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DAY 46-60

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MISCELLANEOUS

National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019

1. The bill seeks to broaden the NIA's powers and can be seen as part of NDA's policy of zero tolerance against terrorism.
2. The NIA was set up in 2009 in the wake of the Mumbai terror attack which had claimed 166 lives.
3. The bill provides for a national-level agency to investigate and prosecute offences listed in a schedule (scheduled offences).
4. Further, it allows for creation of Special Courts for the trial of scheduled offences.

सत्यमेव जयते

National Investigation Agency
Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India

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MISCELLANEOUS

National Medical Commission Bill

1
It will replace the controversial Indian Medical Council (IMC) with a National Medical Commission (NMC) to regulate medical

2
To meet this objective, the Bill repeals the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and dissolves the current MCI.

3
The 2019 Bill sets up the National Medical Commission (NMC) as an umbrella regulatory body with certain other bodies under it.

4
The NMC will subsume the MCI and will regulate medical education and practice in India.

5
Under the Bill, states will establish their respective State Medical Councils within three years.

6
These Councils will have a role similar to the NMC, at the state level.

7
The Bill sets up four autonomous boards under the supervision of the NMC.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana

- Create demand for generic medicines through medical practitioners.
- Create awareness through education and awareness program that high price need not be synonymous with high quality.
- Provide all the commonly used generic medicines covering all the therapeutic groups.
- Provide all the related health care products too under the scheme.
- Create awareness among the public regarding generic medicines.
- Making quality medicines available at affordable prices for all, particularly the poor and disadvantaged, through exclusive outlets "Jan Aushadhi Medical Store", so as to reduce out of pocket expenses in healthcare.
- It is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.

प्रधानमंत्री भारतीय जन औषधि परियोजना

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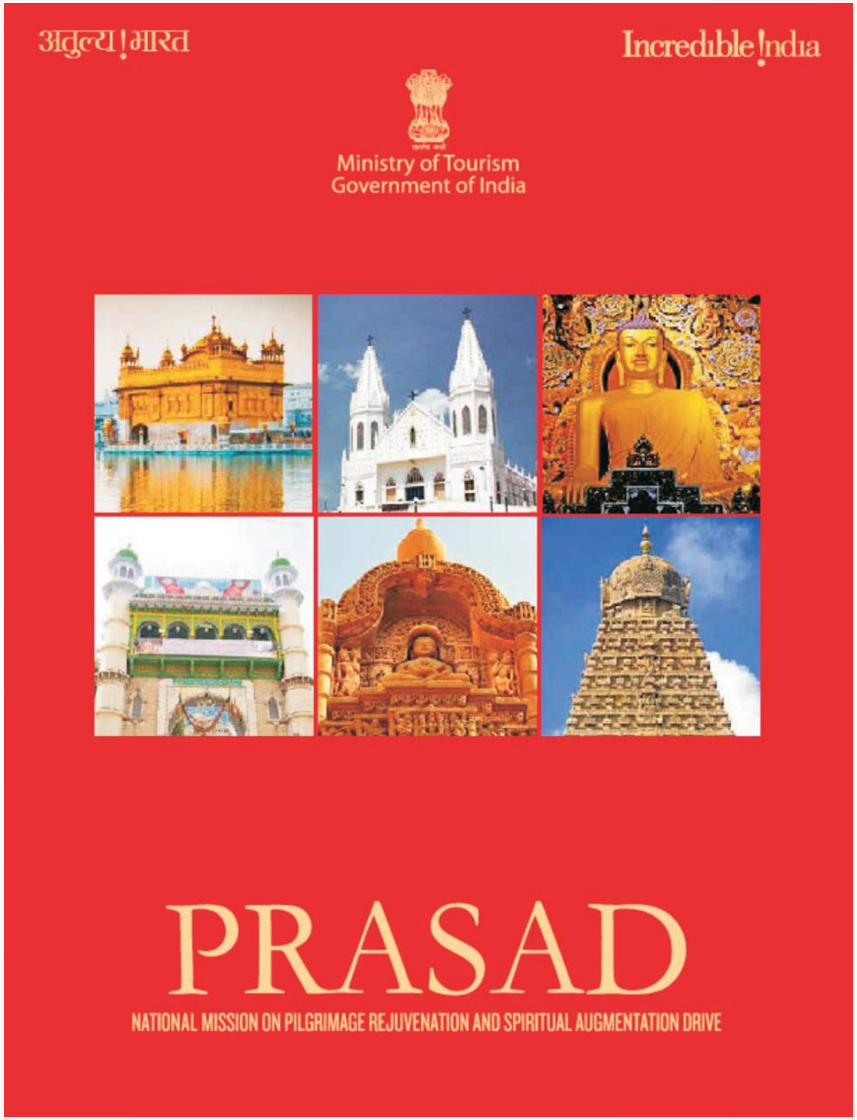
MISCELLANEOUS

PRASAD Scheme

1. Twelve cities namely Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh), Gaya(Bihar), Dwaraka(Gujarat), Amritsar(Punjab), Ajmer(Rajasthan), Kanchipuram(Tamil Nadu), Vellankani(Tamil Nadu), Puri(Odisha), Varanasi(Uttar Prasesh), Mathura(Uttar Pradesh), Kedarnath (Uttarakhand) and Kamakhya (Assam) have been identified for development under Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) by the Ministry of Tourism.
2. The criterion for selection of these cities is their rich heritage and cultural history.
3. To implement the PRASAD scheme a Mission Directorate has been set up in the Ministry of Tourism.
4. Promote local arts, culture, handicrafts, cuisine, etc., to generate livelihood in the identified places.
5. Beautify and improve the amenities and infrastructure at pilgrimage centres of all faiths.



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MISCELLANEOUS

Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019

IN THE LOK SABHA

NATIONAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY AMENDMENT BILL, 2019

Empowers NIA to probe terror attacks targeting Indians, Indian interests on foreign soil

Allows NIA to probe cyber-crimes and cases of human trafficking

Allow the Centre and states to designate sessions courts as special court for trial

UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

UAPA Bill empowers NIA DG to approve seizure/attachment of property in case

Inspector of NIA can investigate offences under chapter IV and VI

PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Increase NHRC members from two to three, one of which will be a woman

A retired Supreme Court judge could also be considered as chairperson

1. This bill will amend the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 that make the National Human Rights Commission and state human rights commission more representative and powerful.
2. It will help protect human rights more effectively.
3. The amendment reduces the tenure of chairpersons of national and state human rights body.
4. The amendment reduces the tenure of chairpersons of national and state human rights bodies to three years from the current five years.
5. It also stipulates that besides a former chief justice of India, as is the current requirement, a former Supreme Court judge can also become NHRC chairperson.
6. Similarly, a former high court judge can also become a state human rights commission chairperson besides a high court chief, according to the bill.
7. This bill also gives more administrative and financial powers to these bodies.

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ECONOMY

GST Council

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX COUNCIL

1. Goods & Services Tax Council is a constitutional body for making recommendations to the Union and State Government on issues related to Goods and Service Tax.
2. The GST Council is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and other members are the Union State Minister of Revenue or Finance and Ministers in-charge of Finance or Taxation of all the States.
3. The GST council is the key decision-making body that will take all important decisions regarding the GST.
4. The GST Council dictates tax rate, tax exemption, the due date of forms, tax laws, and tax deadlines, keeping in mind special rates and provisions for some states.
5. The predominant responsibility of the GST Council is to ensure to have one uniform tax rate for goods and services across the nation.

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ECONOMY

National Rural Economic Transformation Project

World Bank and the Government of India signed a $250 Million Agreement for the National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP) which will help women in rural households shift to a new generation of economic initiatives by developing viable enterprise for farm and non-farm products.

A Key Focus of the Project will be to promote women-owned and women-led farm and non-farm enterprises across value chains; enable them to build businesses that help them access finance, markets and networks; and generate employment.

National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP) is an additional financing to the $500 million National Rural Livelihoods Project (NRLP) approved by the World Bank in July 2011.

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ECONOMY

Predatory Pricing

1. It is the act of a market leader lowering its prices below its costs to gain an unfair advantage. The predator incurs short-term losses to hurt other players and drive them out of the market. Later, with fewer competitors, the predator can raise prices to recoup losses.

2. Such behaviour is considered anti-competitive and can be taken up by competition or industry regulators for review.

3. Predatory pricing should not be confused with normal, competitive price wars. For instance, a firm that reduces costs below that of its competitors could offer products with lower prices.

4. Smaller or new players offering temporary, deep discounts would not be considered predatory since they may not have the effect of driving larger firms out of the market.

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ECONOMY

Renewable Energy Certificates

1. In order to promote renewable energy market in India, the Indian government has framed policies under the Electricity Act, 2003 and the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) to increase the total renewable power generation capacity in the country.

2. Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), also known as green energy certificates or tradable renewable certificates are proof that energy has been generated from renewable sources such as solar or wind power.

3. Each REC represents the environmental benefits of 1MWh of renewable energy generation. When you purchase RECs, renewable energy is generated on your behalf

4. Renewable Energy Certificates (REC) is a policy instrument to catalyze the development of renewable energy. It is market-based mechanism which will help the states meet their regulatory requirements (such as Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPOs)) by overcoming the geographical constraints on existing renewable potential in different states.

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ECONOMY

TechSagar

1

The National Cyber Security Coordinator's office in partnership with Data Security Council (DSCI) of India has launchedTechSagar a platform to discover India's technological capability through a portal.

2

The portal will list business and research entities from the IT industry, startups, academia, and individual researchers.

3

The repository will facilitate new opportunities for businesses and academia to collaborate, connect and innovate in future.

4

It will provide insights about capabilities of the Indian Industry, academia and research across 25 technology areas like internet of things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), blockchain, cloud &virtualisation, robotics & automation, ar/vr, wireless & networking, and more.

5

DSCI is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, setup by NASSCOM.

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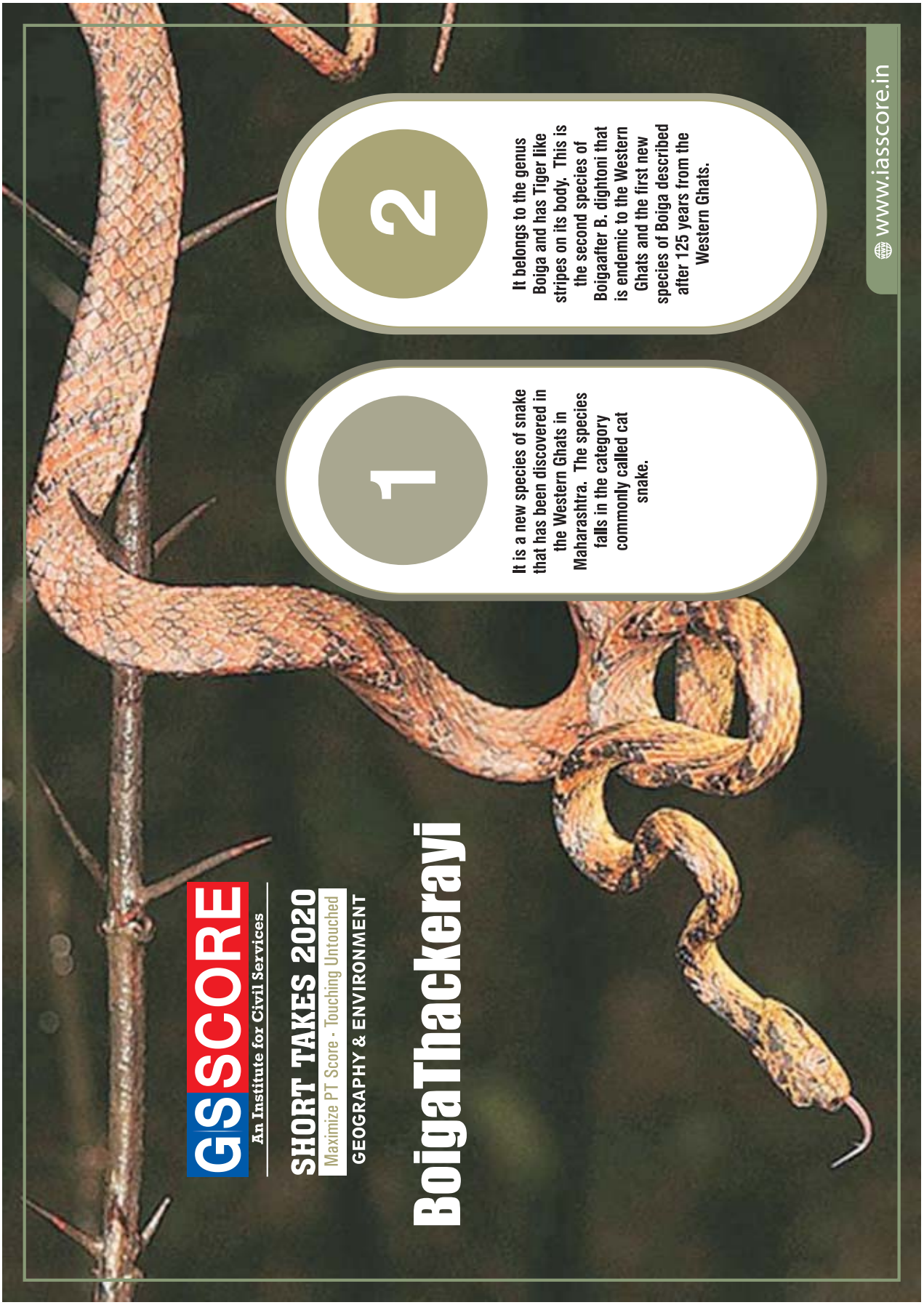
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GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT
Boiga Thackerayi
1
It is a new species of snake that has been discovered in the Western Ghats in Maharashtra. The species falls in the category commonly called cat snake.
2
It belongs to the genus Boiga and has Tiger like stripes on its body. This is the second species of Boigaafter B. dightoni that is endemic to the Western Ghats and the first new species of Boiga described after 125 years from the Western Ghats.
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GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

Cryodrakon Boreas

This species was recently discovered by planetologists.

It could be one of the largest flying animals with a wingspan of over 10 metres and is believed to have flown over the heads of dinosaurs.

The reptile lived over 77 million years ago in what is modern day western Canada.

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GEOGRPHY & ENVIRONMENT

Direction on Great Indian Bustards (GIB) by NGT

1. Noting the high mortality rate of the Great Indian Bustard, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Centre to prepare a time-bound action plan within two months for protection of the birds.
2. IUCN status of GIB is Critically Endangered.
3. GIB has been listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection)Act, 1972 and in the Convention on Migratory Species Convention or Bonn Convention and in Appendix I of CITES.
4. Identified as one of the species for the recovery program under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

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GEOGRPHY & ENVIRONMENT

Extinction of Animal Species in India due to Desertification

1. Desertification has led to extinction or possible extinction of many species in India such as the Indian Cheetah, pink-headed duck, and the Great Indian Bustard.

2. Researchers had warned at the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 14) about the rapid extension of desert in India.

3. Current IUCN Status of these species
   - Indian Cheetah: Extinct
   - Pink-headed Duck: Extinct
   - The Great Indian Bustard: Critically Endangered

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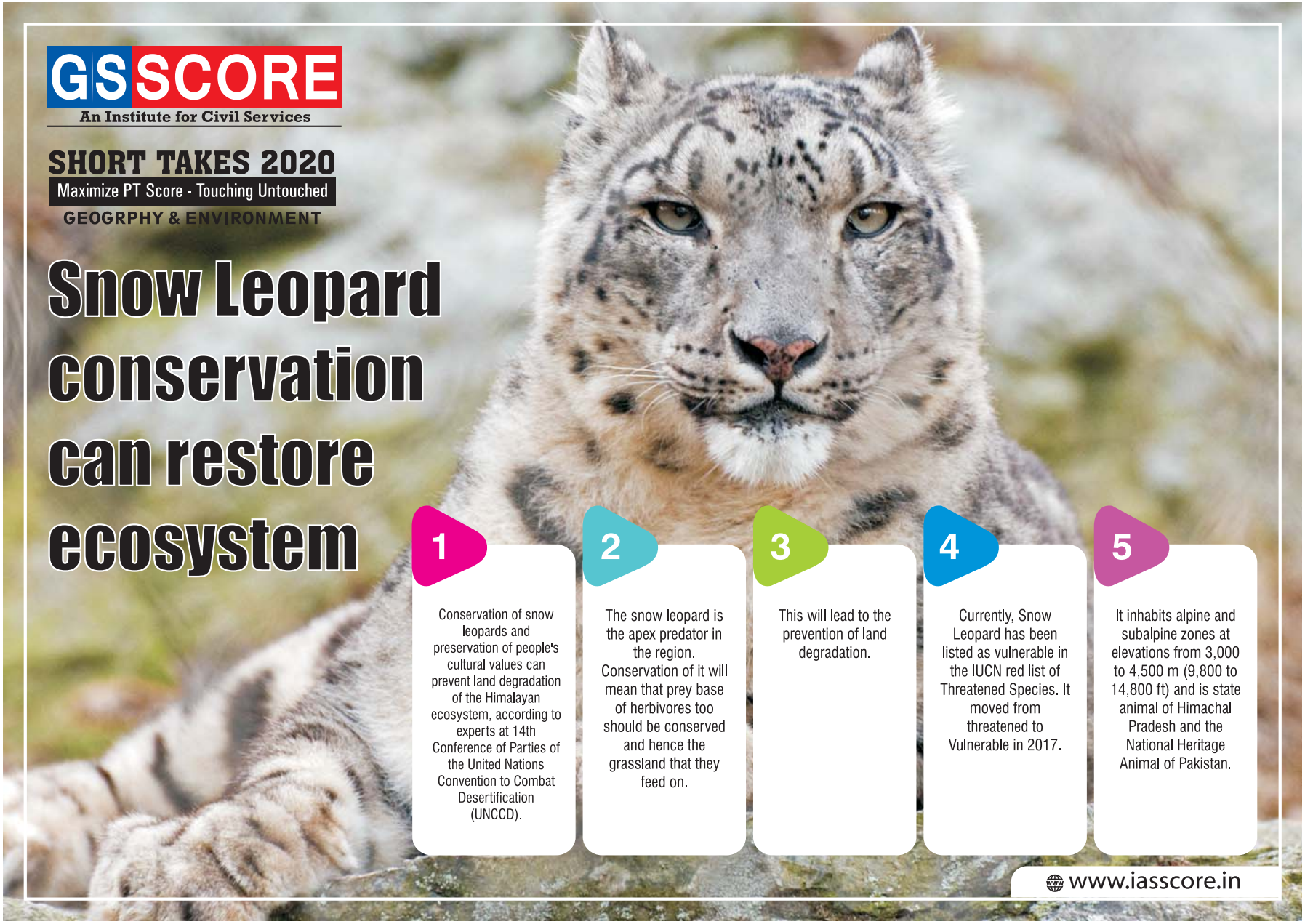
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GEOGRPHY & ENVIRONMENT
Snow Leopard conservation can restore ecosystem
1
Conservation of snow leopards and preservation of people's cultural values can prevent land degradation of the Himalayan ecosystem, according to experts at 14th Conference of Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
2
The snow leopard is the apex predator in the region. Conservation of it will mean that prey base of herbivores too should be conserved and hence the grassland that they feed on.
3
This will lead to the prevention of land degradation.
4
Currently, Snow Leopard has been listed as vulnerable in the IUCN red list of Threatened Species. It moved from threatened to Vulnerable in 2017.
5
It inhabits alpine and subalpine zones at elevations from 3,000 to 4,500 m (9,800 to 14,800 ft) and is state animal of Himachal Pradesh and the National Heritage Animal of Pakistan.
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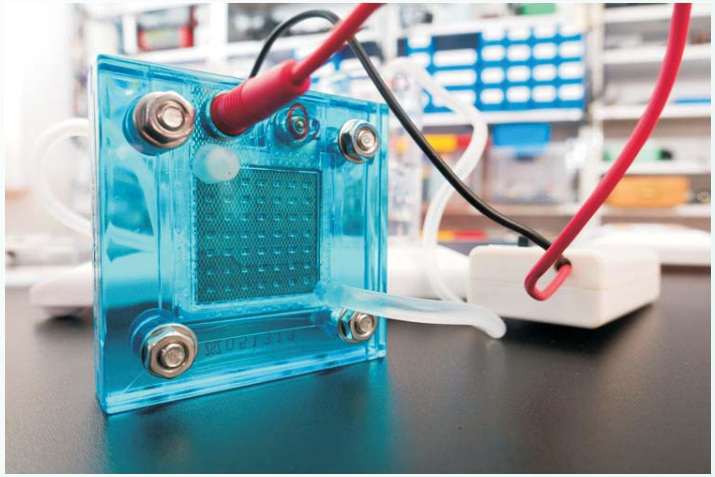
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

HTPEM TECHNOLOGY

1. India's first indigenously developed high-temperature based Fuel Cell System was recently introduced.
2. It is a 5.0 kW fuel cell system that generates power in a green manner.
3. The developed fuel cells are based on High-Temperature Proton Exchange Membrane (HTPEM) technology.
4. Developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in partnership with Indian industries.
5. Built under India's flagship programme named 'new Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI)'.



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GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

ADITYA- L1 MISSION

1. The Indian Space Research Organization is planning to launch Aditya- L1 mission to study the sun early in 2020.
2. It will study the sun's outer most layers, the corona and the chromospheres and collect data about coronal mass ejection, which will also yield information for space weather prediction.
3. The data from Aditya mission will be immensely helpful in discriminating between different models for the origin of solar storms and also for constraining how the storms evolve and what path they take through the interplanetary space from the Sun to the Earth.
4. Aditya- L1 satellite will be placed in the halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) of the sun-earth system.
5. Lagrangian points are the locations in space where the combined gravitational pull of two large masses roughly balance each other.
6. There are five such points in Sun-Earth system and they are denoted as L1, L2, L3, L4 and L5. A halo orbit is a periodic three-dimensional orbit near the L1, L2 or L3.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Iron Union 12

1. A joint military exercise between ground forces of United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the United States, commenced on 10 December 2019.
2. It takes place in presence of UAE Commander of Land Forces Major General Saleh Mohamed Saleh Al Amiri and Commander of US Army Central (USARCENT) Lieutenant General Terry Ferrell.
3. It is aimed at enhancing combat efficiency and tactical expertise between two countries.
4. The exercise spanning over a few weeks, will see the two sides take part in joint military cooperation to enhance combat and tactical capabilities.
5. Such exercises reflect the UAE Armed Forces' determination to stand firmly against all threats and challenges facing the region.

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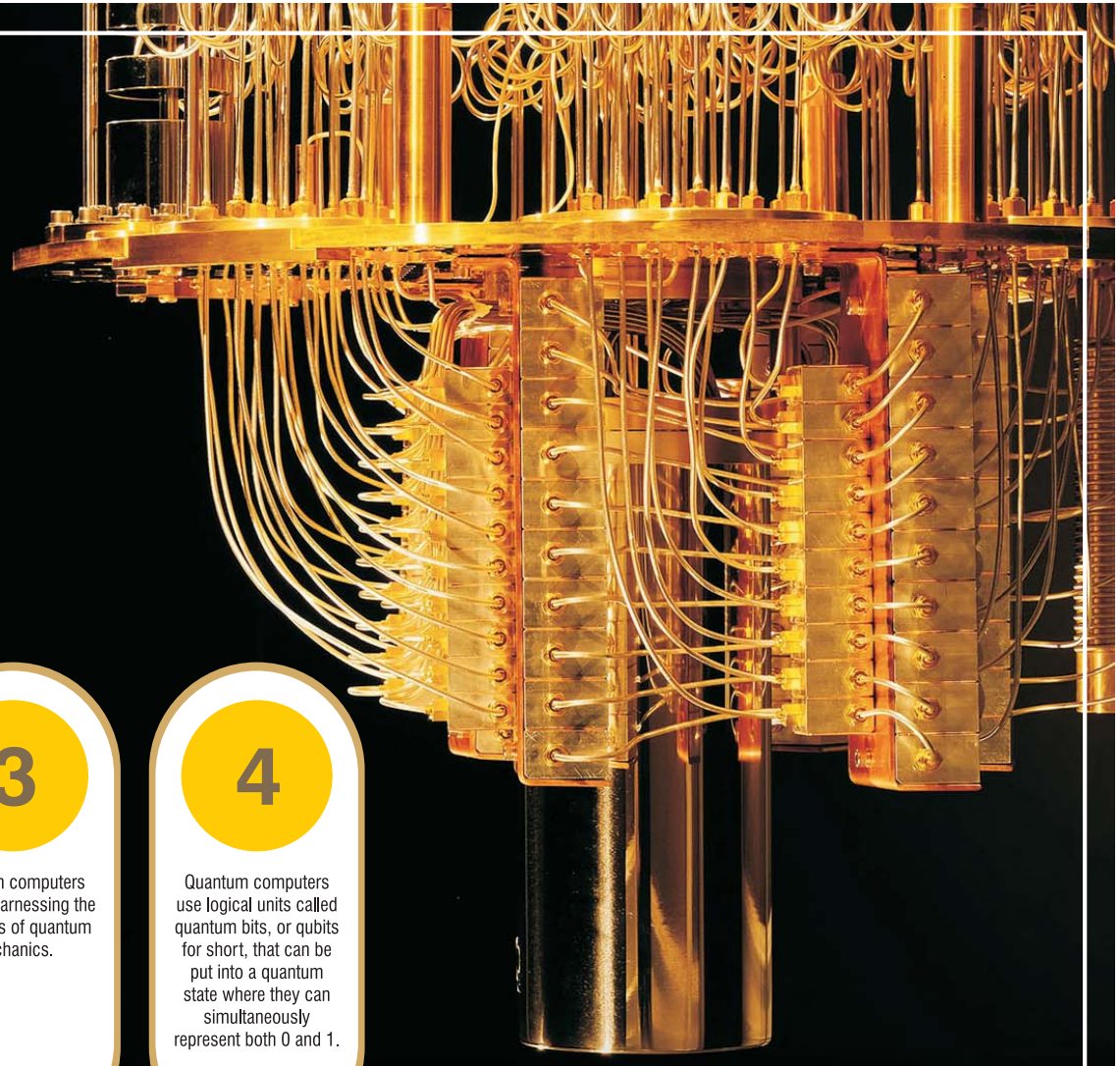
GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

QUANTUM SUPREMACY



1. Google researchers claim to have achieved a major milestone in computer science known as "quantum supremacy."
2. Researchers have been able to use a quantum computer to perform a single calculation that no conventional computer, even the biggest supercomputer, can perform in a reasonable amount of time.
3. Quantum computers work by harnessing the properties of quantum mechanics.
4. Quantum computers use logical units called quantum bits, or qubits for short, that can be put into a quantum state where they can simultaneously represent both 0 and 1.

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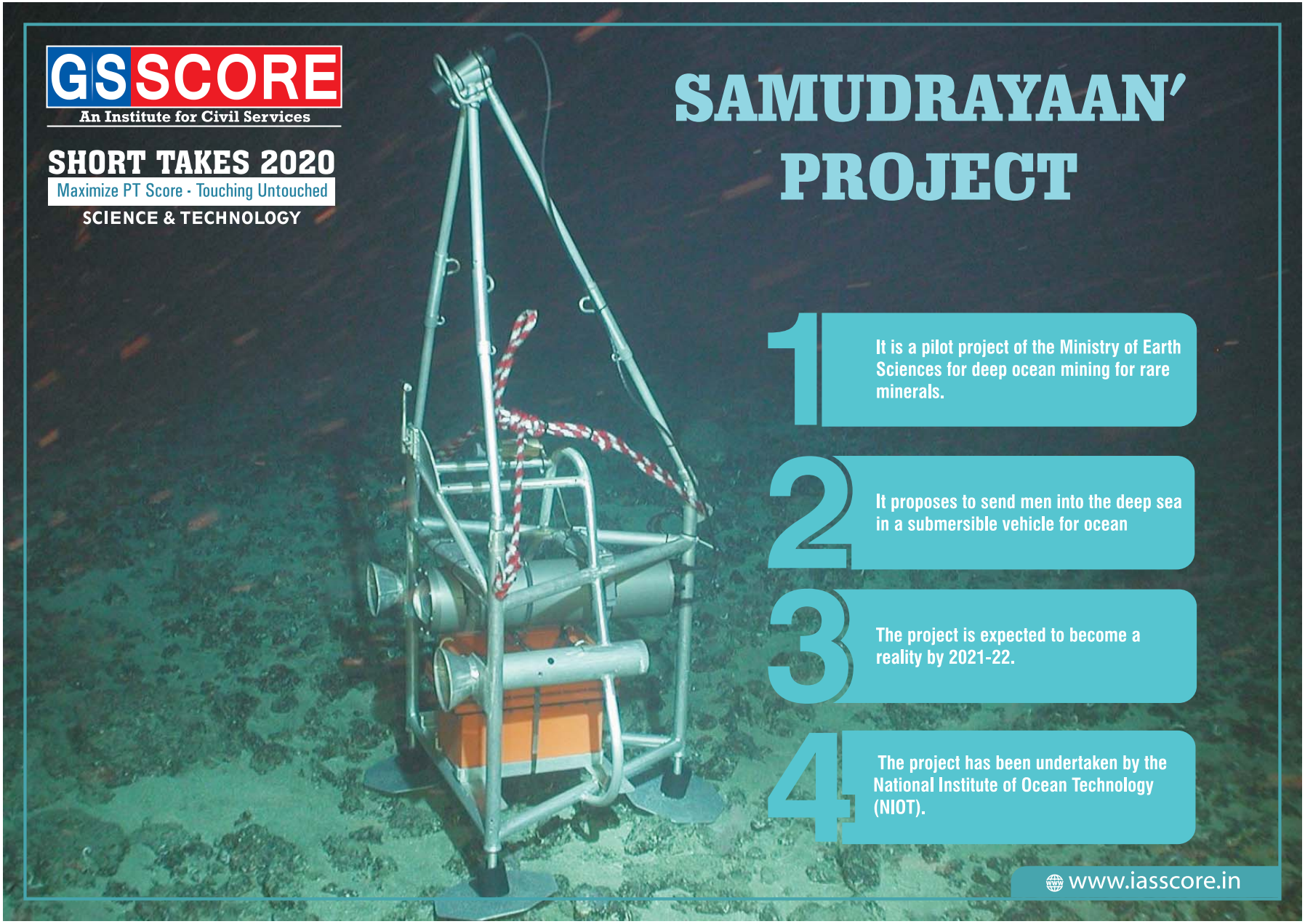
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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
SAMUDRAYAAN' PROJECT
1 It is a pilot project of the Ministry of Earth Sciences for deep ocean mining for rare minerals.
2 It proposes to send men into the deep sea in a submersible vehicle for ocean
3 The project is expected to become a reality by 2021-22.
4 The project has been undertaken by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT).
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POLITY

Annual Indo-Russian Forum for Media Cooperation

1

India and Russia agreed that an annual forum for media cooperation be organised alternately in the two countries to institutionalise the process of cooperation in the sector.

2

Television, news agencies, digital distribution platforms, new media, news gathering, co-production of programmes, sharing of content and exchange of professionals were identified as possible areas of

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POLITY

COMCASA Agreement

1. It is one of the three foundational defence pacts that needs to be signed by a country in order to obtain high-tech military hardware from the US.
2. The agreement will give Indian military access to function on high-end secured and encrypted communication equipment which are installed on American platforms obtained by Indian Armed Forces.
3. The act is usually known as the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA). But, it was changed to COMCASA to signify its India-specific alterations.
4. It will also provide a legal framework for the transfer of encrypted communication security equipment from the US to India.
5. Before COMCASA, India had signed only one of these agreements Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016. The two countries are yet to begin talks on the third agreement Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA).

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POLITY

Language Death

1 Language death is a linguistic term for the end or extinction of a language. Also called language extinction.

2 Distinctions are commonly drawn between an endangered language (one with few or no children learning the language) and an extinct language (one in which the last native speaker has died).

3 Currently, around 922 languages are classified as dying because the last remaining speakers are not able to pass the language on to children.

4 Once the last native speaker dies, it is nearly impossible to bring a language back from the dead. Hebrew is the only language to have ever successfully gone through such a revival.

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POLITY

Menominee

1. Menominee, Algonquian-speaking North American Indians who, lived along the Menominee River, now the eastern portion of the boundary between Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
2. US government has recognized Menominee as a Native American tribe.
3. The Menominee Tribe has no additional trust land outside of their contiguous boundaries.
4. The Menominee Indian Tribe's current reservation was created in 1854 through treaty with the United States of America. This is known at the "Termination Bill" which was signed into law by President Eisenhower.

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POLITY

UNIDO

1. On 17 November, 1966, the United Nations General Assembly passes resolution 2152 (XXI) establishing the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as an autonomous body within the United Nations.
2. Its mission is to promote and accelerate the industrialization of developing countries.
3. UNIDO is the specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability.
4. The mission of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as described in the Lima Declaration adopted at the fifteenth session of the UNIDO General Conference in 2013, is to promote and accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) in Member States.
5. As of 1 April 2019, 170 States are Members of UNIDO. They regularly discuss and decide UNIDO's guiding principles and policies in the sessions of the Policymaking Organs.

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ECONOMY

Aadhar Virtual ID

1. Privacy of the personal data including the demographic and biometric information mentioned on the Aadhaar card, UIDAI has recently decided to come up with a unique feature, termed as Aadhaar Virtual ID.
2. It consists of 16-digit random numbers that are mapped to an individual's Aadhaar card at the back end.
3. The Aadhaar Virtual ID offers limited KYC access providing only that much information which is required for verification rather than offering complete details of an individual's Aadhaar card.
4. The Aadhaar Virtual ID gives access to the biometric information of an Aadhaar cardholder along with the basic details like name, address and photograph that are sufficient for the e-KYC.
5. Unlike in the past, the agency will not know the 12-digit Aadhaar number and other personal details.

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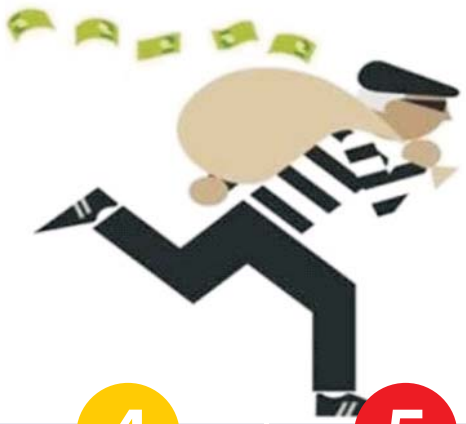
ECONOMY

Fugitive Economic Offender Act, 2018

A fugitive economic offender is any individual against whom warrant for arrest is issued for his involvement in select economic offences involving an amount of at least Rs 100 crore or more and has left India so as to avoid criminal prosecution. The act provides for:



1. making an application before the Special Court for a declaration that an individual is a fugitive economic offender;
2. attachment of the property of a fugitive economic offender and proceeds of crime;
3. issue of a notice by the Special Court to the individual alleged to be a fugitive economic offender;
4. confiscation of the property of an individual declared as a fugitive economic offender or even the proceeds of crime;
5. disentitlement of the fugitive economic offender from defending any civil claim; and
6. appointment of an Administrator to manage and dispose of the confiscated property under the Act.

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ECONOMY
Index of Industrial Production
1
The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index which shows the growth rates in different industry groups of the economy in a stipulated period of time.
2
The IIP index is computed and published by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) on a monthly basis.
3
The CSO uses secondary data to reach the monthly IIP number. The data is sourced from various agencies in different ministries or departments of the government. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) is the source for the major chunk of data for the calculation.
4
The base year was changed to 2011-12 from 2004-05 in the year 2017.CSO or Central Statistical Organisation operates under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
5
Electricity, crude oil, coal, cement, steel, refinery products, natural gas, and fertilisers are the eight core industries that comprise about 40 percent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production. Mining, manufacturing, and electricity are the three broad sectors in which IIP constituents fall.
6
India's industrial output contracted to 3.8 percent month-on-month (MoM) for three consecutive times in October 2019 against 4.3 percent in September.
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ECONOMY

New Arrangement to Borrow

1. It is a renewable funding mechanism that has existed since 1998. Through the New, Arrangements to Borrow (NAB) a number of member countries and institutions stand ready to lend additional resources to the IMF.
2. The NAB constitutes the second line of defence to supplement IMF resources to forestall or cope with an impairment of the international monetary system.
3. Concurrent with the quota increases under the 14th Review, the NAB was rolled back from SDR 370 billion to SDR 182 billion in February 2016.
4. The activation of NAB requires support from 85% of creditors eligible to vote.
5. Under NAB, member countries and institutions can stand ready to lend to the Fund

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ECONOMY

World Wide Education for the Future Index

1
India jumped five ranks in the Worldwide Educating for the Future Index (WEFFI) 2019, as per a report published by The Economist Intelligence Unit.

2
The index ranks countries based on their abilities to equip students with skill-based education.

3
The report analyses the education system from the perspective of skill-based education "in areas such as critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, collaboration, creativity and entrepreneurship, as well as digital and technical skills."

4
India ranked 35th on the overall index in 2019 with a total score of 53, based on three categories policy environment, teaching environment and overall socio-economic environment. The country ranked 40th with an overall score of 41.2 across categories in 2018.

5
Among the world's largest economies, the US, UK, France and Russia all fell back in the index, while China, India and Indonesia took steps forward.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

COPERNICUS PROGRAMME

- Data from the Sentinel-3 World Fire Atlas have been released. Data have been recorded under the Copernicus Sentinel-3 mission.
- There were almost five times as many wildfires in August 2019 compared to August 2018.
- Copernicus is the most ambitious Earth observation programme to date.
- It will provide accurate, timely and easily accessible information to improve the management of the environment, understand and mitigate the effects of climate change and ensure civil security.
- Copernicus is the new name for the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security programme, previously known as GMES.
- This initiative is headed by the European Commission (EC) in partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA).
- Services provided by Copernicus: land management, the marine environment, atmosphere, emergency response, security and climate change.
- Sentinel: ESA is developing a new family of satellites, called Sentinels, specifically for the operational needs of the Copernicus programme.
- The Sentinels will provide a unique set of observations, starting with the all-weather, day and night radar images.

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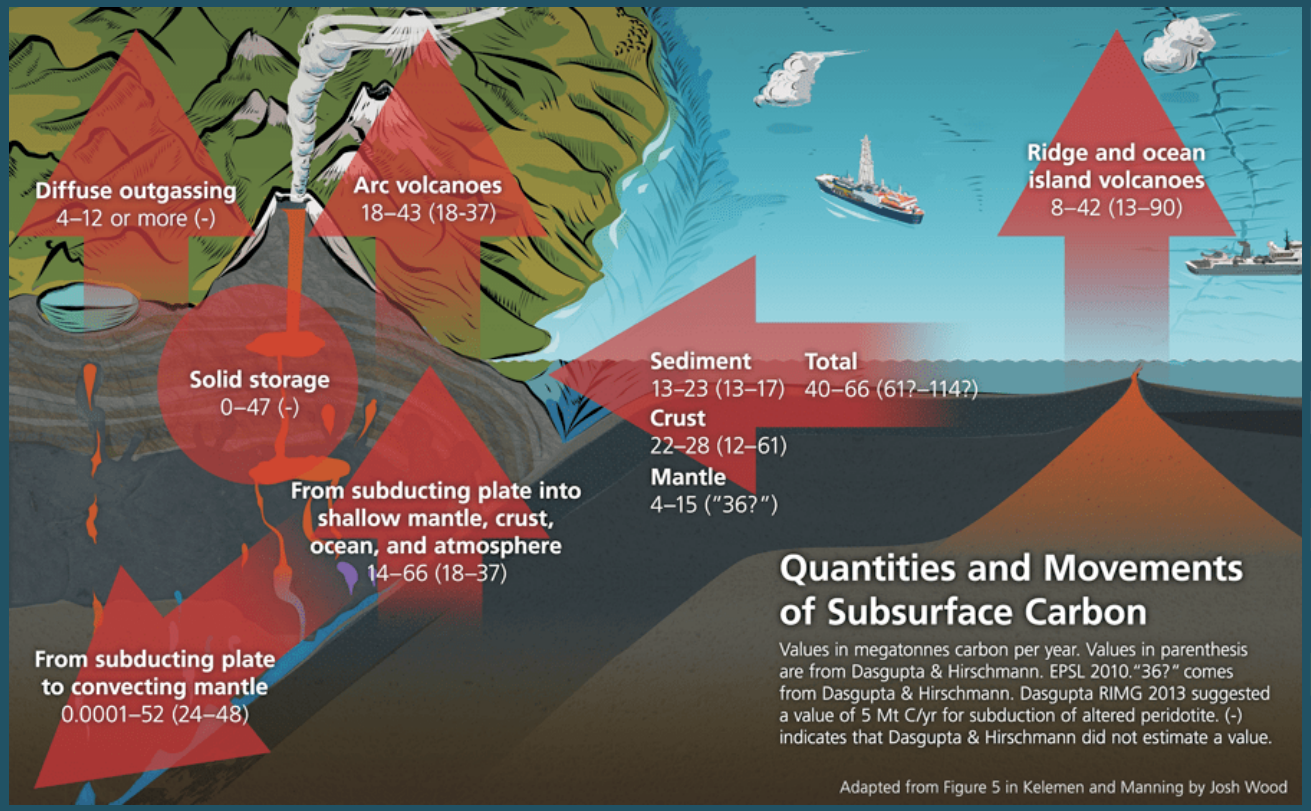
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

DEEP CARBON OBSERVATORY



1. Deep Carbon Observatory (CDO) has released a report on Carbon, its emissions and availability.
2. The study's results are concerning due to past extinction events linked to the mass release of atmospheric CO_2.
3. It is a global community of more than 1000 scientists on a ten-year quest to understand the quantities, movements, forms, and origins of carbon in Earth.
4. Human activity contributes about 10 gigatonnes of CO_2 into the atmosphere each year.
5. Natural geological process underground, for comparison, release about 10 times less of the global warming gas.
6. The burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and other human actives contribute between 40 and 100 times the amount of CO_2 into the atmosphere.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

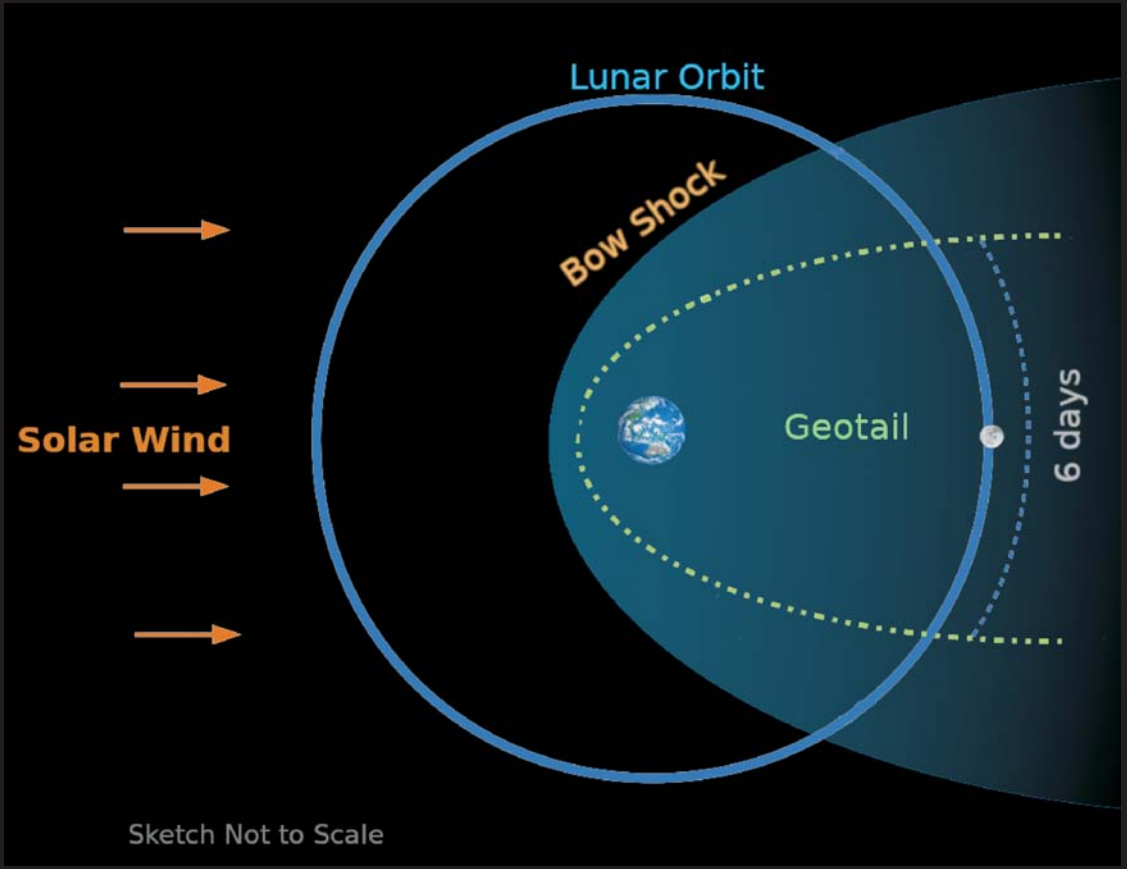
GEOTAIL

1 An instrument on Chandrayaan-2, CLASS, designed to detect signatures of elements in the Moon's soil, had detected charged particles during the mission.

2 A region in space that allows the best observations. The region exists as a result of

3 **How is it formed?**

- The Sun emits the solar wind, which is a continuous stream of charged particles.
- These particles are embedded in the extended magnetic field of the Sun. Since the Earth has a magnetic field, it obstructs the solar wind plasma.
- This interaction results in the formation of a magnetic envelope around Earth.
- On the Earth side facing the Sun, the envelope is compressed into a region that is approximately three to four times the Earth radius.
- On the opposite side, the envelope is stretched into a long tail, which extends beyond the orbit of the Moon.
- It is this tail that is called the geo tail.
- Once every 29 days, the Moon traverses the geo tail for about six days.



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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

LIBRA

1. It is a digital asset built by Face book and powered by a new Face book-created version of the blockchain, the encrypted technology used by bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

2. Facebook says Libra is a "global currency and financial infrastructure"

3. The currency will be serviced by a collective of companies called the "Libra Association".

4. The Libra Association is described by Face book as an independent, not-for-profit organisation based in Switzerland.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

RUCO Initiative
(Repurpose Used Cooking Oil)

1 To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October as Rashtriya Swachhta Diwas, publicity vans were flagged off in Delhi, to generate awareness among the people about the OMCs' initiative of converting Used Cooking Oil to Biodiesel.

2 During frying, several properties of the oil are altered, Total Polar Compounds (TPC) are formed on repeated frying.

3 The toxicity of these compounds is associated with several diseases such as hypertension, atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, liver diseases.

4 FSSAI has fixed a limit for Total Polar Compounds at 25 percent beyond which the vegetable oil shall not be used.

5 The level of TPC increases every time oil is re-heated.

6 TPC accumulation in oil without food is slower than that in oil frying with food.

7 The initiative will enable the collection and conversion of used cooking oil to bio-diesel.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

Golden Butterfly' Variety Tea

1. The 'Golden Butterfly' is a special variety of tea which is produced by the Dikom Tea Estate near Dibrugarh. Golden Butterfly is made of tea buds and not tea leaves.

2. Recently, the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) created history by selling 1 kg of the "Golden Butterfly" tea at ₹ 75,000.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

Microhyla Eos

1. It is a newly discovered species of frog from Arunachal Pradesh. It was discovered from riparian habitats in a primary evergreen forest in the Namdapha Tiger Reserve.

2. Microhylaare a group of narrow-mouthed frogs that is primarily and widely distributed in Asia. Commonly known as 'Rice Frogs' or 'Chorus Frogs', the genus currently comprises of 49 recognised species.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

New Burrowing Frog Species

1 A new species of burrowing frog has been ascertained in Jharkhand's Chhota Nagpur Plateau. It has been named as Spahaerotheca Magadha and will be known by the common name of 'Magadha Burrowing Frog'.

2 The frog is endemic to agricultural areas in Nawadih and Joungi village of Jharkhand's Koderma district.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

New Species of Freshwater Fish Found in Mizoram and Himachal Pradesh

1. GlyptothoraxGopiiis a new species of catfish. It was found in Mizoram's Kaladan River.

2. It is dark brown on its dorsal surface, and its ventral surface is of a yellowish-light brown.

3. Garrasimbalbaraensisw as found in Himachal Pradesh's Simbalbarariver. It has a yellowish-grey colour fading ventrally. Both fish, measuring less than seven centimetres, are hill stream fauna and are equipped with special morphological features to suit rapid water flow.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

Tarantula found in Kerala

1. Rare tarantula sighted in Villupuram district in the Pakkamalai Reserve Forests.

2. It is a critically endangered species. The spider belongs to the genus Poecilotheria and is commonly known as the Peacock Parachute Spider or Gooty Tarantula. The species is known to be endemic to India.

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POLITY

ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting

1
The 21st ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held from 11-12 April 2019 at New Delhi.

2
India congratulated Thailand on its assuming the Chairmanship of ASEAN for 2019 and welcomed its role as Country Coordinator of the ASEAN-India dialogue partnership for the

3
It also welcomed the commissioning of the ERIA Study on the Trilateral Highway and its extension to Lao PDR, Cambodia and Viet Nam as well as the proposal on formation of Digital Villages in the ASEAN countries,

4
The Meeting decided to impart urgency to Cooperation in Renewable Energy and hold an ASEAN-India Conference on Renewable Energy in 2019. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) would be the co-partners for this project.

5
The ASEAN-India partnership is being implemented through the 'Plan of Action (2016-20) to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity'.

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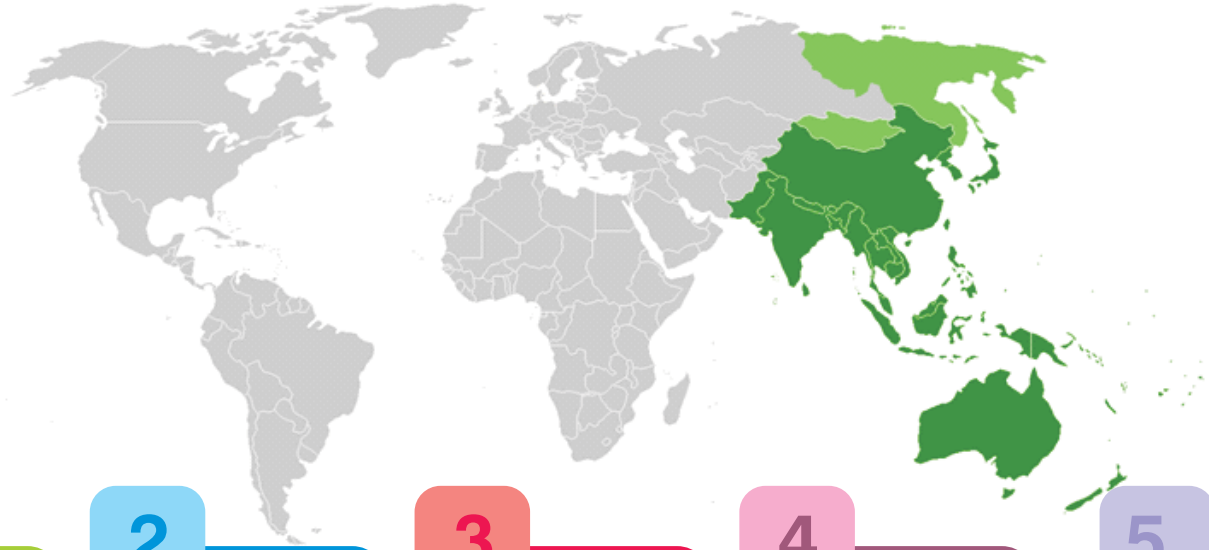
POLITY

Indo-Pacific Division



1. On April 14, 2019, reports emerged that India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had set up a new Indo-Pacific division.

2. The division will "integrate the Indian Ocean Rim Association, ASEAN Region, and the Quad" under its purview.

3. The main objective of the Indo-pacific division is intended to give a coherent architecture to the Indo-Pacific policy articulated by PM at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018.

4. The Indo-Pacific diplomacy of India has repeatedly placed ASEAN at the centre of its policy.

5. Even the US has recently renamed its Pacific Command to the Indo-Pacific Command as it seeks to give teeth to its Indo-Pacific policy.

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POLITY

Saraswati Samman

1. Telugu poet K Siva Reddy was conferred the prestigious Saraswati Samman, 2018, for his collection of poems titled PakkakiOttigilite (Turning Aside While Lying Down).
2. PakkakiOttigilite, published in 2016, is an anthology of 104 poems in blank verse.
3. The award, instituted by the KK Birla Foundation, is given annually for an outstanding literary work written in any official Indian language and published during the preceding 10 years.
4. It is the highest recognition in the field of Indian literature and carries a cash purse of Rs 15 lakh, apart from a citation and a plaque.
5. The KK Birla Foundation has instituted three awards in the field of literature. These are the Saraswati Samman, VyasSamman (for Hindi) and BihariPuraskar (for Hindi and Rajasthani writers of Rajasthan).

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POLITY

UNESCO Geo Park

1. UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.

2. Their bottom-up approach of combining conservation with sustainable development while involving local communities is becoming increasingly popular.

3. At present, there are 147 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 41 countries.

4. UNESCO's work with geoparks began in 2001. In 2004, 17 European and 8 Chinese geoparks came together at UNESCO headquarters in Paris to form the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) where national geological heritage initiatives contribute to and benefit from their membership of a global network of exchange and cooperation.

5. The Organization supports Member States' efforts to establish UNESCO Global Geoparks all around the world, in close collaboration with the Global Geoparks Network.

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POLITY

Veer Parivar App

1. The Central Reserve Police Force observed its 54th Valour Day on April 9, 2019.
2. President Ram NathKovind launched 'CRPF veer pariwar mobile' application to help the families of martyrs.
3. The application will act as an interface between the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) authorities and the next of kin of the slain personnel.
4. The app will provide assistance to the families of the martyred CRPF personnel with regard to the issuance of ex gratia, pension benefits etc.
5. The app will show the financial benefit provided to the families of martyrs and the app will also be used to provide another kind of help to martyrs' families.

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MISCELLANEOUS

National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019

1. The bill seeks to broaden the NIA's powers and can be seen as part of NDA's policy of zero-tolerance against terrorism.
2. The NIA was set up in 2009 in the wake of the Mumbai terror attack which had claimed 166 lives.
3. The bill provides for a national-level agency to investigate and prosecute offences listed in a schedule (scheduled offences).
4. Further, it allows for the creation of Special Courts for the trial of scheduled offences.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)

1. The Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) is a scheme to incentivise employers registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for job creation by the Government paying the full contribution of employers to the Employee Pension Scheme (EPS) and Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) in respect of new employees having a new Universal Account Number (UAN).

2. This Scheme has a dual benefit, where, on the one hand, the employer is incentivised for increasing the employment base of workers in the establishment, and on the other hand, a large number of workers will find jobs in such establishments.

3. A direct benefit is that these workers will have access to social security benefits of the organized sector.

4. The PMRPY scheme aims to incentivise employers for employment generation by the Government paying the full employers' EPS contribution of 12%, for the new employees, for the first three years of their employment and is proposed to be made applicable for unemployed persons that are semi-skilled and unskilled.

5. The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and is operational since August 2016.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019

1. Rights Commission and state human rights commission more representative and powerful.
2. It will help protect human rights more effectively.
3. The amendment reduces the tenure of chairpersons of national and state human rights body.
4. The amendment reduces the tenure of chairpersons of national and state human rights bodies to three years from the current five years.
5. It also stipulates that besides a former chief justice of India, as is the current requirement, a former Supreme Court judge can also become NHRC chairperson.
6. Similarly, a former high court judge can also become a state human rights commission chairperson besides a high court chief, according to the bill.
7. This bill also gives more administrative and financial powers to these bodies.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Seva Bhoj Yojna

1. Seva Bhoj Yojna' is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

2. It envisages to reimburse the Central Government share of Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) and Integrated Goods and Service Tax (IGST) so as to lessen the financial burden of such Charitable Religious Institutions who provide Food/Prasad/Langar (Community Kitchen)/Bhandara free of cost without any discrimination to Public/Devotees.

3. Free 'prasad' or free food or free 'langar' / 'Bhandara' (community kitchen) offered by charitable religious institutions like Gurudwara, Temples, Dharmik Ashram, Mosques, Dargah, Church, Mutt, Monasteries etc.

4. Financial Assistance will be provided on First-cum-First Serve basis of registration linked to funding available for the purpose in a Financial Year.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Stand Up India

01
The Standup India scheme aims at promoting entrepreneurship among women and scheduled castes and tribes.

02
The scheme is anchored by the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

03
Stand-Up India Scheme facilitates bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 Crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise.

04
This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector. In the case of non-individual enterprises, at least 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either an SC/ST or woman entrepreneur.

05
Loans under the scheme are available for an only greenfield project. Greenfield signifies, in this context, the first time venture of the beneficiary in the manufacturing or services or trading sector.

STAND UP India
Endeavour and Prosper

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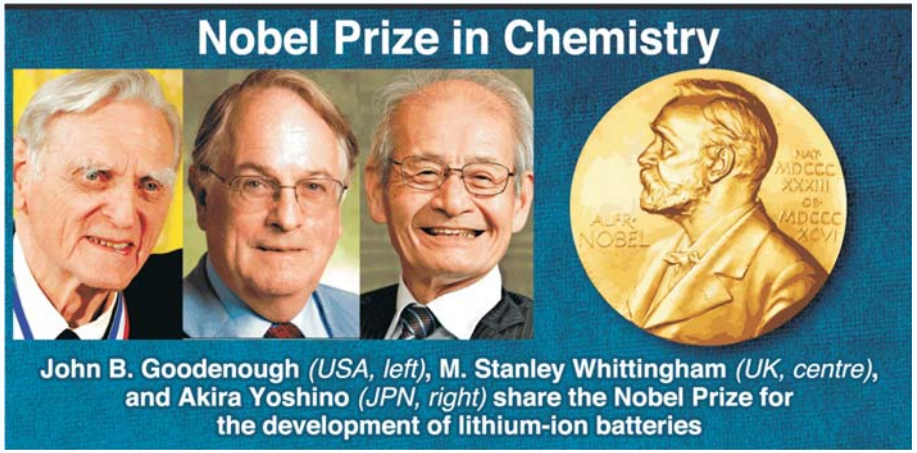
MISCELLANEOUS

NOBEL PRIZE IN CHEMISTRY



1. The 2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded to John D. Goodenough, M. Stanley Whittingham and Akira Yoshino.
2. For their roles in the development of lithium-ion batteries.
3. M. Stanley Whittingham: laid foundations of Lithium (Li) ion batteries in 1970s, when he used titanium disulphide as cathode and metallic lithium, which is highly reactive, as anode.
4. John B. Good enough: In 1980s, he replaced titanium disulphide with cobalt oxide as the cathode doubling the battery's potential. However, the use of reactive lithium remained a concern.
5. Akira Yoshino: The first commercially viable lithium-ion battery was developed by him in 1991. He replaced lithium anode with petroleum coke anode, which drew Li-ions towards it from the Lithium Cobalt oxide cathode.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE

1. The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine has been awarded to William Kaelin, Peter Ratcliffe and Gregg Semenza.
2. For discovering the complex processes behind how human cells respond to change in levels of oxygen.
3. The research has tried to explain how cells adapt to higher or lower amounts of the molecule in the atmosphere.
4. When the body detects that less oxygen is present, the kidneys release a hormone called erythropoietin, or EPO, which tells the body to make more red blood cells to carry more oxygen around.
5. They found that a protein called hypoxia-inducible factor, or HIF, rises when there's less oxygen around.

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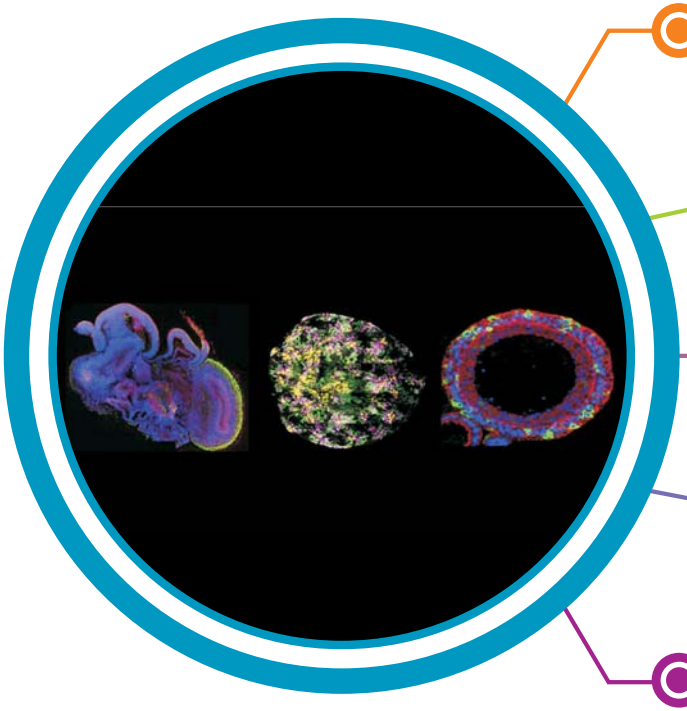
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Organoids



1. Organoids are a group of cells grown in laboratories into three-dimensional, miniature structures that mimic the cell arrangement of a fully-grown organ.
2. They are tiny (typically the size of a pea) organ-like structures that do not achieve all the functional maturity of human organs but often resemble the early stages of a developing tissue.
3. Most organoids contain only a subset of all the cells seen in a real organ, but lack blood vessels to make them fully functional.
4. Organoids offer new opportunities to studying proteins and genes that are critical for the development of an organ.
5. Organoids can be used to study the safety and efficacy of new drugs and also test the response of tissues to existing medicines.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Project Soli

1. Google Pixel 4 uses a radar-based Soli chip to introduce Motion Sense, a feature that provides similar touch less gesture-based controls.
2. Google announced Project Soli in 2015. Since then, Google's ATAP (Advanced Technology and Projects) division has been developing the technology, which can be used in wearables, phones, computers, cars and IoT
3. Google's Soli is a purpose-built chip to track your motion on a microscopic scale.
4. It uses miniature radar for real-time motion tracking of the human hand; it's able to track sub-millimetre motion at high speeds with great accuracy.
5. The Soli radar chip works on the 60 GHz spectrum frequency as it has the least interference for the kind of minute movements Google wants to track.
6. However, the 60 GHz spectrum is not commercially usable in India.
7. The 60 GHz band is also known as V-band or WiGig band (Wi-Fi at 60 GHz) using IEEE 802.11ad protocol.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Za'ir-Al-Bahr
(Roar of the Sea)

1. A three-day naval exercise, Za'ir-Al-Bahr (Roar of the Sea) is being conducted between November 17 and November 21, 2019 between the
2. The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability between the naval forces.
3. The exercise is being held for the first time.
4. From the Indian side, the Missile Stealth Frigate INS Trikand and Patrol Aircraft P8-I along with Rafale aircraft are to attend the exercise.
5. The exercise will include Air defence, Surface action, interdiction operation, maritime surveillance and anti-terrorism.
6. The Qatar Emiri Naval Forces participating in the exercise include Anti-Ship Missile equipped Barzan Class Fast Attack craft and Rafale aircraft.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

GI Tag for MizoPuanchei

1. MizoPuanchei is the most colourful and popular among the Mizo shawls.
2. It is wrapped around the waist.
3. Pawndum is a traditional shawl worn at funerals to indicate lamentation or mourning.
4. Hmaram and Ngotekherh are among the most popular Mizo traditional shawls worn on special occasions.
5. The Hmar, a major Mizo tribe, claimed that the two shawls originally belonged to them.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

GI Tag for PalaniPanchamirtham

1 The famous Palanipanchamirtham, given as 'prasadam' at the Murugan temple there, has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

2 This is the first time a temple 'prasadam' from Tamil Nadu has been bestowed with the GI tag. Chinnaraja G. Naidu, Deputy Registrar of Geographical Indications, confirmed that the GI tag had been given for the panchamirtham.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

GI Tag for Tawlhlohpuan

1

These are five Mizo traditional puan (shawls), which have received the GI tag.

2

The traditional shawls originally belonged to the Mizos and the GI tag is necessary to retain ownership and originality of the traditional shawls.

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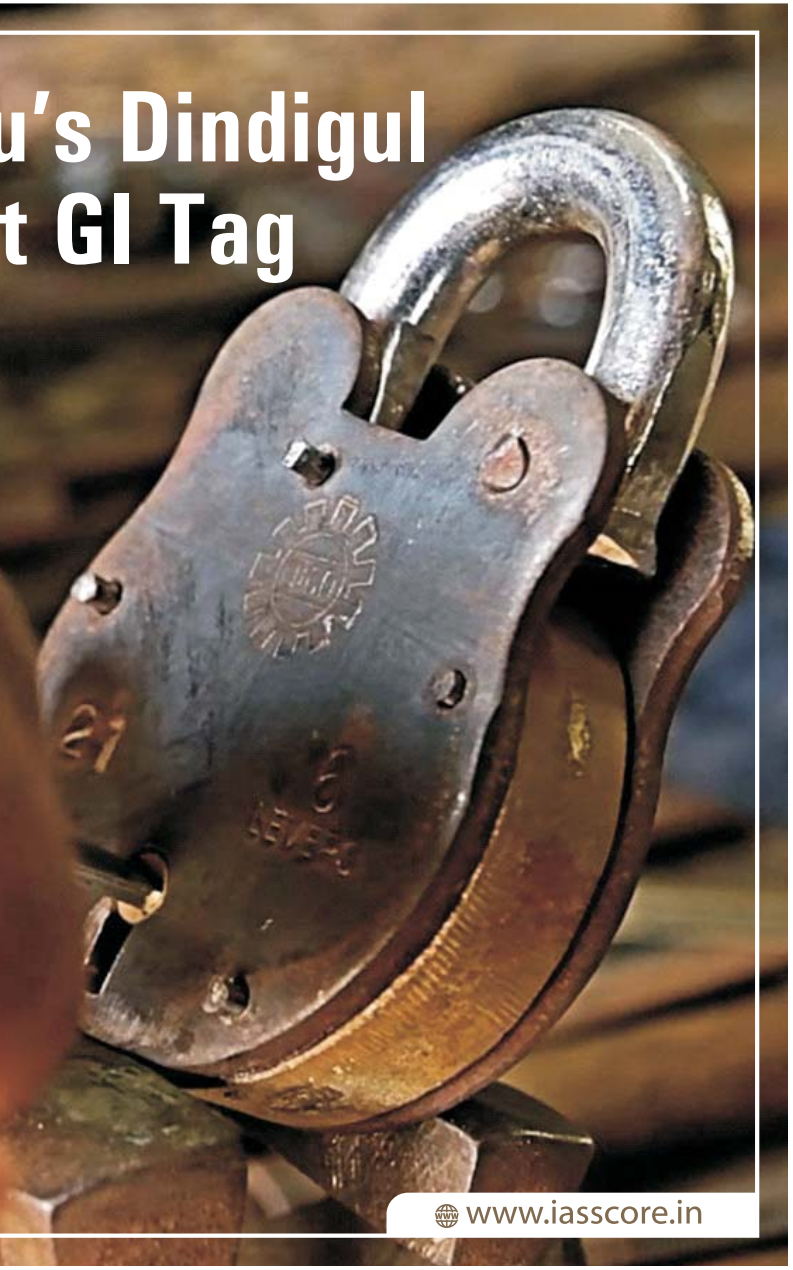
ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

Tamil Nadu's Dindigul Lockgot GI Tag



1. The famous Dindigul locks are known throughout the world for their superior quality and durability, so much so that even the city is called Lock City.
2. The abundance of iron in this region is the reason for the growth of the lock-making industry.
3. Though machine-made locks are easily available, government institutions like prisons, godowns, hospitals and even temples use the older pattern locks.
4. These lock manufacturing units are limited to an area of 5 km in and around Dindigul. There are over 50 varieties of locks made by the artisans.

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ECOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY

Tirur Betel leaf got GI Tag

1

The Tirur leaves are widely used in paan, popular after-meals treat in both India and Pakistan.

2

It also stands out for its medicinal properties too, with significantly high chlorophyll and protein content.

3

The GI tag is the culmination of a years of application from the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU), the Kerala government's Agriculture Development and Farmers' Welfare Development and farmers from Tirur.

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POLITY

CLAWS
(Centre for Land Warfare Studies)

1. The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an autonomous think tank on strategic studies and land warfare in the Indian context.

2. CLAWS is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and is a membership-based organisation. It is governed by a Board of Governors and an Executive Council.

3. The mandate of CLAWS covers national security issues, conventional military operations and sub-conventional warfare.

4. The Centre also focuses on conflicts in the region and military developments in countries within India's strategic frontiers, particularly those in the Southern Asian region.

5. CLAWS has been ranked 48th amongst World Top Defence and National Strategic Think Tanks as per '2013 Global Go To Think Tank Report' published by University of Pennsylvania, USA.

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POLITY

National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003.

By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely- (i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w.e.f. 19 February, 2004.

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes functions from its Headquarters at New Delhi and from the Regional Offices of the Commission located in six States.

For Investigation and Inquiry, the Commission is vested with powers of a civil court having authority to:

- Summon and enforce attendance of any person and examine on oath;
- Discovery & production of any documents;
- Receive evidence on affidavits;
- Requisition any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;
- Issue Commissions for examination of witnesses and documents; and
- Any matter which President, by rule, may determine.

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POLITY

New Department of Military Affairs

1 Department of Military Affairs (DMA) with Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as Secretary was created to facilitate optimal utilization of resources and promote jointness among the three Services.

2 As per the Second Schedule to Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961, the following subjects were allocated to DMA:-

- The Armed Forces of the Union, namely, Army, Navy and Air Force.
- Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defencecomprising of Army Headquarters, Naval Headquarters, Air Headquarters and Defence Staff Headquarters.
- The Territorial Army.
- Works relating to Army, Navy and Air Force.
- Procurement exclusive to the Services except capital acquisitions, as per prevalent rules and procedures.
- Promoting jointnessin procurement, training and staffing for the Services through joint planning and integration of their requirements.
- Facilitation of restructuring of Military Commands for optimal utilisation of resources by bringing about jointness in operations, including through establishment of joint / theatre commands.
- Promoting use of indigenous equipment by the Services.

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POLITY

UN Arms Trade Treaty

- Opened for Signature : 3 June 2013
- EnteredintoForce : 24 December 2014
- Duration : Unlimited
- Membership : 130 Signatories, 101 States Parties

1. The landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), regulating the international trade in conventional arms from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships entered into force on 24 December 2014.
2. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) establishes common standards for the international trade of conventional weapons and seeks to reduce the illicit arms trade.
3. The treaty aims to reduce human suffering caused by illegal and irresponsible arms transfers, improve regional security and stability, as well as to promote accountability and transparency by state parties concerning transfers of conventional arms.
4. The ATT does not place restrictions on the types or quantities of arms that may be bought, sold, or possessed by states. It also does not impact a state's domestic gun control laws or other firearm ownership policies.

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POLITY

UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

1. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

2. The 180 cities which currently make up this network work together towards a common objective: placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and cooperating actively at the international level.

3. By joining the Network, cities commit to sharing their best practices and developing partnerships involving the public and private sectors as well as civil society.

4. The Network covers seven creative fields: Crafts and Folk Arts, Media Arts, Film, Design, Gastronomy, Literature and Music.

5. The Creative Cities Network is a privileged partner of UNESCO.

6. This 30 October 2019, 66 cities have been designated as UNESCO Creative Cities by the Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network now counts a total of 246 cities.

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ECONOMY

16-point Action Plan to Boost Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare

1 Union Budget has proposed a 16-point action plan to boost agriculture and farmers' welfare and doubling farmers' income by 2022. It also seeks to double farmers' income by 2022.

2 Comprehensive measures for 100 water-stressed districts have also been proposed in the Budget.

3 Twenty lakh farmers will beprovided funds for setting up standalone solar pumps. Farmers will also be allowed to set up solar units on barren and fallow lands and supply power to grids.

4 Youth and fishery extension work will be enabled by rural youth as SagarMitras, forming 500 fish farmer producing organizations.

5 Indian Railways will set up Kisan Rail through PPP arrangement for transportation of perishable goods.

6 Krishi UDAN will be launched by Civil Aviation Ministry on international and national routes.

7 It will improve value realization in North East and tribal districts.

8 The Finance Minister further said, financing on Negotiable Warehousing Receipts will be integrated with e-National Agricultural Market.

9 NABARD Refinancing Scheme will be further expanded, and agri credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set at 15 lakh crore rupees.

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ECONOMY

African Union Summit

1. The 33rd African Union (AU) summit, which opened on 9th Feb, 2020, in Addis Ababa, is being held under the theme"Silencing the Guns: Creating conducive conditions for Africa's development".

2. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is taking over from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi as AU chair, announced that he planned to host two summits in May: one focused on conflict resolution and the other on implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

3. The AU summit also comes amid a dispute between Egypt and Sudan on one side and Ethiopia on the other over a dam built by the latter on the Blue Nile, which Cairo fears will reduce its supply of water.

4. The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent.

5. The African Union (AU) was officially launched in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, following a decision in September 1999 by its predecessor, the OAU to create a new continental organisation to build on its work.

6. MoussaFaki is the chairperson of the African Union Commission.

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ECONOMY

Assemble in India model

1

According to the Economic Survey, India should draw a lesson from China's success in exports, and launch a project to 'Assemble in India for the world' that would create 80 million well-paid jobs in the next 10 years.

2

Adopting such a move will also help India in its aspiration to become a $5-trillion economy.

3

China's remarkable export performance vis-à-vis India is driven primarily by deliberate specialization at large scale labor-intensive activities, especially in 'network products', where production occurs across GVCs (global value chains) operated by multi-national corporations.

4

Similarly, by integrating 'Assemble in India for the world' into Make in India, India can raise its export market share to about 3.5% by 2025 and 6% by 2030, which is highly feasible.

5

In India, increased exports explain the conversion of about 800,000 jobs from informal to formal between 1999 and 2011, representing 0.8% of the labour force.

9

Formal employment in the economy increased from 8% in 2011-12 to 9.98% in 2017-18, the survey clarified.

8

India's job market is facing a huge demand-supply mismatch with employment generation falling way behind jobs on offer.

7

Examples of network products include computers, electronic and electrical equipment, telecommunication equipment and automobiles, the survey explained.

6

India must focus on "a group of industries, referred to as 'network products', where production processes are globally fragmented and controlled by leading multinational enterprises within their producer-driven global production networks."

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ECONOMY

Import duty on Green Energy Equipment hiked

1. Solar power developers in India are crying foul over the government's move to raise tariffs on imports of green energy equipment such as solar cells and modules in the budget.
2. The step is aimed at driving local manufacturing of such equipment and discouraging low-quality Chinese imports.
3. Once a separate notification is issued, a new duty structure enabling a basic customs duty (BCD) of 20% on cells and modules will come into effect. Such equipment earlier did not attract any BCD.
4. The fast-growing domestic market for solar components is dominated by Chinese companies due to their competitive pricing.
5. India, the world's third-largest energy consumer after the US and China, has a manufacturing capacity of 3 gigawatts (GW) for solar cells and imported $2.16 billion worth of solar photovoltaic cells, panels, and modules in 2018-19.
6. India is running what will become the world's largest clean energy programme with an aim of having 175GW of clean energy capacity by 2022 as part of its global climate change commitments.
7. It plans to add 100GW of solar capacity by 2022, including 40GW from rooftop projects.

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ECONOMY

Kisan Rail

1 The budget proposes that "To build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables, inclusive of milk, meat and fish, the Indian Railways will set up a "Kisan Rail"- through PPP arrangements.

2 There shall be refrigerated coaches in Express and Freight trains as well."

3 Towards fulfillment of the budget proposals, following are the major initiatives which have already been taken by Indian Railways regarding Development of Cold Chain for Transportation of Perishable Traffic

- Refrigerated Parcel Vans: New design of Refrigerated Parcel Vans (VPR, carrying capacity of 17 tonnes) for transportation of highly perishable parcel traffic was developed, and procured through Rail Coach Factory Kapurthala. At present, Indian Railway has a fleet of nine (09) Refrigerated Parcel Vans available.
- These Refrigerated Parcel Vans are booked on round-trip basis, and are charged at 1.5 times the freight of normal VP as per category of train.
- Reefer (Ventilated Insulated) Rail Containers: 98 Ventilated Insulated Containers have been procured, through CONCOR, for movement of fruits and vegetables to different parts of the country.
- Cold Storage Facilities for Perishables: 'Temperature controlled perishable cargo centres' have been commissioned at GhazipurGhat (U.P), New Azadpur (Adarsh Nagar, Delhi) and Raja kaTalab (U.P) as a pilot project under Kisan Vision Project by CONCOR under CSR initiative. Another project is under construction at Lasalgaon, Nasik (Maharashtra).

4 Approval has been granted to Central Railside Warehousing Corporation (CRWC) to develop temperature controlled storages at Fatuha and Mancheswar.

5 Cold storage facility has also been developed at Dadri. Fresh & Healthy Enterprise Ltd. (FHEL) has been redeveloped as Agriculture Logistic Center at Rai, Sonepat. This facility is CONCOR's 100% own subsidiary developed in an area of 16.40 acres of land.

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POLITY

Delimitation Commission

1. The Central Government has constituted the Delimitation Commission for delimitation of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.

2. A Delimitation Commission was set up under the Delimitation Act, 2002 to readjust the division of each state and union territory into territorial constituencies for Lok Sabha and state assembly elections based on census figures of 2001.

3. The job of delimitation is assigned to a high power body. Such a body is known as Delimitation Commission or a Boundary Commission.

4. In India, such Delimitation Commissions have been constituted four times in 1952 under the Delimitation Commission Act, 1952, in 1963 under Delimitation Commission Act, 1962, in 1973 under Delimitation Act, 1972 and 2002 under Delimitation Act, 2002.

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POLITY

Indian Army Celebrates Ganga Yodha Mahotsav 2020

1. The Indian Army hosted a concert by eminent musician KailashKher, to create awareness about the immense work being done by the armed forces towards the effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of river Ganga.

2. The concert was organized by the Territorial Army to create awareness about the immense work being done by 137 Ecological TA Battalion under the leadership of Colonel AmitPandey, NM. The event was held on the scenic banks of the Ganges in Varanasi.

3. To make the Ganga YodhaMahotsav a success, the Territorial Army have also organised for the post event clean-up drive to encourage and convey a message to keep the surroundings clean.

4. With the announcement of the NamamiGange project in 2014, the efforts for Ganges rejuvenation gained national importance and the government also invited the Army to contribute.

5. The Army formed a special battalion for this purpose in April 2018, with units located at Kanpur, Varanasi and Prayagraj.

6. Popularly known as the Ganga Task Force, the 137 CETF Bn (TA) 39 GR was raised with the budgetary support of the 'Ministry of Water Resources, River Devp and Ganga Rejuvenation' and functions in close coordination with the National Mission for Clean Ganga.

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POLITY

Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra

1. The Central government renamed the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra and Foreign Service Institute in the national capital after former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.
2. While the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra has been renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, the Foreign Service Institute will be known as the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.
3. The announcement is being made on the eve of her birth anniversary falling on 14th February.
4. Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on October 2, 2016.
5. Sushma Swaraj, who was the External Affairs Minister in the previous BJP-led NDA government, passed away in August last year.

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POLITY

SC/ST Amendment Act, 2018

1. The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act
2. A three-judge bench, headed by Justice Arun Mishra, upheld the amended Act, which said neither is a preliminary inquiry required before lodging an FIR under the Act nor is approval needed from higher authorities for arrests.
3. The amendment also restores the unconditional ban on the grant of anticipatory bail put in place by the March 2018 judgement of the apex court.
4. The Parliament had amended the Act to nullify a March 2018 apex court judgement that had diluted the provisions of the Act.

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POLITY

Statehood Day of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh

1. Prime Minister greeted the people of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram on their statehood day (20th Feb, 2020).
2. Mizoram was previously part of Assam until 1972, when it was carved out as a Union Territory.
3. It became the 23rd state of India, a step above Union Territory, on February 20, 1987, with the Fifty-Third Amendment of the Indian Constitution.
4. Arunachal Pradesh which literally means 'land of dawn-lit mountains' is the Northeastern-most state of the country on the edge of the Himalayas.
5. It is the largest of the Seven Sister states of Northeast. Statehood day was conferred on Arunachal Pradesh on Feb 20, 1987.

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