

16.02.21

PM Atma Nirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana



- The Union Budget, which allocated Rs 2,23,846 crore for health and wellbeing launched a new centrally sponsored scheme, PM AtmaNirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana, with an outlay of about Rs 64,180 crores over 6 years.
- This will develop capacities of primary, secondary, and tertiary care Health Systems, strengthen existing national institutions, and create new institutions, to cater to detection and cure of new and emerging diseases.

- This will be in addition to the National Health Mission.

The main interventions under the scheme are:

- Support for 17,788 rural and 11,024 urban Health and Wellness Centers
Setting up integrated public health labs in all districts and 3382 block public health units in 11 states
- Establishing critical care hospital blocks in 602 districts and 12 central institutions
Strengthening of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), its 5 regional branches and 20 metropolitan health surveillance units
- Expansion of the Integrated Health Information Portal to all States/UTs to connect all public health labs;
- Operationalisation of 17 new Public Health Units and strengthening of 33 existing Public Health Units at Points of Entry, that is at 32 Airports, 11 Seaports and 7 land crossings
- Setting up of 15 Health Emergency Operation Centers and 2 mobile hospitals and
Setting up of a national institution for One Health, a Regional Research Platform for WHO South East Asia Region, 9 Biosafety Level III laboratories and 4 regional National Institutes for Virology.
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Sri Jagannath temple



- The draft architectural plan and design of the Sri Jagannath temple heritage corridor project with an estimated cost of Rs 3,200 crore was given the green signal by the temple managing committee on Sunday.

Jagannath Temple in Puri

- The Jagannath Temple in Puri was called the “White Pagoda”.
- The temple is a part of Char Dham (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram) pilgrimages that a Hindu is expected to make in one’s lifetime.
- When most of the deities in the temples of India are made of stone or metal, the idol of Jagannatha is made of wood which is ceremoniously replaced in every twelve or nineteen years by using sacred trees.
- The temple is believed to be constructed in the 12th century by King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty.
- The temple is famous for its annual Ratha Yatra or Chariot festival, in which the three principal deities (Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra) are pulled on huge and elaborately decorated temple cars
- Jagannath Puri temple is called ‘Yamanika Tirtha’ where, according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of ‘Yama’, the god of death has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.
- Architecture Jagannath Temple in Puri

Nila Chakra

- Nila Chakra is located on the top of the temple and a different flag, each named as Patita Pavana, is hoisted on the chakra daily. The chakra has eight spokes called Navagunjaras. The chakra was made by an alloy of eight metals also known as Ashtadhatu.

Singhdwara

- There are four gates to enter the temple and one of them is Singhdwara which is a Sanskrit word which means Lion Gate. There are statues of two lions one on each side of the gate. People can enter the temple through the staircase of 22 steps which is known as Baisi Pahacha.
- There is an image of Lord Jagannath which is painted on the right side of the entrance and is known as Patitapavana.
- This image was made for untouchables who were allowed to pray to the image of the lord from outside but cannot enter the temple.

Arun Stambha

- Arun Stambh is situated in front of the Singdwara. The pillar is sixteen-sided and is monolithic. Idol of Arun can be found here who drives the chariot of Sun god.
- Arun Stambh was previously located at Konark temple but was brought here by Guru Brahamachari Gosain.

Hathidwara, Vyaghradwara, and Ashwadwara

- Hathidwara, Vyaghradwara, and Ashwadwara are the three other entrances from where people can enter the temple.
- Hathidwara is also known as elephant gate, Vyaghradwara as tiger gate, and Ashwadwara as horse gate.
- The gates are named so as they are guarded by elephant, tiger, and horse respectively.

Mukti Mandapa

- Mukti Mandapa is a platform made with granite and its height is five feet. The square-shaped mandapa covers an area of 900 square feet. The roof of the mandapa is supported by twelve pillars out of which four are built in the middle.

Dola Mandapa

- Dola Mandapa is used to make a swing on which idol of Dologobinda is placed. The swing is made during the annual Dol yatra. The mandapa is carved by using Torana and it is the same arch on which the swing is hanged.

Vimala Temple

- There are many minor temples in the precincts of Jagannath Temple and Vimala temple is one of them.
- Hindu mythology says that the feet of Goddess Sati has fallen on the spot where the temple is constructed.
- The food offered to Lord Jagannath is also offered to goddess Vimala then it is called Mahaprasad.

Mahalaxmi Temple

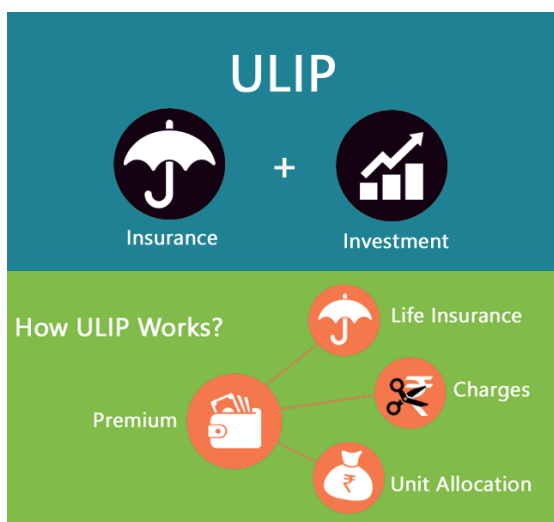
- Many rituals are performed in Jagannath temple and the Mahalaxmi Temple plays an important role because preparation of the food to be offered to Lord Jagannath is supervised by Mahalaxmi. The food is known as Naivedya.

GrapeNet System



- Recently, the APEDA upgraded the GrapeNet to ensure secured, scalable and cost effective interface in the exports value chain
- The GrapeNet is a web based certification and traceability software system for monitoring fresh grapes exported from India to the European Union.
- GrapeNet is a first of its kind initiative in India that has put in place an end-to-end system for monitoring pesticide residue, achieve product standardization and facilitate tracing back from retail shelves to the farm of the Indian grower, through the various stages of sampling, testing, certification and packing
- In a bid to ensure cyber security protection for its traceability initiative, APEDA has adopted next generation Blockchain and Cloud migration enabled GrapeNet System which would ensure a secured, scalable and cost effective interface for all the stakeholders in the exports value chain.
- GrapeNet integrates all stakeholders in the supply chain of grapes export, namely The Farmers, State Government Horticulture Departments, The testing laboratories, Agmark Certification Department, The Phyto-sanitary department, Pack houses, Exporters, and APEDA.
- The software can be easily used – anywhere, anytime, 24 by 7, by all authorized stakeholders
- It has virtually reduced duplication in data capture and enables instant reference of previous steps in the supply chain.
- APEDA can trace details of the consignment right upto the farm plot level. After integrating Blockchain, GrapeNet will be more secure.

Unit Linked Insurance Plan (ULIP)



- Recently, a committee was set up by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on the request of some insurers. The committee has recommended introducing index-linked insurance policies (ILIPs).
- This is linked to units of investment which are made in the capital and money markets.
- Hence, ULIPs are a combination of life insurance and market linked investment.

- Therefore, it provides you life cover as well as capital appreciation linked to the capital markets. In other words ULIPs are long term investment cum protection plans that offer individuals an opportunity of availing market linked returns while providing life insurance protection.
- Depending on the individual's risk appetite one has the option of choosing from a host of funds having varied degrees of risk exposure.
- In ULIPs, a part of the investment goes towards providing you life cover.
- The residual portion of the ULIP is invested in a fund which in turn invests in stocks or bonds.
- The value of investments alters with the performance of the underlying fund opted by you.
- It was firstly introduced in 1971 by Unit trust of India with the Government of India. Then in 2005, IRDA (Insurance regulatory and development authority) had plotted the major guidelines for the insurance companies.
- In a ULIP ,the full amount of premium paid is not allocated to purchase units. Insurers allot units on the portion of the premium remaining after providing for various charges under the plan.
- Thus, the portion of premium used to purchase units varies from product to product.
- The total monetary value of the units allocated is invariably less than the amount of premium paid because the charges are first deducted from the premium collected and the remaining amount is used for allocating units.

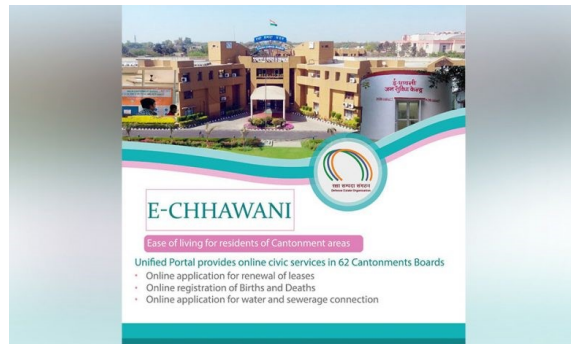
Mandarin duck



- The Mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) was identified by the Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist Carl Linnaeus in 1758.
- Thee Bird platform, which documents bird species around the world, describes it as a “small, exotic-looking bird” that is native to East Asia.
- The male duck is “very ornate with big orangey ‘sailfins’ on the back, streaked orangey cheeks, and a small red bill with a whitish tip” ,according to thee Bird site
- The female has “narrow white spectacles on a shaggy grey head, bold pale dappled spots along flanks, and pale bill tip”.
- The migratory duck breeds in Russia, Korea, Japan, and north eastern China, Gogoi said. There are established populations in Western Europe and America, too.
- An individual of the species was spotted in a pond in Central Park in New York City in 2018.
- The duck rarely visits India, which is not on its usual route of migration, and only a handful of sightings have been recorded in the country.

- The Maguri- Motapung wetland, declared an 'Important Bird Area' by the Bombay Natural History Society, is located close to the Dibru Saikhowa National Park in Upper Assam.
- There is a grass land adjacent to the wet land.
- "The entire ecosystem (grassland and wetland) is home to at least 304 bird species, including a number of endemic ones like the black-breasted parrotbill and marsh babbler

e-Chhawani portal



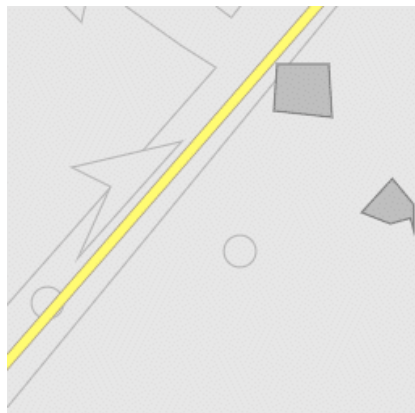
- e-Chhawani project aims to provide online municipal services to more than 20 lakh citizens across 62 Cantonment Boards through a multi-tenancy central platform.
- Through this portal, online application for renewal of leases, online registration of births and deaths and online application for water and sewerage connection will be very simpler
- CDS General Bipin Rawat was also present at the event.

Glenmark launches USFDA-approved kidney cancer treatment drug in India



- Glenmark Pharma has launched 'SUTIB', a generic version of US Food and Drug Administration-approved Sunitinib oral capsules, for kidney cancer treatment in India.
- The drug is priced 96% lower compared to the innovator brand and will reduce risk of kidney cancer progression by 58%, Glenmark said. It'll cost ₹7,000 (50 mg), ₹3,600 (25 mg) and ₹1,840 (12.5 mg) per month.

Krida Sthal



- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the Rashtrapati Bhavan Krida Sthal (renovated Football Ground and Basketball Court) in the President's Estate today (February 16, 2021).
- On the occasion, an 'Exhibition Football Match' was played between the children of My Angels Academy, Vikaspuri, New Delhi – a Trust working for the cause of underprivileged children.

- These state-of-art sports facilities are developed with the aim to cater to the needs of the employees of Rashtrapati Bhavan and their families.
- An inter-departmental football tournament with five teams namely – President’s Secretariat Heroes, Household Youngs, PBG Warriors, Army Guard Daredevils and Delhi Police Stalwarts starts from today to encourage the employees and their family members to take part in the sports activities.

Fossils of ‘Dickinsonia’ found at Bhimbetka



- Dickinsonia is an extinct genus of basal animal that lived during the late Ediacaran period in what is now Australia, Russia and Ukraine.
- The individual Dickinsonia typically resembles a bilaterally symmetrical ribbed oval. Its affinities are presently unknown; its mode of growth is consistent with a stem-group bilaterian affinity, though some have suggested that it belongs to the fungi, or even an "extinct kingdom".
- The discovery of cholesterol molecules in fossils of Dickinsonia lends support to the idea that Dickinsonia was an animal.
- The rock shelters of Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, about 40km by road from state capital Bhopal, is a must on the itinerary of nearly every traveller to the region.
- Located in the foothills of the Vindhya Mountains, the rock shelters contain paintings which date ‘from the Mesolithic Period right through to the historical period’, according to the UNESCO citation. In 2003, it was declared a World Heritage Site.

Leatherback nesting sites could be overrun by Andamans development project

- Proposals for tourism and port development in the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands have conservationists worried over the fate of some of the most important nesting populations of the Giant Leatherback turtle in this part of the Indian Ocean.
- The largest of the seven species of sea turtles on the planet and also the most long-ranging, Leatherbacks are found in all oceans except the Arctic and the Antarctic.
- Within the Indian Ocean, they nest only in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and are also listed in Schedule I of India’s Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, according it the highest legal protection.
- There is concern now, however, that at least three key nesting beaches — two on Little Andaman Island and one on Great Nicobar Island — are under threat due to mega “development” plans announced in recent months.

- The Little Andaman plan, which proposes phased growth of tourism on this virtually untouched island, has sought the de-reservation of over 200 sq km of pristine rainforest and also of about 140 sq km of the Onge Tribal Reserve.
- Two sites where key components of the tourism plan are to be implemented are both Leatherback nesting sites — South Bay along the southern coast of the island and West Bay along its western coast.
- For the Leatherback, perhaps even more important is Great Nicobar Island, the southernmost of the A&N group. Large numbers have been recorded nesting here — mainly on the long and wide beaches at the mouth of the Dagmar and Alexandria rivers on the west coast and at the mouth of the Galathea river along its south eastern coast
- Galathea Bay was, in fact, proposed as a wildlife sanctuary in 1997 for the protection of turtles and was also the site of a long-term monitoring programme.
- The A&N Islands are prominent in the National Marine Turtle Action Plan released on February 1, 2021, by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The plan notes that “India has identified all its important sea turtle nesting habitats as ‘Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Areas’ and included them in the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) – 1”. South Bay and West Bay on Little Andaman and Galathea on Great Nicobar, along with other nesting beaches in the islands, find a specific mention here as “Important Marine Turtle Habitats in India” and the largest Leatherback nesting grounds in India.
- The plan identifies coastal development, including construction of ports, jetties, resorts and industries, as major threats to turtle populations
- It also asks for assessments of the environmental impact of marine and coastal development that may affect marine turtle populations and their habitats.

Indian investments and BITs

- In 1997, India and Sri Lanka signed a BIT to promote and protect foreign investment in each other’s territories.
- The defining characteristic of this BIT, as is the case with all BITs, is that it empowers individual foreign investors to directly sue the host state before an international tribunal if the investor believes that the host state has breached its treaty obligations.
- This is known as investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS).
- An important protection provided for foreign investment in the India-Sri Lanka BIT is the fair and equitable treatment (FET) provision given in Article 3(2).
- This Article provides that investments and returns of investors of each country shall, at all times, be accorded FET in the other country’s territory. FET is a ubiquitous provision contained in almost all BITs.
- The normative content of the FET provision has been fleshed out by scores of ISDS tribunals in the last two decades.

- The tribunals have persistently held that an important component of the FET provision is that the host state should protect the legitimate expectations of foreign investors.
- Sri Lanka, by signing the agreement to jointly develop the ECT at the Colombo port, created such expectations on the part of Indian investors.
- Defaulting on this agreement, without specific and reasonable justification, potentially violates the Indian investor's legitimate expectations, and thus, the FET provision of the BIT.
- However, the twist in the tale is that India unilaterally terminated the India-Sri Lanka BIT on March 22, 2017.
- This termination was part of the mass repudiation of BITs that India undertook in 2017 as a result of several ISDS claims being brought against it.
- In cases of such unilateral termination, survival clauses in BITs assume significance because they ensure that foreign investment continues to receive protection during the survival period.
- Article 15(2) of the India-Sri Lanka BIT contains a survival clause, according to which, in case of a unilateral termination of the treaty, the treaty shall continue to be effective for a further period of 15 years from the date of its termination in respect of investments made or acquired before the date of termination.
- The Indian investment in Sri Lanka and vice-versa made or acquired before March 22, 2017, will continue to enjoy treaty protection.
- But, in the case of the investment in developing the ECT at the Colombo port, this survival clause will be inconsequential, since the agreement was signed in 2019, i.e., after India unilaterally terminated the BIT.
- Episode has important lessons for India's overall approach to BITs.
- As a consequence of the onslaught of ISDS claims in the last few years, India has developed a protectionist approach towards BITs. The motivation appears to be to eliminate or at least minimise future ISDS cases against India.
- However, an important attribute that perhaps has not received much attention is that BITs are reciprocal.
- Thus, BITs do not empower merely foreign investors to sue India, but also authorise Indian investors to make use of BITs to safeguard their investment in turbulent foreign markets.

Structural reforms for NEP 2020

- First, the system of appointments of vice-chancellors and syndicates, or governing councils, the key authorities for any university, needs to be revised.
- The appointments are often mired in controversies, with frequent reports in the past of aspirants for the post of vice-chancellors and membership of syndicates indulging in unethical practices to gain favour.
- Luckily, the NEP talks of creating new structures, such as a Board of Management, to replace the syndicate system
- Further, with the vice-chancellor as chairman, the Board should consist of former vice-chancellors drawn from other universities, members drawn from industry, the alumni, eminent public intellectuals, principals of affiliated colleges on rotation and members representing the non-teaching staff.
- For the appointment of vice-chancellors of universities, search committees constituted for such purposes must be thoroughly restructured.
- The government's and chancellors' role in such committees must be done away with.
- Applications for the post of vice-chancellors can be invited through advertisements on the university website and through newspapers. Biodata of candidates must also be published on the websites.
- The committee may then allot marks to candidates' scholarship in terms of teaching and research, administrative capabilities, and capacity for fundraising.
- Finally, in order to improve the higher education ecosystem, excellence in teaching, research, innovation, entrepreneurship and social contribution must be encouraged.
- The NEP's recommendations, like the introduction of four-year courses that have the option of re-entry and exit, one- or two-year postgraduate courses, and setting up of an Academic Bank of Credit for credit transfers, may be helpful.