



CURRENT AFFAIRS : DECEMBER 2022

AUDIT OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) is planning to expand its presence up to the district level to exercise audit control over three tier Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI).

- Looking at the huge allocation of funds, the CAG has prepared a proposal to open its offices in each district and “exercise control and supervision” over the proper maintenance of accounts and audit of the PRIs.
- At present CAG has presence in state capitals and its accountant general’s office is responsible for auditing accounts of state governments.
- While the government departments draw funds from the consolidated fund, the PRIs draw money from separate fund accounts kept in bank or treasury.
- As reported, the CAG has now decided to assert its constitutional mandate to supervise all government expenditure whether drawn from the consolidated fund or the state treasury.
 - o The PRIs come under the purview of audit under **Comptroller and Auditor-General’s (Duties, Powers, and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971.**

About Local Self Governance and its Audit

- Parliament passed the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in 1992, which mandated that State governments constitute panchayats (at the village, block and district levels) and municipalities (in the form of municipal corporations, municipal councils and nagar panchayats) in every region.
- This instituted a third-tier of governance in the federal framework through the devolution of functions, funds, and functionaries to local governments.
- **Constitutional Provisions**
 - o **Article 243 J:** The Legislature of a State may, by law, make provisions with respect to the maintenance of accounts by the Panchayats and the auditing of such accounts.

o **Article 243 Z:** The Legislature of a State may, by law, make provisions with respect to the maintenance of accounts by the Municipalities and the auditing of such accounts.

About Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG)

- **Articles 148 – 151** of the Constitution of India deal with the institution of the CAG of India.
- CAG is **appointed by the President** by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Removal from office in like manner and on like grounds as a **Judge of the Supreme Court**.
- **In order of precedence, the CAG is ranked 9th** and enjoys the same status as a sitting judge of Supreme Court of India.
- CAG exercise such **powers and perform such duties in relation to the accounts of the Union and of the States and of any other authority or body** as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament.

DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Recently, Supreme Court observed that a delegated legislation which is ultra vires the parent Act cannot be given any effect.

- Case is an appeal filed by the Kerala State Electricity Board against a State High Court decision which upheld Kerala Electricity Supply Code, 2014.
- As per ruling, Delegated legislation should not travel beyond the purview of the parent Act.

About Delegated Legislation

- It is a process by which the executive authority is given powers by primary legislation to make laws in order to implement and administer the requirements of that primary legislation.
- Parliament thereby, through primary legislation, enables others to make law and rules through a process of delegated legislation.
- Under the Constitution of India, legislative power is given to the legislature while the Executive has the power to execute the laws.



APPOINTMENTS OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

Recently, a private member's Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha regarding formation of selection committee for Election commissioners.

- Bill seeks to insulate the appointment process of election commissioners and mandates that they should not be eligible for any post-retirement jobs.
- It seeks the members of the EC, including the Chief Election Commissioners (CEC), to be appointed by PM-led panel.

About Private member Bill

- Any bill **introduced by a member other than a minister.**
- Can only be **introduced and discussed on Fridays.**
- **Admissibility is decided by Chairman** in case of Rajya Sabha and **Speaker** in case of Lok Sabha.
- No private member's bill has become an Act since 1970.

About Election Commission of India

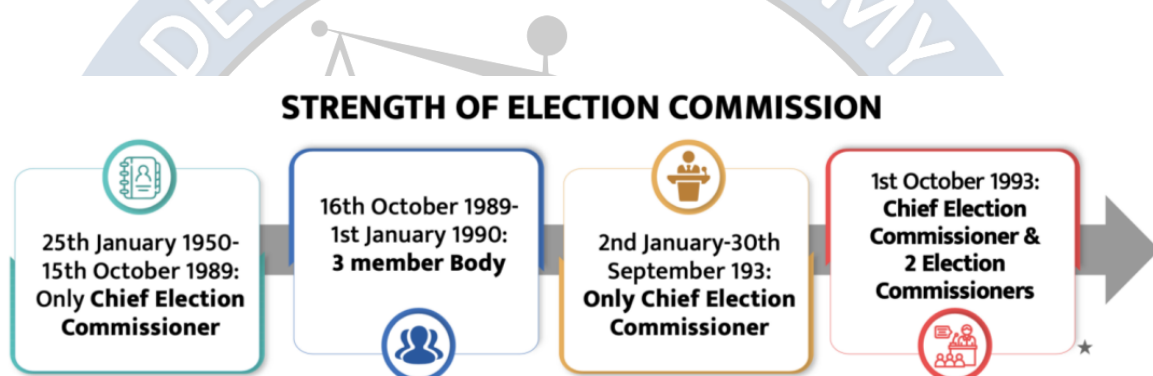
- Under Article 324, Election Commission of India (ECI) is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India.
 - o It administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.
- Under the **Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991**, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners have tenure of 6 years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
- CEC is provided with the security of tenure as he cannot be removed from his office in like manner and on the like grounds as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
 - o The conditions of service of the Chief Election Commissioner shall not be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment:

o While any other election commissioner or a regional commissioner cannot be removed from office except on the recommendation of the chief election commissioner.

- Constitutional provisions for appointments

o Under **Article 324(2)**, the President of India is empowered to appoint the CEC and the ECs.

o Article 324(2) empowers the President of India to fix from time to time the number of Election Commissioners other than the CEC.



MAHARASHTRA-KARNATAKA INTER-STATE BORDER DISPUTE

- Boundary dispute between two states traces its origin to reorganisation of states along linguistic lines via State Reorganisation Act, 1956.

- Since its creation in 1960, Maharashtra has been demanding 865 villages from five districts of Karnataka (Belagavi, Karwar, Vijayapura, Kalaburagi and Bidar) where Marathi-speaking people are in majority.

- In 1967, Mahajan Commission, constituted by Centre, rejected Maharashtra's claim over Belagavi (then Belgaum) and recommended transferring some of villages to Maharashtra and others to Karnataka.

o Report was rejected by Maharashtra and Maharashtra challenged State Reorganisation Act, 1956 under Article 131 of Constitution (original Jurisdiction of SC) in 2004.

o Karnataka has resorted to Article 3 of Constitution i.e., only Parliament has power to decide borders of states.

o Belagavi is currently part of Karnataka.

• Demarcation of boundaries have resulted in interstate border disputes in around 11 states and 1 Union Territories.

o For example, Andhra Pradesh-Odisha, HaryanaHimachal Pradesh, UT of Ladakh-Himachal Pradesh, etc.

NORTH-EASTERN COUNCIL (NEC)

• To mark 50 years of NEC, Prime Minister stated that government should work on 8 pillars for North east development, viz. Peace, Power, Tourism, 5G connectivity, Culture, Natural farming, Sports, Potential.

• Other initiatives for development of North East

o 'Act Fast for Northeast' and 'Act First for Northeast' Policy.

o PM's Development Initiative for Northeast (PMDevINE) will lead to creation of infrastructure, employment generation etc.

o Dhola Sadiya bridge, country's longest bridge over Lohit River in Assam.

o Indian-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and Agartala-Akhaura rail project.

• NEC was established in 1972 as nodal agency for economic and social development of North Eastern Region (NER).

o It works under administrative control of Ministry of Development of NER.

o Union Home Minister is ex-officio Chairman of NEC.

G20 BALI DECLARATION

The 17th G20 summit concluded recently with the adoption of Bali declaration.

• The motto for this G-20 summit was Recover Together, Recover Stronger.

- Also, India took over the presidency of G20 from Indonesia.

Key Highlights of the Bali Declaration-2022

- The Group highlighted its differences in the on-going war in Ukraine and asked for Russia's complete withdrawal from the territories of Ukraine.
- Group also reassured its Commitment to secure Global Food security.
 - o The Group welcomed the Black Sea Grain initiative brokered by Turkey and UN.



BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BIMSTEC)


Experts have suggested that there is a need to look for better Regional Forum for the South Asian region.

- The other existing regional forum SAARC is defunct since 2014.
- Experts believe that with the current Geopolitical situation, there is a need to find an alternative to SAARC.


- For this BIMSTEC is seen as the right choice for India.

BIMSTEC


The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation




Nepal




Bhutan




Bangladesh




India



Thailand




Myanmar








Sri Lanka

7 MEMBER COUNTRIES



Founded in 1997 through **Bangkok Declaration**

Objectives of BIMSTEC

-  **To enable environment for rapid economic development.**
-  **To collaborate and mutually assist members on matters of common interest.**
-  **To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations.**
-  **To endeavour to eradicate poverty from the Bay of Bengal region.**
-  **To establish multidimensional connectivity, promote synergy among connectivity frameworks in the region.**

INDIA-USA-CHINA TRIANGLE

The 18th edition of 'Yudh Abhyas', the annual India-U.S. military exercise concluded recently in Uttarakhand.

- Since the exercise was conducted at just 100kms away from the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Chinese government raised its contention.
- China has claimed that India has violated the 1993 and 1996 agreements on LAC and also advised the US not to interfere in IndiaChina relations.
- Experts point that the relations between these three super-states are very important for the coming world.

LUSOPHONE COUNTRIES

- India is hosting the International Lusophone Festival in Goa.
 - It seeks to further India's connection with the Lusophone world.
 - The Portuguese rule over Velha Goa (or Old Goa) started in 1510 and lasted till 1961.
- Lusophone World (Portuguese-speaking countries)
 - It is spread in nine countries across four continents.
 - Portuguese is the most spoken language in the Southern Hemisphere (see image).
 - In 1996, Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), also known as Lusophone Commonwealth was formed.
- ✓ CPLP is a multilateral forum with 9 member states and 32 associate observers (India is associate observer).
- ✓ Members are Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Príncipe; while Timor Leste and Equatorial Guinea

COMPETITION LAW AND BIG TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

Recently, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance gave a report titled 'Anti-competitive practices by Big Tech companies' and urged for a Digital Competition Act and code of conduct for tech companies.

Competition: Its Meaning, Types and Role in an Economy

- Competition refers to 'a situation in a market in which firms or sellers independently strive for the patronage of buyers in order to achieve a particular business objective.'
 - The objective can be profits, sales and/or market share.
- The underlying economic drivers of digital markets have inevitably led to the rise of relatively few leading players, collectively referred to as Big Tech Companies.
- The committee has identified 10 types of anti-competitive practices which are practiced by Big Tech companies as:

S. No.	Anti-Competitive Practice	Description
1.	Anti-Steering Provisions	Prominently associated with ' App Stores ' (Google and Apple App Stores), the app publishers prevent their business users (app users) from moving out of the platform and use other alternatives for payments.
2.	Platform Neutrality/ Self-Preferencing	Commonly associated with ' marketplaces ', some platforms place their own products prominently . E.g., prominent placement of Google Pay on Play Store by Google.
3.	Adjacency/ Building and Tying	In it, digital firms force people to buy related services . E.g., Food delivery apps making it mandatory for restaurants to use the platform's delivery services.
4.	Data Usage (use of non-public data)	Monopolistic usage of data by digital firms, especially from leading platforms with vast repositories of data . E.g., Past purchase data is used by Swiggy and Zomato to customize offerings for users, dissuading other players from entering.
5.	Mergers and Acquisitions	' Killer acquisitions ' is a repeated issue in digital markets where Big Techs buy highly valued start-ups , disallowing the smaller firms to grow beyond a certain limit. E.g., Facebook acquisition of WhatsApp.
6.	Pricing/ Deep Discounting	Prominently associated with e-commerce sales , huge discounts are also used by leading platforms in hotel booking, food delivery etc. It compromises service providers control over the final price and offline player's ability to compete. E.g., Amazon, Flipkart.
7.	Exclusive Tie-ups	An exclusive arrangement of e-commerce platforms with a brand hampers the business of other platforms as well as of brick-and-mortar sellers. Similarly, platforms use price parity clause to stop businesses from selling at lower rates on other platforms.
8.	Search and Ranking Preferencing	Giving preference to sponsored products in algorithms used to show results for users search rather than showing organic search results. E.g., Preferential listing by Amazon and Flipkart.
9.	Restricting Third-Party Applications	Presence of gatekeepers in digital markets which restrict installation or operation of third-party applications . E.g., for app developers, Apple's App Store is the only channel to distribute their apps to iOS consumers.
10.	Advertising Policies	Digital advertising market faces issues of conflict of interest and self-preferencing when platforms operate at all levels of the ad-tech supply chain .

Legislative Framework in India and its issues

- To promote and sustain fair competition, i.e., to prevent practices having adverse effect on competition, the government of India enacted the 'Competition Act, 2002.'
- The act provides for the establishment of Competition Commission of India or CCI (established in 2009) for the administration, implementation, and enforcement of the Act.
 - CCI also protects the interests of consumers and ensures freedom of trade carried on by other participants in markets in India.
- The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), constituted under the Companies Act of 2013, is the Appellate Tribunal to hear and dispose appeals against CCI directions, orders, or findings.
 - But it is an ex-post approach, i.e., law designed to penalize anti-competitive behavior only after its occurrence.

o In comparison, digital markets move at high pace due to the Increasing Return of Size Economies – making ex post effects too delayed to prevent irreparable harm to affected parties from Big Techs.

LEGAL REFORMS AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS (EODB)

Recently, Ministry of Commerce and Industry has introduced the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2022 in Lok Sabha.

- Bill amends 42 Acts administered by 19 ministries to reduce the compliance burden on individuals and businesses and ensure ease of doing business.

- o Some Acts that are amended by the bill include Indian Post Office Act, 1898, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991, Information Technology Act, 2000 etc.

- It will help in settlement of a large number of issues by adjudication and administrative mechanism, without involving courts.

- o It also enables persons to remedy minor contraventions and defaults and save time, energy and resources.

48TH MEETING OF GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST) COUNCIL

GST Council is a constitutional body, established under **Article 279A (1)**, introduced through **101st Constitutional Amendment Act** to decide issues relating to GST.

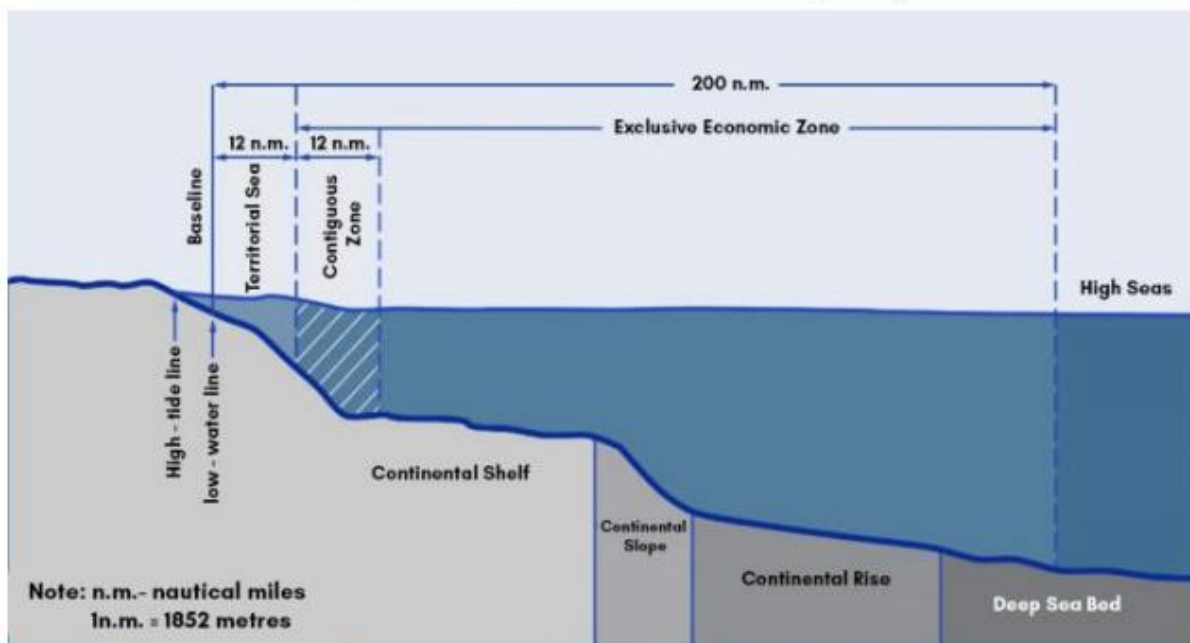
o GST Council is a joint forum of Centre and States, consist of following members:

- ✓ Union Finance Minister (Chairman),
- ✓ Union Minister of State in-charge of Revenue or Finance (Member)
- ✓ Minister in charge of Finance or Taxation or any other Minister nominated by each State Government (Member).

EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ)

- Defence, Space Agencies released 99% of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) prohibited areas for oil exploration and production (E&P).
- Prohibited for security reasons, decision came as part of prioritising energy security of India.
 - o It will reduce the 'no go' areas of around 2.37 million sq km of India's EEZ from 42% to just 1%.
- Under United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), EEZ is the area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, generally extending 200 nautical miles from shore.
 - o Within this area coastal nations claim and exercise sovereign rights to explore and exploit, and the responsibility to conserve and manage, both living and non-living resources.
 - o With a 7,516 km long coastline, **India has the 12th largest EEZ in the world.**

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

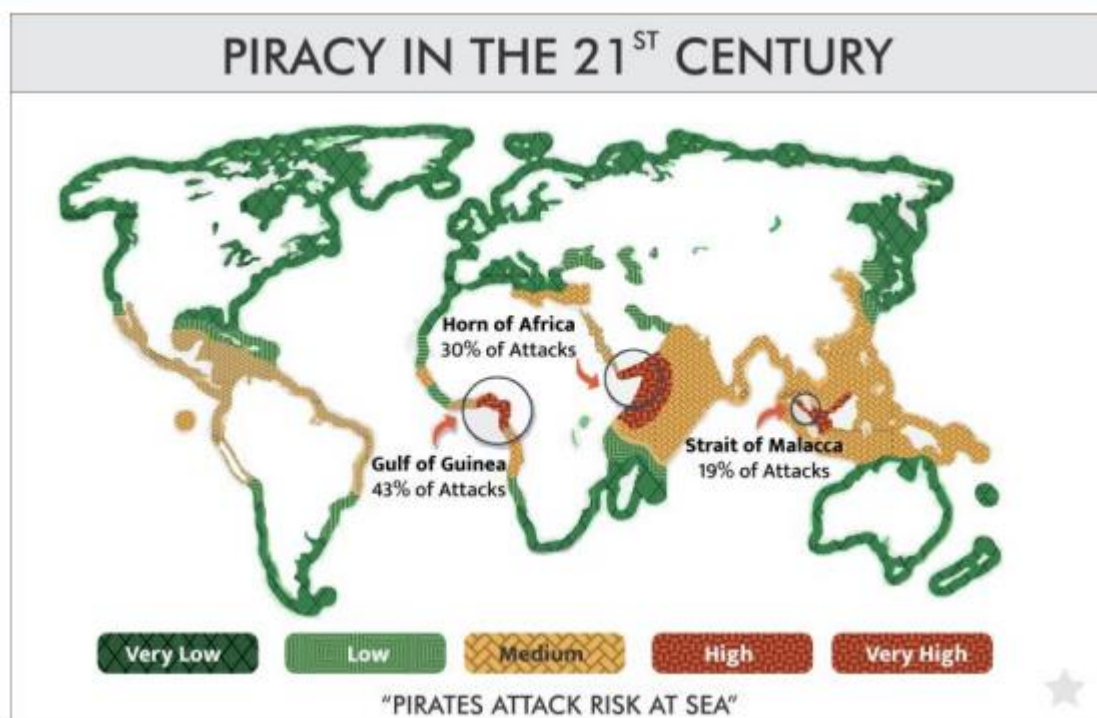


ANTI-MARITIME PIRACY BILL

The reintroduced Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill based on Standing Committee recommendation was passed by both the Houses of the Parliament.

Key Highlights of the Bill

- **Definition of Piracy:** The Bill defines piracy as “any illegal act of violence or detention or any act of depredation committed for private ends by any person or by the crew or any passenger of a private ship and directed on the high seas against another ship or any person or property on board such ship”.
 - o Inciting or intentionally facilitating such acts and voluntary participation in the operations of a pirate ship or aircraft also amounts to an act of Piracy.
- **Punishment:** Those found guilty of piracy or attempting piracy shall be sentenced to either imprisonment or imprisonment for life in prison or fine or death penalty.
- **Applicable regions:** The Bill will apply to high seas which includes EEZ and all waters beyond the jurisdiction of any other state.
 - o The inclusion of the High seas as an applicable region was recommended by the Standing Committee.
- **Piracy an Extraditable Offence:** The accused can be transferred to any country for prosecution with which India has signed an extradition treaty.
 - o In the absence of such treaties, offences will be extraditable on the basis of reciprocity between the countries.
- **Designated Courts:** Central Government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, will specify certain courts as Designated Courts for speedy trial of offences of piracy.
- **Authorized Personnel:** Only authorized personnel are allowed to out arrest and seizure of the Pirate ships.
- **Disposing the seized property:** The Committee recommended that there was a need of creating an appropriate agency to deal with the seized property. Now the ship or property seized will be disposed of only by a Court order.



AGNI-5

- The Strategic Forces Command (SFC) carried out the successful test of the missile from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
 - o SFC is a key tri-services formation that manages and administers all the strategic assets.
 - o It falls under purview of the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA).
 - ✓ NCA has 2 councils, one Political (Headed by PM) and another Executive (Headed by National Security Advisor).
- Agni-V is a nuclear capable advanced surface-to-surface ballistic missile developed indigenously by DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).
 - o The IGMDP had five missiles as Prithvi, Agni, Trishul, Nag and Akash.
 - o Agni-V uses a three-stage solid fuelled engine.

- Crucial to India's defence, Agni-V and 3,500 km range K-4 nuclear submarine launched ballistic missile are the spearheads of India's nuclear triad.

o It is in line with India's minimum credible deterrent nuclear doctrine that highlights the commitment to 'No First Use'.

BRAHMOS

- Indian Air Force successfully fired Extended Range Version of BrahMos air-launched cruise missile.
- About BrahMos missile
 - o It is a joint venture of India and Russia, and its name is derived from Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers.
 - o It can be launched from land, air, sea, and underwater.
 - o Its range was originally capped at 290 km as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
 - o Following India's entry into MTCR, it was decided to extend range to 450 km and 600 km at a later stage.

CRIME AND CRIMINAL TRACKING NETWORK SYSTEM (CCTNS)

- Haryana Police was awarded first rank among all major state police in implementation of CCTNS.
- CCTNS is a Mission Mode Project under National eGovernance Plan (NeGP).
 - o It is aimed at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of policing through adopting of principle of e-Governance.
 - o CCTNS has been implemented in 99% police stations. 100 percent FIRs are being registered directly in CCTNS.

EXERCISES IN NEWS

- **Kazind – 2022:** It is an India - Kazakhstan joint training exercise that was instituted in 2016 as Exercise Prabal Dostyk and was renamed as Ex Kazind in 2018.
- **Surya Kiran:** It is the 16th edition of joint training exercise between India and Nepal.
- **Agni Warrior:** It is a bilateral exercise between Singapore & Indian Army.
- **Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT):** Indian Navy conducts CORPATs with several countries in Indian Ocean region. Recently, one such exercise was conducted with Indonesian Navy.


COP15 TO THE UNITED NATIONS (CBD)

The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity recently concluded in Montreal, Canada.


About COP15

- The COP15 was chaired by China and hosted by Canada.
- COP 15 was held in two phases:
 - o Phase one took place virtually in Kunming, China, in October 2021 and
 - o Phase two was recently held in Montreal, Canada.
- The main objective of COP15 was to adopt a global biodiversity framework (GBF), which will replace the Aichi Biodiversity Targets that expired in 2020.

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)




- It is an **international legally binding multilateral treaty**, opened for signature in 1992 at the **Rio "Earth Summit"** and **entered into force in 1993**.
- **Conference of the Parties (COP)** is the **governing body** of the Convention, and advances implementation of the Convention through the decisions it takes at its periodic meetings.
- **Signatories:** 196 parties **(including India)**.



Supplementary agreements of CBD
(India has signed and ratified all 3 of these protocols)

- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**
- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing**
- Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** ★



Objectives

- Conservation of biological diversity.
- Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity.
- Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

'RIGHT TO REPAIR' PORTAL

- Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution unveiled 'right to repair' portal on occasion of National Consumer Day (December 24).
- On the portal, manufacturers would share manual of product details with customers so that they could either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers.
 - o Initially, mobile phones, electronics, consumer durables, automobile and farming equipments would be covered.
- Right to Repair movement calls for companies to make spare parts, tools and information on how to repair devices available to customers and repair shops to increase lifespan of products and to keep them from ending up in landfills.

o Right to Repair has been recognised in many countries including US, UK and European Union.

BOMB CYCLONE

• A bomb cyclone, also known as an explosive cyclogenesis, is a meteorological phenomenon that occurs when a low-pressure system experiences a rapid and drastic drop in atmospheric pressure.

o When this rapid pressure drop is accompanied by strong winds and can lead to severe weather, including heavy snowfall, strong winds, and thunderstorms.

CYCLONE MANDOUS

• Tamil Nadu and neighbouring areas are bracing for heavy rainfall with cyclone Mandous expected to make landfall.

• Tropical cyclones are violent storms that originate over warm ocean waters near equator.

• Favourable conditions

o Large sea surface with temperature higher than 27° C.

o Presence of the Coriolis force.

o Small variations in the vertical wind speed.

o A pre-existing weak low-pressure area or low-level-cyclonic circulation.

KALASA-BANDURI PROJECT

• Centre has given approval for implementation of Kalasa-Banduri canal construction project.

• About Kalasa-Banduri project:

o Proposes to divert water from two tributaries of the Mahadayi river (also known as Mandovi): Kalasa and Banduri to the Malaprabha river.

- o Entire project aims to construct several dams on the river Mandovi.
- o Aimed at facilitating drinking water for towns in drought-hit northern Karnataka.

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT (NFSA), 2013

The Centre has launched 'PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)' to provide free of cost food grains for a year under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.

- Under the newly launched PMGKAY, rice, wheat and coarse grains shall be provided free of cost for all eligible households (both Primary HouseHolds and Antodaya Anna Yojana) under section 3 of the NFSA from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

- o Until now beneficiaries were paying the subsidised price called Central Issue Price (CIP) worth Rs.1, Rs.2 and Rs.3 for Coarse-grains, wheat and rice respectively.
- o The subsidised prices are specified in Schedule-1 of the NFSA 2013, which the government can change by executive order.

NUCLEAR FUSION

In a fusion experiment using lasers, the scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California achieved a net energy gain for the first time.

- o The scientists at the National Ignition Facility (NIF), USA, for the first time ever, were able to achieve ignition in nuclear fusion i.e., creating a nuclear reaction that generates more energy than it consumes.

Nuclear Fission vs. Nuclear Fusion	
<p>> Nuclear fission is the splitting of a nucleus into smaller particles, releasing high amount of energy.</p>	<p>> Nuclear fusion is the combination of two smaller atoms to create a large atom releasing energy.</p>
<p>> Not common in nature.</p>	<p>> Common in stars such as the Sun.</p>
<p>> May require high-speed neutrons.</p>	<p>> Require high temperature and high pressure conditions.</p>
<p>> Produce a high energy.</p>	<p>> Reactions of light nuclei produce a very high energy; reactions of heavy nuclei may not release energy.</p>
<p>> Examples: neutron bombardment of uranium-235 and radioactive decay in unstable isotopes.</p>	<p>> Examples: fusion between Deuterium and Tritium.</p>

ACHARYA JAGADISH CHANDRA BOSE (J.C. BOSE)

Ministry of Culture organized an international conference on the occasion of 164th birth anniversary of the Indian scientist Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose (J.C. Bose)

About J.C. Bose (1858-1937)

- He was an Indian Physicist and plant physiologist.
- Born in Munshiganj, Bengal Presidency, British India (currently, in Bangladesh). J.C. Bose did his B.A in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University and on his return to India in 1885, he was appointed professor at Presidency College, Calcutta.

- Inspired by nationalist ideals, he founded the Bose Institute in 1917.
 - o It was Asia's first modern research centre which focussed on interdisciplinary research.
- He was the first Asian to be awarded a US patent in 1904 and first Asian along with Srinivasa Ramanujan FRS, to become the fellows of the Royal Society (FRS) in 1920.
- He was the president of the 14th session of the Indian Science Congress in 1927.

How Acharya J.C. Bose proved that plants have life?

J.C. Bose believed that plants had a sensitive nervous system and that their responses to external stimuli could be measured and recorded. He established the following through his experiments-

- Plants live and die: In one of his experiments, the plant was dipped in bromide (a poison). The pulse beat of the plant (similar to pulse of an animal) measured by Crescograph became unsteady once the plant started taking in the poison, proving that plants have life.
- Plants feel pleasure and pain:
 - o He wrote how plants grew more quickly when exposed to nice music and gentle whispers, and poorly when exposed to harsh music and loud speech.
 - o He also mentioned how plants became depressed when exposed to polluted air and darkening skies.

PERSEVERANCE MISSION

- Perseverance rover mission is part of NASA's Mars Exploration Program, a long-term effort of robotic exploration of Mars.
 - o It aims to look for signs of past microbial life, prepare for future human exploration and collect samples of rock and regolith (broken rock and soil) for possible return to Earth.

ARTEMIS 1 LUNAR MISSION

- Uncrewed Orion capsule splashed down off the coast of Baja California, bringing an end to NASA's Artemis 1 moon mission after 2.3 million kilometers flight.

o Splashdown occurred on 50th anniversary of touchdown on moon of NASA's last lunar mission, Apollo 17.

DIGI YATRA

- Ministry of Civil Aviation launched Digi Yatra for Three Airports in country.
- Digi Yatra is conceived to achieve contactless, seamless processing of passengers at airports based on Facial Recognition Technology (FRT).
- It facilitates paperless travel and avoid identity checks at multiple points in an airport.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

Recently, the Government has granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to 9 products from across the country

- With this the total number of GI Tags of India comes to 432.
 - o The top 5 states holding maximum number of GIs are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala.

About Geographical Indication (GI)

- A geographical indication (GI) is defined in the TRIPS Agreement as an indication which identifies a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a regional locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin.

o A geographical indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party whose product does not conform to the applicable standards.

✓ For example, in the jurisdictions in which the Darjeeling geographical indication is protected, producers of Darjeeling tea can exclude use of the term “Darjeeling” for tea not grown in their tea gardens or not produced according to the standards set out in the code of practice for the geographical indication.

o However, a protected geographical indication does not enable the holder to prevent someone from making a product using the same techniques as those set out in the standards for that indication. Protection

• India, in compliance with its obligation under TRIPS, has taken legislative measures by enacting the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999 and the Geographical Indication of Goods (Regulation and Protection) Rules, 2002.

o Under the Act, the Controller-General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks under Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry is the 'Registrar of Geographical indications' who supervises the functioning of the Geographical Indications Registry (GIR).

✓ The GIR is in Chennai, and it has All-India jurisdiction.

• A GI is registered for a period of 10 years and the registration may be renewed from time to time for a period of 10 years at a time.

SANGAI FESTIVAL

• Named after State animal, Sangai, brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur.

o Sangai is found in Keibul Lamjao National Park and is seen over floating biomass, called phumdi.

• Biggest annual cultural festival of Manipur, organized every year in November.

• Locals exhibit their skills in native sports like:

o Famous martial art of Manipur: Thang Ta (a combination of Spear & Sword skills).

o Sagol Kangjei, an indigenous form of polo etc.

HORNBILL FESTIVAL

- It is celebrations of the indigenous warrior tribes of Nagaland with an aim to revive and protect the culture of Nagaland.
- It is named after Hornbill – a tropical bird reflected in tribal cultural expressions, songs and dances.
- Conceptualised in 2000, the Hornbill Festival is annually celebrated.

VEER BAL DIWAS (26 DECEMBER)

- Nation observed the first Veer Bal Diwas by paying tributes to Guru Gobind Singh's martyred sons -Sahibzada Baba Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Baba Fateh Singh.
- Last week of December is observed as Shaheedi Saptah - starting with the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh's elder sons Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh.
- Guru Gobind Singh (1671 -1708) was the 10th Sikh Guru born at Patna Sahib, Bihar.
 - o He created the Khalsa Panth and fought the battles of Anandpur (1700) and Chamkaur (1704) against Mughals.
 - o He wrote Zafarnamah in 1705.

SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS (SAA)

- Sahitya Akademi announced SAA for 2022.
- It is a literary honour, conferred annually on writers of most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages.
 - o Besides 22 languages enumerated in 8th Schedule of Constitution, English and Rajasthani are also recognised.
 - o Award includes a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and an amount of Rs. 1,00,000/-.
- Sahitya Akademi functions as an autonomous organisation. It is registered as a society under Societies Registration Act, 1860.

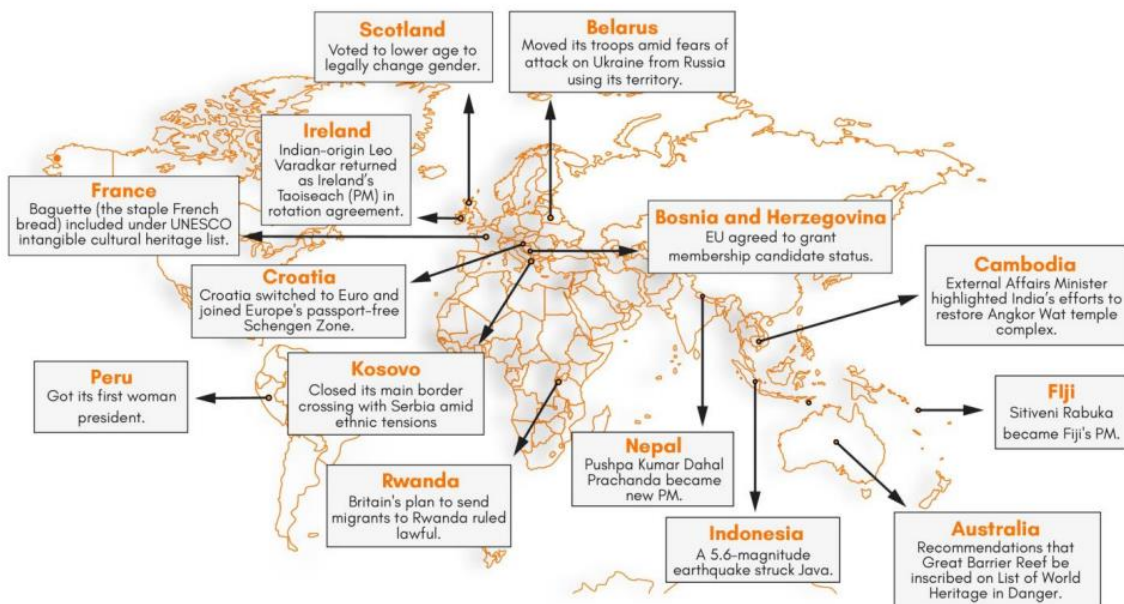
NATIONAL SPORTS AWARDS

- National Sports Awards are a collection of 6 awards given out to sportspersons, coaches or organisations for contribution towards the growth of Indian sports.

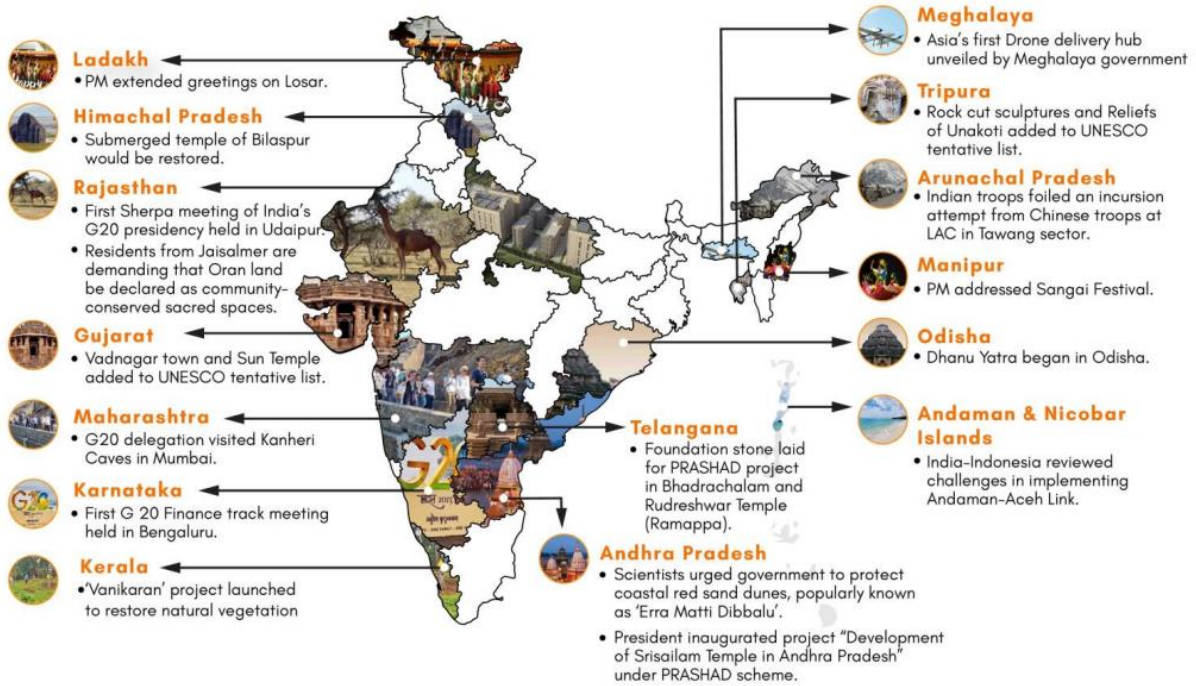
- o 6 core awards are: Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, Arjuna Award, Dronacharya Award, Major Dhyan Chand Award for lifetime achievement, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy, and the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar.

- Awards are given annually by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand.

Places in News: World



Places in News: India



Ladakh

- PM extended greetings on Losar.

Himachal Pradesh

- Submerged temple of Bilaspur would be restored.

Rajasthan

- First Sherpa meeting of India's G20 presidency held in Udaipur.
- Residents from Jaisalmer are demanding that Oran land be declared as community-conserved sacred spaces.

Gujarat

- Vadnagar town and Sun Temple added to UNESCO tentative list.

Maharashtra

- G20 delegation visited Kanheri Caves in Mumbai.

Karnataka

- First G 20 Finance track meeting held in Bengaluru.

Kerala

- 'Vanikaran' project launched to restore natural vegetation

Meghalaya

- Asia's first Drone delivery hub unveiled by Meghalaya government

Tripura

- Rock cut sculptures and Reliefs of Unakoti added to UNESCO tentative list.

Arunachal Pradesh

- Indian troops foiled an incursion attempt from Chinese troops at LAC in Tawang sector.

Manipur

- PM addressed Sangai Festival.

Odisha

- Dhanu Yatra began in Odisha.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- India-Indonesia reviewed challenges in implementing Andaman-Aceh Link.

Telangana

- Foundation stone laid for PRASHAD project in Bhadrachalam and Rudreshwar Temple (Ramappa).

Andhra Pradesh

- Scientists urged government to protect coastal red sand dunes, popularly known as 'Erra Matti Dibbalu'.
- President inaugurated project "Development of Srisailem Temple in Andhra Pradesh" under PRASHAD scheme.

