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The Ramsar List

Context:

- As part of various sustainable activities, Coal India Ltd (CIL) has under taken– Conservation of coal mine pit lakes, maintenance of ecological character of wet lands and inclusion of such pit lakes in prestigious Ramsar List with the assistance of respective State Governments and the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC).

Background:

- To meet the energy demands it is necessary to augment the coal production in the country.
- So the coal sector is facing the challenge of increasing the production of coal and also achieving it through the sustainable means.
- As a part of this, the Coal India has come forward to preserve the coal mine pit lakes and their inclusion into the Ramsar List.
- As per the guidance of MoEFCC, CIL has identified five pit lakes in the States of West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh for consideration of including in Ramsar list.



About RAMSAR –

- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of Ramsar sites.
- It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed in 1971
- The Ramsar Convention's broad aims are to halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve, through wise use and management.

Does this pit lakes come under the definition of wetlands?

- The Convention uses a broad definition of wetlands.
- It includes all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fish ponds, rice paddies, reservoirs and salt pans.

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)



Context:

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the categorization of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) as an 'International Organization' and signing of the Headquarters Agreement (HQA) with CDRI for granting it the exemptions, immunities and privileges as contemplated under the United Nations (Privileges & Immunities) Act, 1947.

About:

- Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is an initiative that aims to propagate the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.

- Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) acts as a platform for the National governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions.
- The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) works with a motto of promoting the Sustainable Development Goals' aim of universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent work.

Structure:

1. **Technical Support and Capacity-building** – Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) works on capacity building measures, disaster response and recovery support.
2. **Research and Knowledge Management** – This includes collaborative research; global flagship reports; and a global database of infrastructure and sector resilience.

Background:

- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction emphasizes the role of improved disaster resilience infrastructure.
- It specifies on different targets including reducing the global mortality due to disasters, reduce the number of affected people, etc.
- The CDRI was launched by the Indian Prime Minister in 2019 at the UN Climate Action Summit.
- The secretariat of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is also located at New Delhi.

G7 Summit

Context:

- The Group of Seven (G7) Summit will be held at Schloss Elmau, a century-old retreat in a Bavarian Alps nature preserve, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in Germany for the event.

About:

- Leading industrialised nations such as Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States participate in the informal G7 forum.
- At the G7 heads of state and government gathering every year, the European Union is always represented. In 2022, Germany is the G7's president.
- India has been invited to the 2022 Summit as a partner nation along with Argentina, Indonesia, Senegal, and South Africa by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.
- The G7 presidency has confirmed that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy would participate online on June 27.
- A number of international organizations, including the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, are also participating in the Summit.



Significance of G7:

- The G7 nations will account for 10% of the world's population, 31% of its GDP, and 21% of its carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2022.
- China and India, the two most populous nations in the world with some of the highest GDP estimates, are excluded from the grouping.
- The majority of G7 nations have high levels of gross debt as well, particularly the US, Japan, and Italy (which combined for 263% of GDP)
- The G7 nations are significant participants in world trade. Particularly nations such as Germany and the US.

India – Russia Energy Ties

Context:

- Due to the sanctions imposed by the west, many companies are ending their partnership with Russian oil and gas firms.
- Sakhalin-1 and Sakhalin-2 major energy consortium consisting of major companies such as Shell and Mitsubishi are terminating from the project.

Background:

- The Far Eastern region which is prone to earthquakes needs special technical expertise and engineering skills.
- Even the economic input for exploration of minerals in the region is also huge.
- Oil and gas sector is vital for the Russian Economy, specially after the Ukrainian crisis.
- Therefore, Russia requires long term partner in the oil and gas sector in the Far Eastern region.
- The alternative market for Russia would be in the South Asia, South East and the Eastern Asia.



India – Russia Energy Ties

- The bilateral energy trade between the two nations remains significantly low considering its historical ties.
- This is despite Russia being the third largest producer and India being the third largest consumer.
- The fundamental reason for this is the geographical obstacles for the transportation of oil.
- Amidst the conflict in Ukraine, Russia has offered to supply India with cheaper crude oil.

- Indian companies though significantly increased their volumes of oil imports from Russia.
- India's total import of Russian oil despite buying additional volumes in March 2022, remained less than 1 per cent of its total oil import.
- These figures increased to 18 per cent in May, 2022 as per a report published by CREA.



Strategic Challenges:

- An increase in energy spending in the Russian Far East would boost naval ties between India and Russia and the Indian presence in the Indo-Pacific.
- Shipments of Indian oil from the Russian Far East would also be free of the threat of piracy that still exists close to the Horn of Africa.
- One could contend that China would, in a worst-case situation, ban imports of Indian oil from the Russian Far East.
- However, considering the geopolitical alliance between China and Russia, the claim that China would find it challenging to halt Russian oil shipments to India is a convincing counterargument.
- Even so, India might wield a similar leverage against China if the need ever arises by interfering with its oil supplies across the Malacca Strait.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act

Context:

- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act was brought into force in the year 1971 to address the challenge of maternal mortality owing to unsafe abortions.

Background:

- The Union Government in the 1960's constituted the Shantilal Shah Committee to give its opinion on the legislation of the abortion law in India.
- This was brought in to control the unsafe abortions which was taking place in the country.
- Recently, the amendment was made to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act.
- After the amendment was done to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, broader provisions were inserted.
- Post amendment, the time duration for medical abortion has been extended from 20 weeks to 24 weeks.
- But this is allowed only in specific cases after the recommendation from the medical personnel.
- It is mentioned that upto 20 weeks of the gestational period the recommendation of one medical practitioner is required but when it is for the period between 20-24 weeks recommendation of two medical practitioners are required.



Can the abortion be done after 24 weeks?

- There is a provision for termination even after 24 weeks but there are formalities associated with it.
- It can be done on the grounds of foetal abnormalities in the women, if it poses severe risk to her health.

- Each state under the act is empowered to constitute a board, a four member medical board which can give the permission.

Judicial Interventions:

- In the landmark case of the Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India, the court held that the decision by a pregnant person on whether to continue a pregnancy or not is part of such a person's right to privacy as well and, therefore, the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Apart from this there are instances every year where numerous cases approach the courts to against the medical board's decisions.

Criticism of the Legislation:

- According to the data of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, there is severe shortage of obstetrician-gynaecologists.
- In India there is a shortage of about 70% in the rural areas according to the data.
- So the MTP Act which requires the obstetrician-gynaecologists to perform the termination poses a huge challenge to the public health infrastructure.
- There is criticism that this law might push women to take up the termination through illicit means which poses further danger to the health of the women.

Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains

Context:

- Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DONER, Shri G. Kishan Reddy along with Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw flagged off the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train from Delhi Safdarjung Railway Station today.
- For the first time it will connect India and Nepal with a tourist train.

What are Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains?

- The Indian Railways introduced the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains with the aim of showcasing the country's historical places and the rich cultural heritage to the citizens of India as well as to tourists from across the world.
- These trains are theme-based tourist circuit trains. The trains have been launched under the central government's "Dekho Apna Desh" initiative.

About the Ramayan Circuit:

- Under the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains initiative, the Ramayan yatra has been flagged off.
- The yatra which happens for 18 days will also cover the religious destination of JANAKPUR (in Nepal).
- In India it covers important destinations in India including Ayodhya, Nandigram, Sitamarhi, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, Pancvati (Nasik), Hampi, Rameshwaram and Bhadrachalam



Other Aspects:

- The Ministry of tourism along with Ministry of Railways and IRCTC has proposed the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Trains for other circuits also.
- They include the Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and many more.
- This is an initiative by the Ministry of tourism and Ministry of Railways to promote the cultural heritage of India.
- This provides an opportunity for the citizens of India to explore the rich architectural, cultural and spiritual heritage in the country.

Way Forward:

- Apart from promoting the architectural, cultural and spiritual heritage, a boost to tourism sector will result in increasing opportunities economically.
- These spiritual circuits are untapped, they have huge potential to grow as tourist hubs.
- This can also be seen as an employment generating opportunity across the country, as tourism can provide employment to lakhs of people across the country.

PM eVIDYA

Context:

- Use of ICT under a comprehensive initiative called PM eVIDYA by the Department of School education, Ministry of Education, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic wins UNESCO's recognition.

About:

- During the pandemic one of the most affected sectors was education sector, therefore the PM eVIDYA was initiated.
- One of the important provision under this is that, the top hundred universities in the country will be providing online education to students.
- To enable students those deprived of internet access, an exclusive channel called Swayam Prabha is launched.
- And also an exclusive platform called Diksha will be launched which will contain digital content.
- So to provide comprehensive education from class 1ST to 12th, 12 DTH channels were dedicated, now which is being expanded to 200.

Benefits:

- It is estimated that the PM e – vidya programme will be benefitting more than 25 crore students across the nation.
- It is with the goal to provide affordable technology to enhance the educational opportunities for all and to augment the quality of education and to bring equity into the educational system in the country and keeping in view the recommendations of NEP-2020, Ministry of Education through CIET, NCERT has been working tirelessly and meticulously in designing, developing and disseminating a large number of initiatives.
- This includes eBooks, eContent – audios, videos, interactives, augmented reality contents, Indian Sign Language (ISL) videos, audiobooks, talking books, etc.
- A variety of eCourses for school and teacher education; organizing digital events like online quizzes primarily for students and teachers through leveraging Online/Offline, On-Air technology One Class-One Channel, DIKSHA, ePathshala, NISHTHA, school MOOCs on SWAYAM, etc

Way Forward:

- It was during the pandemic that the education of millions of students came to an halt.
- It was devastating to students from specially rural areas and those from the poorer background
- It was only with technology the students could continue with their education.
- But there were several surveys which pointed out the digital divide in the country, so the Government must come up with solutions to overcome the challenge of digital divide.

Sovereign Gold Bond

Context:

- The Government of India has notified that the Sovereign Gold bonds are open for subscription.
- The issue price of the Sovereign Gold Bond during the subscription period will be Rs.5091.

About Sovereign Gold Bond

- The Sovereign Gold Bond is issued by Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the Government of India
- The minimum investment to be made is the value of one gram of gold, the bond can be purchased in terms of quantity of gold.
- The bondholders will be paid an interest of 2.5% annually on the total value, the interest will be paid to the bondholder semi-annually.
- The maturity period for Sovereign Gold Bond is eight years, with an option of premature exit after five years.



What is the purpose of its introduction?

- The Sovereign Gold Bond scheme which was initiated in the year 2015 was introduced with a purpose of reducing the demand of physical gold.
- By reducing the usage of physical gold, the domestic savings instead of being lying as physical gold can be transferred into financial savings.
- This also helps the buyer in terms of storage cost, problem of theft and damage.

- Apart from this this bond also bears with it an interest which is paid semi-annually.
- And also, physical gold depreciates with time, it will not hold the same value as at the time it was purchased.

International Day of Yoga 2022

Context:

- The Ministry of Ayush and the Government of Karnataka are geared up to celebrate the main event of 8th edition of the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2022 at Mysuru Palace, Mysuru.

What is the theme this year?

- 'Yoga for Humanity', is the theme for this year's international yoga day which is being mainly held in Mysore.

About Guardian Yoga Ring

- Guardian Yoga Ring is a collaborative exercise between 79 countries and United Nations organisations along with Indian Missions abroad to illustrate Yoga's unifying power that surpasses National boundaries.
- As the sun apparently moves from the east to the west across the world, the Mass Yoga Demonstrations in the participating countries, if seen from any one point on Earth, will seem to be happening one after the other, almost in tandem, thus underlining the concept of 'One Sun, One earth'.
- The Indian tradition of Surya Namaskar/Sun Salutation will be celebrated across the 16 time zones of the world.
- Starting from Fiji in the east by welcoming the sun through Surya Namaskar will end in San Francisco.

About Yoga:

- Yoga comprises a set of physical, mental and spiritual practices which was originated in India.
- There are evidences in the form of seals and fossil remains of Indus Valley with yogic motives and figures. • Yoga finds its mention in the Rig Veda but became popular as hatha yoga texts in the 11th Century.
- Yoga includes Asanas, Mudras, Kriyas and other meditation techniques.

- Though yoga was practised in ancient times, it was Maharishi Patanjali who codified and systemized yoga.

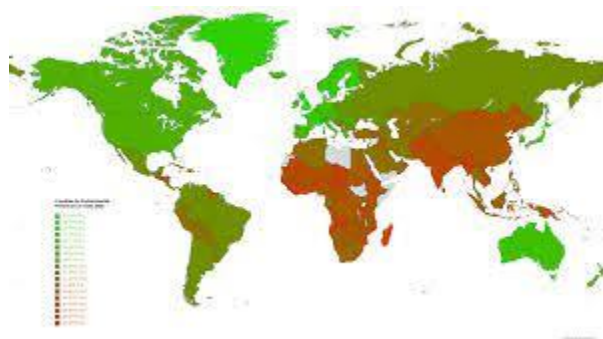
Environmental Performance Index (EPI)

Context:

- The latest Environmental Performance Index (EPI) carried out by Yale and Columbia Universities has placed India at the last position among the 180 countries.

Background:

- The study, which was conducted by Yale and Columbia Universities with a focus on climate change mitigation, has sparked controversy because it prioritises the flow of greenhouse gases from countries while ignoring the stock of carbon dioxide from industrialised countries, which is warming the planet.
- India would clearly do considerably better if countries were penalised for their CO₂ stock in the atmosphere rather than measured their reduction measures over a decade.
- The EPI is less contentious because it focuses on air quality, waste management, and environmental conservation initiatives.



What is the response of the government?

- India is under pressure to increase its ambition and commitment to the Paris Agreement's more ambitious 1.5° Celsius objective for temperature rise, rather than the less stringent target of well below 2°C.

- India performs higher in sub-metrics such as black carbon, methane, and fluorinated gas growth rates, and greenhouse gas emissions based on intensity and per capita volumes within the total climate score.
- The country is rated low on expected greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the mid-century period, with a goal of Net Zero emissions.
- China, India, the United States, and Russia are predicted to account for more than half of global residual greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, according to the EPI analysis.

Way Forward:

- If regulations on luxury urban emissions were geared at aiding poorer Indians, the national justification would be stronger.
- High fuel and vehicle taxes could exclusively promote change and build a green commons such as clean public transportation, cycling, and pedestrianisation in the transportation sector (which accounts for around 13% of emissions).
- Although the national aim of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2070 gives a longer timescale for coal phaseout, strategies that prevent carbon lock-in can benefit other regions.
- Emissions from buildings, particularly carbon incorporated in construction materials like cement and steel, can be reduced.

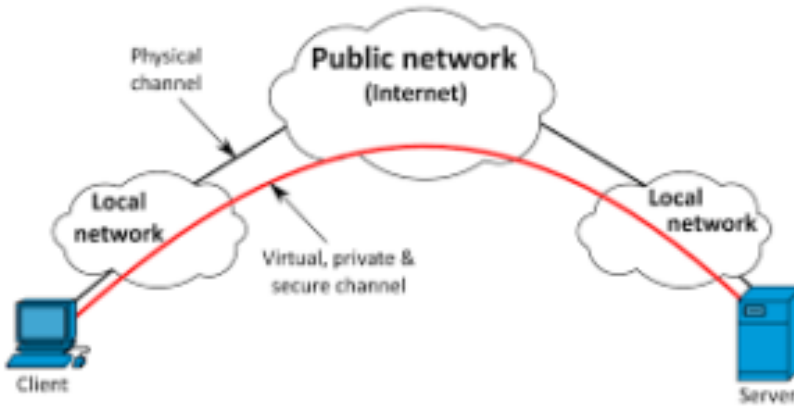
Virtual Private Network (VPN)

Context:

- Recently, The Government of India has issued notices to virtual private network (VPN) service providers to adhere to the rules released by Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

What is VPN?

- Virtual Private Network, as the name suggests is an intermediary which connects the user to the destination web page.
- It acts as a secure channel and protects the privacy of the user.
- So the when the user is accessing the web through VPN, the IP address of the user cannot be detected hence it will be difficult to track the location of the user.



What is the use of it?

- One of the major advantage of a VPN is privacy, without a vpn connection the websites can accurately track the user.
- A VPN connection will protect the user from cyber criminals as it delinks the user's activity from the IP address.
- The VPN provides for a provision of location spoofing, it allows the user to get through the geo restrictions.
- To take a simple example, certain films or other content may not be available in your region — Netflix, for instance, knows every time you connect from your home region, and which movie should not be on the menu.
- It also protects the users from online censorship, for example a website may be banned from using in a particular country, then a VPN user can bypass this restriction.

Challenges:

- Using a VPN, a lot of cybercrimes including identity theft, online fraud, cyberbullying, stalking, etc. can be done and it would be difficult to identify the culprit.
- Since VPNs require your traffic to be routed via a VPN server, it could take longer to reach your destination website.

- One major problem for VPN users is that they are often denied access to certain websites and services.

Linking Credit Cards with UPI

Context:

- The Reserve Bank of India has proposed to allow linking of credit cards with the Unified Payments Interface platform.

About the move:

- The credit cards which are issued by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) will be the first ones who will be enabled with the UPI.
- The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is also managed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- The significance of UPI today is significant, as the numbers speak about the milestone it has created.
- According to the data released by RBI, it is estimated that there are over twenty six crore users on the platform including the five crore merchants on the platform.
- In May 2022, about 594 crore transactions amounting to ₹10.4 lakh crore were processed through the interface.
- As of now the savings and current accounts linked with debit cards are enabled with UPI.

What will be the impact?

- This will provide the consumers with an additional avenue to make the payments in a easier way.
- The move will also further increase the usage of credit cards and thus will increase its reach.
- People who do not wish to use their savings for making payments can make use of credit cards.
- This will avail them of a longer pay-back period.
- One more important aspect is that it will reduce the dependence on the PoS machines
- As of now, especially in the semi urban and rural areas there is a shortage of credit card Point of Sale machines.
- So if the credit card is linked to UPI, the payments can be made using the QR code.

Way Forward:

- It is predicted when this provision once comes into force will increase the overall spending in the economy.
- Certainly, this move will also increase the digital payments and also increase the average ticket size.

- Currently, the ticket size of a financial transaction in the UPI is 1,600 so by linking it to credit card will increase the ticket size of a financial transaction to Rupees 3,000 to 4,000.

Crashing Crypto Market

Context:

- Bitcoin has lost more than two-thirds of its value while Ethereum has lost almost 80% from its peak. As a result, the overall market capitalisation of cryptocurrencies has dropped under \$1 trillion for the first time since January 2021.

Why this fall in prices?

- In order to fight inflation, The US Federal Reserve has tighten the monetary policy due to which there is fall in prices of stocks.
- According to some analysts fall in prices of stocks also have led to crash of the crypto currencies market.
- As central banks withdraw liquidity from the market, there's less money chasing assets, which in turn causes the prices of assets to drop.



What is the Government's view?

- Some sceptics have also stated that, while private cryptocurrencies may eventually become viable alternatives to fiat currencies, governments and central banks may refuse to allow this.
- Many countries have taken steps to hinder broad adoption of cryptocurrencies.

- While some governments, such as China and Russia, have openly banned cryptocurrencies, others, like as India, have attempted to aggressively tax and regulate them.
- While the government of India has not issued a blanket ban on cryptocurrencies, the Reserve Bank of India has been vociferous about the need to do so.

What will be the future of cryptos?

- Cryptocurrency supporters believe that cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin have always been prone to wild price swings, and that now is a great moment to buy these virtual currencies at a discount.
- To be honest, many crypto-enthusiasts have profited handsomely in the past when they purchased cryptocurrencies during panic selling periods.
- They suggest that, similar to gold, cryptocurrencies shield investors from price inflation.
- It's worth noting that, unlike central bank-issued fiat currencies, the quantity of various cryptocurrencies is limited by design.
- Investors can protect themselves from central bank debasement by storing their wealth in cryptocurrencies that preserve or even increase in value over time.

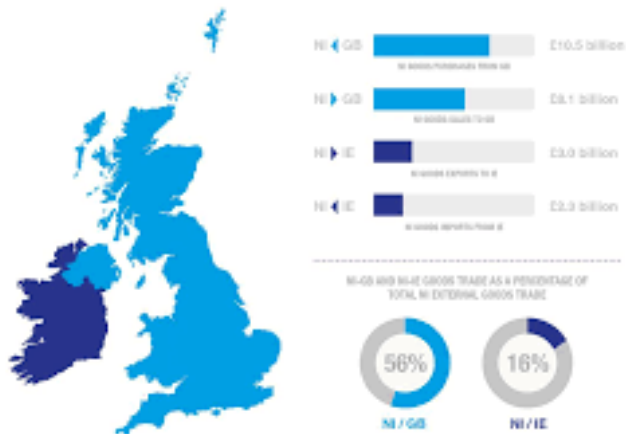
Northern Ireland Protocol

Context:

- The Boris Johnson administration has come up with a new legislation, the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, which would enable the U.K. to override provisions of the Brexit deal

What is NIP?

- As the BREXIT came into force, the UK had to come out of the customs union, this has created confusions within Europe.
- Northern Ireland is the only part of the U.K. that shares a land border with the EU, as the Republic of Ireland (or Ireland) is an EU member-state.
- This protocol will enable the authorities in UK to override the provisions of the Brexit deal.
- The provisions under the Northern Ireland Protocol would allow the authorities to conduct the checking at the borders (port) of the Northern Island.
- After this Northern Ireland will follow the EU standards for the products.



How checks between Britain and Northern Ireland work

Certain goods, such as meat and eggs, need to be checked when they enter Northern Ireland from Great Britain



Why NIP?

- The UK has decided to unilaterally revamp the Northern Ireland Protocol through bringing in a local law.
- This legislation is widely seen as violative of the international laws.
- The main reason for bringing in the law is because of the restrictive laws which prevented free movement within UK.
- These barriers which restricted the trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland is considered as one of the main reasons to bringing in the legislation.
- Northern Ireland's Unionists (those who support the United Kingdom) are unhappy with the NIP, and they detest having to live with a provision that essentially isolates them from the United Kingdom when compared to people in other regions of the United Kingdom.

- The unionist party in Northern Ireland is effectively preventing the creation of a new power-sharing government in Belfast, stating that it would not participate unless the NIP rules are repealed.
- The Northern Ireland Protocol Bill seeks to allow the UK government to override essential sections of the NIP in this context.

Way Forward:

- The Johnson government has attempted to explain its violation of the Brexit deal by citing the “doctrine of necessity,” a norm of international law.
- When a state’s “essential interests” are in “grave and imminent jeopardy,” the UN’s International Law Commission authorises it to utilise this doctrine.
- The Johnson administration believes that by exploiting this emergency gap, it will be able to overcome any legal challenges to its planned legislation.

Disease Outbreaks and its Impact

Context:

- In the past decade the world has seen several outbreaks, due to which there has been serious impact socially and economically.
- In this context it is important to analyse how the developing nations and developed countries have struggled to address the problem of inequity in access to life-saving products such as vaccines.

Background:

- Unexpected changes in the economic environment, such as disease outbreaks, can create within-country spatial variability in business opportunities and problems for MNEs and domestic enterprises.
- It is difficult to forecast how these various types of businesses would respond strategically to such changes.
- On the one hand, incumbent MNEs may be better positioned to harness their global size and consolidate their market dominance across national regions.

Inequity Within:

- The 2009-10 H1N1 influenza pandemic was used as a source of a dramatic spike in global demand for flu vaccines, according to a study.
- Following this increase in demand, it was investigated how subnational heterogeneity in health-care infrastructure and political alignment between the

federal/central and regional governments in India influence MNEs and domestic firms' market share and revenues in the influenza vaccine market compared to non-influenza vaccine markets.

Other Factors:

- The findings show that direct costs and opportunity costs are two distinguishing characteristics that might lead to variability in foreign and domestic business decision sets across locations within a country.
- The findings directly speak to the difficulties, which policymakers across numerous emerging economies face; that is, the complex problem of recruiting foreign enterprises to supply vaccines while also seeking self-sufficiency in domestic vaccine production.
- The findings of the study allow for the identification of which regions within a country may require greater governmental support in order to recruit various types of enterprises to supply life-saving products.

Right to Repair

Context:

- The U.S. state of New York recently passed the Fair Repair Act, which requires manufacturers to supply repair information, tools, and parts to independent repair shops and not just their own stores or partners.

About:

- Only the domestic situation of the country can decide the scope of the right.
- In comparison to the past, we now use more complex machinery.
- Air conditioners, for example, have mainly replaced fans and coolers.
- Because it lacks the tools, materials, instructions, and technical know-how to repair these high-tech products, an entire repair class is effectively denied the opportunity to conduct business.
- Furthermore, repair employees' lack of certification/licensing is perceived as a reflection of their lack of skills.
- A repair certification/licence, on the other hand, can be granted to persons who meet specified criteria and pass skill exams.
- It may also be advantageous because tech companies are compelled to share their repair manuals with qualified technicians, in addition to defending their right to livelihood.



Right To Repair

Section 2(9) of CoPA:

- Manufacturers frequently degrade product durability, forcing customers to either buy the product or have it repaired at exorbitant fees imposed by the manufacturer.
- This, in particular, infringes on the right to access information about the product's quality, the right to obtain products at reasonable rates, and the right to seek recourse for unethical activities.
- The 'right to repair' is implied in Section 2(9) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, when examined closely. This calls for a sigh of relief.

Way Forward:

- With access to relevant tools and repair manuals, independent repair shops will finally be able to compete with manufacturers.
- While this is a victory for consumer rights, privacy, security and quality concerns along with blatant intellectual property (IP) rights violations of the manufacturers cannot be sidelined.

Tremors in The Currency Market

Context:

- Domestic stock markets and the rupee faced rough weather in early trading on recently as the sharp rise in US inflation triggered concerns over more aggressive rate hikes and stronger capital outflows.

What is the reason?

- In the first session, Indian equities sank 2.6 percent as equity markets around the world sold down after US May inflation data jumped to a four-decade high of 8.6%, stoking fears of aggressive rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve at its next monetary policy meeting on Wednesday.
- Treasury yields in the United States soared to a 14-year high of 3.15 percent, while the dollar index climbed above 104 points.
- After the massive sell-off on Friday, US futures are also down 1%. Apart from that, the market will remain cautious ahead of this week's meetings of major central banks.
- The rupee is under pressure due to rising US inflation, fears of rate hikes, and a drop in the stock market.
- Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have already withdrawn out Rs 18,814 crore from the equity markets in June as a result of more rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve.
- Since January this year, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have taken out Rs 2.40 lakh crore from India, putting pressure on the rupee.



What is Foreign Portfolio Investment?

- FPI is a mode of investment in which investors hold securities and other financial assets in other countries. FPI holdings can include stocks, ADRs, bonds, mutual funds, and exchange-traded funds.
- Unlike FDI, FPI consists of passive ownership; investors have no control over ventures or direct ownership of property or a stake in a company.

Impact:

- The fall in the rupee is likely to make imports costlier and exports lucrative.
- However, runaway depreciation might not happen amid RBI intervention
- The Indian market will only stabilise once the US market has stabilised and the US Fed's rate rises have ceased. When FPIs return and start pumping money again, the market will rebound.

Web 5.0

Context:

- Former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey recently announced his vision for a new decentralized web platform that is being called Web 5.0 and is being built with an aim to return “ownership of data and identity to individuals”.



Background:

- The initial iteration of the worldwide digital communications network was known as Web 1.0. It's known as the “read-only” Internet since it's made up of static web pages that only allow passive interaction.
- The “read and write” Internet was the next step in the web's evolution. Users may now communicate with servers as well as other users, resulting in the birth of the social web.
- This is the internet as we know it today.
- Web 3.0 is a developing concept that refers to the future generation of the Internet, which is a “read-write-execute” web built on decentralisation.
- It refers to a digital world created on the blockchain technology, in which people can connect with one another without the necessity for a middleman.
- Artificial Intelligence and machine learning will power Web 3.0, allowing robots to comprehend data in the same way that people can.

About Web 5.0:

- The Block Head (TBH), Dorsey's Bitcoin business company, is working on Web 5.0, which aims to “create an additional decentralised web that puts you in charge of your data and identity.”
- Both Web 3.0 and Web 5.0 envision an Internet free of government or corporate restrictions, as well as the prospect of catastrophic disruptions.

- In response to a Twitter inquiry on the differences between Web 5.0 and Web 3.0, Dorsey said that Web 3.0 is controlled by multiple “venture capitalists and restricted partners,” rather than being fully decentralised or owned by its users.

WTO Ministerial Conference

Context:

- The twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference is all set to begin from 12th June 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland after a gap of almost five years.

What are the areas of focus?

- Fisheries subsidies negotiations,
- Agriculture issues including Public Stockholding for Food security,
- WTO Reforms and Moratorium on Custom Duties on Electronic Transmission.
- Response to pandemic
- Custom Duties on Electronic Transmission.



Structure of WTO:

1. Ministerial Conference:

- The ministerial conference of the World Trade Organisation which is held biennially is the top decision-making body of the WTO.
- It is in the ministerial conference that all the member countries of World Trade Organisation are brought together.
- The Ministerial Conference has powers to take decisions on all matters under any of the multilateral trade agreements.

2. WTO General Council:

- The General Council is the WTO's highest-level decision-making body in Geneva, meeting regularly to carry out the functions of the WTO.
- It has representatives (usually ambassadors or equivalent) from all member governments and has the authority to act on behalf of the ministerial conference which only meets about every two years.

3. WTO Secretariat:

- The responsibility of the WTO Secretariat is to provide top-quality, independent support to WTO member governments on all of the activities that are carried out by the Organization, and to serve the WTO with professionalism, impartiality and integrity.

BrahMos

Context:

- The BrahMos has been making news since past few months including the test fire of it from a Sukhoi fighter jet and Philippines which has locked up a deal with India in procuring the BrahMos missile system.

Background:

- In the early 1980's the Integrated Missile Development Programme was pioneered by Dr Kalam.
- As a result of this numerous indigenous missiles were commissioned including Agni, Pruthvi, Trishul, Akash and Nag with wide capabilities.
- But it was after the 1990's especially after the Gulf war where the cruise missiles were used in the war, Indian strategic leadership felt the importance and necessity of the cruise guided missiles.
- It was later in 1998 when An Inter-Governmental Agreement was signed with Russia.
- It was signed between Dr Kalam, who headed the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and N V Mikhailov, Russia's then Deputy Defence Minister.
- This led to the formation of BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture between DRDO and NPO Mashinostroyenia (NPOM), the Indian side holding 50.5% and the Russians 49.5%.

- The first successful test fire was conducted in the year 2001, since then it has reached many milestones.

About BrahMos:

- The BrahMos missile is a two-stage missile with a solid-fuel booster engine.
- Its first stage accelerates the missile to supersonic speeds before detaching it.
- In cruise phase, the liquid ramjet, or second stage, accelerates the missile closer to three times the speed of sound.
- The missile has a low radar signature and may go in a number of directions, making it stealthy.

MILESTONES	
2001: Maiden launch from land-based launcher in anti-ship mode from ITR, Chandipur	to Indian Army
2002: Launch in land-to-sea configuration from ITR	2013: Launch from a submerged platform in Bay of Bengal
2003: Maiden launch from Naval warship	2017: Cruise missile's maiden launch from Su-30MKI
2005: Navy receives first batch of BrahMos	2020: Su-30MKI equipped with BrahMos inducted in an IAF formation
2007: BrahMos land system delivered	2022: First mega export order from Philippines Navy

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Context:

- General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) “condemned and denounced” the comments on Prophet Muhammed made by two erstwhile national spokespersons of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

About OIC:

- The OIC bills itself as the “unifying voice of the Muslim world.” After the ‘criminal arson’ of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the contested city of Jerusalem, it was founded during a summit in Rabat (Morocco) in 1969.
- The main objectives is to Protect, defend, and combat defamation of Islam, prevent growing dissension in Muslim societies, and work to ensure that member states take a

united stand in the UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council, and other international forums.

- The OIC has consultative and cooperative relationships with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organisations to protect Muslim interests
- And resolve conflicts and disputes among member states, such as the territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the status of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The organization's current headquarters are in Jeddah, but it aims to relocate to East Jerusalem once the disputed city is 'liberated.' Furthermore, it wants to hold Israel accountable for "war crimes" and international law transgressions.
- The organisation follows a charter that outlines its goals, ideals, and operating procedures.
- The charter, which was first adopted in 1972, has been updated several times to reflect changing situations in the developing countries.
- The current charter was adopted in Dakar, Senegal, in March 2008.
- It states that all members must be directed and motivated by great Islamic teachings and values while also committed to the UN charter's goals and ideals. Member states are supposed to protect and promote good governance, democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, resolving conflicts peacefully and without resorting to threats or force.



Structure of OIC:

- The Islamic Summit, which is made up of kings and leaders of state, is the organization's top authority.
- It meets every two years to deliberate, make policy choices, provide guidance on organization-wide concerns, and consider matters of importance to member nations.
- The Council of Foreign Ministers is the OIC's top decision-making body, and it meets once a year to deliberate how to carry out the organization's broad policy. In addition, this council picks the Secretary General, who is the grouping's senior administrative official, for a five-year term.
- The Secretary General monitors the implementation of decisions, pays attention to the specific concerns of competent organs, establishes a channel for cooperation among the various organs, and submits annual reports on the work done.
- UN members with a Muslim majority can join the organisation. The membership is to be ratified with full consensus at the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers.

India's Position:

- It has not been easy for India to join the 57-nation organisation. Despite having positive relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia, Pakistan has consistently contested the country's membership and engagement.
- The Indian delegation was sent back from the venue at the last minute in 1969 due to Islamabad's resistance to Indian participation at the first OIC Plenary.
- Sushma Swaraj, the Indian External Affairs Minister, spoke as a guest of honour at the OIC Plenary of Foreign Ministers in Abu Dhabi 50 years later. The UAE's Foreign Minister extended the invitation.
- In 2018, Bangladesh had proposed India be given the observer status at the OIC considering its sizeable Muslim population – a move which received support from Turkey but was opposed by Pakistan.

IN-SPACE

Context:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) at Bopal, Ahmedabad today.

What is IN-SPACE?

- The Union Government in order to increase the private sector participation has established this platform.
- This will act as a common platform to both ISRO (Indian Space Research Programme) and any other entities who are ready to participate in the space sector in India.
- This will also act as a guide and will encourage the domestic participation in the space sector.
- This common platform would lead to a level playing field to the private sector to use the Indian space sector.
- In this context it is also important to analyse one more institution established, that is NSIL – New Space India Limited.

About NSIL:

- NSIL is a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) wholly owned by Government of India.
- This institute is headquartered in Bangalore.
- New Space India Limited (NSIL) is considered to be the commercial arm of ISRO.
- The main objective of NSIL is to pioneer the space based Indian industries in high end technologies.



Way Forward:

- In recent years ISRO has shown immense capacity in terms of adopting to the latest technologies.
- Its achievements in its recent missions including Chandrayan II and Mangalyan has caught the attention of the world.
- So by encouraging private sector into the Space sector, it would enable ISRO to concentrate on research and development.
- The major challenge now the Space agencies across the world are facing is how to deal with space debris.
- By encouraging private sector there will be boost to further launches into the space along with the challenge of clearing the space debris.

Tensions in Taiwan

Context:

- Beijing will “not hesitate to start a war” if Taiwan declares independence, China’s Defence Minister warned his U.S. counterpart on Friday, the latest salvo between the superpowers over the island.
- This incident comes during the time when recently, The President of USA in his recent visit to Japan stated that Washington would defend Taiwan militarily if it is attacked by China.



Background:

- After the World War II, there was conflicts between the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party(Kuomintang) in mainland China.
- After the communist party dominated over them under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the Nationalist party fled to Taiwan.
- China has been consistently exerting immense diplomatic pressure on the countries not to recognise Taiwan as a state.
- Until now US is following a policy of strategic ambiguity and also Diplomatically, the US currently sticks to the “One-China” policy, which recognises only one Chinese government – in Beijing – and has formal ties with China rather than Taiwan.

How is Taiwan important to the world?

- As we know there is acute shortage of Semi-Conductor all over the world, Taiwan is one of the biggest producers of Semi Conductor.
- Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company or TSMC – has over half of the world’s market.
- So Chinese takeover of Taiwan would give China control over the foundry in Taiwan.

How are the relations between India and Taiwan?

- From the past decades, The China factor has played a huge role in the ties between India and Taiwan.
- India’s complicated relationship with China also played a role in preventing Delhi and Taipei from intensifying their relationship
- But the recent assertiveness of China has compelled many countries including China to improve their ties with China.
- Taiwan with a huge base of manufacturing units could collaborate with India with huge demographic potential.

Manas National Park

Context:

- The one-horned rhinos of western Assam's Manas National Park, bordering Bhutan, are expected to have high life expectancy and significant growth in population, the 14th Assam rhino estimation census has revealed.
- The report has also revealed that it requires immediate conservation translocations.
- This was inferred in the fourteenth Rhino estimation census held in the state of Assam.

About Manas National Park:

- The Manas National Park is located on the Himalayan foothills in the state of Assam.
- The Manas National Park gets its name from the river which flows through the national park, which is the Manas river.
- Manas river is one of the major tributaries of the Brahmaputra river. It also serves as an international border between India and Bhutan.
- The Manas National Park is also a designated Tiger reserve, biosphere reserve and an elephant reserve.
- It also houses various endangered species including Assam roofed turtle, hispid hare, golden langur and pygmy hog.
- Manas is also known for its decent population of the wild water buffalo.



What is in the census?

- According to the 14th Assam rhino estimation census the one-horned rhinos of western Assam's Manas National Park have high life expectancy and significant growth in population.
- But the matter of concern here is that the population of the calves and the sub adults are meagre.
- With this condition it would be difficult to sustain the population of the rhinos in the region.

- The report mentions that there is an immediate action necessary for the translocation of the rhinos.

Way Forward:

- Even though the state of Assam has the highest population of one horned rhinos, the matter of concern is the concentration of its population in a small area.
- As we know the state is always prone to floods, there is a threat of extinction of its population.
- Apart from this there is threat from the poachers in the region by few extremist groups.

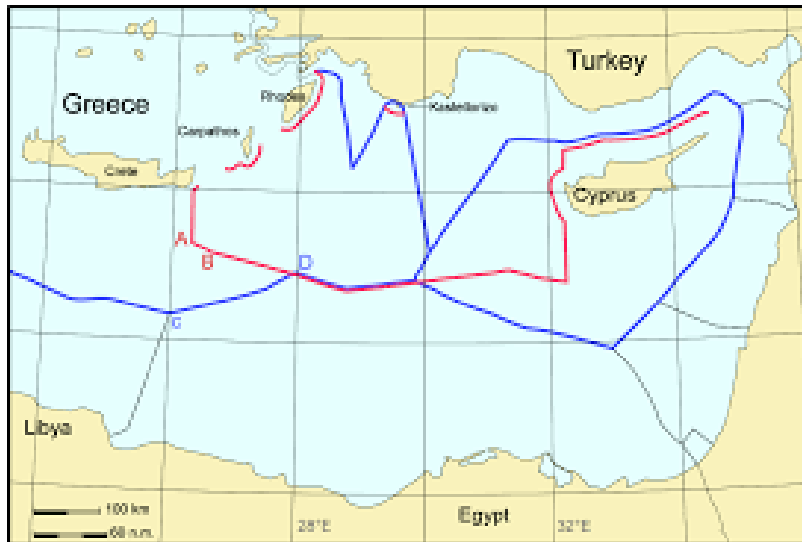
Aegean Islands

Context:

- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday warned Greece to demilitarise islands in the Aegean Sea.
- The two countries who are NATO allies have a history of disputes between them.

Background:

- The two countries have disputes over a range of issues over sovereignty and related rights in the region of the Aegean Sea.
- The primary reason behind the dispute is the different interpretation of the maritime laws.
- Turkey has not signed up to UNCLOS so it doesn't recognise Greece's rights in its continental shelf nor its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- Other disputes rests in the maritime and aerial zones of influence, this is due to the geographical peculiarity of the region.
- Most of the Aegean islands in the region belong to Greece this has hindered Turkey in extending any of its zones of influence beyond a few nautical miles off its coastline.



What is the current dispute?

- Turkey is accusing Greece that it has been building a military presence in the region.
- This is seen as a violation of the treaties that has been signed between them that guarantee the unarmed status of the Aegean islands.
- Turkey argues that it has ceded those islands to Greece with a guarantee that the region would be demilitarized.

International Labour Conference

Context:

- International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization is being held in Geneva.
- India's Labour and Employment Minister will address the conference and will raise the social security concerns of the Indian workers abroad.

About the conference:

- The International labour Conference sets the International labour standards and the broad policies of the ILO.
- It meets annually in Geneva. Often called an international parliament of labour, the Conference is also a forum for discussion of key social and labour questions.



What is the agenda of the conference?

- Occupational Safety and Health
- Apprenticeships
- Social and Solidarity Economy

About ILO:

- The International Labour Organization is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.
- Founded in October 1919 under the League of Nations, it is the first and oldest specialised agency of the UN.

Structure of ILO:

1. International Labour Conference – This conference which is held annually in Geneva sets the international labour standards and broad policies of ILO.
2. Governing Body – This is the executive arm of ILO which meets thrice a year in Geneva
3. International Labour Office – This is the permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organisation.

India's Role:

- India has been one of the founding member of the International Labour Organisation and India has been a permanent member of the ILO Governing Body since 1922.
- India has ratified over six conventions of the International Labour Organisation-
 1. Forced Labour Convention
 2. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention
 3. Equal Remuneration Convention
 4. Discrimination (Employment Occupation)
 5. Minimum Age Convention
 6. Worst forms of Child Labour Convention
- Whereas India has not ratified two other conventions which includes Freedom of Association Convention and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention.

Repo Rate & Its Implications

Context:

- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday voted unanimously to increase the policy repo rate by 50 basis points to 4.90%.
- The interest rate has been increased keeping in mind the rising inflation.

What is Repo Rate?

- The Repo Rate is the rate at which a nation's central bank gives money to commercial banks in the time of a cash shortage.
- Monetary authorities use the Repo Rate to limit inflation. In the time of inflation, central banks increase the Repo Rate to prevent banks from borrowing from the central bank.
- Changes in repo rates can have a direct influence on the economy. A reduction in the repo rate aids the country's growth and development.
- A drop in the repo rate may cause banks to lower their lending rates, which is good for retail loan borrowers.

Who decides the Repo Rate?

- The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India.
- The meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee are held at least 4 times a year and it publishes its decisions after each such meeting.
- It was through an amendment in 2016 to the RBI Act, 1934 that the Monetary Policy Committee was constituted.
- The primary objective of the MPC is to set the inflation target at 4% with plus or minus 2%.

Other Important Terminologies:

1. Cash Reserve Ratio – The commercial banks will have to maintain certain balance with RBI as a share of such percent of the bank's Net Demand and Time Liabilities(NDTL)
2. Statutory Liquid Ratio – The share of the NDTL of a commercial bank required to be maintained in liquid assets by the bank.

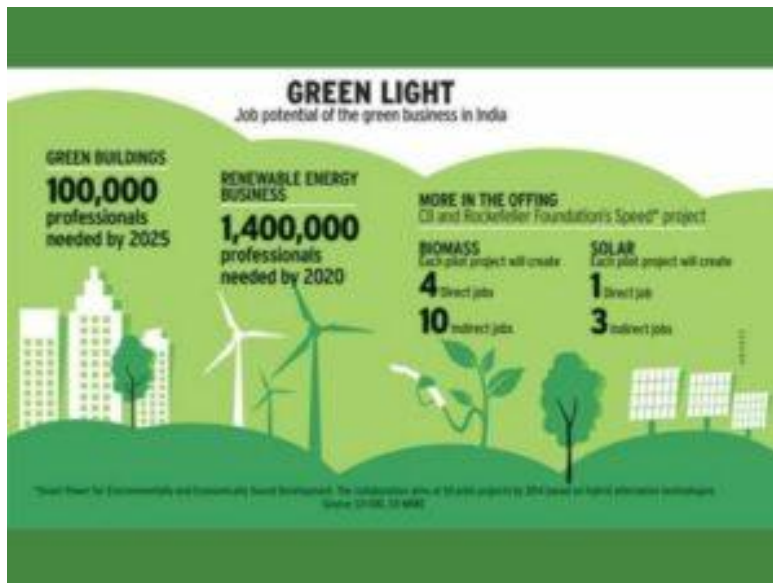
Green Jobs

Context:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed at a World Environment Day ceremony about India's ongoing efforts to combat climate change.
- He also addressed India's efforts to develop "green jobs" during his speech.

What are Green Jobs?

- Green occupations are jobs that have a direct positive impact on the environment and contribute to overall environmental welfare. Jobs involving renewable energy, resource conservation, and energy efficiency are all classified as part of this category.
- Overall, they're intended at lowering economic sectors' negative environmental impacts and accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy.
- The concept of a low-carbon economy, also known as decarbonisation, is straightforward: it is all about sustaining a sustainable economy that does not result in massive emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide.



Status in India:

- In 2015, the Union government has established the Skill Council for Green Jobs.
- It was established as a not-for-profit, independent, industry-led programme, aligned to the National Skill Development Missions.
- The council, which is jointly sponsored by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), aims to assist manufacturers and other service providers in India's "green business" sector in implementing industry-led, collaborative skills that will help the country realise the true potential and significance of "green jobs."
- According to the Skill Council for Green Jobs, increasing public awareness and training in green jobs skills would help to limit greenhouse gas emissions, reduce

waste and pollution, protect and restore ecosystems, and aid in climate change adaptation.



Rajya Sabha Elections

Context:

- In the coming days the Assemblies of 4 states will elect 16 MPs to Rajya Sabha.
- The election has grabbed the attention of the people due to the importance parties give to seats in the Upper House.

Why is it so important?

- Every Rajya Sabha seat counts for both the ruling party and the opposition, as any Bill, with the exception of those classified as Money Bills by the Lok Sabha Speaker, need the consent of the second chamber to become law.
- The Rajya Sabha, or Council of States, is made up of 245 members. To attain the simple majority of 123 has been impossible, no ruling party has ever surpassed 100 seats in the last three and a half decades.
- Rajya Sabha has a limited role in the case of Money Bills. It cannot amend a Money Bill, but can recommend amendments within a stipulated time, and Lok Sabha may either accept or reject all or any of these.



About the elections:

- The Article 83(1) of the Indian Constitution states that “The council of States shall not be subject to dissolution, but as nearly as possible one third of the members thereof shall retire as soon as may be on the expiration of every second year in accordance with the provisions made in that behalf by Parliament by law”
- Therefore, biennial elections are held to fill those vacancies who vacate for every two years.
- Out of the 245 members, 12 are nominated by the President and 233 are representatives of the States and Union territories of Delhi and Puducherry.
- When there are vacancies arising due to death or resignation of a member, bypolls will be held and he will serve for the term remaining of the predecessor.

The Tenth Schedule:

- Regarding the nominated members the law specifies that within six months of being nominated to the House, they can choose to join a political party.
- The time is given so that if a nominated MP is not a member of a political party, they can decide to join one if they want.
- But if they don't join a political party during the first six months of their tenure, and join a party thereafter, then they lose their seat in Parliament.

Revenue Deficit Grant

Context:

- The Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has on Monday released the 3rd monthly instalment of Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) Grant of Rs.7,183.42 crore to 14 States.
The grant has been released as per the recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission.

What is Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) Grant?

- The Post Devolution Revenue Deficit grants are released to the states as per the recommendations of the successive Finance Commissions to meet the gap in Revenue Accounts of the States post-devolution

- The Post Devolution Revenue Deficit grants are provided to the states under Article 275 of the Constitution.
Article 275 empowers the Parliament to make laws to provide financial assistance to States in the form of grants-in-aid charged to the revenue of India.

How is the devolution of tax done in India?

- The devolution of taxes by the Union Government is based on the recommendations made by the finance commission, currently the fifteenth finance commission.
- The two main functions of the Finance Commission is to determine the share of the net proceeds of Taxes between the centre and the states and relative share of each state among them.
- Under the Fifteenth Finance Commission the share of the states under the Union taxes is 41% for the period from 2021 – 2026.
- This is less than the previous recommendation by the Fourteenth Finance Commission which was 42%, the remaining 1% exclusively kept for the newly formed Union Territory J&K and Ladakh.

What are the criterias for devolution?

While determining the share of states the finance commission keeps in mind certain criterias including:

- a. Income Distance – 45%
- b. Area – 15%
- c. Population – 15%
- d. Demographic Performance – 12.5%
- e. Forest & Ecology- 10%
- f. Tax & Fiscal Efforts – 2.5%

Glacial Advance

Context:

- Multiple events of glacial advances have been witnessed from the Yankti Kuti valley situated in the extreme eastern part of Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand, since 52

thousand years (MIS 3) that synchronises with climate variability, according to a new study.



What is a Glacial Advance?

- Glacial Advance is nothing but the extension of the terminus of the glacier further down the valley, this occurs when the glacier flows downvalley faster than the rate of ablation at its terminus.
- Depending on the amount of accumulation of snow or evaporation due to which melting occurs have led the glaciers to periodically advance or retreat.



Study area of the present research work.

Kuti Valley:

- Kuti Valley is a Himalayan valley situated in the Pithoragarh District, Kumaon division of the Uttarakhand state of India.
 - Located in the eastern part of Uttarakhand, it is the last valley before the border with Tibet.
- This valley which is significant both strategically and geographically is the place of birth

for two important rivers, the Kali and Kalapani river which flows through the Lipulekh Pass.

About the report:

- By employing several advanced dating methods numerous researchers have provided data on the nature of the glaciation in the Central Himalayas.
- But it is unfortunate that due to the inaccessibility to these areas there is insufficient data regarding the nature of glaciation chronologically.
- This lack of data is not just because of the inaccessibility to these areas but also due to the lack of dating material in the study areas.
- Due to this it has been difficult to figure out the correlation between two major climatic systems: the Indian summer Monsoon and the mid-latitude westerlies and also about the glacier advance.

What is the use of this study?

- The study can contribute hugely to enhance the existing knowledge of the relationship between Himalayan climate and glacier dynamics and can help assessing the role of Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM) versus westerlies in driving the valley glaciers in the Central Himalayan region.

D2M Technology

Context:

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and India's public service broadcaster Prasar Bharati are exploring the feasibility of a technology that allows to broadcast video and other forms of multimedia content directly to mobile phones, without needing an active internet connection.



What is the D2M technology?

- Mobile phones can receive terrestrial digital TV using this technology, which is based on the convergence of broadband and broadcast.
- It would work in the same way that people listen to FM radio on their phones, with a receiver built into the phone that can tap into radio frequencies. Multimedia content can also be immediately broadcast to phones via D2M.
- The technology's concept is that it might be used to directly broadcast content relating to citizen-centric information, as well as to combat fake news, issue emergency alerts, and provide disaster management help, among other things.
- It can also be used to broadcast live news, sports, and other content to mobile phones.

Impact:

- Consumers would benefit from this technology because they would be able to access multimedia content via Video on Demand (VoD) or Over The Top (OTT) content providers without using up all of their mobile data, and at a low cost.
- People in rural locations with limited or no internet access will be able to consume video material thanks to this technology.
- One of the major advantages of the technology for businesses is that it allows telecom service providers to transfer video traffic from their mobile network to the broadcast network, allowing them to free up valuable mobile spectrum.
- This will also optimise the use of mobile airwaves and free up bandwidth, reducing call dropouts and increasing data speeds, among other things.

Indian Grey Wolves

Context:

- The Indian grey wolves are one of the oldest wolf lineages in the world. With only 3,100 wolves remaining in India, they could be the next to disappear.

About the Indian Grey Wolves:

- The Indian wolf is a subspecies of grey wolf that ranges from Southwest Asia to the Indian Subcontinent.
- It is intermediate in size between the Himalayan wolf and the Arabian wolf, and lacks the former's luxuriant winter coat due to it living in warmer conditions.
- They are smaller and leaner compared to their European and American counterparts.
- The Indian wolf is highly adapted to the hot, arid plains of the subcontinent.
- In India, wolves are in the same category of endangerment as tigers.



What are the reasons behind endangerment?

- One of the main reasons for it is the habitat loss which has resulted in its endangerment in India.
- Its habitat primarily being the barren wastelands are all being diverted for development purposes.
- It is a matter of sorrow that there is no dedicated sanctuary or a reserve to protect the specie.

- They are also under threat from its enemy specie i.e the dog, they share a very bad relationship.
- And also due to its inability to find a partner, the wolves mate with the dogs and resulted in dog-wolf hybrids.
- This is an existential threat to the specie, which may lead to the specie being completely extinct.

Way Forward:

- Each and every organism in an ecosystem is dependent on each other for their survival.
- Similarly, pastoral nomadic communities living in various parts of the country play a huge role in protecting the wolves.
- And also its natural habitat must be increased in order to protect the specie.

India's Textile and Apparel Industry

Context:

- India has touched US\$ 44.4 Bn in the textiles and apparel industry including the handicrafts in the fiscal year 2021-22 indicating a substantial increase of 41% and 26% over corresponding figures in FY 2020-21 and FY 2019-20, respectively.

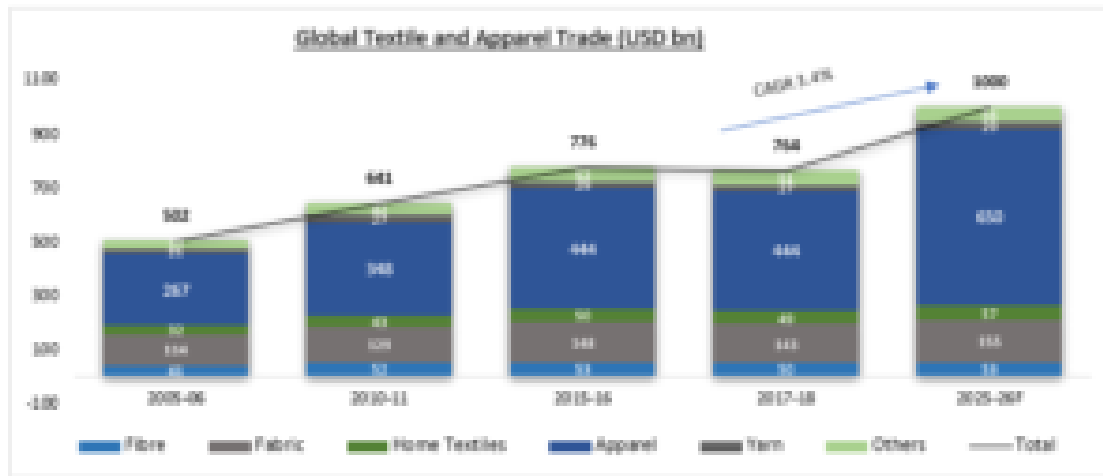
Which are the export destinations?

- USA – 27%
- EU – 18%
- Bangladesh – 12%
- UAE – 6%

Categories:

- The export of Cotton Textiles stood at US\$ 17.2 Bn which makes up the major share which is followed by ready made garments which stands at US\$ 16 Bn.

- The share of the handicrafts stood at US\$ 2.1 Bn which has seen a growth of 22% from the last fiscal year.



Source: UN Comtrade, Wazir Analysis, Telexivory's Analysis

Background:

- The textile industry which is labour intensive provides upto 45 million employment in India which only stands next to the agriculture sector in terms of employment.
- The textile industry in India contributes significantly to the economy, it contributes upto 2.3% of the total GDP also it contributes 7% in in the industrial output.
- It is also important to note that the export revenue from the textile sector makes upto 12% of the total export earnings.

What are the Challenges faced by the textile industry?

- One of the hindrances to the Indian textile industry is that it is highly unorganised and fragmented which is a challenge in front of the mass production of textiles around the world.
- It is also evident that the textile industry has not received much attention from the

foreign investors, FDI inflow into this sector is too low.

- Apart from this the exports from India has remained stagnant with new competitors in the South Asian region specially Bangladesh doing well in textile sector.
- The stakeholders of the textile industry argue that the tax regime in India has made Indian producers to be expensive and uncompetitive.

INDEX of Eight CORE INDUSTRIES

Context:

- The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stood at 143.2 in April 2022, which is an increased of 8.4 per cent (provisional) as compared to the Index of April 2021.



What are the Core Industries?

The Eight core sectors of the Indian Economy are:

- Electricity.
- Steel.
- Refinery products.
- Crude oil.
- Coal.
- Cement.
- Natural gas.
- Fertilizers.

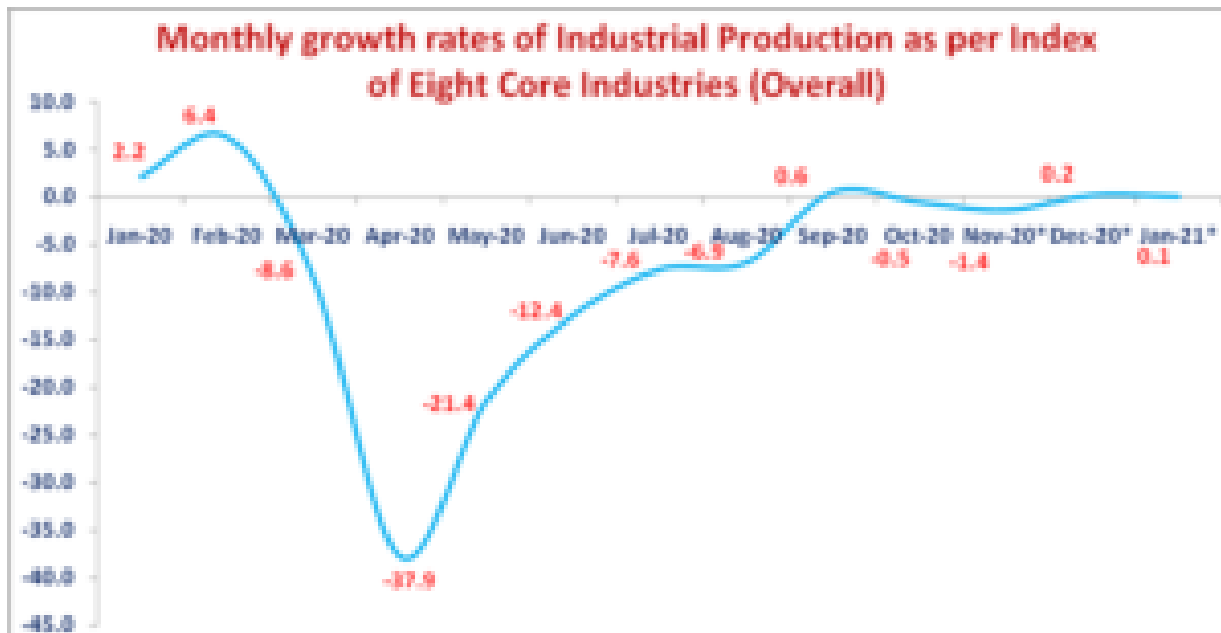


Significance:

- These sectors which have a huge impact on the economy plays a huge role.
- These eight core industries which together make upto 40.27% of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- The Index of the Eight Core Industries is released by the Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and Ministry of Commerce & Industry every month.

What is the current status?

- The combined index has been increased by 8.4% when compared to the index of April 2021.



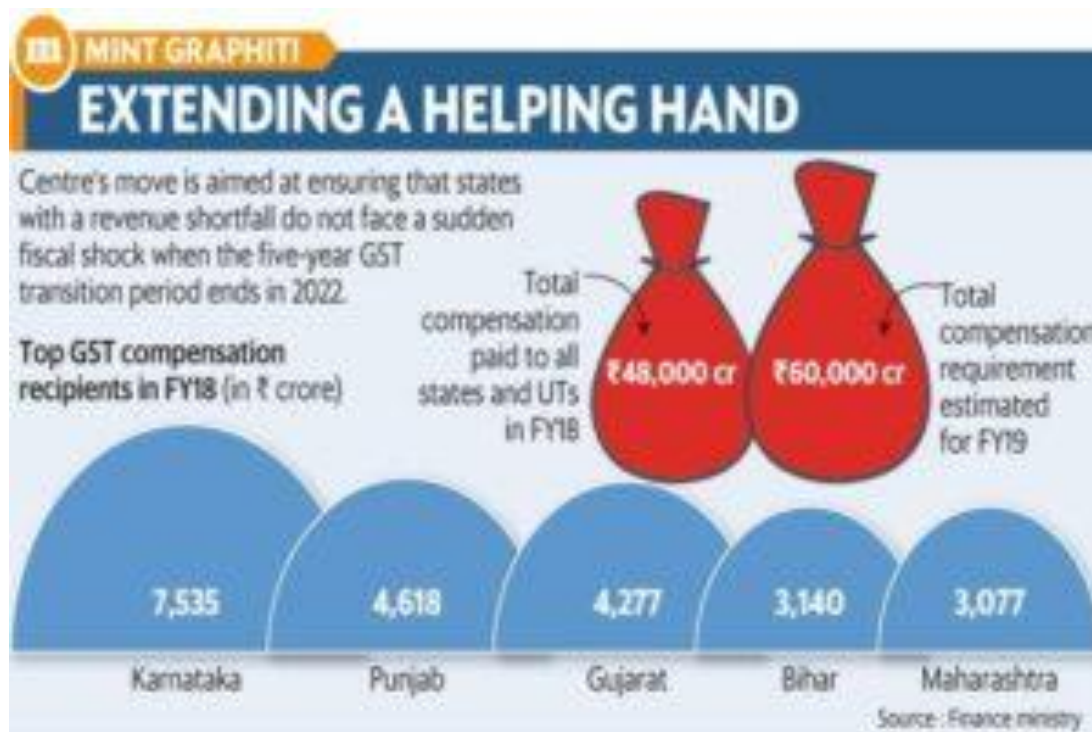
About The IIP:

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is a composite indicator that measures the short-term changes in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to that in a chosen base period.
- In India, the first official attempt to compute the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) was made much earlier than the first recommendation on the subject came at the international level.
- With the inception of the Central Statistical Organization (now known as National Statistics Office (NSO)) in 1951, the responsibility for compilation and publication of IIP was vested with it.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) Compensation

Context:

- The Centre on Tuesday paid the entire amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation due to States up to May 31 by releasing an amount of ₹86,912 crore.



What and Why Compensation?

- The 101st Constitutional Amendment Act brought in the GST regime and the states were promised that the states would receive the compensation for loss of any revenue due to the implementation of the new tax regime.
- This was assured under the provisions of the GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 for a time duration of 5 years.

- The GST revenue is calculated keeping the tax revenue of the state with the base year to be 2015-16 and assuming the growth rate to be 14%.
- The compensation is paid out of cess which will be levied on such goods which will be recommended by the GST Council.
- The proceeds of the compensation cess will be credited to a non-lapsable fund known as the Goods and Services Tax Compensation Fund in the public account.

About GST Council:

- As per Article 279A, the GST council has to be constituted by the President within sixty days of the commencement of the Art 279A.
- The GST Council shall consist of members from both centre and the states.
- The members include the Union Finance Minister as the chairperson and the ministers in charge of finance of the states as members.
- The council makes recommendations to the Union and the States on various issues about GST regime.



Way Forward:

- Recently, in a landmark decision by the Supreme Court it has ruled that the recommendations by the GST council will not be binding on both Union and the states.
- This comes at a time when most of the states were voicing for the GST compensation and some states even raised their concern of considering to extend the GST compensation period currently which is five years.