



SHAPING TALENT

CURRENT AFFAIRS

June 2020

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HEALTH REGISTER:

- In a first of its kind initiative in India, the Karnataka government has proposed a **State Health Register project** to maintain the health database of all its citizens.
- It will be a robust and standardized health repository of all the citizens living in the state.
- This will not only help the government to provide better health care, but will also help efficient resource allocation, management and better implementation of various citizen centric schemes in the state.

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PLASTICS ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY (CIPET):

- The Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET) will take up Research and Development initiatives in the areas of Health Care, like Manufacturing and Certifying PPE to deal with COVID-19 pandemic.
- CIPET functions under the Ministry of Chemicals and fertilizers.
- It was established in 1968 by Government of India with the assistance of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at Chennai.
- Its main objective of setting up of the institute was to develop manpower in different disciplines of Plastics Engineering & Technology.

PAK DA:

- Russia has now started constructing its first strategic stealth bomber, capable of delivering nuclear weapons, under the Perspective Aviation Complex for Long Range Aviation (PAK DA) programme.
- Strategic stealth bomber, the second 5th Generation combat aircraft from Russia after the Sukhoi Su-57 supersonic fighter, will eventually replace the current set of strategic bombers Tupolev Tu 22, Tu-95 and Tu-160.

WORKING MECHANISM FOR CONSULTATION & COORDINATION ON India-CHINA BORDER AFFAIRS (WMCC):

- India and China have activated the “working mechanism” at the diplomatic level. This has been activated alongside the military-to-military conversation taking place at the field level to “dis-engage” and “de-escalate” the situation.
- WMCC was established in 2012 as an institutional mechanism for consultation and coordination for management of India – China border areas, as well as to exchange views on strengthening communication and cooperation, including between the border security personnel of the two sides.
- It is headed by joint secretary-level officials from both sides. They are entrusted to help the special representative for boundary talks, a position currently held by NSA Ajit Doval.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF UN PEACEKEEPERS 2020:

- International Day of UN Peacekeepers 2020 will be observed on May 29. The theme for this year’s Day is “Women in Peacekeeping: A Key to Peace” to help mark the 20th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- First UN peacekeeping mission was established on 29th May 1948, when the Security Council authorized the deployment of a small number of UN military observers to the Middle East.

- United Nations Peacekeeping is a joint effort between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support.
- Every peacekeeping mission is authorized by the Security Council. The financial resources of UN Peacekeeping operations are the collective responsibility of UN Member States. According to UN Charter every Member State is legally obligated to pay their respective share for peacekeeping.
- UN peacekeepers (often referred to as Blue Berets or Blue Helmets because of their light blue berets or helmets) can include soldiers, police officers, and civilian personnel.
- Peacekeeping forces are contributed by member states on a voluntary basis.
- Civilian staff of peace operations are international civil servants, recruited and deployed by the UN Secretariat.
- It helps countries torn by conflict create conditions for lasting peace.
- Peacekeeping has unique strengths, including legitimacy, burden sharing, and an ability to deploy and sustain troops and police from around the globe, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to advance multidimensional mandates.
- UN Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles: Consent of the parties, Impartiality, Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.
- UN peacekeeping is a unique global partnership. It brings together the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop and police contributors and the host governments in a combined effort to maintain international peace and security.

NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK:

- Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attended the Special Board of Governors meeting of the New Development Bank (NDB) through video-conference.
- The agenda included the election of next President of NDB, appointment of Vice President and Chief Risk Officer and membership expansion.
- New Development Bank is a multilateral development bank operated by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).
- Bank was agreed to by BRICS leaders at the 5th BRICS summit held in Durban, South Africa in 2013.
- It was established in 2014, at the 6th BRICS Summit at Fortaleza, Brazil.
- Bank is set up to foster greater financial and development cooperation among the five emerging markets
- In the Fortaleza Declaration, the leaders stressed that the NDB will strengthen cooperation among BRICS and will supplement the efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global development.
- Bank will be headquartered in Shanghai, China.
- Unlike the World Bank, which assigns votes based on capital share, in the New Development Bank each participant country will be assigned one vote, and none of the countries will have veto power.
- The New Development Bank will mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, to supplement existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development.

CHARRU MUSSEL:

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- It is an invasive mussel native to the South and Central American coasts.
- It is now spreading quickly in the backwaters of Kerala, elbowing out other mussel and clam species and threatening the livelihoods of fishermen engaged in molluscan fisheries.
- Rapid spread may have been triggered by Cyclone Ockhi which struck the region in 2017.
- Externally, the Charru mussel resembles the green and brown mussels (kallummekkaya in Malayalam), but is much smaller in size. Its colour varies from black to brown, purple or dark green.

OPERATION WARP SPEED:

- It is a public–private partnership, initiated by the Federal Government of the United States, to facilitate and accelerate the development of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.
- It is an interagency program that includes components of the Department of Health, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institutes of Health and private firms.

MONTENEGRO:

- Montenegro is the first country in Europe to declare itself coronavirus-free.
- Montenegro is a country of South and Southeast Europe on the coast of the Balkans.
- It borders Bosnia-Herzegovina to the northwest, Serbia to the northeast, Kosovo to the east, Albania to the southeast, the Adriatic Sea to the southwest, and Croatia to the west.



GOVERNOR MODIFIES LAW ON FOREST RIGHTS:

- Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari has modified the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, allowing rightful claimants of forest rights to appeal against decisions of the district level committee (DLC).
- Governor has modified Section 6 of the Act, in its application to Scheduled Area of the State of Maharashtra, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Schedule V of the Constitution.
- Notification is important to provide justice to tribals whose 'individual or community forest right' has been rejected by the DLC, constituted under the Forest Rights Act (FRA).
- Notification applies to areas covered in the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act in the State and allows appeal provision against the DLC's decision.
- Notification states that divisional level committees under the chairmanship of divisional commissioners have been constituted to hear the appeals against the DLC's decisions.
- Activists, however, are concerned that this will lead to further delays in implementation of forest laws.
- They say the notification is a double-edged sword. A tribal farmer will find it difficult to go to the district headquarters.

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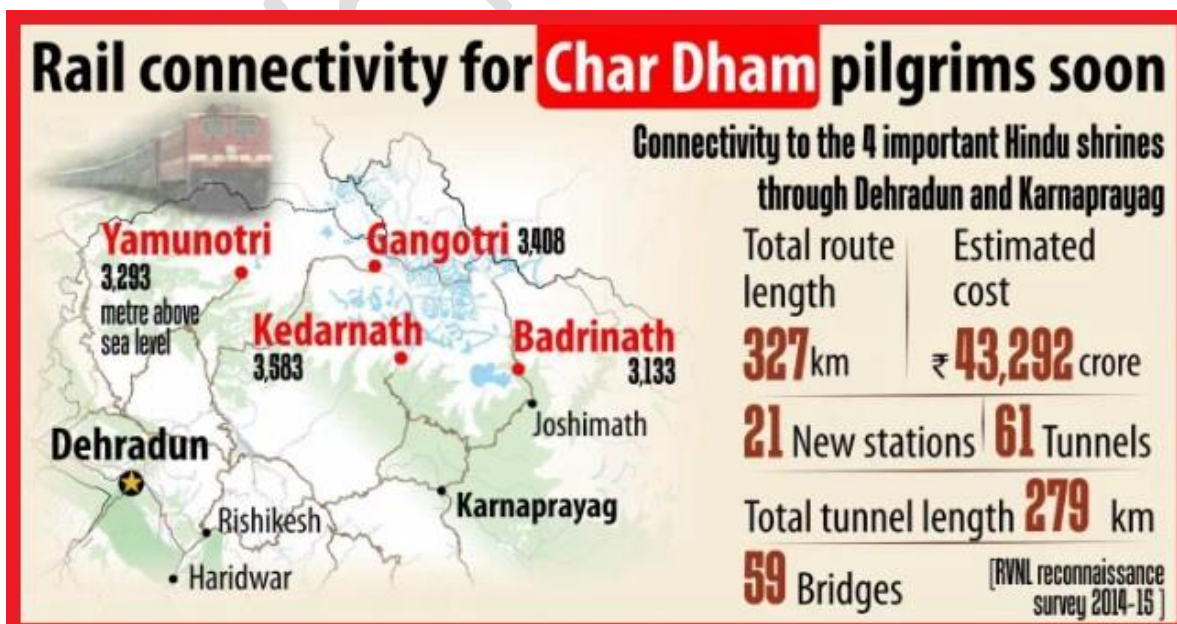
- They fear this committee will further delay implementation of FRA. Delay means denial of justice and increased scope for fake claims.
- Para 4 of the Fifth Schedule provides for establishment of a Tribes Advisory Council (TAC) in any State having Scheduled Areas

FINANCIAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (FSDC):

- Constituted in December, 2010. It is not a statutory body.
- Replaced the High-Level Coordination Committee on Financial Markets (HLCCFM).
- Set up to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism for maintaining financial stability, enhancing inter-regulatory coordination and promoting financial sector development.
- Council is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and its members are Governor, Reserve Bank of India; Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs; Secretary, Department of Financial Services; Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance; Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India etc.
- Recently, the government through a gazette notification, had included ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) secretary in the FSDC in view of the increased focus of the government on digital economy.
- Council deals, inter-alia, with issues relating to financial stability, financial sector development, inter-regulatory coordination, financial literacy, financial inclusion and macro prudential supervision of the economy including the functioning of large financial conglomerates. No funds are separately allocated to the Council for undertaking its activities.

CHARDHAM TUNNEL:

- It is a 440-m tunnel constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) below the densely populated Chamba town on the Rishikesh-Dharasuroad National Highway in Uttarakhand.
- Tunnel is part of the efforts to boost the annual Chardham yatra to connect Gangotri, Kedarnath, Yamunotri and Badrinath.



SPECTRIN AND AXONS:

- Spectrin are flexible rod-shaped molecules present in axons.
- Axons are long tubular extensions of nerve cells that transmit electrical signals across long distances and can be up to a meter long in the case of humans.
- At such lengths, they are subjected to large stretch deformations during limb or other bodily movements.
- Researchers have found that spectrin can act as 'shock absorbers' to protect axons from stretch-induced damage.
- Study can help in understanding and treatment of concussion from head injuries as well as stretch induced nerve injuries.

APOE:

- A new study has found a link between the severity of Covid-19 and a gene linked to dementia.
- Having a faulty gene linked to dementia doubles the risk of developing severe COVID-19.
- Gene is called APOE, and exists in a different forms, one of which is termed e4e4.
- Team found that people with the APOE e4e4 genotype were at double the risk of developing severe Covid-19, compared to those with the common e3e3 form of the APOE gene.
- APOE (Apolipoprotein E) is a Protein Coding gene.
- APOE transports lipids, fat-soluble vitamins, and cholesterol into the lymph system and then into the blood.
- It is implicated in Alzheimer's disease and cardiovascular disease.

ENDEMIC DISEASE:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has said that like HIV, the novel coronavirus could become endemic and "may never go away", and urged for a "massive effort" to contain the spread of COVID-19.
- According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a disease is endemic when its presence or usual prevalence in the population is constant.
- In simple terms, an endemic disease is "the constant presence of a disease or infectious agent within a given geographic area or population group; may also refer to the usual prevalence of a given disease within such an area or group."
- Some examples of endemics include the chicken pox and malaria, where there are predictable number of cases every year in certain parts of the world.
- When epidemics become endemic, they become "increasingly tolerated" and the responsibility of protecting against it shifts from the government to the individual.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN:

- Third tranche of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan economic stimulus package announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- These measures are part of a Special economic and comprehensive package of Rs 20 lakh crore – equivalent to 10% of India's GDP announced by PM on 12th May 2020.
- The 3rd Tranche includes measures to strengthen Infrastructure Logistics, Capacity Building, Governance and Administrative Reforms for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Processing Sectors.

- Measures for improving agricultural infrastructure: Rs 1 lakh crore Agri Infrastructure Fund for farm-gate infrastructure for farmers.
- Rs 10,000 crore scheme for Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (MFE).
- Rs 20,000 crore for fisherman through Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- **National Animal Disease Control Programme for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis launched.**
- Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund of 15,000 crore will be setup.
- Promotion of Herbal Cultivation: Outlay of Rs. 4,000 crore.
- Beekeeping initiatives – Rs 500 crore.
- “Operation Greens” run by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) will be extended from tomatoes, onion and potatoes to ALL fruit and vegetables.
- Amendments to Essential Commodities Act to enable better price realisation for farmers.
- A Central law will be formulated to provide adequate choices to the farmer to sell their produce at remunerative price and barrier free Inter-State Trade.
- A facilitative legal framework to enable farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters etc. in a fair and transparent manner.
- A mission-mode drive to enable Rs 2 lakh crore credit boost to the farm sector by covering 2.5 crore PM-KISAN beneficiaries under Kisan Credit Card Scheme by December 2020.
- Minimum Support Price (MSP) purchases of amount more than Rs 74,300 crore, PM KISAN fund Transfer of Rs 18,700 crore and PM Fasal Bima Yojana claim payment of Rs 6,400 crore have been made.
- During Lockdown, Demand of Milk reduced by 20-25%. Accordingly, 560 Lakh litre per day (LLPD) were procured by cooperatives against daily sale of 360 LLPD. Total 111 crore litres of milk extra procured ensuring payment of Rs 4,100 crore.
- A new scheme to provide interest subvention @2% per annum to dairy cooperatives for 2020-21 has been launched, also providing additional 2% p.a interest subvention on prompt payment/interest servicing.
- This scheme will unlock Rs 5,000 crore additional liquidity, benefitting 2 crore farmers.

EVENTBOT:

- The Computer Emergency Response of Team (CERT) of India has issued warning against a new malware called “EventBot”.
- The malware steals personal financial information from Android phone users.
- The Eventbolt is a Trojan.
- It cheats victims secretly attacking computer or phone operating system.
- It targets money-transfer services, financial applications.
- Malware is defined as a software designed to perform an unwanted illegal act via the computer network. It could be also defined as software with malicious intent.

QUININE NONGLADEW:

- It is a village in Meghalaya. It is named after the alkaloid quinine extracted from the bark of cinchona, a plant belonging to the Rubiaceae family and classified as either a large shrub or a small tree.
- The place was called Quinine because of the plantation.

JUBALAND:

- It is an autonomous region in southern Somalia.
- Its eastern border lies 40–60 km east of the Jubba River, stretching from Gedo to the Indian Ocean, while its western side flanks the North Eastern Province in Kenya, which was carved out of Jubaland during the colonial period.
- Its largest city is Kismayo, which is situated on the coast near the mouth of the Jubba River.

DEHING PATKAI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY:

- Concerns have been expressed over the diversion of 98.59 hectares land of Saleki proposed reserve forest, which is a part of Dehing Patkai elephant reserve, for a coalmining project in Upper Assam.
- The reserve is located in the Dibrugarh and Tinsukia Districts of Assam.
- The Dehing Patkai forms the largest stretch of tropical lowland rainforests in India.
- Ethnic groups living in the area include the indigenous Assamese communities, particularly Tai Phake, Khamyang, Khampti, Singpho, Nocte, Ahom, Kaibarta, Moran and Motok, Burmese, and non-indigenous Nepali people.
- Assam government has decided to upgrade the Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary into a national park.

What is a National Park?

- According to the Indian Ministry of Environment & Forests, a national park is “[a]n area, whether within a sanctuary or not, [that] can be notified by the state government to be constituted as a National Park, by reason of its ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, or zoological association or importance, needed to for the purpose of protecting & propagating or developing wildlife therein or its environment.
- National parks in India are IUCN category II protected areas.
- India’s first national park was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park, now known as Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand.

EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD WEAKENS:

- As per the reports, the magnetic field around the earth, on an average, has lost almost 10% of its strength over the last two centuries.
- The magnetic field of the earth protects us from the solar radiation.
- However, a rapid shrink has been observed in the South Atlantic Anomaly (SAA), a stretch between Africa and South America.
- It is an area where the Earth's inner Van Allen radiation belt comes closest to the Earth's surface, dipping down to an altitude of 200 kilometres.
- This leads to an increased flux of energetic particles in this region and exposes orbiting satellites to higher-than-usual levels of radiation.
- The effect is caused by the non-concentricity of the Earth and its magnetic dipole.
- The SAA is the near-Earth region where the Earth's magnetic field is weakest relative to an idealized Earth-centered dipole field.
- One most speculated reason behind this is that there is a chance that the time for Earth's pole reversal is coming near.

- Pole reversal is when the north and south magnetic poles flip. While this flip will not occur immediately or suddenly, and will happen over centuries, there would be multiple north and south magnetic poles during this period, all around the planet.
- This is definitely not the first time that pole reversal will be happening on the Earth.
- This event has occurred few times in the history of our planet, as per the scientists and we are long overdue by the average rate at which these reversals take place (roughly every 250,000 years).
- This is not going to affect or alarm the general public to a huge extent.
- But it is causing technical difficulties for various satellites and spacecrafts, as the magnetic field getting weaker, charged particles from the cosmos can penetrate through to the altitudes that low-Earth orbiting satellites fly at.

CoAST:

- India Observatory, an open-source database, has come up with a GIS-enabled dashboard that includes an India map reflecting the movement of migrants in real time on their long journeys, along with facilities and relief organisations on their routes.
- The platform, a collaboration with Anand-based Forest Ecological Security (FES) as its main nodal point, is called CoAST India (Collaboration/Covid Action Support Group).
- It draws information from 55 organisations on the ground, mostly in villages, and aims to make such data available so that it would enable governments and small local civil society groups to be of assistance.
- The map matches “time and spatial data, on administrative facilities in the area, transportation and healthcare facilities of an area and summaries, on the fly, in real time of people passing by.
- India Observatory was set up in December 2019, with FES focused on ecological issues about forests, water bodies, conservation, etc. that needed “a bird’s eye view or a satellite’s vision”.

KATKARI TRIBE:

- Katkari is one of the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- Katkaris were historically forest dwellers. They are located primarily in Raigad and in parts of Palghar, Ratnagiri and Thane districts as well and in some places of Gujarat.
- The British administration had classified them under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871.
- The name Katkari is derived from a forest-based activity – the making and barter or sale of Katechu (kath) from the khair tree (Acacia Katechu).
- It is produced by boiling wood from the Khair tree and evaporating the resulting brew.

INDIA-CHINA BORDER DISPUTE:

- The India-China border has been witnessing tensions over the past month, with incidents reported in at least four different locations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The border is not fully demarcated and the LAC is neither clarified nor confirmed by the two countries.
- India-China border is divided into three sectors.
- The LAC in the western sector falls in the union territory of Ladakh and is 1597 km long
- The middle sector of 545 km length falls in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and
- The 1346 km long eastern sector falls in the states of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

- The main differences are in the Western and Eastern sectors. India sees China as occupying 38,000 sq km in Aksai Chin. In the east, China claims as much as 90,000 sq km, extending all across Arunachal Pradesh.
- The middle sector is the least disputed sector, while the western sector witnesses the highest transgressions between the two sides.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF FOOD PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY (IIFPT):

- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), appreciated the initiative taken by Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) to manufacture nutrient rich foods for COVID-19 patients at a time when the need for healthy and immunity boosting foods is indispensable.
- IIFPT is a premier national Institute for promoting research and education in food processing.
- Parent Agency: It works under the administrative control of Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).
- Its HQ is in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.

KALAPANI AND TREATY OF SUGAULI:

- On May 8, India inaugurated the Darchula-Lipulekh pass link road, cutting across the disputed Kalapani area which is used by Indian pilgrims to Kailash Mansarovar.
- Nepal hit back by summoning the Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Vinay Mohan Kwatra, to convey a formal protest.
- Located in the easternmost corner of Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district.
- Shares a border on the north with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and Nepal in the east and south.
- It is wedged in between Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani.
- The area is the largest territorial dispute between Nepal and India consisting of at least 37,000 hectares of land in the High Himalayas.
- The area is in India's control but Nepal claims the region because of historical and cartographic reasons.
- The Kalapani region derives its name from the river Kali. Nepal's claims to the region is based on this river as it became the marker of the boundary of the kingdom of Nepal following the Treaty of Sugauli signed between the Gurkha rulers of Kathmandu and the East India Company after the Gurkha War/AngloNepal War (1814-16). The treaty was ratified in 1816.
- According to the treaty, Nepal lost the regions of Kumaon-Garhwal in the west and Sikkim in the east.
- According to Article 5, the King of Nepal gave up his claims over the region west of the river Kali which originates in the High Himalayas and flows into the great plains of the Indian subcontinent.
- According to the treaty, the British rulers recognised Nepal's right to the region that fell to the east of the river Kali.

US DISCUSSED CONDUCTING ITS FIRST NUCLEAR TEST IN DECADES:

- The Trump administration discussed last week whether to conduct its first nuclear test explosion since 1992.
- In mid-April, a report issued by the United States State Department on "Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Non-proliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and

Commitments (Compliance Report)" raised concerns that China might be conducting nuclear tests with low yields at its Lop Nur test site, in violation of its Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

- The U.S. report also claims that Russia has conducted nuclear weapons experiments that produced a nuclear yield and were inconsistent with 'zero yield' understanding underlying the CTBT, though it was uncertain about how many such experiments had been conducted.
- The United States has not conducted a nuclear test explosion since September 1992, and nuclear non-proliferation advocates warned that doing so now could have devastating consequences.
- Such a test would be a significant departure from US defence policy and dramatically up the ante for other nuclear-armed nations.
- If it were to go ahead it would be seen as the "starting gun to an unprecedented nuclear arms race". The Comprehensive
- **Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** is the Treaty banning all nuclear explosions – everywhere, by everyone. The Treaty was negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

INLAND WATER TRANSIT AND TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH, 2020:

- To boost trade, economic activity and connectivity, India and Bangladesh have added five more "ports of call" on either side and increased the protocol (water) routes from 8 to 10.
- Inclusion of Sonamura- Daudkhandi stretch of 'Gumti river' (93 Km) as IBP route No. 9 & 10 in the Protocol will improve the connectivity of Tripura and adjoining States with Indian and Bangladesh's economic centres.
- Presently, there are six "ports of call" each in India and Bangladesh. Five more Ports of Call and two more extended Ports of Call have been added, increasing the number to eleven Ports of Call and two extended Ports of Call in each country.
- The new five "ports of call" on the Indian side are Dhulian, Maia, Kolaghat, Sonamura and Jogigopha and on the Bangladesh side Rajshahi, Sultanganj, Chilmari, Daudkandi and Bahadurabad.
- Protocol on Transit and Trade through inland waterways between Bangladesh and India was first signed in 1972 (immediately after independence of Bangladesh).
- It was last renewed in 2015 for five years with a provision for its automatic renewal for a further period of five years giving long term assurance to various stakeholders

GOVERNMENT DEBT:

- The Central Government released the Ninth Edition of the Status Paper on the Government Debt, which provides a detailed analysis of the Overall Debt Position of the Government of India.
- It also contains Debt Management Strategy of the Central Government for the financial years from 2019-20 to 2021-22.
- The Central Government has been bringing-out a Status Paper on Government Debt since 2010-11.
- The central government's debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) dropped marginally by 0.1% from 45.8% in fiscal 2017-18 to 45.7% or Rs 86.73 lakh crore in FY19.

- The general government debt to GDP ratio, which includes the combined debt of the Centre and states, declined by 0.1% from 68.7% in March 2018 to 68.6% or Rs 1.3 crore crore (Rs 130 trillion) in March last year.
- As external debt stood at 2.7% of GDP or Rs 5.12 lakh crore in FY19.
- Around 94.1% of the Centre's liabilities consisted of domestic debt in FY19, of which 84.4% or Rs 59.68 lakh crore was made up of marketable securities.
- The tenure of the longest security was 37 years.
- The average interest cost (AIC) for the Centre remained unchanged over FY18 to FY19 at 7.1%.

PRESERVATION OF EASTERN, WESTERN GHATS:

- 6 States have expressed desire to expedite early notification of Ecologically Sensitive Area of Western Ghats. These six states include Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
- The government had constituted a High-Level Working Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Kasturirangan. The Committee (2012) had recommended that identified geographical areas falling in the six States of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu may be declared as Ecologically Sensitive Areas.
- Eco-Sensitive Areas are located within 10 kms around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries. To provide for a transition zone between the highly protected and relatively less protected areas.
- However, Gadgil Committee (2011) defined the boundaries of the Western Ghats for the purposes of ecological management by proposing that this entire area be designated as ecologically sensitive area (ESA).
- Within this area, smaller regions were to be identified as ecologically sensitive zones (ESZ) I, II or III based on their existing condition and nature of threat.
- It proposed to divide the area into about 2,200 grids, of which 75 per cent would fall under ESZ I or II or under already existing protected areas such as wildlife sanctuaries or natural parks.
- The committee proposed a Western Ghats Ecology Authority to regulate these activities in the area.
- The Kasturirangan report seeks to bring just 37% of the Western Ghats under the Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) zones - down from the 64% suggested by the Gadgil report.
- Recommendations of Kasturirangan Committee: A ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining. +No new thermal power projects, but hydro power projects allowed with restrictions, A ban on new polluting industries, Building and construction projects up to 20,000 sq m was to be allowed but townships were to be banned, Forest diversion could be allowed with extra safeguards.
- Western ghats is the home of many endangered plants and animals. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- It is one of the eight "hottest hot-spots" of biological diversity in the world.
- According to UNESCO, the Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas. They influence Indian monsoon weather patterns by intercepting the rain laden monsoon winds that sweep in from the south-west during late summer.
- **Eastern Ghats:** The Eastern Ghats run from the northern Odisha through Andhra Pradesh to Tamil Nadu in the south passing some parts of Karnataka. They are eroded and cut through by four major rivers of peninsular India, viz. Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna, and Kaveri.

PRADHAN MANTRI VAYA VANDAN YOJANA (PMVVY):

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the Extension of Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY) and other changes for the welfare of and to enable old age income security for Senior Citizens.
- Extension of **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)** up to 31st March, 2023.
- Revised rate of returns of Senior Citizens Saving Scheme (SCSS).
- Approval for expenditure to be incurred on account of the difference between the market rate of return generated by LIC.
- It is a Pension Scheme exclusively for the senior citizens aged 60 years and above.
- The Scheme can be purchased offline as well as online through Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India which has been given the sole privilege to operate this Scheme.
- Maximum investment: One can invest a maximum amount of ₹15 lakh under Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY) scheme. The tenure of the policy is set at 10 years.
- Scheme provides initially an assured rate of return of 7.40 % per annum for the year 202021 per annum and thereafter to be reset every year.
- Pension is payable at the end of each period, during the policy term of 10 years, as per the frequency of monthly/ quarterly/ halfyearly/ yearly as chosen by the pensioner at the time of purchase.
- The scheme is exempted from GST.
- On survival of the pensioner to the end of the policy term of 10 years, Purchase price along with final pension installment shall be payable.
- Loan upto 75% of Purchase Price shall be allowed after 3 policy years (to meet the liquidity needs). Loan interest shall be recovered from the pension installments and loan to be recovered from claim proceeds.
- The scheme also allows for premature exit for the treatment of any critical/ terminal illness of self or spouse. On such premature exit, 98% of the Purchase Price shall be refunded.
- On death of the pensioner during the policy term of 10 years, the Purchase Price shall be paid to the beneficiary.

SOLAR MINIMUM:

- The sun is said to have gone into a state called the 'solar minimum' and is about to enter the deepest period of 'sunshine recession' as sunspots are virtually not visibly at all.
- Sun has a cycle that lasts on average 11 years, and right now we are at the peak of that cycle.
- Every 11 years or so, sunspots fade away, bringing a period of relative calm. This is called the solar minimum. And it's a regular part of the sunspot cycle.
- While intense activity such as sunspots and solar flares subside during solar minimum, that doesn't mean the sun becomes dull. Solar activity simply changes form. For instance, during solar minimum we can see the development of long-lived coronal holes.
- But, this may cause health risks to astronauts travelling through space as "the sun's magnetic field weakens and provides less shielding from these cosmic rays."

SHEKATKAR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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- Government has accepted and implemented three important recommendations of Committee of Experts (CoE) under the Chairmanship of Lt General D B Shekatkar (Retd) relating to border Infrastructure.
- Outsourcing road construction work beyond optimal capacity of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
- Mandatory to adopt Engineering Procurement Contract (EPC) mode for execution of all works costing more than Rs 100 crore.
- Delegating enhanced procurement powers from Rs 7.5 crore to Rs 100 crore to BRO, for domestic and foreign procurements.
- The land acquisition and all statutory clearances like forest and environmental clearance are also made part of approval of Detailed Project Report (DPR).
- Other recommendations made by the committee and which are under implementation include: Optimization of Signals Establishments to include Radio Monitoring Companies, Corps Air Support Signal Regiments, Air Formation Signal Regiments, Composite Signal Regiments and merger of Corps Operating and Engineering Signal Regiments.
- Restructuring of repair echelons in the Army to include Base Workshops, Advance Base Workshops and Static / Station Workshops in the field Army.
- Redeployment of Ordnance echelons to include Vehicle Depots, Ordnance Depots and Central Ordnance Depots apart from streamlining inventory control mechanisms.
- Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.

MICRO-RNA:

- They are non-coding molecules, meaning that they do not translate into protein. They are part of our line of attack against a viral infection.
- They fight the virus by latching on to the virus's genetic material (RNA) and cutting it.
- Age and underlying health conditions make people more vulnerable to the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. This is because the attacking microRNA numbers dwindle in them.

NON-CONVERTIBLE DEBENTURES:

- Debentures are long-term financial instruments which acknowledge a debt obligation towards the issuer.
- Some debentures have a feature of convertibility into shares after a certain point of time at the discretion of the owner.
- The debentures which can't be converted into shares or equities are called non-convertible debentures (or NCDs).
- Non-convertible debentures are used as tools to raise long-term funds by companies through a public issue.
- To compensate for this drawback of non-convertibility, lenders are usually given a higher rate of return compared to convertible debentures.
- NCDs offer various other benefits to the owner such as high liquidity through stock market listing, tax exemptions at source and safety since they can be issued by companies which have a good credit rating as specified in the norms laid down by RBI for the issue of NCDs.
- In India, usually these have to be issued of a minimum maturity of 90 days.

INFANT MORTALITY:

- Two scientific papers on child survival published by the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative depicted a significant decline — 49% — in the under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) between 2000 and 2017, but it pointed out inequality between states and wide variations between districts.
- The findings show there were 1.04 million under-5 deaths in 2017, down from 2.24 million deaths in 2000
- Neonatal deaths in India have gone down from 1.02 million deaths in 2000 to 0.57 million deaths in 2017. Neonatal mortality rate (NMR) has dropped by 38% in India since 2000.
- Sixty-eight per cent of under-5 deaths in India are attributed to child and maternal malnutrition, whereas 83% of the neonatal deaths to low birth weight and short gestation.
- The highest number of under-5 deaths in 2017 were in UP (312,800, which included 165,800 neonatal deaths) and Bihar (141,500, including 75,300 neonatal deaths)

TODAS:

- Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, the indigenous Toda artisans from the Nilgiris are producing thousands of masks with exquisite embroidery for local residents, police, and sanitary workers.
- Toda people are a Dravidian ethnic group who live in the Nilgiri Mountains of Tamil Nadu.
- During the 20th century, the Toda population has hovered in the range 700 to 900.
- The Toda traditionally live in settlements called Mund, consisting of three to seven small thatched houses. The Toda huts, called dogles, are of an oval, pent-shaped construction built of bamboo.
- Their economy was pastoral, based on the buffalo, whose dairy products they traded with neighbouring peoples of the Nilgiri Hills.
- Fraternal polyandry - a practice in which a woman marries all the brothers of a family - in traditional Toda society was fairly common; however, this practice has now been totally abandoned, as has female infanticide.
- Since the early 21st century, Toda society and culture have been the focus of an international effort at culturally sensitive environmental restoration.
- The Toda lands are now a part of The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO-designated International Biosphere Reserve; their territory is declared UNESCO World Heritage Site.

ULTRAVIOLET GERMICIDAL RADIATION (UVGI):

- Scientists are studying the use of ultraviolet germicidal radiation (UVGI) to detect Coronavirus in schools, restaurants and other public places.
- Through this method, ultraviolet (UV) lights would be able to disinfect contaminated public spaces to stop the transmission of the virus.
- UV light from the sun has shorter wavelengths than visible light and, therefore, is not visible to the naked eye.
- The full spectrum of UV radiation is sourced from the sun and can be subdivided into UV-A, UV-B and UV-C rays.
- In this spectrum, UV-C rays are the most harmful and are completely absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere.
- While both UV-A and UV-B rays are harmful, exposure to UV-B rays can cause DNA and cellular damage in living organisms.

- Increased exposure to it can cause cells to become carcinogenic, thereby increasing the risk of getting cancer.
- UVGI uses the “destructive properties” of UV light to target pathogens.
- UVGI replicates UV wavelengths that disinfects contaminated spaces, air and water.
- UVGI lamps can also be installed in the corners of a room and alternatively, can be installed in air ducts of ventilation systems or portable or fixed air cleaners

DECLINE IN THE ARCTIC SEA ICE:

- The National Centre of Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) has warned about the decline in the Arctic sea ice. The dramatic decline in the Arctic sea ice is due to global warming. The loss of sea ice led to a localized increase in evaporation, air humidity, cloud cover, and rainfall.
- It is well known that Arctic sea ice is a sensitive indicator of climate change and has strong retaliatory effects on other components of the climate system.
- NCPOR observed that the largest decline in Arctic sea ice in the past 41 years happened in July 2019. It stated that, in the last 40 years (1979-2018), the sea ice has been declining at a rate of -4.7% per decade, while its rate was found to be -13% in July 2019.
- It warned that, if this trend continues, there would be no ice left in the Arctic sea by 2050, which would be dangerous for humanity and the entire environment.
- The study also stated that the decline of the Arctic sea ice area and the increase in the duration of summer and autumn seasons have affected the local climate & weather over the Arctic Ocean and its marginal seas.
- The report also highlighted that the loss of sea-ice at this rate will have a catastrophic impact due to rising global air temperature and slowing down of global ocean water circulation.

MUKHYAMANTRI MATRU PUSHTI UPHAAR SCHEME:

- Tripura State government announced the Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar scheme. The scheme aims to provide nutrition kits to pregnant and lactating women. The scheme is expected to benefit 40,000 women from the state. The initiative was launched as many pregnant women and infants in the state suffer from malnutrition.
- Under the scheme, nutrition kits will be provided to the pregnant & lactating women. Each kits cost around Rs.500.
- Each kit will have food items and grocery supplies, such as peanuts, soya beans, mixed pulses, jaggery, and ghee.
- The state government has estimated to incur an expenditure of Rs.8 crore every year for the initiative.
- Under this initiative, the pregnant women will be tested four times at a nearby Primary Health Centers (PHC). After the check-up, the beneficiaries will be given a nutrition kit after each test.
- The scheme will be in addition to the Pradhan Mantri Matru Bandana Yojana.
- Previously, the state had allocated Rs.5,000 each under the Matru Bandana Yojana to 58,996 beneficiaries.

MARY W. JACKSON:

- The US Space Agency, NASA has announced that its headquarters in Washington, D.C., will be named after Mary W. Jackson, one of its history-making engineers.
- The information was passed by NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine.

BANKING REGULATION AMENDMENT ORDINANCE 2020:

- President Ram Nath Kovind promulgated the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020. It is in pursuance with the commitment to ensure the safety of depositors across banks. The Ordinance will amend the Banking Regulation Act 1949 as applicable to Cooperative Banks.
- The Ordinance will seek to protect the interests of depositors and strengthen cooperative banks by improving governance and oversight.
- The ordinance will extend powers that are already available with RBI in respect of other banks to Co-operative Banks and for sound banking regulation, and by ensuring professionalism and enabling their access to capital.
- The amendments do not affect existing powers of the State Registrars of Co-operative Societies under state co-operative laws.
- The amendments do not apply to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) or co-operative societies whose primary object and principal business is long-term finance for agricultural development, and which do not use the word “bank” or “banker” or “banking” and do not act as drawees of cheques.
- The Ordinance will amend Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, to enable the making of a scheme of reconstruction or amalgamation of a banking company for protecting the interest of the public, depositors, and the banking system.
- The ordinance will also secure its proper management, even without making an order of moratorium, so as to avoid disruption of the financial system.

PM FORMALIZATION OF MICRO FOOD PROCESSING ENTERPRISES (PM FME) SCHEME:

- The scheme aims to provide financial, technical, and business support for the upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises.
- Centre launched the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) scheme as a part of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- Centrally Sponsored PM Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises scheme was launched by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).
- The scheme aims to provide financial, technical, and business support for the upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises.
- The PM FME Scheme will generate a total investment of Rs.35,000 crore.
- It will also generate 9 lakh skilled and semi-skilled employment and benefit 8 lakh units through access to information, training, better exposure, and formalization.
- The scheme will be implemented over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25 with an outlay of Rs.10,000 crore.
- The expenditure for the scheme will share a 60:40 ratio between Central and State Governments, in 90:10 ratio with North Eastern and the Himalayan States, 60:40 ratio with UTs with the legislature, and 100% by Centre for other UTs.

CHAMPIONS:

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today launched the technology platform CHAMPIONS which stands for Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength.

- As the name suggests, the portal is basically for making the smaller units big by solving their grievances, encouraging, supporting, helping and handholding. It is a real one-stop-shop solution of MSME Ministry.
- MSP FOR KHARIF CROPS
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all mandated Kharif crops for marketing season 2020-21.
- Government has increased the MSP of Kharif crops for marketing season 2020-21, to ensure remunerative prices to the growers for their produce.
- The highest increase in MSP is proposed for nigerseed (Rs 755 per quintal) followed by sesamum (Rs 370 per quintal), urad (Rs 300 per quintal) and cotton (long staple) (Rs 275 per quintal).
- The differential remuneration is aimed at encouraging crop diversification.
- The increase in MSP for Kharif Crops for marketing season 2020-21 is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSPs at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production (CoP), aiming at reasonably fair remuneration for the farmers.
- The expected returns to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest in case of Bajra (83%) followed by urad (64%), tur (58%) and maize (53%). For rest of the crops, return to farmers over their cost of production is estimated to be at least 50%.
- Besides, the Umbrella Scheme "Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanraksan Abhiyan" (PM-AASHA) announced by the government in 2018 will aid in providing remunerative return to farmers for their produce.
- The Umbrella Scheme consists of three sub-schemes i.e. Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPSS) on a pilot basis.

NISARGA:

- The Severe Cyclonic Storm "NISARGA" Moved Northeastwards and Crossed Maharashtra Coast Close to South of Alibagh as A Severe Cyclonic Storm With A Wind Speed of 100-110 Kmph Gusting to 120 Kmph
- Cyclones that form in every ocean basin across the world are named by the regional specialised meteorological centres (RSMCs) and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs). There are six RSMCs in the world, including the India Meteorological Department (IMD), and five TCWCs.
- As an RSMC, the IMD names the cyclones developing over the north Indian Ocean, including the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, after following a standard procedure. The IMD is also mandated to issue advisories to 12 other countries in the region on the development of cyclones and storms.
- In 2000, a group of nations called WMO/ESCAP (World Meteorological Organisation/United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) (comprises of Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand) decided to start naming cyclones in the region. After each country sent in suggestions, the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones (PTC) finalised the list.
- Adopting names for cyclones makes it easier for people to remember, as opposed to numbers and technical terms. Apart from the general public, it also helps the scientific community, the media, disaster managers etc.

TULIP:

- TULIP - **Urban Learning Internship Program** for providing opportunities to fresh Graduates in all ULBs & Smart Cities launched
- Online portal for 'The Urban Learning Internship Program (TULIP)' - A program for providing internship opportunities to fresh graduates in all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and Smart Cities across the country.
- TULIP is a program for providing fresh graduates experiential learning opportunities in the urban sector.
- It is the result of the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister who firmly believes in the power of the youth and their ability to not only bring positive change in our country but in the world.

PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS):

- Considering the importance of availability of labour force data at more frequent time intervals, National Statistical Office (NSO) launched Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) on April 2017.
- The objective of PLFS is primarily twofold, to estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators (viz. Worker Population Ratio, Labour Force Participation Rate, Unemployment Rate) in the short time interval of three months for the urban areas only in the Current Weekly Status (CWS) and to estimate employment and unemployment indicators in both usual status (ps+ss) and CWS in both rural and urban areas annually.
- The first Annual Report (July 2017- June 2018) covering both rural and urban areas giving estimates of all important parameters of employment and unemployment in both usual status (ps+ss) and current weekly status (CWS) was released in May 2019.
- This is the second Annual Report being brought out by NSO on the basis of Periodic Labour Force Survey conducted during July 2018-June 2019.
- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** LFPR is defined as the percentage of persons in labour force (i.e. working or seeking or available for work) in the population.
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR):** WPR is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.
- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** UR is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.
- **Activity Status- Usual Status:** The activity status of a person is determined on the basis of the activities pursued by the person during the specified reference period. When the activity status is determined on the basis of the reference period of last 365 days preceding the date of survey, it is known as the usual activity status of the person.
- **Activity Status- Current Weekly Status (CWS):** The activity status determined on the basis of a reference period of last 7 days preceding the date of survey is known as the current weekly status (CWS) of the person.

VAN DHAN VIKAS KENDRAS:

- Van Dhan Kendras, established under the scheme initiated by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs are leading the way in helping tribals generate their livelihood in these distressed times.
- One segment that has been impacted during the ongoing crisis has been the tribal population as most of their income comes from Minor Forest Produce activities such as gathering, which usually is at the peak between the months of April-June.

- The success story of Van Dhan scheme in Maharashtra in spite of the state facing the brunt of Covid 19 is worth enumerating.
- Maharashtra is home to more than 50 tribal communities and the Van Dhan team has taken charge to stay ahead of the curve.
- Through their sustained efforts and initiatives, the Van Dhan team is helping 19350 tribal entrepreneurs to find a platform to market the products in order to generate sustained livelihood.
- Several initiatives have been put in place to combat the impact of Covid-19.
- These range from providing interest free loans to Self Help groups to facilitate the collection of bees to the procurement of the seasonal Mahua flowers and Giloe (which form major MFPs of this region) from village to village.
- Procurement of giloe and mahua, amidst the lockdown, has been made possible after following the adequate safety measures, using masks and maintaining social distancing.

OP SAMUDRA SETU:

- Indian Naval Ship Jalashwa, which reached Male, Maldives on 04 Jun 20 for her third trip under Op Samudra Setu - Indian Navy's contribution to India's national effort to bring home our citizens from foreign shores by sea, embarked 700 Indian nationals on 05 Jun 20 and departed for India late in the evening.
- During the embarkation, the ship was visited by Colonel Mohamed Saleem, the Commandant of the Maldives Coast Guard.
- With this trip, Jalashwa will successfully bring back almost 2700 Indian citizens from Maldives and Sri Lanka to Indian shores under the broader umbrella of the Indian Government's Mission Vande Bharat.

NAIMISHA 2020:

- National Gallery of Modern Art to run ONLINE NAIMISHA 2020- Summer Art Program
- National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi has announced ONLINE NAIMISHA 2020- Summer Art Program from 8th June 2020 to 3rd July 2020.
- During this pandemic situation and lockdown, museums and cultural institutions cannot serve visitors and audiences as usual. It led NGMA to explore new areas and platforms to reach to its audiences.
- In the last two month or so NGMA has organised many programs and exhibitions virtually. The technological development provides an opportunity to organise such programs digitally.
- So, NGMA is making an endeavour to host its most popular summer art program NAIMISHA digitally.

IFLOWS-MUMBAI:

- IFLOWS-Mumbai is developed as a state of art Integrated Flood Warning system for Mumbai to enhance the resilience of Mumbai by providing early warning for flooding specially during high rainfall events and cyclones
- The flood during 26th July 2005, is probably etched in the memory of every Mumbai citizen, when the city received a rainfall of 94cm, a 100 year high in a span of 24 hours paralyzing the city completely.

- In a bid to aid in the mitigation activities of the flood prone city, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, Govt of Maharashtra approached the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to develop an Integrated Flood Warning System for Mumbai referred to as, IFLOWS-Mumbai.
- IFLOWS-Mumbai is developed as a state of art Integrated Flood Warning system for Mumbai to enhance the resilience of the city of Mumbai by providing early warning for flooding specially during high rainfall events and cyclones.
- I-FLOWS is built on a modular structure and comprises of seven modules, namely Data Assimilation, Flood, Inundation, Vulnerability, Risk, Dissemination Module and Decision Support System.
- The system incorporates weather models from National Centre for medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), India Meteorological Department (IMD), field data from the rain gauge network stations setup by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and IMD, thematic layers on land use, infrastructure etc provided by MCGM.
- Based on inputs from weather models, Hydrologic models are used to transform rainfall into runoff and provides inflow inputs into the river systems.
- Hydraulic models are used to solve equations of fluid motion to replicate the movement of water to assess flooding in the study area.
- The land topography, land use, infrastructure, population etc., was provided by MCGM and it was integrated into a Decision Support System to accurately estimate flood levels at ward level using thematic layers in GIS.
- A web GIS based decision supports system is built to calculate the vulnerability and risk of elements exposed to flood.

AAROGYAPATH:

- A CSIR National Healthcare Supply Chain Portal that aims to provide real-time availability of critical healthcare supplies <https://www.aarogyapath.in> has been launched on June 12,2020.
- AarogyaPath would serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers. During the present national health emergency arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic, where in there is severe disruption in supply chain, the ability to produce and deliver the critical items may be compromised due to a variety of reasons.
- The information platform named AarogyaPath with a vision of “providing a path which leads one on a journey towards Aarogya (healthy life)” was developed to address these challenges.
- This integrated public platform that provides single-point availability of key healthcare goods can be helpful to customers in tackling a number of routinely experienced issues.
- These issues include dependence on limited suppliers, time-consuming processes to identify good quality products, limited access to suppliers who can supply standardized products at reasonable prices within desired timelines, lack of awareness about the latest product launches, etc.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GPAI):

- India joined the league of leading economies including USA, UK, EU, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore to launch the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI or Gee-Pay).

- GPAI is an international and multi-stakeholder initiative to guide the responsible development and use of AI, grounded in human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation, and economic growth.
- This is also a first initiative of its type for evolving better understanding of the challenges and opportunities around AI using the experience and diversity of participating countries.
- In order to achieve this goal, the initiative will look to bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.
- It is pertinent to note that India has recently launched National AI Strategy and National AI Portal and have also started leveraging AI across various sectors such as education, agriculture, healthcare, e-commerce, finance, telecommunications, etc. with inclusion and empowerment of human being approach by supplementing growth and development.
- By joining GPAI as a founding member, India will actively participate in the global development of Artificial Intelligence, leveraging upon its experience around use of digital technologies for inclusive growth.

ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020:

- Ministry of Power had prepared a draft proposal for Amendments in Electricity Act 2003 in the form of draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020 with the following broad objectives –Ensure consumer centricity, Promote Ease of Doing Business, Enhance sustainability of the power sector, Promote green power.
- There is no proposal to take away the power of appointment of Members/Chairpersons of State Electricity Regulatory Commissions from the State Governments.
- The appointments will continue to be made by Central Government for the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission and by the State Governments for the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions as before.
- The reason for this proposed amendment was that currently every State had to constitute a separate Selection Committee for each fresh vacancy and this took time.
- In some cases the time taken for appointment was up to 2 years leading to disruption of work of the Regulatory Commission.
- Regulatory Commissions are the fulcrum around which the Power sector revolves. Delay were deleterious for the various stake holders such as consumers, Discoms, and generators etc.
- However, based on the suggestions received, the Central Government is now considering to continue with the existing separate Selection Committees for each state – but make them Standing Selection Committees so that there is no need for constituting them afresh every time a vacancy occurs.
- As per Section 65, of the Electricity Act, 2003, the State Government is required to pay the amount of subsidy in advance to the distribution companies. The subsidy is now being proposed to be given into the account of the consumers maintained by the Distribution Companies through DBT.
- Cost reflective Tariff: To eliminate the tendency of some Commissions to provide for regulatory assets, it is being provided that the Commissions shall determine tariffs that are reflective of cost so as to enable Discoms to recover their costs. It is estimated that the total regulatory asset, i.e. revenue due to a Discom but not collected because appropriate tariff increase was not given, in the country is about Rs. 1.4 lakh crore.

- Establishment of adequate Payment Security Mechanism for scheduling of electricity - It is proposed to empower Load Dispatch Centres to oversee the establishment of adequate payment security mechanism before dispatch of electricity, as per contracts.
- Late payment of dues of generating and transmission companies have reached unsustainable levels. As of 31.03.2019, the payables to the Gencos and Transcos were Rs. 2.26 lakh crore.
- This not only impairs the finances of the Gencos and Transcos making it difficult for them to pay for fuel and other expenses but also has a debilitating impact on the Banks. If liquidity is not maintained, the power sector can collapse.
- Cross Subsidy: At present, the Act provides for the State Commissions to progressively reduce cross subsidies. Despite the requirement of the Tariff Policy to reduce cross-subsidies to within 20% of average cost of supply, they are in excess of 50% in some States making industries uncompetitive. The Bill provides for the SERCs to reduce cross subsidies as per the provisions of the Tariff Policy. The Tariff Policy is prepared after consultation with the all stakeholders and the views of the State Governments are taken into consideration before finalising its provisions. It is noteworthy that there is no proposal to eliminate cross subsidy.
- Establishment of Electricity Contract Enforcement Authority: CERC and SERCs do not have powers to execute their orders as decree of a civil court. An Authority headed by a retired Judge of the High Court is proposed to be set with such powers including but not limited to powers of attachment and sale of property, arrest and detention in prison and appointment of a receiver to enforce performance of contracts related to purchase or sale or transmission of power between a generating company, distribution licensee or transmission licensee.
- Strengthening of the Appellate Tribunal (APTEL): It is proposed to increase the strength of APTEL its strength of Members, apart from the Chairperson, to at least seven to facilitate quick disposal of cases. It may be noted that there are a large number of cases pending in APTEL at present.

LOCUST CONTROL OPERATIONS:

- Locust control operations are going on in the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab and Maharashtra.
- In total 60 ground control teams of Locust Circle Offices and 12 Drones are being used for Locust Control operations. The Locust Warning Organization and 10 Locust Circle Offices in coordination with State Governments undertakes locust control operations in schedule desert areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- One swarm of 2 km x 4 km size which was previously controlled in Jhunjhunu district (Rajasthan) on 26th June 2020 moved to Rewari district in Haryana. This swarm in Rewari was controlled by the State Agriculture Department deploying 40 tractors and 4 fire brigade vehicles. Two Ground control teams and officers of Locust Circle office were also present and joined them. Control operations were carried out from midnight to early morning hours on 27th June 2020.
- The left over swarm initially moved towards Jhajjar district in the morning and thereafter turned towards east following the wind direction. This swarm split into 3-4 smaller swarms. One moved towards Nuh (Haryana) and two swarms moved over Gurugram, moving further towards U.P.
- Two teams deployed in Haryana are following these swarms. Five more ground control teams have been moved from Nagaur and Jaipur in Rajasthan to join the operations in U.P. Drones have also been moved from Jaisalmer to join operations. State Agriculture Departments of

Haryana & U.P. have been continuously kept informed and they are making necessary arrangements for control wherever the swarm finally settles.

- India is the first country to control locust by using drones after finalizing the protocols and getting all statutory approvals. Major operations are concentrated in Rajasthan where maximum resources are committed. State governments have deployed tractor mounted sprayers and fire tender vehicles in large numbers to undertake locust control in cropped area.
- Steps taken to strengthen capacity of Locust control -
- To strengthen locust control capabilities in India, 10 ground spray equipments were imported from Micron, UK, during January 2020 and 15 equipments in June 2020. Additional 45 ground spray equipments will reach in the month of July 2020 and Locust Circle Offices have more than 100 ground control equipment by July.
- Presently 60 control teams and more than 200 Central Government personnel are engaged in locust control operations.
- For effective control of locusts on tall trees and in inaccessible areas, 5 companies with 12 drones are deployed for spraying of pesticides for locust control. India is the first country which is using drones for locust control after finalizing all required protocols.
- 55 additional vehicles have been purchased to strengthen the control capabilities.
- Enough stock of pesticides is being maintained with the locust control organization and there is sufficient availability with State Governments also.
- Ministry of Home Affairs has included admissibility of hiring of vehicles, tractors with spray equipments for spraying of plant protection chemicals for pest control; hiring of water tankers; and purchase of plant protection chemicals for locust control under new norms of assistance under SDRF and NDRF.
- Under Sub-Mission on Agriculture Mechanization, assistance for purchase of 800 tractors mounted spray equipments sanctioned for Rajasthan State Government. (2.86 crores).
- Financial assistance of Rs. 14 Crore sanctioned for Rajasthan State under RKVY for hiring of vehicles, tractors and for purchase of pesticides is under sanction.
- Financial assistance of Rs. 1.80 crore sanctioned for Gujarat State for purchase of vehicles, spray equipments, safety uniform, android application, training with regard to locust.
- Review meetings were organized at different levels (Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, Cabinet Secretary, and Secretary-DAC&FW), VCs were organized for different State Governments and Locust control preparedness is being reviewed. Local awareness literature, SOP of approved pesticides and awareness videos were also shared with all stakeholder States and all the States were requested to make all necessary preparations for control as per SOP.
- No significant crop losses have been reported in the States of Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Haryana. However, some minor crop losses have been reported in some districts of Rajasthan.
- Virtual meetings of the technical officers of South West Asian countries (Afghanistan, India, Iran and Pakistan) have taken place on weekly basis. So far 14 SWAC-TOC meeting have been done this year.

SARDAR PATEL COVID CARE CENTRE:

- Shri Amit Shah said 10,000 bed Sardar Patel COVID care centre would provide huge relief to people of Delhi

- The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah reviewed the preparedness of the 10,000 bed 'Sardar Patel COVID Care Centre' at the Radha Swami Satsang Beas in Delhi yesterday.
- The Home Minister also thanked the Radha Soami Satsang Beas and all others who helped to create this huge COVID care facility.

PRADHAN MANTRI GARIB KALYAN ANNA YOJANA:

- Prime Minister emphasized that provision of food to those in need during lockdown has been the foremost priority of the country. As soon as lockdown was announced, the government brought about PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, under which a package of Rs 1.75 lakh crore for the poor was announced.
- He noted that in the last three months, Rs 31,000 crore has been transferred in the Jan Dhan accounts of almost 20 crore poor families, Rs 18,000 crore has been transferred to the bank accounts of more than 9 crore farmers and Rs 50,000 crore is being spent on PM Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan, which has been started to provide employment opportunities.
- Prime Minister observed that the enormity of the decision to provide free ration for three months to more than 80 crore people ie providing 5 kg free rice/wheat to each member of the family, along with providing 1 kg pulses to each family, per month, has made the entire world take notice.
- The government will spend more than Rs 90,000 crore towards the extension of the scheme, the Prime Minister said, adding that if the amount spent towards it in the previous three months is added together, a total of almost Rs 1.5 lakh crore would be spent towards the scheme.
- Prime Minister underlined that the country is moving towards the institution of 'one nation, one ration card', which will be of immense benefit to the poor who travel to other states in search of work.

NATIONAL STATISTICS DAY:

- National Statistics Day is celebrated on 29 June every year. The day is to commemorate the birth anniversary of Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis.
- The day aims to create awareness among youth about the role of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation. On this day, the nation pays homage to Professor Mahalanobis. Its main aim of the day is to popularize the use of Statistics in everyday life.

MATSYA SAMPADA:

- Matsya Sampada is a newsletter Fisheries and Aquaculture.
- The newsletter was launched by the Union Minister of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Giriraj Singh.
- From the first quarter of 2020-21, newsletter Matsya Sampada will be published on a quarterly basis. The operational guidelines for the PMMSY scheme have also been published in the first edition of the newsletter.
- Through the newsletter, the Department of Fisheries will aim to reach out to the fishers and fish farmers of the country. It will serve as a means of communication for educating and providing the latest information and developments related to the fisheries and aquaculture sector to all the stakeholders involved in the sector.

About Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY):

- With an investment of Rs 20050 crore, the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) was launched in May 2020. Through the scheme, responsible and sustainable development of the fisheries sector will be aimed, which will further help in creating an AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- Under the scheme, 55 lakh (5.5 million) jobs are expected to be created over the next 5 years as the target has been set for an additional 7 million (70 lakh) tonnes of fish production per year.

NADA INDIA MOBILE APPLICATION:

- The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has launched its mobile application 'NADA INDIA'. The mobile application was launched by the Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju.
- It aims at creating a bridge with the athletes under which information on prohibited substances would be provided easily.
- Through this initiative, NADA has taken an important step towards creating a clean and dope free sports.

Benefits of the Mobile Application:

- Information on medicines that are commonly prescribed and used by Athletes will be available in the application
- Information on Inadvertent use of prohibited substances that may affect the career of athletes
- Registered Testing Pool (RTP) athletes under NADA can update their whereabouts, this will ensure a smoother and quicker process for conducting tests as per availability of Dope Control Officers
- This will make athletes self-dependent for information on which medication or substance is to be used or not

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA):

- NADA is headquartered in New Delhi, founded on 24th November 2005 for monitoring and promoting doping control programs in all forms of sports in India.
- NADA is also responsible for ensuring the proper implementation of anti-doping policies in all forms of sports in India.

COVAXIN gets DCGI approval for Human Clinical Trials:

- The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has given approval for Phase I and Phase II human clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccine 'COVAXIN'.
- COVAXIN is developed by Hyderabad base vaccine & bio-therapeutics manufacturer-Bharat Biotech in association with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV)
- Thus, COVAXIN became the first indigenously developed COVID-19 vaccine to be approved for Human Clinical Trials. The approval was granted based on the results from the pre-clinical studies of the vaccine. During preclinical studies, the vaccine has demonstrated safety and effective immune response.

DRUGS CONTROLLER GENERAL OF INDIA:

- Drugs Controller General of India is a department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of the Government of India responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines, and sera in India.

- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) works under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and Government of India.
- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for approval of Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials, laying down the standards for Drugs, control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country and coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice with a view of bring about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
- Further CDSCO along with state regulators, is jointly responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.

CHINA PASSES HONG KONG NATIONAL SECURITY LAW:

- The National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC) has unanimously passed the National Security Law for Hong Kong on 30th June 2020.
- It went into effect late on June 30, 2020.
- Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China since 1997 when the former colony was returned by Britain to China.
- Matters related to foreign affairs and defence of Hong Kong are controlled by China, rest it has its own- Executive, Legislative, and Independent Judicial Power which is known as the basic law of Hong Kong.
- The new legislation has sparked widespread concern about its implications, despite assurances from officials who say it only targets a small minority in the city. The Post looks at how various parties could be affected under the law.
- The law could see people punished for criticising Beijing as well as the Chinese Communist Party - as it happens in mainland China.
- As per the new law, the Chinese government will not need a nod from local citizens or lawmakers, as mainland Chinese authorities are running out of patience after months long anti-government protests, which have greatly tarnished Beijing's carefully managed international image.



KHOLONGCHHU HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT:

- Recently, a concession agreement was signed between the Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited and the Royal Government of Bhutan.
- The Concession Agreement provides the right to Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited to operate the Kholongchhu Hydroelectric Project within the jurisdictions of the Bhutanese Government.
- The project will be located on the Kholongchhu River in Eastern Bhutan's Trashiyangtse District. The run of the river Hydroelectric Project will of 600 MW and is expected to be completed by the second half of 2025.
- For this purpose, a joint venture between Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation and India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited was formed on 12th June 2015. The joint venture was named as Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited.
- This is the 5th Hydroelectric project under bilateral ties between the Governments of India and Bhutan.
- The Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project is of 720 MW. The Tala Hydroelectric Project is the largest Hydropower project in Bhutan with 1020 MW.
- Tala Hydroelectric Project is operational since 2007 and was financed by India through grants.



STARS PROGRAM:

- STARS stands for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program.
- Since 1994 the program has helped in establishing a long partnership between India and the World Bank.
- Through the program, the World Bank Group has provided greater flexibility to the vision of the Indian Government to provide 'Education for All'.
- The Government of India has made significant strides in its vision over the years as the number of students going to school has increased to 248 million from 219 million between the 2004-05 to 2018-19 period.
- The program will have a series of reform initiatives that will help in addressing the learning outcome challenges that exist in the educational system in rural parts of the country.
- Recently, the World Bank Group has announced that a loan of USD 500 million (approx Rs 3700 crore) was approved by its Board of Executives on 24th June 2020 for improving the quality and governance of school education system in India.

- The loan was approved as a part of the STARS Program. The 6 Indian states namely Rajasthan, Odisha, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra will be benefitted by this program.

DEXAMETHASONE:

- It is a type of corticosteroid medication that is being used for the treatment of a wide range of conceptions such as eye pain after eye surgery, asthma, skin diseases, etc.
- The steroid has immunosuppressant and anti-inflammatory effects.
- Recently, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has released an updated Clinical Management Protocol under Dexamethasone was advised as an alternative to Methylprednisolone.
- As Dexamethasone has immunosuppressant effects, the COVID-19 patients whose immune system rapidly produces proteins called cytokines in response to the coronavirus infection, Dexamethasone serves to dampen the too aggressive response of the immune system. This overdrive reaction from the immune system is called 'cytokine storm'. These cytokines when overproduced by the immune system damages cells and tissues in the body.

SERO-SURVEY:

- Recently, a pilot Sero Survey was conducted in New Delhi by using the antibody kit earlier in the month. Good results were yielded during the pilot Survey by using the anti-body Kit. The antibody kit of NIV is known by the name 'COVID Kavach ELISA'.
- ELISA (Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) based antibody kit was developed by the National Institute of Virology (NIV).
- A Sero Survey is for determining the presence of antibodies in the blood sample of an individual. The presence of the COVID-19 Immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibody in the blood sample of an individual will suggest past exposure to the COVID-19 virus.
- The immune system develops the antibody Immunoglobulin G (IgG) in the blood and other body fluids for protection against bacterial and viral infection. The antibody IgG develops in 7 to 12 days after an infection or immunization.

PRIDE OF GUJARAT GROWS IN NUMBER:

- The Gujarat Forest Department had carried out a "population estimation exercise" that showed a rise in the population of majestic Asiatic Lions. The census shows an exclusive population increase by 29% over five years.
- Once seen as extinct animals are now present in the protected areas and agro pastoral landscapes of Saurashtra which covers nine districts of about 30,000 sq.km.
- The rise in the lions population is mainly due to the community participation, emphasis on technology, wildlife healthcare, proper habitat management and steps to reduce human- lion conflict.
- In the year 2018, the Gir lions witnessed an outbreak of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) where 36 lions died. So the department imported the vaccines and improved the health care system.

Gir lions:

- The Asiatic Lions are endangered animals and belonged to Panthera leo population.

- The lions are restricted to Saurashtra's Gir forest and an area of 1412.1 sq.km was declared as a sanctuary for the lions in 1965.
- The lions live closely to the humans, especially the Maldhari community.
- For the conservation of the lions population, SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) was developed. It is a combination of software, training materials and patrolling systems.
- The Gujarat government launched the 'Asiatic Lion Conservation Project' to protect and conserve the lions.

Malabar Gliding Frog Spotted:

- Recently, the green coloured Malabar Gliding Frog was spotted at Pullad in Kerala.
- The Malabar Gliding Frog was spotted in the orchard of a house at the Pullad, Kozhencherry. It is a rare amphibian is endemic the rainforests of the Western Ghats.
- The Western Ghats is a repository of biological diversity. Malabar Gliding Frog is one of the largest mossy frogs.
- Due to deforestation, developmental activities, and climatic change, the population of Malabar gliding frogs are declining. The interesting behaviour of the tadpoles of this species is cannibalism.

Features:

- The Malabar Gliding Frog is scientifically known as Rhacophorus malabaricus.
- It is green in colour with webbed feet and a slender body. It has unusual body positions and can camouflage very well.
- It is a rare amphibian that can glide in the air up to 10 to 12 meters.
- The body length of this frog is 10cm.
- They can easily walk through the tree branches as the fingers and toes of the frog are like sticks.
- The females are larger than males. They can live only in moist forests with streams.
- They build small foam above the pools of water and drops the tadpoles for hatching. The females choose to spawn on the green leaves overhanging a water body.
- They breed during monsoons.

Recent Earthquakes in Delhi:

- In light of the recent earthquakes in and around Delhi, scientists are definite that no unusual seismic activities are taking place.
- Recent earthquakes triggered fear of a big earthquake coming sometime soon. Since May, 11 minor earthquakes occurred in and around Delhi with each ranging between 2 and 4 in the Richter scale. The most powerful among them, so far, being of magnitude 3.4. Scientists are asserting that these are not unusual or abnormal seismic activities.
- The earthquake catalogue shows that Delhi and its surrounding areas like Ajmer, Jaipur, Mount Abu and the Aravalli experience two to three earthquakes of magnitude 2.5 every month, but with monthly and annual variations.
- Earthquake Detection:
 - Detection of Earthquake depends on the number of seismic recorders installed in that area. Delhi and its surroundings have the densest concentration of seismometers in the country.
 - There are 115 detectors installed in the country. Among them, 16 are installed in and around Delhi. So, the earthquakes of smaller magnitude are also recorded and the information can be accessed publicly.

- Thousands of earthquakes of magnitude 4 and below are recorded every year around the world. These earthquakes hardly cause any damage and certainly do not record any future events.
- Foreshocks are the smaller earthquakes that have occurred in the near past before the occurrence of a major earthquake in an area. Indian scientists say that earthquakes cannot be predicted. And no one can rule out that these small earthquakes are precursors for a big one.
- Scientists have been working to study the precursors. But predicting an earthquake in Delhi is more difficult as the place does not lie in a plate boundary i.e., tectonic plates. Delhi is located on a single plate and the seismic activities are generated by internal deformities.

Seismic Zones in India:

- According to the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), there are four seismic zones in the country.
- Zone II: This Zone is seismically least active. Areas that are not categorized in Zones III, IV and V are included in this zone.
- Zone III: In Zone III, the damage caused by the earthquake is moderate. States like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Lakshadweep Islands, Kerala, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and some parts of Uttar Pradesh are part of this zone.
- Zone IV: Earthquakes in this zone cause major damage. Parts of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi National Capital Region (NCR), Sikkim, Northern parts of Uttar Pradesh, parts of Gujarat, Bihar, West Bengal and some parts of Maharashtra fall under this zone.
- Zone V: Regions in this zone contain major fault systems. This zone is the most vulnerable to earthquakes. Northeast region, parts of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Rann of Kutch of Gujarat fall under this Zone.

Illegal Wildlife Trade Report:

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) described in its first global Report on Illegal Wildlife trade as 'Global Threat'.
- The report on Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) is the first international report on wildlife trade. In the report, it described wildlife trade as a 'global threat'.
- The illegal Wildlife trade also has links with other crimes such as modern slavery, arms trade and drug trafficking.
- The report shows an increasing international concern where the crimes may lead to more zoonotic diseases in the future.
- The illegal trade generates revenue up to \$23 billion a year and has links with other crimes.
- The FATF report shows that financial investigation is the key in dismantling the syndicates involved.
- The findings for the reports are gathered from the inputs of 50 jurisdictions across the FATF global network, experts from the private sector and civil society. The findings show the concern over the lack of focus on the financial aspects of the crime.
- The report of "Money Laundering and the Illegal Wildlife Trade" report shows that the criminals rely on corruption, complex fraud, tax evasion.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

- FATF is an independent intergovernmental organization. It was founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7.

- FATF develops policies and promotes them to protect the global financial system against the crimes. The crimes involved are money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- India is a voting member of the FATF and the co-chair of the joint group.
- After the September 11, 2001 attack on the USA, the organization also included combating terror financing.

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