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WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022



Floor Test: Governor



Floor Test: Governor – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, in the ongoing political crisis in Maharashtra, the decision to conduct floor test of the Governor is once again in the news.

Today Current Affairs

What are the constitutional provisions of the Governor related to the floor test?

- Article 174 – empowers the Governor to summon, dissolve and prorogue the State Legislative Assembly.
- Article 174 (2) (b) of the Constitution empowers the Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly on the aid and advice of the Cabinet, although the Governor can exercise his discretion when such a Chief Minister, whose majority is in doubt It is possible.

- According to Article 175(2), the Governor can summon the session of the House and call for a floor test to prove whether the government has sufficient number of MLAs or not. The Hindu Analysis
- However, the Governor can exercise the above power only according to Article 163 of the Constitution, according to which the Governor acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister.
- When the House is in session, the Speaker can call for a floor test. But when the Legislative Assembly is not in session, under Article 163, the Governor can use his residuary powers to allow the floor test to be called.

Discretionary Power of Governor : The Hindu Analysis

- Article 163(1) essentially limits any discretionary power of the Governor to only those cases where the Constitution clearly specifies that the Governor should act at his discretion and exercise it independently.
- The Governor can exercise his discretionary power under Article 174 when the Chief Minister has lost the support of the House and his support is debatable.
- Usually the chief minister is suspected when he has lost the majority, the opposition and the governor will call for a floor test.
- Courts have also made it clear on several occasions that when the ruling party's majority is in question, a floor test should be conducted at the earliest opportunity available.

View of the Supreme Court on the power of the Governor to call a floor test : The Hindu Analysis

- In 2016 in *Nabam Rebia and Bamang Felix v. Deputy Speaker (Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly case)*, the Supreme Court held that the power to summon the House is not vested in the Governor alone and should be exercised with the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers and not that at your discretion.
- The Court highlighted the fact that the Governor is not an elected authority, he is only a nominee of the President, and such a nominee cannot have overriding authority over the House of the State Legislature or the representatives of the people constituting the Houses. The Hindu Analysis
- Allowing the Governor to govern the State Legislature or the State Executive does not harmonize with the strong democratic principles enshrined in the provisions of the Constitution. Particularly because the constitution is founded on the principle of ministerial responsibility.
- In the year 2020, in *Shivraj Singh Chouhan & Ors. Vs. Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly & Ors*, the Supreme Court upheld the Speaker's powers to call for floor test if there is a prima facie view that the government has lost its majority. Retained the powers of the speaker.

- In the year 2020, the Supreme Court upheld the power of the Speaker to call for floor test if it is prima facie held that the government has lost its majority in Shivraj Singh Chouhan & Ors. Vs Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly & Ors. The Hindu Analysis
- “The Governor is not deprived of the power to order a floor test where, on the basis of the information available with the Governor, it becomes clear whether the Government enjoys the confidence of the House, the issue shall be assessed on the basis of the floor test. But should be done.

Floor Test : The Hindu Analysis

- It is a term used for the test of majority. If there is doubt against the Chief Minister (CM) of a state, he can be asked to prove his majority in the House.
- In the case of a coalition government, the Chief Minister can be asked to take a trust vote and get a majority.
- In the absence of a clear majority, when more than one person is claiming to form the government, the governor can call a special session to see who has the majority to form the government.
- Some MLAs may be absent or may choose not to vote. In such a situation the numbers are considered on the basis of only those MLAs who were present to vote.

Swadeep Kumar

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NIPUN



NIPUN – Today Current Affairs

- Recently an innovative project called ‘NIPUN’ for skill training of construction workers i.e. National Initiative for Promotion of Skills of Construction Workers was launched.
- Creating the labor force of the future for the skillful construction industry which will spur innovation and large-scale growth in the country.
- The construction sector is on track to become the largest employer by 2022, and will require over 45 million qualified workers over the next ten years.

Today Current Affairs

Skilled Project:

- The basic objective of the project is to train over 1 lakh construction workers through new skilling and upskilling programmes.
- Project Nipun is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- This project is being operated under the flagship program of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).
- The transformative impact of the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) has reduced the vulnerability of urban poor households by providing skills and employment opportunities to urban residents, especially the youth.

Implementing Agency:

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) : The Hindu Analysis

- NSDC is the nodal and implementing agency under the Ministry of Skill Development

and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

- NSDC will be responsible for overall execution of training, monitoring and candidate tracking.

Skilled Project Implementation : The Hindu Analysis

Project implementation is divided into three parts:

- Training through Recognition of Prior Training (RPL) at construction sites : The Hindu Analysis
- Onsite skill training will be provided to around 80,000 construction workers through industry associations under RPL certification, branded with MoHUA.

Training through New Skills (SSC) by Plumbing and Infrastructure Sector Skill Council : The Hindu Analysis

- About 14,000 candidates will gain new skills through the Plumbing and Infrastructure Sector Skill Council (SSC) in trades that have potential for placement.

International placement through industries/builders/contractors : The Hindu Analysis

- The courses are in line with the National Skill Qualification Framework.
- It will be provided only at recognized and affiliated training centres.
- It is also envisaged that NSDC will house around 12,000 people in foreign countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE and other Gulf countries.

Benefits associated with the skillful project:

Access to New Opportunities : The Hindu Analysis

- Skilled project will enable construction workers to find better job opportunities, increase their wages and even get overseas placements.

Entrepreneurial spirit : The Hindu Analysis

- It is encouraged and supported by providing access to self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities to urban workers.
- This initiative will enable construction workers to be more efficient.

Skill Advancement : The Hindu Analysis

- Construction workers can adopt advanced skills keeping in view the future trends in the construction industry by upgrading their capabilities and diversifying their skills.
- The ministry also faced technology challenges, which led to the implementation of

six light house projects in record time, using technology and local materials to build sustainable green buildings.

Growth of Economy : The Hindu Analysis

- The construction industry is an important contributor to the country's GDP, so this scheme will catalyze the growth of GDP.

Social Security : The Hindu Analysis

- It will provide trainees with digital skills like 'Skill Insurance', three years accidental insurance with coverage of Rs 2 lakh, cashless transactions and EPF and BOCW facilities.

Swadeep Kumar

India's EV ambition rides on three wheels

India's EV ambition rides on three wheels – Today Current Affairs

- Sales of three wheel Electric Vehicles (EVs) fare well than the sales of two wheel and four wheel EVs

Today Current Affairs

What is the FAME 2 Scheme?

- Phase-II of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid and) Electric (FAME) Vehicles scheme was approved in 2019 with an outlay of Rs10000 crore.
- This renewed push for EVs is significant considering phase-I launched in 2015 with an outlay of Rs 895 crore.
- It aims to support 10 lakh e-two-wheelers, 5 lakh e-three-wheelers, 55,000 e-four-wheeler passenger cars and 7,000 e-buses.

How successful is the FAME 2 scheme? The Hindu Analysis

- Response from companies –As a part of FAME-II, the government has also made a push for indigenous manufacturing.
- As a result Legacy auto manufacturers such as Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hero Electric, and TVS have unveiled their EV offerings.
- New EV players like Ola and Bounce have also emerged on the scene.

- Adoption of EVs – 3 years into FAME-II the adoption lags far behind the target due to various factors including the pandemic. As a result FAME-II got a two-year extension in June 2021.

Three wheeler EVs are dominating the EV market while two wheelers and four wheeler EVs have received only considerable coverage. The Hindu Analysis

- The sales of two wheeler EVs comes at a distant second with over 30% of registrations and passenger four wheeler EVs stands at a meagre 2.5% of the total sales of EVs.
- Three wheelers EV sales have crossed over 4 lakh vehicles of the 5-lakh target since 2019.
- The numbers are expected to be higher given the prevalence of unregistered vehicles in India.
- At the current rate, e-three-wheelers are expected to breach the 5-lakh target by 2023.

Which states fare well in e-three-wheeler sales? The Hindu Analysis

- Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal account for close to 80% of all e-three-wheeler registrations, with U.P. accounting for close to 40% of all registrations.
- Of these five States, Assam, Delhi, U.P., and West Bengal have formalised EV policies while Bihar has a draft policy with a final policy due to be introduced later in 2022.
- These five States are characterised by high population density and shortage of affordable public transport.

What are the incentives provided for promoting e-vehicles? The Hindu Analysis

- All five States provide road tax exemption of 100% and on registration fees.
- Assam, Delhi and West Bengal have linked incentives to the battery size (in kWh) with additional benefits on interest rate on loans and scrappage incentives in some cases.
- U.P. has offered 100% interest-free loans to State government employees for purchasing EVs in the State and 30% subsidy on the road price of EVs to families with a single girl child. It has also exempted SGST on all such vehicles.
- UP has outlined incentives to promote EV manufacturing in the State.
- Bihar's draft EV policy too has been drafted along similar lines, focusing on both adoption and manufacturing.
- How well local manufactures fare up against legacy brands? The Hindu Analysis
- With financial assistance from FAME-II, local manufacturers have built a truly Indian EV with its unique design catering to Indian commuter needs.
- Costing between Rs1 lakh and Rs1.5 lakh, these vehicles are produced by scores of local workshops and small enterprises and have come to dominate the e-three-wheeler market.
- Legacy automakers with their own e-three-wheeler offerings have been struggling to compete with these local producers.

What are the issues to be addressed? The Hindu Analysis

- Low rate of adoption – e-two-wheeler and e-four-wheeler have problems both on the demand and supply side.
- Consumers are justifiably apprehensive in adopting such vehicles given the host of issues which come with it.
- The recent incidents of fires in e-scooters have added to the apprehension.
- Reliable manufacturers with proven track records are also hard to come by.
- Adequate passenger safety – Local manufacturing enterprises often lack motivation to invest in design developments focusing on safety.
- Fragmented manufacturing industries with non-uniform standards have made legacy automakers struggle to compete with local manufacturers.
- Future policies must therefore incorporate appropriate design and passenger safety standards.

Anshul

Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM)



Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) – Today Current Affairs

- Recently Vertical Launched Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) was successfully flight tested by Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Indian Navy from an Indian Naval Ship at Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur

Odisha.

Today Current Affairs

About VL-SRSAM:

- VL-SRSAM has been jointly designed and developed by three units of Defense Research and Development Organization for deployment on warships of the Indian Navy.
- The missile has the capability to neutralize various airborne threats at close range including sea-skimming targets.
- Sea skimming is a technique used by many anti-ship missiles and some fighter or strike aircraft to evade radar and infrared detection.

Design : The Hindu Analysis

- The missile has a range of 40 to 50 km. Designed to attack high-speed air targets at a distance of up to 15 km and at an altitude of about 15 km.
- Its design is based on the Astra missile, which is an air-to-air missile beyond visual range.
- Astra ("Weapon") is India's first air-to-air all-weather active beyond visible range radar homing air-to-air missile, developed by the Defense Research and Development Organization.
- Beyond-Visual-Range Missile (BVR) is an air-to-air missile capable of hitting a range of 20 nautical miles or more.

Features : The Hindu Analysis

- Cruciform wings: They are four small wings arranged like a cross on four sides and provide a stable aerodynamic position to the projectile.
- Thrust vectoring: This is the ability to change the direction of thrust, angular velocity and position of the missile with its engine.
- Thrust is the force that moves the aircraft through the air.
- Canistered system: It controls the environment inside, thus making it easier to transport and store, and to make the weapon durable.

Defensive response:

Chaff : The Hindu Analysis

- It is a countermeasure technique used around the world to protect naval ships from enemy radar and radio frequency (RF) missiles.

Missiles to counter anti-ship missiles : The Hindu Analysis

- These systems should have a rapid detection mechanism and quick response to warships.

Swadeep Kumar

NITI Aayog



NITI Aayog – Today Current Affairs

- NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant is set to step down and will be replaced by Parameswaran Iyer, former Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Today Current Affairs

NITI Aayog:

Background:

- The Planning Commission was replaced by a new institution NITI Aayog on January 1, 2015, emphasizing the 'bottom-up' approach to envisage the concept of Maximum Governance, Minimum Government, echoing the spirit of 'cooperative federalism'.
- It has two hubs.

- Team India Hub – acts as an interface between the states and the Centre.
- Knowledge and Innovation Hub- Works like a think-tank of NITI Aayog.

Combination : The Hindu Analysis

- Chairman: Prime Minister
- Vice President: appointed by the Prime Minister
- Governing Council: Chief Ministers of all States and Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories.
- Regional Council: The Prime Minister or a person nominated by him presides over the meeting of Chief Ministers and Lieutenant Governors to address specific regional issues.
- Ad-hoc Membership: 2 ex-officio members on rotation from leading research institutes.
- Ex-officio Membership: Up to four members of the Union Council of Ministers nominated by the Prime Minister.
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO): Secretary to the Government of India who is appointed by the Prime Minister for a fixed term.
- Special Invitees: Experts from various fields nominated by the Prime Minister.

Purpose : The Hindu Analysis

- Promoting cooperative federalism through structured support initiatives and mechanisms with states on an ongoing basis, recognizing that strong states make up a strong nation.
- Developing mechanisms for making credible plans at the village level and progressively collating these at higher levels of government.
- To ensure that the interests of national security are incorporated into economic strategy and policy, in particular in the areas it refers to. The Hindu Analysis
- Pay special attention to those sections of society who may be at risk of not benefiting adequately from economic progress.
- Provide advice and encourage partnerships between key stakeholders and national and international like-minded think tanks as well as academic and policy research institutions
- Establishing a knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurial support system through a collaborative community of national and international experts, practitioners and other partners.
- To provide a forum for resolution of inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues to expedite the implementation of the development agenda. The Hindu Analysis
- To help in dissemination of stakeholders along with maintaining a state-of-the-art resource centre, aggregating research on good governance and best practices in sustainable and equitable development.

Importance of setting up NITI Aayog : The Hindu Analysis

- The 65 year old Planning Commission had become a redundant organization. It was relevant in a directed economy structure but no longer.
- India is a country of diversities and its states are at different stages of economic development, with their own different strengths and weaknesses. The Hindu Analysis
- The notion that one model should be applicable to all for economic planning is wrong. It cannot establish India as a competitor in today's global economy.

Related concerns and challenges : The Hindu Analysis

- NITI Aayog has no authority to give discretionary funding to states, which makes it incapable of making transformative interventions.
- It acts only as an advisory body which advises the government on various issues without ensuring the enforceability of its ideas.
- NITI Aayog has no role in influencing private or public investment. The Hindu Analysis
- The organization has been politicized in recent times.
- NITI Aayog has been turned into a glorified recommendatory body, which lacks the necessary powers to bring about a positive change in the working of the government.

Initiatives of NITI Aayog : The Hindu Analysis

- SDG India Index
- Composite Water Management Index
- Atal Innovation Mission
- Project with
- Aspirational District Program
- School Education Quality Index
- District Hospital Index
- Health Index
- Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index
- India Innovation Index
- Women Transforming India Awards
- Good Governance Index

Difference between NITI Aayog and Planning Commission

NITI Aayog : The Hindu Analysis

- It acts as an advisory think tank.
- It consists of a wide range of expert members.

- It works in the spirit of cooperative federalism as the states are equal partners.
- Secretaries appointed by the Prime Minister are known as CEOs.
- It focuses on the 'bottom-up' approach of the scheme.
- It does not have the authority to enforce policies.
- It does not have the authority to allocate funds, which is vested in the Finance Minister.

Planning Commission : The Hindu Analysis

- It functioned as a non-constitutional body.
- It had limited expertise.
- States participated in the Annual Planning Meetings as spectators.
- Secretaries were appointed through normal process.
- It followed a 'top-down' approach.
- Implemented policies on states and allocated funds with approved projects.
- It was empowered to allocate funds to ministries and state governments.

Swadeep Kumar

Menar Bird Village Rajasthan



Menar Bird Village Rajasthan – Today Current Affairs

- Menar village in Udaipur district, recognized as “Bird Village” after various conservation efforts, has been decided to be notified as the new wetland of Rajasthan.
- This will pave the way for this rural area of Mewar region to get the status of Ramsar site.

Today Current Affairs

Wetlands:

- Wetlands are seasonal or permanent ecosystems located in water. These include mangroves, swamps, rivers, lakes, deltas, floodplains and floodplains, rice fields, coral reefs, marine areas (places with high tides less than 6 m) as well as man-made wetlands such as wastewater treatment ponds and Reservoir etc. are included.

Importance : The Hindu Analysis

- Wetlands are an important part of our natural environment. They reduce the incidence of floods, protect coastal areas, as well as improve water quality by absorbing pollutants.
- Wetlands are important for humans and the earth. More than 1 billion people depend on them for subsistence and 40% of the world's species live and breed in wetlands. The Hindu Analysis
- They are important sources of food, raw materials, genetic resources for medicines and hydropower.
- 30% of land-based carbon is stored in peatlands (a type of wetland).
- They play an important role in transport, tourism and cultural and spiritual wellbeing of the people.
- Many wetlands are areas of natural beauty and important to the tribal people.

Main features of Menar Wetland : The Hindu Analysis

- Two lakes in Menar village- Brahma and Dhandha host a large number of migratory birds every year.
- The Forest Department has started the process of notifying Menar as a wetland, which will recognize its role in sediment and nutrient storage and help local authorities in conserving the lakes concerned.
- Two lakes will be strengthened to increase aquatic plants and protect biodiversity with wetland status.

Resident Species : The Hindu Analysis

- More than 150 species of local and migratory birds inhabit both the lakes during the winter season.
- These include the Greater Flamingo, White-tailed Lapwing, Pelican, Marsh Harrier, Bar-headed Goose, Common Teal, Greenshank, Pintail, Wagtail, Green Sandpiper and Red-Wattled Lapwing.
- Bird lovers and tourists visit this village after the arrival of migratory birds from Central Asia, Europe and Mongolia.

Other Ramsar sites : The Hindu Analysis

- Presently there are two wetlands recognized as Ramsar sites in Rajasthan-
- Keoladeo Ghana in Bharatpur District.
- Sambhar Salt Lake in Jaipur district.

Importance of Ramsar List : The Hindu Analysis

- It is like an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certification. Any site may also be removed from this list if it does not consistently meet their standards. It is like a valuable item which has a cost but that cost can be paid only when that article has a brand value.
 - Ramsar tag depends on strong security system of any site and provides protection against encroachment.
 - Many species of birds prefer to avoid going into the Himalayan region when entering here and instead choose a route through Afghanistan and Pakistan to enter the Indian subcontinent via Gujarat and Rajasthan.
 - Thus Gujarat has become the first 'landing point' for many international migratory species like ducks, waders, plovers, terns, gulls etc. and shorebirds as well as birds of prey.
- The Hindu Analysis
- Wetlands in India act as pastures and resting places for migratory birds during winter.
 - According to the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Wildlife Species, the CAF (Central Asian Flyway), which covers 30 countries, covers at least 279 species of 182 migratory waterfowl species, including 29 globally threatened and near Threatened species are included.

Swadeep Kumar

Need for an Urban Job Guarantee Scheme

Need for an Urban Job Guarantee Scheme – Today Current Affairs

- A study commissioned by the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council has recommended an urban job guarantee scheme.

Today Current Affairs

What is the history of urban employment schemes in India?

- India has had a history of urban employment schemes such as the Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), which was launched in 1997.
- It provided employment to the unemployed and underemployed urban poor through self-employment and wage employment.
- In 2013, the SJSRY was replaced by the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM).
- But none of them were employment guarantee schemes.
- More and more Indian state governments are looking favourably towards an urban version of MGNREGA. These include
 - Kerala – Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme
 - Odisha- Unnati or Urban Wage Employment Initiative
 - Himachal Pradesh- Mukhyamantri Shahri Aajeevika Guarantee Yojna or MMSAGY
 - Madhya Pradesh- Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana
 - Jharkhand- Mukhyamantri Shramik Yojana
 - Rajasthan- Indira Gandhi Shahari Rozgar Yojana
 - Tamil Nadu- Tamil Nadu Wage Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme for Urban Poor
- What is the need for an urban job guarantee scheme? The Hindu Analysis
- The nationwide lockdown implemented strictly in urban areas led to job losses and reverse migration.
- Growing distress among the urban poor.
- Unemployment rates are typically higher in urban areas.
- Urban poor are worst affected by India's persistently high inflation.
- Prevalence of low-wage, poor quality, informal work.
- Food transfers under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana as well as enhanced MGNREGA works saved the rural population but most of the urban poor have not signed up for PMGKY or Jan Dhan Yojana.

Can an urban job guarantee scheme be tailored along the lines of MGNREGA? The Hindu Analysis

- An urban job guarantee scheme should not be tailored along the lines of a job guarantee like MGNREGA because the urban workforce is more diverse than its rural counterpart.
- The MGNREGA is essentially an income-support programme for off-season farm workers, whereas the urban workforce can be divided into two broad categories
- Those living on the margins in cities for years

- A more aspirational migrant population
- Those living on the margins in cities need to be enrolled in the government portals for benefits such as pension schemes.
- Investment in skilling is essential to ramp up competitiveness in manufacturing.
- The industrial training institutes need to be brought in line with the latest skilling needs by working in concert with industry.

Anshum

Road Safety Loans to States: World Bank



Road Safety Loans to States: World Bank – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the World Bank has approved a loan of US \$ 250 million for the India State Assistance Program for Road Safety in seven states, under which a single accident report number to better manage post-accident incidents. (Single Accident Reporting Number) will be established.

Today Current Affairs

World Bank:

- The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were established together in 1944 during the Bretton Woods Conference in New Hampshire, USA.
- The World Bank Group is a unique global partnership of five institutions working towards

sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.

Member : The Hindu Analysis

- 189 countries are its members.
- India is also its member.

Major Reports : The Hindu Analysis

- Human Capital Index.
- World Development Report.

Its five development institutions : The Hindu Analysis

- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
- International Development Association (IDA)
- International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
- International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)
- India is not its member.

Main features of the program : The Hindu Analysis

- The project will establish a national harmonized crash database system to analyze accidents and use it to build better and safer roads.
- The USD 250 million convertible spread loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a maturity period of 18 years including a grace period of 5.5 years.
- It will be implemented in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Target : The Hindu Analysis

- It aims to fund network expansion of basic and advanced life support ambulances and on the spot training of first responder caregivers for road accident victims.
- The project will also provide incentives to states to take advantage of private financing through Public Private Partnership (PPP) concessions and pilot initiatives.
- Women have to bear the brunt of road accidents indirectly. Recognizing this challenge, the project has a gender-specific focus and will promote the representation of women in management roles in the road safety sector.
- The project will also provide employment opportunities for women especially in post-crash care command and control centres.

Road Accident Scenario in India : The Hindu Analysis

- Official government statistics show that about 150,000 people are killed and another 450,000 are injured in road accidents in India every year.
- More than half of the victims are pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists, and about 84% of all deaths are among the working age group of 18-60 years.
- Poor households, which account for more than 70% of accident victims, bear a high proportion of the socio-economic burden of road accidents due to lack of income, high medical expenses and limited access to the social safety net.

Initiatives for Road Safety:

3rd High Level Global Conference on Road Safety 2030 to Achieving Global Goals : The Hindu Analysis

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) participated in a conference in Sweden in the year 2020 (3rd High Level Global Conference on Road Safety 2030 to Achieving Global Goals 2030), where India has set a target of zero road accidents by 2030.

Brasilia Declaration : The Hindu Analysis

- India has signed the Brasilia Declaration and is committed to reducing the mortality rate.
- The Declaration was signed at the 2nd Global High Level Conference on Road Safety held in Brazil.

Motor Vehicles (MV) (Amendment) Act, 2019 : The Hindu Analysis

- It has increased the penalties for traffic violations, faulty vehicles, juvenile driving etc.
- It provides the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund, which will provide compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India for certain types of accidents.

Ravi Singh

Defence Cooperation between India and Malaysia



Defence Cooperation between India and Malaysia – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, the Indian Defense Minister held talks with his Malaysian counterpart to strengthen defense cooperation between the two countries.
- The Malaysian Air Force is looking for 18 new light combat aircraft, with several nations forming a group including South Korea, Pakistan, China and Sweden. Indian offer is for LCA Mk1A version.
- India has offered a dual package for the maintenance of indigenous fighter jets as well as Russian-origin Su30 MKM aircraft operated by Malaysia.

Today Current Affairs

Key points of the meeting:

- Both countries highlighted areas in which the Indian defense industry can assist Malaysia. India invited senior officials from Malaysia to India to get first-hand experience of the facilities and products of the Indian Defense Industry.
- Malaysia expressed the need to include women workers in peacekeeping operations. Both sides agreed to involve each other on this issue.
- Both countries agreed to upgrade capacity for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations.
- The two sides discussed the existing defense cooperation activities and framework between the two countries and ways to further enhance them under the existing Malaysia-India Defense Cooperation Meeting (MIDCOM) framework.
- The next Midcom is scheduled to be held in July 2022 and it was decided to use this

platform for deeper participation in the defense sector.

Key points of India-Malaysia relations : The Hindu Analysis

- India established diplomatic relations with Malaysia in 1957.
- Economic Relations: India and Malaysia have signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). CECA is a type of Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- India has also signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in services and investment with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- Malaysia is the third largest trading partner in ASEAN.
- Bilateral trade between India and Malaysia is in favor of Malaysia.
- Defense and Security Cooperation: Joint military exercise “Harimau Shakti” is held annually between the two countries.
- Traditional Medicine: India and Malaysia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of Traditional Medicine in October 2010.
- The Government of Malaysia is working to popularize AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) systems in Malaysia.
- AYUSH system is used in Malaysia.

Recent Events : The Hindu Analysis

- In the year 2020, the purchase of Malaysian palm oil resumed after a gap of four months after diplomatic diplomacy between India and Malaysia.
- The former Prime Minister of Malaysia criticized India’s Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which was considered interference in India’s internal affairs.

Importance of Malaysia for India : The Hindu Analysis

- As a country with 7.2% of the population of Indian origin, Malaysia occupies an important place in India’s foreign policy.
- Bordered by busy sea routes such as the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea, Malaysia is also a key pillar of India’s Act East policy and is critical to India’s maritime connectivity strategies.

Swadeep Kumar

Global Health leaders Award 2022

Global Health leaders Award 2022 – Today Current Affairs

- India's ASHA volunteers have received arguably the biggest international recognition in form of the WHO's Global Health Leaders Awards 2022.

Today Current Affairs

How did ASHA evolve?

- India launched the ASHA programme in 2005-06 as part of the National Rural Health Mission.
- Initially rolled out in rural areas, it was later extended to urban settings as well.
- The core of the ASHA programme has been an intention to build the capacity of community members in taking care of their own health and being partners in health services.
- The ASHA programme was inspired from the learnings from two past initiatives.
- In 1975, a WHO monograph titled 'Health by the people' and then in 1978, an international conference on primary health care in Alma Ata.
- The biggest inspiration for designing the ASHA programme came from the Mitandin initiative of Chhattisgarh, which had started in 2002.

What about the key features of ASHA? The Hindu Analysis

- The ASHA selection involved key village stakeholders to ensure community ownership for the initiatives and forge a partnership.
- ASHAs coming from the same village where they worked had an aim to ensure familiarity, better community connect and acceptance. The Hindu Analysis
- The idea of having activists in their name was to reflect that they are the community's representative in the health system, and not the lowest-rung government functionary in the community.
- Calling them volunteers was partly to avoid a painfully slow process for government recruitment and to allow an opportunity to implement performance-based incentives. The Hindu Analysis
- ASHAs have become pivotal to nearly every health initiative at the community level and are integral to demand side interventions for health services in India.

What are the challenges of the programme? The Hindu Analysis

- Salary- ASHAs do not have a fixed salary.

- Career progress- They do not have opportunities for career progression.
- Delays- Though performance-based incentives are supplemented by a fixed amount in a few Indian States, the total payment continues to remain low and often delayed.
- Protests- The issues have resulted in dissatisfaction, regular agitations and protests by ASHAs in many States of India.

What is the need of the hour? The Hindu Analysis

- High remuneration- Indian States need to develop mechanisms for higher remuneration for ASHAs.
- Capacity building- It is time that in-built institutional mechanisms are created for capacity-building and avenues for career progression for ASHAs.
- Social services- Extending the benefits of social sector services including health insurance for ASHAs and their families should be considered. The Hindu Analysis
- External review- While the ASHA programme has benefitted from many internal and regular reviews by the Government, an independent and external review of the programme needs to be given urgent and priority consideration.
- Permanent staff- Considering the extensive shortage of staff in the primary health-care system in India, ASHAs can be made permanent government employees.

Anshum

48th meeting of G-7



48th meeting of G-7 – Today Current Affairs

- Recently at the 48th G-7 summit, the Prime Minister of India invited the G-7 nations to invest in the vast market of clean energy technologies emerging in the country.

- The G-7 is chaired by Germany for the year 2022.
- The German Presidency has invited Argentina, India, Indonesia, Senegal and South Africa to the G-7 summit.

Today Current Affairs

G-7:

- It is an inter-governmental organization, which was formed in the year 1975.
- The bloc meets annually to discuss issues of common interest such as global economic governance, international security and energy policy.
- The G-7 countries are the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US.
- All G-7 countries and India are part of the G20.
- The G-7 has no formal charter or secretariat. The Presidency, which is allocated every year among the member states, is in charge of setting the agenda. Sherpas, ministers and envoys take policy initiatives ahead of the summit.
- According to the Summit website, by the year 2022, G-7 countries contribute 10% of the global population, 31% of the global GDP and 21% of the global carbon dioxide emissions. China and India, the two most populous countries with the world's largest GDP figures, are not part of this group.
- Annual expenditure of the public sector exceeded revenue in all G-7 countries in 2021. Most G-7 countries also had high levels of gross debt, notably Japan (263% of GDP), Italy (151%) and the US (133%).
- G-7 countries play an important role in global trade. America and Germany in particular are the major exporting countries. In the year 2021, goods worth more than one trillion US dollars were exported abroad by both the countries.

Other highlights of the G-7 summit:

PGII : The Hindu Analysis

- To deliver “game-changing” and “transparent” infrastructure projects to developing and middle-income countries, the G-7 annually collectively under the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) announced to raise \$600 billion by the year 2027.

Life Campaign : The Hindu Analysis

- Global Initiative for Life (Lifestyle for Environment) campaign/campaign highlighted by Indian Prime Minister.
- The goal of this campaign is to promote eco-friendly lifestyle.

Stance on Russia-Ukraine Crisis : The Hindu Analysis

- Energy prices have risen to record levels due to the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The Indian Prime Minister addressed the need for equitable energy distribution between the populations of rich and poor countries.
- On the Russo-Ukraine war, the Prime Minister reiterated his stand that hostilities must end immediately and a resolution must be reached by choosing the path of dialogue and diplomacy.

Clean Energy Technology : The Hindu Analysis

- It refers to any process, product or service that minimizes negative environmental impacts through significant energy efficiency improvements, sustainable use of resources or environmental protection activities.
- Clean energy technologies support economic growth by increasing the supply of energy demand and addressing environmental challenges and their effects due to the use of other traditional sources of energy.
- Clean energy technologies support economic growth by increasing the supply of energy demand and addressing environmental challenges and their impacts caused by the use of other traditional sources of energy.
- Clean technology includes a range of technologies related to recycling, renewable energy (wind power, solar energy, biomass, hydropower, geothermal, biofuels, etc.), information technology, green transportation, electric motors, green chemistry, electricity, greywater, etc.

Emerging market for clean technology in India:

Government Regulations : The Hindu Analysis

- With more active media and environmental awareness, India is on the way to adopt a pro-environment approach in all its development strategies.

Adoption of innovative and clean technologies : The Hindu Analysis

- Adoption of new and clean technologies will help India on a sustainable development path as the Indian economy is growing at an unprecedented rate.

Global Climate Dialogue : The Hindu Analysis

- The current global negotiations on climate change have put pressure on rapidly developing economies like India to adopt green technologies.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) : The Hindu Analysis

- Indian market offers strong business prospects for foreign investors.

- India's growing economy and ongoing sector reforms coupled with increasing demand for clean energy to strengthen energy security and reduce pollution continue to make India one of the most attractive destinations for eco-friendly investments in the world.

Low Carbon Technologies : The Hindu Analysis

- India is particularly well positioned to become a global leader in renewable batteries and green hydrogen.
- Other low carbon technologies could make India a market of up to \$80 billion by 2030.

Development in India : The Hindu Analysis

- India has achieved 40% energy-efficiency from non-fossil sources and 10% ethanol-blending in petrol.
- India has the world's first fully solar powered airport.
- India is one of the largest producer of energy from renewable sources. In the power sector, renewable energy (excluding large hydroelectric power plants) accounts for 20% of the total installed electric capacity.

Benefits of clean energy : The Hindu Analysis

- Clean energy provides a variety of environmental and economic benefits, including reduction in air pollution.
- Diversified clean energy supply also reduces dependence on imported fuels.
- Renewable clean energy also has lower costs inherent in it, as there is no need to extract and transport fuels such as oil or coal, these resources are naturally available.
- Other industrial benefits of the clean energy mix create jobs for the development, creation and installation of future clean energy resources.

Swadeep Kumar

Living Lands Charter: Commonwealth



Living Lands Charter: Commonwealth – Today Current Affairs

- Recently Commonwealth members agreed to voluntarily dedicate ‘living lands’ in their respective countries to future generations in line with the strategy set for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
- The ‘Living Lands Charter’ was announced at the conclusion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2022 in Kigali (Rwanda).

Today Current Affairs

UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration:

- The United Nations General Assembly declared the year 2021-30 as the ‘UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration’.
- It aims to promote the environmental goals of the United Nations.
- To provide global cooperation, especially for the restoration of damaged and destroyed ecosystems.
- It calls for the conservation and restoration of ecosystems around the world.

Living Lands Charter : The Hindu Analysis

- The non-binding ‘Living Lands Charter’ states that member states will protect global land resources and prevent land degradation while working towards sustainable management of climate change, biodiversity loss.
- The Living Lands Charter helps cover a joint effort to keep the global average temperature rise to 1.5 °C.
- The Charter aims to achieve climate goals by mixing policy impact, funding, technical assistance, governance and knowledge sharing by nations. The Hindu Analysis

- Commonwealth governments have been asked to submit their emissions reduction targets by September 23, 2022.
- It aims to support member countries to effectively fulfill their commitments under the three Rio Conventions – the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Key Points of CHOGM 2022 : The Hindu Analysis

- The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting is a biennial summit of the Heads of Government of all Commonwealth countries.
- CHOGM 2022 was organized in Rwanda with the theme- ‘providing a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, and transforming.’
- It has raised over US\$4 billion in pledges to fight against malaria and other tropical diseases.
- There have been 24 CHOGMs since 1971, the latest meeting being held in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2018.

Commonwealth : The Hindu Analysis

- It is an international intergovernmental organization of countries that were mostly territories under the former British Empire.
- It was established in 1949 by the London Declaration.
- Queen Elizabeth II is the head of the Commonwealth.
- Many countries in Africa, Asia, America, Europe and the Pacific are included in the Commonwealth.
- Presently 56 countries are its members. Membership is based on free and equal voluntary cooperation.
- In the CHOGM 2022, two African countries Gabon and Togo have been included in the Commonwealth of Nations as the 55th and 56th members respectively.
- Its headquarter is in London.

Swadeep Kumar

Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis: Founder of statistical culture in India

Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis: Founder of statistical culture in India – Today Current Affairs

Context:

- 29th June is the birth anniversary of the father of the Indian statistical system Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis. 29th June is also recognized as national 'Statistics Day'. Mahalanobis taught India how to make plans before starting any project. He is also called Plan man of India
- Introduction: Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis was a renowned statistician and remembered for the Mahalanobis distance, a statistical measure, and for being one of the members of the first Planning Commission of free India. He was born in Kolkata on 29th June 1893. Statistics is the most significant science regarding data collection. In modern days data is the most important element of the world. the person and country which has maximum data is the most powerful country. He taught the interpretation of the data. Without data interpretation, the scientific analysis of social, economic, and political trends can not be analyzed

Today Current Affairs

- Role of Mahalanobis in Indian Statistics and His Biography
- Actually, Mahalanobis was not very much interested for this subject . he took this subject by chance . Actually , Tagore was a person who brought Mahalanobis as the professor of Physics in Calcutta's Presidency College. When Mahalanobis was asked to analyze the examination records of Calcutta University. First time he learnt the significance of statistical data.
- During his life , Mahalanobis also met with great scientist Einstein and he heard the praising of Indian scientist by the Einstein. Einstein praised the Satyendra Nath Bose who discover Boson. The Hindu Analysis
- Mahalanobis certainly believed data to be instrumental in efficient planning for national and human development. Planning in the newly independent nation in the 1950s was largely based on the data obtained from various surveys.
- For the development of the country, a planned economy was necessary. Therefore Mahalanobis was appointed as a member of the first planning commission so that he could make the plan for the comprehensive and judicious development of the country . The Hindu Analysis

- He had a good relationship with Rabindra Nath Tagore. Tagore treated Mahalanobis as a close confidant, despite an age gap of 32 years, and they shared a three decades-long friendship. Worked in the Vishwabharti also . In fact , Mahalanobis help Tagore for the establishment of the Vishwabharti which was the dream project of the Tagore . He served this university as the joint secretary for 10 years and as a member of the governing body, executive council, academic council, and the agricultural board.
- ‘Basanta’ (meaning ‘Spring’) started in the university on the day of the marriage of Mahalanobis. Mahalanobis also learned many things from Tagore . However the panning Commission is changed into NITI Aayog , the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) with the Central Statistical Office (CSO) to form the National Statistical Office (NSO) but the significance of the data collection and interpretation remained unchanged. Therefore the significance of the Mahalanobis remains unaffected

Today Current Affairs

Conclusion

- 29th June 2022 is a memorable day for the Indian statistics. He was the Mahalanobis who popularized statistics in Indian universities and He exposed the significance of statistics in data collection and in data interpretation. the significance of the statics is now in every social science subject.

Anshul

47th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council



47th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, in the 47th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, chaired by the Union Finance Minister, the officials decided to reduce the rates for certain goods and services by largely eliminating the exemption of many consumption items to simplify the rate structure.

Today Current Affairs

GST Council:

- The Goods and Services Tax regime came into force after the Constitutional (122nd Amendment) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament in 2016.
- After this more than 15 Indian states ratified it in their state legislatures, after which the President gave his assent.
- The GST Council is a joint forum of the Center and the States.
- It was established by the President in accordance with Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution.

Member : The Hindu Analysis

- The members of the Council include Union Finance Minister (Chairman), Union Minister of State (Finance).
- Each State Minister in charge of Finance or Taxation or any other Minister may be nominated as a member.

Work : The Hindu Analysis

- The Council as per Article 279, “to make recommendations to the Center and the States on important issues relating to GST, such as the GST on goods and services subject to or may be exempted from the Model GST laws”.
- It also decides on different rate slabs of GST.
- For example, an interim report of a panel of ministers has suggested a tax of 28% on casinos, online gaming and horse racing.

Recent Events : The Hindu Analysis

- This is the first meeting after the Supreme Court’s decision in May 2022 that the recommendations of the GST Council are not binding.
- The Court observed that Article 246A of the Constitution empowers both Parliament and State Legislatures to “simultaneously” make laws on GST and that the Council’s recommendations are “the result of negotiations involving the Union and the States”.

- This was welcomed by some states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu, who believe that states can be more flexible in accepting recommendations that suit them.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) : The Hindu Analysis

- GST was introduced through the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016.
- It is one of the biggest indirect tax reforms in the country.
- It was introduced with the slogan 'One Nation One Tax'.
- Indirect taxes like Excise Duty, Value Added Tax (VAT), Service Tax, Luxury Tax etc. have been subsumed in GST.
- GST reduces the cascading effect of tax or the burden of tax which is passed on to the end consumer.

Tax Structure under GST : The Hindu Analysis

- Central GST to cover excise duty, service tax etc.
- State GST to cover VAT, luxury tax etc.
- Integrated GST (IGST) to cover inter-state trade.
- IGST itself is not a tax but a tax system to coordinate state and union taxes.
- It has a 4-tier tax structure of 5%, 12%, 18% and 28% for all goods and services under the slab.

Reasons for implementing GST : The Hindu Analysis

- To reduce issues like double taxation, cascading effect of taxes, multiplicity of taxes, classification etc. and to create a common national market.
- The GST that a trader pays for the purchase of goods or services (i.e. on inputs) can be set up or set to apply later on the final supply of goods and services.
- Set off tax is called input tax credit.
- Thus GST can reduce the cascading effect of tax as it increases the tax burden on the end consumer.

Importance of GST : The Hindu Analysis

- Creation of a common national market: This will help in creating a unified common national market for India. It will also promote foreign investment and "Make in India" campaign.
- Streamlining taxation: There will be harmonization of laws, procedures and tax rates between the Center and the States and Union Territories. The Hindu Analysis
- Increase in tax compliance: Better compliance environment will be created as all returns will be filed online, input credits will be verified online, paperless transactions will be encouraged at every level of the supply chain.

- Discouraging tax evasion: Uniform SGST and IGST rates will reduce the incentive for evasion by eliminating rate arbitrage between neighboring states and between inter-state sales.
- Bringing certainty: Common procedures for registration of taxpayers, refund of taxes, uniform format of tax returns, common tax base, common system of classification of goods and services will provide more certainty to the taxation system. The Hindu Analysis
- Reduction in Corruption: More use of IT will reduce the human interaction between the taxpayer and the tax administration, which will go a long way in reducing corruption.
- Promotion of secondary sector: It will boost export and manufacturing activity, generate more employment and thus increase GDP with gainful employment leading to real economic growth.

Swadeep Kumar

Horn of Africa: China



Horn of Africa: China – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the first “China-Horn of Africa Peace, Governance and Development Conference” was organized.
- This is the first time that China aims to “play its role in the field of security”.
- The conference held in Ethiopia saw the participation of the foreign ministries of the following Horn countries- Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda.

Today Current Affairs

Horn of Africa:



- The Horn of Africa is a peninsula in Northeast Africa.
- Located in the eastern part of the African mainland, it is the fourth largest peninsula in the world.
- It is located along the southern border of the Red Sea and extends for hundreds of kilometers in the Guardafui Channel, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. The Hindu Analysis
- The Horn of Africa is equidistant from the equator and the Tropic of Cancer.
- The Horn includes biodiversity areas of the Ethiopian Plateau, the Ogaden Desert, the highlands of Eritrea and the Somalian Coast. The Hindu Analysis
- The Horn of Africa refers to the region comprising the countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia.
- The region has experienced imperialism, neo-colonialism, cold war, ethnic conflict, inter-African conflict, poverty, disease, famine, etc.

Recent Projects in China :The Hindu Analysis

- In January 2022, China emphasized its three objectives in Africa, including controlling the epidemic, implementing the results of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum (FOCAC), and maintaining common interests while fighting the politics of hegemony.
- The entire region of Horn participated in the 2021 Forum, which adopted four resolutions:

Dakar Action Plan : The Hindu Analysis

- The two sides appreciate the development of relations between China and Africa, recognizing that the Forum has strongly promoted the development of relations between

China and Africa in the past 21 years since its establishment, and promotes international cooperation with Africa.

China-Africa Cooperation Vision 2035 : The Hindu Analysis

- It was designed to set out the directions and objectives of medium- and long-term cooperation and promote closer ties with China and Africa for a shared future.

Sino-African Declaration on Climate Change : The Hindu Analysis

- It aims to enhance coordination and cooperation in the multilateral process on climate, as well as jointly protect the legitimate rights and interests of China, Africa and other developing countries.

Announcement of the Eighth Ministerial Conference of FOCAC : The Hindu Analysis

- Under the theme “Strengthening China-Africa Partnership and Promoting Sustainable Development to Build a China-Africa Community with a Common Future in the New Era,” as well as the development of FOCAC and the China-Africa Comprehensive Strategic and Cooperative Partnership Commitment to strengthen both unanimously adopted the Dakar Declaration of the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC.
- FOCAC promotes China’s role in the infrastructural and social development of the Horn.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, China donated over 300,000 vaccines to Ethiopia and Uganda and 200,000 to Kenya and Somalia. Sudan and Eritrea have also benefited from China’s vaccine diplomacy.

China’s primary interests in the region:

Infrastructure : The Hindu Analysis

- The African Union Headquarters was fully financed by a landmark Chinese project in Addis Ababa with US\$200 million.
- China has also invested in the Mombasa-Nairobi rail link in Kenya, in addition to already working on railway projects in Sudan.
- It also has a viable military hardware market in Ethiopia and has built over 80 infrastructure projects in Somalia, including hospitals, roads, schools and stadiums.
- 14 infrastructure projects in Djibouti are being financed by China.

Financial help : The Hindu Analysis

- Ethiopia is one of the top five African recipients of Chinese investment and has approximately US\$14 billion in debt.
- China accounts for 67 percent of Kenya’s bilateral debt.

- In 2022, China promised to provide 15.7 million US dollars in aid to Eritrea.

Natural Resources (Oil and Coal) : The Hindu Analysis

- China is also interested in Ethiopia in minerals such as gold, iron-ore, precious stones, chemicals, oil and natural gas.
- Beijing (China) has continued to invest in South Sudan's petroleum industry since its 1995 entry.

Maritime interest : The Hindu Analysis

- China's first and only military base outside its mainland is in Djibouti.
- In 2022, China indicated its desire to develop the Eritrean coast, which would connect landlocked Ethiopia to Chinese investments.
- The US anticipates that China wants to build another military base in Kenya and Tanzania, which will increase its military presence in the region.

Significance of Horn of Africa for India:

Growing interest in Africa : The Hindu Analysis

- India's interest in Africa is growing for political, economic and security reasons, especially the sub-region – the Horn of Africa.

Proximity to oil producing area : The Hindu Analysis

- The Horn of Africa is strategically important because it is close to the oil producing region of the Middle East.
- About 40% of the oil produced in the Middle East passes through the shipping lanes of the Red Sea.

Shipping Route : The Hindu Analysis

- Djibouti is the main point of this shipping route. This is the reason why countries like USA, France and China have military base in Djibouti.
- With India's economic development dependent on new sea lines of communication, Delhi declared that its national interests were no longer confined to the subcontinent, but extended "from Aden to Malacca".

India's concern over China's presence:

Dominance in the Indian Ocean : The Hindu Analysis

- Djibouti, located on the north-western edge of the Indian Ocean, could become one of China's "string of pearls" and a threat to India's military alliances and assets, including

Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

- China has intensified activities in the Indian Ocean, which India considers to be in its sphere of influence in recent times, citing anti-piracy patrols and freedom of navigation. This has forced the Indian Navy to tighten surveillance of strategic waters.

China's desire to control important shipping routes : The Hindu Analysis

- Indian Ocean shipping lanes hold 80% of the world's oil and one-third of global bulk cargo. China seeks to secure its energy and trade transport links along an important shipping route.

Affecting Indian Ocean Countries : The Hindu Analysis

- The Indian Ocean is also emerging as a major destination for countries that play a major role in global affairs. China wants to create goodwill and influence in the countries of the Indian Ocean by investing in projects such as ports, roads and railways.
- China is looking to expand its presence in the Indian Ocean and is building ports and other infrastructure in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Expansion through OBOR : The Hindu Analysis

- The Indian Ocean has a prominent place in China's ambitious One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative to build a new Silk Road.
- India has distanced itself from OBOR.

Swadeep Kumar

Gradually Weakening the Anti defection law: Alarming threat to Indian democracy

Gradually Weakening the Anti defection law: Alarming threat to Indian democracy – Today Current Affairs

Context:

- For the last few years, it has been observed that the anti-defection law described in the 10 schedules of the Indian constitution has been continuously losing its significance. Horse trading is not being stopped through this law. Recently in Maharashtra, we see open horse-trading, and earlier, in the case of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, these types of efforts have been done.

Today Current Affairs

Introduction

- For the democracy, the faith of the public in our representatives should remain intact otherwise the democracy would lose its significance. For this, our Judicial system should come forward. The issue of Maharashtra raises questions about how the political class is emasculating the anti-defection law which was described by the Supreme Court of India as “constitutional correctives against a legislatively perceived political evil of unprincipled defections induced by the lure of office and monetary inducements”. The Hindu Analysis
- Nowadays Indian democracy is threatened by the internal flaws of the constitution (party politics). For this country, democracy is the soul. Destruction of the democracy would be the biggest destruction for the country. The Supreme Court drew the attention of citizens to the very danger of subversion of democracy by unprincipled defection.

Important thrust areas : The Hindu Analysis

- When the tenth schedule was introduced in 1985 during the period of Rajeev Gandhi with the intention that the defection should be stopped because defection is a type of betrayal with the public who voted MP/MLAs and the rights regarding the ineligibility of the MLA/MP were given to the chairman of the house. But it is observed that every time chairman of the house supported his own political party because in India the chairperson of the house is related to a particular political party which is a big flaw, and should also be reviewed.
- The law as it was enacted provided for the disqualification of a legislator belonging to a political party if he voluntarily gave up his membership of his party or if he defied the whip of his party by voting contrary to its directions in the legislative house. If the split in the party is done with more than 1/3rd majority, members would be exempted from the disqualification but those members either should make a new party or should merge in any other party. The disintegration of the party would be examined as per the constitution of the political party. However if all members of the Shivsena leave the party, they can not be Shivsena they must rename the ShivSena.

Consciousness of the public is also necessary to protect the soul of the Indian democracy : The Hindu Analysis

- In the case of Madhya Pradesh, those members were disqualified by the house, and most of them were reelected in the assembly election with the new party. If suppose they were defeated horse-trading could be discouraged but in such a situation, horse-trading was encouraged.
- In fact, the awareness of the public is also important to save Indian democracy

Today Current Affairs

Conclusion

- As per the above discussion, it has been observed that , the anti defection law is being degrading and continuously it is losing its significance. It has been failed to prevent from the defection. There is a need to review this law and the public awareness is also necessary in this regard. Those members who change the party should be rejected by the public the in next election . Here public should thing beyond the party politics . Once people start to reject all the betrayer members who change their party after taking money , the horse-trading would be discouraged . therefore, citizens of India must be come forward defection to save Indian democratic values.

Anshul

National statistics day



- India celebrates National Statistics Day on 29 June every year in honor of the work and contributions of late Professor and Scientist Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the field of statistics and economic planning.
- The Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI) also recognizes outstanding contributions to the official statistical system by high quality research in the field of applied and theoretical statistics through awards established for this purpose.

Highlights of the Day:

Purpose:

- To popularize the use of statistics in daily life and to sensitize the public on how statistics helps in shaping and formulating policies.

- To raise public awareness about the role of statistics in socio-economic planning, especially among the younger generation.
- Theme for the year 2022: 'Statistics for Sustainable Development'.
- Statistics Day is celebrated every year with a theme of current national importance.

Prashant Chandra Mahalanobis

- Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis was a world renowned Indian statistician who founded the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in the year 1932.
- He was a trained physicist, at the behest of his teacher WH Macaulay, he read the book 'Biometrika'. It was only after reading this book that his inclination towards statistics started. Impressed by this book, he bought a complete set of editions of the magazine.
- He soon discovered that statistics could be used in various fields, including meteorology and anthropology, and this proved to be a turning point in his scientific career.
- Mahalanobis made many contributions to statistics, including the 'Mahalanobis distance', which is a statistical measure. In addition, he was a pioneer in the field of anthropometry or the study of human measurements in India and assisted in the design of large-scale sample surveys and sampling methods.
- He also created the Feldman-Mahalanobis model, a neo-Marxist model of economic development used in India's Second Five Year Plan, which promoted rapid industrialization in the country.
- Mahalanobis also served in the first Planning Commission of India. He also received many awards including Padma Vibhushan.

Relationship with Rabindranath Tagore:

- They met for the first time in 1910 at Shantiniketan.
- Rabindranath Tagore, a close aide of Mahalanobis, wrote in the second volume of the Samkhyā, "These are dance steps of numbers in the field of time and space, weaving the illusion of presence, a constant flow of change that is and is never."
- Mahalanobis wrote a series of essays called 'Ravindra Parichay' ('Introduction to Rabindra') for the prestigious Bengali magazine Probashi.
- PC Mahalanobis also helped Rabindranath Tagore in the establishment of Visva Bharati.

Chronology:

- 1930: For the first time, the 'Mahalanobis distance' was proposed, which is a measure for comparison between two data sets.
- The formula is used to find the distance between a point and a distribution based on measurements in multiple dimensions. It is widely used in the field of cluster analysis and classification.

- 1932: Establishment of ISI in Kolkata, which was declared an Institute of National Importance in the year 1959.
- 1933: Beginning of 'Samkhyā: The Indian Journal of Statistics'.
- 1950: Establishment of National Sample Survey and establishment of Central Statistical Organization (CSO) to coordinate statistical activities.
- 1955: Became a member of the Planning Commission and remained in that post till 1967.
- He was instrumental in the preparation of India's Second Five Year Plan (1956–1961), which laid the roadmap for industrialization and development in India.
- 1968: Awarded Padma Vibhushan.
- He was also honored with many awards by international organizations.

Swadeep Kumar

Internet shutdown



- Recently, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a report titled Internet Shutdown: Its Trends, Causes, Legal Implications and Impact on Human Rights, and states that Internet Shutdown protects people and welfare is affected, information flow is hampered and the economy suffers.

Internet shutdown:

- Internet shutdown measures are commonly used when civil unrest occurs, to block the flow of information regarding government actions.
- Shutdown often involves completely restricting Internet connectivity or access to the affected services. However, governments increasingly resort to reducing bandwidth or

limiting mobile service to 2G, which makes it extremely difficult to make meaningful use of the Internet while maintaining nominal access.

- Governments around the world have resorted to shutting down the Internet, citing many reasons
- It also makes it difficult to share and view videos, live broadcasts and other journalistic works that are often ordered during civil society movements, security measures as well as election proceedings, and human rights monitoring and reporting are seriously undermined.

Related International Frameworks:

- Internet shutdowns seriously affect many human rights, as well as rapidly impairing freedom of expression and security and access to information, a prerequisite for the full development of the individual as one of the foundations of democratic societies.
- It is a criterion for all other rights guaranteed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other human rights instruments (ie the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).
- The Sustainable Development Goals reinforce the human rights obligations of states to function through a universally available and accessible Internet, free from unjust restrictions.
- Established to facilitate international connectivity in communications networks, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) works on the adoption of standards that ensure that networks and technologies interconnect and strives to improve access to the Internet.

Major findings:

Global Scenario:

- The first major Internet shutdown that caught the world's attention was in Egypt in 2011, and it was accompanied by hundreds of arrests and murders.
- The #KeepItOn coalition, which monitors Internet shutdown episodes around the world, documented 931 shutdowns in 74 countries from 2016-2021.
- More than 10 shutdowns were implemented by 12 countries during that period. Many shutdowns have been faced in all regions globally, but most of the reports have been in Asia and Africa.
- Of the shutdowns filed by civil society groups, 132 were officially justified by the need to control the spread of hate speech, propaganda or other forms of content deemed illegal or harmful.

Indian Scenario:

- India has blocked or disrupted internet connections 106 times and India has at least 85 internet shutdown episodes in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Nearly half of all shutdowns recorded by civil society groups from 2016-2021 were in the context of protests and political crises, including 225 shutdowns during public demonstrations related to a wide range of social, political or economic grievances.

Shutdown during election:

- It eliminates access to digital tools that are vital for campaigning, promoting public discourse, voting and overseeing electoral processes.
- In 2019 alone, 14 African countries blocked access to the Internet during the election period.
- These disruptions disrupt the work of impartial journalists and the media in general. Shutdowns in Uganda undermined media coverage of elections in 2021 amid reports of violent repressive measures.
- Shutdowns after protests during the election period were also reported in countries such as Belarus and Niger.

Effect of internet shutdown:

- On economic activity: It causes huge economic cost to all sectors, disrupts financial transactions, commerce and industry.
- The World Bank recently calculated that internet shutdowns in Myanmar alone cost about US\$2.8 billion from February-December 2021, reversing the economic progress made over the past decade.
- On education: It undermines learning outcomes and interferes with education planning and communication between teachers, school administrators, families.

On access to health and humanitarian aid:

- Studies have shown significant impacts of shutdowns on health systems, including mobilizing immediate medical care, disrupting the delivery of essential drugs and equipment maintenance, limiting the exchange of health information between medical personnel, and essential mental health support.
- Internet shutdowns have a profound effect on the ability of human agents to provide assistance. The flow of information critical to the supply and delivery of goods and services can be obstructed.
- Internet shutdowns in Myanmar reportedly put local aid organizations in jeopardy, as it prevented them from seeking and receiving funds.

Guidelines of Supreme Court of India for Internet Shutdown:

- As ruled by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India (2020) that internet shutdown does not violate Article 19 of the Indian Constitution. It acts as a reasonable restriction and should be enacted only when there is a real threat to public safety or national security. Some balance testing should be done and the government should use this extremely restrictive measure only when absolutely necessary.

Swadeep Kumar

Hate Speech and Communal Violence : Must be stopped for the Stability of Country

Context :

- Recently the incident in Udaipur shocked the entire India. It is not only a communal killing but it is a wallop on our communal harmony also . Incident of Udaipur may be related to the conspiracy of our rival countries .

Introduction :

- The term hate speech refers to threatening speech or abusive speech . Hate speeches in Public sometimes disrespect the religious beliefs which resulted in the form of reactionary speeches . Gradually this action and reaction converts into violent struggle .this communal violence always destruct this country multidimensionally . Therefore this should be the responsibility of the state as well as the patriotic citizens of the country to prevent this country from such communal violence for which all of us should open heartily criticize the hate speeches .

Provisions of the punishment in IPC against the Hate Speeches

- In IPC section Section 153(A) provides that the head speech is the punishable offense and there shall be the punishment of imprisonment which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both
- Section 295A of IPC also defines the contours of free speech and its limitations with respect to offenses relating to religion.
- Section 298 IPC penalizes 'uttering, words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person'
- Section 505(1) and (2) IPC penalizes publication or circulation of any statement, rumor or report causing public mischief and enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes.
- Apart from the above provisions, several other provisions are also there to punish the

hate speakers (Mainly speeches disrespecting the values of any religion)

The measures which should be adopted to stop communal violence

- The root cause of the communal violence is hate speeches and the political provocation. Therefore action against the hate speeches must be taken immediately irrespective to the religion
- The atmosphere of insecurity among the minorities must be disappeared through the organizing the all religious priests meetings and through other cultural programme
- Composite cultural activities must be promoted
- Political communalization must be denounced
- Religious priests should come forward in this regard to propagate the real crux of the religion
- The relevance of the ideologies of Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi must be taught at school
- The incidents of the communal conflicts of our past should not be exposed through any means (Through Cinema)
- The political parties who contested the election on the basis of communal agenda must be rejected by the patriotic and responsible citizens of India

Conclusion

- On the basis of the above discussion ,it can be concluded that most of the hate speeches are related for the political benefits and delivered by those people who are not very popular and renowned persons but our media just made them popular . All these types of people must be denounced by the media channels . They should not be valued and it is expected by our fourth pillar of the democracy to pay his responsibility . They should not only work for the TRP and commercial benefits .
- Government should not discriminate regarding taking action against any hate speakers. The recent incident in Udaipur should be condemned by all the people of all religions simultaneously. The Government should take immediate action against those people who have delivered hate speeches in the past .
- We have earned the freedom of India after the great sacrifices of our ancestors and communal harmony has been the integral characteristics of Indian culture for a long time which must be intact . We should not be trapped under the conspiracy of our rival countries .

Anshul