

My Notes....

NATIONAL

INDIA CLIMBS EIGHT PLACES IN GLOBAL GENDER INDEX

- India has ranked at **127 out of 146 countries** in terms of **gender parity** — an **improvement of eight places** from last year.
- The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** ranked **India at 135 out of 146 countries** in the **Global Gender Gap Index** in the report's 2022 edition.
- The **Global Gender Gap Report**, now **in its 17th edition**, benchmarks the evolution of **gender-based gaps** in four areas: **economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment.**

RIGHT TO CHANGE ONE'S NAME IS PART OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

- The **right to change one's name or surname** is a **part of the right to life** under **Article 21**, the High Courts of Allahabad said.
- Allowing a man called **Shahnawaz to change his name to Md. Sameer Rao**, the Allahabad HC said the **fundamental right to keep or change one's name** is vested in every citizen under **Articles 19(1)(a), 21, and 14** of the Constitution.

ASSAM RIFLES IS THE UNIQUE FORCE

- **Assam Rifles** is **one of the six central armed police forces (CAPFs)** under the **administrative control** of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- Its **uniqueness lies** in the fact that **it is the only paramilitary force** with a **dual control structure.**
- The **administrative control of the force is with the MHA**, its **operational control is with the Indian Army**, which is under the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**.

LAW COMMISSION SEEKS VIEWS ON UCC

- A **UCC** would provide for **one law for the entire country**, applicable to **all religious communities**, in their personal matters such as **marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption** etc.
- Currently, **Indian personal law is fairly complex**, with **each religion adhering to its own specific laws.**

PM-PRANAM SCHEME GETS CCEA APPROVAL

- The **Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** approved **PM-PRANAM**, which is aimed at **incentivising states to use alternative, non-chemical fertilisers**, and also decided to continue the **current urea subsidy for three years** starting FY23.
- **PM-PRANAM** stands for **Prime Minister's Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Generation, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth.**

INTERNATIONAL

UN ADOPTS 'HISTORIC' HIGH SEAS TREATY

- The **world's first international treaty to protect the high seas** was adopted at the United Nations.
- The treaty is seen as **crucial to countries protecting 30 percent of the world's oceans and lands by 2030**, as agreed by world governments in a **separate historic accord** reached in Montreal in December.
- The treaty, officially known as the treaty on "**Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction**" or **BBNJ**, also introduces requirements to carry out environmental impact studies for proposed activities to be carried out in international waters.

BONN CLIMATE MEET

- **The countries did manage to wrap up**, however, was the third and final round of technical discussions on **global stocktake, or GST**.
- **GST** Mandated by the **2015 Paris Agreement**, **GST** is an exercise aimed at assessing the progress in the **fight against climate change**, and deciding ways and means to enhance global action **to bridge the adequacy gap**. The Paris Agreement says GST must be conducted every five years, **starting in 2023**.
- The **actual meat in GST would come in at COP28**, the **year-ending climate conference**, this time being held in Dubai.

RUSSIA'S PROBLEM WITH THE BLACK SEA GRAIN DEAL

- **Black Sea grain deal** is the **United Nations and Turkey** brokered the **Black Sea Grain Initiative** to help **tackle a global food crisis** worsened by **Moscow's invasion of Ukraine** and blockade of its **Black Sea ports**.
- It allows **food and fertilizer** to be exported from **three Ukrainian ports – Chornomorsk, Odesa and Pivdennyi (Yuzhny)**. The deal has been extended three times, most recently until 17 July 2023.

JAPAN INCREASED THE AGE OF CONSENT

- As part of revamping its **laws relating to sex crimes**, **Japan** has raised the age of sexual consent **from 13 to 16 years**.
- **In India**, the age of consent used to be 16 years originally, but it was later **increased to 18 years in 2013** after the passage of the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012**, to ensure conformity with the Act.

UN DROPS INDIA FROM ITS REPORT ON CHILDREN & CONFLICT

- The **United Nations Secretary-General has taken India off** a list of countries mentioned in a report **on children and armed conflict over the alleged recruitment** and use of boys by armed groups in J&K and their detention, killing and maiming by security forces.
- This is the **first time since 2010** that **India has not been named in the report** alongside countries like **Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Lake Chad basin, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines**.

ECONOMY

FINFLUENCERS ARE UNDER SEBI'S SCRUTINY

- **Finfluencers** are people **with public social media platforms** offering **advice and sharing personal experiences** about money and investment in stocks.
- Their videos cover **budgeting, investing, property buying, cryptocurrency advice** and financial trend tracking.

INDIA'S WORKFORCE INCREASES MALE-DOMINATED

- According to the data from the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)**, India's **labour force participation rate (LFPR)** fell to **39.5%** in the last financial year (2022-23) that ended in March.
- This is the **lowest LFPR reading since 2016-17**. The **LFPR for men stood at a seven-year low of 66%** while that of **women was pegged at a mere 8.8%**.
- The LFPR is **the share of the working-age population** (aged 15 years and above) that is **employed or unemployed**, willing and looking for employment.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

CASSINI FINDS PHOSPHOROUS ON ENCELADUS

- **Phosphorus**, a **key chemical element for many biological processes**, has been found in **icy grains emitted by Enceladus**, the **small moon of Saturn**, into space and is likely abundant in its subsurface ocean.

FACE AUTHENTICATION IN PM KISAN APP

- In a first for any central welfare scheme, the government **rolled out a face authentication feature in the PM-Kisan app**, which will enable beneficiary farmers **to complete their e-KYC process by just scanning their face on mobile phones instead of using one-time password or fingerprints**.
- The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi or **PM-Kisan scheme gives beneficiaries financial assistance of Rs 6,000 per year in three equal instalments every four months**.

BEPICOLOMBO SPACECRAFT FLEW CLOSE TO MERCURY

- **BepiColombo**, a **joint mission between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)**, flew about **236 kilometres above the planet Mercury's surface** on 19 June 2023, according to ESA.

SALE OF CELL-CULTURED CHICKEN APPROVED

- The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** has approved the **sale of cell-cultured chicken** in a landmark decision that clears the path for consumers to try it out themselves.
- **Cultured meat**, also known as **cultivated, cell-based or lab-grown protein**, is made by **putting stem cells from the fat or muscle of an animal into a culture medium** that feeds the cells, allowing them to grow.
- The **medium is then put into a bioreactor** to support the **cells' growth**, creating an end product that looks and tastes like traditional meat.

INDIA'S RANKING IN ENERGY TRANSITION INDEX

- The **World Economic Forum** on 28 June 2023 **ranked India at the 67th place globally** on its **Energy Transition Index** and said it is the **only major economy** with energy transition momentum accelerating across all dimensions.
- **Sweden topped the list** and was **followed by Denmark**, Norway, Finland and Switzerland in the top five on the list of 120 countries.
- The WEF said that out of 120 countries, **113 have made progress** over the last decade but **only 55, including India, have improved their scores** by more than 10 percentage points.

WORLD ASTEROID DAY 2023

- **World Asteroid Day** is an **annual global event** which is **held on 30 June**, the anniversary of the **Tunguska event in 1908** when a **meteor air burst decimated about 2,000 square km (500,000 acres) of pine forest in central Siberia, Russia**.
- The **Tunguska asteroid event** was the **Earth's largest asteroid impact** in recorded history.

MISCELLANEOUS

'LANDFALL' OF A CYCLONE

- The **landfall process of Cyclone Biparjoy** started near **Jakhau port** in the state's **Kutch district**.
- **Landfall** is the **event of a tropical cyclone coming onto land** after being over water. As per the IMD, a tropical cyclone is said to have **made a landfall when the center of the storm – or its eye – moves over the coast**.

EL NINO IMPACTS THE MONSOON

- This year's monsoon is **also progressing under the cloud of an El Nino** in the **Pacific Ocean**. **El Nino**, as is commonly known, refers to an **abnormal warming of surface waters in equatorial Pacific Ocean**.
- It is known to suppress monsoon rainfall. The opposite phase, **La Nina**, which is the **abnormal cooling of sea surface waters in the same region**, is known to **aid rainfall over India**.
- There is a **third, neutral phase**, as well in which the **sea surface temperatures remain roughly in line with long-term averages**.
- Together, these three phases in the **Pacific Ocean** are referred to as **El Nino Southern Oscillation, or ENSO**.

GANDHI PEACE PRIZE 2021 CONFERRED ON GITA PRESS

- The **Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021** will be conferred on **Gita Press**, Gorakhpur, the **culture ministry** announced.
- The conferment of Gandhi Peace Prize on Gita Press, on **completion of 100 years of its establishment**, is recognition of the work done by the institution in community service.
- The prize was instituted by the **government of India in 1995** to mark the **125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**.

MIYAWAKI FORESTS METHOD USED IN MUMBAI

- Named after Japanese botanist **Akira Miyawaki**, this method involves **planting two to four different types of indigenous trees** within **every square metre**.
- In this method, **the trees become self-sustaining** and they grow to their full length within three years. The **methodology was developed in the 1970s**, with the basic objective to **densify green cover** within a small parcel of land.

PM GIFTS JILL BIDEN WITH A LAB-GROWN DIAMOND

- **Lab-grown diamonds (LGDs)** are diamonds that are produced using **specific technology** which **mimics the geological processes** that grow natural diamonds.
- They are not the same as **"diamond simulants"** – LGDs are **chemically, physically** and optically diamond and thus are difficult to identify as **"lab-grown."**

FLASH FLOODS LED TO LANDSLIDES

- The **Chandigarh-Manali highway** was blocked following **flash floods and landslides** in parts of **Haryana and Himachal Pradesh**.
- **Excessive or continuous rainfall** over a period of days, or **during particular seasons**, can lead to **stagnation of water** and **cause flooding**.
- **Flash floods** refer to such a situation, but **occurring in a much shorter span of time**, and are **highly localised**.