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1 Shri Guru Ravidas Vishva Mahapeeth Rashtriya Adhiveshan-2021

President Kovind recently addressed 'Shri Guru Ravidas Vishva Mahapeeth Rashtriya Adhiveshan in Delhi.

Who was Guru Ravidas?

- Guru Ravidas was born in the **14th century**, to a low caste family, in Seer Goverdhanpur, UP. He was among the first people to fight for basic human rights and tried to spread the message of equality by opposing the Indian caste system.
- **Contribution to Sikhism:** He taught spirituality and contributed 41 devotional poems and songs in **Guru Granth Sahib**. It is believed that his teachings were studied by Sikh Gurus as well.
- He was one of the most famous and leading stars of the nirguna sampradaya (sant parampara).
- He was also one of the prominent leaders of the North Indian **Bhakti movement** and taught spirituality and tried to bring forward a message of **equality** message based on freedom from the oppression of the **Indian caste system**.
- **Association with Meera Bai:** Sant Guru Ravidas Ji is considered as a spiritual Guru of Meera Bai.
 - She was the queen of Chittoor and daughter of one of the famous kings in Rajasthan naming Rao Dudaji.

Guru Ravidas's Jayanti

- Guru Ravidas's Jayanti is celebrated as the birthday of Guru Ravidas.
- It is celebrated on the full moon day of the month of Magh according to Hindu calendar and will fall on 27th February in 2021.

2 Cabinet approves CECPA between India and Mauritius

The Union Cabinet has approved signing of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between India and Mauritius.

ABOUT

What is in the India-Mauritius CECPA?

- The India-Mauritius CECPA will be the **first trade Agreement** to be signed by India with a country in Africa.
- The Agreement is a **limited agreement**. It will cover
 - Trade in Goods
 - Rules of Origin
 - Trade in Services
 - Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)
 - Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures
 - Dispute Settlement
 - Movement of Natural Persons
 - Telecom

- Financial services
- Customs Procedures and Cooperation in other Areas
- The CECPA between India and Mauritius covers 310 export items for India, including food stuff and beverages (80 lines), agricultural products (25 lines), textile and textile articles (27 lines), base metals and articles thereof (32 lines), electricals and electronic item (13 lines), plastics and chemicals (20 lines), wood and articles thereof (15 lines), and others.

Automatic Trigger Safeguard Mechanism (ATSM)

- ▶ Both sides have also agreed to negotiate an **Automatic Trigger Safeguard Mechanism (ATSM)** for a limited number of highly sensitive products within two years of the Signing of the Agreement.
- ▶ It will automatically increase levies once imports cross a given threshold.
- ▶ ATSM is considered as an effective tool in balancing trade among bilateral and multilateral partners.
- ▶ It was also part of the **trans-pacific partnership (TPP)**, negotiations before the Donald Trump Administration pulled out from it.

3

Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram celebrate statehood day

Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, the two northeastern states of India, received their statehood on February 20, 1987.

ABOUT

● Arunachal Pradesh

- The North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) was created in 1954. In 1972, it became the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Its administrative headquarters was Shillong (until 1974, when it was transferred to Itanagar).
- Arunachal received statehood in 1987.

● Mizoram

- Lying in the remotest part of Northeastern India, Mizoram was declared Union Territory in 1972 and in 1986 became a full-fledged federal state of Indian Union in 1986.
- It became the 23rd state of India on February 20, 1987.

4

Amendments to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Women and Child Development to amend the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015** to introduce measures for strengthening Child Protection set-up to ensure best interest of children.

What is Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015?

- The JJ Act, 2015 replaced the Indian juvenile delinquency law, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection

of Children) Act, 2000.

- It allows for juveniles in conflict with Law in the age group of 16–18, involved in Heinous Offences, to be tried as adults.
- The Act also sought to create a universally accessible adoption law for India.
- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) has been given the status of a statutory body to enable it to perform its function more effectively.
- The bill allows a Juvenile Justice Board, which would include psychologists and social workers.
- The bill introduced concepts from the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption, 1993 which were missing in the previous act.
- The bill introduces foster care in India.

Key-highlights of the Amendments

The Amendment aims to introduce measures for strengthening the Child Protection set-up to ensure the best interest of children.

- **Authorization to DM:** The amendment authorizes District Magistrate including Additional District Magistrate to issue adoption orders under Section 61 of the JJ Act. Appeals can be done at the divisional commissioner level
- **Adoption powers to Magistrates:** Children accused of offences where the maximum sentence is more than seven years but in which no minimum sentence is prescribed will no longer be tried in adult courts.
 - From now on, district magistrates, as well as the additional district magistrates, will be allowed to issue adoption orders. This has been done to ensure speedy disposal of cases and enhance accountability.
- **Eligibility criteria set up:** Defining eligibility parameters for the appointment of CWC members.
- **Categorization of serious offence:** Categorization of previously undefined offences as 'serious offence'. The amendments also state that crimes committed by children, in which the minimum sentence is less than seven years, will be categorised as "serious" and not "heinous" offences.
- **Special care:** Children who have suffered trafficking, drug abuse or have been rescued or children abandoned by their guardians too will come under child in need of protection or CARE.
- GS-III
- Economy

5 International Mother Language Day

International Mother Language Day is observed on February 21.

ABOUT

What is International Mother Language Day?

- Held every year on 21 February, International Mother Language Day is observed to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.
- International Mother Language Day recognizes that languages and multilingualism can advance inclusion, and the Sustainable Development Goals focus on leaving no one behind.
- The theme of the 2021 International Mother Language Day is "Fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society".

BACKGROUND

- The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh.
- It was approved at the 1999 UNESCO General Conference and has been observed throughout the world since 2000.
- On 16 May 2007 the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution called upon the Member States "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world".

6

Sixth Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog Concludes

Sixth Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog recently concluded.

Key-highlights of the meeting

- The Agenda for the Sixth Council Meeting comprised the following items:
 - Making India a Manufacturing Powerhouse
 - Reimagining Agriculture
 - Improving Physical Infrastructure
 - Accelerating Human Resources Development
 - Improving Service Delivery at Grassroots Level
 - Health and Nutrition

Governing Council of NITI Aayog

- ▶ The Governing Council of NITI Aayog comprises the Prime Minister of India, Chief Ministers of all the States and Union Territories with Legislature, Lt Governors of other UTs, Ex-Officio Members and Special Invitees.
- ▶ It is the premier body tasked with evolving a shared vision of national development priorities, sectors and strategies with the active involvement of States in shaping the development narrative.
- ▶ Including today, a total of Six meetings have been held so far.

Cooperative Federalism

- ▶ NITI Aayog has been mandated with fostering **Cooperative Federalism** through structured support initiatives and mechanisms with the States on a continuous basis, recognizing that strong States make a strong nation on the principles of '**SabkaSaath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas**'.
- ▶ It seeks to design and assist the implementation of strategic, long-term policy frameworks and programme initiatives, while monitoring their progress and efficacy.
- ▶ The Governing Council, which embodies these objectives of cooperative federalism, presents a platform to discuss inter-sectoral, inter-departmental and federal issues to accelerate the implementation of the national development agenda.

7

Go Electric' Campaign

The Government launched the "Go Electric" Campaign to spread awareness on the benefits of e-mobility and EV Charging Infrastructure as well as electric cooking in India.

ABOUT

What is Go Electric Campaign?

- The Go Electric Campaign is an initiative aimed at reducing the import dependence of our country in the coming years and has also been projected as an important step towards a cleaner and greener future.
- The campaign is aimed at creating awareness at PAN-India level.
- Furthermore, it is expected to boost the confidence of Electric Vehicle manufacturers.

The trend

- ▶ In India, 80 percent of the total EV manufacturing constitutes electric two-wheelers (E2Ws) and three-wheelers (E3Ws) only, unlike the western world.
- ▶ And in the next four years, this country should go 100 percent electric on two and three-wheelers.
- ▶ If India does so, it will become the 'Global Leaders' in E2Ws and E3Ws in the world, and it will be exporting millions of EVs to other countries.

8

Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Cohort Announced

The Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced the names of the 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge under the **Smart Cities Mission**.

ABOUT

What is Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge?

- The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge is a 3-year initiative.
- It is hosted by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation and WRI India.
- **Aim:** The Challenge aims to incorporate a focus on early childhood development (0-5-year-old children) in the planning and management of Indian cities.

25 Listed cities

- ▶ The selected cities were Agartala, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Dharamshala, Erode, Hubballi-Dharwad, Hyderabad, Indore, Jabalpur, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Kota, Nagpur, Rajkot, Ranchi, Rohtak, Rourkela, Salem, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruppur, Ujjain, Vadodara, and Warangal.
- ▶ The shortlisted cities would carry out projects for making early childhood-friendly neighborhoods.

9 Mahabahu-Brahmaputra

In a latest development, the Government of India launched the 'Mahabahu Brahmaputra' project in Assam.

ABOUT

What is Mahabahu-Brahmaputra programme?

- The 'Mahabahu-Brahmaputra' program is aimed at providing seamless connectivity to the **Eastern parts of India** and includes various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
- The launch of Mahabahu-Brahmaputra was marked by the inauguration of the **Ro-Pax vessel operations** between **Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari; Shilanyas of Inland Water Transport (IWT) Terminal** at **Jogighopa** and various tourist jetties on River Brahmaputra.

Others

- ▶ **Dhubri Phulbari Bridge:** The proposed Dhubri Phulbari Bridge will be located on NH-127B, originating from Srirampur on NH-27 (East-West Corridor), and terminating at Nongstoin on NH-106 in Meghalaya.
 - It will connect Dhubri in Assam to Phulbari, Tura, Rongram and Rongjeng in Meghalaya.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

- It will provide seamless connectivity to the Eastern parts of India
- It will enhance various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
- Ro-Pax services will help in reducing the travel time
- Speedier connectivity between banks will reduce the distance to be travelled by road
- Ro-Pax operation between Neamati and Majuli will reduce the total distance of 420 Km currently being travelled by vehicles to only 12 Km
- Small-scale industries of the region will derive logistical benefits to grow faster

10 City Innovation Exchange (CiX)

The Government launched City Innovation Exchange (CiX) Launched for Fostering Innovation in Urban Ecosystem.

ABOUT

What is City Innovation Exchange (CiX)?

- The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) is a platform to bring together Citizen Organisations-Academia-Businesses- Government.
- CiX will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions

for their pressing challenges.

- Built on the concept of 'open innovation', the platform will help in the flow of ideas 'outside in and inside out', enhancing the skills and capacity required to deliver smart urban governance.
- The Platform has more than 400 start-ups, 100 smart cities, more than 150 challenges statements and over 215 solutions at the time of launch.

SIGNIFICANCE

- **Converting ideas to real environment:** The platform will benefit cities in the transfer of ideas from 'labs' to real environment.
- **Easy adoption of tested solution:** Furthermore, it will ensure adoption of tested solutions that will be impactful and sustainable.
- **Improvement in ease of doing business:** The platform will help cities in adopting solutions that will enhance the quality of life for its residents and significantly improve the Ease of Doing Business.

To sum up, the platform will ease the discovery, design & validation of solutions through a robust, transparent and user centric process that will reduce barriers for innovators and cities to discover fitting solutions.

11 Successful Launches of VL-SRSAM Missile System

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted two successful launches of Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM).

ABOUT

What is VL-SRSAM?

- It is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO for Indian Navy.
- VL-SRSAM is meant for neutralizing various aerial threats at close ranges including sea-skimming targets.
- The current launches were carried out for demonstration of vertical launch capability as part of its maiden launch campaign.
- The next generation all-weather air defence missile system can provide point and area defence against various aerial targets like jets, fighter aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles.
- The canister-based state of art weapon system can identify, track, engage and destroy the target with high kill probability.
- It has a strike range of about 40 km.
- Once deployed, the VL-SRSAM system will prove to be a force multiplier for the Indian Navy.

12 TROPEX 21

Recently, the Chief of the Naval Staff presided over the debrief of TROPEX-21 (Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise) at Kochi.

ABOUT

What is TROPEX-21?

- The exercise had commenced in January 2021 involving all three Commands of the Indian Navy,

the Tri-Services Command at Port Blair, and elements of Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard.

- The Biennial exercise is the **largest exercise conducted by Indian Navy** aimed to validate its concepts of war-fighting across the entire spectrum of warfare.

13

Software Defined Radio (SDR) for Indian Army under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan

To arm the soldiers with advantages offered by technology and equip him to fight a war in the Net-Centric battle space, present radios are to be replaced soon by indigenously developed Software Defined Radio (SDR).

V/UHF Manpack SDR

- Indian Army is in the process to revamp its communication systems by procuring **Very/Ultra High Frequency (V/UHF) Manpack SDRs** under Make-II category.
- Development of **V/UHF Manpack SDR** under Make-II will be a game changer for Indian Army.
- It is in sync with the "**Aatmanirbhar Bharat**" policy of the Government which will lead to "**Self Reliance**" in advanced communication systems.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SDR

- enhanced data transmission capability
- enhanced voice clarity and data transmission accuracy in spectrally noisy environments
- support multiple waveforms, greater system security
- better communication survivability in clear and secure mode to meet the operational requirements of the Indian Army

THE NEED

- Communication is vital and critical to all military operations.
- The **Combat Net Radio (CNR)** is the mainstay of communications for the Indian Army in the battlefield.
- The contemporary CNR equipment in the Indian Army supports voice communication only and has limited or no data transmission capability.

14

E-Chhawani portal

In order to provide online civic services to over 20 lakh residents of 62 Cantonment Boards across the country, the Ministry of Defence launched E-Chhawani portal and mobile app.

ABOUT

- The E-Chhawani portal provides a platform to the residents of cantonment areas to avail basic services from the comfort of their home.
- The basic services such as renewal of leases, application for birth & death certificates, water & sewerage connections, trade licences, mobile toilet locators and payment of different types of taxes and fees, with just a click of a button.
- **Developed by:** The portal is jointly developed by eGov Foundation, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Directorate General Defence Estates (DGDE) and National Informatics Centre (NIC).

- Other important citizen-friendly system
 - Ease of living
 - Ease of doing
 - Minimum Government - Maximum Governance
 - Digital India
 - E-Governance

15 Sustainable Development for Coal Sector

Government has put major thrust on sustainable development in coal mining and is taking multi-pronged action on both environmental & social fronts.

ABOUT COAL

- Coal is a combustible black or brownish-black sedimentary rock with a high amount of carbon and hydrocarbons.
- Coal is classified as a nonrenewable energy source because it takes millions of years to form.
- Coal contains the energy stored by plants that lived hundreds of millions of years ago in swampy forests.
- Layers of dirt and rock covered the plants over millions of years. The resulting pressure and heat turned the plants into the substance that is called coal.

Types of Coal:

- **Anthracite** contains 86%–97% carbon and generally has the highest heating value of all ranks of coal.
- **Bituminous** coal contains 45%–86% carbon.
- **Subbituminous** coal typically contains 35%–45% carbon, and it has a lower heating value than bituminous coal.
- **Lignite** contains 25%–35% carbon and has the lowest energy content of all coal ranks.

What measures have been taken?

- Ministry of Coal has moved forward with a **comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan** and has initiated its speedy implementation.
- Primary focus is on making immediate social impact through Out of Box (OoB) measures besides regular environmental monitoring and mitigation during mining operation.
- These OoB measures include:
 - use of surplus Mine Water for irrigation & drinking purpose in and around mining areas
 - extraction & use of Sand from Overburden (OB)
 - promoting Eco-Mine Tourism
 - encouraging Bamboo Plantation, etc.

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