

My Notes....

NATIONAL

INDIA IN UNDP'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

India ranked 132 out of 191 countries in the **2021 human development index**, according to a report released by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**. **India's HDI value of 0.633** places the country in the **medium human development category**, lower than its value of 0.645 in the 2020 report. **India ranked 131** among 189 countries in the **2020 human development index**.

What is in report?

1. Like global trends, in **India's case**, the **drop in HDI from 0.645 in 2019 to 0.633 in 2021** can be attributed to falling life expectancy - **69.7 to 67.2 years**.
2. India's **expected years of schooling stand at 11.9 years**, and the mean years of schooling are at 6.7 years.
3. The Human Development Report - **Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World** - launched by UNDP - argues that layers of uncertainty are stacking up and interacting to unsettle life in unprecedented ways.
4. The Human Development Report shows that **progress globally is in reverse**. India's decline in human development mirrors this trend - **impacted by intersecting crises**.
5. India is **bridging the human development gap between men and women faster** than the world. This development has come at a **smaller cost to the environment**.
6. India's growth story reflects the **country's investments in inclusive growth, social protection, gender-responsive policies**, and **push towards renewables** to ensure no one is left behind.
7. **India's HDI value continues to exceed South Asia's average human development**. India's HDI value has been steadily catching up to the world average since 1990 - indicating a **faster than the global rate of progress** in human development.
8. This is a result of **policy choices made by the country** over time, including investments made in health and education.
9. **South Asian economies** like **Bangladesh** and **Bhutan** bucked the trend and registered an improvement.

Flashback

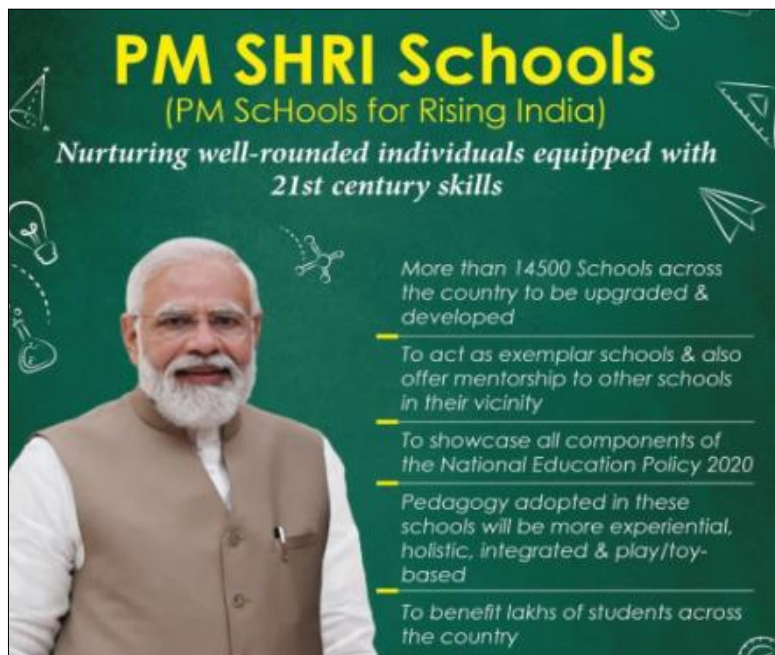
1. Pakistani economist **Mahbub -ul-Haq** developed **Human Development Index (HDI)** as a measure to track progress on **three key dimensions of human development** — a **long and healthy life**, **access to education**, and a **decent standard of living** in 1990 with the objective — **“people are the real wealth of nations”**.
2. It is calculated using the following **four indicators** – **life expectancy at birth**, **mean years of schooling**, **expected years of schooling**, and the **per capita Gross National Income**.

PM-SHRI SCHEME ANNOUNCED

Prime Minister on 5 September 2022 announced a **new scheme** on **Teacher's Day** under which **14,500 schools will be revamped**. The **development and upgradation** of 14,500 schools across India under the **Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) Yojana**. These will become model schools which will encapsulate the full spirit of **NEP (National Education Policy)**.

What

1. The **PM-SHRI schools** will have a **modern, transformational** and **holistic** method of imparting education. Emphasis will be on a discovery oriented, **learning centric way of teaching**.
2. **Focus** will also be on **modern infra** including latest technology, smart classrooms, sports and more.
3. The **PM-SHRI schools** will further benefit lakhs of students across India in the spirit of NEP.
4. Owing to the pandemic and limited incomes, there has been a significant shift to government schools.
5. Findings of the **16th Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)** conducted in 7,299 schools across 25 states and Union Territories in 2021, show that in the **age group of six to 14**, enrolment in private schools decreased from 32.5 per cent in 2018 to 24.4 per cent in 2021.



KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE-GYANVAPI MOSQUE DISPUTE

At the **heart of the decision** on 12 September 2022 by the **Varanasi District and Sessions Court** dismissing the **Anjuman Intezamia Masajid Committee's plea** challenging the maintainability of the civil suits filed by five Hindu women seeking the right to worship at the complex, is the **interpretation** of the **Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**.

What

1. The committee argued that the **Places of Worship Act**—which states that the **religious character of any place of worship** as it existed on 15 August 1947, must be maintained—barred the changing of the character of the mosque.
2. In his verdict, District Judge A K Vishvesha observed that among the “**main contentions of defendant are...**the suit of the plaintiffs is barred by **Section 4 of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.**”
3. However, the judge observed that according to the plaintiffs, “**they were worshipping...**at the disputed place incessantly since a **long time till 1993**.”
4. After 1993, they were allowed to worship the above-mentioned Gods only once a year under the regulatory state of Uttar Pradesh. Thus, according to plaintiffs, they worshipped...at the disputed place regularly even after 15th August 1947.
5. Therefore, **The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**, does not operate as bar on the suit of plaintiffs and the suit is not barred by...the Act.

What is the 1991 Place of Worship Act?

1. The long title describes it as “**An Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character** of any place of worship as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.”
2. **Section 3 of the Act bars the conversion**, in full or part, of a place of worship of any religious denomination into a place of worship of a **different religious denomination** — or even a different segment of the same religious denomination.
3. **Section 4(1) declares** that the religious character of a place of worship “**shall continue to be the same as it existed**” on 15 August 1947.
4. **Section 4(2)** says any suit or legal proceeding with respect to the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship existing on 15 August 1947, pending before any court, shall abate — and no fresh suit or legal proceedings shall be instituted.
5. The proviso to this subsection saves suits, appeals and legal proceedings that are pending on the date of commencement of the Act if they **pertain to the conversion of the religious character** of a place of worship after the cut-off date.
6. **Section 5** stipulates that the **Act shall not apply to the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case**, and to any suit, appeal or proceeding relating to it.

COMMITTEE TO SUGGEST FRAMEWORK OF HEALTH POLICY

The **NITI Aayog** has set up a committee on formulation of '**Integrative Health Policy**' to suggest measures to adopt ways combining **modern and traditional methods** and to propose a **framework of comprehensive integrative health policy** to achieve an **inclusive, affordable, evidence-based healthcare**, the Centre has told the Delhi High Court.

More about the committee

1. Among others, the committee has been asked to **suggest recommendations** for effective implementation of **integrative healthcare** through **education, research and clinical practice**.
2. It had also been tasked to propose **roadmap for disease preventive** and health promotion in national programmes based on modern and traditional integrative approaches.
3. This was **disclosed in response to a PIL** by BJP leader and advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, who sought a direction for adopting holistic and integrated system of study and treatment under **Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy**.
4. The petitioner also sought a direction to implement a '**Holistic Integrated Common Syllabus and Common Curriculum**' of Allopathy, Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy for all medical colleges in order to secure right to health guaranteed under **Articles 21, 39 (e), 41, 43, 47, 48** of the Constitution.
5. In its written response, the **Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry** said the **National Commission for Indian System of Medicine** and **National Commission for Homeopathy** prescribed their own standards for education.
6. The institutionally qualified practitioners of **Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani Tibb and Homeopathy** are eligible to practice respective Systems including **Surgery and Gynecology obstetrics, Anesthesiology, ENT, ophthalmology** etc., based on the training and teaching.
7. However, **the right to practice any profession is a fundamental right** guaranteed under **Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution** but this is subject to any law relating to the qualifications necessary for practicing any profession enacted under **Article 19(6)** of the Constitution.

8. The **regulatory measures**, including **professional qualification and conduct**, have been applied, keeping in view not only the **right of the medical practitioners** but also the **right to life and proper health care of persons** who need medical care and treatment and to ensure there can be no compromise on professional standards of medical practitioners, the government said.

THE COMPLEX ISSUE OF ASSISTED SUICIDE

Jean-Luc Godard, one of the legends of French New Wave cinema, **died by assisted suicide** at the age of 91. French newspaper Le Monde reported that the Godard family's legal advisor, **Patrick Jeanneret**, has confirmed that the filmmaker died by assisted suicide.

Why are assisted suicide and euthanasia controversial topics?

1. **Assisted suicide and euthanasia**, both practices under which a person intentionally ends their life with **active assistance** from others, have long been contentious topics of debate as they involve a complex set of moral, ethical and in some cases, **religious questions**.
2. Several European nations, some states in **Australia and Colombia** in South America allow assisted suicide and euthanasia under certain circumstances. **Euthanasia** can further be divided into **active and passive**.
3. The **practice of passive euthanasia** involves simply stopping lifesaving treatment or medical intervention with the consent of the patient or a family member or a close friend representing the patient.
4. **Active euthanasia**, which is legal in only a few countries, entails the use of substances to end the life of the patient.

Does India allow assisted suicide or euthanasia?

1. In a **landmark judgment**, the **Supreme Court of India legalised passive euthanasia** in 2018, stating that it was a matter of **'living will'**.
2. According to the judgment, an adult in his conscious mind is permitted to refuse medical treatment or voluntarily decide not to take medical treatment to embrace **death in a natural way**, under certain conditions.
3. In the 538-page judgment, the court laid down a set of guidelines for **'living will'** and defined **passive euthanasia and euthanasia** as well.
4. It also laid down guidelines for **'living will'** made by terminally ill patients who beforehand know about their chances of slipping into a **permanent vegetative state**.
5. The court specifically stated that the rights of a patient, in such cases, would not fall out of the purview of **Article 21 (right to life and liberty)** of the Indian Constitution.

INTERNATIONAL

INDIA OPTS OUT OF JOINING IPEF TRADE PILLAR

India has decided to **join three pillars** of the United States-led **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)**--supply chains, tax and anti corruption and clean energy--while **opting out of the trade pillar** for now. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, who was in **Los Angeles** to attend the **first official in-person IPEF ministerial** on 8-9 September, said that decision was taken because so far, under the **trade track, broader consensus** had not emerged on certain issues such as **environment, labour and public procurement**.

What

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1. This is the **first plurilateral deal** that **India has agreed to join** after exiting **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) deal** at the last minute in 2019.
2. On **one pillar** which deals primarily with **trade**, the **contours of the framework**, particularly any commitments required on **environment, labour, digital trade, public procurement**, are certain areas in which a broader consensus is yet to emerge on all nations.
3. **India** has agreed to the **remaining three pillars** (supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy).
4. **India** cannot agree on **free agriculture trade**, but if it is about high standards of export, we are agreeable. **India has stood up to its own interest** and we can't be arm-twisted like other smaller countries.
5. Apart from **India and the US**, the 12 other members of the IPEF are Australia, Brunei, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. All the **other member nations** have **joined the four pillars -- trade, supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy**.

Flashback

1. The **IPEF** was launched **jointly by the US and other partner countries** of the Indo-Pacific region on the sidelines of the **Quad Summit** in Tokyo on 23 May 2022.
2. It seeks to **strengthen economic partnership** among participating countries with the objective of **enhancing resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness and competitiveness** in the region.
3. IPEF is also seen as an **economic initiative to counter China's influence** in the South and Southeast Asian nations. IPEF partner countries represent over **40 per cent of the global economy**.

CHARLES III IS ALSO KING OF COMMONWEALTH REALM

Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have announced that **King Charles III**, who succeeded his mother, **Queen Elizabeth II**, to the British throne on 10 September 2022, will be their head of state as well. **All three countries** are part of what is called the **"Commonwealth realm"**.

What is Commonwealth realm?

1. The **Commonwealth realm** is a **group of 14 countries** (not including the United Kingdom) that **recognise the British monarch as their head of state** — a position that is explicitly stated in the constitution and laws of some of these countries.
2. Besides Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, the **Commonwealth realm** includes **Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Grenada,**

What is Commonwealth of Nations or Commonwealth

1. This is a **group of 56 member countries**, the vast majority of which are former **British colonies**.
2. They are mostly in **Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific**. **Three European nations** are part of the Commonwealth: **Cyprus, Malta**, and of course, the **UK itself**.
3. The **14 Commonwealth realm countries** are part of the **larger Commonwealth**. Of the **remaining 41 member states, 36 are republics** — this group **includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka**.
4. **The other five** — Brunei Darussalam, Lesotho, Malaysia, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) and Tonga — have **their own monarchs**.
5. The **Commonwealth is home to 2.5 billion people**, a **third of the world's population**, and the bulk of who live in the **Indian subcontinent**.

Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

3. **Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are all constitutional monarchies**, with political systems that are oriented in a way that the new monarch of the UK would have become their head of state as part of the usual process.

INDIA, BANGLADESH INK FIRST WATER SHARING PACT

India and Bangladesh on 6 September 2022 signed an **interim water sharing agreement** for **Kushiyara River**, the **first such pact** since the signing of the **Ganga water treaty in 1996**. The pact will benefit people residing in **southern Assam** and the **Sylhet division of Bangladesh**.

What

1. There were **54 rivers** that pass through the **Indo-Bangladesh border**, and have been linked to the livelihood of the people of the **two countries for centuries**.
2. India has been **sharing flood-related data with Bangladesh** on a **real-time basis** and we have also **extended the period of data sharing**.
3. India and Bangladesh had signed the **Ganga water treaty in 1996** for sharing waters of the **mighty river for a period of 30 years**.
4. The treaty was signed by the then **prime minister H D Deve Gowda** and **Hasina**.

Other MoUs signed

1. MoU between the **ministry of railways (Railway Board)** Government of India and the ministry of railways, Government of Bangladesh **on training of Bangladesh Railway personnel in India**
2. MoU between the **National Judicial Academy**, India and the **Supreme Court of Bangladesh** on training and capacity building programme for Bangladesh judicial officers in India.
3. MoU on **scientific and technological cooperation** between **Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)**, India and **Bangladesh Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (BCSIR)**, Bangladesh
4. MoU between the **Prasar Bharti** and **Bangladesh Television (BTV)** on Cooperation in Broadcasting

TIBETAN DEMOCRACY DAY

A little more than six decades ago, **Tibetan Democracy Day** was marked with the inauguration of the **Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamshala** on 2 September. The day, widely known within the community as **Mangsto Duchen** ('Mangsto': democracy; 'Duchen': occasion) marks the inception of the **Tibetan democratic system in exile**. At the heart of the Tibetan democratic system, stands the **Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)**, the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamshala. So many decades later, however, the **CTA is not officially recognised by any country**.

What are the major milestones?

1. On 2 September 1960, a year after thousands of Tibetans had been forced to flee their home; the **first elected representatives** of the **Tibetan Parliament-in-exile** took their oaths in **Bodh Gaya** to inaugurate the Tibetan democratic system.
2. In 1963, the **Dalai Lama** enacted the **Tibetan constitution** based on the ideals of democracy and universal values, following which the **first women representatives were elected**.
3. In 1975, Kashag, the apex body of CTA, declared 2 September as the **founding day of Tibetan democracy**.

4. **In 1991**, the Charter of the Tibetans in exile was adopted, and in the following year, the **Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission** was established, introducing the exile community to the **three pillars of democracy**.
5. A major shift in the **political and cultural landscape** of the Tibetan people was marked when the **Dalai Lama** announced that he would assume a **position of semi-retirement**.
6. He then called for the first direct election of **Kalön Tripa**, the executive head of the CTA.
7. **A decade later in 2011**, in a first, His Holiness handed over all his political and executive power to the **Sikyong**, also known as the **President of CTA**.

How does the CTA, the Tibetan government-in-exile, work?

1. **The CTA**, which is based in **Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh**, has a branch office in every Tibetan settlement spread across India and abroad.
2. Under its incumbent President, **Penpa Tsering**, CTA runs **seven departments: Religion and Culture, Home, Finance, Education, Security, Information and International Relations, and Health**. The President is directly elected every five years.

ANTI-RADIATION PILLS OF A NUCLEAR EMERGENCY

With fears of a **nuclear disaster** at **Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia power plant** growing, the European Union has decided to pre-emptively supply **5.5 million anti-radiation pills** to be distributed among residents in the vicinity. Those being handed out the pills are being told to **only take them once a radiation leak** has been confirmed.

How do these pills work?

1. After a radiation leak, **radioactive iodine floats through the air** and then contaminates food, water and soil.
2. While **radioactive iodine deposited during external exposure** can be removed using **warm water and soap**, according to the World Health Organisation, the bigger risk is inhaling it.
3. "**Internal exposure**, or **irradiation**, occurs when radioactive iodine enters the body and accumulates in the **thyroid gland**," says the WHO.
4. The **thyroid gland**, which **uses iodine to produce hormones** to regulate the body's metabolism, has no way of telling radioactive from non-radioactive iodine.
5. **Potassium iodide (KI) tablets** rely on this to achieve '**thyroid blocking**'. KI pills taken a few hours before or soon after radiation exposure ensure that **non-radioactive iodine in the medicine is absorbed** quickly to make the thyroid "full".
6. Because KI contains so much **non-radioactive iodine**, the thyroid becomes full and cannot absorb any more iodine – either stable or radioactive – for the next 24 hours.
7. But **KI pills are preventive only** and **cannot reverse any damage done by radiation** to the thyroid gland. Once thyroid gland absorbs radioactive iodine, those exposed are at a high risk of developing thyroid cancer.

What are anti-radiation pills?

1. **Potassium iodide (KI) tablets**, or anti-radiation pills, are known to **provide some protection in cases of radiation exposure**.
2. They contain **non-radioactive iodine** and can help block absorption, and subsequent concentration, of radioactive iodine in the thyroid gland.

1.

ECONOMY

THE COMPANY LAW COMMITTEE EXTENDED

The **Ministry of Corporate Affairs** has **extended by a year** the tenure of the **company law committee** that advises on changes needed in the **Companies Act** and the **Limited Liability Partnership Act**. The committee, led by the secretary in the ministry, has been **instrumental in key amendments** brought out in the **regulatory framework** in recent years including the **decriminalization of the Companies Act**.

What an official order said

1. The **committee's term stands extended by one year** up to 16 September 2023. The panel, originally **formed in 2019**, has already been extended twice.
2. The panel is in the **nature of a standing committee** which recommends measures needed to be adopted from time to time **depending on the need of the hour**.
3. Earlier this year, the committee recommended **major changes to the Companies Act** aimed at **giving more flexibility to investors** for raising capital in and strengthening the framework of statutory audit.
4. The committee also proposed **allowing companies to issue fractional shares** and discounted shares as part of efforts to improve ease of doing business.
5. Allowing businesses to issue fractional shares, a **practice now prohibited under the Companies Act**, will help retail investors access high-value shares.
6. These proposals are currently under the **examination of the ministry for legislative work**.
7. Currently, an **11-member committee** is chaired by corporate affairs secretary Tarun Bajaj.
8. The committee was constituted as **part of the government's efforts** to promote **ease of living** by providing **ease of doing business** to law abiding corporates, **to foster improved corporate compliance** for stakeholders at large and to address emerging issues having an impact on the working of companies.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

INDIA'S FIRST INDIGENOUS AIRCRAFT COMMISSIONED

Prime Minister commissioned **India's first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant** in Kochi on 2 September 2022. The **giant warship**, housing state-of-the-art automation features, will contribute significantly towards enhancing **India's maritime capabilities**. The commissioning of Vikrant is being seen as a significant step towards **India's self-reliance in the defence sector**.

Key points about INS Vikrant

1. **INS Vikrant** is the **largest ship ever built in India's maritime history**, built at a cost of Rs 20,000 crore
2. It has been named after **India's first aircraft carrier** (which was in service from 1961 to 1997) that played a **vital role in the 1971 war** with Pakistan
3. INS Vikrant vital stats: **262m long, 62m wide**; displaces approximately 43,000 tonnes when fully loaded; maximum designed **speed of 28 knots** with **endurance of 7500 nautical miles**.
4. With its commissioning, **India joins an elite league** with **US, UK, Russia, China and France**- countries capabilities to indigenously design and build an aircraft carrier

5. INS Vikrant designed by **Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau**, built by **Cochin Shipyard Limited**.
6. Warship built using **indigenous equipment and machinery** supplied by India's major industrial houses as well as over 100 MSMEs
7. Capable of **supporting 30 aircraft; MiG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31 and MH-60R multi-role helicopters, Advanced Light Helicopters and Light Combat Aircraft** to be deployed on ship
8. Has around **2,200 compartments**, designed for a crew of around 1,600 that include specialised cabins to **accommodate women officers and sailors**
9. Also has a **full-fledged medical complex** with latest equipment including physiotherapy clinic, ICU, laboratories and isolation ward. Aircraft landing trials will begin in November, **to be completed by mid-2023**

IAD TECHNOLOGY SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATED

ISRO on 3 September 2022 successfully demonstrated a new technology with **Inflatable Aerodynamic Decelerator (IAD)** which it said is a **game changer** with multiple applications for future missions. **An IAD**, designed and developed by **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)**, was successfully test flown in a '**Rohini**' sounding rocket from **Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS)**.

What

1. The **IAD** was initially **folded and kept inside the payload bay of the rocket**. At around **84 km altitude**, the IAD was inflated and it descended through atmosphere with the **payload part of sounding rocket**.
2. The **pneumatic system for inflation** was developed by **Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC)**.
3. The **IAD** has systematically **reduced the velocity of the payload** through **aerodynamic drag** and followed the predicted trajectory.
4. This is **first time** that an IAD is designed specifically for spent stage recovery. All the objectives of the mission were successfully demonstrated.
5. The **IAD has huge potential in variety of space applications** like **recovery of spent stages of rocket**, for **landing payloads on to Mars or Venus** and in making space habitat for human space flight missions.
6. **Rohini sounding rockets** are routinely used for **flight demonstration of new technologies** being developed by ISRO as well as by scientists from India and abroad.
7. In **today's flight**, along with IAD, new elements like micro-video imaging system which captured the bloom and flight of IAD, a **miniature software defined radio telemetry transmitter**, MEMS-based acoustic sensor and a host of new methodologies were flight tested successfully, ISRO said.
8. These will be inducted later to the major missions. **Sounding rockets** offers an **exciting platform** for experimentation in **upper atmosphere**.
9. This demonstration opens a **gateway for cost effective spent stage recovery** using the **Inflatable Aerodynamics Decelerator technology**. It can also be used in **ISRO's future missions to Venus and Mars**.

INDIA'S FIRST 'DARK SKY RESERVE'

By the end of 2022, **India** will establish the **country's first Dark Sky Reserve** in the **cold desert regions of Ladakh**, Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent charge) for Science and Technology, announced on 3 September 2022. This facility will also **promote astronomy-tourism**.

What is a Dark Sky Reserve?

1. A **Dark Sky Reserve** is public or private land with a **distinguished nocturnal environment** and **starry nights** that has been developed responsibly to prevent **light pollution**.
2. According to the **International Dark Sky Association (IDSA)**, these reserves “consist of a **core area meeting minimum criteria for sky quality** and natural darkness, and a peripheral area that supports **dark sky preservation** in the core.”
3. These reserves are formed through a “**partnership of multiple land managers** who have recognized the value of the **natural nighttime environment** through regulations and long-term planning”.

How does a site become a ‘Dark Sky Reserve’?

1. Individuals or groups can nominate a site for certification to the **International Dark Sky Association (IDSA)**. There are **five designated categories**, namely **International Dark Sky parks, communities, reserves, sanctuaries** and **Urban Night Sky Places**.
2. The certification process is similar to that of a site being awarded the **UNESCO World Heritage Site tag** or getting recognised as a **Biosphere Reserve**.
3. Between 2001 and January 2022, there have been **195 sites** recognised as **International Dark Sky Places** globally.

Why was Ladakh chosen for the project?

1. **Ladakh is a unique cold desert** located about **3,000 metres above sea level** with high mountainous terrains.
2. Long and harsh winters with minimum temperatures dropping to **minus 40 degrees Celci us** make large parts of the UT highly inhabitable.
3. This **aridity, limited vegetation, high elevation** and large areas with sparse populations – all make it the perfect setting for long-term astronomical observatories and dark sky places.

STEALTH FRIGATE 'TARAGIRI' LAUNCHED

'Taragiri', the **third stealth frigate** of the **Indian Navy's Project 17A**, was launched in Mumbai on 11 September 2022, the **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL)** said. This ship has been built using an **integrated construction methodology** which involves **hull block construction** in different geographical locations and integration and erection on the slipway at the MDL.

About Taragiri and Project 17A

1. **P17A ships** have been designed by the **Indian Navy's in-house design organization**, the Directorate of Naval Design (Surface Ship Design Group).
2. **Taragiri's air defence capability**, designed to counter the threat of enemy aircraft and **anti-ship cruise missiles**, will revolve around the vertical launch and long-range surface-to-air missile system.
3. Indigenously developed **triple tube light weight torpedo launchers** and **rocket launchers** will add punch to the ship's anti-submarine capability.
4. The **first ship of Project 17A, 'Nilgiri'**, was launched on 28 September 2019, and is expected to undergo sea trials in the first half of 2024.
5. The **second ship, 'Himgiri'**, was launched on 14 December 2020, and is expected to be commissioned by August next year.
6. The **third ship, 'Udaygiri'**, was launched on 17 May 2022 and it is expected to start sea trials during the second half of 2024. The **fourth ship, 'Dunagiri'**, was launched on 15 July 2022.

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7. The **keels of the sixth and seventh ships** were laid on 5 March 2021, and 28 June 2022. They will be named **INS Vindhyagiri** and **INS Mahendragiri**.
8. **Project 17A ships** are sourcing **80% of the material/ equipment** required for the projects from indigenous vendors. It is also generating employment for over 2,000 Indian firms and MSMEs.
9. The ships are propelled by **two gas turbines** and **2 main diesel engines** which are designed to achieve a speed of over 28 knots.
10. The steel used in **hull construction of P17A frigates** is indigenously developed DMR 249A, which is a low carbon micro alloy grade steel manufactured by SAIL.

CANCER TO BE DECLARED AS NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

The **139th report** on "**Cancer Care Plan and Management: Prevention, Diagnosis, Research & Affordability of Cancer Treatment**" was submitted to the Rajya Sabha chairman on 12 September 2022, which recommended that the Cancer be declared as a **notifiable disease**. The **parliamentary standing committee on the health and family welfare** made the recommendation citing several unreported deaths owing to cancer in India.

Main recommendation of the committee

1. The Committee expressed its **deep displeasure** over the **National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP)** is working since 1982 through **Population Based Cancer Registry (PBCR)** and **Hospital Based Cancer Registry (HBCR)** but **only 10 per cent** of the Indian population is covered under PBCRs.
2. The Committee recommended the **National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (ICMR)** to take requisite action to set up a **population-based cancer registry (PCBR)** in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Orissa.

What is a notifiable disease?

1. A **notifiable disease** is any disease that is **required by law to be reported** to government authorities.
2. The **collation of information** allows the authorities to monitor the disease, and **provides early warning** of possible outbreaks.

What is Cancer?

1. **Cancer** is a disease in which some of the **body's cells grow uncontrollably** and spread to other parts of the body.
2. The ability to combat the disease and recover depends on **few factors** including at **which stage the disease was diagnosed**.
3. Cancer often has the **ability to spread throughout your body**. Cancer is the **second-leading cause of death** in the world.

MISCELLANEOUS

HINDI DIWAS CELEBRATED

Hindi Diwas, observed across the country in schools, colleges and other institutions on 14 September 2022, is the celebration of the **declaration of Hindi** as the **official language of India**. It is celebrated **every year on 14 September**. **Hindi is the official language in India** and is quite popular in countries like- **Fiji, New Zealand, Singapore, Mauritius**, others.

History

1. On **14th September in the year 1949**, the Constituent Assembly of India decided by one vote that **Hindi would be the official language of India**. Hindi Diwas is celebrated every year on 14 September to mark this day.
2. The day also marks the **birthday of Beohar Rajendra Simha**, who was an acclaimed Indian scholar. Simha is known for the illustrations in the original final **manuscript of the Constitution of India**.
3. It was on his **50th birthday** that the **Hindi language got adopted in official terms**. It was the late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who decided to celebrate **14 September as Hindi Diwas**.

Importance

1. **Hindi Diwas** is celebrated on 14 September annually **to promote the language and its usage** across the nation.
2. Apart from Hindi Diwas, **World Hindi Day** is celebrated **every year on 10 January** to commemorate the **anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference** held at Nagpur on 10 January 1975, in which 122 delegates from 30 countries participated. The **aim of the conference** was **to promote Hindi language across the world**.

NMC BANS ‘CONVERSION THERAPY’

India’s medical regulatory body **National Medical Commission (NMC)** said on 2 September 2022 that it had declared **conversion therapy** – an **illegal practice** that **queer people are subjected to in order to “cure” them** — as an act of professional misconduct. At a hearing on 2 September 2022, **NMC** told the **Madras High Court** that it had complied with the court’s 8 July order and banned the practice under the **Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002**.

What the court said

1. **Conversion therapy** is the attempt to change an **individual’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression**.
2. Sometimes referred to as **reparative therapy**, the practice may include **talking therapies** and prayer as well as extreme practices such as **exorcism, physical violence, and food deprivation**.
3. These methods are used to try **to stop or suppress a person’s sexual or gender identity** in order to “cure” them by changing their sexual orientation or gender identity.
4. On 2 September 2022, the Madras High Court gave the Tamil Nadu government 12 weeks to notify the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules** after the government reported to the court that the Act is in its final stages.
5. The court **admonished the state government** for its delay in implementing the policy.

INDIAN WINS AWARD FOR FORTIFYING MILLET

Telangana-based agriculture scientist **Mahalingam Govindaraj** has won the coveted **2022 Norman E. Borlaug Award** for Field Research and Application for developing a variety of pearl millet **rich in iron and zinc**. The variety, named **Dhanashakti**, is the **world’s first biofortified pearl millet or bajra** which was released for cultivation in 2014.

What

1. **Govindaraj** is recognised for his **outstanding leadership** in mainstreaming **biofortified crops**, particularly pearl millet, in **India and Africa**, the **World Food Prize Foundation** said in a statement on 30 August 2022.

2. It added that for over a decade, Govindaraj directed the **development and dissemination of high-yielding, high-iron and high-zinc pearl millet varieties** which contributed to better nutrition for thousands of farmers and their communities.
3. **Biofortification** is a process of selective breeding to **increase productivity and micronutrient** content of crops.
4. The award was **constituted in 2011** in the memory of **Norman E. Borlaug** whose work as a young scientist in Mexico in the 1940s and 1950s was instrumental in the fight to eradicate global hunger and poverty.
5. Endowed by the **Rockefeller Foundation**, the \$10,000 award is presented every October in Iowa, the US, to recognise the work of an **individual scientist** under the **age of 40**.
6. **India adopted high-yield dwarf wheat** varieties developed by **Borlaug** during the **Green Revolution** beginning in the mid-1960s which made the country self-sufficient in food production.

Flashback

1. The **first biofortified food crop**, a **Vitamin A enriched sweet potato**, was released in 2004. Since then, **hundreds of biofortified varieties** of **12 different staple crops** have either been released or are in testing phases in more than 60 countries.
2. Globally, **biofortification** is now used as one of the several ways to **fight hidden hunger** or **micronutrient deficiency**.
3. The **other strategies** are promoting **dietary diversity**, **post-harvest fortification** of food, and providing vitamin, iron and folic acid supplements to targeted groups like pregnant women and lactating mothers.

JOINT EXERCISE 'GAGAN STRIKE' CONDUCTED

Army's Kharga Corps and **the Air Force** have conducted joint exercise '**Gagan Strike**' in Punjab, a defence spokesperson said on 9 September 2022. The exercise, conducted over four days, comprised the **deployment of attack helicopters** as the aerial arm in support of ground forces carrying out drills, **practising annihilation of enemy defences** and **deep penetration**.

More about the exercise

1. The exercise showcased **precision firepower of the attack helicopters** in coordination with ground forces' mechanised columns.
2. It validated the **Apache 64E** and **Advanced Light Helicopter WSI** as potent weapons delivery platforms.
3. The force multiplier effect of combining these machines with ground operations has enhanced the forces' **combat superiority**.
4. The joint exercise was spearheaded by General Officer Commanding, Kharga Corps, Lt Gen Pratik Sharma.

384 DRUGS ON ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

Twenty-six drugs, including the common gastrointestinal medicines **ranitidine** and **sucralfate**, have been deleted from the revised **National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) 2022** released on 13 September 2022 by Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

More about NLEM

1. **Three hundred and eighty-four drugs** find place in the NLEM, 2022 with the **addition of 34 drugs**, while **26 from the previous list** have been dropped. The medicines have been categorised into **27 therapeutic categories**.
2. The **National List of Essential Medicines** was **first compiled in 1996** and it was **revised thrice earlier** in 2003, 2011, and 2015.
3. **Drugs deleted from the NLEM** includes medicines banned in India and those having reports of concerns on the safety profile.

Purpose of National List of Essential Medicines

1. The primary purpose of the NLEM is to **promote rational use of medicines** considering the three important aspects — **cost, safety and efficacy**.
2. It also helps in **optimum utilisation of healthcare resources** and budget; drug procurement policies, health insurance; **improving prescribing habits**; medical education and drafting pharmaceutical policies

INDIA DISCRIMINATION REPORT 2022

Discrimination in India causes **100 per cent of employment inequality** faced by **women in rural areas** in the labour market and 98 per cent in urban areas, according to the **Oxfam India report**. Apart from women, **historically oppressed communities** such as **Dalits and Adivasis**, along with religious minorities such as Muslims, also continue to face discrimination in accessing jobs, livelihoods, and agricultural credits, said the **India Discrimination Report 2022**.

What the report said

1. The report said that **in rural areas**, the **sharpest increase of 17 per cent** in unemployment was for Muslims compared to non-Muslims during the first quarter of the Covid-19 pandemic making the rural Muslim unemployment rate 31.4 per cent.
2. **Highlighting that women in India**, despite their **same educational qualifications** and work experience, face discrimination as compared to men in the labour market due to societal and employers' prejudices.
3. The **lower wages for salaried women** are due to **67 percent of discrimination** and 33 percent due to lack of education and work experience.
4. Calling on the **Indian government** to actively **enforce effective measures** for the protection and **right to equal wages and work for all women**, Oxfam India said the participation of women **should be incentivised** in the workforce, including **enhancements in pay, upskilling, job reservations** and easy return-to-work options after maternity.
5. **Discrimination in the labour market** is when people with identical capabilities are treated differently because of their identity or social backgrounds.
6. There have been minimal attempts to measure the extent of discrimination and its impact on the **lives of marginalised communities in India** so far.
7. The findings of the Oxfam report indicate **discrimination as a driving factor** behind the **low Women's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** in the country.
8. The report said **LFPR for women in India was only 25.1 per cent** in 2020-21 for urban and rural women, which was **42.7 per cent in 2004-05**, thus showing the withdrawal of women from the workforce despite rapid economic growth during the same period.
9. This is considerably **lower than Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa** as per the latest World Bank estimates.

6TH EDITION OF MARITIME EXERCISE 'JIMEX'

The **sixth edition** of **Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2022 (JIMEX 22)** hosted by the **Indian Navy** began in the **Bay of Bengal** on 11 September 2022. The Indian Navy is represented by three indigenously designed and built warships, **Sahyadri**, a **multi-purpose stealth frigate** and **Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvettes Kadmatt and Kavaratti**.

More about the exercise

1. **JIMEX 22** involves two Phases; **exercises at sea** and a **harbour phase** at Visakhapatnam.
2. This edition marks the **10th anniversary of JIMEX**, which began in Japan in 2012. It also coincides with the **70th anniversary** of the establishment of **diplomatic relations between India and Japan**.
3. **JIMEX 22** seeks to consolidate the **high degree of interoperability** between the two countries maritime forces through complex exercises in the **surface, sub-surface and air domains**.
4. The exercises were aimed at **enhancing interoperability** and streamlining seamanship and communication procedures.
5. This exercise is part of the ongoing efforts between the two navies toward ensuring **safe and secure international shipping and trade in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
6. The two countries have been carrying out **regular exercises in IOR** towards reinforcing maritime association.

FACT TO REMEMBER:

1. **INDIA IN UNDP'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX**
2. **PM-SHRI SCHEME ANNOUNCED**
3. **THE COMPLEX ISSUE OF ASSISTED SUICIDE**
4. **INDIA OPTS OUT OF JOINING IPEF TRADE PILLAR**
5. **ANTI-RADIATION PILLS OF A NUCLEAR EMERGENCY**
6. **THE COMPANY LAW COMMITTEE EXTENDED**
7. **INDIA'S FIRST INDIGENOUS AIRCRAFT COMMISSIONED**
8. **IAD TECHNOLOGY SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATED**
9. **INDIA'S FIRST 'DARK SKY RESERVE'**
10. **INDIAN WINS AWARD FOR FORTIFYING MILLET**

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