

National and International Weekly Current Affairs 10 to 16 September 2023

National News

CMFRI's research on India's marine biodiversity displayed at UN meet

- Research findings of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) on India's marine ecosystems were showcased at UN Meet.
- United Nations meeting was held at Seoul, South Korea to discuss the **Global Biodiversity Framework**.

Key points

- India emphasized its commitment to marine ecosystem conservation, particularly mangroves and coral reefs, the identification of marine protected areas, and the promotion of sustainable marine fishing.
- India emphasized about the **Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) workshop**, which is aimed to accelerate the implementation of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)** of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- The report highlighted CMFRI's research in developing a deep learning-enabled image recognition model for classifying underwater coral images as part of efforts to restore ocean ecosystems.
- It also mentioned CMFRI's attempts to map the spatial distribution of aquatic invasive species in the northern Indian Ocean region.

Did you know?

- SOI is a global platform that seeks to build partnerships and enhance capacity to achieve global goals and targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity.

CBI does not require permission to probe pre-2014 cases too: SC

- A Constitution Bench held that a Supreme Court judgment of 2014 which declared invalid a legal provision mandating the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to take prior permission before investigating corruption cases against senior government officials has a retrospective effect. **Key points**
- A five-judge Bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said the provision in question, Section 6A of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, the statute that governs the CBI, was void from the very day of its insertion on September 11, 2003.
- The 106-page judgment held that Section 6A violated fundamental rights, and once a law is declared to be unconstitutional, being violative of Part-III (fundamental rights) of the Constitution, then it would be held to be void ab initio, still born, unenforceable and non est
- This means that senior government officials involved in corruption cases even before the date of the Supreme Court judgment invalidating the need for prior sanction would no longer be able to avail the protection of prior approval.

Series of disruptive weather and climate phenomenon occurring in India linked to food security**El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle.**

- El Nino and La Nina are complex weather patterns resulting from variations in ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific Region. They are opposite phases of what is known as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle.
- The ENSO cycle describes the fluctuations in temperature between the ocean and atmosphere in the east-central Equatorial Pacific.
- El Nino and La Nina episodes typically last nine to 12 months, but some prolonged events may last for years.

El-Nino

- El Nino is a climate pattern that describes the unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
- It is the "warm phase" of a larger phenomenon called the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).
- It occurs more frequently than La Nina.
- El Niño is a loose translation of "little boy" or "Christ child" in Spanish.
- El Niño is the warming of sea waters in Central-east Equatorial Pacific that occurs every few years (Warm phase off the coast of Peru).
- During El Niño, surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific rise
- This weakens the trade winds — east-west winds that blow near the Equator.
- Due to El Niño, easterly trade winds that blow from the Americas towards Asia change direction to turn into westerlies.
- It thus brings warm water from the western Pacific towards America



Special Session to discuss Parliament's 75-year journey, take up Bills on CEC, the Press

- There will be a discussion on "Parliamentary journey of 75 years starting from Samvidhan Sabha — achievements, experiences, memories and learnings".
- The agenda indicates a plan to shift to the new Parliament building.
- Three Bills will be taken up:
 - a) the Post Office Bill, 2023 to "consolidate and amend the law relating to Post Office in India";
 - b) the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, to "regulate the appointment, conditions of service and term of office of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners"; and
 - c) the Repealing and Amending Bill, 2023 to "repeal certain enactments and to amend an enactment".
- In addition to these, the Lok Sabha will take up the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, and the Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023.

Activists raise concerns over legal loophole pertaining to sexual assault of animals

- Animal rights activists across India have expressed their concern at the absence of any provision to address sexual crimes against animals in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 Bill that seeks to repeal the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860.

Key points

- While the 2018 judgment removing portions of Section 377 of the IPC decriminalised sex between consenting same-gender adults, it did not address the question of bestiality.
- Currently, Section 377 of the IPC provides for punishment of those found engaging in bestiality.
- It states, "Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine."

Note: The meaning of BESTIALITY is sexual relations between a human being and a lower animal.

National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)

- A Central team of officials from NCDC is expected to visit Maruthonkara and Ayancheri areas in Kozhikode district of Kerala where two persons died due to Nipah infection recently.

Key points**National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC):**

- It is an institute under the Indian Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The Director, an officer of the Public Health sub-cadre of Central Health Service, is the administrative and technical head of the Institute.
- Headquarters: New Delhi.

- It functions as the nodal agency in the country for disease surveillance facilitating prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Constitution articles dealing with language

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that simple and clear Hindi words should be used in office work, adding that the principle of language change says that "language moves from complexity to simplicity".
- The Minister said that the Hindi language had played an unprecedented role in uniting the country during the difficult days of the Independence movement, instilled a feeling of unity in a country divided into many languages and dialects, and played an important role in carrying the freedom struggle from east to west and north to south in the country.

Key points

- Article 343 of the Indian Constitution talks about the Official language of the Union
- Article 344 talks about Commission and Committee of Parliament on official language

SC joins National Judicial Data Grid

- Real-time data on the filing and disposal of cases in the Supreme Court will now be available at the fingertips of the common man, just a click of a mouse away.
- **Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud** announced the onboarding of the Supreme Court on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)

Key points

- The **NJDG portal is a national repository of data** relating to cases instituted, pending and disposed of by the courts across the length and breadth of the country.
- The onboarding of Supreme Court's case data on the NJDG is based on the 'open data policy'.
- Data will be uploaded on the NJDG on a real-time and daily basis.

All reported births, deaths to be digitally registered from Oct. 1

- All reported births and deaths in the country will be digitally registered on the Centre's portal from October 1, 2023.

Key points

- The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023 that paves the way for digital birth certificates will come into effect from October 1.
- The digital birth certificates will be a single document to be used for admission to educational institutions, applications for driving licence, government jobs, passports or Aadhaar, voter enrolment, and registration of marriage, and others.
- The centralised database will also update the National Population Register (NPR), ration cards, property registration, and electoral rolls.

National Population Register (NPR) and Census**National Population Register (NPR):**

- The National Population Register (NPR) is a register of usual residents of the country.

- It includes both Indian citizens as well as a foreign citizen.
- According to the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, a usual resident is a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.
- It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National level under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003
- The Census is the enumeration of the population of the country and it is being conducted at an interval of 10 years

NPR vs Census

- The decennial census is the largest single source of a variety of statistical information on the different characteristics of the people of India.
- While NPR only contains demographic information, more details are required for the census like information on demography, economic activity, literacy and education, and housing and household amenities among others.

India vs Bharat controversy

- In dinner invitations sent to G-20 summit guests had carried the nomenclature of the President of India as 'President of Bharat'.
- Government critics have alleged that Modi's Govt is planning to change the name to only Bharat.

Key points:

- **Article 1** says, "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States".
- **Parliament has the absolute power** to change the name of the country at any time by amending the Constitution.
- **Article 368** deals with the Constitutional Amendment.

Did you know?

- **Article 52 says that there shall be a President of India.** Therefore, constitutionally speaking, there is no President of Bharat in the country.
- The word 'Bharat' is not used in any of the articles of the Constitution except in the Hindi version, which was published under the authority of the President under **Article 394A**.
- Article 1 in the Hindi translation of the Constitution says "Bharat means India", which shows that Bharat is treated as the translation of India.

Maharashtra State News

Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project

- National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL) is implementing the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project.
- The land for the project is spread over three districts – Thane, Palghar and Mumbai Suburban in Maharashtra.

- The **508 km-long Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project** is the pet project of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL), a joint venture of the central government and participating state governments, is implementing the project.

Thane depot of bullet train project to be built on Japan's Shinkansen depots' standards

- The Thane depot is one of the three depots planned for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project.
- The **Thane depot, to be designed on the lines of the Japanese Shinkansen depots.**
- The Shinkansen, also known as the bullet train in Japan, is famous for its high-speed rail technology and safety standards.

Person in news: Sushiladevi Salunkhe

- Sushiladevi Salunkhe's work is an inspiration for the new generation today.
- National, social and educational work done by Sushiladevi Salunkhe in the pre-independence and post-independence period is unforgettable.
- Mata Sushila Devi Salunkhe played a major role in **setting up Sri Swami Vivekananda Education Institute all over Maharashtra** along with Education Maharishi Dr. Bapuji Salunkhe.
- Sushila Devi took an active part in the Indian Freedom Movement, Chale Jav Movement, Samyukta Maharashtra Movement

Dhangars' long-pending quota demand

- Dhangars' long-pending quota demand remains a complex issue in Maharashtra.
- The Dhangars, who account for up to 9% of the population and get 3.5% reservation, have been demanding inclusion in the ST category
- The community has for the past several decades been fighting for reservation under the Scheduled Tribe category.

Climate Change impact on Maharashtra

- Climate change: Maharashtra's extreme temperatures, rainfall, cyclones rise 1.5 times more than average
- The climate change has triggered the temperatures across Maharashtra almost three times the usual over 24 days with the overall summer-monsoon (June to August) season witnessing a rise of 1.5 times the average climate activities such as rainfall and wind triggered by the heat.
- The overall departure of long-term average temperature during the season was 0.8 degrees celsius i.e nearly one degree above (0.2 degrees less)

₹837 Crore Project To Deal With Cyber Crimes in MH

- The project aims to bring all modern technologies under one umbrella, which will also include a control and command center, technology-assisted investigation, a center of excellence, a Computer Emergency Response Team, a cloud-based data center, a security operations center

- Under this project, people can register their complaints on a 24x7 call center, according to the decision passed by the state cabinet.

International Literacy Day 2023

- On the occasion of International Literacy Day, Rotary Club Osmanabad distributed the 'Rashtra Prachikar Award' 2023-24 at Rotary Eye Hospital.

Key points:

- It is observed on 8th September.
- UNESCO in November 1966, formally designated September 8th as International Literacy Day.
- The observance of ILD aims to reinforce public opinion in support of the ongoing endeavours against illiteracy.
- International Literacy Day 2023 will be celebrated under the theme "Promoting literacy for a world in transition: Building the foundation for sustainable and peaceful societies".

National Lok Adalat in Mumbai

- National Lok Adalat in Mumbai awards ₹722 cr. to over 12,000 cases.
- National Lok Adalat has awarded over ₹722 crore by settling more than 12,000 cases here.
- The cases included compoundable criminal offenses, cheque bouncing as well as matters under the Payment and Settlement Act. A total settlement amount of ₹722,82,71,891 was distributed to 12,472 cases.

Did you know?

- National Lok Adalat (NLA) is a forum for amicable settlement of disputes at national level.
- It is organized by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in collaboration with the State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) and District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs).

Pune, Pimpri Chinchwad register 30% of all EV sales in state.

- Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad now have around 30% of the total number of electric vehicles (EVs) registered in the state, data from the ministry of road transportation.
- In addition, a significant increase has also been seen in the registration of CNG vehicles in the twin cities.
- Around 95,000 of the 3,22,225 EVs registered in the state are in Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad alone.

Rs 4,500 crore plan to empower Thane with 24-hour power

- A plan has been drawn to upgrade the power distribution system with a budget of Rs4,500 crore for uninterrupted and round-the-clock power supply to Thane district, said union minister Kapil Patil.
- Under the plan, the power distribution network will be strengthened in the 850 villages of Thane district.
- Work worth Rs1,200 crore will be done in the first two years and the remaining will be completed in next five years.

IIT Council ties up with American univ assn to form research institute

- With a seed fund of \$10 million, the IIT Council on behalf of all higher educational institutes in India has entered into an MoU with the Association of American Universities (AAU) to establish the Indo-US Global Challenges Institute.
- The intent of the institute was announced in June this year, during the US visit of PM Modi.
- This institute will seek to address some of the "consequential" economic, environmental and technological challenges "that have the potential to affect the security, prosperity, and stability of both countries."

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)

- The poor response from universities in Maharashtra to their participation in National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has got the state education department taking a serious view about its implementation.
- Director of higher and technical education in Maharashtra Shailendra Deolankar had sent three reminders to universities in Maharashtra to submit data about colleges that have been poor in responding to the NAAC gradation which was also not submitted by the universities

About NAAC:

- The NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (NAAC) conducts assessment and accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) such as colleges, universities or other recognised institutions to derive an understanding of the 'Quality Status' of the institution.
- NAAC evaluates the institutions for its conformance to the standards of quality in terms of its performance related to the educational processes and outcomes, curriculum coverage, teaching-learning processes, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources, organisation, governance, financial well being and student services.



Vultures breeding: 50 captive vultures will be released in the wild soon

- Over the next one year, 50 captive vultures will be released in the wild in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- These vultures are part of the 650 that have been bred over the last 20 years at four Conservation Breeding Centres by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) with funding by the Royal Society for Protection of Birds, UK, and later by the state forest department where the centers are located.

Did you know?

- The chief cause for the decline in vulture population was the use of diclofenac injections in cattle.
- The Panna tiger reserve has a large number of wild vultures.

BNHS members explore Amboli's Biodiversity and Bioluminescent Fungus

- Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) recently discovered hundreds of species of native plants in a small forest patch in Devrai (Sacred Groves) near Amboli.

Key points:

- BNHS members spotted endemic herpetofauna, including the Malabar Pit Viper, Amboli Bush Frog, Malabar Gliding Frog, and the Critically Endangered Amboli Tiger Toad.
- They witnessed bioluminescent fungus during one of the night trails.

Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)

- It is a Non-Governmental Organisation in India engaged in conservation and biodiversity research.
- It was founded on 15 September 1883.
- BNHS is the partner of **BirdLife International in India**. It has been designated as a 'Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation' by the Department of Science and Technology.
- Logo: The BNHS logo is the **great hornbill**.
- Internet of Birds platform: IT consultancy firm Accenture and the Bombay Natural History Society have developed **Internet of Birds platform** that identifies bird species found in India using Artificial Intelligence technology, including machine learning and computer vision, from digital photos that are uploaded by the public.

Constitutional Provisions Governing Reservation in India

- States do not have authority to grant reservation, says Maharashtra education minister.
- Maharashtra education minister Deepak Kesarkar said the issue of reservation was related to the Constitution and the states did not have much authority to grant quotas.

Let us understand the Constitutional Provisions governing Reservation in India:

- Part XVI deals with reservation of SC and ST in Central and State legislatures.

- Article 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution enabled the State and Central Governments to reserve seats in government services for the members of the SC and ST.
- The Constitution was amended by the Constitution (77th Amendment) Act, 1995 and a new clause (4A) was inserted in Article 16 to enable the government to provide reservation in promotion.
- Later, clause (4A) was modified by the Constitution (85th Amendment) Act, 2001 to provide consequential seniority to SC and ST candidates promoted by giving reservation.
- Constitutional 81st Amendment Act, 2000 inserted Article 16 (4 B) which enables the state to fill the unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for SCs/STs in the succeeding year, thereby nullifying the ceiling of fifty percent reservation on total number of vacancies of that year.
- Article 330 and 332 provides for specific representation through reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the Parliament and in the State Legislative Assemblies respectively
- Article 243D provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Panchayat.
- Article 233T provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Municipality.
- Article 335 of the constitution says that the claims of STs and STs shall be taken into consideration constitutively with the maintenance of efficacy of the administration.

Gaurav K.T Patil's Statue

- Gaurav K.T. Patil's statue was unveiled by Deputy CM, Devendraji Fadnavis.
- The conference was held in Bhosle High School in Dharashiv city.
- Gaurav K.T. Patil was the Founder Secretary of Adarsh Shikshan Prasarak Mandal.

Ayushman Bhava campaign

- Maharashtra health department has started screening children in the age group of 0-18 under **Ayushman Bhava campaign** which has been rolled out in all districts.
- Under this campaign, **32 tests will be done free of charge for all children**.
- Till date, 25 crore Ayushman cards have been distributed across the country under the initiative 'Ayushman Aya Dari'.

Inauguration of Maha Arogya Camp under " Ayushman Bhava" Campaign at Vashi

- It was held at Karmaveer Mamasahab Jagdale College.
- In this camp, **64 types of diseases will be examined free of charge**.
- On this occasion, Swasthya Rath (Mobile Medical Unit) was also inaugurated.

Highly prestigious Nation Builder Award for exemplary teacher

- The highly prestigious Nation Builder Award presented by the Rotary Club was presented to **Shyamsunder Mahadev Tanmore**.

Key points:

- Mr. Tanmore is a primary graduate teacher of Sanja International School.
- Mr. Tanmore was awarded as the "Outstanding Teacher" based on students' evaluation of Sanja School.
- The Nation Builder Award provides recognition to outstanding teachers of Government and Government aided schools, through a participatory evaluation process through the students and head.

Marathwada witnessed 685 farmers suicides in 2023

- 685 farmers ended their lives in Marathwada region in 2023.
- The district with the highest number of such incidents is Beed.

Did you know?

- Marathwada is an arid region in central Maharashtra consisting of eight districts Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed, Parbhani, Nanded, Osmanabad, Hingoli and Latur.

No takers for 19k RTE seats in state's private schools.

- Every year, there is a clamor for seats under the Right to Education (RTE) Act with lakhs applying for free admission in private schools.
- This year, **nearly 19,000 seats under the 25% scheme are vacant in Maharashtra** even though 3.64 lakh applications were received by the state education department for the 1.01 lakh seats.
- Education officials said that the vacant seats were in non-popular schools and with government schools also providing quality education, many preferred to study there.

Did you know?

- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009.
- The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right.

The Kharif 2022 crop insurance case

- State Level Grievance Redressal Committee directed the Insurance Companies to deposit the remaining 350 crore rupees of Insurance to farmer's accounts.

Key points:

- The State Level Grievance Redressal Committee gave a judgment in favor of farmers in the Kharif 2022 crop Insurance case.
- The companies are reluctant to pay the amount.

- The Kharif 2022 crop insurance case is a legal case filed by a group of farmers in the Supreme Court of India challenging the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

Impulsive response to Multimedia Exposure

- Students participated in the digital multimedia exhibition organized on behalf of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Central Bureau of Communications, Solapur and District Administration.
- The topic was 9 years of service to the Central Government, good governance and welfare of the poor and nutrition, food grains, youth, women, public representatives and citizens in large numbers.

Lok Adalat settles 58 cases

- At least 58 matters were settled, and compensation to the tune of Rs 3.5 crore was awarded in cases heard during the Lok Adalat organized in Maharashtra's Raigad district.
- Lok Adalat is a forum where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at the pre-litigation stage are settled/compromised amicably.
- Lok Adalats have been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.**

NIA offers cash reward of Rs 3 lakh for information on ISIS Pune Module case suspects

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has offered a cash reward of Rs 3 lakh for each individual who provides information leading to the apprehension of four wanted accused individuals in the ISIS Pune module case.
- The accused persons have been identified as Mohammed Shahnawaz Shafiuzzama Alam alias Abdulla, Rizwan Abdul Haji Ali, Abdulla Faiyaz Shaikh alias Diaperwala and Talha Liyakat Khan,

Did you know?

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is a central agency of India responsible for investigating and prosecuting terrorist activities, crimes against the nation, and offenses under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- It was established in 2008 in the wake of the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Private hospital to combat drug resistant tuberculosis (DRTB)

- The Nagpur Municipal Corporation's (NMC's) pilot project involving a private hospital to combat growing cases of patients suffering from drug resistant tuberculosis (DRTB) is showing encouraging results with 18 persons being cured of the deadly disease within four months of its launch.
- The NMC had roped in Astha Critical Care Centre at Suyog Nagar to provide free services to DRTB patients who were shunned by even other overburdened and stressed public hospitals.

National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP):

- The NTEP is a government-led program that aims to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) in India by 2025.
- The program was launched in 1997 and has made significant progress in reducing the TB burden in India.
- In 2018, India accounted for 27% of the global TB burden, but only 10% of the global TB deaths.
- The NTEP is implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and works with state and district governments, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Shyam Hotel to be converted into a monument for Dr. Ambedkar

- The Nagpur Metropolitan Region Development Authority (NMRDA) has now decided to take up the ambitious work of renovation of Shyam Hotel at Sitabuldi and convert it into a monument for Dr. Ambedkar.

Key points:

- The project is titled as 'Bhimsrushti' and it involves strengthening the dilapidated structure and redoing the room in which Dr. Ambedkar stayed.
- The architect of the Indian constitution and messiah of dalits Bharat Ratna, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar stayed at Shyam Hotel when he came there for embracing Buddhism at Deekshabhoomi.

Water literacy lessons for 200 villages with aquifer mapping

- The aquifer mapping of 200 villages in Maharashtra project is launched at the Gokhale Institute of Economics and Politics (GIPE), Pune.

Key Points:

- It is a part of Mission Easy Water Literacy and hopes to address water scarcity and drought-related challenges.
- This initiative is a collaboration between the Dr Dhananjayrao Gadgil Centre for Sustainable Village Development at GIPE and Sahaj Jalbodh to involve the public in aquifer mapping to improve water management.
- Significant water scarcity issues has lead to farmer suicides and rural-to-urban migration in search of livelihoods.

Shivaji's Wagh Nakh may be displayed in 5 Indian cities; will fuel research: V&A

- London's Victoria and Albert Museum which will soon return the wagh nakh (a dagger resembling tiger claws).

Key Points:

- It was used by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to kill Afzal Khan
- The state government has said that the wagh nakh's display in India may enable new research into their history.
- Adrian Grant Duff was given the tiger claws when he was resident of Satara by the Prime Minister of the Peshwas of the Marathas.
- Duff took it to Britain with him and his descendants donated the weapon to the V&A Museum

Pola 2023: Date, Rituals and Significance

- Pola is a traditional and one of the most famous festivals of Maharashtra.
- People of Maharashtra celebrate Pola at the end of monsoon season and beginning of agricultural year
- On this auspicious day, they worship cattles especially bulls who have a big contribution in farming activities.
- It is the day when farmers seek blessings for a bountiful harvest.
- This year, the festival of Pola is being celebrated on the Amavasya Tithi of Bhadrapada Month i.e., September 14, 2023.

IIT-Bombay makes AI, Data Science must for undergrad students

- The Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) has decided to introduce Artificial Intelligence and Data Science (AI-DS) as a mandatory course for undergraduate students — BTech as well as Bachelor of Science (BS) — from this academic year.
- Earlier, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology used to be common courses which everybody had to learn, now AI-DS is a new addition to that list in our curriculum.

Maharashtra Speaker Begins Hearing Disqualification Petitions

- The Supreme Court had stated that "the Speaker must decide on the disqualification petitions within a reasonable period".
- Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar began hearing the disqualification petitions filed against each other by the two rival Shiv Sena factions led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Sena (UBT) chief and former CM Uddhav Thackeray.

Disqualification Powers of Speakers

- The **Tenth Schedule or the anti-defection law**, introduced in 1985, gives the Speaker of the House the power to disqualify legislators who 'defect' from the party.
- In 1992, the Supreme Court ruled that the decision of the Speaker in this regard is subject to judicial review.

'Divyanga Ke Dari' campaign by Maha Govt

- Maharashtra's Disability Welfare Department is implementing the campaign 'Divyanga Ke Dari'.
- Aim - To provide the benefits of various government schemes to the disabled and also to obtain the necessary documents.
- This campaign will be held on Thursday 21 September 2023 at Chayadeep Mangal Office, Aurangabad Road, Osmanabad.
- In this campaign, the disabled beneficiaries will be registered online in a category-wise manner. It is planned to take appropriate action on the applications of disabled beneficiaries received from Asha Sevika and Anganwadi Sevika as well as the applications pending earlier.

A young male tiger died in a road hit near Murdoli village in the buffer zone of the Nawegaon Nagzira Tiger Reserve

- Nawegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve is located in the Gondia, Maharashtra.
- Navegaon is also a home to almost 60% of the bird species found in entire Maharashtra. It was notified as the 46th Tiger Reserve of India in December 2013.

Did you know?

- India's top sugarcane-growing states are Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu.
- The first three account for 85-90% of the sugar produced in the country.

Maharashtra - first position in attracting FDI

- Maharashtra has once again surged ahead of other states to regain its first position in terms of attracting foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the country.
- Over the last one year the state has successfully attracted around Rs 1.25 lakh foreign direct investment taking Maharashtra ahead of Karnataka and Gujarat.

Did you know?

- Foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment made by a company or an individual in one country into business interests located in another country. FDI is an important driver of economic growth.

TReDS platforms

- The Reserve Bank of India has recently announced a new initiative to boost the liquidity and credit availability for MSMEs by allowing insurance companies to participate in the trade receivable discounting system (TReDS), an online platform for financing trade receivables.

Key Points:

- TReDS stands for Trade Receivables Discounting System.
- It is an electronic platform that facilitates the discounting of trade receivables of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by multiple financiers.
- The TReDS platform is a centralized marketplace where buyers and sellers of trade receivables can interact with each other

Committee to study lacunae in private farm market

- The Maharashtra government has appointed a ten-member committee to study the lacunae in the present private farm markets in the state and provide recommendations to overcome it.
- The move comes after the central government repealed three farm-laws following sustained agitation by farmers across the country in 2021
- Out of the three laws, The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act had provided for setting up a mechanism allowing the farmers to sell their farm produce outside the Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs).

Indian Parliament in September 2020 passed the three farm laws:

- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020

These laws were passed with the aim of reforming the agricultural sector in India and giving farmers more freedom to sell their produce. However, the laws have been met with widespread protests from farmers, who fear that they will lead to exploitation by big corporations and lower prices for their crops.

- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, allows farmers to sell their produce outside of the regulated markets, known as mandis. This is intended to give farmers more freedom to choose where to sell their produce and get better prices.
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, allows farmers to enter into contracts with buyers for the sale of their produce. This is intended to give farmers more certainty about the price they will receive for their crops.
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020, removes some of the restrictions on the storage and movement of essential commodities, such as wheat and rice. This is intended to make it easier for traders to store and transport these commodities, which could lead to lower prices for consumers

New India Literacy Programme sets target of educating over 12 lakh illiterate people by 2024

- The New India Literacy Programme (NILP), a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at eradicating illiteracy among those above 15 years of age, is in full swing in Maharashtra.
- The course material prepared by Maharashtra State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is ready and available online in Marathi, English, Hindi among other languages on the DIKSHA portal.

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Saras Seva MAHAPACK

महाराष्ट्र पोलीस, तलाठी, वनरक्षक, कृषी विभाग,
महानगरपालिका, नगरपरिषद, जिल्हा परिषद
& All Other State Exam

Live classes, Test Series,
Recorded Videos, E-Books

Key points:

- The New India Literacy Programme (NILP) is launched by the Government of India in 2022.
- It aims to cover 5.00 crore non-literates in the age group of 15 years and above in five years, i.e., 2022-2027.
- The programme has been implemented in all the states and union territories of India.
- The NILP is a convergence programme, which means that it will be implemented in partnership with other government departments and agencies, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Rural Development, and the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

DIKSHA portal

- DIKSHA stands for Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing.
- It is a national digital platform for sharing educational resources and content.
- The platform was launched by the Ministry of Education, Government of India in 2017.
- The DIKSHA platform is available in 12 languages and can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection.

DIKSHA provides access to a variety of educational resources, including:

1. Textbooks and other teaching materials
2. Audio and video lectures
3. Interactive exercises
4. Assessment tools
5. Teacher training modules

Tata Steel, U.K. gov. to invest £1.25 billion in Port Talbot

- Tata Steel and the U.K. government have agreed to **invest in an electric arc furnace at Port Talbot** with a capital cost of £1.25 billion, including a grant of up to £500 million from the U.K.
- The project would bolster U.K.'s steel security and be the **first major step towards decarbonisation of the local steel industry**, reducing direct emissions by 50 million tonnes over a decade.

Key Points:

- Port Talbot is a town located in South Wales, United Kingdom, known for its rich industrial history, particularly in the steel and manufacturing sectors.
- Tata Steel is one of the largest and oldest steel manufacturing companies in India and among the top global steel producers.
- Tata Steel was founded by Jamsetji Tata in 1907, Tata Steel has a rich history of innovation, sustainability, and corporate responsibility.

Nagpur shines in vibrant Marbat festival celebrations.

- In Nagpur, Maharashtra crowds gathered enthusiastically to participate in the Marbat festival
- The focal point of this grand spectacle was the **clay effigies, known as 'Marbats,'** representing both Kali (in black) and Pivli (in yellow),

Key Points:

- The Marbat festival is a unique and traditional festival celebrated in Maharashtra, primarily in the city of Nagpur and its surrounding regions.
- It is a unique 150-year-old tradition celebrated exclusively in this region.
- As per the time-honored custom, devotees led a colorful procession, bearing effigies symbolizing evil forces

Access to Justice is a Fundamental Right

- Bombay HC observed that **access to justice is a fundamental right** and delay in filing appeals in NIA cases can be condoned.
- Bombay High Court ruled that appellate courts can condone delays and hear appeals filed beyond the mandatory 90-day period under the NIA Act.

Key points:

- The Constitution of India has provided for Constitutional articles (Article 39A, Article 14, and Article 21) that guarantee the citizens the right to access to justice.
- Right to legal aid is also now firmly entrenched in various acts including the Legal Services Authorities Act, the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and various Lok Adalats being set up in district and remote villages in India to provide legal help to the ones who cannot afford it.

ICMR's National Institute of Virology, Pune, sent its mobile BSL-3 lab to Kozhikode for early detection of Nipah virus cases.

- Aim is to test samples for Nipah virus in the Kozhikode district after five cases, including two deaths, were reported there.
- A team of experts from the Department of Animal Husbandry has also been deployed to assist the state in the surveillance of animals

Key Points:

- The National Institute of Virology (NIV) is a premier research institution under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), dedicated to the study of viruses and viral diseases.
- NIV plays a crucial role in understanding, diagnosing, and combating viral infections that have public health implications.
- NIV is involved in the development and evaluation of vaccines against viral diseases.

About Nipah Virus:

- Nipah virus (NiV) is a highly contagious and deadly zoonotic virus that can cause severe respiratory and neurological diseases in both humans and animals.
- Nipah virus was first identified in 1999 during an outbreak in Malaysia. It was named after the village of Sungai Nipah, where the initial cases occurred.
- The natural hosts of the virus are fruit bats (Pteropus spp.), also known as flying foxes.

- Human infections often occur through direct contact with infected bats, consumption of contaminated fruits or date palm sap etc
- Nipah virus is categorized as a priority pathogen by the World Health Organization (WHO) due to its epidemic potential and high mortality rate.

Iconic double-decker buses of Mumbai retire after 8 decades of service

- After 86 years of serving various routes across 'Maximum City', these non-air-conditioned double-decker buses bid adieu to daily commuters and tourists
- It was in wake of a decision by Brihanmumbai Electricity Supply and Transport (BEST) authorities to phase out the diesel-run buses as part of modernisation and operational cost-cutting measures.
- Introduced in 1937, the double-decker buses became synonymous with the city itself, etching themselves into the collective memory of its residents and tourists.

Marathwada Liberation Day

- Marathwada Liberation Day, also known as Marathwada Mukti Sangram Din, is celebrated in Maharashtra on 17 September annually.
- It marks the anniversary of Marathwada's integration with India when the Indian military, liberated State of Hyderabad, and defeated the Nizam on 17 September 1948, 13 months after Indian independence.
- Marathwada, Telangana and Kalyana-Karnataka were part of the former princely Hyderabad state

State News

67 species of reptiles, 59 amphibians recorded in Wayanad forest survey

- 67 species of reptiles and 59 species of amphibians were identified in the first herpetofaunal survey that concluded recently in the South Wayanad Forest Division.

Key points

- The Survey was conducted by: University of Calicut, Kerala Forest Research Institute, South Wayanad forest department and Aranyakam Nature Foundation.
- Of these, four amphibians and three reptiles were spotted for the first time at the forest division.
- Of the 126 species identified, 48 amphibians and 21 reptiles are endemic to the Western Ghats.

Important amphibian species recorded and sighted were:

1. Starry Night Frog, bearing a constellation of blue dots on its obsidian body;
2. Miniature Night Frog, the tiniest frog in the country;
3. Naked Dancing Frog; and
4. Endangered species such as Malabar Torrent Toad and Red Stream Toad,
5. Wayanad Dravidogecko,
6. Nilgiri Spiny Lizard, and
7. the Nilgiri Forest Lizard

Nipah breaks out again in Kerala

- Nipah scare returned to Kerala with two deaths from the viral infection being reported from the Kozhikode district.

Nipah Virus

- Nipah virus (NiV) infection is zoonotic disease (disease transmitted to humans from animals) that causes severe disease in both animals and humans.
- The organism which causes Nipah Virus encephalitis is RNA or Ribonucleic acid virus of family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus, and is closely related to Hendra virus.
- Fruit bats or flying foxes of Pteropodidae Family, Pteropus genus are natural host of Nipah virus.
- The virus is present in bat urine and potentially, bat faeces, saliva, and birthing fluids.
- It was first identified in 1999 during outbreak among pig farmers in Malaysia and Singapore.
- It gets its name from Sungai Nipah, a Malaysian village, where pig farmers became ill with encephalitis.

Transmission:

- The virus spread fast and is mostly fatal.
- Infected bats shed virus in their excretion and secretion.
- The virus cannot be transmitted through air.
- But it is transmitted through direct contact with infected bats, pigs.
- Human to Human transmission from other NiV-infected people is also reported

Symptoms:

- NiV infection can cause acute respiratory syndrome, breathing trouble, inflammation of the brain, fever, headache, drowsiness, disorientation and delirium.

Treatment:

- There is no vaccine for disease either for humans or animals.

No motorised boats in wetlands, NGT tells Madhya Pradesh

National Green Tribunal (NGT), prohibited operation of cruise and other motor propelled boats in Upper Lake (Bhoj Wetland now called Ramsar site) and other wetlands.

Bhoj Wetland

- The Bhoj wetland is situated in the heart of Bhopal district in Madhya Pradesh.
- The wetland consists of two man-made lakes--the upper lake and the lower lake.
- The upper lake, the oldest among large man-made lakes in central India, was created by king Bhoj in the 11th century by constructing an earthen dam across the Kolans river and the lower lake was constructed nearly 200 years ago mostly from the seepage from the upper lake..
- The lakes are very rich in biodiversity, particularly for macrophytes, phytoplankton, zooplankton, both natural and cultured fish species, both resident and migratory birds, insects, reptiles and amphibians.
- It is designated as the Ramsar site in 2002.

National Green Tribunal (NGT)

- The National Green Tribunal has been established under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010.
- New Delhi is the Principal Place of Sitting of the Tribunal and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai shall be the other four places of sitting of the Tribunal.
- NGT is mandated to make disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of the filing of the same.
- The Tribunal comprises the Chairperson, the Judicial Members, and Expert Members.
- They shall hold office for a term of 5 years and are not eligible for reappointment.
- The Chairperson is appointed by the Central Government in consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI).
- A Selection Committee shall be formed by the central government to appoint the Judicial Members and Expert Members.
- There are to be at least 10 and a maximum of 20 full-time Judicial members and Expert Members in the tribunal.

We do not recognise buffer zones in Manipur, says Meitei women's group

- Leaders of the Meira Paibi, a Meitei women's collective in Manipur, do not recognise the legitimacy of buffer zones in the State, created by the Union and Manipur governments separating the Kuki-Zo population in the hills from the Meitei community in the valley.

Key points**About Meitei community**

- The Meitei people, also known as the Manipuri people, are the predominant ethnic group of Manipur State.
- They speak the Meitei language (officially called Manipuri), one of the 22 official languages of India and the sole official language of Manipur State.
- The Meiteis primarily settled in the Imphal Valley region in modern-day Manipur, though a sizable population has settled in the other Indian states of Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram.
- There is also a notable presence of Meitei in the neighbouring countries of Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- The Meitei ethnic group represents about 53% of Manipur's population.
- They are divided into clans, the members of which do not intermarry.
- Rice cultivation on irrigated fields is the basis of their economy.
- A majority follow Hinduism, while more than 8% are Muslims

Kuki Tribe

- It is one of the ethnic groups that inhabit the northeastern regions of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- They are mainly found in the states of Manipur and Mizoram in India, Chin State in Myanmar, and Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh.
- They are also known as Chin or Mizo people, and they share a common ancestry and culture.

- They are part of the larger Zo people, along with the Chin and Mizo tribes.
- The Kuki tribe has a rich and diverse history, culture and tradition that reflect their adaptation to the hilly and forested terrain they live in.
- They speak various dialects of the Chin-Kuki-Mizo language family, which belong to the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan languages.

International News**Earthquake in Morocco**

- A powerful earthquake of magnitude 6.8 hit the Marrakech and surrounding region in Morocco.
- **This is the biggest earthquake in a North African country in 120 years.**

Key points

- Most affected province and cities are Al Haouz province and Taroudant, Agadir, Al Hoceima (Mediterranean port city)
- Doctors Without Borders, or MSF offers help which is a charity that provides humanitarian medical care.
- It is a non-governmental organization (NGO) of French origin known for its projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic diseases.
- Such quakes occur due to the "northward convergence of the African plate with respect to the Eurasian plate along a complex plate boundary".

Did you know?

- Morocco has a coast by the Atlantic Ocean that reaches past the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea.
- It is bordered by Spain to the north (a water border through the Strait and land borders with three small Spanish-controlled exclaves, Ceuta, Melilla, and Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera), Algeria to the east, and Western Sahara to the south. Since Morocco controls most of Western Sahara, its de facto southern boundary is with Mauritania.

India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor

- Beijing 'welcomed' India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor initiative but says it 'should not become a geopolitical tool'.

India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the plan to build a rail and shipping corridor linking India with the Middle East and Europe.
- The project aims to foster economic growth and political cooperation. It would help to boost trade, transport energy resources and improve digital connectivity.
- The rail and shipping corridor is part of the Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)
- PGII is a collaborative effort by G7 nations to fund infrastructure projects in developing nations.
- This project is also called as a green and digital bridge across continents and civilizations.

Launch of West Asia economic corridor is a historic step: PM

- Outcome of visit of Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia

Key points

- They agreed to set up a joint task force to fast-track the West Coast refinery project.
- The corridor will help in the increase of economic growth, energy sector and digitisation
- Narendra Modi described Saudi Arabia as “one of the most important strategic partners of India”.

More than 5,300 are feared dead, thousands more are missing as eastern Libya is devastated by floods

- Libya is mostly desert and oil-rich country in northern Africa.
- Libya has the largest oil reserve in Africa and one of the largest oil producers in the world.

Appointment News**Who is India's G20 Sherpa?**

- Ex-NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant acted as India's new Sherpa in the recent G-20, replacing Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce & Industry and Consumer Affairs, who was appointed as the G-20 Sherpa in September last year.
- A retired 1980-batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, Amitabh Kant is known for his role in big initiatives — Startup India, Make in India, Incredible India.
- He is credited with coining the slogan “Kerala: God's Own Country” during his tenure in the Kerala government.

Srinivasan K. Swamy elected Chairman of Audit Bureau of Circulations for 2023-24

- Srinivasan K. Swamy, Executive Chairman of R.K. Swamy Hansa Group, has been unanimously elected Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2023-2024.

Key points

- Mr. Swamy currently serves as Chairman of the Asian Federation of Advertising Associations.
- He was earlier President/Chairman of the International Advertising Association (IAA), IAA India Chapter, Confederation of Asian Advertising Agency Associations, Advertising Agencies Association of India, Advertising Standards Council of India, All India Management Association, Madras Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Madras Management Association.

Summits & Conferences News**Highlights of the Day1 of the G20 Summit**

- **African Union Granted Permanent G20 Membership:** African Union was granted permanent membership in the G20, signifying a significant step toward inclusivity.
- **Bilateral Discussions:** Numerous bilateral discussions unfolded, including a pivotal meeting between Indian Prime Minister Modi and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, reinforcing diplomatic ties.

- **Adoption of G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration:** Prime Minister Modi proudly announced the adoption of the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, showcasing collective agreement and commitment.
- **Acknowledgment and Gratitude:** PM Modi extended gratitude to G20 sherpas, ministers, and officials for their unwavering dedication to making the joint declaration possible.
- **India's Presidency Walking the Talk:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asserted that India demonstrated its commitment and action during its presidency, emphasizing tangible results.
- **Addressing the Russia-Ukraine Conflict:** The declaration addressed the Russia-Ukraine conflict, underlining the urgency for peace in today's global landscape and its detrimental effects on supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation, and economic growth.
- **Global Biofuel Alliance Launch:** PM Modi introduced the Global Biofuel Alliance, rallying G20 nations to take ethanol blending with petrol to a global 20% standard.
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor:** Leaders inaugurated the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, a massive rail and shipping connectivity project, fostering economic integration across regions.
- **Successful Negotiations and Unity:** Hard-fought negotiations led by India, with support from key countries such as Brazil, South Africa, and Indonesia, culminated in a united G20 declaration, dispelling doubts amid divisions related to the Ukraine war.
- **G20 Commitment to WTO Reforms:** G20 leaders expressed their commitment to reform the World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute settlement system by 2024.
- **G20 Leaders Dinner:** President Droupadi Murmu hosted a lavish dinner for G20 leaders, featuring a diverse array of Indian culinary traditions.
- **US President Biden on Xi's Absence:** US President Joe Biden commented on the absence of China's President Xi Jinping, stating that the summit was proceeding well despite it.
- **Nalanda University's Legacy:** The greeting area at the dinner featured the ruins of Nalanda University, highlighting India's rich educational heritage.
- **Bilateral Talks and Meetings:** Prime Minister Modi engaged in bilateral discussions with several leaders, including Italy's PM Giorgia Meloni.
- **Global Biofuels Alliance Launch:** India launched the Global Biofuels Alliance, urging G20 nations to join the initiative and increase ethanol blending with petrol to 20%.
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor:** PM Modi stressed the significance of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, emphasizing its potential for sustainable development.

- **G20 Commitment to Cross-Border Payments:** G20 nations committed to promoting faster, transparent, and inclusive cross-border payments, in line with the G20 roadmap.
- **UK-India FTA Discussions:** India and the UK discussed their growing ties and progress towards delivering a UK-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- **G20 Spouses Explore Indian Agriculture:** The spouses of G20 leaders experienced India's agricultural prowess through exhibitions and farm-to-fork experiences.
- **G20 Leaders Embrace Clean Energy:** G20 countries committed to phasing down unabated coal power and eliminating inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.
- **Territorial Integrity and Sovereignty:** The G20 declaration called for all states to uphold principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and peaceful conflict resolution.
- **Global Push for Crypto-Asset Policies:** There is a global push for clearer policies on crypto-assets, gaining momentum and consensus among G20 nations.
- **G20 Urges Peace in Ukraine:** The G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration stressed the importance of peaceful conflict resolution and refraining from war in today's era.
- **Achievements of India's G20 Presidency:** India's G20 Presidency was marked by ambitious initiatives, a focus on climate financing, and successful negotiations on various fronts.
- **Record Stock Market Valuation:** India's strong economic growth and stock market performance set the stage for a significant presence at the G20 summit 2023.
- **Adoption of G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration:** Prime Minister Modi officially declared the adoption of the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, signaling the successful outcome of Day 1.

Global Biofuel Alliance

- Global Biofuel Alliance is one of the priorities under India's G20 Presidency, under which **Brazil, India, and the United States, will work together** during the next few months towards the development of a Global Biofuels Alliance along with other interested countries.
- The Alliance shall work in collaboration with and complement the relevant existing regional and international agencies as well as initiatives in the bioenergy, bioeconomy, and energy transition fields more broadly, including the Clean Energy Ministerial Biofuture Platform, the Mission Innovation Bioenergy initiatives, and the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP).

International Biofuel Alliance Objectives:

1. Promoting the use of sustainable biofuels.
2. Development and strengthening of the biofuel market
3. Facilitating global biofuel trade.
4. Development of Biofuel policy.

African Union - 21st member of G-20

- African leaders welcomed the unanimous decision by the G-20 countries to admit the African Union (AU) as its 21st member.
- Union of Comoros President and AU chairperson Azali Assoumani took the seat as a full member of the G20.
- The AU is an influential organisation comprising 55 member states that make up the countries of the African continent.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

- In December 2022, the CBD Conference of the Parties, at its 15th meeting (COP 15), adopted a historic agreement to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on the path of recovery and ensure that people live in harmony with nature by 2050.
- The GBF includes 4 outcome-oriented goals and 23 action-oriented targets, with the majority being highly relevant for the ocean.

List of gift hampers given to G20 representatives of countries

- Gift hampers consisted of a curated compilation of handcrafted artefacts and products, which speak volumes about Bharat's rich cultural traditions.
- Some of the products are the product of centuries of tradition & cherished across the world for their unparalleled workmanship and quality.
- These were meticulously created by the hands of Master Craftsmen. Some products are the result of the unique bio-diversity of our country.

The hamper had the following products:

1. Sheeshamwood Sandook with Brass Patti
2. Red Gold: The Saffron from Kashmir
3. Pekoe Darjeeling and Nilgiri Tea
4. Araku Coffee
5. Sundarbans Multiflora Mangrove Honey
6. Kashmiri Pashmina
7. Zighrana Ittar

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Maharashtra

ka mahapack

Live classes, Test series

Recorded videos, E-books

MPSC (राज्यसेवा) MPSC (संयुक्त) महाराष्ट्र पोलीस
तलाठी, वनरक्षक, कृषी विभाग महानगर पालिका नगर
परिषद, जिल्हा परिषद, SSC & ALL OTHER STATE
EXAM

Schemes and Committees News

President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate the 'Ayushman Bhav' campaign

- The 'Ayushman Bhav' campaign is a comprehensive nationwide healthcare initiative that aims to provide saturation coverage of healthcare services, reaching every village and town in the country.
- This initiative builds upon the success of the Ayushman Bharat program and signifies a paradigm shift in healthcare services.
- The campaign is a collaborative effort spearheaded by gram panchayats in coordination with the Department of Health, other government departments, and local elected bodies in the rural and urban areas.
- Its core objective is to extend comprehensive healthcare coverage to every village and town, transcending geographical barriers and ensuring that no one is left behind.

PMMSY: bridging gaps in the fisheries sector

- India is now counted among the world's top three countries in fish and aquaculture production

PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- It is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of 20,050 crore for its implementation during 2020-21 to 2024-25 as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat package.
- Ministry: Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying

Aim:

- To bring about a blue revolution through sustainable and responsible development of the fisheries sector in India.
- To double the incomes of fishers and fish farmers, reducing post-harvest losses from 20-25% to about 10% and the generation of gainful employment opportunities in the sector.

Implementation:

- It is implemented as an umbrella scheme with two separate components namely
- Central Sector Scheme: The project cost will be borne by the Central government. The entire project/unit cost will be funded by the Government of India (GoI) (i.e., 100% GoI Funding).
- Centrally Sponsored Scheme: All the sub-components/activities will be implemented by the States/UTs and the cost will be shared between Centre and State.
- North Eastern & Himalayan States: 90% Central share and 10% State share.
- Other States: 60% Central share and 40% State share.

Genetic Engineering Assessment Committee (GEAC)

- GEAC was formed to regulate GM crop research, testing, food safety, and organism release.
- GEAC is constituted under the **Environment Protection Act of 1986**.

- It is India's main biotech regulatory body.
- GEAC was established by the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests department.

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

- JJM is GoI's **₹3.6 lakh crore scheme** that aims to provide **pipelined water to every village home by 2024**.
- **Vision** - To provide drinking water supply to every rural household in adequate quantity of prescribed quality on regular and long-term basis.
- It comes under Jal Shakti Ministry.
- JJM was launched in 2019.

Objectives of JJM

- To **provide functional household tap connections (FHTC) to every rural household**.
- To prioritize provision of FHTCs in quality affected areas, villages in drought prone and desert areas, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) villages, etc.
- To **provide functional tap connection** to Schools, Anganwadi centres, GP buildings, Health centres, wellness centres and community buildings
- To monitor functionality of tap connections.

Did you know?

- According to the scheme's definitions, an FHTC household is one where at least 55 litres of potable water per person a day is made available to every household.

Why is JJM in the news?

- Poor implementation of scheme.
- What is claimed by the JJM portal does not match the reality.

Defense News

Foundation stone laid for airfield within striking distance of LAC in Ladakh

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually lays foundation stone for Nyoma airfield in Ladakh, inaugurates Nechiphu tunnel in Arunachal.

Key points

- The Nyoma Airfield, to be developed at a cost of about Rs 200 crore, will boost the air infrastructure in Ladakh and augment IAF's capability along the northern border
- Among the projects dedicated by the defence minister include the Nechiphu tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh, two airfields in West Bengal, two helipads, 22 roads, and 63 bridges. Of these 90 projects, 36 are in Arunachal Pradesh, 26 in Ladakh, 11 in Jammu & Kashmir, five in Mizoram, three in Himachal Pradesh, two each in Sikkim, Uttarakhand and West Bengal and one each in Nagaland, Rajasthan, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Ranks & Reports News

United Nations' Global Stocktake Report

- The United Nations' Global Stocktake report serves as a blueprint for discussions during the Conference of Parties and aims to assess countries' progress in curbing greenhouse gas emissions since 2015.

Centre plans new indicators to rank states for good governance

- The Union government's Department of Administration Reforms and Public Grievances is planning to come out with new indicators for good governance to gauge the performance of states and union territories

Key points

- The opinion of the state is being sought on indicators in seven areas.
- Indicators in these areas have been proposed by other states and union territories
- The index, a uniform tool to assess the status of governance and the impact of various interventions taken up by state governments and union territories, took up 50 indicators before deciding on the rankings for the state in 10 sectors.

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report

- This report is released by FAO.
- According to the 2019 report, it is difficult to achieve the 'Zero Hunger' target by 2030.

Did you know?

- Goal 2 of SDG Goals is about creating a world free of hunger by 2030.
- Solution - adoption of science-based technologies for crop improvement such as genetically modified (GM) crops

Sports News**Person in news: Jignesh Raval**

- Jignesh Raval is one of the best tennis coaches in the country.
- The last two national women's champions Zeel Desai and Vaidehi Chaudhari have come from his stable in Ahmedabad.
- Jignesh has had a rich experience grooming a lot of players with missionary zeal.

Did you know?

- Among the best tennis coaches in the country, Jignesh Raval gave up on a promising and rewarding career in the UK, USA and Canada and chose to be back home after fruitful stints in all those nations; he has used the experience to put a system in place in India.

Warner surpasses Tendulkar, becomes opener with most tons

- Australian batter David Warner went past legendary Indian batter Sachin Tendulkar to become the **opener with the most number of centuries in international cricket.**
- The 36-year-old batter accomplished this milestone against South Africa in the second ODI, scoring his 46th hundred.

Science and Technology News**Genetic engineering gives mosquito control an upgrade**

- Scientists now have access to the whole genome sequences of multiple mosquito species, allowing us to genetically manipulate them.

- Gene-drive technology is one such approach, which has been used in outdoor trials in India, Brazil, and Panama

Key points

- The fundamental idea behind genetic manipulation of mosquitoes is to **systematically control their populations by interfering with their reproduction.**
- Scientists worldwide have developed various genetic modification approaches. A major one in this endeavour is **gene-drive technology.**

Gene-drive technology

- This technology was conceived by **Austin Burt**, professor at Imperial College London, in a 2003 paper published in Royal Society Proceedings.
- In 2020 a genetically modified mosquito called OX5034 was released in counties in Florida and Texas.
- Genetically modified male OX5034 mosquitoes mated with female mosquitoes but the self-limiting gene prevented female offspring from surviving. Male mosquitoes would then disappear from the environment after around a dozen generations.

Mosquito-borne diseases

- Malaria, Dengue/Dengue Hemorrhagic fever (DHF), Lymphatic Filariasis (Elephantiasis), Kala-azar/Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL), Japanese Encephalitis (JE), and Chikungunya.

What are picoflare jets?

- Researchers studying the findings of the Solar Orbiter Aircraft, a joint mission by the European Space Agency and the U.S. space agency NASA, recently announced that they had detected small jets of charged particles that were being expelled in intermittent fashion from the outer regions of the sun's outer atmosphere.

Key points

- 'Picoflare jets' could be a source of the solar wind, which have important effects on the solar system at large as well as on the earth's magnetic field.
- A solar wind is a high-speed stream of charged particles from the sun, but their exact origin remains unclear.

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Indian space start-ups say funding is the topmost challenge

- Funding is the biggest challenge the Indian space industry is facing today and therefore, the government should consider setting up soft funds and additional incentives to turbo charge the growth of the sector, said space start-ups and ecosystem players.

Key points

- The sector was all set for huge growth with clarity emerging on the regulation front.
- However, funding remained an issue although venture capital firms had been showing interest to invest in the sector, observed experts at the International Conference on Space 2023
- Some eight niche areas have been identified as key drivers of the space sector, which has the potential to become a \$44-billion industry in the next 10 years, from \$8 billion
- some 95% of the components for space solutions, equipment and products are imported.

Important Days**World Suicide Prevention Day**

- It is observed on September 10th.
- World Suicide Prevention Day is an initiative which began in 2003 to shed light on the critical issue, diminish societal stigma, and heighten awareness.
- The theme since 2021, 'Creating Hope Through Action,' aims to inspire hope and bolster preventive measures.

Hindi Diwas: Sept 14

- September 14 is celebrated in India as Hindi Diwas.
- The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution lists 22 languages, which includes Hindi. A quiz on these languages.
- Hindi is written in the Devanagari script.

Miscellaneous News**India's suicides facts**

- Housewives make up over 50% of India's female suicides.
- Highest suicide rates are in the south compared to the north states.
- According to National Crime Records Bureau (2021 Study) - The number of women who died by suicide in India reached a peak of 45,026 in 2021.
- Housewives make up over 50% of India's female suicides.
- 35% of married women in poorest households had faced some form of abuse.
- Over 30% of all suicides (men and women) were due to issues relating to family or marriage.
- When we look at suicide deaths, the highest suicide rates are in the south. There is more societal pressure in these states to have a successful life. The thing is that a state with a high level of education also brings a higher level of expectations. And when those expectations are unmet the frustration level is higher.

- In the south, where female literacy rates are comparatively high and women have greater access to mass media, there tends to be a clash between modern perspectives and traditional societal norms. In contrast, the push back against traditional expectations is less pronounced in the north, partly due to lower levels of exposure among women

Benefits of new biotech/GM crops

1. To achieve Goal 2 of SDG Goal, i.e. 'Zero Hunger' target by 2030.
2. Achieving global food and nutritional security.
3. To mitigate climate change and produce nutrient-dense food.
4. Can meet India's edible oil needs.

Did you know?

- Bt cotton was commercialized as the first GM crop in India and the only GM crop allowed for cultivation .
- India faces a major deficit in edible oils, with 60% of its demand being met by imports.
- Center for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants (CGMCP), University of Delhi South Campus, created a GM mustard hybrid, DMH-11.
- On October 25, 2022, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Government of India approved DMH-11.

Edelweiss Alternatives mulls \$500-million climate fund

- An Edelweiss group arm is planning to **raise up to \$500 million for its maiden climate fund.**

Key point

- The fund will be used in areas of renewable energy, transmission infrastructure, developing electric vehicle infrastructure, green infrastructure, water treatment, transport decarbonisation and industrial decarbonisation.

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