



YOJNA IAS

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Pangong Tso Lake



- India is closely monitoring the construction of a bridge by China over the Pangong Tso Lake in 'East Ladakh'.

Related case:

- The People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China has a garrison at the 'Kurnak Fort' on the north bank of the 'Pangong Tso' lake and the 'Moldo' on the south bank of the lake, and the distance between the two fronts is about 200 km.
- The distance between the nearest points on both the northern and southern banks of the 'Pangong Tso' lake is about 500 meters, and in the meantime China is building a new bridge, after which the movement between the two sectors will take about 12 hours. The time will be reduced to just three or four hours.
- This will reduce the time it takes for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to move troops and equipment between the two fronts.
- This bridge is located about 25 km ahead of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

About Pangong Tso

- Pangong Tso literally means “Conclave Lake”. In Ladakhi language Pangong means proximity and in Tibetan language Tso means lake.
- Pangong Tso is a long narrow, deep, land-locked lake situated at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet in Ladakh, its length is about 135 km.
- It is formed from Tethys land formation.
- It is a salt water lake.
- The Karakoram mountain range, which has a number of hills over 6,000 meters, including K2 the world’s second highest peak, runs through Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and India and ends at the northern edge of the Pangong Tso.
- On its southern bank also there are high fractured mountains sloping towards Spangur Lake.
- The water of this lake, although clean as glass, is not potable due to being ‘saline’.

Reason for controversy at this location:

- Line of Actual Control (LAC) – Generally this line passes through the site leaving the width of Pangong Tso and since the year 1962 divides Indian and Chinese troops. This line passes through water in the Pangong Tso area.
- Both sides have declared their respective territories, marking their territories.
- India controls the Pangong Tso area for a distance of 45 km, and the rest of the lake is controlled by China.

What are Fingers?

- In Pangong Tso Lake, the hills of the ‘Chang Chenmo range’ are forward, called ‘Fingers’.
- 8 of these fingers are disputed. In this area, there is a difference of opinion between India and China regarding the LAC.
- India claims that the LAC passes through Finger 8, and this is the last army post of China.
- India patrols this area, up to Finger 8, on foot due to the structure of this area. But the control of the Indian Army is only till finger 4.
- On the other hand, China says that the LAC passes through Finger 2. The Chinese army patrols with light vehicles up to Finger 4 and sometimes till Finger 2.

Reason for Chinese encroachment in Pangong Tso area:

- Pangong Tso Lake is close to the strategically important Chushul Valley. The main attack by China during the 1962 war was launched from the Chushul Valley.
- The path to the Chushul Valley passes through Pangong Tso Lake, a major route China

could use to capture Indian-occupied territory.

- China also does not want India to expand its infrastructure anywhere near the LAC. China fears this could threaten its rights on Aksai Chin and the Lhasa-Kashgar highway.
- Any threat to this highway could hamper Chinese imperialist ambitions in Ladakh and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Swadeep Kumar

Tibet and China dispute



- US Special Coordinator on Tibet 'Uzra Zeya' recently, on a public visit to Dharamsala (Himachal Pradesh), 'Sikyong' or self-styled Central Tibetan Administration leader 'Penpa Tsering' and other officials and Met representatives of the Tibetan community.
- This visit is also being seen as a strong message from the Government of India to China. China is opposed to any outside "interference" in Tibet-related matters, and the visit of the US Special Coordinator was facilitated by New Delhi.

Location of Tibet:

- Tibet (TIBET) is a landmass on the Tibetan Plateau in Asia, extending about 2.4 million square km, and in size it is about a quarter of the total area of China.
- It is the traditional homeland of the Tibetan population as well as some other ethnic groups.

How did China establish its authority over Tibet?

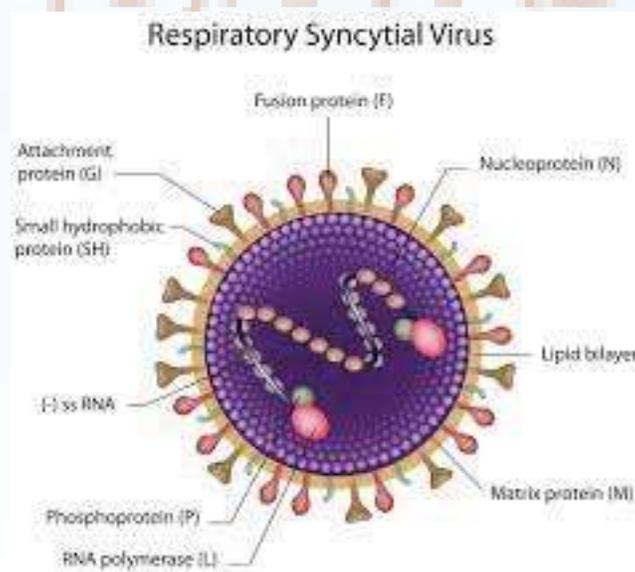
- As claimed by the 'People's Republic of China,' Tibet has been a part of China since the 'Yuan Dynasty' led by the Mongols.
- In 1951, Tibetan leaders were forced to sign a treaty directed by China.
- The treaty is known as the "Seventeen Point Agreement" and promised to guarantee Tibetan autonomy and respect for Buddhism, but at the same time, it included 'Lhasa' (the capital of Tibet). Provision has also been made for the establishment of Chinese civil and military headquarters.
- However, the Tibetan population, including the Dalai Lama, consider the treaty to be 'invalid,' saying that the treaty was signed under pressure.
- The Chinese occupation of Tibet is often described by the Tibetan people as a 'cultural genocide'.

Tibetans abroad:

- There are more than 1 lakh Tibetans settled across India, while the remaining Tibetans are settled in the United States, Australia, Brazil, Canada, and Costa Rica, France, Mexico, Mongolia, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland and many other countries..

Swadeep Kumar

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)



Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) – Today Current Affairs

- A recent study found that lower respiratory infections caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are more common in children under the age of five.
- According to the report published by Lancet, it is responsible for 100,000 child deaths in the world during the year 2019.

Today Current Affairs

About respiratory syncytial virus (RSV):

- RSV is a common respiratory virus.
- It is highly infectious in nature, meaning it has a high potential to infect people.
- It has increased the risk of lung infections. The Hindu Analysis
- It usually infects children under the age of 2 to 6 years.
- In most cases it shows symptoms similar to the common cold but in extreme cases it turns into pneumonia and bronchiolitis.

Conclusion : The Hindu Analysis

- In the year 2019, more than 45000 infant deaths under the age of six were reported.
- Worldwide, one in five children infected with RSV die.
- Children aged six months and below are most vulnerable to this virus. The Hindu Analysis
- According to research, the annual incidence rate in India is 53 per 1,000 children (5.3%), with about 61, 86, 500 cases of RSV in children under the age of five related to lower respiratory infections.
- RSV kills 97 percent of children under the age of five in low- and middle-income countries.

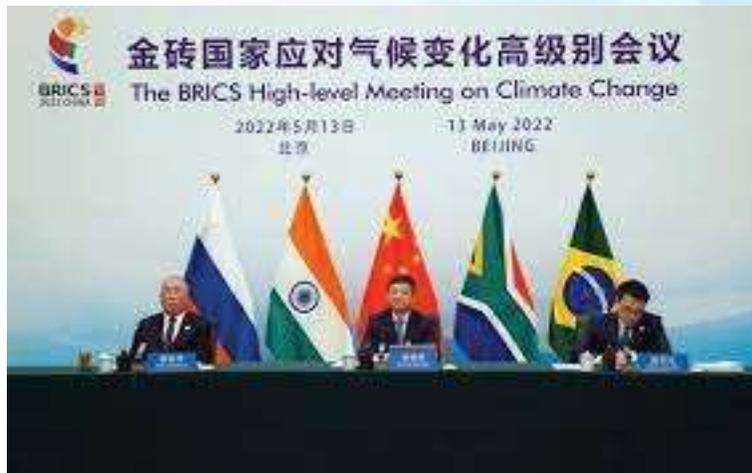
Treatment of respiratory syncytial virus : The Hindu Analysis

- There is no reliable treatment for RSV infection.
- Scientists, governments and relevant authorities are promoting research and development in this area to find suitable drugs and vaccinations to save the lives of infants and children.

In this article we mention all information about Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) Today Current Affairs.

Swadeep Kumar

BRICS meeting on climate change



BRICS meeting on climate change – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change participated in the virtual high-level meeting of BRICS, where they jointly addressed climate change, explored approaches to accelerate the low carbon and adaptation transition and Underlined the relevance of the Forum for sustainable development.
- The meeting was chaired by the People's Republic of China and was attended by environment ministers from BRICS countries- Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa.

Today Current Affairs

Highlights of the meeting:

- India in its address underscored India's commitment to strong climate action, including promoting a sustainable lifestyle based on careful consumption and waste reduction.
- India is currently taking several important steps in the field of renewable energy, sustainable habitat, carbon sink creation through additional forest and tree cover, transition to sustainable transport, e-mobility, encouraging private sector to meet climate commitments etc. The Hindu Analysis
- India continues to progressively separate economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions.
- The ambitious implementation of climate action by developing countries is dependent on an ambitious and adequate delivery of climate finance, technology transfer and other implementation support as mandated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.
- The BRICS countries have expressed their hope to move forward in line with the Glasgow

Decision on Climate Finance Delivery and the COP 26 Climate Finance Delivery Plan issued by the Presidency.

- BRICS Environment Ministers committed to strengthen cooperation on climate change and to broaden and deepen the scope of cooperation. The Hindu Analysis
- In addition, these countries also agreed to continue policy exchanges and cooperation in the areas of environment and climate change.

About BRICS : The Hindu Analysis

- BRICS is an acronym for the group of five leading emerging economies of the world – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- British economist Jim O'Neill used the term BRIC in 2001 to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China. The Hindu Analysis
- The grouping was formalized during the first meeting of the BRIC Foreign Ministers in 2006.
- South Africa was invited to join the BRIC in December 2010, after which the group adopted the acronym BRICS.
- BRICS brings together the five largest developing countries in the world, representing 41% of the global population, 24% of global GDP and 16% of global trade.
- The BRICS summit is chaired annually by the Supreme Leader of the member countries in the order B-R-I-C-S.
- India was the President for 2021. The Hindu Analysis
- During the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza (Brazil) in 2014, the leaders signed the agreement to establish the New Development Bank (NDB – Shanghai, China). He also signed the BRICS Contingency Reserve Arrangement to provide short-term liquidity support to the members.

Here we mention all information about BRICS meeting on climate change Today Current Affairs.

Swadeep Kumar

SCO member countries meeting under RAT



SCO member countries meeting under RAT – Today Current Affairs

- Recently under the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) there was a meeting between the member countries of SCO. This is the first such meeting in India after Russia's encroachment on Ukraine and China's encroachment on the Line of Actual Control.
- The agenda for promoting cooperation and tackling various global and regional security challenges has been discussed in the SCO-RATS meeting.
- India is the chairman of the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure of the SCO (RATS SCO).

Today Current Affairs

Key points discussed in the meeting:

- The situation in Afghanistan and the security concerns arising out of the fall of Afghanistan at the hands of the Taliban were the main agenda of this meeting.
- India has expressed strong desire to strengthen its security cooperation with the SCO and its regional counter-terrorism structure, which focuses on security and defense matters.

Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) : The Hindu Analysis

- RATS is a permanent body of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- It aims at facilitating coordination and dialogue among SCO member states in the fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism.

- The main function of SCO-RATS is coordination and information sharing. The Hindu Analysis
- As a member, India has actively participated in the activities of SCO-RATS.
- India's permanent membership will enable it to develop greater understanding among members for its perspective.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization : The Hindu Analysis

- SCO was created in the year 2001.
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established as a multilateral federation to ensure security and maintain stability in the vast Eurasian region.
- It envisages joining forces to meet emerging challenges and threats and enhance trade as well as cultural and humanitarian cooperation.
- Before the establishment of the SCO in 2001, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the organization 'Shanghai-5'. The Hindu Analysis
- In the year 1996, 'Shanghai-5' was formed through a series of demilitarization talks, these talks with China were done by the four former Soviet republics to maintain the situation of stability on the borders.
- After the entry of Uzbekistan into the organization in the year 2001, 'Shanghai-5' was named SCO.
- The SCO Charter was signed in the year 2002 and came into force in the year 2003. Russian and Chinese are the official languages of the SCO.

The SCO has two permanent bodies : The Hindu Analysis

- SCO Secretariat in Beijing.
- Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.

Member Country : The Hindu Analysis

- Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.
- Recently approval has been given to include Iran in this organization.

In this article we mention all information about SCO member countries meeting under RATS Today Current Affairs.

Swadeep Kumar

Raja Ram Mohan Roy



Raja Ram Mohan Roy – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, the Ministry of Culture organized the inauguration ceremony of the year-long festival in the memory of Raja Ram Mohan Roy on his 250th birth anniversary.
- The inaugural ceremony was held at the ‘Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation’, Salt Lake and Science City Auditorium in Kolkata.
- It is a one year festival which will be celebrated till next year (May 22, 2023).
- This year also marks the 250th birth anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the 50th foundation day of ‘Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation’.
- The Ministry of Culture has also unveiled an iconic statue of Raja Ram Mohan Roy at the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation.

Today Current Affairs

Raja Ram Mohan Roy:

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the father of modern India’s renaissance and a tireless social reformer who ushered in the era of Enlightenment and liberal reformist modernization in India.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born on 22 May 1772 in Radhanagar, Bengal in an orthodox Brahmin family.

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy had his early education in Persian and Arabic languages at Patna, where he studied the Qur'an, the works of Sufi mystic poets and Arabic versions of the books of Plato and Aristotle.
- He also studied Sanskrit language, Vedas and Upanishads in Banaras.
- From 1803 to 1814, he worked as a private dewan for the East India Company under Woodford and Digby.
- In the year 1814 he resigned from the job and went to Calcutta to dedicate his life to religious, social and political reforms. Today Current Affairs
- In November 1830, he left for England with the aim of counteracting the possible unrest arising out of the banning of the practice of Sati.
- Ram Mohan Roy went to England for complaints related to the pension of the Mughal Emperor Akbar II of Delhi, when he was given the title of 'Raja' by Akbar II.
- In his address, Tagore called Ram Mohan Roy 'a shining star of Indian history as the inaugurator of the modern era in India.'

Ideology : The Hindu Analysis

- Ram Mohan Roy was greatly influenced by western modern thought and emphasized on rationalism and modern scientific approach.
- The immediate problem of Ram Mohan Roy was the religious and social decline of his native Bengal.
- He believed that religious orthodoxy damages the social life and instead of improving the condition of the society, disturbs the people further.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy believed that social and political modernization consists only in the purview of religious reform.
- Ram Mohan Roy believed that every sinner should atone for his sins and this atonement should be done through self-purification and repentance, and not through pomp and rituals.
- He believed in the social equality of all human beings and thus was a strong opponent of the caste system.
- Ram Mohan Roy was attracted to Islamic monotheism. He said that monotheism is also the core message of Vedanta.
- He considered monotheism as a corrective step towards the polytheism of Hinduism and Christianity. He believed that monotheism supported a universal model for humanity.

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy believed that unless women were freed from inhuman forms like illiteracy, child marriage, Sati system, and Hindu society could not progress.
- He portrayed the practice of Sati as a violation of every human and social sentiment and as a symptom of the moral degradation of a caste.

Contribution:

Religious Reforms : The Hindu Analysis

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy's first publication Tuhfat-ul-Muwahideen (A Gift to the Gods) came out in the year 1803, which exposed the irrational religious beliefs and corrupt practices of the Hindus.
- In the year 1814, he founded the Atmiya Sabha in Calcutta to oppose idol worship, caste rigidity, meaningless rituals and other social evils. Today Current Affairs
- He criticized the rituals of Christianity and dismissed Jesus as the incarnation of God. In Prispts of Jesus (1820), he tried to separate the moral and philosophical message of New Testament which was given through wondrous stories.

Social reforms : The Hindu Analysis

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy conceived of reformist religious associations as instruments of social and political change.
- He founded the Atmiya Sabha in the year 1815, the Calcutta Unitarian Association in the year 1821 and the Brahmo Sabha (which later became the Brahmo Samaj) in the year 1828.
- He campaigned against the caste system, untouchability, superstition and drug use.
- He was known for his pioneering views and actions on women's freedom and especially the abolition of sati and widow remarriage.
- He opposed child marriage, illiteracy of women and degrading condition of widows and demanded the right of inheritance and property for women.

Educational Reforms : The Hindu Analysis

- Ram Mohan Roy made a lot of efforts to spread modern education among the countrymen. He supported David Heyer's efforts to found a Hindu College in 1817, while Roy's English school taught mechanics and Voltaire's philosophy.
- In the year 1825, he founded the Vedanta College where both Indian teaching and Western social and physical science courses were taught.

Economic and Political Reforms:

Civil liberty : The Hindu Analysis

- Ram Mohan Roy was deeply impressed by and admired the civil liberties given to the people by the British system of constitutional government. He wanted to pass on the benefits of that system of government to the Indian people.

Press Freedom : The Hindu Analysis

- Through the writings and other activities, they supported the movement for independent press in India.
- In the year 1819, the press censorship was released by Lord Hastings, Ram Mohan Roy has three magazines – Brahminist magazine (year 1821); Bengali Weekly – Dialogue Koumudi (Year 1821) and Persian Weekly – Mirat-ul-Akbar published.

Taxation Reforms : The Hindu Analysis

- Ram Mohan Roy condemned the oppressive practices of the Bengali zamindars and demanded fixation of minimum rent. He also demanded tax-free land and abolition of taxes.
- He called for reduction in export duties on Indian goods abroad and the abolition of trading rights of the East India Company.

Administrative Reforms : The Hindu Analysis

- He demanded Indianisation of better services and separation of the executive from the judiciary. He demanded equality between Indians and Europeans.

Swadeep Kumar

Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme



इंदिरा गांधी शहरी रोजगार गारंटी योजना

Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme – Today Current Affairs

- The Rajasthan government has released details about the jobs covered under its much-publicized Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme.
- Rajasthan government in its budget speech had announced employment scheme for urban areas on the lines of MGNREGA for rural areas.
- MGNREGA provides employment in rural areas, whereas there was no provision under it for street vendors as well as those working in dhabas and restaurants in urban areas.

Today Current Affairs

Plan:

- Under the scheme, 100 days of employment will be provided every year to the families living in urban areas.
- For labor work of “general nature” the ratio of cost of material and payment will be in the ratio of 25:75, while for special works it will be in the ratio 75:25.
- Emphasis is being laid on providing maximum employment under this.
- On the other hand, a higher physical component would be required to build a property, so the ratio under ‘Special Works’ is 75:25.

Eligibility : The Hindu Analysis

- All people in the age group of 18 to 60 years residing within the urban body limits are eligible for the scheme and migrant workers can be covered in special circumstances such as pandemic or disaster.

Constituent:

Environment protection : The Hindu Analysis

- Plantation of trees in public places, maintenance of parks, irrigation of plants on footpaths and dividers, preparation of nurseries under Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), Forest, Horticulture and Agriculture departments.

Water conservation : The Hindu Analysis

- Anyone can do the work of construction, repair and cleaning of rain water harvesting structures and restoration of water sources for cleaning and improvement of ponds, lakes, stepwells etc.

Work related to sanitation and hygiene : The Hindu Analysis

- This includes solid waste management, labor work, including door-to-door garbage collection and segregation, segregation of waste at dumping sites, cleaning and maintenance of public/community toilets, cleaning of sewers/drains as well as waste generated from construction and demolition Includes removal tasks.

Acts related to defacement of property : The Hindu Analysis

- This includes labor work to remove encroachments as well as illegal boards/hoardings/banners etc., as well as paintings displayed on dividers, railings, walls and other public places.

Convergence : The Hindu Analysis

- Under this scheme those people can be employed in other central or state level schemes which already have physical component and require labor work.

Service : The Hindu Analysis

- This includes labor work in Gaushalas and 'multitask services' in the offices of civic bodies, record keeping etc. In addition, works related to heritage conservation are also included.
- Miscellaneous works, such as security / fencing / boundary wall / work related to protection of urban bodies and public lands, development and management of parking spaces within the limits of urban bodies, capture and management of stray animals, etc.

Requirement of social security for urban areas:

Major Contributors to the Economy : The Hindu Analysis

- The urban sector is an integral part of the development process of the country. Like most

countries, India's urban areas contribute a lot to the country's economy.

- Indian city contributes about two-thirds in economic production, make a growing part of the population and are the main receipt of FDI. They are also promoters of innovation and technology.

Hotspots for Businesses : The Hindu Analysis

- Cities also hold the status of a collective hotspot for a wide variety of economic activities.
- As a result of scalable and congested benefits (supply of educational facilities, presence of suppliers etc.), cities attract more business and people.

Center of Social Capital : The Hindu Analysis

- Cities are centers of social capital. They also tend to be the 'meeting points' of culturally or socially diverse groups or centers of discussion on differing views.

Power Center : The Hindu Analysis

- Cities are centers of ever-expanding power, consolidating their position at the expense of towns and villages.

Importance of Urban Employment Schemes : The Hindu Analysis

- Ensures social inclusion by strengthening the livelihood base of the rural poor.
- It gives statutory right to work to urban residents and thereby ensures the right to life guaranteed under the Constitution (Article 21).
- Example- The new state government in Madhya Pradesh has started "Yuva Swabhiman Yojana".
- It provides employment to skilled and unskilled workers among urban youth and addresses the concerns of unemployment. Today Current Affairs
- Programs such as these can bring much-needed public investment into towns, which in turn can boost local demand, improve urban infrastructure and quality of services, restore urban commons, and empower urban youth. Can train and enhance the capacity of ULBs

Swadeep Kumar

Wild polio virus



Wild polio virus – Today Current Affairs

- In Mozambique, this week the country's first case of 'wild poliovirus type 1' has been confirmed after a child was infected with the disease.
- This is the first case of the disease in Mozambique since 1992 and the second imported case of 'wild poliovirus' in South East Africa this year.
- Earlier this year, an outbreak of the disease was reported in the country of 'Malawi' in South East Africa.

Note: Until now, 'wild polio virus' was found (endemic) only in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Today Current Affairs

What is 'polio'?

- Polio or poliomyelitis is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as 'a highly contagious viral disease'. This disease mainly affects young children.

Transmission : The Hindu Analysis

- The polio virus is mainly transmitted from person to person through the faecal route or other common carriers (such as contaminated water or food).
- By reaching the intestines, the number of this virus multiplies and from there it reaches the nervous system and causes paralysis.

When a country is declared polio-free? The Hindu Analysis

- There are three types of 'polio virus', whose number is 1 to 3. For a country to be declared polio-free, it is imperative to stop the uncontrolled transmission of all three types of

viruses.

- Further, for 'polio eradication', both wild and vaccine-derived polio infections have to be reduced to zero.
- After receiving any evidence of virus for three years, India was declared polio free in January 2014. This achievement is considered widely inspired by successful 'Pulse Polio Campaign'.

India's efforts in this regard : The Hindu Analysis

- To prevent the transmission of polio virus in India, under the Pulse Polio programme, all states and union territories have formed 'Rapid Response Teams' to deal with any polio outbreak in the country.
- Government has made oral polio vaccination (OPV) compulsory for those traveling between India and polio affected countries, such as Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Syria and Cameroon since March 2014.

Swadeep Kumar

75th Conference of the World Health Assembly



75th Conference of the World Health Assembly – Today Current Affairs

- The 75th session of the World Health Assembly is being held in Geneva, the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO), from May 22 to 28, 2022.
- The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare emphasized India's commitment towards building a more resilient global health security framework.

- The theme of the World Health Assembly, 2022 is 'Health for Peace, Peace for Health'.
- Accredited 'Social Health Activists (ASHA)' from India were honored with the Global Health Leaders Award at the 75th World Health Assembly for their "commitment to advancing global health, leadership and regional health issues". Outstanding contribution to be recognized.

Today Current Affairs

World Health Assembly:

- The World Health Assembly is made up of representatives representing the member states.
- Each nation is represented by a maximum of three representatives, one of whom is designated as the chief representative.
- These representatives are selected from amongst the fittest persons on the basis of their technical ability in the field of health as they preferentially represent the national health administration of the member nation.
- The World Health Assembly meets regularly in annual sessions and sometimes in special sessions.

Functions of the World Health Assembly : The Hindu Analysis

- The World Health Assembly determines the policies of WHO.
- It monitors the financial policies of the organization and reviews and approves the budget.
- It reports to the Economic and Social Council regarding any agreement between the WHO and the United Nations.
- Highlights of the address of the Union Ministers in the 75th session : The Hindu Analysis
- There is a need to streamline whose approval process for vaccines and medical legislation for a more flexible global health security architecture. Equal access to vaccines and drugs should be allowed, including intellectual property aspects.
- Cost effective research, technology transfer and regional manufacturing capability should be on the priority list.
- According to WHO, India has recorded 4.7 million deaths (10 times the official figure) due to COVID. Concerns were therefore expressed over the recent practice of the WHO, which has recorded a higher death rate from all causes than from COVID-19. The Hindu Analysis
- India urged the WHO to consider country-specific authentic data published by the Registrar General of India (RGI) through the Citizen Registration System (CRS).
- The use of mathematical models of data prediction should not be relied upon. Consequently, the Central Council for Health and Family Welfare (established under Article 263 of the Constitution) passed a unanimous resolution condemning the WHO's

approach in this regard.

Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) : The Hindu Analysis

- ASHA is one of the major components of the National Rural Health Mission (NHRM).
- She is a social health worker in the age group of 25-45 years, who acts as the first point of contact to meet the health needs of disadvantaged sections of the rural population including women and children.
- There is usually one ASHA per 1000 population. However, depending on the workload in tribal, hilly and desert areas, this criterion can be reduced to “one ASHA per settlement”.

Responsibilities and Roles : The Hindu Analysis

- To create awareness about health determinants by providing people with information about nutrition, basic hygiene and hygienic practices, healthy living and working conditions etc.
- It also provides information about existing health services and encourages people to make timely use of health and family welfare services.
- Counseling women on preparation for birth, importance of safe delivery, breastfeeding, contraception, immunization, child care and prevention of Reproductive Tract Infections/ Sexually Transmitted Infections (RTIs/STIs). The Hindu Analysis
- Facilitate access to antenatal check-up (ANC), post-natal check-up (PNC), immunization, sanitation and other health services at village/sub-centre/primary health centers by mobilizing the community.
- Developing a comprehensive health plan by working in collaboration with the Village Health and Sanitation Committee of the Gram Panchayat.
- To provide first aid care for minor disorders like fever, diarrhea and minor injuries under the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme. The Hindu Analysis
- Arrange maintenance for pregnant women and children who require treatment or need to be admitted to the nearest health care facility.
- Informing the sub-centres/primary health center about births and deaths in your village and any disease outbreaks/unusual health concerns in the community.

Swadeep Kumar

Interstate council



Interstate council – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, the Inter-State Council (ISC) has been reconstituted with the Prime Minister as the President and the Chief Ministers of all the states and six Union Ministers as members.
- Ten Union Ministers will be invited to the Inter-State Council on a permanent basis.
- The government has also reconstituted the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council with the Union Home Minister as the Chairman.
- The Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh are also members of the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council.

Today Current Affairs

Interstate Council:

Background:

- The Central Government appointed Justice R.S. to review the working of the existing arrangements between the Center and the States. A commission was constituted in the year 1988 under the chairmanship of Sarkaria.
- The Sarkaria Commission made an important recommendation to establish an Inter-State Council as an independent national forum for consultation in pursuance of the mandate defined in accordance with Article 263 of the Constitution of India.

Introduction : The Hindu Analysis

- The Inter-State Council is empowered to inquire into and advise on disputes arising

between States, to inquire into and discuss matters of common interest to some or all of the States or the Center and one or more States.

- It also makes recommendations for better coordination of policy and action on these subjects, discusses matters of common interest to the States, which may be referred by its President.
- It also considers other matters of general interest to the States, as may be referred by the President of the Council.
- The Council may meet at least three times in a year.
- The Council also has a Standing Committee.

Organization : The Hindu Analysis

- President- Prime Minister
- Member- Chief Ministers of all states
- Chief Ministers of Union Territories with Legislative Assembly and Administrators of Union Territories not having Legislative Assembly and Governors of States under President's Rule (Governor's Rule in the case of Jammu and Kashmir) Members.
- Six cabinet rank ministers in the Union Council of Ministers nominated by the Prime Minister.

Functions of the Inter-State Council : The Hindu Analysis

- To create a strong institutional framework to promote and support cooperative federalism in the country and to energize the Council and Regional Councils by holding regular meetings.
- Facilitates the consideration of all pending and emerging issues of Centre-State and Inter-State relations by the Regional Councils and the Inter-State Council.
- To develop a system to monitor the implementation of the recommendations submitted by them.

Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council : The Hindu Analysis

- It was established in the year 1996 for continuous consultation and processing of matters for consideration of the Council.

It consists of the following members : The Hindu Analysis

(i) Union Home Minister as Chairman

(ii) Five Union Cabinet Ministers

(iii) A council of nine Chief Ministers to assist the Inter-State Council Secretariat.

- This Secretariat was established in the year 1991 and is headed by a Secretary to the Government of India. Since the year 2011, it is also functioning as the Secretariat of the Zonal Councils.

Work : The Hindu Analysis

- The Standing Committee will have continuous consultation and procedural matters for the consideration of the Council, processing all matters relating to Centre-State relations before consideration in the Inter-State Council.
- The Standing Committee also oversees the implementation of the decisions taken on the recommendations of the Council and considers any other matter referred to it by the Chairman or the Council.

Other bodies promoting interstate relations:

Regional Council : The Hindu Analysis

- Regional councils are statutory (not constitutional) bodies. These are established by an Act of Parliament, i.e. States Reorganization Act 1956.
- This act divided the country into five regions- northern, central, eastern, western and southern and provided a regional council for each region.
- A number of factors have been taken into account when creating these regions, including: the natural division of the country, river systems and means of communication, cultural and linguistic ties, and the need for economic development, security and law and order. The Hindu Analysis
- North-Eastern Council: The North-Eastern States of (i) Assam, (ii) Arunachal Pradesh, (iii) Manipur, (iv) Tripura, (v) Mizoram, (vi) Meghalaya and (vii) Nagaland, are included in the Zonal Councils and their specific problems are handled by the North-Eastern Council, which was established under the North-Eastern Council Act, 1972.

Inter-State Trade and Commerce : The Hindu Analysis

- Part XIII of the Constitution, Articles 301 to 307 deal with trade, commerce and interaction within the territory of India.

Interstate Water Disputes : The Hindu Analysis

- Article 262 of the Constitution provides for adjudication of inter-state water disputes.

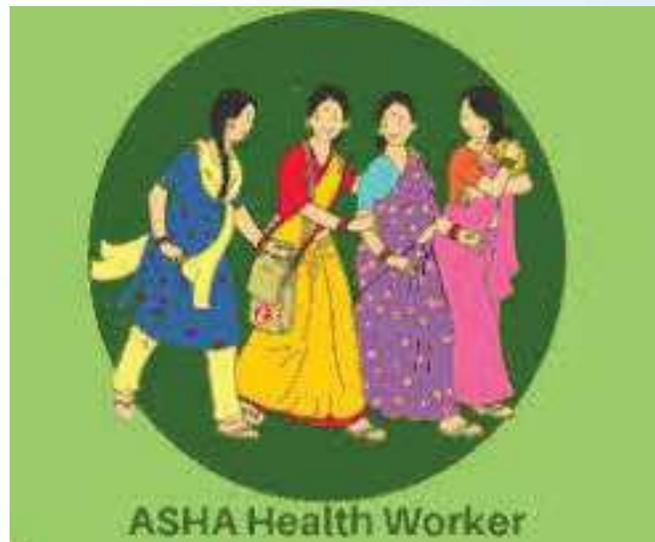
It makes two provisions : The Hindu Analysis

- Parliament may by law provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint relating to the use, distribution and control of the waters of any inter-state river and river basin.

- Parliament may also provide that no other court, including the Supreme Court, shall have jurisdiction over any such dispute or complaint.

Swadeep Kumar

WHO Awarded ASHA workers



WHO Awarded ASHA workers – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, during the event of the 75th 'World Health Assembly', India's 'ASHA' activists ie 'Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)' 'Global Health Leaders Award'-2022 (Global Health Leaders Award -2022) has been provided.
- Eight volunteer polio activists are also among the recipients of this award. These volunteer polio activists were shot dead by armed gunmen in Afghanistan's Takhar and Kunduz provinces in February this year.

Today Current Affairs

About ASHA Workers (Accredited Social Health Activists):

- ASHA workers are volunteers working within the community, who are trained to provide information and help people to avail benefits of various health schemes of the government.
- They act as a bridge connecting marginalized communities with facilities such as primary health centres, sub-centres and district hospitals.
- The role of these 'Community Health Volunteers' was first established in the year 2005

under the 'National Rural Health Mission' (NRHM).

Eligibility : The Hindu Analysis

- Volunteers should have good manners, communication and leadership skills to work as ASHA workers; In addition, the program guidelines require the workers to have formal education up to class 8.

ASHA workers in the country : The Hindu Analysis

- At present, there are about 10.4 lakh ASHA workers working across the country.
- The highest number of ASHA workers are in the high population states – Uttar Pradesh (63 lakh), Bihar (89,437), and Madhya Pradesh (77,531).
- Goa is the only state in the country where there are no ASHA workers.

ASHA Worker – Roles and Functions : The Hindu Analysis

- To create awareness about basic nutrition, hygiene practices and health services available from door to door in their designated areas.
- Ensuring women undergo antenatal check-ups, nutritious diet during pregnancy, delivery in health facilities, and training obstetricians for post-birth breastfeeding and supplemental nutrition for children.
- Counseling women about contraceptives and sexually transmitted infections.
- Ensuring vaccination of children.
- To provide daily medicines to TB patients under the direct supervision of National Programme.

How much are ASHA workers paid? The Hindu Analysis

- Since they are considered “volunteers”, governments are not obliged to pay them salaries. And, most of the states do not pay any salary for these.
- Their income depends on the incentives given under various schemes. These incentives are provided to 'ASHA workers' for tasks like ensuring an institutional delivery or getting the child vaccinated. For all these works, they get only Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000 per month.

Swadeep Kumar

Param Porul Supercomputing



Param Porul Supercomputing – Today Current Affairs

- Param Porul, a state-of-the-art supercomputer was inaugurated at NIT Tiruchirappalli under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
- Param Porul Supercomputing Facility has been set up under Phase-II of NSM, most of the components used in it are manufactured and assembled in the country. Also indigenous software stack developed by C-DAC in line with Make in India initiative has also been used in this.

Today Current Affairs

Features of Param Porul:

- PARAM PORUL systems equipped with a mix of CPU (Central Processing Unit) nodes, GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) nodes, high memory nodes, high throughput storage and high-performance InfiniBand interconnects to meet the computing needs of various scientific and engineering applications.
- The system utilizes direct contact liquid cooling technology to achieve high power utilization efficiency while reducing operating costs.
- Many applications in various scientific domains such as weather and climate, bioinformatics, computational chemistry, molecular dynamics, materials science, computational fluid dynamics and so on have been established by the system for the benefit of researchers.

About National Supercomputing Mission : The Hindu Analysis

- The National Supercomputing Mission was launched in 2015 to improve the country's research capabilities by connecting them to a supercomputing grid, with the National Knowledge Network (NKN) acting as the backbone in this area.

- The National Supercomputing Mission was launched in the year 2015 to enhance research and capabilities in the country by establishing a supercomputing grid with the National Knowledge Network (NKN).
- The NKN project aims to establish a powerful Indian network that would be capable of providing secure and reliable connectivity.
- A supercomputer is a computer that performs at or near the highest operating rate currently for a computer.
- Construction and implementation of 24 facilities with a cumulative compute power of over 64 petaflops are planned under this mission. The Hindu Analysis
- The petaflop is a unit of measurement of the processing speed of a supercomputer, which can be expressed as one thousand trillion floating point operations per second.
- It supports the government's vision of 'Digital India' and 'Make in India' initiatives.
- The mission is being jointly operated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- It is being implemented by Center for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune and IISc (Bangalore).

The mission was planned in three phases : The Hindu Analysis

- Phase I- It involves assembling supercomputers.
- Phase II- Considering manufacturing of certain components within the country.
- Phase III- Under this the supercomputer is designed by India.

Recent developments under National Supercomputing Mission : The Hindu Analysis

- Under Phase 1 and Phase 2, 15 systems with computer power of 22 petaflops (PF) have been created in IIT's, C-DAC, NIT, JNCASR and IISER.
- NSM installed "Param Ganga" at IIT Roorkee in March 2022 with a supercomputing capacity of 1.66 petaflops as a part of Phase 2.
- PARAM Siddhi-AI is India's fastest supercomputer built under National Supercomputing Mission with a capacity of 5.26 petaflops.
- Japan's Fugaku is the world's fastest supercomputer.

Swadeep Kumar

Recognizing sex work as a “profession”: Supreme Court



Recognizing sex work as a “profession”: Supreme Court – Today Current Affairs

- In a recent landmark order, the Supreme Court has recognized sex work as a “profession” and said its practitioners are entitled to respect and equal protection under the law.
- The Court exercised its special powers under Article 142 of the Constitution. Article 142 confers discretionary power on the Supreme Court, it states that the Supreme Court may, in the exercise of its jurisdiction, pass such decree or make such order as to do complete justice in any matter or matter pending before it.
- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recognized sex workers as informal workers in the year 2020.

Today Current Affairs

Salient Features of the Supreme Court Judgment:

Criminal Law:

- Sex workers are entitled to equal protection under the law and criminal law should be applied equally to all cases on the basis of ‘age’ and ‘consent’.
- When it is clear that the sex worker is an adult and is participating with consent, the police should refrain from interfering or taking any criminal action.
- Article 21 declares that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. This right is available to both citizens and non-citizens.
- Sex workers should not be “arrested or punished or harassed or victimized” whenever a brothel is raided, “since voluntary sex work is not illegal, while running a brothel is illegal”.

Rights of a sex worker's child : The Hindu Analysis

- The child of a sex worker should not be separated from the mother merely on the ground that he is engaged in prostitution.
- Sex workers and their children also enjoy the basic protection of human decency and dignity.
- In addition, if a minor is found to be living in a brothel or with sex workers, it should not be assumed that the child has been trafficked.
- If the sex worker claims that he/she is his/her son/daughter, an examination may be conducted to determine whether the claim is true and if so, the minor should not be forcibly separated.

Health care : The Hindu Analysis

- Sex workers who have been sexually assaulted should be provided all facilities, including immediate medical-legal care.

Role of media : The Hindu Analysis

- The media should take utmost care that the identities of sex workers, whether victims or accused, are not disclosed during arrests, raids and rescue operations and do not publish or circulate any photographs that reveal their identities.

Related Provisions/views of the Supreme Court:

Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act : The Hindu Analysis

- The law governing sex work in India is the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act.
- The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Children Act was enacted in the year 1956.
- Later the law was amended and the name of the Act was changed to Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act.
- The law punishes acts such as running a brothel, soliciting in a public place, living off the earnings of sex work, and living or habitually living with a sex worker.

Justice Verma Commission (2012-13) : The Hindu Analysis

- The Justice Verma Commission also recognized that there is a distinction between women trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and adult, consenting women who are voluntarily engaged in sexual activity.
- Buddhadeb Karmaskar vs. State of West Bengal (2011) Case : The Hindu Analysis
- The Supreme Court in Buddhadeb Karmaskar v State of West Bengal (2011) held that sex workers have a right to respect.

Challenges before sex workers:

Discrimination and Blaming : The Hindu Analysis

- The rights of sex workers are non-existent and those who do such work face discrimination because of their criminal status.
- These people are looked down upon and have no place in the society and are mostly treated harshly by landlords and even by law.
- Their fight continues to demand equal human, health and labor rights as they are not treated in the same category as other workers.

Abuse and Exploitation : The Hindu Analysis

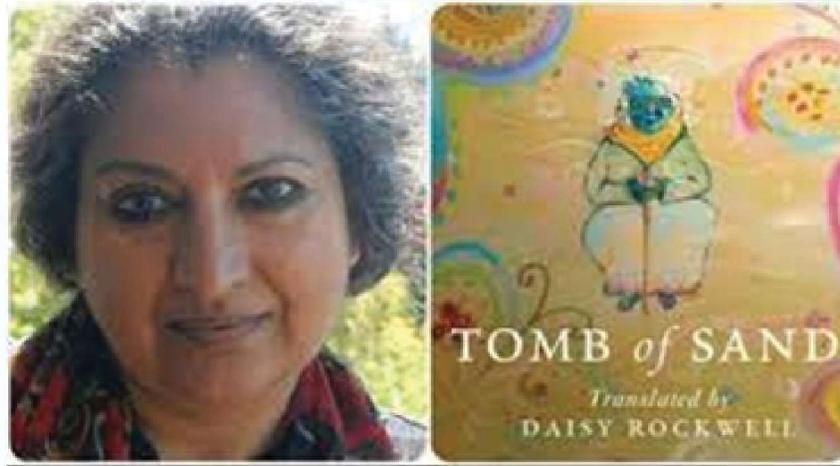
- Sometimes sex workers have to face a variety of abuses which range from physical to mental assaults.
- They face harassment from customers, their own family members, the community and even those who must obey the law.

Way forward : The Hindu Analysis

- The time has come to recognize sex work as a profession and give it a moral character.
- To make a living by providing sexual services to adult men, women and transgender persons under sex work; there is a need to provide the right to lead a dignified life and freedom from violence, exploitation, social stigma and discrimination.
- The time has come to rethink sex work from the point of view of labor, where we recognize their work and provide them with basic labor rights guarantees.
- Parliament should reconsider the existing law and try to remove the problems prevailing in the process of 'victim-rescue-rehabilitation'.
- This is especially important in this time of crisis.

Swadeep Kumar

INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE



- ‘Tomb of Sand’ has become the first book written in an Indian language to be awarded the International Booker Prize.
- The book, originally published in Hindi as Reet Samadhi, is written by author Geetanjali Shree and translated into English by Daisy Rockwell.
- This book tells the story of an 80-year-old woman who experiences a deep depression after the death of her husband. Eventually, she overcomes her depression and eventually decides to visit Pakistan to face the past she left behind during the partition.

International Booker Prize:

- The International Booker Prize is awarded annually to a book that has been translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.
- The International Booker Prize started in the year 2005 as the Man Booker International Prize.
- The aim of this award is to encourage more and more reading of high-quality novels from around the world.
- Although it has already had a significant impact in the UK.
- The significant work of translators is celebrated, with the prize money of £50,000 divided equally between the author and the translator.
- Each shortlisted writer and translator also receives £2,500.
- Both novels and short stories collections are eligible.

Swadeep Kumar

Money spider



- Money spider, commonly found in European grasslands, has been spotted in the Muthanga range of Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary for the first time in the country.
- Researchers from Christ College (Kerala) have also discovered ant-mimicking spiders belonging to the group of jumping spiders from the Muthanga range.

About Money Spider:

- The money spider belongs to the family of dwarf spiders (Linyphiidae) under the genus *Prosoponoides*.
- So far only six species of spiders belonging to this genus have been identified worldwide.
- It has been named *Prosoponoides biflectogynus*.
- Male and female money spiders are usually 3 mm to 4 mm long, respectively.
- Both males and females are dark brown in color with irregular silver and black spots on the oval abdomen.
- They have many fine black spines on their olive-green legs.
- Eight black colored eyes arranged in two rows.
- Females build triangular webs between dry tree twigs and feed on small insects, while males prefer to hide under dry leaves.
- Two or more males can be found in the web of a female spider.

Anti-Mimicking Spider:

- Ant-mimicking spider named *Toxius alboclavus*.
- They belong to the Salticidae family.
- Male and female spiders of this species are up to 4 mm and 6 mm long, respectively.

- A pair of white stripes on the dark brown belly of females sets them apart from other spiders in this group (jumping spiders).
- Males of the species are characterized by a brownish pectoral region and black thorax with white hairs.
- These spiders have antler-shaped features in their protruding fangs.
- A long spine is present at the base of each of their legs.

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary:

- Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS) located in Kerala is an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. It was established in the year 1973.
- The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the first biosphere reserve in India to be included in the UNESCO-designated World Network of Biosphere Reserves (designated in 2012).
- Other wildlife parks under this reserve include Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park, Mukurthi National Park and Silent Valley.
- 44 sq. km. The Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over an area of 10 km, is connected to the tiger reserves of Nagarhole and Bandipur in Karnataka and Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu.
- River Kabini (a tributary of river Kaveri) flows through this sanctuary.
- Forest types found here include South Indian moist deciduous forests, western coastal semi-evergreen forests and teak, Nilgiri/Eucalyptus and Grevelia forests.
- Elephant, Gaur, Tiger, Cheetah, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Wild Boar, Sloth Bear, Nilgiri Langur, Bonnet Macaque, Common Langur, Malabar Giant Squirrel etc. are the major mammals found here.

YOJNA IAS

Swadeep Kumar

Jagannath Puri Corridor



- Odisha government's ambitious temple corridor project in Puri has become a subject of political controversy.

Puri Heritage Corridor Project:

- It is the Odisha government's redevelopment project to make Puri an International Heritage Site, including the Jagannath Temple. Though it was conceived in the year 2016, it was unveiled in December 2019.
- Under this umbrella project, the areas of Shree Jagannath Heritage Corridor or Shree Mandir Parikrama Project are covered.
- The project includes Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) building redevelopment, a 600-capacity Shree Mandir Reception Centre, Puri Lake, Musa River Rejuvenation Scheme etc.
- The Odisha government has listed three objectives for the improvement of the area around the temple – security of the temple, protection of devotees and creation of religious atmosphere for the devotees.
- The government has allocated funds for the project related to development of infrastructure and development of heritage and architecture in Puri (ABADHA) scheme.
- ABADHA scheme covers land acquisition fee/rehabilitation and road improvement to provide better facilities in and around Shri Jagannath Temple.

Why has the project become the subject of controversy?

- Experts and members of civil society objected to the use of heavy machinery for excavation, citing the potential for adverse effects on the 12th century temple.
- Questions were raised about whether proper permissions and approvals were obtained

for construction around the temple.

- Jagannath Temple has been designated a Monument of National Importance by the Archaeological Survey of India and is a centrally protected monument.
- Large scale demolition and construction work is taking place within 100 to 200 meters area of the temple which is prohibited by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Verification) Act (AMSAR), 2010.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Recognition) Act (AMSAR), 2010:

- As per the AMSAR (Amendment and Recognition) Act, construction work is prohibited within a radius of 100 meters of the protected area.
- The area around the monument extending up to 200 meters is called the regulated zone.
- As per the provisions of the AMSAR Act, the National Monuments Authority (NMA) established in the year 2011 under the Ministry of Culture is in charge of protection and conservation of ASI-protected sites by managing the prohibited and regulated area within the periphery of such site.
- Permission from the NMA is required if construction is to be carried out in a regulated or prohibited area.
- The term “construction” as defined in the AMSAR Act does not include construction of public toilets, urinals and “like facilities”.
- It does not include water, electricity supply or “provision of similar facilities for publicity”.
- In addition, if the built up area of the monument is more than 5,000 square metres, an impact assessment is also required to be done by the NMA before development around the monument.

Features of Jagannath Temple:

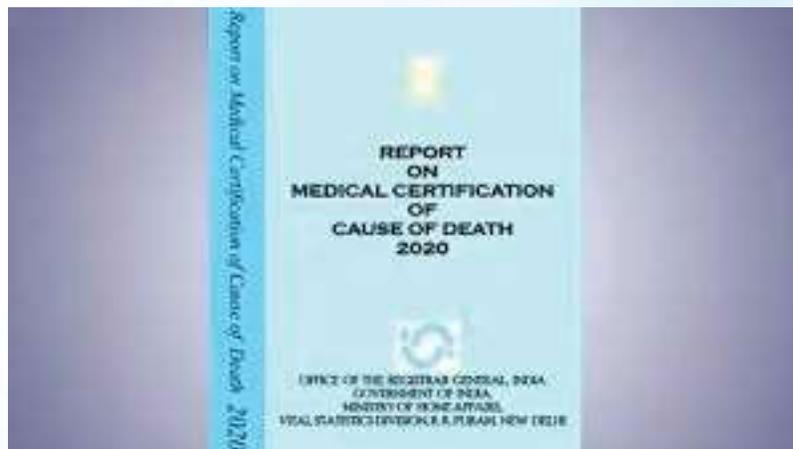
- It is believed that this temple was built in the 12th century by King Anantvarman Chodagung Dev of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty.
- Jagannath Temple at Puri is also called ‘Yamanika Tirtha’, according to Hindu beliefs, the power of ‘Yama’, the god of death has ended due to the presence of Lord Jagannath in Puri.
- This temple was called “White Pagoda” and is part of the Chardham pilgrimage (Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri, Rameshwaram).
- The temple has four main gates (‘Singh Dwar’ in the east, ‘Ashwa Dwar’ in the south, ‘Vyaghara Dwar’ in the west and ‘Hasti Dwar’ in the north). Each door is carved.
- Opposite its entrance stands the Arun Stambh or Surya Pillar, which was originally installed in the Sun Temple at Konark.

Other Important Monuments of Odisha:

- Konark Sun Temple (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Tara Tarini Temple
- Lingaraja Temple
- Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves

Swadeep Kumar

MCCD 2020 Report



- According to the Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) 2020 report, the first year of the COVID-19 lockdown saw the highest incidence of people dying of respiratory diseases during the past decade.

MCCD Report:

- The Medical Certification of Causes of Death (MCCD) scheme was launched in the country under the provisions of the Birth and Death Registration (RBD) Act, 1969.
- Since then it has started with different levels of proficiency in the States/UTs in the country.
- Under the scheme, the Office of the Registrar General of India receives data on medically proven causes of death in a form collected, compiled and tabulated by the Birth and Death Registration Offices of the respective Chief Registrars of States/UTs.

Salient Features of MCCD Report:

Total Deaths:

- The total number of deaths due to all causes in the year 2020 was 81.2 lakh.

- India's additional death rate for 2020 and 2021 is estimated at 47.4 lakh in the report.
- The Civil Registration System (CRS) data reported an additional 4.75 lakh deaths from all causes in 2020 compared to 2019.

Medically Proven Deaths:

- In the case of medically proven deaths, it is 22.5% of the total registered deaths nationally, but the death toll at the time of terminal illness has increased to 54.6% but this increased to 54.6% at the time of terminal illness.
- About 5.7% of total clinically certified deaths are reported as infant deaths.

Major group causes of death:

There are nine major group causes of death that account for approximately 88.7% of all medically proven causes of death:

- Communicable diseases (32.1%)
- Respiratory tract diseases (10%)
- Special Purpose Code- COVID-19 (8.9%)
- Some infectious and parasitic diseases – mainly involving septicemia and tuberculosis (7.1%)
- Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases (5.8%)
- Injury, poisoning and some other consequences of external causes (5.6%)
- Neoplasm (4.7%)
- Some conditions arising in the perinatal period (4.1%)
- Symptoms and abnormal clinical results “not elsewhere classified” (10.6%)

Deaths from Kovid-19:

- The COVID-19 virus, also a cause of respiratory illness, is separately reported in the report as “Deaths reported under the Code for Special Purposes (COVID-19 Deaths)”.
- COVID-19 is the third leading cause of death, accounting for 8.9% of total medical deaths nationally.
- However, according to the Union Health Ministry, in the year 2020, 1.49 lakh people died due to Kovid-19.
- As of May 2022, the death toll from Kovid-19 in India was 5.2 lakh.
- Deaths due to respiratory disease:
- In the year 2020, there were 1,81,160 deaths due to respiratory diseases like pneumonia, asthma and bronchitis, while in the year 2019 there were more than 1,52,311 deaths.
- People above the age of 70 were most affected by respiratory diseases, which were responsible for the majority of deaths, with 29.4% of all registered medically certified

deaths belonging to this age group.

- This is followed by 23.9% of deaths in the age group of 55-64 years, while a significant number of deaths (4.5%) have also been reported in the age group of 65-69 years.
- The highest number of deaths were observed in the age group of 45 years and above which accounts for 82.7% of the total deaths.

Swadeep Kumar

Lavender Festival



- Recently India's first Lavender Festival was inaugurated in Baderwah, Jammu.
- Cultivation of lavender has created employment for about 5,000 farmers and young entrepreneurs in remote areas of Jammu and Kashmir. More than 1,000 farmer families are involved in its cultivation in 200 acres.

Lavender Revolution:

- The Purple or Lavender Revolution was launched in 2016 by the Union Ministry of Science and Technology through the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Aroma Mission.
- Lavender is cultivated in almost all the 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir.
- For the first time, farmers were given free lavender saplings for cultivation, whereas farmers who had cultivated lavender earlier were given Rs 5-6 per plant.

Target:

- Supporting domestic aromatic crop based agricultural economy by promoting domestic varieties instead of imported aromatic oils.

The product:

- The main product is lavender oil which sells at least Rs 10,000 per litre.
- Lavender water, which is isolated from lavender oil, is used to make incense sticks.
- Hydrosol, which is formed after distillation from flowers, is used to make soap and room freshener.

Importance:

- This is in line with the government's policy of doubling farm income by 2022.
- It will help in providing means of livelihood to the budding farmers, agri-entrepreneurs and will boost the Startup India campaign and entrepreneurial spirit in the region.
- More than 500 youth had taken advantage of the Purple Revolution and their income increased manifold.

Aroma Mission:

- Aroma Mission is envisaged by CSIR to bring about a transformational change in the fragrance sector through desired interventions in the areas of agriculture, processing and product development to promote the growth of the perfume industry and rural employment.
- This mission will promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for such essential oils, which are in high demand in the aroma (perfume) industry.
- This mission will help Indian farmers and aroma industry to become global representatives in the production and export of some other essential oils like 'Menthol Mint'.
- It aims at making farmers prosperous by making high profits, utilizing barren land and protecting crops from wild and domesticated animals.

Aroma Mission Phase-I & Phase II:

- During the first phase, CSIR helped in cultivating 6000 hectares of land and covered 46 aspirational districts across the country. Also trained more than 44,000 people.
- In February 2021 CSIR launched the second phase of Aroma Mission which is proposed to involve more than 45,000 skilled human resources which will benefit more than 75,000 farmer families across the country.

Nodal Agency:

- CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow is its

nodal agency.

Potential consequences:

- Bringing about 5500 hectares of additional area under captive cultivation of aromatic cash crops, especially targeting rainfed/degraded lands across the country.
- To provide technical and infrastructural support for distillation and value addition to farmers/producers across the country.
- Enabling effective buy-back mechanism to ensure remunerative price to the farmers/producers.
- Value addition of essential oils and fragrances for their integration into global trade and economy.

Swadeep Kumar

INS Khanderi



INS Khanderi – Today Current Affairs

- Raksha Mantri sailed to sea aboard Scorpene class submarine 'INS Khanderi' during his visit to Karwar Naval Base in Karn
- During the visit, he underwent a wide range of operational exercises with the submarine showcasing the advanced sensor suite, combat system and weapon capability. These capabilities provide an advantage to the submarine in the subsurface area.

Today Current Affairs

Scorpene Class Submarine:

- The Scorpene class submarines built under Project-75 are powered by a diesel-electric propulsion system.
- The Scorpene is one of the most sophisticated submarines, capable of carrying out multiple missions including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mining and area surveillance.
- The Scorpene class is the Navy's first modern conventional submarine line-up in nearly two decades since INSS Sindhushastra was procured from Russia in July 2000.

Khanderi Submarine : The Hindu Analysis

- Khanderi is a Kalvari class diesel-electric attack submarine.
- It is named after a deadly fish named 'Sawfish Khander' which is found in the Indian Ocean.
- The first Khanderi submarine was commissioned by the Indian Navy on 6 December 1968 and decommissioned in October 1989.
- Besides Khanderi, these submarines include Karanj, Vela, Vagir, Vagsheer and Kalvari which have already been launched.

Calvary class submarine : The Hindu Analysis

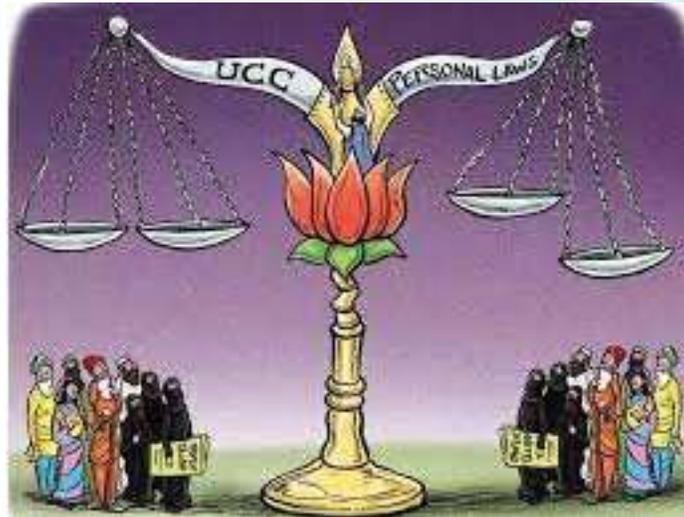
- The Calvary class is based on the Scorpene-class submarines for the Indian Navy with a diesel-electric powered attack capability.
- India's Defense Ministry approved Project-75 in 1997 which allows the Indian Navy to acquire 24 submarines.

Project-75 : The Hindu Analysis

- It is one of two lines of P-75 submarines, the other being the P75I. This is part of a plan approved in 1999 to build indigenous submarines with technology sourced from foreign firms.
- The contract for six submarines under the P-75 was awarded to Mazagon Dock in October 2005 and deliveries were to begin in 2012, but the project has faced delays.
- The program has been initiated with the transfer of technology from French company Naval Group (earlier known as DCNS) to Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).a

Swadeep Kumar

Uniform Civil Code (UCC)



Uniform Civil Code (UCC) – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the Uttarakhand government constituted an expert committee headed by a retired Supreme Court (SC) judge to review all relevant laws governing the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and the personal affairs of the residents of Uttarakhand.
- A few months ago, the Allahabad High Court had also asked the central government to initiate the process of implementation of UCC.

Today Current Affairs

Uniform Civil Code (UCC):

- Uniform Civil Code provides for uniform law for the whole country as well as uniformity in laws like marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption etc. for all religious communities.
- Article 44 of the Constitution states that the State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India.
- Article 44 is one of the Directive Principles of State Policy mentioned in the Constitution.
- Article 37 defines that the provisions relating to the Directive Principles of State Policy cannot be enforced by any court but the principles contained therein shall be of a fundamental nature in the system of governance.

Status of UCC in India : The Hindu Analysis

- India follows a uniform civil code in most of the civil matters, such as the Indian Contract Act, 1872, Code of Civil Procedure, Sale of Goods Act, Transfer of Property Act, 1882, Partnership Act 1932, Evidence Act 1872 etc.

- However in some respects these civil laws are also subject to variation as hundreds of amendments have been made to them by the states.
- For example, many states have refused to implement the Motor Vehicles Act, 2019 uniformly.
- At present Goa is the only state which has implemented UCC.

Produce : The Hindu Analysis

- The origin of UCC lies in a report submitted in the year 1835 during the British rule.
- The report stresses the need for uniformity in the codification of Indian law relating to offences, evidence and contracts, specifically recommending that personal laws of Hindus and Muslims be excluded from such codification.
- Increased legislation dealing with personal issues. This prompted the government to codify the Hindu law in the year 1941 with B.N. Rao was forced to form the committee.

Hindu Succession Act, 1956 : The Hindu Analysis

- N. Based on the recommendations of the Rao Committee, the Hindu Succession Act (1956) was adopted to amend and codify the law relating to intestate or involuntary succession among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs.
- Although there were separate personal laws for Muslims, Christians and Parsis.

Supreme Court Judgment : The Hindu Analysis

- Courts have often said in their judgments that the government should move towards UCC to bring about uniformity.
- The decision of Shah Bano case (1985) in this context is well known.
- Another case was the Sarala Mudgal case (1995), which deals with the issue of bigamy and conflict between the personal laws on matters of marriage. The Hindu Analysis
- In the Shayara Bano case (2017), the Supreme Court declared the practice of triple talaq (talaq-e-biddat) unconstitutional.
- Arguing that practices like triple talaq and polygamy adversely affect a woman's right to live with dignity, the Center has questioned whether the constitutional protection given to religious practices should be extended to those which is not in compliance with the Fundamental Rights.

Requirement of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) : The Hindu Analysis

- All citizens should be treated equally and rules of government sponsorship/religious places/programmes should be barred in the constitution.
- Implementation of UCC will help in reducing religious divide in a country like India where people of different religions live.

- Enforcement of UCC will protect weaker sections, simplify laws and ensure gender justice while following the ideals of secularism. The Hindu Analysis
- People in India have different religious beliefs. The diverse religious practices enable it to be applied on the basic platform for each religion.
- Minorities i.e. Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis have a misconception that UCC will destroy their religious practices and they will be forced to follow the religious practice of the majority.

Lack of awareness among people : The Hindu Analysis

- The most important issue is people's ignorance about UCC and the reason for such ignorance is lack of education, false news, irrational religious beliefs etc.

Communal Politics : The Hindu Analysis

- Many analysts are of the opinion that Uniform Civil Code is demanded only in the context of communal politics.
- A large section of the society sees it as majoritarianism under the guise of social reform.

Constitutional Constraints : The Hindu Analysis

- Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which protects the freedom to profess and propagate any religion, is against the concept of equality enshrined in Article 14 of the Indian Constitution

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