

January 2021 Content

Polity

Official Secrets Act

- It was **enacted in Lord Curzon era**.
- The Act was **to suppress the voice of nationalist publications**.
- It deals with **2 aspects**:
  - **Section 3**: Spying.
  - **Section 5**: Disclosure of secret information of the Government.
- **News Context**: Complaint against Republic TV Editor-in-Chief.

President's Address (President's Speech)

- It **highlights government's policies**, agenda and framework for upcoming year.
- It is **drafted by the Cabinet**.
- **Motion of Thanks**:
  - It is **moved in each House** by ruling party MPs after the address.
  - It is **discussed by Parties** during the session with suggesting some amendments.
- **After the address**:
  - **Debate takes place** not only on the contents of the address but also the broad issues of governance in the country.
  - This paves the way for **discussion on the Budget**.
- **Article 87(1)**: At the commencement of the **1<sup>st</sup> session after each general election** and at the commencement of the **1<sup>st</sup> session of each year** the **President shall address** both Houses assembled together.
- The **President cannot refuse to address** to the legislature, but can deviate a bit from the text.

- **News Context**: 18 Opposition parties announced to boycott President's address.

Governance

PM-Kisan

- It is to **provide income to small and marginal farmers**.
- **Rs.6000 per year** is transferred directly into the bank accounts of the farmers.
- It is **states' responsibility to identify the beneficiaries**.
- **Context**: Rs. 1,364 crores given to wrong beneficiaries.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Care and Maintenance of Case Property Animals) Rules, 2017

- It is framed under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**.
- It allows a **Magistrate to forfeit (to lose) the cattle** of an owner facing trial under the Act.
- Then **animals are sent to animal shelters or adoption**.
- **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**:
  - It is to **prevent unnecessary pain or suffering on animals**.
  - The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) was established in 1962 under **this Act**.
  - It provides **guidelines relating to experimentation on animals for scientific purposes**.

The Special Marriage Act, 1954

- It is a **provision for civil marriage or registered marriage**.
- It **applies on Indian citizens** (Even on **Foreign Soil**) irrespective of their religion.
- There is **no need to follow rituals or traditions**.
- The parties have to **notify the Marriage Registrar at least 30 days before**.
- **News Context**: Publication of marriage notice is not mandatory- Allahabad HC.

### Livelihood Inclusion and Financial Empowerment (LIFE) Mission

- It is a Kerala government **housing project for homeless and landless.**
- **News Context:** Corruptions involved in the scheme.

### Gujarat Disturbed Area (DA) Act, 1991

- It is to **check communal polarisation** of various parts of the state through the Act.
- Under this, A **District Collector** can **notify** an area of a town as a “**disturbed area**”.
- It is done **on the basis of history of communal riots** in the area.

### Amendments in the Act, 2019

- **More Powers to the Collector:**
  - To set up Special Investigation Team (SIT).
- **Review Power to the State:**
  - The **state government** can **review the decision of Collector.**
- **Advisory Committee:**
  - **State government can form an advisory committee.**
  - It **advises on DA Act provisions**, including **adding new areas** to the ‘**disturbed areas**’ list.
- **Disturbed Area:**
  - The **government can declare** any area as ‘**disturbed area**’ where it sees the possibility of a communal riot.
  - **Non-Applicability:** The **Act will not be applied to government’s rehabilitation schemes in a disturbed area**, where it resettles displaced people.
- **Penal Provisions:**
  - The **punishment is 3-5 years with fine.**

### Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Ordinance, 2020

- It gives **power to sub-inspector ranked officer and above to search premises and seize cattle and materials used** or intended to use to **commit the offence.**
- **Such seizures** will be **reported to Sub Divisional Magistrate.**
- It is a **cognizable offence** with **3-7 years of imprisonment.**
- **Issue:**
  - The **government has not framed rules** yet prescribing manner of **cattle transportation.**
  - There are **possibilities of farmers’ prosecution** for **transporting cattle** within the State even for **agriculture or animal husbandry.**

### Cyber Crime Law, Bihar

- Any **person** can be **punished under IT Act** if he or she:
  - Makes **objectionable and indecent comments online against the state government**, Ministers, MLAs, MPs or officials.
  - Uses any **abusive or indecent language.**

### Whatsapp Policy

- WhatsApp has **updated its privacy policy** to share information of its users with Facebook.

### Key Features

- **Hardware Information:**
  - WhatsApp collects information from devices such as **signal app version, browser information, connection information** (including phone number, mobile operator or ISP) etc.
- **Deleting the Account:**
  - If WhatsApp is deleted from the device without deleting account, then user’s information will remain stored.

- **Location:**
  - Whatsapp collects **IP addresses** and other information like phone number, **area codes** for location.
- **Payment Services:**
  - It captures **payment account** and **transaction information**.

#### Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), 2020

- It is an **autonomous region in Assam**, made up of **4 districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri**.
- It is **administered** by an **elected body** known as the **Bodoland Territorial Council**.
- **Features of agreement:**
  - **Villages** dominated by **Bodos**, which were **outside BTR** would be **included** and with **non-Bodo population** would be **excluded**.
  - The **criminal cases registered against National Democratic Front of Bodoland members** factions for “non-heinous” crimes shall be **withdrawn**.
  - The families of those **killed during the Bodo movement** would get **Rs. 5 lakh each**.
  - **Rs. 1500 Crore package** will be provided for Bodo areas development by the centre.
  - The **Assam Assembly seats** will be increased to **60 from 40**.
- **Bodos:** Single largest tribe of Assam with 5-6% of Assam population.
- **News Context:** Assam to celebrate 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of BTR.

#### Ayushman Bharat Health Scheme for Central Armed Police Forces

- Under this scheme, **Assam Rifles, NSG personnel** etc. and their **families** will be **covered** by ‘Ayushman Bharat: Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana’ (**AB PM-JAY**).
- **PM-JAY Features:**
  - It is **world’s largest health insurance** scheme.

- It provides **5 lakhs per family per year** for **secondary and tertiary care hospitalization**.

#### Indian Telegraph Act, 1885

- It governs the use of **wired and wireless telegraphy**, telephones, radio communications, **digital communications** etc.
- It gives **exclusive jurisdiction** to Government to **establish, maintain, operate**, license all forms of **wired and wireless communications**.
- It gives power to **intercept communications** and **tap phones** under conditions defined in Constitution.
- **Section 5(2):** It allows **centre and state** to **stop the transmission of messages**. In case of:
  - Public emergency, Public safety.
  - In the interests of the **sovereignty and integrity of India**, the **security** of the state.
- **News Context:** It was implemented in Delhi during the violent protest on Republic Day.

#### DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019

- **DNA data banks, Laboratories and Regulatory Board** will be set up.
- It will help to **maintain national database** for **victim identification**, suspects in cases, undertrials, **missing persons** and unidentified human remains.
- DNA data will only **be used for identification** of the person and **not for “any other purpose”**.
- **Leaking the DNA profile** will be **punishable** with 3 years of prison with fine.
- **News Context:** Opposition indicated towards the misuse of this bill. As:
  - The concern over **privacy violations**.

#### Jal Jeevan Mission-Urban (JJM-Urban)

- It is to provide **tap water connections** and **sewer connections** to all **cities with a population of over 1 lakh**, by 2026.

- It would **cover cities** that are not covered under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) **mission**.
- It will be executed by **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry**.
- **Rural Mission:** Nal se Jal.

#### Jail Tourism, Maharashtra

- The **historically significant jails** in Maharashtra will be opened to visitors to see the barracks **where freedom fighters were imprisoned by the British**.
- **Yarvada Jail** of Pune would be the 1<sup>st</sup> to be included where **Poona Pact** happened.

#### Demand for Autonomous States in Assam

- The Twenty-second Amendment of the Constitution of India, 1969, inserted article 244A in the Constitution.
- It empowered Parliament to enact a law for **constituting an autonomous State within the State of Assam**.
- It provides the **autonomous State with Legislature or a Council of Ministers or both**.
- Demand across three hill districts — Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao, since the 1980s. The districts are **currently governed by two autonomous councils**.

#### G. Kishan Reddy committee

- Committee to look into **Ladakh issues**.
- To find an appropriate solution to the issues related to language, culture and conservation of land in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

#### Light House Projects: Project for affordable housing

- Around 1,000 houses each will be built in six cities
- Part of the **Global Housing Technology Challenge-India (GHTC-India)** initiative.
- New technologies for providing resilient, and comfortable housing for the poor and the middle class.

- The GHTC provided the scope for incubating new technologies for construction and innovation.

#### Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs)

- A sub-scheme under Pradhan Mantri AWAS Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U).
- Initiated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
- To provide ease of living to **urban migrants/ poor** in Industrial Sector as well as in non-formal urban economy.
- Access to **dignified affordable rental housing close to their workplace**.

#### Elections

#### Judiciary

#### Aadhaar Review Petitions

- It is **certified by the government as Money Bill** under **section 7 of Aadhaar act**.
- **Section 7: Expenditure for subsidy, services or benefits under welfare schemes** would be from **Consolidated Fund**.
- **News Context:** Supreme Court **dismissed PIL** by **upholding Speaker's certification** of Aadhaar law as a Money Bill.

#### M. Nagaraj case, 2006

- Supreme court had **upheld the application of creamy layer principle for the SCs and STs in promotions**.
- Court upheld the validity of Article 16 (4A): "It is an enabling provision."
- The **State is not bound** to make **reservation for the SCs and STs in promotions**.
- But, if the state seeks to do so, it must collect quantifiable data on three facts:
  - Backwardness of the class
  - Inadequacy of the representation in public employment
  - General efficiency of service as mandated by Article 335 not to be affected.

### Advertisement using the name of God

- Advertisement of any article using the name of any God and claiming that it has supernatural qualities, is illegal under the **Maharashtra Black Magic Act.** - Bombay High Court.

### Discrimination by UPSC in selection

- Sambhavana NGO claimed that the UPSC reserved **only 24 vacancies for persons with disabilities** out of a total 796 'expected approximate vacancies'.
- This is below the **4% mandatory reservation under Section 34 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.** 4% of 796 vacancies works out to 32.

### International Relations

#### Kalapani Dispute

- **Kalapani is a 372-sq km area located at Pithoragarh district of Uttarkhand.**
- **It lies at the border of Tibet, Nepal and India.**
- **The conflict arose when India introduced its new National map after the reorganization of J&K.**
- **However, Nepal claims this territory since 1997.**
- **The territory represents the basin of the Kalapani river, one of the headwaters of the Kali River in the Himalayas.**
- **Kali River forms the boundary between India and Nepal in this region.**
- **Nepal's claim:** It lies in **Darchula district, Sudurpashchim Pradesh.**

#### Open Sky Treaty (OST), 1992

- It is an **international effort to promote transparency of military forces and activities.**
- It is a programme of **unarmed aerial surveillance flights over the entire territory of its participants.**

- It is to **enhance mutual understanding and confidence among participants.**
- **Members: 34**
- **News Context:** Russia's exit from OST.

#### Financial Action Task Force (FATF), 1989

- It is an **inter-governmental body** set up on the **initiative of G7.**
- **Aim:** To make policy to generate political will to implement reforms.
- **Headquarter:** Paris.
- **FATF Blacklist or Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs):**
  - It is a list of **countries**, which are **non-cooperative** in the **global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.**
- **News Context:** Pakistan is in risk zone to be included in the Black List.

#### Research and Tourism in the Arctic

- **India has come with arctic Policy, it is:**
  - To expand **scientific research**, sustainable tourism, **oil, infrastructure** and **gas** exploration in the Arctic region.
  - To understand the scientific and **climate-related linkages** between **Arctic and Indian monsoons.**
  - To **involve polar research with 3<sup>rd</sup> pole (Himalayas).**
  - To explore **natural resources, minerals** from Arctic.
- **India's involvement in the region:**
  - India's research station in the Arctic: **Himadri.**
  - **India is an Observer** country of **Arctic Council** since 2013.
- **Arctic region:** It includes **Arctic Ocean, parts of Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, Russia, USA (Alaska), Finland, Sweden and Iceland.**

### Indonesia Freedom Struggle and Biju Patnaik

- **Indonesian National Revolution or Indonesian War of Independence:**
  - It was an **armed and diplomatic struggle** between the Republic of **Indonesia** and the **Dutch Empire**.
  - **Indonesia declared itself independent in 1945.**
  - **Netherlands recognized** Indonesia's independence in **1949**.
- **Biju Patnaik's Role:**
  - He has been the CM of Odisha and a skilled pilot.
  - He **flew several missions in 1947** for Indonesia's freedom.
  - **He flew Indonesian leaders as:** President Sukarno, Vice-President Hatta and Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir out of Indonesia.
- **News Context:** Indonesian Embassy in New Delhi made a special room for Biju Patnaik as memorial.

- Its members are world's leading gold mining companies.
- **Headquarter:** London
  - Other offices are in India, China, Singapore, USA.

### Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or Iran Deal

- **Iran agreed to limit its nuclear programme** in this deal with USA, UK, Russia, China, France and Germany.
- It agreed to **reduce its stores of enriched uranium and heavy-water storage (key components for nuclear weapons).**
- A **Joint Commission** was established to monitor implementation of the agreement.
- This deal gave **Iran relief from sanctions.**
- **News Context:** USA had pulled itself out of the deal in 2018.
  - Now **USA confirms to rejoin** the deal with few new terms and conditions.

### Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of the Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) India Forum-2021

- It is a **part of NCAVES project** of UN Statistics Division (UNSD).
- It aims to **help 5 countries** for addressing the concerns of **sustainability and environment conservation.**
- **India** is one of **5 countries** besides **Brazil, China, South Africa and Mexico.**

### START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), 2010

- It was **signed between USA and Russia.**
- **It limits both sides to:**
  - **700 deployed** intercontinental ballistic missiles (**ICBMs**) or **deployed** submarine-launched ballistic missiles (**SLBMs**).
  - **1,550 nuclear warheads** on deployed ICBMs and SLBMs.
  - **800** deployed and non-deployed **ICBM launchers.**
- **News Context:** US, Russia agreed to extend 'New START' nuclear arms treaty.

### WTO Information Technology Agreement, 1996

- It is to **lower all taxes and tariffs on IT products** by signatories to zero.
- **India** joined it in **1997.**
- **News Context:** IT ministry is to restart manufacturing and export of electronic goods under this act.

### Vaccine diplomacy

- A tool of soft power.
- India surpassed China.

### World Gold Council

- It is a **market development organisation** for the gold industry.
- It **stimulates and sustains demand for gold.**

### Lèse-majesté

- French term. Means: the insulting of a monarch or ruler.

- In Thailand, any criticism of the Royal family may lead to very harsh punishment.

#### Difficult four

- **Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and India.**
- These are the Countries where citizens do not have the capacity to fight for their rights.
- Classification by some UK-based policy institute.

#### Hannah Arendt

**Context:** US Elections, a violent mob loyal to President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol, peaceful and orderly transfer of power in democracy.

- Hannah Arendt (1906 –1975) was a German-born American political theorist.
- She is widely considered one of the most important political thinkers of the 20th century.
- Arendt was born in a Jewish family.
- Her works cover a broad range of topics. Eg. The nature of power and evil, direct democracy, authority, and totalitarianism.
- **The Origins of Totalitarianism** (1951), was Hannah Arendt's first major work. In this book, she describes **Nazism and Stalinism as the major totalitarian political movements** of the first half of the 20th century.

#### Totalitarianism

- It is a **form of political system** that **prohibits opposition parties, restricts individual opposition to the state and its claims.**
- It exercises extremely high degree of control over public and private life.
- It is regarded as the **most extreme and complete form of authoritarianism.**
- In totalitarian states, political power has often been **held by autocrats** who employ **all-encompassing campaigns** in which propaganda is **broadcast by state-controlled mass media.**

#### Iran's uranium enrichment

- Iran resumed 20% uranium enrichment at its **Fordow nuclear facility.**

- Breach of 2015 nuclear deal, the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).**

#### China's amended National Defence Law

- It includes the protection of China's economic activities and assets overseas. Eg. those under the Belt and Road Initiative.
- It broadened the scope of key security fields beyond borders, to include outer space and electromagnetic networks.

#### UNiTE

- **United Nations Women's** global initiative to raise awareness on **gender-based violence.**
- **UNiTE to End Violence against Women, 2008:** United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's campaign.
- **UNiTE** calls on governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, the media and the entire UN system to join forces **in addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls.**
- **#OrangeTheWorld** campaign.

#### Polar Silk Road

- It is the shipping routes comprising the Northeast Passage, Northwest Passage and Central Passage that cross the Arctic Circle.
- It connects the **three economic centers** of North America, East Asia and Western Europe.

#### Economy

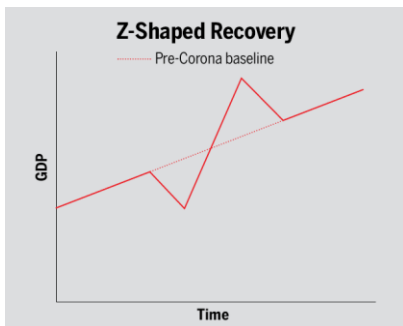
#### Working Group on Digital Lending

- **RBI has set up** this, which **includes online platforms and mobile apps.**
- It is **to study all aspects of digital lending activities** in the **regulated and unregulated financial sector.**
- **Major Functions:**
  - To **identify the risks posed by unregulated digital lending** to financial stability.
  - To suggest **regulatory changes to promote growth of digital lending.**

- **Benefits of digital lending:**
  - It makes access to **financial products and services more fair, efficient and inclusive.**

**Various Shapes of Economic Recovery**

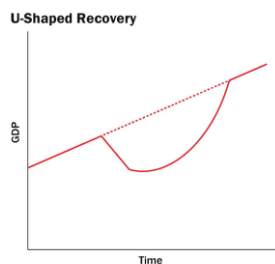
- **Z-shaped Recovery:**
  - It is an **optimistic scenario**, in which the **economy quickly rises after a crash.**
  - It **makes up for lost ground** before settling back to the normal trend-line.



- **V-Shaped Recovery:**
  - The **economy quickly recoups lost ground** and gets back to the normal growth trend-line.

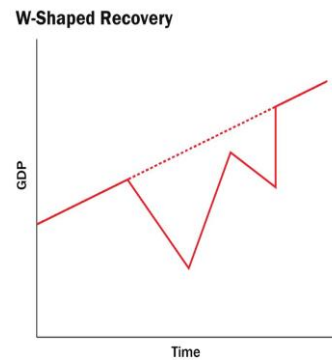


- **U-shaped recovery:**
  - The **economy (after falling) struggles and muddles around a low growth rate** for some time and then **rises to usual levels.**

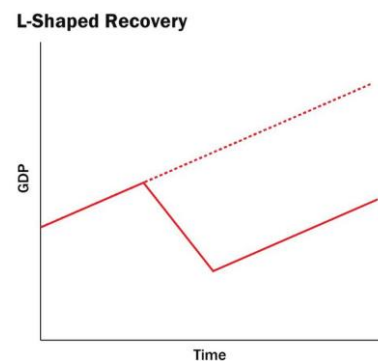


- **W-shaped recovery:**

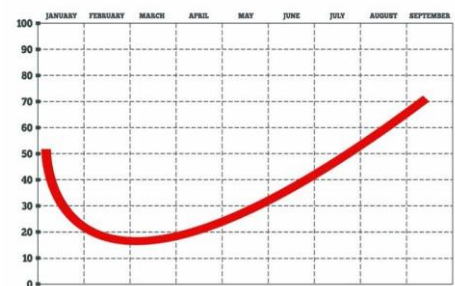
- The **growth falls and rises, but falls again before recovering.**



- **L-shaped Recovery:**
  - The **growth after falling, stagnates at low levels and does not recover for a long time.**



- **J-shaped recovery:**
  - The **growth rises sharply from the lows much higher than the trend-line and stays there.**
  - It is kind off **unreal scenario.**



**Udyog Sahayak Enterprises Network (USENET)**

- It is to **provide major growth to nano and micro-enterprises in India's informal sector.**
- It is **drafted by** Premji University, FICCI and Tata Institute of Social Sciences.



### The Inequality Virus

- It is a report published by Oxfam.
- It states that pandemic has increased the economic inequalities in India and world.

### Off Budget Borrowings

- These are loans taken not by the Centre directly, but by another public institution which borrows on the directions of the government.
- It fulfils the government's expenditure needs.
- The liability of the loan is not formally on the Centre so, the loan is not included in the fiscal deficit.
- **Fiscal Deficit:** It is the difference between what government spends and earns or.
- It is the level of borrowings by the Union government.

### Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021

- It creates framework for official digital currency to be issued by RBI.
- It prohibits all private cryptocurrencies in India.
- However, it allows for certain exceptions to promote the underlying technology of cryptocurrency and its uses.
- The bill is based on the recommendation of SC Garg Committee.
- The Committee recommends banning of cryptocurrencies and allow an official digital currency.
- **News Context:** An official digital currency to be issued by RBI.

### Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), 1970

- It is engaged in trade, procurement, export of cotton.
- It is responsible for equitable distribution of cotton among the different constituents of the industry and aid imports of cotton.
- It is a public sector agency, established under Companies Act 1956.

- It is governed by Textile Policy 1985 issued by Textile Ministry.

### Spices Board, 1987

- It comes under Commerce and Industry Ministry.
- It was constituted under the Spices Board Act, 1986 by merging the Cardamom Board and the Spices Export Promotion Council.
- It is an autonomous body to promote 52 scheduled spices and the development of small and large cardamom.

### Public Sector Asset Rehabilitation Agency or PARA

- To buy out the NPAs of high value from Indian banks.
- Suggested by the Economic Survey 2017.

### Legal Entity Identifier (LEI)

- It is a 20-digit unique code.
- to identify parties to financial transactions worldwide.
- Banks shall advise their large corporate borrowers having total exposures of Rs 50 crore and above to obtain LEI.

### Payment Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) Scheme

- Scheme by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- To subsidise deployment of payment acceptance infrastructure in tier-3 to tier-6 centres.
- Special focus on the north-eastern states of the country.

### Health

### Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)

- These are tropical infections, common in low-income populations.
- It mostly exists in developing regions of Africa, Asia, Americas.
- These are caused by unsafe water, poor housing conditions and poor sanitation.

- **India's policy on NTDs:**
  - National Health Policy (2017)
  - National Policy on Treatment of Rare Diseases (2018)
- **News Context:** India has joined the **world to Light Up Qutub Minar** as a sign of unity to combat the Neglected Tropical Diseases.

### Art and Culture

#### Magh Bihu (Maghar Domani) Festival

- It is also known as **Bhogali Bihu (Eating Bhog i.e. enjoyment)**.
- It is **celebrated in Assam** at the **end of harvesting season** in the **month of Magh (January–February)**.
- A **bonfire (Meji)** is lit to **pray to the God of Fire**.
- It is **developed by the Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryans**.

#### Makaravilakku Festival

- It is held on **Makara Sankranti in Kerala** at the **shrine of Sabarimala**.
- It includes **Thiruvabharanam (sacred ornaments of Lord Ayyappan)**.
- **Mythology related to it:**
  - Lord **Sri Rama** and **Lakshmana** met **Sabari**, a tribal devotee, at **Sabarimala**.

#### Jallikattu (Sallikattu, Thazhuvuthul, Mancuvirattu)

- It is practiced in **Tamil Nadu on Pongal (Mattu Pongal day)**.
- It is a **traditional event** in which a **bull is released in the crowd**.
- Multiple **human participants** attempt to **grab bull's hump** and **hang on to it** while the bull attempts to escape.
- It was practiced during **Tamil classical period (400-100 BC)**
- It was common among **Ayar people** who lived in **Mullai region**.

#### Sulawesi cave painting: Leang Tedongnge cave painting

- **Warty pig painting** found in the limestone cave of Leang Tedongnge.
- **World's oldest known cave art:** A life-sized picture of a wild pig painted at least 45,500 years ago in Indonesia.
- The **previously oldest dated rock art 'scene'** is at least 43,900 years old. It is a depiction of **hybrid human-animal beings hunting** Sulawesi warty pigs and dwarf bovids.
- **Visayan warty pig is a critically endangered species**.

#### Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple (Gavipuram Cave Temple)

- It is a **Shiva temple in Bangalore**, famous for **mysterious stone discs**.
- The architecture has the exact planning **allowing the sun to shine on shrine** in certain time of the year (**Makar Sankranti**).
- It was **built by Gautama Maharshi and Bharadwaja Muni in Vedic period**.
- Later, **renovated in 16<sup>th</sup> century by Kempe Gowda, the founder of Bengaluru**.

#### Risa

- It is **hand woven cloth** used by **Tripura tribes**.
- It is one of the **3 parts of Tripura female attire**.
  - The other 2 are: **Rignai** and **Rikutu**.

#### Martial arts Forms in Khelo India

- Sports Ministry has included **4 martial art forms** in **Khelo India Youth Games**.
- **Mallakhamb, Madhya Pradesh:**
  - It is a traditional form of gymnastics performed with a wooden pole, cane or a rope.
- **Gatka, Punjab:**
  - It is a fighting style with wooden sticks originated in 15th Century.
  - **Bana** and **Chola** are worn for ritualistic performances.
- **Thang Ta, Manipur:**

- It is one of the **2 components of Huyen langlon** Martial Art.
- Thang-ta means **armed combat** with **thang (sword) and ta (spear)**.
- Another component is **Sarit Sarak (Unarmed Fighting)**.
- **Kalaripayattu, Kerala:**
  - It originated during **3<sup>rd</sup> century BC- 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD**.
  - It is an Indian mixed martial art, first appeared in **Sangam literature**.

#### Bhima- Koregaon Battle, Pune

- It was fought **between Peshwas and British army** in **1818**.
- The **British army was comprised** mainly of **Dalit soldiers**, who fought the **upper caste dominated Peshwa army**.
- **Outcomes:**
  - The British army filled with **Dalits** **defeated Peshwas**.
  - It was seen as a **moral victory** against **caste-based discrimination**.
- **News Context:**
  - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (**OCHCR**) has called for **release of Bhima Koregaon activists**, who **gathered** in the celebration of **200<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the battle.

#### Patharughat Peasant Uprising of Assam, 1894

- **British annexed Assam in 1826** and started imposing land taxes.
- In 1893, British **increased** agricultural land **tax** by 70- 80%.
- The **peasants** were **protesting** against this decision and **military** started **open fire**.

#### Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC)

- The proposal to construct a new Parliament building was approved.
- **Headed by** Durga Shanker Mishra.
- The panel looked at the preservation of heritage as per the **Unified Building Bylaws, 2016**.

#### Mannathu Padmanabhan

- A social reformer and freedom fighter from Kerala.
- Founder of the **Nair Service Society (NSS)**.
- He took part in anti-untouchability agitations.
- Participated in **Vaikom Satyagraha**.

#### Kolam or Muggu (Rangoli)

- It is a form of drawing on land in south India.
- that is drawn by using rice flour, chalk, chalk powder etc.
- it is widely practised by female Hindu family members in front of their houses.

#### Society

#### New Labour Codes

- The labour ministry **had amalgamated 29 labour laws** such as, Minimum wages, social security etc. **into 4 Codes**.
- **Significance:**
  - To **reduce compliance burden**.
  - To **improve ease of doing business**.
  - Greater ease of hiring and firing of workers.
  - To **enhanced flexibility** to employers in terms of work hours.

#### PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)

- It was launched by **Housing and Urban Affairs ministry in 2020**.
- It is to **provide affordable Working Capital loan** to **street vendors** to **resume their livelihoods**, which was affected due to lockdown.
- The **duration** of the scheme is **until March 2022**.
- It is for the **first time** that **Microfinance Institutions, NBFC, SHG** have been **allowed in a scheme** due to their **ground level presence**.
- **News Context:** The loans under this scheme are turning into NPAs.

## Jhatka and Halal Meat

- **Halal:** It is an **Islamic way of slaughter**.
  - In this, they **let the animal bleed slowly** for some time before it dies.
- **Jhatka:** It is a **non-Islamic way of slaughter**.
- In this, an **animal is killed** instantly with a **single strike**.
- **News Context:** Delhi municipal corporation ordered restaurant to display whether they are serving Halal or Jhatka meat.

## Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan (MUKTA)

- It was launched by **Odisha** as the **minimum wage scheme** for the **migrant workers** during lockdown in a **temporary way**.
- Its **guidelines** were based on **MGNREGA**.
- **News Context:** This scheme will be implemented as **permanent now**.

## Abhyuday

- It is launched by **U.P.** to provide **free coaching** to **students** for **competitive Exams**.

## Transgenders can contest poll from women's category

- The Bombay High Court allowed a transgender to contest village panchayat polls in women's category.
- They have the **right to "self-perceived gender identity"**
- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 has permitted a transgender person to have a right to self-perceived gender identity.

## Environment and Geography

### Dzukou Valley

- It is **located** at the **borders of Nagaland and Manipur**.
- It is famous for the **Dzuko Lily**.
- **News Context:** Wildfire at Dzukou Valley.

### Houbara Bustard

- **Protection Status:**
  - **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable.
  - Indian wildlife protection act, 1972.
- **Habitat:** India and Pakistan.
- **2 Distinct Species of Houbara Bustard** are recognized by **IUCN:**
  - Chlamydotis Undulata in **North Africa**.
  - Chlamydotis Macqueenii in **Asia**.
- **News Context:** **Pakistan permitted Dubai Ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid to hunt houbara bustard.**

### Sunderbans, West Bengal

- It is a **world heritage site** and a **Ramsar site**.
- It is considered as a **World Network of Biosphere Reserve** (Man and Biosphere Reserve) since **1989**.
- **Rare species:**
  - Critically Endangered Northern River Terrapin (**Batagur baska**).
  - Endangered Irrawaddy Dolphin (**Orcaella brevirostris**).
  - Vulnerable Fishing Cat (**Prionailurus Viverrinus**).
- **News Context:** Zoological Survey of India published a report.
- **Key Points:**
  - It is a home to **428 species** of birds.
  - **Masked Finfoot, Buffy Fish Owl, Goliath heron, Spoon-Billed Sandpiper** are found here.

### Manufactured Sand (M-Sand) Policy, Rajasthan

- **M-Sand:**
  - It is a **substitute of river sand** for **concrete construction**.
  - It is produced from **hard granite stone** by **crushing** with size of less than **4.75 mm**.
  - It is **dust free**, does not contain soluble compounds, gives **strength of concrete**, **no impurities** such as Clay, dust or silt.
- **Features of the Policy:**

- It will enable the investors to set up M-sand units and would create employment.
- Rajasthan gives **industry status to these units to reduce the dependence on Bajri (riverbed sand)**.

### Elephant Corridor

- It is a **narrow strip of land that connect 2 large habitats of elephants**.
- It is important **to avoid Man-Elephant conflict** and makes easy for elephants to move.
- **News Context:** Supreme Court has appointed conservationist **Nandita Hazarika as Member of a Technical Committee** constituted for this.
- **Supreme court upheld Tamil Nadu to notify an ‘elephant corridor’** in Nilgiri biosphere reserve.
- **Corridor Location:** Sigur plateau, connecting Western and Eastern Ghats.

### Green Tax (Pollution or Environment Tax)

- It is an **excise duty on vehicles** that cause **environmental pollutants**.
- **10-25% additional green tax** will be implemented on:
  - **Commercial transport** vehicles that are older than **8 years** at the time of fitness certification renewal.
  - **Personal Vehicles** after **15 years**.
- It **exempts tractors, harvesters** used in **farms**.
- Hybrid, electric, ethanol, LPG CNG powered vehicles.
- Lower green tax will be for public transport vehicles.

### Climate Adaptation Summit (CAS), 2021

- It was hosted by Netherlands online, as being called **‘CAS Online’**.
- It was built on the advances of the **UN Climate Action Summit**.
- It showcased the **solutions of climate emergency** and sustaining momentum through UNFCCC’s **COP26**.

- The Conference of Parties (**COP**) is the **decision-making** body of the UN Climate Change Framework Convention (**UNFCCC**).
- UNFCCC was **formed in 1994** to stabilize the **greenhouse gas emissions**.

### Merapi Volcano

- Indonesia (Ring of Fire).

### Shailaja Chandra Committee

- River Yamuna Monitoring Committee.
- The Supreme Court has sought a status report.

### Migratory birds flock to Harike wetland, Punjab

- Winter migratory water birds. Eg. **Common Pochard**, Eurasian coot, greylag goose, bar-headed goose, gadwall and the northern shoveler.
- These birds using the **central Asian flyway**.

### Indian star tortoises

- **IUCN status: Vulnerable** as per IUCN website. (Endangered as per The Hindu)
- **Habitat:** Found across the Indian sub-continent.
- **Protected under Schedule IV of Wild Life Protection Act, 1972 and CITES.**
- India is campaigning to re-list it from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I
- **Threats:** loss of habitat to agriculture; illegal harvesting for the trade.

### Flyways

- A flyway is a flight path used by migrating birds.
- There are nine flyways in the world. Three pass through Indian Subcontinent:
  - Central Asian Flyway (CAF)
  - East Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAF)
  - Asian East African Flyway (AEAF)

### Semeru volcano, Java, Indonesia

- Erupted recently.
- The highest volcano in Java.

### Meteorite

- It is an **object** like a meteoroid, comet, or asteroid, which **survived its passage through the atmosphere to reach the surface of a planet.**
- When the original object enters the atmosphere, it **heats up and radiates energy.**
  - It then becomes a meteor.
  - Once it **settles on the planet's surface,** the **meteor becomes a meteorite.**
- Mukundpura CM2: carbonaceous chondrite

### Corporate Average Fuel efficiency (CAFE-2) regulations

- To make cars **more fuel efficient** are set to come into effect in 2022.
- It attempts to accomplish the goals indirectly: by making it **more expensive for automakers to build inefficient vehicles by introducing penalties.**
- These standards were first notified in India in 2017 **by the Ministry of Power under Energy Conservation Act, 2001.**
- These are accordance with the **fuel consumption standard, 2015.** These aim to **increase fuel efficiency of vehicles road by 35% by 2030.**
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) is the nodal agency.

### Gangetic dolphin

- National Aquatic Animal.
- IUCN status: Endangered.

### Indian pangolin

- Also known as **scaly anteaters**
- These are **endangered mammals.**

### Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, Andhra Pradesh

- It is the **second largest stretch of mangrove forests** in India.
- It is home to the **critically endangered white-backed vulture and the long billed vulture.**
- **Hope Island and Sacramento Island** are important **nesting sites for the endangered Olive Ridley turtles.**

### Reducing hazards by birds to flights

- **Location-specific habitat management:** reducing the attractiveness of sites for bird species by reducing the availability of food, water, cover and roosting sites etc.
- **A systematic study** of birdlife at an airfield and understanding the bird community structure.
- **Water flows** related to irrigation and water stagnation should be prevented.
- **Ornithological training** for the Air Traffic Control (ATC) staff.
- **Database for all bird species** in the 10 km radius of airports.
- **Awareness creation and public participation:** Feeding of birds by people close to airports to be discouraged.
- **Preventing breeding** inside airports.
- **Discouraging slaughterhouses and dumping of waste** close to airports.
- **Species-wise suggestion:**
  - To discourage **black kites**, which pose danger during landing and take-off, airfields must be clear of carcasses.
  - To discourage **lapwing bird**, appropriate short grass cover to be developed.
  - To stop **crows**, food waste dumping areas around the airport to be relocated.
  - To keep away **pigeons**, water stagnation should be cleared.
  - To keep **water flow and water birds** away from airports, filing areas near the runway.

### Woolly rhino

- It is an **extinct species** of rhinoceros that was common throughout Europe and northern Asia during the **Pleistocene epoch** and survived until the end of the **last glacial period.**
- It was a member of the Pleistocene megafauna.

### Sabri River

- Tributary of Godavari River.

### Red Sanders

- IUCN status: **Near Threatened**.
- Also known as **red sandalwood**.
- Endemic to the **southern Eastern Ghats**.
- The tree is valued for the **rich red colour** of its wood. The **wood is not aromatic**.
- The tree is **not to be confused with the aromatic Santalum sandalwood trees** that grow natively in South India.
- The wood has historically been **valued in China**.

### Assam's a lifeline to its only Ramsar site

- Authorities **ban community fishing in Deepor Beel** to prevent over-exploitation.
- The prohibition order under Section 144 of the CrPC.

### Food and Nutrition

#### NOVA food classification system

- Based on the nature, extent and purpose of **industrial food processing**.
- Four types:
  - Unprocessed or minimally processed food
  - Processed industrial ingredients
  - Processed foods
  - Ultra-processed food

#### Ultra-Processed Food (Junk Food)

- These products have **undergone specified types of food processing**, with **low-cost ingredients**.
- These are designed to **be convenient, eaten on the go, hyperpalatable and appealing to consumers**.
- **News Context:** It makes us feel hungrier, thereby encourage overeating and weight gain.

#### Gucchi or Morel

- One of the costliest mushrooms in the world.
- Grows in Jammu and Kashmir.

#### Nutrition committees

##### National Nutrition Council (NNC)

- Headed by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman **Rajiv Kumar**

- 12 Union Ministers and five Chief Ministers on a rotational basis

##### Executive Committee (EC) of the National Nutrition Mission

- Headed by **Ram Mohan Mishra**

##### National Technical Board on Nutrition (NTBN)

- Headed by **V.K. Paul**.

### Science and Technology

#### Butterfly's Clap Technique

- It helps them **take off rapidly**.
- When the wings clap together, the air between the wings is pressed out, creating a jet, pushing it in the opposite direction.

#### Neeva

- It is an **ad-free search engine**, an Indian alternate to Google.
- It requires a **subscription to use**.
- It can be **linked to personal accounts** like Microsoft Office, Dropbox etc.

#### Time Capsule

- It is a **historic treasure of goods or information**.
- It intends as **method of communication with future people**.
- It is **sometimes created and buried** during any **celebrations or occasions**.
- **News Context:** Time capsule was buried encapsulating the history of AMU spanning over a century.

#### Cancer metabolism and tumour cells

- Tumour cells are **addicted to glucose**. Once glucose enters the cell, it quickly gets fed to pathways and is **utilised to multiply and grow**.
- In contrast, **normal cells** primarily use **glucose for energy** production.

- This reprogramming of glucose metabolism by cancer cells **often alters the response to drugs used in cancer treatment.**

#### QuEST

- Means Quantum Enabled Science and Technology.
- By the Department of Science and Technology.
- To explore the possibilities and engage with the researchers.

#### National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications (NMQTA).

- To develop quantum computing linked technologies amidst the second quantum revolution.
- To make India the world's third biggest nation in the sector after US and China.
- Proposed in Union Budget 2020-21 to spend ₹8,000 crore.

#### Gelatin

- It is widely **used as a stabilizer to ensure vaccines** remain safe and effective during storage and transport.
- Pork-derived.

#### Security

#### Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX)

- It is an **inter-service military exercise.**
- It involves **Indian Army, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard.**
- It is **carried out in 3 phrases:**
  - Independent workup phase, Joint workup phase, Tactical phase.

#### Asmi Machine Pistol

- **India's first indigenously Developed 9mm Machine Pistol**
- Jointly developed by **DRDO and Indian Army.**

#### Desert Knight-21

- It is a **bilateral Air exercise** between **Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force.**
- **Key features:**
  - It included **Rafale** aircraft by both sides.
- **Defence Exercises between India and France:**
  - Varuna: Naval exercise
  - Garuda: Air exercise
  - Shakti: Army exercise

#### Kalam Missile Complex

- It is an **Integrated Weapon System Design Centre** at DRDO.
- It will focus on **surface-to-air and ballistic missile** defence systems.

#### Tejas

- It is an Indian **single-engine, single seat, 4<sup>th</sup> generation, multirole light fighter.**
- It came from the **Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme, began in 1980s to replace MiG-21 fighters.**
- **In 2003, the LCA was named "Tejas".**
- It can carry **air-to-air, air-to-surface, precision-guided, and standoff weaponry.**
- It is the **smallest and lightest multi-role supersonic fighter aircraft** in the Indian Air Force.
- **News Context:** Cabinet Committee on Security approves 83 Tejas fighters for Air Force.

#### Sea Vigil 21

- It is **India's largest coastal defense drill** along **Exclusive Economic zone.**
- It involves **all the 13 coastal States and UT.**
- **Participation:** Indian Navy, Coast Guard, National Security Guard, Border Security Force, oil handling agencies.
- This exercise is a **build up towards TROPEX.**
- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):**
  - Generally extending **200 nautical miles** from shore.



- The coastal state has the **right to explore and exploit EEZ**.
- State conserves and manages, both living and non-living resources.

#### Miscellaneous

#### PM-UDAY Scheme

- It grants ownership rights for properties in Delhi's unauthorised colonies.
- It targets towards 50 lakh residents of unauthorised colonies in the Capital.

#### MICE Tourism

- It stands for "Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions".
- It is Gujarat version of business tourism that draws domestic and international tourists to a destination.
- It comes under 'the Gujarat Tourism Policy (2021-25)'.

#### National Innovation Foundation (NIF), 2000

- It is an autonomous body of Sci and Tech department at Ahmedabad.
- It is to provide institutional support for scouting, sustaining and scaling up the grassroots innovations across the country.
- **News Context:** Sci & Tech minister dedicates an Innovation Portal developed by NIF, to the nation.
- National Innovation Portal (NIP) is home to about 1.15 lakh innovations.
- It covers Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Human Health.

#### India Innovation Index

- It is released by NITI Aayog.
- It evaluates the innovative environment of states and UT.
- It has 2 parameters: Enablers (Innovative Capacities) and Performance.

- **Enablers:** Human Capital, Investment, Knowledge Workers, Business Environment, Safety and Legal Environment.
- **Performance:** Knowledge Output, Knowledge Diffusion.

#### Dragon Fruit

- It is cultivated throughout tropical and subtropical regions.
- **News Context:** Gujarat Government renamed it as kamalam.
  - In Sanskrit, it means shape of Lotus.

#### Parakram Divas

- Celebrated as 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Subhash Chandra Bose, 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

#### Maha Vir Chakra

- It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest military decoration, after the Param Vir Chakra.
- It is awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of enemy, whether on land, at sea or in the air.
- It had replaced the British Distinguished Service Order (DSO).

#### Central Waqf Council (Sunni Waqf Board), 1964

- It is a statutory body established under the Waqf Act, 1954.
- **Objective:**
  - To advise on matters related to the working of the State Waqf Boards.
  - To administer Waqfs in the country.
- **Waqf:** It is a permanent donation of movable or immovable properties for religious or charitable purposes as recognized by Muslim Law.
- The grant is known as mushrut-ul-khidmat.
- The person donating is known as Wakif.

### Bharat Ratna Govind Ballabh Pant

- He **established 'Prem Sabha'** for several reforms.
- He was the **1<sup>st</sup> CM of UP** in Independent India and has been the **Home Minister of India**.
- **News Context:** His statue was removed from the Parliament premises and now will be unveiled at its new location.

### Interconnect Usage Charge (IUC)

- This charge is paid by a telco to another operator when its customers make voice calls to subscribers of that network.
- The IUC regime comes to an end on January 1, 2021. - Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

### Bare Necessities Index (BNI)

- It is introduced by **Economic Survey**.
- It shows **inequalities in basic necessities** like drinking water, sanitation, hygiene etc. continue to exist **between urban and rural** India.
- The **BNI summarises 26 indicators** on **5 dimensions:**
  - water, sanitation, housing, micro-environment, other facilities.

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