed by FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) to measure the performance of states on five important parameters of food security.
- The parameters include human resource and institutional data, compliance, food testing – infrastructure and monitoring, training and capacity building and consumer empowerment.
- The Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides a framework for the purpose of evaluating food security across all States/UTs.
- The first State Food Security Index for the year 2018-19 was announced for the first time on World Food Safety Day on June 7, 2019.

Importance : The Hindu Analysis

- The index will help in providing safe and nutritious food to our citizens.

State performance:

All State : The Hindu Analysis

- Tamil Nadu tops the State Food Security Index, followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra.

In smaller states : The Hindu Analysis

- Goa ranked first, followed by Manipur and Sikkim.

Among Union Territories : The Hindu Analysis

- Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Chandigarh secured first, second and third position respectively.

Food Safety Day : The Hindu Analysis

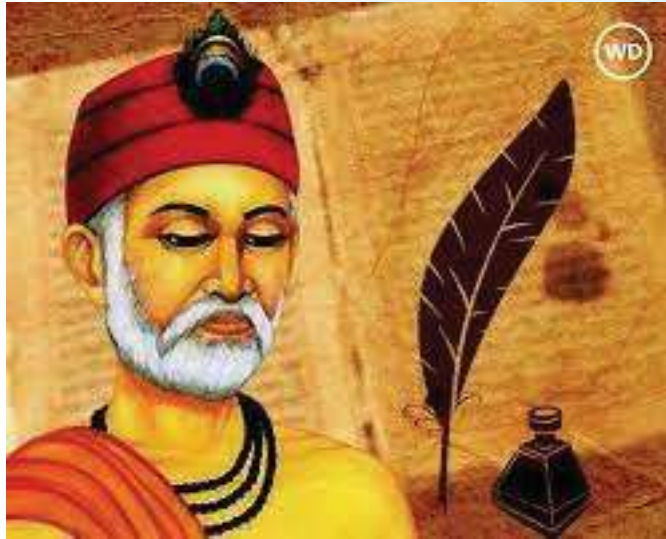
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations jointly facilitate the celebration of World Food Safety Day in collaboration with member countries and other relevant organizations.
- It was first observed in the year 2019 by the Addis Ababa Conference and the Geneva Forum to reinforce the commitment to enhance food security under the “Future of Food Security”.
- The theme of World Food Safety Day, 2022 is ‘Safe Food, Better Health’.

Other initiatives taken on the occasion : The Hindu Analysis

- Various innovative initiatives taken by FSSAI include Eat Right Research Awards and Grants – Phase II, Eat Right Creativity Challenge – Phase III, School Level Competition and Ayurveda Diet logo.
- This logo has Ayurveda diet and five leaves, which symbolize the five elements of nature, this will help in making food products a unique identity and easy to identify them.
- A Guidance Document on Foodborne Disease Outbreak Detection and Microbiological Process Control, Sampling and Testing of Fish and Fish Products has been issued.

Swadeep Kumar

Kabir



Kabir – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, 'Sant Kabir Academy and Research Center' was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind under 'Swadesh Darshan Yojana' in 'Maghar' (Uttar Pradesh).

Today Current Affairs

About Kabir:

- Sant Kabir Das was a great famous saint, poet and social reformer of India during the 15th century. His excellent works and poems describe the greatness and oneness of 'Parmatma'.
- He was a leading saint poet of the Bhakti movement.
- Kabir did not believe in any kind of religious discrimination and readily accepted all religions.
- He founded a religious community named 'Kabir Panth' and its followers are called 'Kabir Panthi'.
- Influence of Swami Ramananda: The Vaishnava saint Swami Ramanand accepted Kabir as his disciple. Kabir Das's ideology was greatly influenced by him.

Nirguna Tradition : The Hindu Analysis

- The 'Nirguna Parampara' is a sect within the Bhakti movement and 'Sant Kabir' was a prominent member of this sect. In this tradition, the Lord is regarded as a universal and formless being.

Famous Literary Works : The Hindu Analysis

- Bijak, Sakhi Granth, Kabir Granthwali and Anurag Sagar.
- His verses have also been included in the Sikh scripture 'Guru Granth Sahib'.
- A large part of his compositions were collected by the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Arjan Dev.
- The identity of the compositions of Sant Kabirdas is his two-line couplets, which are known as 'Kabir's couplets'.

Against caste system : The Hindu Analysis

- Kabir strongly protested against the 'caste system' and sought to do away with the complex rituals and customs performed by the Brahmins.
- He argued, like other prominent sages of his time, that one can attain salvation only through devotion, through intense love or devotion to God.
- He tried to eradicate caste discrimination and tried to create an 'egalitarian society'.

Swadeep Kumar

