

12.03.21

## Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav



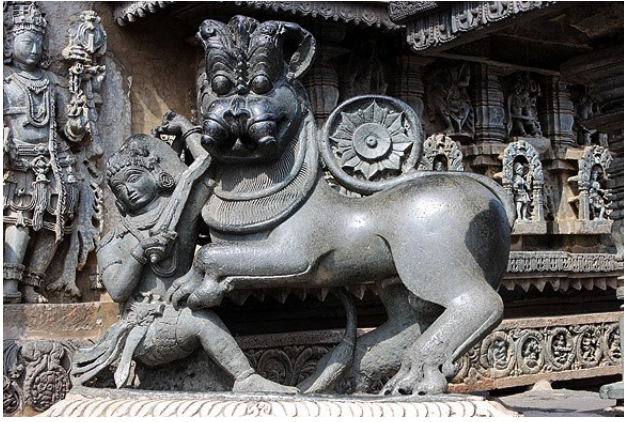
- Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav is a series of events to be organised by the Government of India to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence.
- The Mahotsav will be celebrated as a Jan-Utsav in the spirit of Jan-Bhagidari.
- A National Implementation Committee headed by the Home Minister has been constituted to chalk out policies and planning of various events to be undertaken under the Commemoration.
- The curtain raiser activities are beginning from 12th March 2021, 75 weeks prior to 15th August 2022.

## Dustlik Exercise



- The second edition of the joint military exercise, based on counter-terrorist operations in Kashmir, held from March 9.
- The contingent of the Uzbekistan Army has arrived in Delhi for Indo-Uzbek joint exercise Dustlik.
- The joint military exercise of India and Uzbekistan 'DUSTLIK II' commenced on March 10, 2021, in Ranikhet (Uttarakhand).
- This is the 2nd edition of the annual bilateral joint exercise of the armies of India and Uzbekistan and it will continue till March 19.
- The first edition of the exercise took place in Uzbekistan in November 2019.
- In order to participate in the exercise, the Uzbek soldiers arrived in New Delhi on March 8.
- The joint army exercise is mainly based on counter-terrorist operations and aims at enhancing the military cooperation between the two countries.
- Exercise between India and Uzbekistan will provide a push to the ever-growing military and diplomatic ties between the two countries.

## The 'Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala'



- The 'Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala' represents the pinnacle of artistic and cultural accomplishments of the Hoysala Empire that reigned from the 11th to the 14th Centuries CE largely in present day Karnataka in southern India.
- The properties also represent a cultural value and respect for the pluralistic spiritual beliefs of Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Jainism and contributed to their development.
- The sacred and the spiritual intersected with ordinary people and daily lives in numerous ways.
- Set in the foothills of the hilly and forested terrain of the Western Ghats on sites of enduring sanctity, the sacred ensembles included grand and small Hindu temples designed on ancient treatises, Jaina temples, numerous secondary structures, intricate sculpture and iconography, temple dances and music, lakes and tanks, town planning with the sacred elements, and a relationship to the natural environment that was both material and symbolic.

Following are the architectural marvels of Hoysalas

- A navaranga was usually included as a place for people to gather and participate in cultural programs such as music and dance performances, story-telling from mythology, and religious discourses.
- Mantapa that are pavilions or pillared halls of all sizes are a typical feature and occurred with temples and without.
- Kalyani or stepped wells are commonly found in the Hoysala sacred ensembles
- These wells served as an important source of water and were an important architectural structure.
- Rathabeedi : The temple complex had rathabeedi or wide streets for processions and circumambulation of the deities on enormous chariots.
- The Hoysalas ruled a large part of modern day Karnataka and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu from the 10th to the 14th century.

## Olympics 2048 bidding by New Delhi



- Recently, the Delhi government pledged to to launch a bid for the 2048 Olympic Games to mark 100 years of India's independence
  - The Delhi government said that it will bring sports facilities and the city infrastructure to such a level that the national capital can bid to host the 39th Olympics in 2048.
  - A vision has been provided in the budget that the 2048 Olympic Games should be held in Delhi
- Government's announcement of a long term goal to host the Olympics is not new. For instance, China hosted the Beijing Games in 2008 only after it began preparing for it through its 'Olympic Strategy' formulated in 1985
  - An IOC committee gets into discussions with the cities interested to host the Games.
  - The panel vets the bids and engages with the governments and other stakeholders of the interested countries.
  - Based on their observations, the committee recommends a potential host, which the Executive Board then has to take a call on
  - IOC, which is currently in the process of finalising the venue for the 2032 edition, hasn't yet invited bids for the 2048 event.
  - After it chooses the host for 2032, the IOC will first select venues for the 2036, 2040 and 2044 Games before it begins the search for the city to conduct the event in 2048.

## Kalvari class Submarines



- Indian Navy's fifth Kalvari-class Diesel Electric attack submarine INS Vagir was launched at Mazgaon Dock in Mumbai
  - These submarines are built under Project 75 and their design is based on the Scorpene class of the submarines.
  - Constructed by the public sector shipbuilder Mazagon Dock Ltd (MDL) in Mumbai.
- Used in anti-warship and anti-submarine operations, intelligence gathering and surveillance and naval mine laying.
  - Design is based on Scorpene class of submarines designed and developed by French defence major Naval Group formerly DCNS and Spanish state owned entity Navantia.
  - The other vessels of the Kalvari class are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, INS Vela and INS Vagsheer.



## World's largest floating solar project



- The country's biggest floating solar power plant, by generation capacity, till date being developed by NTPC in the reservoir of its thermal plant at Ramagundam in Peddapalli district of Telangana is set to be commissioned by May-June next.
- Work on the 100 megawatt plant is in the final stages of completion.
- It would be one of the renewable (solar) energy plants being developed by NTPC with an installed capacity of 447 MW in the Southern Region and the entire capacity would be commissioned by March 2023.

## First Meeting of BRICS CGETI held under India's Chairship



- The first Meeting of the BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI) was held under India's Chairship from 9th till 11th of this month. The theme of BRICS this year is -"BRICS at 15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus".
- India presented the calendar of events for BRICS CGETI 2021, which included the priority areas for deliverables, schedule and scope of the MSME roundtable conference workshop on Services Statistics, and the BRICS Trade Fair.
- Till September, inter sessional deliberations will be carried out to reach consensus amongst the BRICS countries.

## First Quad Leaders Summit



- The First Quad Leaders' Summit will be held virtually today. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and US President Joseph R Biden will participate in the first Leaders' Summit of the Quadrilateral Framework.
- The Leaders will discuss regional and global issues of shared interest and exchange views on practical areas of cooperation towards maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- The Summit will provide an opportunity to exchange views on contemporary challenges such as resilient supply chains, emerging and critical technologies, maritime security and climate change.

- The Leaders will also discuss ongoing efforts to combat Covid-19 pandemic and explore opportunities for collaboration in ensuring safe, equitable and affordable vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Cellular Agriculture



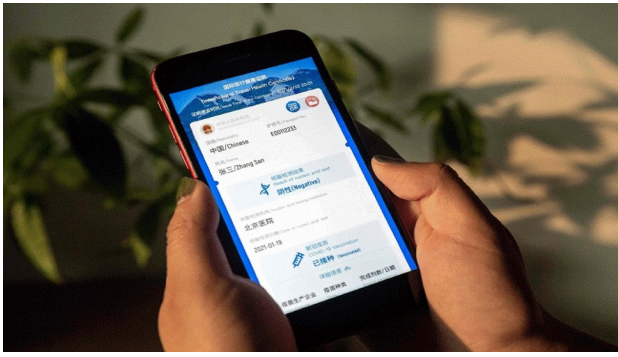
- It refers to the production of animal-sourced foods from cell culture.
- In other words, Cellular Agriculture is a multi-disciplinary branch of science encompassing biotechnology, medicine, and farming.
- It is a nascent technology that allows meat and other agricultural products to be cultured from cells in a fermentor or a bioreactor rather than harvested from livestock on a farm.
- It designs new mechanisms to produce existing agriculture products especially animal products from cell cultures rather than the bodies of living organisms.
- Example: Cellular meat is the most well known cellular agriculture concept
- There are two kinds of agricultural products derived from cell culture: acellular products and cellular products.
- Acellular products are made of organic molecules like proteins and fats and contain no cellular or living material in the final product.
- Cellular products are made of living or once-living cells.
- The main use of this technology has been for food applications, particularly in vitro or cultured meat, called 'clean meat', cellular agriculture can be used to create any kind of agricultural product, including those that never involved animals, to begin with, eggs, leather, milk, fragrances, gelatin and silk
- Cell-based meat, also called clean meat or cultured meat, is nutritionally equivalent to conventional animal meat, and tastes, smells, looks and feels exactly the same
- Its only difference lies in the method of production.

## Techbharat 2021



- Techbharat is facilitating interactions & deliberations between thousands of domestic & global participants, including policymakers, government representatives, industry members, investors & start-ups to nurture resourceful partnerships and boost growth in the sectors.
- The Pradhan Mantri Aatmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana, with a massive outlay of over 64 thousand crore rupees over the next six years, will develop capacities of primary, secondary and tertiary care, health care systems.

# Virus Passport



- China introduced the first “virus passports” on Tuesday in a bid to boost international travel as the United States and the European Union consider similar programmes.
- The EU has said it plans to propose an EU-wide digital vaccination passport sometime this month.
- From digital certificates to "health passports", countries and airlines across the globe are hoping to relaunch travel by letting people prove their Covid-free status.
- Most programmes under development are geared towards facilitating travel and come in the form of smartphone apps with varying criteria for a clean bill of health.
- Vaccine passports, for example, are a popular way to approach proof of immunity with jab rollouts underway across the globe.

## International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)



- International North-South Transport Corridor is a corridor to increase trade between India and Russia. This trade route is 7200 Km long and the transport of freight is through a multi-mode network of Road, Ship, and Railways.
- This route connects India and Russia through Iran and Azerbaijan.
- Russia, India, and Iran are the founding member states of INSTC. The agreement was signed in 2002.

There are 13 member states of the INSTC project. The list of member states is given below.

India  
Iran  
Russia  
Azerbaijan  
Armenia  
Kazakhstan  
Belarus  
Tajikistan  
Kyrgystan  
Oman  
Turkey  
Syria  
Ukraine.  
Bulgaria is the Observer State.



## Race To Zero Campaign



- Race To Zero is a global campaign to rally leadership and support from businesses, cities, regions, investors for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery that prevents future threats, creates decent jobs, and unlocks inclusive, sustainable growth.
- It mobilizes a coalition of leading net zero initiatives, representing 454 cities, 23 regions, 1,397 businesses, 74 of the biggest investors, and 569 universities.
- These 'real economy' actors join 120 countries in the largest ever alliance committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest.
- Collectively these actors now cover nearly 25% global CO2 emissions and over 50% GDP.
- Led by the High-Level Climate Champions for Climate Action – Nigel Topping and Gonzalo Muñoz– Race To Zero mobilizes actors outside of national governments to join the Climate Ambition Alliance, which was launched at the UNSG's Climate Action Summit 2019 by the President of Chile, Sebastián Piñera.
- The objective is to build momentum around the shift to a decarbonized economy ahead of COP26, where governments must strengthen their contributions to the Paris Agreement.
- This will send governments a resounding signal that business, cities, regions and investors are united in meeting the Paris goals and creating a more inclusive and resilient economy.

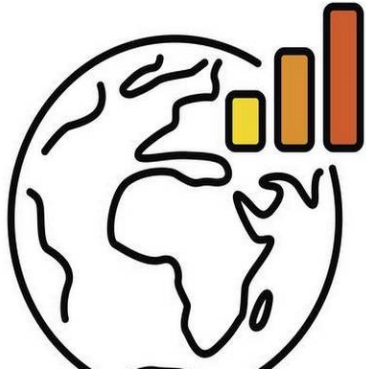
## Sea cucumbers



- Sea cucumbers are single branched marine organisms (invertebrates)
- They are protected under Schedule I under the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972 so their trade is banned
- The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change imposed a total ban on harvesting and transporting sea cucumbers in 2001.

# Working towards climate justice in a non-ideal world

Written by : Manjeev Singh Puri



- This time the push appears to have come to shove, with all countries being told to commit to net zero (GHG emissions) by 2050 with credible plans to ensure meeting this domestic target.
- Indeed, the Chinese, who posited themselves as reaching there by 2060, have been sternly told to be there a decade earlier.
- Taking a cue from the new U.S. Administration, the UN Secretary-General has even called on countries to declare national climate emergencies apart from building a coalition for a carbon-neutral world by 2050.
- As of today, countries representing around 65% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have already agreed to this.
- India, with its huge population and now one of the world's largest economies, can easily be in the crosshairs of such a discourse no matter its extraordinarily small carbon footprint in per-capita terms and huge development imperatives.
- Adding to the challenges of this proposed global goal is the distinct possibility of the EU imposing carbon border levies on those who do not take on high carbon cut-down targets and do so unilaterally if there is no global agreement.
- In such a scenario, World Trade Organization rules that presently exclude the use of tariffs on environmental grounds will certainly get modified.
- In this context, Raghuram Rajan has recently put forward a proposal for India to consider — it calls on countries to pay into a global fund amounts based on their carbon emissions over and above the global per-capita average of five tons.
- This obviously disincentivises coal in a big way while incentivising renewables.
- Those above the global average would pay, while those below would receive the monies.



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