

26.03.21

N. Korea launches 'ballistic missiles'



- North Korea fired two suspected ballistic missiles into the sea on Thursday in its first substantive provocation to the new U.S. administration of Joe Biden.
- The nuclear-armed North has a long history of using weapons tests to ramp up tensions, in a carefully calibrated process to try to forward its objectives.
- They travelled 450 km and reached a maximum altitude of 60 km

Thanjavur plate



- The Thanjavur Art Plate is an artefact which is exclusively made in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India.
- It is a circular plate made as a gift item. It is a handicraft consisting of metals such as silver, bronze, and copper embossed with figures of gods and goddesses at its centre.
- Patronised by Maratha ruler Serfoji II (1777-1832), Thanjavur Kalai craftsmen were kept busy with orders for royal gifts, mostly decorative salvers, jewel boxes and vessels like water pots and ewers.
- In its contemporary version, the craft has been commercially reinterpreted as 'Thanjavur kalai thattu' or Thanjavur Art Plate, a ceremonial platter made with silver, copper and brass layers in three stages.
- The base is plated with alternate copper and silver panels, a bigger embossed silver motif on the central section, and the setting of globular jigna or sequins in the secondary relief.
- It was given a Geographical Indications (GI) tag in 2007, as a proof of its long heritage.

The Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971:



- The Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 was for independence from Pakistan.
- India and Pakistan got independence from the British rule in 1947.
- Pakistan was formed for the Muslims and India had a majority of Hindus.
- Pakistan had two parts, East and West, which were separated by about 1,000 miles.
- East Pakistan was mainly the eastern part of the province of Bengal.
- The capital of Pakistan was Karachi in West Pakistan and was moved to Islamabad in 1958.
- However, due to discrimination in economy and ruling powers against them, the East Pakistanis vigorously protested and declared independence on March 26, 1971 under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- But during the year prior to that, to suppress the unrest in East Pakistan, the Pakistani government sent troops to East Pakistan and unleashed a massacre. And thus, the war for liberation commenced
- The war started when Pakistan launched air strikes on 11 Indian airbases.
- It was perhaps the first time in which India's all three forces fought in unison.
- India quickly responded to Pakistan Army's movements in the west and captured around 15,010 kilometres of Pakistan territory.
- The war ended after the chief of the Pakistani forces, General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, along with 93,000 troops, surrendered to the joint forces of Indian Army and Bangladesh's Mukti Bahini.
- The war lasted for just 13 days, and is one of the shortest wars in history.
- The military confrontation between India and Pakistan occurred from 3 December 1971 to the fall of Dacca (Dhaka) on 16 December 1971.
- On December 16th, 1971, Dhaka fell to the Mukti Bahini, the elite forces of the Mukti Bahini and the Indian army.
- An "Instrument of Surrender" was signed by the defeated Pakistani General Niazi and by the Indian commander General Aurora at 16:31 Indian Standard Time.
- This is how Bangladesh became liberated and independent.
- December 16th is recognized as the Victory Day in Bangladesh, while March 26 is recognized as the Independence Day.

Measures to Achieve Energy Transition Towards Clean Energy



- Government of India has set a target for installing 175 GW of Renewable Energy capacity (excluding large hydro) by the end of 2021-22 which includes 100 GW from solar, 60 GW from wind, 10 GW from Biomass and 5 GW from Small Hydro.
- In order to become self-reliant in power generation and achieving energy transition towards clean energy, Government has inter-alia taken following measures:
 - a) The renewable energy capacity to go up to 450 GW.
 - b) Phase-wise retirement of old polluting coal based power plants.
 - c) Setting up of Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Parks to provide land and transmission to RE developers on a plug and play basis.
 - d) Schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Surakshaevam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM), Solar Rooftop Phase II, 12000 MW CPSU Scheme Phase II, etc.
 - e) Laying of new transmission lines and creating new sub-station capacity under the Green Energy Corridor Scheme for evacuation of renewable power.
 - f) Notifying Bidding Guidelines for tariff based competitive bidding process for procurement of Power from Grid Connected Solar PV and Wind Projects.
 - g) Declaring Large Hydro Power (LHPs) (>25 MW projects) as Renewable Energy source.
 - h) Hydro Purchase Obligation (HPO) as a separate entity within Non-solar Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO).
 - i) Tariff rationalization measures for bringing down hydro power tariff.
 - j) Budgetary Support for Flood Moderation/Storage Hydro Electric Projects (HEPs).
 - k) Budgetary Support to Cost of Enabling Infrastructure, i.e. roads/bridges for hydro projects.
 - a. ₹ 1.5 crore per MW for projects upto 200 MW
 - b. ₹ 1.0 crore per MW for projects above 200 MW.

Functioning of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes



National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

Government of India

- The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes have been set up under Article 338A of the Constitution of India.

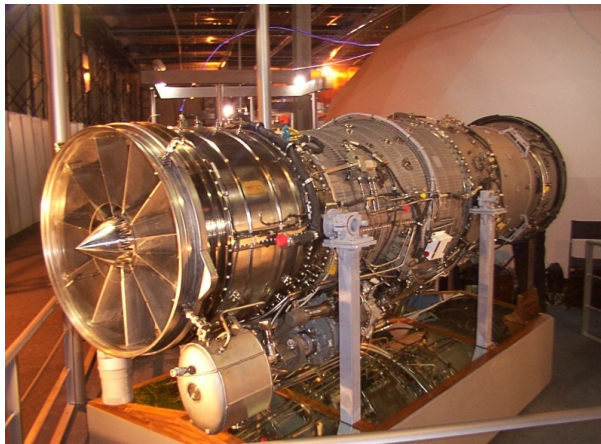
The functions of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes are given below:-

- The Sub-clause (5) of the Article 338A of the Constitution of India provides that it shall be the duty of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes as under:-

- To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Tribes under this Constitution or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;
- To inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled tribes;
- To participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State;
- To present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;
- To make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled tribes; and
- To discharge such other functions insulation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled tribes as the President may, subject to the provision of any law made by Parliament by rule specify
- In addition, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-clause (f) of clause 5 of article 338A of the Commission, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (Specification of other function) Rules, 2005 provide for the following other functions in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes, namely:-
 - Measures that need to be taken over conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce to STs living in forest areas.
 - Measures to be taken safeguard rights of the tribal communities over mineral resources, water resources etc. as laid down by law.
 - Measures to be taken for the development of tribal to plug loopholes and to work more viable livelihood strategies.
 - Measures to be taken to improve the efficacy of relief and rehabilitation measures for tribal groups displaced by development projects.

- Measures to be taken to prevent alienation of tribal people from land and to effectively rehabilitate such people in whose case alienation has already been taken place.
- Measures to be taken to elicit maximum cooperation and involvement of tribal communities for protecting forests and undertaking social afforestation.
- Measures to be taken to ensure full implementation of the provision of Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.
- Measures to be taken to reduce and ultimately eliminate the practice of shifting cultivation by tribal that lead to their continuous disempowerment and degradation of land and the environment.

Kaveri Engine



- The first consignment of high-temperature alloy for the country's indigenous 'Kaveri dry engine program' powering Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV).
- The supply of the first batch was flagged off by the chief engineer of the Centre for Military Airworthiness & Certification (CEMILAC) of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has been dispatched
- GTRE is entrusted with the design and development of Kaveri Engine which is low bypass twin spool turbo fan engine of 80 kN thrust class.
- The engine incorporates flat rated characteristics to mitigate the thrust drop due to high ambient intake temperature and / or high forward speed.
- Twin lane full authority digital engine control with an adequate manual backup is a salient design feature of Kaveri Engine.

La Perouse



- The Indian Navy will be part of a French naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal next month.
- The participating nations also include the other Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) member countries — Australia, Japan and the United States of America (USA).
- This is the first time that the Indian Navy will be part of the France-led war game 'La Perouse'. Until now, India was not invited for the French naval exercise.

- After the Malabar Exercise in November last year, during which the navies of India, the US and Japan got together with Australia as the new addition, India's inclusion in the France-led joint naval drill is a significant step.
- The exercise is scheduled between April 5 and 7
- This will be followed by another important naval exercise 'Varuna', which takes place annually between India and France.
- This time it will also include the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- It will take place in the last week of April in the Western Indian Ocean
- The Indian Navy also carried out war games with the navies of Singapore and Thailand in the Andaman Sea, soon after the Malabar Exercise.
- As part of the Indian government's 'Neighbourhood First' vision, the Indian Navy undertook joint exclusive economic zone surveillance with Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius, as well as coordinated patrols (CORPATs) with Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia.
- The Indian Navy has participated in 13 bilateral and multilateral exercises so far this year.

Future Skills PRIME



- Future Skills PRIME is the next phase of the 'Future Skills' platform that was launched in 2018.
- An online FutureSkills platform for B2B skilling by NASSCOM was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, in the presence of Hon'ble Minister (E&IT), industry leaders, and senior Government officials in 2018.
- The B2B FutureSkills model has been extended to cater to the re-skilling/ up-skilling needs of individuals through a B2C offering – FutureSkills Prime.
- The platform would provide interested candidates with multiple options for their skilling needs.
- Through this platform, learners can exit at multiple points in their learning journey.
- They can earn badges for digital fluency, earn certificates from courses aligned to the government-approved curriculum, go through blended learning from key program partners like CDAC/NEILIT and complete bridge and foundations courses.
- It is a joint venture program between the Ministry of Electronics and IT with the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) to skill 412,000 professionals in the next three years.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister had approved the proposal of the Department of Commerce to give focussed attention to twelve identified Champion Services Sectors for promoting their development and realising their potential.

- IT and ITeS Services is one of the identified champion service sectors under the umbrella scheme titled Champion Service Sector scheme ('CSSS').
- This scheme is proposed to be implemented as a new Central Sector Scheme under the CSSS by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) being the Nodal Ministry for IT-ITeS Services.
- The scheme would be jointly implemented by MeitY and NASSCOM.
- The platform enables learning the skills required in emerging technologies. More importantly, it helps individuals develop an aptitude for learning.

SEBI approves new guidelines for easier listing of start-ups



- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Thursday approved relaxations to existing norms to make it easier for start-ups to list on the stock exchanges.
- These include reducing holding period for pre-issue capital, allowing discretionary allotment to eligible investors and easing delisting requirements. SEBI said these measures were taken in view of India's evolving start-up ecosystem.

Alan Turing



- The Bank of England unveiled the design of a new banknote celebrating mathematician Alan Turing, who helped Britain win World War Two with his code-breaking skills.
- The new 50-pound note features an image of Turing and mathematical formulae from a 1936 paper he wrote. Turing was convicted of gross indecency in 1952 and later used cyanide to kill himself.
- Alan Turing , in full Alan Mathison Turing, (born June 23, 1912, London, England—died June 7, 1954, Wilmslow, Cheshire), British mathematician and logician, who made major contributions to mathematics, cryptanalysis, logic, philosophy, and mathematical biology and also to the new areas later named computer science, cognitive science, artificial intelligence, and artificial life.
- Turing may best be known for his work at Bletchley Park during World War II, and his part in breaking the German Enigma code

Why are brands like H&M, Nike and Adidas facing a boycott in China?



- Brands like H&M and Nike are facing a boycott in China after Communist Party criticised H&M for its March 2020 statement about not buying cotton from Xinjiang over alleged human rights abuses.
- Similar statements by other brands then resurfaced in China and H&M's sales on Chinese e-commerce websites were blocked. The boycott follows the EU's sanctions on four Chinese officials.

UN Institute for Training & Research (UNITAR).



- UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is a dedicated training arm of the United Nations system.
- UNITAR provides training and capacity development activities to assist mainly developing countries with special attention to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and other groups and communities who are most vulnerable, including those in conflict situations.
- The Institute provides training and learning services to national and local government officials of UN member states and civil society representatives from around the world.
- UNITAR strives to respond to the growing demand from UN member States, especially the Least Developed Countries, for capacity development in the thematic areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- UNITAR helps governments to understand climate change, chemicals and waste management, and green economy.
- The institute also assists ministries of finance through its courses on public debt management, finance and trade, and it provides government officials with training in Peacekeeping and conflict prevention.
- Through its programme on operational satellite applications (UNOSAT), the Institute provides satellite imagery and analysis.
- Since 2003, UNITAR provides courses to support municipal and regional leaders dealing with complex public policies.

- Operated as an autonomous body within the United Nations system, UNITAR is headed by an Executive Director and governed by a Board of Trustees.
- The Executive Director and the members of the Board of Trustees are appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General.

Pakal Dul Hydroelectric Project



- India justifies designs of Pakal Dul, Lower Kalnai hydro projects in J-K as Pakistan objects
- It is a reservoir based scheme proposed on river Marusudar, the main right bank tributary of river Chenab in Kishtwar Tehsil of Doda District in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Pakal Dul is a 1GW hydroelectric project (HEP) under construction in the village of Drangdhuran, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), India. It is anticipated to produce around 3,330 million units (MU) of energy a year.
- The Pakal Dul HEP project will be the biggest hydroelectric project in the state and the first storage project, upon completion.
- It is part of the prime minister's Development Package (PMDP) for J&K and is expected to enhance the region's power generation.
- Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPPL) is constructing the project on Marusadar River, a tributary of the Chenab River.
- Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) holds a 49% stake in CVPPL while National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and PTC India hold 49% and 2% respectively.

Gram Ujala



- The Government has launched the Gram UJALA Programme - an ambitious scheme offering the world's cheapest LED bulbs in rural areas at a mere Rs. 10.
- In the first phase 15 million LED bulbs will be distributed across villages of Arrah (Bihar), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), and western Gujarat
- Gram Ujala programme is financed entirely through carbon credits.
- Under the United Nations' Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), the scheme will claim carbon credits.
- Also, under the new scheme, the rural consumer's incandescent and CFL (compact fluorescent lamp) bulbs will be taken back.

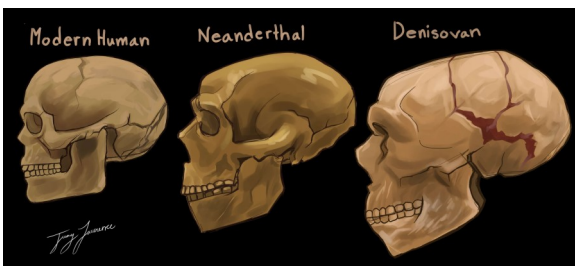
- This scheme is designed specifically for rural homes keeping affordability in mind and it will also result in energy savings as a 12 Watt LED bulb gives equivalent light as of 100 watt incandescent bulb
- India is currently the second-largest LED market in the world by value.
- The government's previous Ujala (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable Lighting for All) scheme had cut LED bulb prices to ₹70 apiece from around ₹310 in 2014. Under Gram Ujala, the new scheme, the revenue earned from carbon credits will contribute ₹60 per LED bulb piece, with the balance ₹10 to be paid by the rural consumer

National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professionals Bill 2021



- The Lok Sabha cleared the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professionals Bill 2021.
- The Bill provides for regulation and maintenance of standards of education and services by allied and healthcare professionals, assessment of institutions, maintenance of a central and a state register and creation of a system to improve research and development and adoption of latest scientific advancement.
- The allied and healthcare professions include a wide range of workers for diagnosis, evaluation and treatment of acute and chronic diseases.
- These professions also work to optimise patient outcomes and attend to overall prevention, promotion, wellness and management of diseases.
- As per the statement of objects and the reasons of the Bill, the advancement in the health sector, changing preferences of consumers and service providers, had warranted creation of a fresh vision of healthcare delivery with a patient-centric approach and focus on moving to a multi-disciplinary team-based care.

Denisovan



- Southeast Asians Carry DNA of 'Mysterious Southern Denisovans'
- The Denisovans or Denisova hominins are an extinct species or subspecies of archaic human that ranged across Asia during the Lower and Middle Paleolithic.
- Denisovans are known from few remains, and, consequently, most of what is known about them comes from DNA evidence.
- Pending consensus on their taxonomic status, they have been referred to as Homo denisova, H. altaiensis, or H. sapiens denisova.

- Denisovans are known only from a few sparse remains, including DNA from 50,000-year-old Siberian finger bone and teeth, as well as collagen proteins from a 160,000-year-old jaw fragment in Tibet.
- Intriguingly, these bits of bone and teeth don't match any of the known fossils in the human family tree.

UPSC_HACKS
www.upschacks.com