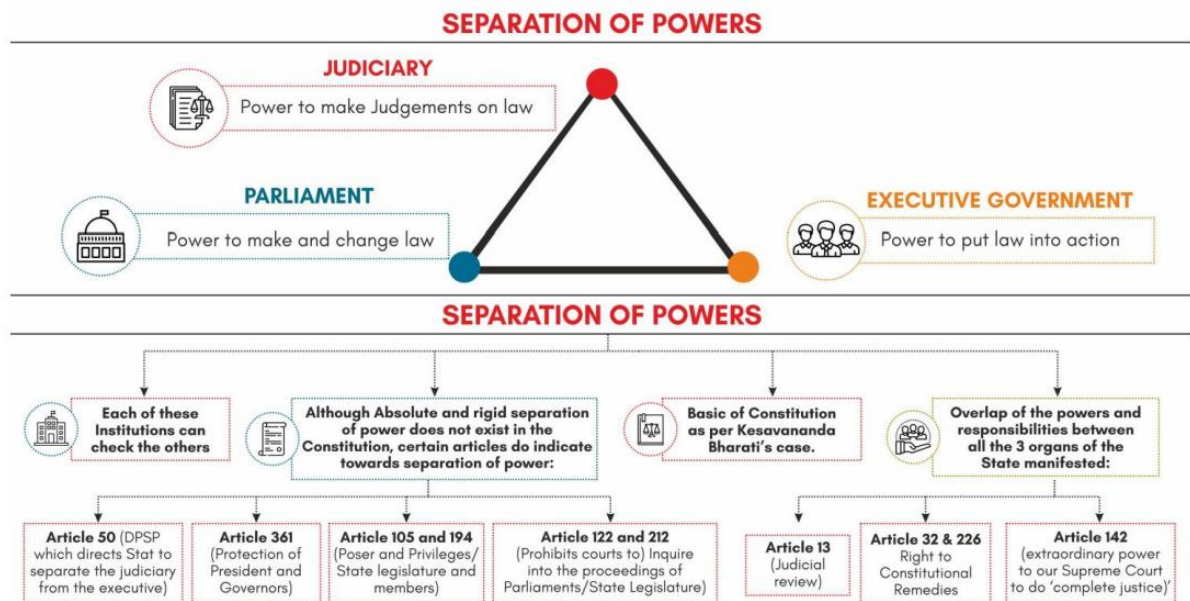


CURRENT AFFAIRS : JANUARY 2023

SEPARATION OF POWERS

Recently, demand of executive representation in collegium system had started debate over doctrine of separation of Power in Indian Constitutional setup.

- Ministry of Law and Justice, in his letter has suggested that Union government representatives be included in the SC Collegium and state government representatives in the high court collegium.
- Vice-President also stated that he did not “subscribe” to the landmark Kesavananda Bharati judgment of 1973 which had propounded the ‘Basic Structure’, upheld judicial review and limited the Parliament’s power under Article 368 to amend the Constitution.
- Apex Court bench on delay in appointment of Judges recommended by Collegium, stated that under Constitution, law declared by the Supreme Court is binding on all.



JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENT ON SEPARATION OF POWERS

Kesavananda Bharati and ors v. State of Kerala

Apex court held that the amending power of the Parliament is subject to the **basic features** of the Constitution. So, any amendment violating the basic features will be declared unconstitutional.

I.R. Coelho v. State of Tamil Nadu

Doctrine of basic structure as propounded in the above-mentioned case and the Ninth schedule grant blanket protection to certain legislations from **judicial review** is violative of this doctrine.

Ram Jawaya Kapoor V State of Punjab

The court held that the Indian Constitution has **not indeed recognized the doctrine of separation of powers** in its absolute rigidity but the functions of the different parts or branches of the government have been sufficiently differentiated.

P Kannadasan V State of Tamil Nadu

The court held, "the Constitution has invested the **Constitutional Courts with the power to invalidate laws made by Parliament** and the state legislatures transgressing Constitutional limitations.

Golak Nath v. State of Punjab

It was observed that the three organs of the government are expected to exercise their functions within their limits and keeping in mind certain encroachments assigned by the constitution.

Kartar Singh v. State of Punjab

Court stated, "it's the function of the legislature to make the law, the executive to implement the law and the judiciary to interpret the law within the limits set down by the Constitution."

Related News

National Judicial Commission (NJC) Bill 2022

- Recently, private member bill National Judicial Commission (NJC) Bill 2022 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha.
- NJC Bill 2022 aims to regulate the appointment of judges to the High Courts and the Supreme Court through the National Judicial Commission.

- Bill seeks to regulate the procedure to be followed by the NJC:
 - o for recommending persons for appointment as the Chief Justice of India and other Judges of the Supreme Court and Chief Justices and other Judges of High Courts
 - o for their transfers and to lay down judicial standards and provide for accountability of Judges,
 - o establish credible and expedient mechanism for investigating into individual complaints for misbehavior or incapacity of a judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court
 - o for the presentation of an address by Parliament to the President in relation to proceeding for removal of a Judge.

FEDERALISM: UNIQUE STATUS OF DELHI

In recent times tussle is going on between UTs and Centre and due to overlapping of functions affecting routine administrative work in UTs.

- In Supreme Court, one case is going on the tussle between the Delhi government and the Centre over administrative control of postings and transfers of civil servants belonging to All India Services serving in Delhi.
- The central government stated that a Union Territory is nothing but an extension of the Union (of India).

Present Status of Delhi as UT

- The 69th Amendment of the Constitution in 1991 gave the National Capital of Delhi special status with its own democratically elected government and legislative assembly.
 - o Insertion of new Articles 239AA and 239AB after Article 239A of the Constitution.
 - o The Legislative Assembly shall have power to enumerate anything in the State List or in the Concurrent List in so far as any such matter is applicable to Union territories.

✓ Except matters with respect to Entries 1, 2 and 18 of the State List and Entries 64, 65 and 66 of that List in so far as they relate to the said Entries 1, 2 and 18.

o Provided that in the case of difference of opinion between the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) and his Ministers on any matter, the Lieutenant Governor shall refer it to the President for decision and act according to the decision given thereon by the President.

o Public order, Police and Land in the NCT of Delhi fall within the domain of Union Government.

• Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act (GNCTD) 2021

o The term “government” in any law made by the Legislative Assembly shall mean the L-G.

o The L-G’s opinion shall be obtained before the government takes any executive action based on decisions taken by the Cabinet or any individual ministers.

o The L-G will not assent to and pass on to the President for consideration any Bill which “incidentally covers any of the matters which falls outside the purview of the powers conferred on the Legislative Assembly”.

IMPORTANT SUPREME COURT CASES

GNCTD vs Union of India case(2019)



- A two-judge bench of the Supreme Court had delivered a split verdict on the question of powers GNCTD and the Centre over services and referred the matter to a three-judge bench.

Government of NCT Delhi vs Union of India case (2018)

- The L-G would be bound by the **aid and advice of the Council of Ministers (COM)** in matters that were not directly under the control of the L-G.
- Barring **police, public order** and **land** the L-G's concurrence is not required on other issues.
- However, the decisions of the CoM will have to be communicated to the L-G.

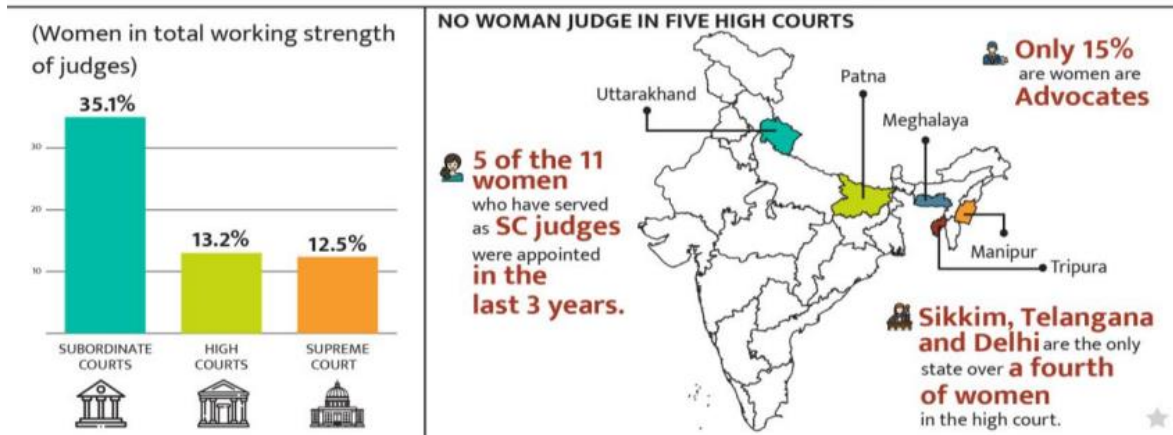


WOMEN IN JUDICIARY

Recently, the Supreme Court had an all-woman bench which was only the third time in its history.

- Only three times (2013, 2018, 2022) in history of the Supreme Court all women benches were formed.
- This third all women benches heard transfer petitions involving matrimonial disputes and bail matters.
- Supreme court currently has only 3 women judges, and the country will get its first woman Chief Justice only in 2027.

Women in Judiciary Status in India



ASPIRATIONAL BLOCK PROGRAMME (ABP)

Prime Minister launched the government's Aspirational Block Programme (ABP), which is aimed at improving performance of blocks lagging on various development parameters.

- It was first announced in Union Budget 2022-23 and has been mentioned in Union Budget 2023-24.
- It is based on the model of Aspirational District Programme (ADP) that was launched in 2018 and covers 112 districts across the country.

Features of Aspirational Block Programme (ABP)

- Coverage: The programme has been launched for covering 500 blocks across 31 states and Union Territories initially.
 - o Over half of these blocks are in 6 states—Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal (in decreasing order). However, states can add more blocks to the programme later.
- Aim: It mainly aims at saturation of essential government services across multiple domains such as health, nutrition, education, agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure.

- Key indicators: Government has identified 15 key socio-economic indicators (KSIs) under such multiple domains.

- o States have the flexibility to include additional state-specific KSIs to address local challenges.

RULE OF LAW INDEX

- After improvement in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business rankings, now government has turned its attention to scoring better in Rule of Law Index.

- Index is published by the World Justice Project (WJP), a US based civil society group.

- o In 2022, India was ranked 77th out of 140 countries.

- Eight factors that the Rule of Law Index measures: Constraint on government powers, Absence of corruption, Open government, Fundamental rights, Order and security, Regulatory enforcement, Civil justice, Criminal justice.

FREE SPEECH OF MINISTERS

- Answering a reference made to it regarding extent of Freedom of Speech and Expression available to public functionaries, constitutional bench of SC held that:

- o Right of free speech and expression , guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (a), can't be curbed by additional grounds other than those already laid down in Article 19 (2).

- o A statement made by a minister, even in official capacity, cannot be attributed vicariously to government by invoking principle of collective responsibility.

- ✓ Under **Article 75 (3) and 164 (2)**, Council of Ministers (CoM) is collectively responsible to House of People and Legislative Assembly of State respectively.

- ✓ SC stated that collective responsibility flows from CoM to individual ministers, not on reverse, namely, from individual Ministers to CoM.

- o A fundamental right under Article 19, 21 can be enforced even against persons other than state or its instrumentalities.

o A mere statement made by a minister, inconsistent with rights of a citizen, may not become actionable as constitutional tort.

✓ But if leads to an act of omission or commission by a public official then it is a constitutional tort.

✓ A 'constitutional tort' is a violation of one's constitutional rights, particularly fundamental rights, by an agent of the government, acting in his/her official capacity. A court of law can award monetary compensation to the victim in such a case.

ELECTRONIC SUPREME COURT REPORTS (E-SCR) PROJECT

- Chief Justice of India announced the launch of e-SCR project to provide access to judgements to common public.
- E-SCR is an initiative to provide digital version of apex court's judgments in manner as they are reported in official law report 'Supreme Court Reports'.
 - o Entire gamut of judgments from inception of Supreme Court in 1950 till date would be available freely to lawyers and law students.
 - o These judgments will be accessible on Supreme Court's website, mobile app and on National Judicial Data Grid's judgment portal.

CHARGE SHEETS

- Supreme Court (SC) held that charge sheet by probing agency is not a "public document".
 - o It stated that putting it in public domain will violate the rights of victim, accused and investigating agencies.
- Charge sheet refers to a formal police record showing the names of each person brought into custody, the nature of the accusations, and the identity of the accusers.
- First Information Report (FIR) is a written document prepared by the police when they receive information about the commission of a cognizable offence.
 - o Under Youth Bar Association Case (2016) the SC issued directions to the police to upload the FIRs in website within 24 hours except in sensitive cases like rape.

INDIA-EGYPT

Recently, Egyptian President was on a visit to India from 24 to 26 January 2023 as he was 'chief guest' for the 74th Republic Day celebrations held in New Delhi.

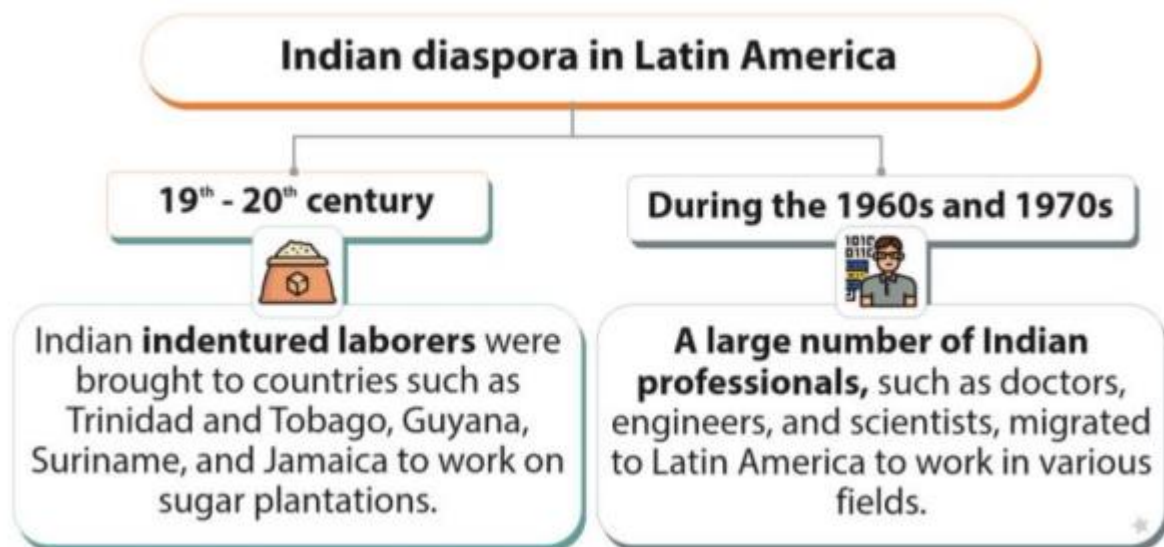
Recent developments in relations:

- India and Egypt agreed to elevate their bilateral ties to “Strategic Partnership” covering political, security, defence, energy and economic aspects.
- Commemorative Postal Stamps to mark 75 years of establishment of India-Egypt relations were also exchanged between the two sides.
- As the President of G20, India has invited Egypt as a guest country for the summit to be held in 2023.

INDIAN DIASPORA IN LATIN AMERICA

The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention in focus on Latin America's diaspora connection, with two Indian-origin Presidents from the region attending as special guests.

- India hosted the 17th PBD Convention in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- The theme of the 17th PBD was "Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal".
- In the Convention, Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards were also conferred.



About Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is observed on 9th January.
- It commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9th January, 1915.
- 1st PBD Convention was organised on 9 January 2003
- Since 2015, PBD Convention has been organised once every 2 years.

ASIAN PACIFIC POSTAL UNION (APPU)

- India will take over the charge of Secretary General of APPU for a tenure of 4 years.
- APPU is an intergovernmental organization of 32-member countries of the Asian-Pacific region.
- Goal of APPU is to extend, facilitate and improve postal relations between member countries and to promote cooperation in the field of postal services.
- It is the only Restricted Union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialized agency of UN.

- Headquarter: Bangkok, Thailand.

INDIA AND UN PEACEKEEPING

India deployed a women-only platoon of peacekeepers to the UN Mission in Abyei on the border of Sudan and South Sudan as part of the Indian Battalion in the United Nations Interim Security Force, Abyei (UNISFA).

UN PEACEKEEPING

Key features

- ◆ A global initiative **by the United Nations to promote peace and security around the world.**
- ◆ The decision to send a peacekeeping mission to a country is made by the UN Security Council, and the **UN secretariat is then responsible for developing and implementing the detailed strategy for the mission.**
- ◆ UN member states are **requested to contribute military and police personnel** under UN command, for which they are paid from UN funds.
- ◆ The **U.N. began its Peacekeeping efforts in 1948** when it deployed military observers to West Asia.
- ◆ **United Nations Peacekeeping Forces awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1988.**

Principles of UN Peacekeeping

There are **three basic principles** that continue to set UN peacekeeping operations apart as a tool for maintaining international peace and security

- ◆ Consent of the parties
- ◆ Impartiality
- ◆ Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate



Related Information

- ◆ BY 2028, UN peacekeeping aims to
 - **Triple the number of women** serving in military consignments
 - **Double the number of women** serving in formed police units
- ◆ More UN peacekeepers means **fewer civilian deaths, less violence, and higher chance at lasting peace.**
- ◆ UN peacekeeper is cost effective as their budget is less than **0.5% of global military spending.**

India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping

- India has a long history of service in UN Peacekeeping, having **contributed more personnel than any other country**.
- India **served in 49 of the 71 UN Peacekeeping missions** established around the world since 1948.
 - **Currently, India is the fifth largest troop contributor (TCC)** with 5,323 personnel deployed in 8 out of 13 active UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- Indian Peacekeepers **provide many services** such as medical care, veterinary support, engineering services to the communities
- **India was the first country to contribute to the Trust Fund** on sexual exploitation and abuse, which was set up in 2016.
- India's participation in UN peacekeeping missions has been motivated by its **commitment to maintaining international peace and security, and also as a way to project its soft power**.

Women in Indian Peacekeeping

- **Women peacekeepers from India have served in several countries, including Congo, Liberia, South Sudan, and Haiti.**
- In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.
- In the year 2014, Indian **cop Shakti Devi of the Jammu and Kashmir Police**, who was deployed in the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), **was awarded the International Female Police Peacekeeper Award**.

STATE FINANCES

RBI has released its annual publication titled "State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2022-23" with the theme "Capital Formation in India - the Role of States".

State Finances in India

- The Indian Constitution provides the federal basis for governance.
 - The Seventh Schedule specifies the financial resources and functions of Centre and the States.

o The Constitution of India also provides for fiscal institutions and mechanism for intergovernmental transfers to address the vertical and horizontal fiscal imbalances across different levels of governments.

• But due to scarcity of capital, nascent private sector and gaps in implementation capabilities, the state finances (revenue and expenses over a specified future period of time) have remained weak, i.e.,

- o high fiscal deficit,
- o high revenue deficit and
- o high debt-to-GDP ratio.

✓ To overcome high borrowings and debt-trap risks, the government introduced the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003; amended subsequently multiple times due to non-achievement of targets.

INLAND WATERWAYS IN INDIA

Recently, Prime minister unveiled inland waterways projects worth over Rs 1000 crore to increase transport, trade & tourism in eastern India.

• Haldia Multi-Modal Terminal in West Bengal was inaugurated under Jal Marg Vikas Project with cargo handling capacity of around over 3 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA).

• Maritime Skill Development Centre for the

Northeast was inaugurated in Guwahati. Jal Marg Vikas project (JMVP).

• Implemented by:

o Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

o Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) with support of the World Bank.

• Aims: To develop the stretch between Varanasi to Haldia (on National Waterway 1) for navigation of large vessels weighing up to 1500-2000 tonnes.

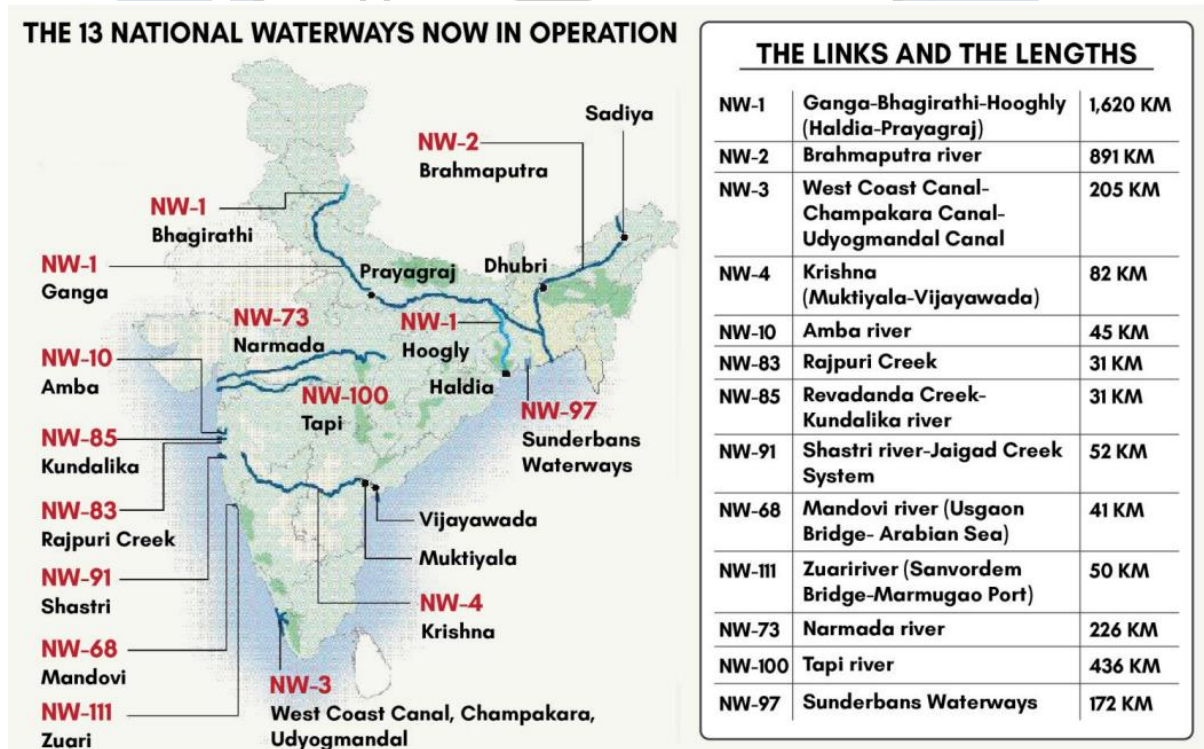
• Other features:

o IWAI came into existence in 1986, primarily for the development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation.

o Multi-Modal Terminals are a part of Jal Marg Vikas project (JMVP).

o Haldia MMT is one of the three Multi-Modal Terminals being constructed on Ganga, 2 other MMTs constructed in Sahibganj and Varanasi under the project.

- Foundation stone for a ship repair facility and an elevated road at Pandu Terminal in Guwahati was laid.
- More than 60 community jetties are being constructed along the river Ganga to boost economic activities and improve the livelihoods of local communities in the region.



DOMESTIC SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT BANKS (D-SIBS)

- SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank have continued to remain Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs).

- D-SIBs are those interconnected entities, whose failure can impact the whole of the financial system and create instability i.e., they are 'too big to fail'.
 - o Concept of D-SIBs was adopted in aftermath of 2008 financial crisis.
- D-SIBs are designated on basis of their Size; Interconnectedness; Lack of readily available substitutes or financial institution infrastructure; and Complexity.
 - o In order to be listed as D-SIB, a bank needs to have assets that exceed 2 percent of national GDP.

T+1 SETTLEMENT

- After China, India became second country in world to start 'trade-plus-one' (T+1) settlement cycle in top listed securities.
 - o Until 2001, stock markets had weekly settlement system, then T+3, and then moved to T+2 in 2003.
- Under T+1, trade-related settlements must be done within a day, or 24 hours, of completion of a transaction.
- Benefits of T+1: Better liquidity with investors; Faster rolling of funds and stocks; Decreases unsettled trade exposure to clearing corporation by 50%; Reduces capital blocked to cover risk of trades etc.

PRITHVI-II

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out a successful test launch of tactical ballistic missile Prithvi-II.
- Missile, which is powered by light propulsion twin engines, has a range of around 350 km and can carry 500-1,000 kg of warheads.
 - o It uses an advanced inertial navigation system to strike the set target.
- Prithvi was developed by DRDO under Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (conceived by Dr A P J Abdul Kalam).

o Other missiles under this program: Agni, Trishul, Akash, Nag.

HYPERSONIC TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATOR VEHICLE (HSTDV)

- DRDO tested the HSTDV, powered by a scramjet engine.
- HSTDV will serve as a critical building block for hypersonic weapons (Speed > 5 mach or 5 times speed of sound).
 - o Scramjet engine (supersonic-combustion ramjet) is one which can operate at hypersonic speeds.
 - o Like ramjet engine, scramjet uses atmospheric air for oxidizer and compresses incoming air before it enters combustion chamber.

EXERCISE IN NEWS

- **Veer Guardian 2023:** It is bilateral Air exercise between Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF).
- **Varuna:** It is a Bilateral Naval Exercise between India and France.
- **Cyclone – I:** It is the first joint exercise between the special forces of the Indian Army and the Egyptian Army.
- **TROPEX:** It is Indian Navy's major maritime exercise that is conducted biennially and also witnesses participation of Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard assets.
- **AMPHEX 2023:** It is a biennial Tri-Services Exercise aimed at joint training of elements of all three services.
- **Tarkash 2023:** It is the 6th Edition of Counter Terrorism Exercise between India's NSG (National Security Guard) and US Special Operations Forces (SOF).
- **Topchi 2023:** Indian army carried out the annual exercise named 'Exercise Topchi'. Focus of the exercise was to showcase indigenous capabilities and strides made in achieving self-reliance in defense sector.

DOOMSDAY CLOCK

- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (BAS) moved Doomsday clock to 90 seconds to midnight largely because of mounting nuclear warfare in Ukraine.
 - o BAS was founded in 1945 by Albert Einstein and University of Chicago scientists who worked on Manhattan Project to build first atomic bomb.
- Doomsday Clock, created in 1947, is a design that warns the public about how close we are to destroying our world with dangerous technologies of our own making.
 - o Since its debut, minute hand has been reset 25 times.

OZONE HOLE RECOVERY

A new United Nations-backed Ozone Recovery Assessment Report, 2022 has stated that the ozone layer is on track to recover within decades as harmful chemicals are phased out.

- The report highlights that Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) levels in 2022 are back to those observed in 1980 before ozone depletion was significant.
 - o This slow but steady progress over the past three decades was achieved by Montreal Protocol.
 - o The pace of reduction in ozone-depleting substances (ODSs) over Antarctica, which experiences a large ozone hole in spring, has been slower.



Ozone Depletion- First Discovered in 1980s

- 15 most abundant long-lived, **chlorine-and bromine-containing chemicals** have caused Polar ozone layer hole formation.
- It happens with the formation of **Polar Stratospheric Clouds**.
 - ▷ **Polar stratospheric clouds are formed only at a high-altitude-clouds** at very low temperatures help **destroy ozone in two ways**:
 - ✓ They **provide a surface** which converts benign forms of chlorine into reactive, ozone-destroying forms.
 - ✓ They **remove nitrogen compounds** that moderate the destructive impact of chlorine.

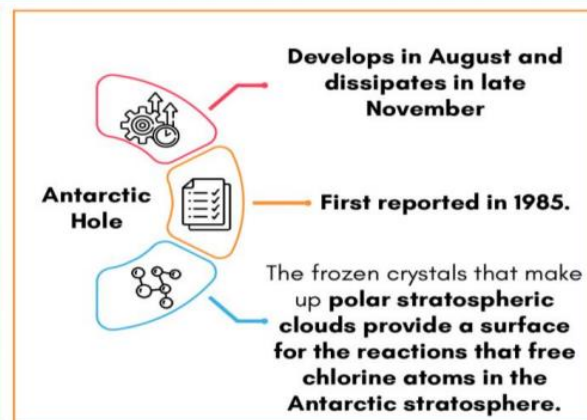
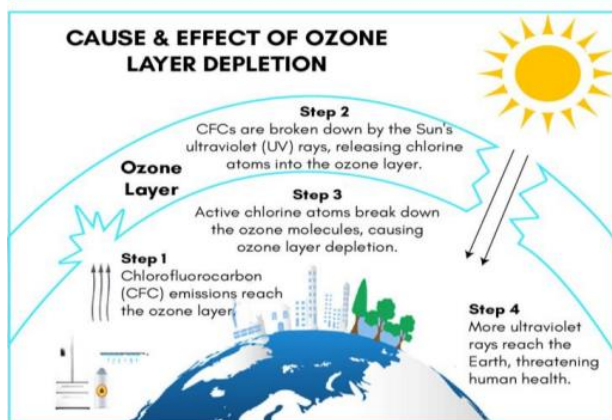
- **Increased concentration of ozone depleting substances** leading to ozone depletion.
 - ▷ It occurs due to Polar Arctic vortex.

First noticed In 2011.

Arctic hole

Occurs during spring.

- **Arctic vortex prevents cold air from escaping the region.**
 - ▷ This keeps the concentration of ozone depleting substances high in the region.



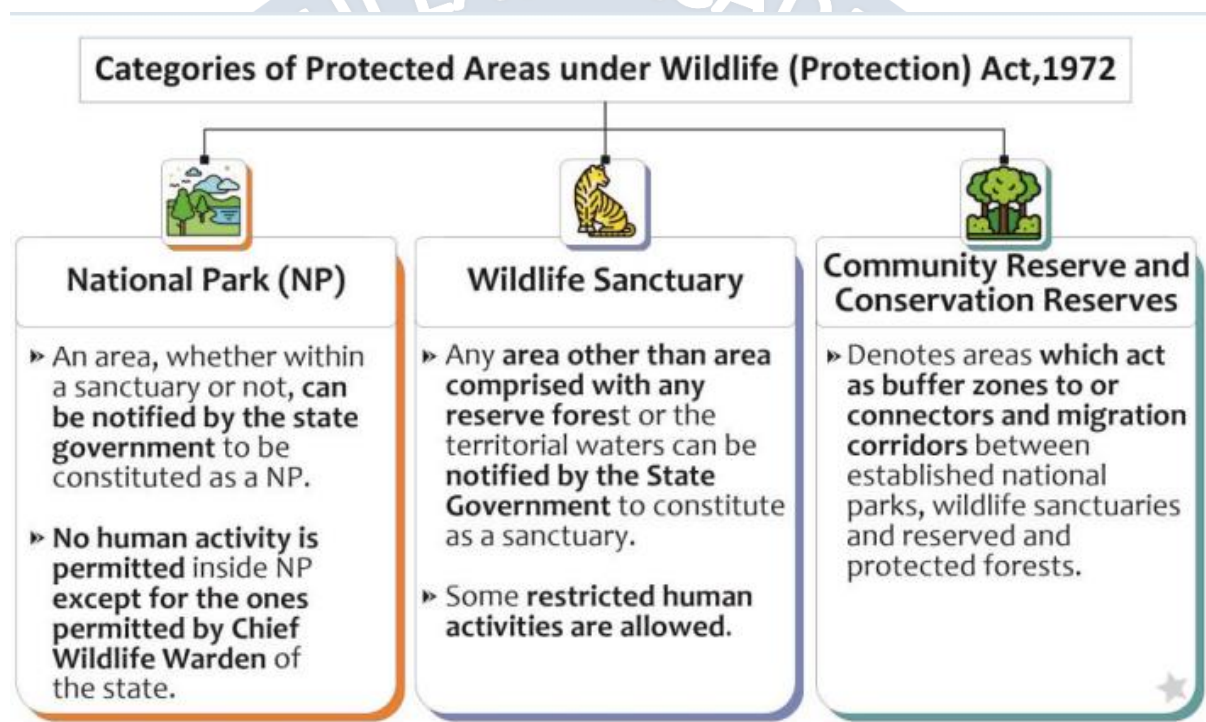
THE WILDLIFE (PROTECTION) AMENDMENT ACT, 2022

Recently, the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 was enacted to amend the WLPA, 1972 to incorporate more species protected under the law.

About Wildlife (Protection) Act (WLPA), 1972

- The act provides for the protection of wild animals, birds, and plants with a view to ensuring the ecological and environmental security of the country.
- It empowers the State to declare protected areas, under four categories- National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Community Reserves and Conservation Reserves.
- Important bodies established under the act include

- o National Board for Wildlife
- o National Tiger Conservation Authority
- o Central Zoo Authority
- The Act has created 6 schedules for specially protected plants (one), specially protected animals (four) and vermin species (one), which gave varying degrees of protection to classes of flora and fauna.



About the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act (WLPA), 2022

- 2022 act seeks to conserve and protect wildlife through better management of protected areas and implement the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Key Provisions of Amended Act 2022:

Number of schedules from 6 to 4 by:

- Reducing the number of schedules for specially protected animals from 4 to 2.

- Inserting a new schedule for specimens listed in the Appendices under CITES(scheduled specimens).
- Removing the schedule for vermin species.
 - o Wild animals will be declared as Vermin by Central Government by the way of notification for any area and for a specified period.

NEW SCHEDULES			
	<u>Schedule- I</u>		<u>Schedule- II</u>
	Animal Species with highest level of protection.		Animal Species with lesser level of protection.
	<u>Schedule- III</u>		<u>Schedule- IV</u>
	Protected plant species.		Speciemen listed in the Appendices under CITES.

SAMUDRAYAAN MISSION

Union ministry of earth sciences recently shared details of Samudrayaan Mission.

- Samudrayaan Mission is aimed to develop a self-propelled manned submersible (MATSYA 6000) to carry three human beings to a water depth of 6,000 meters for deep ocean exploration.
 - o MATSYA 6000 is being developed by National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai.

About Deep Ocean mission

- Union cabinet approved deep ocean mission in 2021 with a total budget of ₹4,077 crore for five years.
- It aims to explore Deep Ocean for resources and develop deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.
 - o The part of the ocean that lies below a depth of 200 metres is defined as the deep sea.
 - o Considering importance of oceans on sustainability, UN declared 2021-2030 as Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
- It is a mission mode project to support Blue Economy initiatives. Blue economy is sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.
- Mission is to be implemented under aegis of Ministry of Earth Sciences.

JOSHIMATH LAND SUBSIDENCE

Uttarakhand's Joshimath has been declared as a landslide and subsidence-hit zone.

- Satellite images of Joshimath released by National Remote Sensing Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) show that it sank at a rapid pace of 5.4 cm in just 12 days, triggered by a possible subsidence event on January 2.
- As per reports, huge cracks have developed in more than 600 houses in Joshimath, making them unfit for habitation.
 - o Roads and fields have also been similarly affected.

About Land subsidence

- United States Geological Survey describes land subsidence as a gradual settling or sudden sinking of Earth's surface due to removal or displacement of subsurface earth materials.
- Subsidence is a global problem.

o Experts estimate that by 2040, land subsidence will affect eight percent of the world's surface.

o Approximate 1.2 billion people living in 21percent of major cities across globe.

- It is most often caused by the removal of water, oil, natural gas, or mineral resources out of the ground by pumping, fracking, or mining activities. Further, it can also be caused by natural events such as earthquakes, soil compaction, erosion and sinkhole formation.

o According to U.S. Geological Survey, more than 80% of land subsidence across the world is caused due to excessive groundwater extraction.

INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER TRANSHIPMENT PORT (ICTP)

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways has invited bids for the ₹41,000-crore mega International Container Transhipment Port (ICTP) at Great Nicobar. It is being planned for the Galathea Bay of Great Nicobar Island.

- ICTP being planned is part of the holistic development of Great Nicobar Island.
- It will be completed in four phases. Phase 1 will create a handling capacity of 4 million TEUs, increasing to 16 million TEUs in the ultimate stage of development.

o A twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) is an approximate unit of measure used for cargo containers.

- Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (Kolkata-based) is the nodal agency for the implementation.

- Public Private Partnership (PPP) will be encouraged for this project via Landlord model.

o Under Landlord Port model, the port authority acts as regulatory body and as landlord, while port operations (especially cargo handling) are carried out by private companies.

NEELAKURINJI (STROBILANTHES KUNTHIANA)

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF) has listed Neelakurinji under Schedule III of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, including it on list of protected plants.

About Neelakurinji

- o It is a shrub that grows in the shola forests of Western Ghats in South India.
- o Neelakurinji flowers bloom once every 12 years.
- o Plant is named after the famous Kunthi River which flows through Kerala's Silent Valley National Park, where plant occurs abundantly.
- ✓ Eravikulam National Park, near Munnar, is known for widespread blooming of kurinji.
- o Blue colour of Kurinji has given Nilgiri hills its name, literally meaning Blue Mountains.

RAM SETU

- Ram Setu, also known as Adam's bridge, is a chain of limestone shoals between Pamban Island or Rameswaram Island, off the south-eastern coast of Tamil Nadu, and Mannar Island, off the north-western coast of Sri Lanka.
 - o Recently, Tamil Nadu assembly also passed a resolution urging Centre to resume work on Sethusamudram Ship Canal project (SSCP).
- National heritage status is sought in the backdrop of SSCP that envisages dredging of a ship channel across the Palk Straits between India and Sri Lanka.
 - o Two channels were suggested - one across Adam's Bridge and another through Palk Bay.
 - o SC, in 2007, had stayed the work for project and Centre was also willing to explore another route to SSCP without damaging Ram Setu.

Significance of SSCP

- o Reduce steaming distances between east and west coasts of India.
- o Strengthen national security by improving navigation for Indian coast guards and naval ships.

DARK SKY RESERVE

- Talacauvery in Kodagu District, Karnataka has emerged as South India's Hanle.






- o Hanle (in Ladakh) is India's first Dark Sky Reserve.
- Dark Sky Reserve is a designation given to a public or private land with
 - o exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights, and
 - o nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural, heritage and/or public enjoyment.
- Dark Sky location depends on light pollution which is measured on Bortle Scale.
 - o Bortle Scale measures night sky's brightness on a nine-level numerical scale with lesser numerical scale representing darkness.

EUTHANASIA

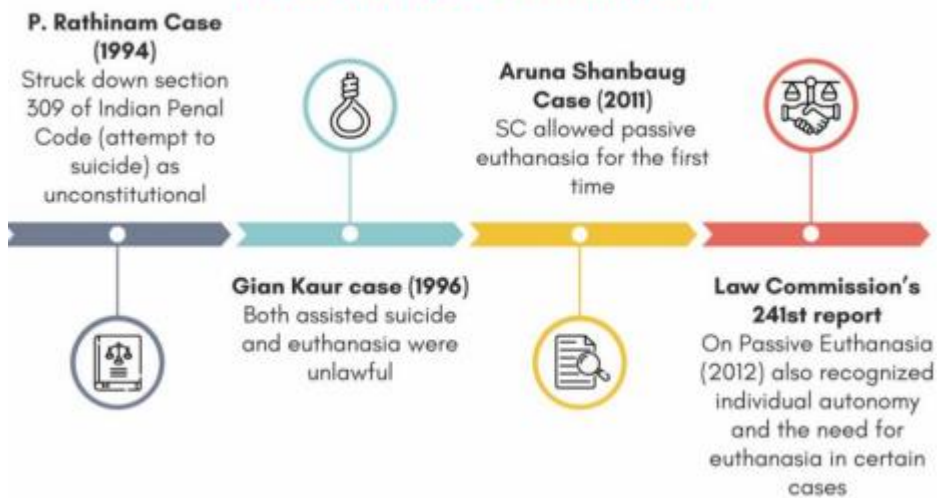
Recently, Supreme Court simplified its rules on passive euthanasia.

- In a 2018 judgement (Common Cause v Union of India), SC had recognised the right to die with dignity as an inextricable facet of the right to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution
 - o It had, accordingly, upheld the legal validity of passive euthanasia.
- It was argued that the directions had become virtually unenforceable owing to the complexity of the procedure prescribed by SC.
 - o Thus, necessary amendments were sought to make the judgement 'workable'.
- Accordingly, several changes were introduced by the five-judge bench in the guidelines laid down in 2018 with respect to the execution and enforcement of advance care directives, as well as the procedure for passive euthanasia.

The changes brought by the SC

	Now	Earlier
 Living will	An attestation by a notary or a Gazetted officer to be sufficient for living will	It was necessary that a judicial magistrate attest or countersign a living will
 Access to the living will	Living will a part of national health record which can be accessed by Indian hospitals	Living will was kept in the custody of the district court concerned
 Primary board to examine patient's condition	Three doctors, including treating physician and two other doctors with five years of experience in the speciality, will comprise the primary board of doctors	Primary board of doctors needs at least four experts from general medicine, cardiology, neurology, nephrology, psychiatry or oncology with overall standing of at least 20 years
 Time taken to decide	Primary/secondary board to decide within 48 hours on withdrawal of further treatment	The 2018 judgment did not specify any outer limit on withdrawal of treatment
 Secondary board	Hospital must immediately constitute a secondary board of medical experts	The district collector had to constitute the second board of medical experts

Timeline of Euthanasia



Other aspects of the Judgment	Now	Earlier
Surrogate decision-maker	More than one guardian or close relative can be named. Before a final opinion consent of all the nominees will be taken.	Only one guardian or close relative was to be named. Before a final opinion, the consent of the guardian or close relative would also be taken.
Role of district court registry	This requirement has been deleted.	Judicial magistrate to forward a copy of the document to the registry of the jurisdictional district court, which would have to retain the document in the original format.
Ascertaining authenticity	Treating physician to execute the advance directive after ascertaining its authenticity with reference to the digital records of the executor, or from the custodian of the document appointed by the local government body.	Treating physician had to execute the advance directive after ascertaining its authenticity from the judicial magistrate.
Appeal before High Court	If permission to withdraw treatment was denied a writ petition at the jurisdictional High Court can be filed.	If permission to withdraw treatment was denied a writ petition at the jurisdictional High Court can be filed.

FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION- INDUSTRY 4.0

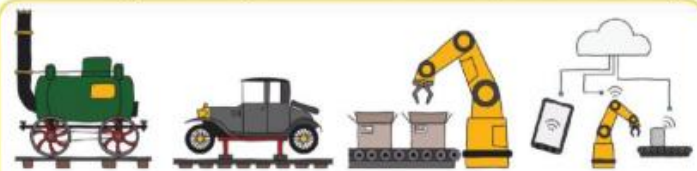
India's first Fourth Industrial Revolution Centre on healthcare, life sciences will be set up in Hyderabad.

- The proposed centre is to be set up in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- It will be established as an autonomous, non-profit organisation focusing on policy and governance for healthcare and life sciences.
- It will be 18th centre to join the WEF's Fourth Industrial Revolution Network.

Fourth Industrial Revolution

- Refers to **the current and developing era of technological change and advancements**, characterized by the integration of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, big data and more into various industries and aspects of society.

- These advances are **merging the physical, digital and biological worlds** in ways that create both huge promise and potential peril.



Industry 1.0

The Industrial Revolution begins
Mechanization of manufacturing with the introduction of steam and water power.

Industry 2.0

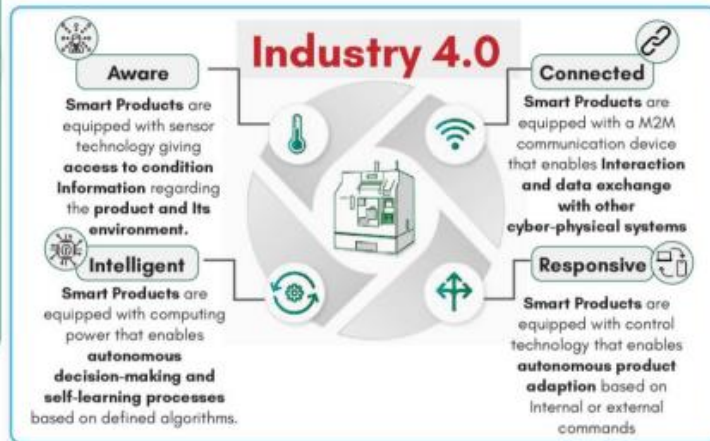
Mass production assembly lines using electrical power.

Industry 3.0

Automated production using electronics, programmable logic controllers (PLC), IT systems and robotics.

Industry 4.0

The 'Smart Factory'. Autonomous decision making of cyber physical systems using machine learning and Big Data analysis. Interoperability through IoT and cloud technology.



BharOS

- BharOS is an AOSP (Android Open-Source Project) based operating system with no Google apps or services.
- It is developed by JandK Operations Private Limited, a non-profit organization incubated at IIT Madras.
- Major difference between BharOS and Google's Android OS is that BharOS does not ship with Google services.
- It will be a barebone operating system, which allows users to install apps of their own interest.

SAMMED SHIKHAR AND SHETRUNJAY HILL

Jain community organised protests across the country over the religious site of Sammed Shikhar on Parasnath hill in Jharkhand and Shetrunjay hill in Palitana of Gujarat.

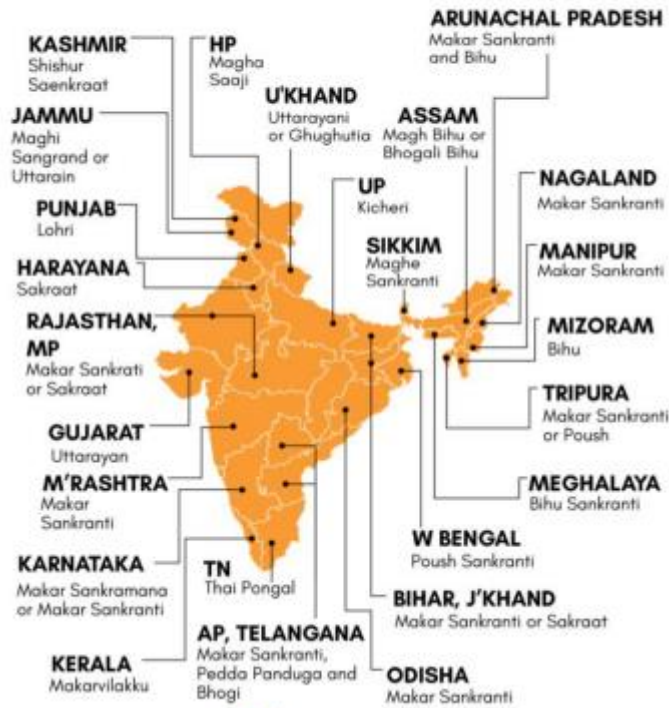
- In Jharkhand, the issue is about Parasnath hill being declared a tourist spot and an eco-sensitive zone.
 - o The Jain community has been protesting against the Jharkhand government's tourism policy which intended to develop Sammed Shikharji in Parasnath hills as a tourist destination.
 - o Also in 2019, Parasnath hill was declared as an eco-sensitive zone by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Ministry planned to develop eco-tourism over here.
 - o Jain community believes that it will deteriorate sanctity of their religious site.
- In Gujarat, the row is over the vandalising of Adinath Dada's Pagla, a marble carving representing the feet of Lord Adinath, the first Jain Tirthankar.
 - o Jain community also expressed their concern over the illegal commercialisation, mining of Shatrunjaya Hill.
 - o The Jains are demanding that Shetrunjay hill and the area around it be protected so as to maintain its holiness.

HARVEST FESTIVALS

- Makar Sankranti is major harvest festival celebrated across India and different states celebrate festival under different names, traditions, and festivities.
 - o Festival is dedicated to Sun God, Surya and marks the first day of sun's transit into Makara(Capricorn).
 - o Makar Sankranti heralds end of winter and start of longer days as sun moves northward.

Makar Sankranti: Many names

Different names of winter harvest festival across India



PARAM VIR CHAKRA (PVC)

- On Parakram Diwas, 21 largest unmanned islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands were named after 21 Param Vir Chakra (PVC) awardees.
 - o Parakram Diwas is celebrated on occasion of the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- PVC is India's highest military decoration, awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valor during wartime.
 - o It was designed by Mrs. Savitri Khanolkar.
- Cast in bronze, it carries state emblem at centre on a raised circle surrounded by four replicas of Indra's Vajra, flanked by sword of Shivaji.
 - o Major Somnath Sharma(Posthumous) was first PVC awardee.

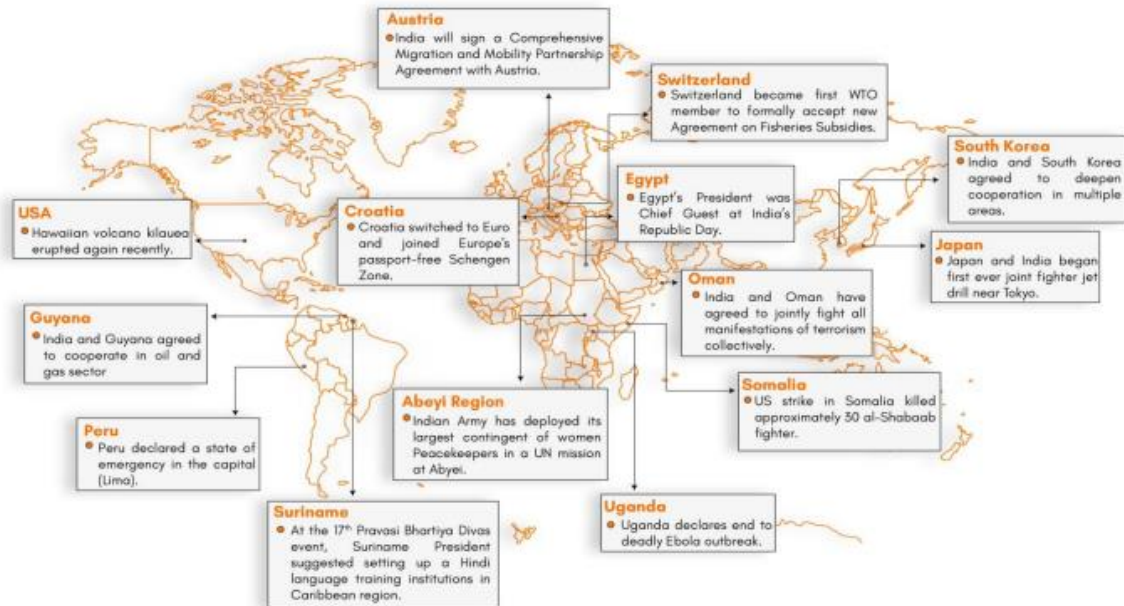
KEHLO INDIA YOUTH GAMES (KYIG), 2022

- Khelo India Youth Games is being held in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
 - o A special mobile application has been launched to ensure that participating athletes, coaches, support staff etc. have access to all related information.
- About KYIG
 - o KIYG were first hosted in 2018 in New Delhi.
 - o Current edition (fifth) of KIYG will feature athletes taking part in the U-18 age category.
- ✓ Also, water sports being included for first time in history of games.

JEEVAN RAKSHA PADAK SERIES OF AWARDS-2022

- President approved conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards-2022.
- Awards is given to a person for meritorious act of human nature in saving the life of a person.
 - o It is given in three categories, namely Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak; Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak and Jeevan Raksha Padak.
 - o Persons of all walks of life are eligible for these awards.
 - o It can also be conferred posthumously.

Places in News: World



Places in News: India

