



27 October 2023

National and International News

NCERT panel suggests replacing 'India' with 'Bharat' in textbooks

Context

A high-level committee set up by the National Council of Educational Research and Training to revise the social sciences curriculum has recommended that the name of the country be changed from "India" to "Bharat" in school textbooks

About NCERT

- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is an autonomous organisation of the Government of India.
- **Established in 1961**, it is a literary, scientific and charitable Society under the Societies Registration Act.
- Its headquarters are located at Sri Aurbindo Marg in New Delhi.
- Dr. Dinesh Prasad Saklani is Director of the council since 2022.

Nipah virus antibodies found in Wayanad bats



Context

Nipah virus antibodies have been detected in bats in Wayanad as well in Indian Council of Medical Research's bat surveillance studies

About Bats

- Bats are the largest mammalian group after rodents, with over 1,300 species making up a quarter of all mammals.
- They occur on all continents except Antarctica and are particularly diverse in South Asia, with 114 species of insect-eating bats and 14 fruit bats, also known as "flying foxes", occurring in India.
- They roost in large colonies on trees, tree hollows, caves, rock crevices and abandoned manmade structures
- They play a unique role in maintaining ecosystem structure, making a singular contribution to our food production, economy and well-being.
- They are the only mammals capable of true flight and have a unique sonar-based echolocation mechanism to capture prey at night.





Nipah virus (NiV)

- It is a **zoonotic virus** (it is transmitted from animals to humans).
- The organism which causes Nipah Virus encephalitis is an RNA or Ribonucleic acid virus of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus, and is closely related to Hendra virus.
- Hendra virus (HeV) infection is a rare emerging zoonosis that causes severe and often fatal disease in both infected horses and humans.
- It first broke out in Malaysia and Singapore in 1998 and 1999.
- It first appeared in domestic pigs and has been found among several species of domestic animals including dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep.

(Compiled by Kavita Baieli-Datt)







White phosphorus



Context

Human Rights Watch recently accused Israel of using white phosphorus munitions in Gaza, and said that such weapons put civilians at risk of serious and long-term injury

About White phosphorus

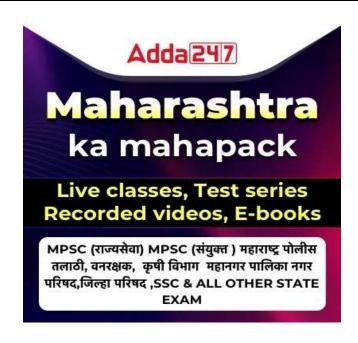
- It is useful in **military operations**. But it also poses environmental dangers.
- White phosphorus can be employed to create dense smoke screens in the context of combat, hindering visibility and providing cover for military manoeuvres.
- It can be used in incendiary devices such as grenades and artillery shells, which can result in persistent and intense fires, effective against people, equipment, and structures.

Legality issue

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) imposes restrictions on the use of incendiary weapons, including white phosphorus, with the aim of safeguarding civilians.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

- It was adopted on 10 October 1980 and entered into force in 1983.
 - The purpose of the Convention is to ban or restrict the use of specific types of weapons that are considered to cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to combatants or to affect civilians indiscriminately.







ISA to release report on global adoption of solar technology



Context

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) will for the first time compile and release a 'global solar stocktake report'.

Key points

- This is inspired by the first ever 'Global Stocktake' of the United Nations Conference of Parties
- A key focus area for ISA is expanding solar installations in Africa and to that end the organisation has set up the Global Solar Facility.
- The aim is to boost the scale of solar investment there and following that expand to West Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
- The Global Solar Facility will have three funds: a payment guarantee fund, an insurance fund to mitigate project risks, and an investment fund for technical assistance.

Key findings

- Solar photovoltaic installations globally touched 1,133 gigawatts (GW) as of 2022, with 191 GW being added in 2022.
- Nearly a fourth, or about 350 MW, is installed in China, which is not a member of the ISA.
- China is followed by the United States, a member country, at 111 GW.
- India ranks among the top five countries globally with 62 GW.

International Solar Alliance (ISA)



- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an intergovernmental organization that was launched in 2015, by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France, at the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris.
- ISA is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies.
- The ISA is guided by its 'Towards 1000' strategy, which aims:
 - 1. To mobilize USD 1000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030
 - 2. To deliver energy access to 1000 million people using clean energy solutions.
 - 3. To mitigate global solar emissions to the tune of 1000 million tonnes of CO2 every year.
- Vision: Let us together make the sun brighter.
- Mission: Every home, no matter how far away, will have a light at home.
- **Headquarter**: National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gurugram, India.





Hong Kong	to	have	own	national	security
law in 2024					

Context

 The semi-autonomous city would create its own national security law in 2024, four years after Beijing imposed sweeping legislation aimed at silencing dissent.

About

- Hong Kong, officially the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
- It is a city and a special administrative region in China.
- With 7.4 million residents of various nationalities in a 1,104-square-kilometre (426 sq mi) territory, Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated territories in the world.

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