

## INDIAN POLITY

### WOMEN IN JUDICIARY

Attorney General of India recently stressed on the need to improve the representation of women in the judiciary.

- Recently, Madhya Pradesh High Court has granted bail to a man accused of sexual harassment on the condition that he will request the complainant to tie a 'rakhi' on him.
  - o With this appeal was filed by nine women lawyers seeking to set aside the High Court's order and a direction to courts across the country to restrain from imposing such conditions as these are against the principle of law.
- However, such trivialisation of sexual offences, through a judicial order to tie Rakhi, or in rape cases, to compromise by marrying the accused, indicate that patriarchy and misogyny, with regressive notions of honour continue to obstruct women's access to justice.
- In this regard Attorney General of India said that there is need to gender-sensitize judges and improve women participation in judiciary.
- A parliamentary standing committee on law and justice in 2015 had proposed reservation for women in the higher judiciary.

#### Existing women participation in judiciary

##### In Supreme Court (SC)

- Supreme Court has only 2 women judges, as against a total sanctioned strength of 34 judges and there has never been a female Chief Justice of India.
- Since its inception 70 years ago, only eight women judges have been appointed to the Supreme Court.
- Justice Fathima Beevi was the first woman SC judge, and she was appointed in 1989, 40 years after its establishment.
- Currently, there are 17 women senior counsel designates in the Supreme Court as opposed to 403 men.

## In High Courts (HC)

- In HCs there are only 80 women judges out of the total sanctioned strength of 1,113 comprising only 7.2% of the total number of judges.
- 6 HCs (Manipur, Meghalaya, Patna, Tripura, Telangana, and Uttarakhand) have no sitting women judges. In Subordinate courts
- There are 27% female judges in the lower judiciary.
- Sub-ordinate judiciary has better women participation due to reservation by some states and entrance exams at the entry level, however it is highly skewed between states.

## Advocates

- Women make up only 15% of all enrolled advocates in the country.

## **REVIEW OF THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONS**

Recently, the Parliamentary Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice has decided to review working of the Central Information Commission (CIC) and the State Information Commissions (SICs).

- Central/State (C/S) Information Commissions are statutory bodies constituted under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.
  - o They are the final appellate authority for RTI Act.
  - o They are vested with wide power like power to impose penalty on erring Public Information Officers (PIOs), initiate an inquiry against them (for this they are vested with the same powers as are vested in a civil court) etc.
- CIC is required to submit annual reports to the Parliament and the SICs to state legislatures through its administrative wings, the Ministry of Personnel and Training in Centre and Services Department in the states.
  - o However, these annual reports are rarely discussed in Parliament or state legislatures raising questions over the efficacy of the information law (RTI).

- Now for the first time the functioning of this body would directly be scrutinized by a parliamentary committee, to effectively implement its functioning.

## **About Central Information Commission**

- The Commission consists of a Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten Information Commissioners (IC).
- They are appointed by President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of Prime Minister as Chairperson, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
- They should be persons of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism, mass media or administration and governance.
- They shall not be Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union Territory as the case may be, or hold any other office of profit or connected with any political party or carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.
- They are not eligible for reappointment.

## **RTI Act, 2005**

- RTI Act, 2005 makes the governance citizen centric by equipping citizens with the power to seek information from public authorities.
- It provides the mechanism for grievance redressal to citizens who are denied any information
- RTI applicant is not required to give any reason for seeking information.
- Public authorities mandated to proactively disclose certain information (like functions, structure, powers and duties of its officers and employees financial information).
- Authorities responsible for supplying information: Public authorities designate some officers in their administrative units as the Public Information Officers (PIOs).

- o These PIOs are mandated to supply the information sought within 30 days (or 48 hours if information sought concerns the life or liberty of a person).
- Appeal mechanism: If the information sought is not provided within the specified time period, then the RTI applicant can file appeal against the decision of the PIOs.
- o First Appeal Authority: The first appeal lies within the public authority itself. The first Appellate Authority happens to be an officer senior in rank to the Central Public Information Officer.
- o Final Appellate Authority: C/S Information Commission, a statutory body that has a Chief information Commissioner and who is assisted with not more than 10 information commissioners. They are appointed by the President/Governor in the State respectively.

## **VOTING RIGHTS TO NRIS**

Recently, Election Commission (EC) approached the Ministry of Law to permit Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to cast their votes from overseas through postal ballots.

### About Postal Ballot

- It is a type of voting whereby Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Papers (ETPB) are distributed to electors and returned by post.
- o Under ETPBS, the postal ballot is dispatched electronically and returned via ordinary mail and it is currently only available to service voters like member of the armed Forces, person employed by govt outside India etc.
- Service voters have the option of either voting through postal ballot or through a proxy voter. It includes
  - o members of Armed Forces of the Union
  - o members of forces to which provisions of Army Act, 1950 applies.
  - o members of armed police force of a State and serving outside that state
  - o persons who are employed by Government of India in a post outside India

## About NRI Voter/Overseas Elector

- NRIs or an Overseas Elector is “a person who is a citizen of India, absent from the country owing to employment, education etc., has not acquired citizenship of any other country and are otherwise eligible to be registered as a voter in the address mentioned in your passport
- According to estimates of Ministry of External Affairs, there are about 3.10 crore NRIs living in different countries across the world.
- In last Lok Sabha elections, roughly 25,000 of them flew to India to vote. Current process of voting for NRIs
- Voting rights for NRIs were introduced only in 2011, through an amendment to the Representation of the People Act 1950.
- An NRI can vote in the constituency in her place of residence, as mentioned in the passport, is located.
- She can only vote in person and will have to produce her passport in original at the polling station for establishing identity.
- Earlier, Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2017 that proposed to extend proxy voting to overseas Indians lapsed on dissolution of 16th Lok Sabha.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### INDIA CHINA WATER RELATIONS

Recently, there have been reports that China plans to build a major dam on Brahmaputra. This has reinvigorated the debate on India-China water relations.

- China has stated that it plans to build run-of-the-river dams on Yarlung Zangbo (the tributary of Brahmaputra (called Siang in China)).
- It has also stated that there is no cause for concern as it plans to keep communication clear with lower riparian states i.e., India and Bangladesh.
- India, on the other hand has stated that it will monitor the developments on the Brahmaputra closely.

### River System in the Tibetan Plateau

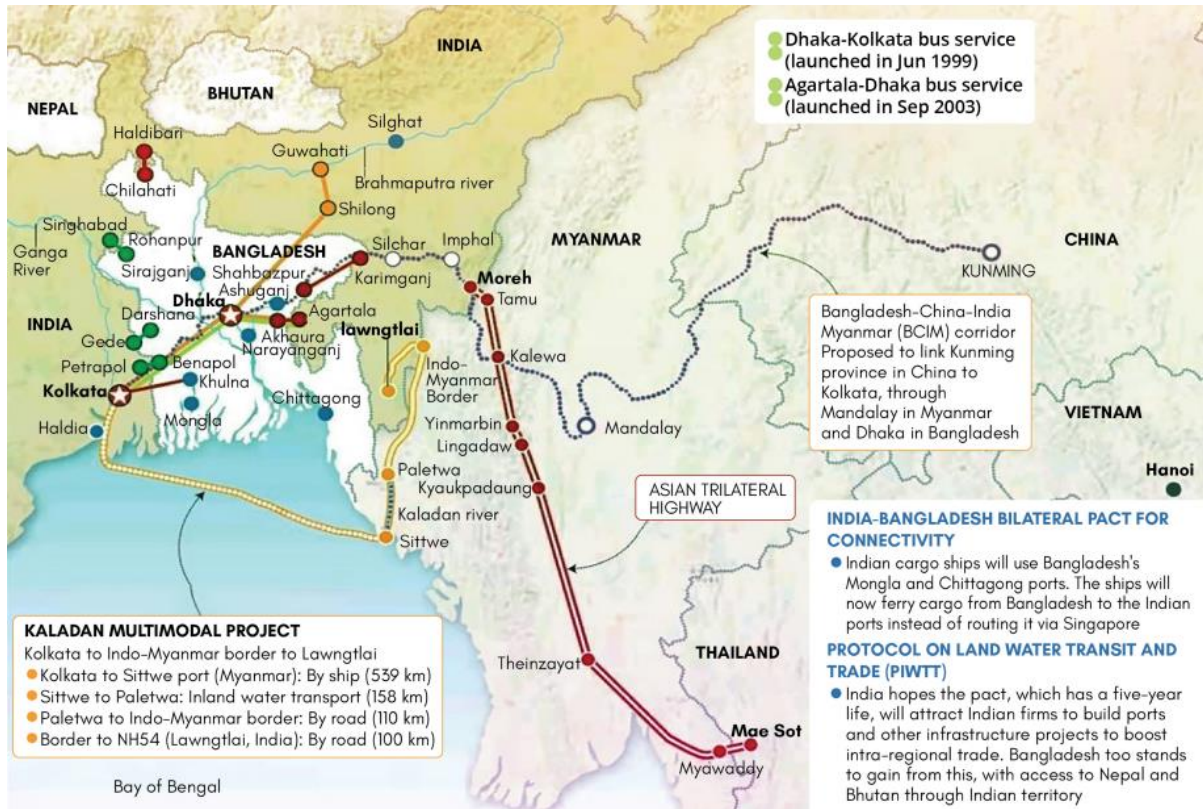
The Tibetan plateau is often called the “Third Pole”, owing to its glacial expanses and vast reserves of freshwater. Following can be cited as key features of this system-

- It is a source of seven of the South Asia’s largest rivers- the Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Irrawaddy, Salween, Yangtze and Mekong.
- These rivers flow into Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam, and form the largest river run-off from any single location.
- It is estimated that 718 billion cubic meters of surface water flows out of the Tibetan plateau and the Chinese-administered regions of Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia to neighboring countries each year.

### India Myanmar Thailand trilateral highway (IMTTH)

- IMTTH is a trans-border corridor that proposes to connect Moreh in Manipur and Mae Sot in Thailand.
- It is a grant-in-aid initiative by India as part of its Act East Policy and is aimed at opening land gate to ASEAN and boost trade and commerce.

- It is expected to be completed by 2021.
- India has also proposed extending the highway to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.



## BREXIT TRADE DEAL

The United Kingdom and the European Union have agreed to a post-Brexit free trade deal i.e. The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), sealing the UK's exit from the bloc.

### European Union

- It is an economic and political union involving 27 European countries.
- It allows free trade and free movement of people, to live, trade and work in whichever country they choose.

- Article 50 of Lisbon Treaty provides for exit of member countries from European Union.
- For any country to come out of European Union, it has to negotiate a settlement deal with EU.
- It has its own currency, the euro, which is used by 19 of the member countries, its own parliament and other institutions
- The United Kingdom joined it in 1973.





## CHABAHAR PORT

Recently, the first Trilateral Working Group (TWG) Meeting between India, Iran and Uzbekistan on joint use of Chabahar Port was held virtually.

### About Chabahar port

It is located in the Gulf of Oman at the Sistan-Baluchistan province of energy rich Iran on the Makran Coast

- It is jointly being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan for multi-modal transport of goods and passengers.
- Port has geographical proximity with India with distance from Kandla port, Gujarat to Chahabar to be around 1000 kms and that from Chahabar to Mumbai around 1450 kms.
- Chabahar has two terminals - Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti (also called first phase of the Chabahar port).
- Shahid Beheshti is being developed jointly by India Afghanistan and Iran under the Trilateral Transit Agreement signed in 2016 according to which
  - o India would be granted a 10-year lease to develop and operate two terminals and five berths at Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar
  - o India and Iran would develop a rail network between Chabahar and Zahedan (located just across the border from Afghanistan).
  - o It also provides the necessary legal framework for trans-shipment of goods to Afghanistan.



## ECONOMY

### DEDICATED FREIGHT CORRIDORS

- The Prime Minister recently inaugurated the New Bhaupur- New Khurja section and the Operation Control Centre of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor.
- New Bhaupur- New Khurja section is a 351-km section between Khurja and Bhaupur in Uttar Pradesh and state-of-the-art Operation Control Centre is located in Prayagraj, UP.

### About Dedicated Freight Corridors

- It is a high-speed and high-capacity railway corridor dedicated exclusively for freight movement and built to affirm a higher throughput per train and a more significant share in the freight market.
- The DFC consists of two arms- Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor and Western Dedicated Freight Corridor.
  - o Additionally, four more corridors namely, East Coast (Kharagpur-Vijaywada), East-West (Kolkata-Mumbai), and North-South (Delhi-Chennai) and Southern (Chennai-Goa) Sub-Corridor are also in the pipeline.

### Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC):

- o It will be the 1,856 km long from Sahnewal in Punjab to Dankuni in West Bengal having double electrified tracts. It will run across six States.
- o The Corridor is projected to cater to a number of traffic streams- coal for the power plants in the northern region of U.P., Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and parts of Rajasthan from the Eastern coal fields, finished steel, food grains, cement, fertilizers, lime stone from Rajasthan to steel plants in the east and general goods.
- o It is also proposed to set up Logistics Park at Kanpur in U.P. and Ludhiana in Punjab to be developed on Public Private Partnership mode by creating a sub-SPV for the same.

### Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC)



- o It will be 1,504 km long will stretch linking Dadri in National Capital Region (NCR) to Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Mumbai.
- o It will run across six States and is proposed to join Eastern Corridor at Dadri.
- o It is proposed to set up Logistics Parks at Mumbai area, Gujarat, Jaipur, & NCR.



## ENVIRONMENT

### INDIA'S CLIMATE PERFORMANCE

India ranked 10th in the latest edition of the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI).

#### Highlights of CCPI

- First three ranks of the overall ranking remained empty: Since no country performed well enough in all index categories.
- From the G20 countries, this year, only the EU as a whole, along with the UK and India, rank among high performers.
- Renewable energy continues to expand: In 2019, its installed capacity grew by over 200 gigawatts – the largest annual growth to date.
  - o The expected tipping point where new installed renewables capacity is cheaper than operating coal or natural gas power plants is expected in 2025.
- Several countries updated their NDCs: China, the world's largest emitter, committed to a target of net zero by 2060, while Japan and the Republic of Korea even announced their aim to become carbon neutral by 2050.
- Impact of COVID 19
  - o GHG Emissions: Owing to the COVID-19 crisis, the first half of 2020 brought a drastic 8.8% decrease in global GHG emissions.
  - o Energy Use: COVID-19 pandemic is expected to trigger a global recession, inducing spending cuts of over 10% in energy efficiency sectors (IEA, Energy Efficiency Report 2020).

### AMMONIA POLLUTION

Recently, Ammonia gas leaked at the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) unit at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. About Ammonia

- Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) is a colourless highly reactive and soluble alkaline gas.
- It is prominent constituent of the nitrogen cycle that adversely affects ecosystems at higher concentrations.

- Sources of emissions:
  - o The largest source of NH<sub>3</sub> emissions is agriculture, including animal husbandry and NH<sub>3</sub>-based fertilizer applications.
  - o Other sources of NH<sub>3</sub> include industrial processes, vehicular emissions, volatilization from soils and oceans, decomposition of organic waste, forest fires, animal and human waste, nitrogen fixation processes.

## **MOUNT EVEREST GROWS TO NEW HEIGHT**

Recently, Foreign Ministers of Nepal and China jointly certified the elevation of Mount Everest at 8,848.86 metres above sea level — 86 cm higher than what was recognised since 1954.

### **About Mount Everest**

- Mount Everest is a peak in the Himalayan mountain range and is considered the highest point on Earth (measured with the mean sea level as the base).
  - o As measured from the Earth's core, Ecuador's Mount Chimborazo is the world's highest, standing more than 2,072 meters above Everest.
  - o Because the Earth bulges in the middle, mountains along the equator are farther from the core.
  - o Measuring from the foot of the mountain to the peak, Hawaii's Mauna Kea is the tallest. § Mauna Kea's summit is at 4,205 meters above sea level, but it extends about 6000 meters below the water's surface. Therefore, its total height is 10,210 meters.
- It is located between Nepal and Tibet, an autonomous region of China.
  - o The Tibetan name is Chomolungma, which means "Mother Goddess of the World." The Nepali name is Sagarmatha, which has various meanings.
- Mount Everest formed from a tectonic smashup between the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates tens of millions of years ago. The collision crumpled the landscape, raising mountains along some 1,500 miles, a range we know as the Himalaya.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 'CURRENCY MANIPULATORS' MONITORING LIST

- US has once again included India in its monitoring list of countries with potentially “questionable foreign exchange policies” and “currency manipulation”.
  - o India was last included in the currency watchlist in October 2018, but removed from the list in May 2019.
- ‘Currency manipulator’ is a label given by the US government to countries it feels are engaging in “unfair currency practices” by deliberately devaluing their currency against the dollar.
  - o Designation of a country as a currency manipulator does not immediately attract any penalties, but tends to dent the confidence about a country in the global financial markets.
- US criteria to label a country as currency manipulator:
  - o Country must have at least have a \$20 billionplus bilateral trade surplus with the U.S.
  - o Foreign currency intervention exceeding 2% of GDP
  - o A global current account surplus exceeding 2% of GDP.
- India, which has for several years maintained a “significant” bilateral goods trade surplus with the US, recently crossed the \$20 billion mark.

### BSE E-AGRICULTURAL MARKETS LTD. (BEAM)

- Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has launched an electronic spot platform for agricultural commodities - "BSE E-Agricultural Markets Ltd. (BEAM)" - through its subsidiary BSE Investments.
- This platform will function as a national, institutionalised, electronic, transparent commodity spot trading platform in line with the Prime Minister's vision to create a single market.
  - o It facilitates spot agricultural commodities transactions across the value chain, consisting of producers, intermediaries, ancillary services and consumers.

- o It will facilitate risk-free and hassle-free purchase and sale of various agriculture commodities by leveraging on state-of-the-art technology to offer customized solutions to farmers, traders, and stakeholders.

## **MEDIUM-RANGE SURFACE-TO-AIR (MRSAM) MISSILE**

- MRSAM, developed by the DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) in collaboration with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) for Army has been tested successfully
- The propulsion system, coupled with a thrust vector control system, allows the missile to move at a maximum speed of Mach 2.
- The weapon has the ability to engage multiple targets simultaneously at ranges of 70km.

## **EXPORT OF AKASH MISSILE SYSTEM**

- Cabinet approved export of indigenously developed Akash missile systems to friendly foreign countries.
- o It would help to achieve target of 5 Billion USD of defence export and improve strategic relations with friendly foreign countries.
- o Besides Akash, there is interest coming in other major platforms like Coastal Surveillance System, Radars and Air platforms.

## **INS VIKRANT**

- India's Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) has completed the basin trials of Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC), INS Vikrant.
- It is India's first domestically built aircraft carrier. • It leads ship of the Indian Navy's Vikrant-class, to be designed and built in India under Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) program.
- INS Vishal, also known as Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 2 (IAC-2), is to be the second aircraft carrier to be built in India after INS Vikrant (IAC-1).



- INS Vikramaditya (India's only active aircraft carrier) is Indian Navy's largest short take-off, but assisted recovery (STOBAR) aircraft carrier, converted from the Russian Navy's decommissioned vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) missile cruiser carrier.

## LADAKH'S TSO KAR WETLAND COMPLEX NOW A RAMSAR SITE

- Tso Kar Wetland Complex is India's 42nd Ramsar site and a second one in Ladakh. Tso Moriri wetland is another Ramsar site in Ladakh.
- Tso Kar Basin is a high-altitude wetland complex consisting of two principal waterbodies, Startsapuk Tso & Tso Kar itself.
- Tso Kar Basin is an A1 Category Important Bird Area as per Bird Life International and a key staging site in Central Asian Flyway.
  - o This is a breeding area for species like Blacknecked Crane, Great Crested Grebe, Barheaded Geese , Ruddy Shelduck etc.

## FIRST TIGER TRANSLOCATION FROM JIM CORBETT TIGER RESERVE (JCTR) TO RAJAJI TIGER RESERVE (RTR)

- Tigris will be shifted as part of the project to increase the density of the big cat in RTR.
  - o Project for translocation of tigers to the western part of Rajaji was approved by National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in 2016.
  - o NTCA is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change for strengthening tiger conservation
- Translocation is the managed movement of live indigenous plants or animals from one location to another.
- RTR is located in the Shivalik range of Himalayas in Uttarakhand and is the second tiger reserve of Uttarakhand after JCTR.
- JCTR is situated in the Nainital district of Uttarakhand and is the oldest national park in India established in 1936 to protect the endangered Bengal tiger.

## INTERNATIONAL BLUE FLAG HOISTED AT 8 BEACHES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

- 8 beaches are: Kappad (Kerala), Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha) and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).
- o Also, India sets up target of getting Blue flag certification for 100 more beaches in next 3-4 years.
- Blue Flag beach is an Eco-tourism model to provide tourists/beach goers clean and hygienic bathing water, facilities/amenities, safe and healthy environment and sustainable development of the area.
- Certification is accorded by Denmark based Foundation for Environment Education.

## SAGUNA RICE TECHNIQUE (SRT)

- It is a unique new method of cultivation of rice and related rotation crops without ploughing, puddling and transplanting (rice) on permanent raised beds.
- It is azerotill, Conservation Agriculture (CA) type of cultivation method evolved at SagunaBaug, District Raigad, Maharashtra.

### Principles in SRT

- o SRT insists that all roots and small portion of stem should be left in the beds for slow rotting.
- o No ploughing, puddling and hoeing is to be done to control weeds. Weeds are to be controlled with weedicides and manual labor.
- o This system will get the crop ready for harvesting 8 to 10 days earlier.

## INDIA'S FIRST LITHIUM REFINERY

- India's first Lithium refinery which will process Lithium ore to produce battery-grade material will be set up in Gujarat.

- Manikaran Power Limited, will set up this refinery.
- Lithium is a rare element not usually found in India. The company will be importing Lithium ore from Australia and will be processing it here.
- With India poised to become one of the largest electric car markets of the world, the refinery would help India reduce import bill on imported Lithium-Ion Battery.
- A significant proportion of lithium reserves are located in South America's "lithium triangle" – an area encompassing parts of Chile, Argentina and Bolivia (largest reserves of lithium in the world).
- Australia is largest producer of lithium in the world.

## LAB-GROWN MEAT

- Recently, the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) approved the sale of a lab-grown meat product. This is the first-time a cultured meat has been cleared for sale anywhere in the world.
- In lab-grown or cultured meat scientists use the animal's stem cells to create meat rather than slaughtering animals.
  - o Stem cells are the building blocks of cells and tissues, and by feeding them amino acids and carbohydrates, the muscle cells will be multiplied and grown in the lab.
  - o Once muscle fibers start growing, the result is an artificially created meat that resembles actual meat in terms of appearance, texture, and nutrient profile.
- Lab-grown meat is different from plant-based meat as latter is made from plant sources such as soy or pea protein, while cultured meat is grown directly from cells in a laboratory.
- Advantage o Cultivated beef could reduce land use by more than 95%, climate change emissions by 74- 87% and nutrient pollution by 94%.
  - o It is created in clean facilities thus, eliminating the risk of contamination by pathogens such as salmonella and E coli, which may be present in traditional slaughterhouses and meatpacking factories.

- o Due to Covid-19 and widespread fears about zoonotic diseases, especially African swine fever and highly pathogenic avian influenza, cultured meat provides an opportunity to the alternative meat industry.

## CHINA'S CHANG'E 5 SUCCESSFULLY ENTERS EARTH'S SURFACE

- Chang'e 5 mission recently returned to Earth, loaded with moon rocks – the first since the Soviet Union's Luna 24 mission in 1976.
- o China is the third country to have retrieved lunar samples after U.S and Russia.
- The Chang'e-5 mission collected two kilograms of material in an area north of the Mons Rumker known as Oceanus Procellarum or "Ocean of Storms" which is a vast, unexplored lava plain.

## COWIN

- Recently, IT minister announced a launch of grand challenge for strengthening the COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system.
- CoWIN is a digitalised real time platform to be used to effectively roll out and scale up the mechanism for COVID Vaccine Distribution System.
- CoWIN will allow the system to monitor the utilisation, wastage, coverage of Covid-19 vaccination.
- Till now, Universal Immunisation Programme has been using a vaccine intelligence system called eVIN (electronic vaccine intelligence network) and CoWIN is essentially an extension of eVIN.

## PNEUMOSIL

- It is India's first pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) developed recently by Serum Institute of India in collaboration with partners like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Pneumosil targets the pneumococcal bacterium, which causes pneumonia and other serious lifethreatening diseases such as meningitis and sepsis.

## **NANOMICELLES**

- Recently, Researchers have found that Nanomicelles can be used for Cancer treatment
- Nanomicelles are globe-like structures with a hydrophilic outer shell and a hydrophobic interior. This dual property makes them a perfect carrier for delivering drug molecules.
  - o Nanomicelles are extremely small structures with size less than 100nm and have been noted as an emerging platform in targeted therapy. They are stable at room temperature.

## **MONPA HANDMADE PAPER INDUSTRY**

- Recently, the Monpa Handmade Paper of Arunachal Pradesh has been revived with the committed efforts of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
- Monpa is a fine-textured handmade paper, which is called Mon Shugu in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local Monpa tribe in Tawang.

## **THARU TRIBE**

- Recently, Uttar Pradesh government has embarked upon a scheme to take the unique culture of its ethnic Tharu tribe across the world
  - o Tharu people are an ethnic group indigenous to the Terai in southern Nepal and northern India. In India, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.
  - o Most of them are forest dwellers, and some practice agriculture.

## **INDIA VOTES TO RECLASSIFY CANNABIS**

- India has voted with the majority at the United Nations to remove cannabis and cannabis resin from the list of most dangerous substances from Schedule IV of 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.
- o Convention allows for control over trafficking in narcotics, marijuana, cocaine and coca leaf.
- Now, the decision by UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) will lead to changes in the way cannabis is regulated internationally.
- Under India's Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, the production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transport, and use of cannabis is a punishable offence.

## JYOTIBA PHULE

Recently 130th death anniversary was observed.

### About Jyotiba phule

- Jyotirao 'Jyotiba' Govindrao Phule was a prominent social reformer and thinker of the nineteenth century India. He was born in Satara district of Maharashtra in 1827. His family belonged to 'mali' caste of gardeners and vegetable farmers. At the age of thirteen years, Jyotirao was married to Savitribai.
- o Education: Phule suggested compulsory, universal and creative education.
- § He and his wife Savitrirao Phule opened the first-ever school for Dalit girls at Bhide Wada, Pune, in 1848.
- o Women empowerment: Jyotiba believed in the equality of men and women. He stressed on women's education and emancipation of women. He brought women in public life. He strongly opposed social evils like Child marriage and Female infanticide.
- § In 1863, Jyotirao and Savitribai started the first-ever infanticide prohibition home in India called Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha. It helped pregnant Brahmin widows and rape victims deliver children.

o **Widow Remarriage:** Jyotiba realised the pathetic conditions of widows and established an ashram for young widows and eventually became advocate of the idea of Widow Remarriage.

o **Against Caste System:** In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jyotiba Phule was the most radical opponent of untouchability and the caste system as he called for the complete demolition of its oppressive structure.

§ He was the first person to coin the term 'Dalits' to apply to all people considered lower caste and untouchables.

- In 1873, he formed the Satya Shodhak Samaj (Society of Seekers of Truth) in Pune. It was a social reform society that fought for equal rights for the depressed classes. The community included Muslims, nonBrahmins, Brahmins and government officials.

## SRINIVASA RAMANUJAN

2020 marks 100<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan.

- He received his degree from Cambridge in 1916 and went on to publish several brilliant papers on his subject with the help of his professor GH Hardy of Trinity College, Cambridge University.

- Ramanujan was elected to the London Mathematical Society in 1917 and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society for his excellent work on Elliptic Functions and the theory of numbers.

- He was also the first Indian to be elected a Fellow of the Trinity College.

- Ramanujan died at the young age of 32 owing to deteriorating health on April 26, 1920.

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2020

The 2020 Human Development Report titled "The next frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene" was released.

## About the Human Development Report (HDR)

- HDR is released by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and was released for the first time in the year 1990.
- HDR Office releases five composite indices each year:
  - o Human Development Index (HDI),
  - o Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI),
  - o Gender Development Index (GDI),
  - o Gender Inequality Index (GII),
  - o Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).
- HDI is released as part of first HDR. This measures achievement in the basic dimensions of human development across countries. The HDI ranks countries on the basis of three parameter:
  - o Life Expectancy
  - o Education
  - o Gross National Income (GNI) per capita

## HDR 2020 findings with respect to India

- India dropped two ranks in HDI this year, standing at 131 out of 189 countries. Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland.
- India's gross national income per capita fell to \$6,681 in 2019 from \$6,829 in 2018 on purchasing power parity (PPP) basis.
- Life expectancy at birth in 2019 was 69.7 years.

## About Anthropocene





- Anthropocene is not yet formally established as a new geological epoch, but several geologists and Earth system scientists propose its beginning to the mid-20th century.
  - o Scientists now agree that human activity, rather than any natural process, is the primary cause of the accelerated global warming.
  - o Agriculture, urbanisation, deforestation and pollution have caused extraordinary changes on Earth.
- Humans are about to leave the 12,000-year-old Holocene Age and enter a new age named after us — the Anthropocene.
  - o Holocene has seen major change on our planet, including the rapid population growth of our species and the development of modern civilisations.
  - o In the last 11,500 years, humans have built cities and achieved colossal technological advancements.