

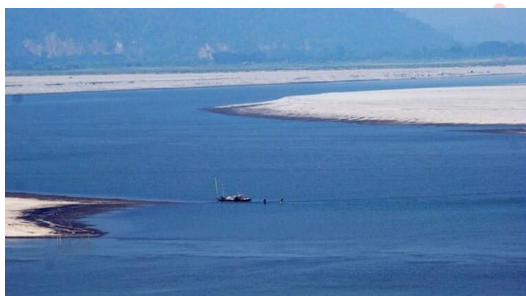
17.02.21

Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan



- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan under Jal Jeevan Mission- Urban
- It will be conducted in cities to ascertain equitable distribution of water, reuse of wastewater and mapping of water bodies with respect to quantity and quality of water through a challenge process.
- As a first step, the Ministry has decided to launch the Survekshan in 10 cities- Agra, Badlapur, Bhubaneswar, Churu, Kochi, Madurai, Patiala, Rohtak, Surat and Tumkur.
- Jal Jeevan Mission Urban is designed to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps in all 4,378 statutory towns in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal - 6.
- The total outlay proposed for JJM (U) is 2 lakh 87 thousand crore rupees which includes 10 thousand crore rupees for continuing financial support to AMRUT Mission.

Mahabahu-Brahmaputra



- The launch of Mahabahu-Brahmaputra will be marked by the inauguration of the Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari; Shilanyas of Inland Water Transport (IWT) Terminal at Jogighopa and various tourist jetties on River Brahmaputra and launch of digital solutions for Ease-of-Doing-Business.
- The program is aimed at providing seamless connectivity to the Eastern parts of India and includes various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
- The Ro-Pax services will help in reducing the travel time by providing connectivity between banks and thus reducing the distance to be travelled by road.
- The Ro-Pax operation between Neamati and Majuli will reduce the total distance of 420 Km currently being travelled by vehicles to only 12 Km, resulting in a substantial impact on the logistics of small-scale industries of the region.
- Two indigenously procured Ro-Pax vessels, namely, M.V. Rani Gaidinliu and M.V. Sachin Dev Burman, shall become operationa

- The programme also includes shilanyas for construction of tourist jetties at four locations, namely, Neamati, Biswanath Ghat, Pandu and Jogighopa with the financial assistance of Rs. 9.41 crores from the Ministry of Tourism.
- These jetties will promote river cruise tourism, generate local employment and also generate growth for local business.
- A permanent Inland Water Transport Terminal will also be built at Jogighopa under the program, which will connect with the Multi-Modal Logistics Park also coming up at Jogighopa.
- This Terminal will help in reducing the traffic on the Siliguri Corridor towards Kolkata and Haldia.
- It will also facilitate the uninterrupted movement of cargo even during flood season to various North-Eastern States like Meghalaya and Tripura and to Bhutan and Bangladesh as well.

Digital Unit (DIU)



- The officials apprised the Minister that for UCC and financial fraud related complaints, time is of utmost essence and a quick time bound action will help in reducing such menace.
- Accordingly, a Nodal agency, named as Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU) will be set up.
- The main function of DIU will be to coordinate with various Law Enforcement Agencies, Financial Institutions and telecom service providers in investigating any fraudulent activity involving telecom resources.

Sagarika cruise terminal at Cochin port



- Recently, the Prime Minister addressed India's first full-fledged international cruise terminal in Kerala
- Sagarika is India's first full-fledged international cruise terminal, it has turned into a major cruise destination across the globe. It is a dedicated terminal, that is fully air-conditioned and serving the cruise ship requirements, provides all statutory clearances, including Customs and Immigration, for cruise passengers.
- According to figures from the Cochin Port Trust, 44 cruise vessels called at the port during the financial year 2019-20, the numbers having remained near constant over the last decade during which the port and its facilities have turned popular among cruise vessels.

- The cruise vessel handling facility, which is now being enhanced by the inauguration of Sagarika, started initially more than a decade ago
- The Cochin Port Trust has catered to the requirements of major cruise operators in the industry and port sources said major operators had found the Kochi facility to their satisfaction.
- The cruisers calling at Kochi on a regular basis include Cunard Line, Royal Caribbean Line, AIDA Cruises and Costa Cruises.
- The Union government has relaxed cabotage restrictions for cruise vessels so that it is possible to transport Indians from one port to another port in the country on foreign cruise vessels transiting through the country's waters.
- The location of Kochi, close to the sites in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi that have a rich historic legacy, too has added strength to the importance of the port as a major cruise destination.

cruise terminal

- It is the type of facility available to accommodate cruise ship
- A passenger terminal is a structure in a port which services passengers boarding and leaving water vessels such as ferries, cruise ships and ocean liners.
- Depending on the types of vessels serviced by the terminal, it may be named ferry terminal, it may be named ferry terminal, cruise terminal, marine terminal or maritime passenger terminal.

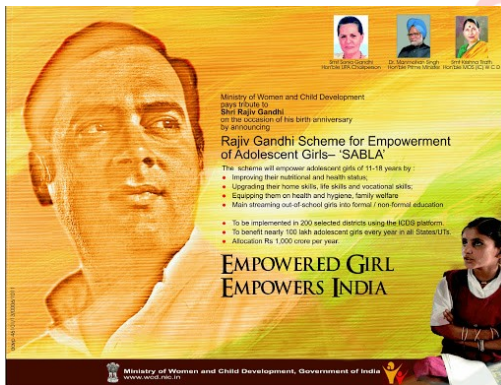
Cochin Port Trust

- Cochin Port or Kochi Port is a major port on the Arabian Sea – Laccadive Sea – Indian Ocean sea-route in the city of Kochi and is one of the largest ports in India.
- It is also the first transshipment port in India.
- It is an all-weather natural harbour
- Sir Robert Bristow (13 December 1880 – 3 September 1966) was a British harbour engineer best known for his contributions to the development of the port of Kochi (Cochin) in India.
- The International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT), part of the Cochin Port, is the largest container transshipment facility in India.
- The port is governed by the Cochin Port Trust (CoPT), a government of India establishment. It was established in 1928 and has completed over 90 years of active service.

NetWire

- It is a remote access Trojan focused on password stealing and keylogging, as well as including remote control capabilities.
- It has been used by malicious groups since 2012 and distributed through various social engineering campaigns (malspam)
- This multi-platform malware has since undergone several upgrades and was identified in different types of attacks that range from Nigerian scammers to advanced persistent threat (APT) attacks.
- As per the experts, NetWire RAT has been observed during 2020 as one of the most active botnets.
- The threat spreads essentially through COVID-19 themed attacks
- This malware was one of the malware families most exploited in COVID-19 phishing campaigns between February and April 2020.

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)-SABLA



- SABAL scheme was launched with the merging of Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) and Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)
- Launched in 2011
- Under Ministry Ministry of Women and Child Development
- The objectives of the Scheme are to: Enable the AGs for self-development and empowerment Improve their nutrition and health status.
- Promote awareness about health, hygiene, nutrition, Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) and family and child care.
- Upgrade their home-based skills, life skills and tie up with National Skill Development Program (NSDP) for vocational skills
- Mainstream out of school AGs into formal/non formal education
- Provide information/guidance about existing public services such as PHC, CHC, Post Office, Bank, Police Station, etc
- It covers adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years under all ICDS projects in selected 200 districts in all the States/UTs in the country.
- The target group is subdivided into two categories, viz. 11-15 & 15-18 years and interventions planned accordingly.
- The Scheme focuses on all out-of-school adolescent girls who would assemble at the Anganwadi Centre as per the time table and frequency decided by the States/ UTs.

- The others, i.e., the school going girls would meet at the AWC at least twice a month and more frequently during vacations/holidays, where they will receive life skill education, nutrition & health education, awareness about other socio-legal issues etc
- SABLA scheme is being implemented using the platform of ICDS Scheme through Anganwadi Centers (AWCs).

Jute-icare



- Ministry of Textiles through its field offices viz; O/o Jute Commissioner, National Jute Board, Jute Corporation of India and the ICAR-CRIJAF under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has organized the Jute Seeds Distribution Program and Jute Farmers Awareness Workshop on Jute ICARE Initiative
- The Jute-ICARE project was launched by National Jute Board (NJB) in technical collaboration with ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (ICAR-CRIJAF), Barrackpore, Ministry of Agriculture and Jute Corporation of India (JCI), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India
- Tagline of the Project: Enhancing Livelihood of Jute Farmers Through Mass Up-scaling of Improved Jute Production Technologies

Objective

- To support the small and marginal jute growers with certified seed, mechanization in sowing and weed control and to accelerate retting by using microbial consortium so that the jute growers can grow good quality jute and receive higher price for their produce.

Key features

- It was launched with an aim to aware and train the jute farmers for efficient and effective utilization of the improved jute production technologies and increase the fibre productivity as well as quality on a larger scale
- It was launched to popularize/introduce some of the better agronomic practices and recently developed microbial assisted retting among farmers intensively in a few blocks in West Bengal and Assam on pilot basis

Four technologies

- The four technologies selected for promotion under the Jute-ICARE project are the technologies developed by ICAR-CRIJAF viz.
- Use of certified jute seed (var. JRO 204 & JBO 2003H)
- Line sowing of jute using CRIJAF multi-row seed drill
- Mechanical weeding by using CRIJAF nail weeder & CRIJAF single wheel jute weeder, and
- Improved retting by using CRIJAF microbial consortium (CRIJAF SONA).

Seed Replacement Rate (SRR)



- Seed Replacement Rate is the percentage of area sown out of the total area of crop planted in the season by using certified/quality seeds other than the farm saved seed.
- In simple terms it is a measure of cropped area covered with quality seed.

- The National Seeds Policy 2002, clearly emphasizes that “It has become evident that in order to achieve the food production targets of the future, a major effort will be required to enhance the seed replacement rates of various crops”
- The main objectives of the National Seeds Policy, therefore, are the provision of an appropriate climate for the seed industry to utilize available and prospective opportunities, safeguarding the interests of Indian farmers and the conservation of agro-biodiversity.

Thrust areas of the policy

- Varietal Development And Plant Variety Protection
- Seed Production/increase Seed replacement
- Quality Assurance
- Seed Distribution And Marketing Seed Distribution And Marketing
- Infrastructure Facilities
- Transgenic Plant Varieties
- Import Of Seeds And Planting Material
- Export Of Seeds
- Promotion Of Domestic Seed Industry
- Strengthening Of Monitoring System Strengthening Of Monitoring System

Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A)



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over the indigenously developed Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to the Indian Army at a ceremony in Chennai last week.

About Arjun Main Battle Tank

- The Arjun Main Battle Tank project was initiated by DRDO in 1972 with the Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) as its lead laboratory.
- The objective was to create a “state-of-the-art tank with superior fire power, high mobility, and excellent protection”.

- During the development, the CVRDE achieved breakthroughs in the engine, transmission, hydropneumatic suspension, hull and turret as well as the gun control system.
- Mass production began in 1996 at the Indian Ordnance Factory's production facility in Avadi, Tamil Nadu.

Features of the Arjun tank

- The Arjun tanks stand out for their 'Fin Stabilised Armour Piercing Discarding Sabot (FSAPDS)' ammunition and 120-mm calibre rifled gun.
- It also has a computer-controlled integrated fire control system with stabilised sighting that works in all lighting conditions.
- The secondary weapons include a coaxial 7.62-mm machine gun for anti-personnel and a 12.7-mm machine gun for anti-aircraft and ground targets.

Maa Canteens



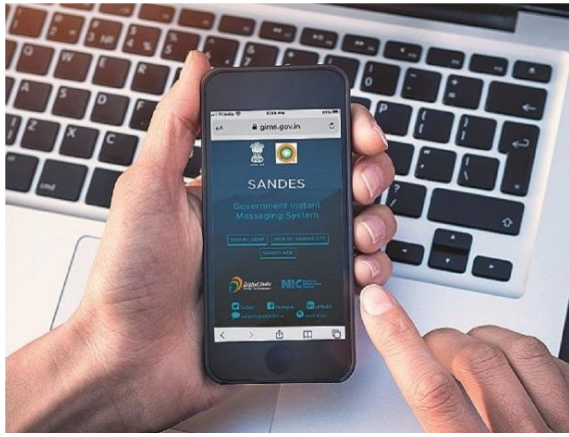
- The West Bengal government launched a new scheme to provide a cheap cooked meal to the poor across the state. Called "Maa", the scheme provides state-subsidised daily meals at lunchtime to the poor.
- Flagging off the programme virtually across the state, Mamata Banerjee announced that the canteens will serve cooked meals comprising of rice, dal, vegetables and egg curry every day.
- The canteens, opening soon from 1pm to 3pm daily in all urban local bodies

Raja Suheldev



- The legend goes that that over a millennia back when invaders were conquering one region after another in India, it was Raja Suheldev of Shravasti who gathered heads of different communities likes Tharu and Banjara as well as small kings to block the invasion.
- It is said that it was his army which defeated and killed Ghazi Salar Masud, the nephew of Mahmud of Gazni at Bahraich. In local folklore, Suheldev is said to be a Rajbhar.

What is Sandes



- The National Informatics Centre has launched an instant messaging platform called Sandes on the lines of WhatsApp.
- Like WhatsApp, the new NIC platform can be used for all kinds of communications by anyone with a mobile number or email id.
- After security scares, the Ministry of Home Affairs had in April last year issued an advisory to all government employees to avoid using platforms like Zoom for official communication.
- This was after the Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In) had also posted an advisory against Zoom over safety and privacy concerns.
- The idea for a secure communication network dedicated exclusively to government employees has been in the works for the past four years.
- The execution of the idea was accelerated during the last year, according to officials.
- The launch of the app is also a part of the government strategy to push for use of India-made software so as to build an ecosystem of indigenously developed products. Open initially only to government officers, it has now been released for the common public as well.

Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary



- ix elephants died of Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (HS) in Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary located in Odisha's Kalahandi district
- Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary located in Kalahandi district and a popular tourist attraction of Odisha in India.
- Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary is about 15 km from Bhawanipatna, the district headquarters of Kalahandi district.
- The sanctuary covers an area of 175 square kilometres (68 sq mi). It lies within the Eastern Highlands moist deciduous forests ecoregion
- Major plant communities include mixed deciduous forests and scrublands.
- This sanctuary is home to many wildlife species like tiger, leopard, sambar, nilgai, barking deer, mouse deer, a wide variety of birds like green munia, Great Eared-nightjar and various reptiles

Haemorrhagic septicaemia (HS)

- It is a disease which infects animals that come in contact with contaminated water or soil by a contagious bacteria (*Pasteurella multocida*).
- In this disease the respiratory tract and lungs of the animals are affected, leading to severe pneumonia.

- It mainly affects water buffalo, cattle and bison with a high mortality rate in infected animals.
- Recently, around 40 buffaloes had succumbed to the infection in Odisha's Kendrapara.
- The disease generally spreads in the period right before and after the monsoons.

Leopard population tracking gets new approach



- The Spatial Mark-Resight (SMR) models applied by the scientists of Aaranyak, Panthera and World Wide Fund for Nature-India have provided a way of counting the melanistic leopards too.
- The new model has been written about in the Animal Conservation journal.
- U.S.-based Panthera is the only organisation in the world devoted exclusively to the conservation of the world's 40 wild cat species and their ecosystems.
- Melanism has been documented in 14 of these species, including the leopard.
- In the SMR models, we then borrow the capture history of the rosette leopards and apply the information on the melanistic leopards to estimate the entire population size of leopards.
- This is a significant analytical development that can help assess the population of leopards across a great part of the species range from where population estimates are scant
- The SMR method is expected to make it easier to assess the population status of leopards for informed conservation measures by applying the conventional camera trapping field method.
- It can also be widely applied for other species that exhibit similar colour variation in nature, the wild cat specialists said

The viability of two proposals

- Four capitals would obviously mean having Parliament buildings in three other regions, too. If there are four capitals, accommodation for all the MPs and the adjunct staff will have to be constructed.
- While those from the northern parts of the country would prefer to be comfortably ensconced in the existing residential accommodation in New Delhi
- Those from other parts of the country may prefer to settle in the capital of the region to which they belong.
- During Parliament sessions, MPs will descend in droves to the envisaged capitals and fly out, leaving these residential accommodations vacant for months after every session.

- Add to this the huge expenditure involved in all the MPs and their staff having to fly to and from these capitals every now and then. Providing security to all the MPs will be a huge burden for the State Police.
- Even the vacant accommodations where the MPs don't reside will have to be guarded round the clock.
- Depending on the risk factor, enhanced security will have to be necessarily provided to a fair number of them, many of whom manage to get top security cover merely for their imprudent utterances.
- A similar request was made in January 2021 when the Bar Councils of the five southern States called for a Supreme Court bench in south India.
- This has been a long-standing demand. Unlike the proposal to establish four capitals, this one merits serious consideration given the prohibitively long distance between the southern States and Delhi.
- Not many can afford to travel all the way to New Delhi to engage lawyers and plead their cases.
- The exorbitant fees of the Supreme Court lawyers in New Delhi is another deterrent.

Combating vaccine hesitancy

(Rakesh Dubbudu & Nanditha Kalidoss)

- According to the World Health Organization, vaccine hesitancy is defined as a reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccine services.
- Like Western nations, vaccine hesitancy has been a cause of concern in the past in India as well.
- For instance, U.P. witnessed a sudden dip in the uptake of oral polio vaccines when the Muslim community was struck by misconceptions that the vaccine led to illness and infertility.
- Similar hesitancy was witnessed in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, which are otherwise familiar with the concept of vaccines.
- Hesitancy for the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine was sufficiently high in the Malappuram district of Kerala to render community immunisation a challenging goal.
- In times of uncertainty, people are particularly susceptible to misinformation due to an intricate combination of cognitive, social and algorithmic biases i.e., information overload and limited attention spans.
- People can choose to not be inoculated, but to break the chain of transmission, it is imperative to have the right strategy in place.
- Hence, it is suggested that we adopt the idea of libertarian paternalism, a concept of behavioural science, which says it is possible and legitimate to steer people's behaviour towards vaccination while still respecting their freedom of choice.

- The target audience must be the swing population i.e., people who are sceptical but can be persuaded through scientific facts and proper communication.
- The second measure is to pause before you share any 'news' from social media.
- The third measure is to use the celebrity effect — the ability of prominent personalities to influence others to take vaccines.

In telehealth, scaling up the Indian advantage

(Kamalini Ramdas)

- The acceleration in the use of digital technologies has mitigated the impact of COVID-19 to some extent. Virtual consultations avoid the risk of COVID-19 transmission and are helping to bridge this socio-economic divide.
- The Indian government's eSanjeevani platform offers both provider-to-patient interactions and provider-to-provider interactions, where patients visit smartphone-equipped community health officers in rural health and wellness centres; these in turn connect to general practitioners and specialist doctors through a hub-and-spoke model.
- Private providers and non-governmental organisations have also expanded virtual access to underserved populations.
- Remote-shared medical appointments in which multiple patients with similar medical needs meet with a clinician at once, remotely, and where each receives individual attention, can greatly increase telehealth capacity by eliminating repetition of common advice.
- Training platforms such as ECHO, which train primary-care providers in many States through an online platform — can accelerate adoption and should also guide implementers on how to gather data that can be used to scientifically validate this care model.
- Data plans are cheaper in India than anywhere.
- It is possible to get 1.5GB of data a day for a few hundred rupees a month, and Indians from all socioeconomic groups regularly enjoy group video chats with friends and relatives.
- Having a group interaction with a care provider on an appropriately secure platform is certainly conceivable.

Looking ahead after the Ladakh walk back

(Written by : Sushant Singh)

- The current disengagement is limited to two places on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh: north bank of Pangong lake and Kailash range to the south of Pangong.
- There are three other sites of contention on the Ladakh border where the PLA had come in — Depsang, Gogra-Hot Springs and Demchok — and talks will be held to resolve these after the current phase of disengagement is completed.
- The Indian military leadership is aware of the strategic importance of the Depsang plains in the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) sector, not only due to its proximity to the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie (DSDBO) road, the DBO airstrip and the Karakoram Pass, but because of the threat it poses to Indian control over the Siachen glacier.

UPSC_HACKS
www.upschacks.com