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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

OCTOBER
2019

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PARYATAN PARV 2019

Paryatan Parv 2019 is dedicated to 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Tourism minister highlighted that sustained efforts to promote tourism has helped to improve our world tourism ranking, which has jumped from 65th in 2013 to 34th position in 2019.

The ranking was published in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report- 2019 released by the **World Economic Forum**.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Paryatan Parv is being organized with the objective of drawing focus on the benefits of tourism, showcasing the cultural diversity of the country and reinforcing the principle of “**Tourism for All**”.
- The three components of Paryatan Parv, are:
 1. **Dekho Apna Desh**: To encourage Indians to visit their own country.
 2. **Tourism for All**: Tourism Events at sites across all States in the country are being organised.
 3. **Tourism & Governance**: Interactive Sessions & Workshops with Stakeholders on varied themes have been organised across the Country as a part of the Paryatan Parv activities.

VAYOSHRESHTHA SAMMANS 2019

Vayoshreshtha Samman is a Scheme of awards instituted by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (D/o Social Justice & Empowerment) and gradually upgraded to the status of National Awards, for institutions involved in rendering distinguished service for the cause of elderly persons especially indigent senior citizens and to eminent citizens in recognition of their service/achievements.

These awards are presented as part of the celebration of the International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) on 1st October.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment decided in the year 2005 to confer Vayoshreshtha Sammans to eminent senior citizens and Institutions in recognition for their service to elderly persons, especially indigent senior citizens.
- The “Vayoshreshtha Samman” was elevated to the level of national awards in 2013.
- Vayoshreshtha Sammans shall be conferred every year in thirteen categories.
- The recipients of the Sammans shall be declared every year on the 1st September and will be conferred on the 1st October on the occasion of International Day of Older Persons (IDOP).
- The Award in each category shall carry a Citation, a Plaque and also cash award in some of the categories as decided from time to time.
- The award would be given to eminent or outstanding Institutions or organisations and individuals from any part of the country.
- Normally the Sammans shall not be presented posthumously: Provided that death occurred subsequent to a proposal having been submitted to the jury in the manner stipulated in this Code, then the Samman may be presented posthumously.
- The Award shall be presented at New Delhi at a special ceremony/function to be held on the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons on the 1st October every year.
- The Awards shall be presented by the President of India or the Prime Minister of India.

NATIONAL HEALTH SYSTEMS RESOURCE CENTRE

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) formally announced the re-designation of National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Priority Medical Devices and Health Technology Policy.

The mandate of the Division of Healthcare Technology at NHSRC is to draw up technical specifications for technologies procured under National Health Mission, draft policies for medical device maintenance and management, undertake evaluations of health product innovations, conduct Health Technology Assessments (HTA), and support the

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on issues related to diagnostics initiative, National Dialysis Program and other technology intensive services.

HIGHLIGHTS

- National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC) has been set up under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) of Government of India to serve as an apex body for technical assistance.
- Established in 2006, the National Health Systems Resource Centre's mandate is to assist in policy and strategy development in the provision and mobilization of technical assistance to the states and in capacity building for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) at the centre and in the states.
- The goal of this institution is to improve health outcomes by facilitating governance reform, health systems innovations and improved information sharing among all stake holders at the national, state, district and sub-district levels through specific capacity development and convergence models.
- It has a 23 members Governing Body, chaired by the Secretary, MoHFW, Government of India with the Mission Director, NRHM as the Vice Chairperson of the GB and the Chairperson of its Executive Committee.
- The NHSRC currently consists of seven divisions – **Community Processes, Healthcare Financing, Healthcare Technology, Human Resources for Health, Public Health Administration, Public Health Planning, Quality Improvement in Healthcare**
- The NHSRC has a branch office in the north-east region of India. The North East Regional Resource Centre (NE RRC) has functional autonomy and implements a similar range of activities.

VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS

- It is India's first indigenously built engineless semi-high-speed train. Earlier, it was known by the name **Train 18**.
- It runs between **Delhi and Varanasi** at a maximum speed of 160 kmph.
- It has been built by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai, in a record time of 20 months.
- The train is a 100% 'Make in India' project and is claimed to be built at half the cost of a similar train set that is imported.
- It is energy-efficient as its coaches will be fitted with LED lights. Coaches will have automatic doors and retractable footsteps.
- It will be inter-connected with fully sealed gangways along with a GPS-based Passenger Information System. It is provided with Bio toilets.
- The "**Future of Rail Opportunities for energy**" report, released by the **International Energy Agency**.

PRAKASH PORTAL

The Union Ministry of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy (IC) and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, jointly launched PRAKASH (Power Rail Koyla Availability through Supply Harmony) portal.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Portal aims at bringing better coordination for coal supplies among all stakeholders viz - Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, Coal India, Railways and power utilities. This is an important step in ensuring adequate availability and optimum utilization of coal at thermal power plants.
- The Portal is designed to help in mapping and monitoring entire coal supply chain for power plants, viz –
 1. Coal Stock at supply end (mines).
 2. Coal quantities/ rakes planned.
 3. Coal quantity in transit.
 4. Coal availability at power generating station.
- PRAKASH Portal is developed by **NTPC** and sources data from different stakeholders such as **Central Electricity Authority (CEA)**, **Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS)** and coal companies.

BENEFITS

- Coal company will be able to track stocks and the coal requirement at power stations for effective production planning.
- Indian Railways will plan to place the rakes as per actual coal available at siding and stock available at power stations.

- Power stations can plan future schedule by knowing rakes in pipe line and expected time to Reach.
- Stock at power generating station.
- Ministry of Power /Ministry of Coal/ CEA/ POSOCO can review overall availability of coal at thermal power plants in different regions.

NTPC

- NTPC is India's largest energy conglomerate with roots planted way back in 1975 to accelerate power development in India.
- Its mission is to provide reliable power and related solutions in an economical, efficient and environment friendly manner, driven by innovation and agility.
- NTPC became a Maharatna company in May 2010.
- It is located in New Delhi.

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY

- CEA is an organization originally constituted under Section 3(1) of the repealed Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, since substituted by Section 70 of the Electricity Act, 2003.
- One of its objectives is to formulate National Electricity Plan every five years for optimum utilization of available resources for power generation.
- It works under the Ministry of Power and is located in New Delhi.

POWER SYSTEM OPERATION CORPORATION LTD.

- POSOCO is a Government of India enterprise that supervise and control all aspect concerning operations and manpower requirement of the Regional Load Despatch Centres (RLDCs) and the National Load Despatch Centre (NLDC).
- NLDC and RLDCs are responsible for operating the electricity market working in the country. They function under the Electricity Act, 2003.
- NLDC is located in New Delhi.

CENTRE FOR RAILWAY INFORMATION SYSTEM

- The Ministry of Railways set up CRIS as a society in July 1986.
- Its area of work includes information systems from all disciplines and functions of the Indian Railways.
- It is headquartered in New Delhi.

'TRANS-FAT FREE' LOGO LAUNCHED

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched the "Trans Fat Free" logo of Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), at the 8th International Chefs' Conference (ICC VII).

This marked an important milestone in the movement against Trans-Fats and also provided a momentum to accelerate the 'Eat Right India' movement of FSSAI.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Trans fats** are the worst type of fats with known health risks. India is committed to eliminating it from the food supply and is progressing towards its objective of trans fat elimination by 2022; a year ahead of the global target by WHO.
- FSSAI is committed to reducing the industrially produced trans fatty acids to less than **2% by the year 2022** in a phased manner and is geared up to get freedom from trans fats with the motto 'India@75'; Freedom from Trans.
- Health Ministry also launched the **Green Purple initiative logo.**
- The initiative aims to qualify the chefs on food safety legal requirements and sustainable cooking methods, in order to promote trans-fat free cooking.
- It will be a six months program that includes key areas of trans-fat free cooking, using less sodium, and hygienic, seasonal, eco-friendly, less energy consuming cooking methods. The chefs shall thereafter ensure global standards of food safety and sustainable environment practices.
- Industrial trans-fats are made by adding hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid, and to increase the shelf life of foods.

- Trans-fats are largely present in partially hydrogenated vegetable fats/oils, Vanaspati, margarine and bakery shortenings, and can be found in baked and fried foods.
- The food establishments which use trans-fat free oil and do not have industrial trans-fat more than 0.2g/100g of food, in compliance with the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018 can display “Trans-fat free” logo at their outlets and on their food products. **The use of the said logo is voluntary.**

TRANS-FAT

- Trans fats, or trans-fatty acids, are a form of unsaturated fat.
- They come in both natural and artificial forms.
- Natural, or ruminant, trans fats occur in the meat and dairy from ruminant animals, such as cattle, sheep, and goats. They form naturally when bacteria in these animals’ stomachs digest grass.
- These types typically comprise 2–6% of the fat in dairy products and 3–9% of the fat in cuts of beef and lamb. However, dairy and meat eaters needn’t be concerned.
- Several reviews have concluded that a moderate intake of these fats does not appear harmful.
- The best-known ruminant trans-fat is conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which is found in dairy fat. It is believed to be beneficial and is marketed as a dietary supplement.
- However, artificial trans fats — otherwise known as industrial trans fats or partially hydrogenated fats — are hazardous to your health.
- These fats occur when vegetable oils are chemically altered to stay solid at room temperature, which gives them a much longer shelf life.
- Trans fats are found in two forms — natural, which occur in some animal products and aren’t considered harmful, and artificial, which are hydrogenated vegetable oils and have serious health consequences.

YOUTH Co:LAB

In a latest initiative to recognize young people as critical drivers of sustainable development, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India launched Youth Co:Lab which aims at accelerating social entrepreneurship and innovation in young India.

HIGHLIGHTS

- To mark the launch, a Letter of Intent (LOI) was signed between AIM, NITI Aayog and UNDP India.
- Through Youth Co:Lab, young entrepreneurs and innovators will get a chance to connect with governments, mentors, incubators and investors, who will help equip them with entrepreneurial skills.
- The initiative will also convene a series of youth dialogues across several cities such as New Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Mumbai to promote entrepreneurship across India.
- AIM and UNDP, as part of UNSDF signed between NITI Aayog and UN India, are collaborating to spread awareness about different issues pertaining to youth, the future of work and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) through Youth Co:Lab.
- The first phase of Youth Co:Lab will focus on six SDGs:
 1. **SDG 5** (Gender Equality).
 2. **SDG 6** (Clean Water and Sanitation).
 3. **SDG 7** (Affordable and Clean Energy).
 4. **SDG 8** (Decent Work and Economic Growth).
 5. **SDG 12** (Sustainable Consumption and Production).
 6. **SDG 13** (Climate Action).
- Youth Co:Lab will convene social innovation challenges at the national and sub-national level, which will invite young people in the age group of **18-29 years** and start-ups to showcase their proposed ideas and solutions to tackle some of the region’s biggest social challenges.
- They will also get the opportunity to pitch their ideas at **UNDP’s regional centre in 2020.**

YOUTH CO:LAB

- Co-created in 2017 by **UNDP and the Citi Foundation**, and operational in 25 countries across the Asia Pacific region, the **Youth Co:Lab initiative** aims to create an enabling ecosystem to promote youth leadership, innovation, and social entrepreneurship.

ATAL INNOVATION MISSION (AIM)

- AIM including **Self-Employment and Talent Utilisation (SETU)** is Government of India's endeavour to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country.
- AIM's objectives are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.
- The Atal Innovation Mission has following two core functions:
 1. Entrepreneurship promotion through Self-Employment and Talent Utilization, wherein innovators would be supported and mentored to become successful entrepreneurs.
 2. Innovation promotion: to provide a platform where innovative ideas are generated.
- AIM has multiple programs to encourage and support innovation in the country.

ATAL TINKERING LABS

- To promote creative, innovative mind set in schools. At the school level, AIM is setting up state of the art Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) in schools across all districts across the country.
- These ATLs are dedicated innovation workspaces of 1200-1500 square feet where do-it-yourself (DIY) kits on latest technologies like 3D Printers, Robotics, Internet of Things (IOT), Miniaturized electronics are installed using a grant of Rs 20 Lakhs from the government so that students from Grade VI to Grade XII can tinker with these technologies and learn to create innovative solutions using these technologies.
- This will enable create a problem solving, innovative mind set within millions of students across the country.

WORLD COTTON DAY 2019

The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, is participating in the World Cotton Day being observed from 7th October to 11th October 2019 in Geneva.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** is organizing World Cotton Day event in collaboration with the Secretariats of the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**, the **International Trade Centre (ITC)** and the **International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)**.
- WTO is hosting the event at the request of the Cotton – 4 countries, **Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali** to celebrate their official application for the recognition of 7th October as World Cotton Day by the United Nations.
- World Cotton Day will celebrate the many advantages of cotton, from its qualities as a natural fibre, to the benefits people obtain from its production, transformation, trade and consumption.
- World Cotton Day will also serve to shed light on the challenges faced by cotton economies around the world because cotton is important to least developed, developing and developed economies worldwide.

INDIA

- The CCI will be displaying various grades of raw cotton including **SUVIN**, the finest quality of Extra Long Staple Cotton produced in Tamil Nadu having the highest fibre length.
- Further, natural coloured cotton that is grown in **Dharwad in the state of Karnataka** in different colours like dark brown, medium brown, green and cream colours will also be on display. Being naturally coloured there is no need to use synthetic dyes which leads to less toxicity in the fabric when used.
- Between 2011 and 2018, India implemented a Cotton Technical Assistance Project worth USD 2.85 million for seven African countries namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.
- The technical assistance focused on improving the competitiveness of the cotton and cotton-based textiles and apparel industry in these countries through a series of interventions which had significant outcomes leading to a demand for a follow-on project.

Cotton is a global commodity that is produced all over the world and a single tonne of cotton provides year-round employment for five people on average. Cotton is a drought – resistant crop ideal for arid climates, it occupies just 2.1 % of the world's arable land, yet it meets 27% of the world's textiles need. In addition to its fibre used in textiles and apparel, food products are also derived from cotton like edible oil and animal feed from the seed.

E-DANTSEVA

Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the eDantseva website and mobile application, the first ever national digital platform on oral health information and knowledge dissemination.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Union Health Minister also released the **Braille booklet and Voice** over on Oral Health Education for the visually impaired individuals, along with the oral health posters for pregnant women and children.
- e-DantSeva is the first ever **national digital platform** that provides oral health information both in the form of a website and mobile application.
- This initiative of the Ministry with AIIMS and other stakeholders aims to sensitize the public about the significance of maintaining optimum oral health and equips them with the tools and knowledge to do so, including awareness on the nearest oral health service facility.
- The website and mobile application provide oral health information gathered from authentic scientific resources and connects the public to timely advice for managing any dental emergency or oral health problem.
- e-DantSeva contains information about the National Oral Health Program, detailed list of all the dental facility and colleges, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material and a unique feature called the 'Symptom Checker', which provides information on symptoms of dental/oral health problems, ways to prevent these, the treatment modes, and also directs the user to find their nearest available dental facility (public and private sectors both).

GANGA AAMANTRAN ABHIYAN

The 'Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan' is a pioneering and historic exploratory open-water rafting and kayaking expedition on the Ganga River to be held between 10th October 2019 to 11 November 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Starting at Devprayag and culminating at Ganga Sagar, the expedition will cover the entire stretch of over 2500 kms of the Ganga River.
- This is the first ever effort by **National Mission for Clean Ganga** to raft across the entire stretch of the river and also the longest ever social campaign undertaken through an adventure sporting activity to spread the message of River Rejuvenation and Water Conservation on a massive scale.
- The expedition will draw attention to the ecological challenges being faced by Ganga.
- The expedition will encompass the five Ganga basin states including Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal with stops at Rishikesh, Haridwar, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Patna, Sonapur and Kolkata.
- Apart from the awareness campaign, the team from CSIR–Indian Institute of Toxicology Research will collect water samples from across diverse ranges of the river for the purpose of water testing, while members of the Wildlife Institute of India will undertake flora and fauna census for the year 2019.
- The Expedition would comprise of members primarily from the Indian Armed Forces. The Armed Forces is supporting this expedition extensively by way of involving all the Commands & Units on the Ganga stretch and also the members from the Armed Forces Wives Welfare Association all along the Ganga Basin.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR CLEAN GANGA (NMCG)

- It is the implementation wing of the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga also known as National Ganga Council (set in 2016; which replaced the NRGBA).
- NMCG was established in the year 2011 as a registered society.
- It has a two-tier management structure and comprises of Governing Council and Executive Committee.
- The aims and objectives of NMCG are:
 1. To ensure effective control of pollution and rejuvenation of the river Ganga by adopting a river basin approach to promote inter-sectoral coordination for comprehensive planning and management.
 2. To maintain minimum ecological flows in the river Ganga with the aim of ensuring water quality and environmentally sustainable development.

INITIATIVES TO PREVENT GANGA POLLUTION

1. **GANGA ACTION PLAN:** It was the first River Action Plan that was taken up by the Ministry of Environment & Forests in 1985, to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion, and treatment of domestic sewage. It also aimed to prevent toxic and industrial chemical wastes (from identified polluting units) from entering the river.
 - National River Conservation Plan was an extension to the Ganga Action Plan, so as to cover all the major rivers of the country.
2. **‘NATIONAL RIVER GANGA BASIN AUTHORITY (NRGBA)’** was formed by the Central Government of India in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986. It is chaired by the Prime Minister of India. **It declared the Ganga as the ‘National River’ of India.**
3. In 2010, **‘GOVERNMENT CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN’** was started to ensure that by 2020 no untreated municipal sewage or industrial runoff enters river.
4. In 2014, **‘NAMAMI GANGE PROGRAMME’** was launched as an Integrated Conservation Mission, to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation, and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
 - The program is being implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and its state counterpart organization viz., State Program Management Groups (SPMGs).
 - It is the flagship programme of the Union Government with a budget outlay of Rs. 20,000 crore.
 - The main pillars of the programme are:
 - a) Sewerage Treatment Infrastructure & Industrial Effluent Monitoring,
 - b) River-Front Development & River-Surface Cleaning,
 - c) Bio-Diversity & Afforestation,
 - d) Public Awareness.
5. **GANGA MANTHAN-** It was a national conference that was held in 2014 to discuss issues and possible solutions for cleaning the river. The event was organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga.
6. In 2014, **CLEAN GANGA FUND** was also formed for cleaning up of the Ganga, setting up of waste treatment plants, conservation of biotic diversity of the river, and development of public amenities (activities such as Ghat redevelopment, and Research and Development and innovative projects). This fund will also be used to finance National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).
7. In 2017, the **NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL** banned the disposal of any waste in the Ganga.

PM-KISAN

The Union Cabinet has approved the relaxation of the mandatory requirement of Aadhaar Seeded data as a pre-condition for release of funds to the beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India. The Scheme is effective from 1.12.2018.

OBJECTIVE

- With a view to augment the income of the Small and Marginal Farmers (SMFs).
- The PM-KISAN scheme aims to supplement the financial needs of the SMFs in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of the each crop cycle.
- This would also protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Under the Scheme an income support of Rs.6000/- per year is provided to all farmer families across the country in three equal instalments of Rs.2000/- every four months.
- Definition of family for the Scheme is husband, wife and minor children.
- The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer family rests with the State / UT Governments.
- The fund is directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.
- Farmers covered under the Exclusion Criteria of the Operational Guidelines are not eligible for the benefit of the Scheme.
- For enrolment, the farmer is required to approach the local patwari / revenue officer / Nodal Officer (PM-Kisan) nominated by the State Government.
- The Common Service Centres (CSCs) have also been authorized to do registration of the farmers for the Scheme upon payment of fees.
- Farmers can also do their self-registration through the Farmers Corner in the portal.
- Farmers can also know the status of their payment through the **Farmers Corner** in the portal.

DEFINITION OF FAMILIES: The SMFs landholder farmer family is defined as “a family comprising of husband, wife and minor children who collectively own cultivable land upto 2 hectare as per land records of the concerned State/UT”.

WHO INDIA COUNTRY COOPERATION STRATEGY 2019-2023

Union Ministry for Health & Family Welfare launched ‘The WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023: A Time of Transition’.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The **Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS)** provides a strategic roadmap for WHO to work with the Government of India towards achieving its health sector goals.
- The India CCS is one of the first that fully aligns itself with the newly adopted WHO 13th General Programme of Work and its 'triple billion' targets, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO South-East Asia Region's eight Flagship Priorities.
- It captures the work of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for 2018–2022**.
- The CCS outlines how WHO can support the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and other allied Ministries to drive impact at the country level.
- The strategy document builds on other key strategic policy documents including India's **National Health Policy 2017**, the many pathbreaking initiatives India has introduced — from Ayushman Bharat to its National Viral Hepatitis programme and promotion of digital health amongst others.

NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY, 2017

The National Health Policy, 2017 (NHP, 2017) seeks to reach everyone in a comprehensive integrated way to move towards wellness. It aims at achieving universal health coverage and delivering quality health care services to all at affordable cost.

TARGETS**1. LIFE EXPECTANCY AND HEALTHY LIFE**

- Increase Life Expectancy at birth from 67.5 to 70 by 2025.
- Establish regular tracking of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) Index as a measure of burden of disease and its trends by major categories by 2022.
- Reduction of TFR to 2.1 at national and sub-national level by 2025.

2. MORTALITY BY AGE AND/ OR CAUSE

- Reduce Under Five Mortality to 23 by 2025 and MMR from current levels to 100 by 2020.
- Reduce infant mortality rate to 28 by 2019.
- Reduce neo-natal mortality to 16 and still birth rate to “single digit” by 2025.

3. REDUCTION OF DISEASE PREVALENCE/ INCIDENCE

- Achieve global target of 2020 which is also termed as target of 90:90:90, for HIV/AIDS i.e. - 90% of all people living with HIV know their HIV status, - 90% of all people diagnosed with HIV infection receive sustained antiretroviral therapy and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.
- Achieve and maintain elimination status of Leprosy by 2018, Kala-Azar by 2017 and Lymphatic Filariasis in endemic pockets by 2017.
- To achieve and maintain a cure rate of >85% in new sputum positive patients for TB and reduce incidence of new cases, to reach elimination status by 2025.
- To reduce the prevalence of blindness to 0.25/ 1000 by 2025 and disease burden by one third from current levels.
- To reduce premature mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases by 25% by 2025.

PRADHAN MANTRI INNOVATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMME (PMILP)- 'DHRUV'

Union Human Resource Development Ministry launched the Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme- 'DHRUV' from Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Headquarters at Bengaluru.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme is being started to identify and encourage talented children to enrich their skills and knowledge.
- In centres of excellence across the country, gifted children will be mentored and nurtured by renowned experts in different areas, so that they can reach their full potential.
- The programme will be called DHRUV (after the Pole Star) and every student to be called 'DHRUV TARA'.
- It will cover two areas i.e. **Science and Performing Arts**. There will be 60 students in all, 30 from each area.
- The 60 students come from across the country.
- The students will be broadly from classes 9 to 12, from all schools including government and private.
- This is only the first phase of the programme which will be expanded gradually to other fields like creative writing etc.

MAPPING POTENTIAL FISHING ZONES

For seamless and effective dissemination of emergency information and communication on disaster warnings, Potential Fishing Zones (PFZ) and Ocean States Forecasts (OSF) to fishermen, the Government launched the Gagan Enabled Mariner's Instrument for Navigation and Information (GEMINI) device.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The satellite-based communication is the only suitable solution for the dissemination of such emergency information and affordable satellite-based communication system should be made part of the dissemination chain to deal with cyclones, high waves and tsunamis.
- While PFZ Advisories provide information on the probable locations on fish aggregation in the seas, OSF provide the accurate state of the ocean.
- Ocean State Forecasts include the forecasts on winds, waves, ocean currents, water temperature, etc. at every 6 hrs on daily basis for next 5 days helping fishermen in maximizing their earnings, ensuring safety and in planning of fishing activities.
- Though the advisories and forecasts are disseminated through multiple communication modes, none of them could provide such information, including the disaster warnings when the fishermen move away from the coast beyond 10-12 km (typical ranges of mobile phones and VHF).
- To overcome this difficulty, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) joined hands with Airports Authority of India (AAI) to utilize the **GAGAN (GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation)** satellite system to transmit the PFZ, OSF and disaster warnings to fishermen with GAGAN system consisting of three geosynchronous satellites (GSAT-8, GSAT-10 and GSAT-15).

- GAGAN foot-print covers the entire Indian Ocean round the clock. To receive the messages transmitted through the GAGAN satellites, INCOIS together with AAI developed a low-cost GAGAN system-enabled GEMINI (GAGAN Enabled Mariner's Instrument for Navigation and Information) device.
- The GEMINI device receives and transfers the data received from GAGAN satellite/s to a mobile through Bluetooth communication. A mobile application developed by INCOIS decodes and displays the information in nine regional languages.
- PFZ forecasts, newly developed by INCOIS which will provide advisories on PFZ to fishermen 3 days in advance.
- The PFZ forecasts are generated using numerical models operationalized by INCOIS and helps overcome the operational difficulties in providing the PFZ advisories during overcast skies based on satellite data.

INDIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGETS

Reports have appeared in a section of media, citing a CRISIL report, that India may fall short of its declared renewable energy target of 1,75,000 MW by the year 2022.

BACKGROUND

- Since March 2014, India's renewable power capacity has increased from 34000 MW to 82,580 MW recording 138 percent growth.
 - Globally, India stands 5th in solar power, 4th in wind power, and 4th in total renewable power installed capacity.
 - If large hydro included, India stands 3rd in renewable power capacity globally.
 - India's renewable energy programme is much beyond production of electricity and covers a basket of applications including use of solar thermal energy for cooling, heating, drying and other industrial applications.
 - The Ministry has launched three new schemes.
1. The first is the **Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) Scheme** Phase-II for setting up 12,000 MW grid-connected SPV Power Projects, by the Government Producers with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support for self-use or use by Government or Government entities, both Central and State Governments. The Scheme mandates use of both SPV cells and modules manufactured domestically as per specifications and testing requirements.
 2. The second is **PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan) scheme** to be implemented over next four years for de-dieselization of the farm sector and increasing farmers' energy independence and income. Under the scheme, India has plans to provide 1.75 million stand-alone solar agriculture pumps and carry out solarisation of 1 million grid connected agriculture pumps by the year 2022. Under the same scheme, Government is also encouraging farmers to set up small solar plants of the size of 500 KW to 2 MW on barren lands for their additional income. Three components combined the scheme aims to add a solar capacity of 25,750 MW by 2022.
 3. The third is **Roof Top Solar Phase-II programme SRISTI (Sustainable Rooftop Implementation for Solar Transfiguration of India) scheme** for accelerated deployment of solar roof top systems in the country. Under this scheme Central Financial Assistance for 4000 MW of small roof top capacity and incentives to Distribution Companies for 18,000 MW capacity by 2022 have been provided. These schemes will also act as catalyst for adding solar cell and module manufacturing capacity in India. Further, the Tariff Policy is being revised to ensure timely adoption of tariffs.

MOBILE APP, "MHARIYALI"

- The app is aimed to encourage Public engagement in planting trees and other such Green drives.
- People can now upload information/photos of any plantation done by them, which is linked to app and will be displayed on the website www.epgc.gov.in.
- The App provides for automatic geo-tagging of plants.
- This app will also enable nodal officers to periodically monitor the plantation.
- A mass plantation drive "Haryali Mahotsav" was launched in San Martin Park, Chanakyapuri in which approx 500 plants were planted and about 150 people, including students, participated.
- 25 Rain Water Harvesting structures were constructed and 307 systems were augmented.

SARAS AAJEEVIKA MELA

Union Minister of State for Rural Development that SARAS Aajeevika Mela is a testimony of Nari-Shakti, as lakhs of poor women through rural women Self Help Groups are transforming their lives and transforming rural India.

HIGHLIGHTS

- SARAS Aajeevika Mela is an initiative by the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, with an objective to bring the rural women Self Help Groups (SHGs) formed with support of DAY-NRLM, under one platform to show-case their skills, sell their products and help them build linkages with bulk buyers.
- The Mela is organised by the marketing arm of the Ministry, Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART).

DEEN DAYAL ANTYODAYA YOJANA

- Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011 as a restructured version of Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY).
- The Mission aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services. In November 2015, the program was renamed Deendayal Antayodaya Yojana (DAY-NRLM).
- In addition, the poor would be facilitated to achieve increased access to their rights, entitlements and public services, diversified risk and better social indicators of empowerment.
- NRLM believes in harnessing the innate capabilities of the poor and complements them with capacities (information, knowledge, skills, tools, finance and collectivization) to participate in the growing economy of the country.

"To reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities, resulting in appreciable improvement in their livelihoods on a sustainable basis, through building strong grassroots institutions of the poor."

MOBILE APP FOR IPR

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Guruprasad Mohapatra launched the website and mobile application [Learn to Protect, Secure and Maximize Your Innovation] on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The website and app has been developed by Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM)-DPIIT in collaboration with Qualcomm and National Law University (NLU), Delhi.
- Both the website and app will be very useful to the start-up community which holds great promise for India and its economy.
- Start-ups are more tuned into investment and risk taking but lack legal knowledge and when we are on the threshold of the fourth industrial revolution the interface between technology and law is growing and therefore it is very essential that a specialised website and app is available to help start-ups with the IP process.
- The modules of this e-learning platform [**L2Pro India IP e-learning Platform and the L2Pro India Mobile App**] will aid and enable youth, innovators, entrepreneurs and small and medium industries (SMEs) in understanding IPRs for their ownership and protection, integrate IP into business models and obtain value for their R&D efforts.
- The L2Pro has been successfully implemented in Germany, United Kingdom, Italy and France, benefiting immensely from close collaboration with respective IP organizations and public research institutions.
- The learning app has been customized for India in order to ensure that innovation which is fundamental to start-ups are protected, managed and commercialised.
- The L2Pro India IP e-learning platform will have 11 modules for three different levels: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced.

- Each module comprises of e-text for understanding concepts, short animated videos of the concepts, links to additional resources on the subject and quizzes for assessment and grading the learner's knowledge and understanding of the subject.

LOTUS-HR

India and Netherlands launched the second phase of the LOTUS-HR (Local Treatment of Urban Sewage streams for Healthy Reuseplant) as a part of joint collaboration.

HIGHLIGHTS

The launch programme was held during the visit of Netherlands King & the Queen to the India-Netherlands water laboratory at the Barapullah drain in Delhi.

- India going to enter into the second phase, wherein 10 thousand L sewage water will be treated per day.
- The project was initiated in July 2017 and aims to demonstrate a novel holistic (waste) water management approach that will produce clean water which can be reused for various purposes.
- The innovative pilot scale modular plant upon commissioning will treat 10,000 L sewage water per day and will showcase a self-sustaining model for the end user.
- This pilot scale facility will employ multiple technologies so that the data generated at the pilot scale becomes a tool-box of treatment technologies for replication at other sites in Delhi as well as other parts of India where similar drains exist.
- The rationale is that the mixing and matching of technologies from this tool-box will depend on the quantity (flow rate) and quality (pollutant load) of drain water, land availability, site accessibility as well as topography.
- The LOTUS-HR project is jointly supported by Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India and Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research /STW, Government of Netherlands.
- Wetlab a Design challenge jointly supported by DBT-BIRAC and Netherlands Enterprise Agency is a novel way of competition which provides a unique learning and networking platform for both Indian and Dutch young professionals and students to think differently for innovative ideas to solve India's urban water challenges and contribute to cleaning up India's rivers.
- The intent of Wetlab is focussed on making best ideas becoming an input for the realisation of the Water Experience Centre that may further lead to turning the project site into an attractive centre for education and technology demonstration for students, young professionals and creating opportunities for start-ups.

FOOD SAFETY MITRA

The theme for this day was 'Healthy Diets for a Zero Hunger World'. Health Ministry also launched the 'Food Safety Mitra (FSM)' scheme, along with the 'Eat Right Jacket', and 'Eat Right Jhola' to strengthen food safety administration and scale up the 'Eat Right India' movement.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The **'Food Safety Mitra (FSM)' scheme** will support small and medium scale food businesses to comply with the food safety laws and facilitate licensing and registration, hygiene ratings and training.
- Apart from strengthening food safety, this scheme would also create new employment opportunities for youth, particularly with food and nutrition background.
- The FSMs would undergo training and certification by FSSAI to do their work and get paid by food businesses for their services.
- The **'Eat Right Jacket'** launched will be used by the field staff.
- This jacket has a smart design to hold tech devices like tablets/smart phone, a QR code and RFID tag for identification and tracking.
- Apart from providing safety to field staff on duty, this would bring in efficiency, professionalism and transparency in food safety administration and bring in a sense of ownership & visibility of FSOs.
- The **'Eat Right Jhola'**, a reusable cloth bag shall replace plastic bags for grocery shopping in various retail chains. Since on repeated use, bags are often contaminated with microorganisms and bacteria, proper and regular washing of cloth bags is essential to ensure safety and hygiene.
- These cloth bags are being provided on rental basis through a private textile rental service company.

FSSAI has partnered with the Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council (DWSSC) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to launch a training course for domestic workers and homemakers across the country. In the first phase, one lakh domestic workers and homemakers will be trained through training partners of DWSSC in association with RWAs. This would be scaled up in due course.

VAN DHAN INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the “Van Dhan Internship Programme” organised by TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

HIGHLIGHTS

- These interns will help the tribal population in becoming self-reliant and entrepreneurs.
- These interns have been selected to go and work on Van Dhan programme in the field. These interns have an inclination towards involving in matters related to tribal livelihood.
- These interns will work with the team of TRIFED in various states and districts in tribal areas in development of tribal welfare and inclusive growth (a dissertation has to be submitted on conclusion of the internship).
- They will support the TRIFED activities on livelihood promotion, value addition of NTFTs, marketing and credit linkages.
- They will develop tools and techniques on institutional development including mechanism for determination of a just price or producer price of Minor Forest Products.

VAN DHAN SCHEME

- The Van Dhan Scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED.
- It was launched on 14th April, 2018 and seeks to improve tribal incomes through value addition of tribal products.
- The scheme will be implemented through Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Nodal Department at the Central Level and TRIFED as Nodal Agency at the National Level.
- At State level, the State Nodal Agency for MFPs and the District collectors are envisaged to play a pivot role in scheme implementation at grassroot level.
- Locally the Kendras are proposed to be managed by a Managing Committee (an SHG) consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF VAN DHAN INITIATIVE

- At unit level, aggregation of produce would be done by SHGs having about 30 members each forming Van Dhan Vikas ‘Samuh’. The SHGs would also undertake primary value addition of the MFPs using equipment such as small cutting and sieving tools, decorticator, dryer, packaging tool etc based on MFPs available in the area.
- A typical Van Dhan Vikas Samuh would have the following facilities:
 1. Provision for required building/ infrastructure support to be established in one of the beneficiary’s house/ part of house or Government/ gram panchayat building.
 2. Equipment/ Tool Kit comprising of equipment such as small cutting and sieving tools, decorticator, dryer, packaging tool etc. based on MFPs available in the area.
 3. Fully equipped training facilities for a batch of 30 trainees with provision for raw material for training purpose and supply of trainee kits (comprising of bag, scribbling pad, pen, brochures, training manual, booklet etc).
 4. Provisioning of working capital for the SHGs through tie up with financial institutions, banks, NSTFDC etc.
- Under Van Dhan, 10 Self Help Groups of 30 Tribal gatherers is constituted.
- The establishment of "Van Dhan Vikas Kendra" is for providing skill upgradation and capacity building training and setting up of primary processing and value addition facility.
- They are then trained and provided with working capital to add value to the products, which they collect from the jungle. Working under the leadership of Collector these groups can then market their products not only within the States but also outside the States.
- Training and technical support is provided by TRIFED. It is proposed to develop 3,000 such centres in the country.

GOAL PROGRAM

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs announced the second phase of GOAL (Going Online as Leaders), a Facebook program aimed at inspiring, guiding and encouraging tribal girls from across India to become village-level digital young leaders for their communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- GOAL connects underprivileged young tribal women with senior expert mentors in the areas of business, fashion and arts to learn digital and life skills.
- In the second phase of the program, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Facebook together will digitally mentor 5000 young women in India's tribal dominated districts.
- GOAL program will provide economically and socially marginalized young women with the tools and guidance they need to succeed, using technology they may otherwise have not had access to.
- The program will include weekly one-to-one mentoring sessions, focused on a range of skills such as digital literacy, entrepreneurship and online safety.
- In total, more than 200,000 hours of guidance will be provided using Facebook family of apps including WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.
- Following the program, the participants will graduate to the GOAL alumni and will continue to receive support and guidance from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Facebook.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs will also work with district administration and other government agencies to help secure qualified participants with a fellowship, so they can put their newly learned skills to work.

INDIA INNOVATION INDEX 2019

NITI Aayog with Institute for Competitiveness as the knowledge partner released the India Innovation Index (III) 2019.

- Karnataka is the most innovative major state in India. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Telangana, Haryana, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh form the remaining top ten major states respectively.
- The top ten major states are majorly concentrated in southern and western India.
- Sikkim and Delhi take the top spots among the north- eastern & hill states, and union territories/city states/small states respectively. Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh are the most efficient states in translating inputs into output.

BACKGROUND

- Recognizing the role of innovation as a key driver of growth and prosperity for India, NITI Aayog with Institute for Competitiveness as the knowledge partner has released the India Innovation Index 2019.
- The aim is to create a holistic tool which can be used by policymakers across the country to identify the challenges to be addressed and strengths to build on when designing the economic growth policies for their regions.
- The index attempts to create an extensive framework for the continual evaluation of the innovation environment of 29 states and seven union territories in India and intends to perform the following three functions-
 - 1) ranking of states and UTs based on their index scores.
 - 2) recognizing opportunities and challenges.
 - 3) assisting in tailoring governmental policies to foster innovation.
- The India Innovation Index 2019 is calculated as the average of the scores of its two dimensions - Enablers and Performance.
- The Enablers are the factors that underpin innovative capacities, grouped in five pillars:
 - (1) Human Capital, (2) Investment, (3) Knowledge Workers, (4) Business Environment, and (5) Safety and Legal Environment.
 - The Performance dimension captures benefits that a nation derives from the inputs, divided in two pillars: (6) Knowledge Output and (7) Knowledge Diffusion.
- The index presents the latest findings and highlights the regional catalysts and caveats for promoting innovation readiness.

- The Report offers a comprehensive snapshot of the innovation ecosystem of 29 states and seven union territories. It also includes a section on state profiles covering 33 indicators looking at the different facets of innovation in India.
- The states have been bifurcated into three categories: **major states, north-east and hill states, and union territories / city states / small states.**

'76TH YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT OF AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT'

The 76th anniversary of the formation of the Azad Hind Government will be celebrated on 21st October, 2019, at the Red Fort, Delhi.

Last year on 21st October 2018, the Prime Minister of India hoisted the National Flag at the Red Fort and also unveiled the plaque commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the formation of Azad Hind Government.

AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT

- On 21st October 1943, Subhash Chandra Bose announced the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) in Singapore, with himself as the Head of State, Prime Minister and Minister of War.
- The Provisional Government not only enabled Bose to negotiate with the Japanese on an equal footing but also facilitated the mobilisation of Indians in East Asia to join and support the Indian National Army (INA).
- The struggle for independence was carried on by Subhash Chandra Bose from abroad. He found the outbreak of the Second World War to be a convenient opportunity to strike a blow for the freedom of India.
- Bose had been put under house arrest in 1940 but he managed to escape to Berlin on March 28, 1941. The Indian community there acclaimed him as the leader (Netaji). He was greeted with 'Jai Hind' (Salute to the motherland).
- In 1942, the Indian Independence League was formed and a decision was taken to form the Indian National Army (INA) for the liberation of India.
- On an invitation from Ras Bihari Bose, Subhash Chandra Bose came to East Asia on June 13, 1943. He was made president of the Indian Independence League and the leader of the INA popularly called 'Azad Hind Fauj'.
- He gave the famous battle cry 'Chalo Dilli'. He promised independence to Indians saying, 'tum mujhe khoon do, main tumhe Azadi dunga' (You give me blood, I will give you freedom).

G20 OKAYAMA HEALTH MINISTERS' MEET

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare attended the G20 Okayama Health Ministers' Meeting on October 19-20, 2019, held under the Presidency of Japan in Okayama City, Japan.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The deliberations of the G 20 Health Ministers focused on four major global health issues, namely
 - a) Achievement of Universal Health Coverage.
 - b) Response to population aging.
 - c) Management of health risks and health security management including Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and its containment.
- The G20 Health Ministers meeting concluded by adopting the "Okayama Declaration of the G 20 Health Ministers".
- The declaration, having 52 articles endorses the Commitment of G20 countries to address the major global health issues, as highlighted above and to pave the way towards an inclusive and sustainable world, as envisioned in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.
- Further, G20 members have committed to continue this dialogue during the upcoming G20 presidency in Saudi Arabia.

- This opportunity was also utilized to have bi-lateral meetings with Italy, Singapore, United Kingdom and United States of America.
- Italy also showed its interest in collaborating with India in Pharma sector. India invited Italy to join **Global Digital Health Partnership**.

TIDE 2.0 SCHEME

TIDE scheme had made some remarkable achievements in the promotion of startups in the country and now with TIDE 2.0 more avenues would open up for startups.

TECHNOLOGY INCUBATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURS (TIDE) 2.0

- TIDE 2.0 will promote tech entrepreneurship through financial and technical support to incubators engaged in supporting ICT start-ups primarily engaged in using emerging technologies such as IoT, AI, Block-chain, Robotics etc. in pre-identified areas of societal relevance.
- The Scheme will be implemented through empowering 51 incubators in India and handholding close to 2000 tech start-ups over a period of 5 years.
- The scheme envisions creating a holistic ecosystem to support technology startups and incubation centers through identifying and creating necessary linkages.
- MeitY Startup Hub (MSH) would be setup under TIDE 2.0 to ensure synergistic linkages among the TIDE centres, theme-based incubation centres, Centre of Excellences on emerging technologies and other collaborative platforms.
- The MSH will also ensure crisscrossing of technology resources across the innovation ecosystem to come out with technology solutions to various societal challenges.

SALIENT FEATURES

- Fostering and evangelizing a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem that inspires budding entrepreneurs as well as support existing ones.
- Creating entrepreneurship models of both financial as well as social value.
- Provide holistic incubation support including co-working space, mentoring, and networking for startups.
- Provide financial support to 51 incubators and close to 2000 tech startups pan India.
- The financial support for startups will be provided Facilitate IPR filings

BACKGROUND

- Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India has taken various initiatives and measures to encourage entrepreneurs to develop indigenous products in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) domain and also improve innovation-led ecosystem with scheme and programmes to support researchers, start-ups and MSMEs.
- Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE) Scheme was put in place by MeitY in 2008 to promote innovation by nurturing startups in Information Technology, Communications & Electronics (ICTE) domain.
- Under the TIDE Scheme, financial assistance is provided to Institutions of Higher Learning to strengthen their Technology Incubation Centres for enabling young entrepreneurs to create technology startup companies for commercial exploitation of technologies developed by them.
- Enhanced version Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0) Scheme is to promote tech entrepreneurship through financial and technical support to incubators engaged in supporting ICT startups using emerging technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Block-chain, Robotics etc.
- **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), A Public Sector Undertaking of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) has been promoting incubators in biotechnology sector for innovative idea through the following programmes:**
 1. **BIRAC BioNEST** (BIRAC Bio-incubation: Nurturing Entrepreneurs for Scaling up Technology): BIRAC's Flagship programme which creates / supports world-class bio-incubators for startups/ entrepreneurs to provide incubation space, mentor networks, instrumentation facilities, IP and technology management support.

2. **SEED** (Sustaining Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Development) Fund: Equity based funding support of up to Rs. 30 Lakh to startups and enterprises through bio-incubators for scaling up.
3. **LEAP** (Launching Entrepreneurial Driven Affordable Products Fund for Start-ups) Fund: Equity based funding support of up to Rs 1 Cr to startups and enterprises implemented through Incubators for scaling enterprises.

SOLAR CELLS

In a major decision that is likely to give further boost to domestic manufacturing of solar cells in India, MNRE has issued a clarification in respect of domestically manufactured solar PV cell.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of flagship programmes of MNRE such as **KUSUM**, have provisions for mandatory use of domestically manufactured solar PV cells. However, it was seen that some manufacturers have been importing semi-processed solar PV cells (generally called blue wafer) and making final Solar PV cells with little value addition in India.
- The Ministry has clarified that if diffused silicon wafer (generally called 'Blue Wafer') is imported and the same is used as raw material for the manufacture of solar PV cells in India, such solar PV cells shall not qualify as domestically manufactured solar PV cells, for the purpose of MNRE's Schemes / Programmes.
- A solar PV cell shall be considered to be domestically manufactured only if the same has been manufactured in India, using undiffused silicon wafer (generally called 'Black Wafer').
- It is expected that this decision will help in establishing a strong solar manufacturing base in India.

The order issued by MNRE in this regard is as below -

- This is in reference to the schemes/ programmes being implemented by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, wherein it is mandatory to use domestically manufactured solar PV cells and domestically manufactured solar PV modules, and also in reference to the Manufacturing-Linked-PPA initiative by Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI).
- A solar PV cell shall be considered to be domestically manufactured only if the same has been manufactured in India, using undiffuse silicon wafer (generally called 'Black Wafer'), classifiable under Customs Tariff Head 3818 and all steps / processes required for manufacturing solar PV cell from the undiffuse silicon wafer have been carried out in India.
- If diffused silicon wafer (generally called 'Blue Wafer') is imported and the same is used as raw material for the manufacture of solar PV cells in India, such solar PV cells shall not qualify as domestically manufactured solar PV cells, for the purpose of MNRE's Schemes / Programmes mandating use of domestically manufactured solar PV cells.
- The solar PV cell manufacturing facility required to be set-up under SECI's Manufacturing-Linked-PPA initiative should manufacture solar PV cells from undiffused wafers.

NATIONAL PANCHAYAT AWARDS

Out of the 2.5 lakh panchayats in the country 240 panchayats were conferred the National Panchayat Awards 2019 in New Delhi.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Awards were given under the following categories: **DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY PANCHAYAT SASHAKTIKARAN PURASKAR (DDUPSP)**: given to best performing Panchayats (District, Intermediate and Gram) in recognition of the good work done for improving delivery of services and public goods. DDUPSPs are given for general and following nine thematic categories:
 1. Sanitation.
 2. Civic Services (drinking water, street light, infrastructure).
 3. Natural Resource Management.
 4. Serving Marginalized Section (women, SC/ST, disabled, senior citizen).
 5. Social Sector Performance.
 6. Disaster Management.
 7. CBOs/ Individuals taking voluntary actions to support Gram Panchayats.
 8. Innovation in revenue generation.
 9. e-Governance.

- **NANAJI DESHMUKH RASHTRIYA GAURAV GRAM SABHA PURASKAR (NDRGGSP):** Given to Gram Panchayats (GPs) for their outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development by involving Gram Sabhas.
- **GRAM PANCHAYAT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (GPDP) AWARD:** Introduced during the year 2018, this award is conferred to best performing Gram Panchayats (GPs) across the country which have developed their GPDPs according to the State/UT specific guidelines prepared in line with the model guidelines issued by Ministry of Panchayati Raj [or adopted as such].
- **CHILD-FRIENDLY GRAM PANCHAYAT AWARD:** This award has been instituted during the year 2018-19 for best performing GPs/Village Councils (VCs) (one in each State/UT) for adopting child-friendly practices.
- **e-PANCHAYAT PURASKAR** is given to States/UTs or promoting e-enablement of PRIs for bringing in efficiency, transparency and accountability in their functioning. The main aim of this award is to encourage the Panchayats for the use of information and communication technology and to incentivize those States/UTs, which have made dedicated efforts in adopting and implementing the e-Panchayat Applications and enabling electronic delivery of services through Panchayats & equivalent rural bodies. The States/UTs are analyzed on the basis of the performance assessment parameters.
- The Minister also launched **a Spatial Planning Application called 'GRAM MANCHITRA'** which is a Geo Spatial based decision support system for the panchayats. The panchayats can utilize this App to plan, develop and monitor developmental activities on real time basis.

GLOBAL BIO-INDIA SUMMIT 2019

The Global Bio-India 2019, one of the largest biotechnology stakeholders conglomerate will be held for the first time in India at New Delhi from 21st to 23rd November, 2019.

- The DBT, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India along with its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is organizing this event.
- The event has been structured to bring together stakeholders from 30 countries, 250 start-ups, 200 exhibitors. Central and State ministries, regulatory bodies, investors, totalling to 3500 participants is anticipated.
- The event is expected to strengthen the indigenous research capabilities, bio-entrepreneurship, investments and last-mile-delivery of technology across rural India and tier-2, 3 cities.
- The Summit assumes significance as it is one of the largest biotechnology stakeholders conglomerate to be held in India for the first time.

GENOME SEQUENCING

The Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) has conducted Whole Genome Sequencing of 1,008 Indians from different populations across the country.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In IndiGen Genome project, the whole genome data will be important for building the knowhow, baseline data and indigenous capacity in the emerging area of Precision Medicine.
- The outcomes of the IndiGen will have applications in a number of areas including predictive and preventive medicine with faster and efficient diagnosis of rare genetic diseases.
- The IndiGen initiative was undertaken by CSIR in April 2019, which was implemented by the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), Delhi and CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad.
- This has enabled benchmarking the scalability of genome sequencing and computational analysis at population scale in a defined timeline. The ability to decode the genetic blueprint of humans through whole genome sequencing will be a major driver for biomedical science.
- The benefits of this initiative include epidemiology of genetic diseases to enable cost effective genetic tests, carrier screening applications for expectant couples, enabling efficient diagnosis of heritable cancers and pharmacogenetic tests to prevent adverse drug reactions.

- The IndiGenome card and accompanying IndiGen mobile application that enables participants and clinicians to access clinically actionable information in their genomes.
- It ensures privacy and data security, which is vital for personal genomics to be implemented at scale.
- This is being pilot tested in individuals across India and has evinced interest from several Indian commercial organisations.
- The outcomes of the IndiGen will be utilized towards understanding the genetic diversity on a population scale, make available genetic variant frequencies for clinical applications and enable genetic epidemiology of diseases.
- The whole genome data and knowhow for the analysis of largescale genomic data is expected to enable evidence and aid in the development of technologies for clinical and biomedical applications in India.

Genome sequencing is the most direct method of detecting mutations, such as single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) and copy number variations (CNVs).

29TH BASIC MINISTERIAL MEET

The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), participated in the 29th ministerial meeting of the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) countries on Climate Change at Beijing, China on 25th-26th October 2019.

BASIC

- The BASIC group was formed as the result of an agreement signed by the four countries on November 28, 2009.
- They are a bloc of four large newly industrialized countries – Brazil, South Africa, India and China.
- The signatory nations have a broadly common position on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and raising the massive funds that are needed to fight climate change.
- The BASIC countries constituted one of the parties in the **Copenhagen Accord** reached with the US-led grouping; the Accord, was, however, not legally binding.
- The BASIC group wields considerable heft purely because of the size of the economies and populations of the member countries.
- Brazil, South Africa, India and China put together has one-third of the world's geographical area and nearly 40% of the world's population, and when they unitedly speak in one voice this shows their determination.
- BASIC is one of several groups of nations working together to fight climate change and carry out negotiations within the UNFCCC.

EK BHARAT SHRESHTH BHARAT PARV

Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat Parv being organized by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan under the Ministry of Human Resource Development in New Delhi from October 31 to November 03, 2019.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat” was announced on 31st October, 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Through this innovative measure, the knowledge of the culture, traditions and practices of different States & UTs will lead to an enhanced understanding and bonding between the States, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.

OBJECTIVES

- To CELEBRATE the Unity in Diversity of our Nation and to maintain and strengthen the fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the people of our Country;
- PROMOTE the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian States and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between States;
- To SHOWCASE the rich heritage and culture, customs and traditions of either State for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity;
- TO ESTABLISH long-term engagements and
- TO CREATE an environment which promotes learning between States by sharing best practices and experiences.

ENGAGEMENT MATRIX BETWEEN STATES AND UTS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Jammu & Kashmir | 4. Uttarakhand & Karnataka |
| 2. Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh | 5. Haryana & Telangana |
| 3. Himachal Pradesh & Kerala | 6. Rajasthan & West Bengal |

7. Gujarat & Chhattisgarh
8. Maharashtra & Odisha
9. Goa & Jharkhand
10. Delhi & Sikkim & Assam
11. Madhya Pradesh & Manipur & Nagaland
12. Uttar Pradesh & Arunachal Pradesh & Meghalaya
13. Bihar & Tripura & Mizoram
14. Chandigarh & Dadra & Nagar Haveli
15. Puducherry & Daman & Diu
16. Lakshadweep & Andaman & Nicobar

MALWARE

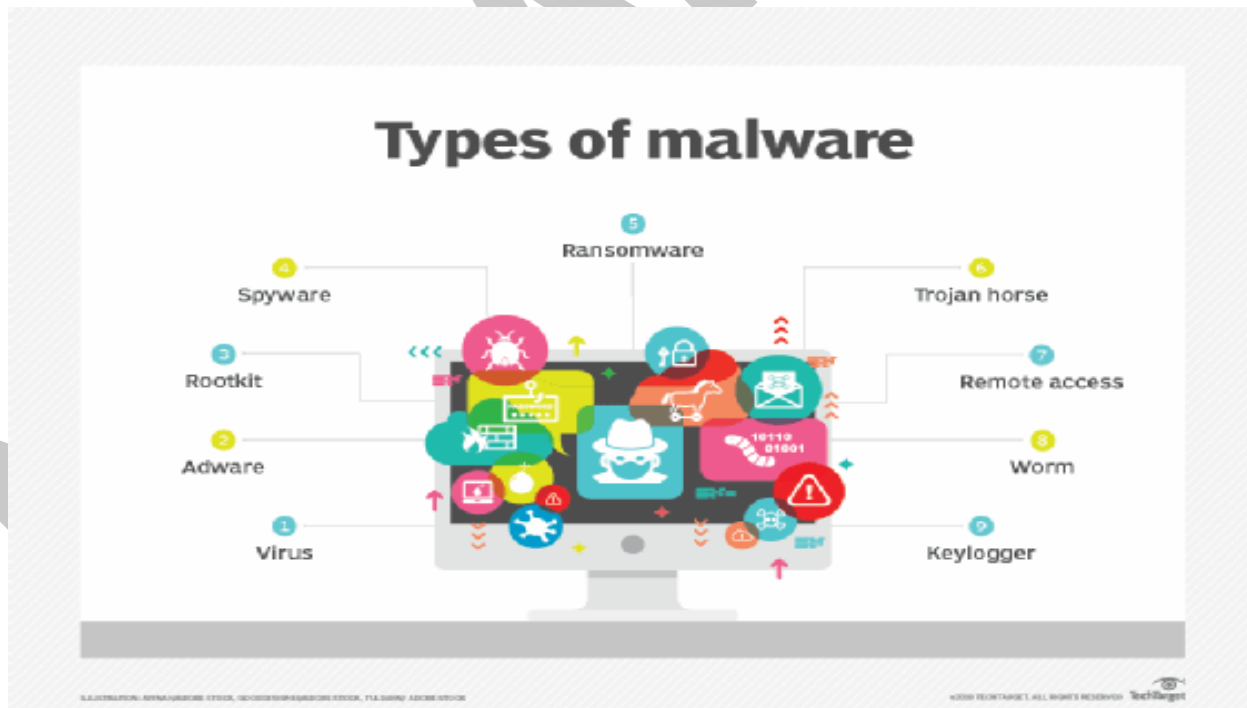
Identification of malware in Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) system is correct. The matter was conveyed by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)

Malware, or malicious software, is any program or file that is harmful to a computer user. Types of malware can include computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses and spyware. These malicious programs can perform a variety of different functions such as stealing, encrypting or deleting sensitive data, altering or hijacking core computing functions and monitoring users' computer activity without their permission.

The term malware was first used by computer scientist and security researcher Yisrael Radai in 1990. However, malware existed long before this. One of the first known examples of malware was the Creeper virus in 1971.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MALWARE CONTAIN UNIQUE TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS. TYPES OF MALWARE INCLUDE:

1. A **virus** is the most common type of malware which can execute itself and spread by infecting other programs or files.
2. A **worm** can self-replicate without a host program and typically spreads without any human interaction or directives from the malware authors.
3. A **Trojan horse** is designed to appear as a legitimate program in order to gain access to a system. Once activated following installation, Trojans can execute their malicious functions.
4. **Spyware** is made to collect information and data on the device user and observe their activity without their knowledge.



5. **Ransomware** is designed to infect a user's system and encrypt the data. Cybercriminals then demand a ransom payment from the victim in exchange for decrypting the system's data.
6. A **rootkit** is created to obtain administrator-level access to the victim's system. Once installed, the program gives threat actors root or privileged access to the system.

7. A **backdoor virus or remote access Trojan (RAT)** secretly creates a backdoor into an infected system that allows threat actors to remotely access it without alerting the user or the system's security programs.
8. **Adware** is used to track a user's browser and download history with the intent to display pop-up or banner advertisements that lure the user into making a purchase. For example, an advertiser might use cookies to track the web pages a user visits to better target advertising.
9. **Keyloggers**, also called system monitors, are used to see nearly everything a user does on their computer. This includes emails, opened web-pages, programs and keystrokes.

DRDO'S AIR INDEPENDENT PROPULSION SYSTEM

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) programme to build a fuel cell-based AIP system for Indian Naval Submarines has crossed several milestones in technology maturity.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) has a force multiplier effect on lethality of a diesel electric submarine as it enhances the submerged endurance of the boat, several folds.
- Fuel cell-based AIP has merits in performance compared to other technologies.
- Air-independent propulsion (AIP) is any marine propulsion technology that allows a non-nuclear submarine to operate without access to atmospheric oxygen (by surfacing or using a snorkel). AIP can augment or replace the diesel-electric propulsion system of non-nuclear vessels.
- Modern non-nuclear submarines are potentially stealthier than nuclear submarines; a nuclear ship's reactor must constantly pump coolant, generating some amount of detectable noise.
- Non-nuclear submarines running on battery power or AIP, on the other hand, can be virtually silent. While nuclear-powered designs still dominate in submergence times and deep-ocean performance, small, high-tech non-nuclear attack submarines are highly effective in coastal operations and pose a significant threat to less-stealthy and less-maneuvrable nuclear submarines.
- AIP is usually implemented as an auxiliary source, with the traditional diesel engine handling surface propulsion. Most such systems generate electricity which in turn drives an electric motor for propulsion or recharges the boat's batteries.
- The submarine's electrical system is also used for providing "hotel services"—ventilation, lighting, heating etc.—although this consumes a small amount of power compared to that required for propulsion.
- AIP can be retrofitted into existing submarine hulls by inserting an additional hull section.
- AIP does not normally provide the endurance or power to replace atmospheric dependent propulsion, but allows longer submergence than a conventionally propelled submarine. A typical conventional power plant provides 3 megawatts maximum, and an AIP source around 10% of that.
- A nuclear submarine's propulsion plant is usually much greater than 20 megawatts.

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

India is committed to eliminate two of these NTDs - Lymphatic Filariasis (Hathipaon) and Visceral Leishmaniasis (Kala-Azar) that put the future of our children at high risk.

HIGHLIGHTS

INDIA signed the 'Call to Action to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2021'.

- Since the launch of the **Global Program to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF)** by the World Health Organization in 2000, endemic countries across the world including India have adopted a twin pillar strategy - prevention through **Mass Drug Administration (MDA)** using combination of 2 anti-filarial drugs (DEC and Albendazole), and, providing **Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP)** services to those affected by the disease.
- Renewing India's commitment towards elimination, the Government launched the **Accelerated Plan for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis (APELF)** in 2018, and as part of intensifying efforts towards elimination later rolled out IDA treatment in a phased manner.
- By the end of February 2019, India successfully rolled out IDA across 4 districts including Arwal in Bihar (20 December 2018), Simdega in Jharkhand (10 January 2019), Nagpur in Maharashtra (20 January 2019) and

Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh (20 February 2019). A total of 8.07 million people out of 10.7 million vulnerable people (75.4%) were benefitted with the IDA medicines.

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

- Lymphatic filariasis, considered globally as a neglected tropical disease (NTD), is a parasitic disease caused by microscopic, thread-like worms. The adult worms only live in the human lymph system. The lymph system maintains the body's fluid balance and fights infections.
- Lymphatic filariasis is spread from person to person by mosquitoes.
- People with the disease can suffer from lymphedema and elephantiasis and in men, swelling of the scrotum, called hydrocele.
- Lymphatic filariasis is a leading cause of permanent disability worldwide. Communities frequently shun and reject women and men disfigured by the disease.

CYCLONE "MAHA"

A meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, Shri Rajiv Gauba, was held to review the preparations for the cyclone over the Comorin and adjoining Lakshadweep Islands.

HIGHLIGHTS

IMD informed that the Depression that had developed in the Comorin Sea, had intensified into a Cyclonic storm. It is likely to cross Lakshadweep Islands by the noon of 31st October 2019 as a Severe Cyclonic Storm and emerge thereafter into the east Central Arabian Sea.

CYCLONE

- In meteorology, a cyclone is a large-scale air mass that rotates around a strong centre of low atmospheric pressure.
- Cyclones are characterized by inward spiraling winds that rotate about a zone of low pressure.
- The largest low-pressure systems are polar vortices and extratropical cyclones of the largest scale.
- Warm-core cyclones such as tropical cyclones and subtropical cyclones also lie within the synoptic scale.
- Mesocyclones, tornadoes, and dust devils lie within smaller mesoscale.
- Upper level cyclones can exist without the presence of a surface low, and can pinch off from the base of the tropical upper tropospheric trough during the summer months in the Northern Hemisphere.
- Cyclones have also been seen on extraterrestrial planets, such as Mars, Jupiter, and Neptune.
- Cyclogenesis is the process of cyclone formation and intensification.

2ND ASSEMBLY OF INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE (ISA)

Two New Countries- Eritrea and St. Kittis and Nevis, Sign the ISA Framework Agreement; Taking Signatory Countries to 83.

HIGHLIGHTS

- At the United Nations Climate Action Summit 2019 pledged to increase renewable energy capacity to 175 GW by 2022 and committed for further increasing it to 450 GW.
- India stands among the top five countries of the world in terms of solar energy capacity and total renewable energy capacity. Facilitation for procurement of power through transparent tariff based competitive bidding has led to a remarkable reduction in cost of solar and wind power.

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy hosted the second Assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 30 and 31 October 2019 New Delhi. While on 30 October 2019, coordination and consultation meetings on different aspects of ISA programmes and initiatives held.

1. The Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of the ISA, and gives directions on various administrative, financial and programme related issues.

2. Earlier 81 countries of the 121 prospective member countries have signed the Framework Agreement of the ISA. Of these, 58 countries have ratified the same.

3. The first Assembly of the ISA was attended by 78 countries, and they had affirmed their determination to accelerate the deployment of solar energy worldwide for achieving universal energy access at affordable rates. Recognizing that ISA has a major role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals, and objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and that the ISA initiative would benefit the world at large, during the first Assembly of the ISA an Indian resolution to extend the Membership of the organisation to all countries that are Members of the United Nations was adopted.

4. Since the first Assembly on 3 October 2018, ISA has initiated many activities and programmes.

a) Demand for over 1000 MW solar power and 300000 solar water pumps has been aggregated from ISA member countries.

b) Some of the major activities for building domestic capacity of the ISA member countries include ITEC Master Trainers Programme at NISE Gurugram; M. Tech programme for mid-career professionals at IIT, Delhi; STAR-C programme, and development of the INFOPEPIA.

c) In order to understand the challenges and issues 'on the ground' and to strengthen support for ISA programmes, the ISA sent country missions to eight countries over the course of 2019 – to Benin, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Togo, and Uganda.

d) ISA has significantly extended outreach and have partnered with over 40 organizations. These broadly include UN, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), international and regional organizations and foundations, and private sector players.

ISA

- The agreement of the International Solar Alliance was open for signature during the COP22 at Marrakech on November 15, 2016. The signatories of the agreement include India, France, Australia, UAE, UK, Japan amongst others.
- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an alliance of more than 122 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, now extended to all members of UN.
- The Paris Declaration establishes ISA as an alliance dedicated to the promotion of solar energy among its member countries.
- Objectives: The ISA's major objectives include global deployment of over 1,000GW of solar generation capacity and mobilisation of investment of over US\$ 1000 billion into solar energy by 2030.
- As an action-oriented organisation, the ISA brings together countries with rich solar potential to aggregate global demand, thereby reducing prices through bulk purchase, facilitating the deployment of existing solar technologies at scale, and promoting collaborative solar R&D and capacity building.
- When the ISA Framework Agreement entered into force on December 6th, 2017, ISA formally became a de-jure treaty based International Intergovernmental Organization, headquartered at Gurugram, India.

EX-EKUEVERIN

Tenth edition of the Joint Military Exercise Ekuverin between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force was organised from 07 to 20 October 2019 at Aundh Military Station in Pune, Maharashtra.

- The Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Forces have been conducting Exercise Ekuverin meaning 'Friends' in the Dhivehi language since 2009.
- The 14 days Joint Exercise held alternatively in India and Maldives focuses on enhancing interoperability between the two forces for carrying out counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in a semi-urban environment under the United Nations mandate.
- As part of validation exercise troops of both the armies carried out specialized joint counter-terrorist operations which were witnessed by dignitaries of both the armies.
- During the exercise, the troops shared best practices being followed by both nations in varied terrain.

EX-NOMADIC ELEPHANT

14th edition of Indo – Mongolian joint military training, Exercise Nomadic Elephant-XIV, being conducted over a period of 14 days, commenced from 05 Oct 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Nomadic Elephant-XIV is aimed at training troops in counter insurgency & counter terrorism operations under United Nations mandate.
- The Joint Exercise will enhance defence co-operation and military relations between the two nations.
- It is an ideal platform for the armies of both the nations to share their experiences & best practices and gain mutually during the joint training.

EX-KAZIND

The 4th edition of annual military exercise KAZIND 2019 between India and Kazakhstan army commenced at Pithoragarh.

The aim of exercise is joint training of troops in Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism operations in both Jungle and Mountainous terrain. Exercise KAZIND 2019 can be termed as a facade of long-standing strategic ties between India and Kazakhstan.

EX-DHARMA GUARDIAN 2019

Joint Military Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN-219 between India and Japan conducted at counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School, Vairengte from 19 Oct 2019 to 02 Nov 2019.

- Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN is an annual training event which is being conducted in India since 2018. Notably, in the series of military training exercises undertaken by India with various countries Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN with Japan is crucial and significant in terms of security challenges faced by both the nations in the backdrop of global terrorism.
- The scope of this exercise covers platoon level joint training on counter terrorism operations in jungle and urban scenario.
- The joint military exercise will enhance the level of defence co-operation between Indian Army and Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces (JGSDF) which in turn will further foster the bilateral relations between the two nations.

EX- EASTERN BRIDGE V

Indian Air Force participated in a Bilateral Joint exercise with Royal Air Force Oman (RAFO), named EX EASTERN BRIDGE-V, held from 17-26 Oct 19, at Air Force Base Masirah.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The last exercise, EX EASTERN BRIDGE-IV was held in 2017 at Jamnagar. For the first time, MiG-29 fighter aircraft participated in an International Exercise outside India.
- IAF contingent comprises of MiG-29 and C-17 aircraft. MiG-29 will be exercising with Royal Air Force Oman's Eurofighter Typhoon, F-16 and Hawk.
- The exercise will enhance inter-operability during mutual operations between the two Air Forces and will provide an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices.

EX-DANX-19

Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) has conducted the second edition of Defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands 2019 (DANX-19), a large scale joint services exercise from 14 Oct to 18 Oct 19.

- Spanning over a period of five days, components of the **Indian Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard** carried out mobilisation and field manoeuvres to validate defensive plans of Headquarters ANC towards pursuance of the Command's responsibility, namely ensuring territorial integrity of the A&N Islands.
- In addition to internal forces from ANC, accretional forces from Mainland comprising ships and aircraft, Special Forces from the newly formed Armed Forces Special Operations Division (AFSOD), also participated in this edition.

EX-SHAKTI 2019

- Series of 'Exercise SHAKTI' between **India and France** commenced in year 2011.
- It's a biennial exercise and is conducted alternately in India and France.
- As part of Exercise SHAKTI – 2019, French Army troops arrived in India on 26 October 2019 for training with Indian Troops.
- The bilateral training exercise conducted at Foreign Training Node at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan.
- The joint exercise focussed on Counter Terrorism operations in backdrop of semi-desert terrain under United Nations Mandate.
- The exercise aimed at enhancing understanding, cooperation and interoperability between the two Armies.

NIRVANA IAS