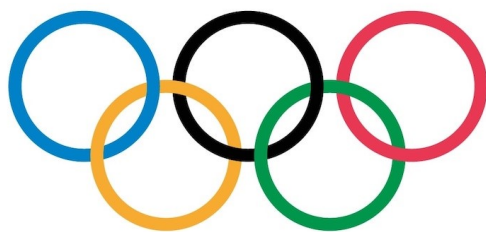


## IOC's RULE 50



- Olympic-bound athletes won't be allowed to protest on the field, on podiums, and during ceremonies.
- The decision, taken on the back of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) Rule 50, has triggered a fresh round of debate over athletes' right to expression.
- The IOC's Rule 50 forbids any kind of "demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda" at venues and any other Olympic area.
- However, following the death of George Floyd in the USA last May, which triggered anti-racism protests and gave a boost to the Black Lives Matter movement, the Olympic body came under pressure to relax the rule so that athletes could express themselves freely during the Games.
- Subsequently, the IOC's Athletes Commission started a consultation process in June last year, took views from 3,547 athletes before last week, it was recommended that the rule should be maintained.

## G7



- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will embark on a four-day visit to London to participate in a meeting of foreign ministers of G7 countries.
- India has been invited to the meeting as a guest country.
- The G-7 or 'Group of Seven' are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- The G-7 nations meet at annual summits that are presided over by leaders of member countries on a rotational basis.
- The summit is an informal gathering that lasts two days, in which leaders of member countries discuss a wide range of global issues.
- The G-7 does not have a formal constitution or a fixed headquarters.
- The decisions taken by leaders during annual summits are non-binding.

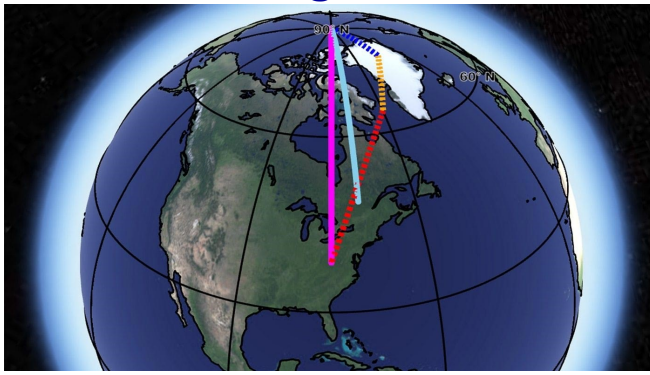
- It is an intergovernmental organisation that was formed in 1975 by the top economies of the time as an informal forum to discuss pressing world issues.
- Canada joined the group in 1976, and the European Union began attending in 1977.
- The G-7 was known as the 'G-8' for several years after the original seven were joined by Russia in 1997.
- The Group returned to being called G-7 after Russia was expelled as a member in 2014 following the latter's annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.

## Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan agree new ceasefire



- After violent clashes across the border, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan have agreed a new ceasefire.
- The border between the two countries has been a focus of tension for the past 30 years.
- Kyrgyzstan had earlier accused Tajikistan of building up troops and military equipment near their border, following the clashes near the de facto Tajik enclave of Vorukh.
- The clashes broke out recently along the frontier between Tajikistan's Sughd province and Kyrgyzstan's southern Batken province because of a dispute over a reservoir and pump, claimed by both sides, on the Isfara River.
- Several hundred people had rallied in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, outside the government offices and demanded the government hand them weapons to fight at the border
- The presidents of the two Central Asian nations have spoken on the phone to discuss further steps after the ceasefire.
- Both countries are former Soviet republics, host Russian military bases and consider Moscow a strategic ally.
- Hence Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov spoke by phone with his counterparts in both countries, urging them to stick to the ceasefire agreement.

# Climate change and shift in earth's axis



- According to new research, glacial melting due to global warming has probably been altering Earth's poles since at least the 1990s.
- The study is published in Geophysical Research Letters of the American Geophysical Union (AGU).
- The Earth's spin around the invisible axis running through the center of Earth's mass is dependent on the distribution of weight around the globe and it shifts just like a spinning top.
- The axis Earth spins around is always moving and the way water is distributed on Earth's surface is one factor that drives the drift.
- The study noted that the average drift speed between 1995 and 2020 increased about 17 times from the average speed between 1981 and 1995.
- Melting glaciers redistributed enough water to cause the direction of polar wander to turn and accelerate eastward during the mid-1990s.
- The researchers found that the contributions of water loss from the polar regions is the main driver of polar drift, with contributions from water loss in nonpolar regions, causing the eastward change in polar drift.
- While this change is not expected to affect daily life, it can change the length of the day by a few milliseconds, experts say.
- The calculations were based on satellite data from NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) mission as well as estimates of glacier loss and groundwater pumping going back to the 1980s.
- While ice melting is the major factor behind increased polar motion, groundwater depletion also adds to the phenomenon.

## GRACE mission:

- The Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) was a joint mission of NASA and the German Aerospace Center (DLR).
- Twin satellites took detailed measurements of Earth's gravity field anomalies from its launch in March 2002 to the end of its science mission in October 2017.
- Data from the GRACE satellites is an important tool for studying Earth's ocean, geology, and climate.
- The Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-On (GRACE-FO) is a continuation of the mission on near-identical hardware, launched in May 2018.

## Bryocrumia Malabarica



- A new species of moss of the genus Bryocrumia has been named after the Malabar region of Kerala from where it was spotted.
- Bryocrumia malabarica, discovered in the Malabar Wildlife Sanctuary along the Western Ghats, is special.
- This tiny bryophyte is only the second species to be identified in the genus Bryocrumia.
- For years, the genus Bryocrumia was thought to include only one species – Bryocrumia vivicolor.
- Found on rocks in streams, B.vivicolor has been spotted in Congo and Uganda in Africa, North and South Carolina in the United States, China's Yunnan, Nuwara Eliya in Sri Lanka, and Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala in India.
- Bryocrumia malabarica which is light green in colour, differs from Bryocrumia vivicolor in the structure of its leaves.
- The plant was first collected in 2014 as part of the PhD programme of one of the researchers.
- It is the 12th species of bryophytes newly described from Kerala in recent years.

## Medical oxygen from industrial nitrogen plants



- Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has identified 30 industries to modify nitrogen plants for the production of medical oxygen.
- CPCB with the help of State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) have identified such potential industries.
- Some of these plants can be shifted to nearby hospitals for supplying oxygen and some plants, where it is not feasible to shift, can produce oxygen on-site and compressed and filled in cylinders/special vessels using high pressure compressors for transportation.
- In the existing nitrogen plants, replacing Carbon Molecular Sieve (CMS) with Zeolite Molecular Sieve (ZMS) and few other changes such as installation of oxygen analyzer, change in control panel system etc.. oxygen for medical use can be produced.
- With the availability of ZMS, such modified plant can be set-up in 4-5 days while installation of new oxygen plants may take minimum 3-4 weeks.

- Recently, M/s UPL Ltd converted one 50 Nm<sup>3</sup>/hr capacity Nitrogen plant to produce oxygen using Zeolite Molecular Sieve, and installed it at L G Rotary Hospital, Vapi (Gujarat).
- It is also under process of conversion of three more plants and on conversion to oxygen plants, these will be installed at hospitals in Surat and Ankaleshwar.

## Asian Development Outlook, 2021



- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has released Asian Development Outlook report for 2021.
- The Indian economy is projected to grow at 11% in the current financial year (which ends on March 31, 2022) amid the “strong” vaccine drive.
- However, the recent surge in COVID cases may put the country’s economic recovery at “risk”.
- India was one of the 45 economies across Asia and the Pacific that were assessed by the report.
- The 45 economies that excluded Japan, Australia and New Zealand, were to grow 7.3 per cent this year, supported by a healthy global recovery and early progress on COVID-19 vaccines.
- It noted that while growth was forecast to be the strongest in East and South Asia, central and southeast Asia as well as the Pacific were to see more moderate growth.
- Rising exports are boosting some economies in Developing Asia (46 members of ADB list on the basis of geographic group) amid strengthening global economic activity, including a rebound in manufacturing.
- The GDP of South Asia is expected to rebound to 9.5% in 2021, following a contraction of 6% in 2020, before moderating to 6.6% in 2022.
- Increasing geopolitical tensions, production bottlenecks, delay in vaccine rollouts or major new outbreaks, financial turmoil and long-term scarring like learning losses due to school closures are the main risk factors.

### Asian Development Outlook:

- It is an annual publication produced by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- It offers economic analysis and forecasts, as well as an examination of social development issues, for most countries in Asia.
- It is prepared by staff of ADB’s regional departments, and field offices, under the coordination of the Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department with the goal of developing “consistent forecasts for the region”.

# How are the SpaceX Crew-1 & Crew-2 Dragon capsules different



- NASA Commercial Crew Program Manager Steve Stich has revealed that while the SpaceX Crew-1 and Crew-2 Dragon capsules are mostly the same, the Crew-2 capsule has upgraded propulsion systems.
- The vehicle sports a battery upgrade with an improved lifetime and improved energy storage.
- It also has a fly around capability that allows it to move around the International Space Station.

## Vorukh



- It is a jamoat in northern Tajikistan. It is an exclave surrounded by Kyrgyzstan that forms part of the city of Isfara in Sughd Region.
- Jamoats are the third-level administrative divisions, similar to communes or municipalities, in the Central Asian country of Tajikistan.

## Scheduled drugs' list

Table 1. Definitions for Schedule I – V Drugs
<b>Schedule I Drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High potential for abuse</li><li>- No currently accepted medical use in the U.S.</li><li>- Lack of accepted safety for use of the drug under medical supervision</li></ul>
<b>Schedule II Drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High potential for abuse</li><li>- Currently accepted medical use in the U.S.</li><li>- Abuse may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence</li></ul>
<b>Schedule III Drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Potential for abuse less than schedule I and II drugs</li><li>- Currently accepted medical use in the U.S.</li><li>- Abuse may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence</li></ul>
<b>Schedule IV Drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lower potential for abuse less than schedule III drugs</li><li>- Currently accepted medical use in the U.S.</li><li>- Abuse may lead to limited physical or psychological dependence relative to schedule III substances</li></ul>
<b>Schedule V Drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Low potential for abuse relative to schedule IV substances</li><li>- Currently accepted medical use in the U.S.</li><li>- Abuse may lead to limited physical or psychological dependence relative to schedule IV substances</li></ul>

- Bombay High Court has asked the Centre to include Remdesivir in the list of scheduled drugs and to regulate its pricing.
- The direction came while the Bench was hearing a suo motu public interest litigation (PIL) petition on the shortage of oxygen, non-availability of Remdesivir, Tocilizumab injections, and hospital beds in Nagpur district.

Other measures suggested by the Court:

- The court also said that it is possible to regulate the pricing if a liberal interpretation is given to the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act (DCA).
- The provisions of the DCA allow restriction or regulation of prices of a drug that was essential during a natural calamity or epidemic.
- Both the Drugs Control Act and DCA enable the central government to issue a notification to fix rates of essential drugs during an epidemic.

- The Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 contains provisions for classification of drugs under given schedules and there are guidelines for the storage, sale, display and prescription of each schedule.

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