

My Notes....

NATIONAL

THE BIODIVERSITY ACT APPROVED FOR AMENDMENT

1. Lok Sabha gave **its approval to a Bill** to amend some provisions of the **Biological Diversity Act of 2002**.
2. The **Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill** seeks to address **concerns of several central ministries, state governments, researchers, industry**, and other stakeholders, regarding the implementation of the **20-year-old law**.
3. **Biological diversity** refers to **all kinds of life forms — animals, plants and microorganisms — their gene pools**, and **the ecosystems** that they inhabit.

THE 'FREE MOVEMENT REGIME'

1. The **illegal migration of tribal Kuki-Chin peoples** into India **from Myanmar** is one of the **key issues** in the **ongoing ethnic conflict** between **Meiteis and Kukis** in Manipur because of **Free Movement Regime (FMR)**.
2. The **FMR is a mutually agreed arrangement** between the two countries that **allows tribes living along the border on either side to travel up to 16 km inside** the other country without a visa.
3. The **FMR was implemented in 2018** as part of the government's **Act East policy** at a time when diplomatic relations between **India and Myanmar** were on the upswing.

COMMERCIAL MINING OF CRITICAL MINERALS APPROVED

1. The **Union Cabinet** approved **amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**, that will pave the way for commercial mining of **six critical minerals — lithium, beryllium, niobium, tantalum, titanium and zirconium — and deep-seated minerals** like **gold, silver and copper**.
2. Currently, **commercial mining of these critical minerals by private companies is prohibited**. Only government agencies were allowed in exploration and mining operations.

LOK SABHA PASSES FOREST CONSERVATION BILL

1. Lok Sabha passed a bill that **seeks to exempt land within 100 km of the country's borders** from the **purview of conservation laws** and permit **setting up of zoos, safaris and eco-tourism facilities in forest areas**.

CENTRE WITHDRAWS DNA BILL

1. The Union government withdrew the **DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019** from the Lok Sabha.
2. The Bill seeks **to create a regulatory framework for obtaining, storing and testing DNA samples** of human beings, **mainly for the purposes of criminal investigations**, and with the objective of establishing the identity of a person.

PARLIAMENTARY PANEL'S NOD FOR INTER-SERVICES ORGANISATIONS BILL

1. As **India gets set to create unified theatre commands for integrated war-fighting machinery** in a cost-effective manner, a parliamentary panel has approved the proposed law **to empower military commanders of all tri-service organisations** with full administrative and disciplinary powers.

LOK SABHA PASSES MMDR AMENDMENT BILL

1. The **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023** was taken up for consideration and passed by the Lok Sabha.
2. This bill proposes to **empower the Central government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for 26 critical minerals** in the country.

INTERNATIONAL

INDIA HANDS OVER MISSILE CORVETTE INS KIRPAN

1. India "gifted" its in-service missile corvette **INS Kirpan** to **Vietnam** in reflection of **growing strategic partnership** between the two sides, especially in the maritime domain.
2. It is for the **first time** that **India gifted a fully operational corvette** to any friendly foreign country.

UK SIGNS 'BIGGEST TRADE DEAL' SINCE BREXIT

1. The **United Kingdom** formally **signed a treaty** to join a **major Indo-Pacific bloc**, the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)** since the country left the European Union at the beginning of 2020.
2. The **CPTPP** is a **landmark pact** agreed upon in 2018 that **cuts trade barriers** among **11 countries**, including Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
3. The pact requires countries to **eliminate or significantly reduce tariffs** and **make strong commitments** to opening services and investment markets.

BIMSTEC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEET

1. The **first-ever Foreign Ministers' meeting** of the **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** began in **Bangkok**, Thailand.
2. **BIMSTEC** is a **regional organisation** that **was established in 1997** with the signing of the **Bangkok Declaration**.

INDIA AND UAE TO PROMOTE USE OF LOCAL CURRENCIES

1. **India** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** have signed a **pact** to **establish a framework** to promote the use of the **rupee and UAE Dirham (AED)** for cross-border transactions.
2. The MoU on **establishing a framework** for the **use of local currencies** for transactions between **India and the UAE** aims to put in place a **Local Currency Settlement System** to promote the **use of INR (Indian rupee) and AED (UAE Dirham)** bilaterally.

INDIA AND FRANCE HAVE AGREED TO USE UPI

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that **India and France** have agreed to use **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** payment mechanism and it will begin from the iconic **Eiffel Tower**. **Indian tourists in France** will now be able to **make payments in rupees**.
2. **UPI** is the **indigenous digital payment system in India** that was conceptualised and operated by the **National Payments Corporation of India**.

ECONOMY

NITI'S EXPORT PREPAREDNESS INDEX 2022

1. **Tamil Nadu** has **pipped Maharashtra and Gujarat** to emerge as the **top state** in the **Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022**.
2. The index is aimed at **assessing the readiness of the states** in terms of **their export potential and performance**. **Gujarat had topped** the chart in the last two rankings.
3. The ranking is based on **four main pillars: policy, business ecosystem, export ecosystem and export performance**.

JAN VISHWAS BILL PASSED

1. The **Lok Sabha** approved the **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023**, to enhance **ease of doing business**, decrease **compliance burden for individuals and industry**, and **alleviate judicial load** by decriminalising minor economic offences.

TCRM MATRIX FRAMEWORK TO DRIVE INNOVATION

1. The **NITI Aayog** released the **Techno-Commercial Readiness and Market Maturity Matrix (TCRM Matrix) framework**, an **assessment tool** that will allow stakeholders to **jointly assess projects** at the **technology readiness level (TRL)**, **commercialization readiness level (CRL)**, and **market readiness level (MRL)** scales.
2. The framework is expected to help the government **prioritize funding**, **setting regulations**, **mitigate risks** and **enhance public-private partnership**.
3. The **TCRM Matrix framework** is set to play a **pivotal role** in catalyzing **India's innovation ecosystem** and creating a **conducive environment** for **transformative ideas**.

INDIA, US NOTIFY WTO OF MUTUAL RESOLUTION

1. **India and the US** have mutually resolved **all six trade disputes** pending at the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**, in line with the commitment made by the two countries during the US visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ISRO PSLV-C56 MISSION SUCCESSFUL

1. **India space agency, ISRO** successfully launched its **proven PSLV rocket** carrying **seven Singaporean satellites** from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
2. The **primary payload** carried by ISRO's trusted workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle is the **DS-SAR Radar Imaging Earth Observation satellite**, which has been developed under a partnership between **DSTA** (representing the Government of Singapore) and **ST Engineering, Singapore**.

INDIA'S FIRST 'SATELLITE NETWORK PORTAL SITE'

1. The **Gujarat government** through its **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** signed a memorandum of understanding with **OneWeb India Communications Pvt Ltd** for setting up a **'satellite network portal site'** — a **first for India** — at **Mehsana** in Gujarat.

NEW SCORPENE CLASS SUBMARINES FOR THE NAVY

1. The **Defence Acquisition Council**, the apex decision-making body for the acquisition of military equipment for **India's armed forces** cleared proposals worth thousands of crores to buy **three additional Scorpene submarines** and **26 Rafale Marine fighter jets** for the Navy.
2. The **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)** is building **six Scorpene class submarines** under the **Project-75**, as part of a \$ 3.75 billion deal signed in **October 2005**, which allowed for **transfer of technology** from the **French defence firm**, Naval Group.

GOVT NODS SEMICONDUCTOR LAB MODERNIZATION

1. The government has approved the **modernisation of the Semiconductor Laboratory** as a **brownfield chip manufacturing unit**.
2. Till date only one proposal of **Micron Technology Inc** for setting up a **semiconductor ATMP unit in India** has been approved. Government has also approved **modernisation of Semiconductor Laboratory, Mohali** as a brownfield Fab.
3. Also known as **microchips** or **integrated circuits**, semiconductors are made from **silicon**, and **consist of millions or billions of transistors** that act like **miniature electrical switches** that flip on and off to process data such as **images, radio waves, and sounds**.

WORLD IN-VITRO FERTILISATION (IVF) DAY

1. **World IVF Day** is **observed every year on 25 July** to commemorate **the birth of the first test tube baby – Louise Brown** – who was born on **this day in 1978** through the **in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) technique**.
2. **IVF** involves the **fertilisation of eggs outside the body**, where mature eggs are retrieved from the ovaries and fertilised with sperm in a laboratory setting.

MISCELLANEOUS

INDIA TARGETS \$300 BILLION WORTH BIOECONOMY

1. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology and Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences Jitendra Singh said **India has a target of \$300 billion in bioeconomy by 2030.**
2. **Bioeconomy** is the **production, utilization, and conservation of biological resources**, including **related knowledge, science, technology, and innovation**, to provide **information, products, processes, and services across all economic sectors.**

CLIMATE CHANGE AIDING SPREAD OF CCHF VIRUS

1. As Europe reels under a **heatwave and wildfires**, the **rising temperatures** have also raised fears of **spread of viruses** generally not found in colder climates.
2. Alert has been sounded about the **Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)**, an infection **spread by ticks** that has a **high fatality rate**, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
3. The **CCHF is endemic to Africa**, the **Balkan countries, Middle East**, and **parts of Asia.**
4. According to the WHO, **Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)** is a **viral haemorrhagic fever** usually **transmitted by ticks.**

SECTION 69 (A) ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

1. The Centre has powers **to issue content takedown orders to social media companies** under **Section 69 (A) of the Information Technology Act, 2000.**
2. **Section 69 of the IT Act** allows the government **to issue content-blocking orders to online intermediaries** such as **Internet Service Providers (ISPs), telecom service providers, web hosting services**, search engines, online marketplaces, etc.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING DAY 2023

1. **National Broadcasting Day in India** is marked on 23 July **as symbolic of the Radio Club of Bombay** (established by some businessmen) making the **first-ever broadcast in the country** in June 1923.
2. The broadcast was followed by the setting up of the **Calcutta Radio Club** five months later.

MARINE HEAT WAVES GRIPPED WORLD'S OCEANS

1. A **marine heat wave** is an **extreme weather event.** It occurs when the **surface temperature of a particular region** of the sea **rises to 3 or 4 degree Celsius** above the average temperature for at least five days.

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY

1. 29 July is celebrated world over as the **International Tiger Day** in a bid **to raise awareness on various issues** surrounding **tiger conservation.**
2. It was **first instituted in 2010** at the **Tiger Summit in St Petersburg**, Russia when the **13 tiger range countries** came together to create **Tx2**, the global goal **to double the number of wild tigers** by the year 2022.
3. **Project Tiger** was launched by the Central government on 1 April 1973, in a bid to **promote conservation of the tiger.**