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NATIONAL AFFAIRS**#INDORE KEEPS THE CLEANEST CITY TAG FOR 5TH YEAR**

- President Ram Nath Kovind conferred awards to 342 cleanest cities of India at the 'Swachh Amrit Mahotsav' as part of **Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban 2.0** by the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.
- More than 300 awards under various categories were given for recognizing the cleanliness and sanitation efforts of the towns, cities, States, and Union Territories under various initiatives of Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban such as the Swachh Survekshan 2021, SafaimitraSurakasha Challenge, and certifications for Garbage Free Star rating for cities.

**Swachh Survekshan 2021: Which is the cleanest city in India 2021?**

- Under the **Swachh Survekshan 2021**, **Indore** has been awarded the 'Cleanest City' of India award for the 5th consecutive year in the 'more than 1 lakh' population category followed by Surat and Vijayawada on the 2nd and 3rd rank respectively.
- **Vita, Lonavala, and Sasvad cities from Maharashtra** have ranked first, second, and third Cleanest Cities respectively in the 'less than 1 lakh' population category.
- **Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh** emerged as the '**Fastest Mover City**' in the 'more than 1 lakh' population category thus securing a place among the top 100 cities at 87th position.
- In other categories, Varanasi **won the 'Best Ganga Town'**, **Ahmedabad Cantonment won 'India's Cleanest Cantonment'** followed by Meerut Cantonment and Delhi Cantonment.

Swachh Survekshan 2021: Which is the cleanest state in India 2021?

- Under the Swachh Survekshan 2021, **Chhattisgarh** has been awarded as the 'Cleanest State' of India for the 3rd consecutive year in the 'more than 100 Urban Local Bodies'.
- **Jharkhand won the 'Cleanest State' of India** for the second time in the 'less than 100 Urban Local Bodies' category.
- Karnataka emerged as the 'Fastest Mover State' in the 'more than 100 Urban Local Bodies' and Mizoram emerged as the '**Fastest Mover State** in the '**less than 100 Urban Local Bodies**'.
- **Swachh Survekshan 2021: Top performer cities, states under first SafaimitraSurakasha Challenge**
- Under the Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge, the top performer cities are **Indore, Navi Mumbai, Nellore, and Dewas** across different population categories among 246 participating cities while the top performer states are **Chhattisgarh and Chandigarh**.
- Under the Star Rating Protocol of Garbage Free Cities, 9 cities were certified as 5-star cities while 143 cities were certified as 3-star.
- The **nine 5-star rated cities** are Indore, Surat, New Delhi Municipal Council, Navi Mumbai, Ambikapur,

Mysuru, Noida, Vijayawada, and Patan.

Swachh Survekshan 2021: Significance

- The '**Swachh Amrit Mahotsav**' marked the celebration of the achievements of cities and states in India over the past seven years of Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban.
- **Launched on October 1, 2020, the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0** focuses on ensuring complete access to sanitation facilities for all. Over the years, the world's largest urban cleanliness survey Swachh Survekshan has become an effective tool for innovations and best practices in sanitation and waste management across urban India.
- The **Swachh Survekshan 2021** holds significance as it is commemorating the '**Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**' and recognizes the efforts of SafaiMitras (frontline sanitation workers) amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Despite the pandemic, the **6th edition of Swachh Survekshan (SS2021)** was conducted in a record time of 28 days. A total of 4,320 cities participated. The SS2021 saw over 5 crores citizens' feedback compared to 1.87 crores in 2020.
- In Swachh Survekshan 2021, Maharashtra won 92 awards which is the highest by any State this year followed by Chhattisgarh with 67 awards. Additionally, five cities – Indore, Surat, Navi Mumbai, New Delhi Municipal Council, and Tirupati were categorized as '**Divya**' (Platinum) under a new performance category **PrerakDaaurSamman in SS2021**.

#RELATED NEWS: PM MODI LAUNCHED SBM-U 2.0 & AMRUT 2.0

Recently, the Prime Minister launched the second phase of **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U 2.0)**.

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** is the nodal ministry for the scheme.
- **About:** SBM-U 2.0, announced in **Budget 2021-22**, is the continuation of SBM-U first phase. The government is trying to tap **safe containment, transportation, disposal of faecal sludge, and septage from toilets**.
- **SBM-U** first phase was launched on 2nd October 2014 aiming at making urban India **Open Defecation Free (ODF)** and achieving 100% scientific management of municipal solid waste. It **lasted till October 2019**.
- It will be implemented over five years **from 2021 to 2026** with an outlay of Rs.1.41 lakh crore
- **Aim:** It focuses on **source segregation of garbage, reduction in single-use plastic and air pollution**, by effectively managing waste from construction and demolition activities and **bioremediation of all legacy dump sites**.
- Under this mission, all wastewater will be treated properly before it is discharged into water bodies, and the government is trying to make maximum reuse a priority.



Mission outcomes:

- All statutory towns will become **ODF+ certified** (focuses on toilets with water, maintenance and hygiene)
- All statutory towns with less than 1 lakh population will become **ODF++ certified** (focuses on toilets with sludge and septage management).
- 50% of all statutory towns with less than 1 lakh population will become **Water+ certified** (aims to sustain toilets by treating and reuse of water).
- All statutory towns will be **at least 3-star Garbage Free rated** as per MoHUA's Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free cities.
- Bioremediation of all legacy dumpsites.

AMRUT MISSION 2.0

Recently, the Prime Minister also launched the second phase of **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT 2.0)**.

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** is the nodal ministry for the scheme
- It is the continuation of the **AMRUT mission** launched in June 2015 to ensure that every household has access to a tap with the assured supply of water and a sewerage connection.
- AMRUT 2.0 aims to provide 100% coverage of water supply to all households in around 4,700 ULBs (Urban Local Bodies).
- It also seeks to promote **Atmanirbhar Bharat** through encouraging Startups and Entrepreneurs (**Public Private Partnership**).

Objectives:

- It will build upon the progress of AMRUT to address water needs, rejuvenate water bodies, better manage aquifers, reuse treated wastewater, thereby **promoting a circular economy** of water.
- It will provide 100% coverage of sewerage and septage in 500 AMRUT cities.
- Recycling and reuse of treated wastewater is expected to cater to 20% of total water needs of the cities and 40% of industrial demand. Under the Mission, fresh water bodies will be protected from getting polluted to make natural resources sustainable.
- **Pey Jal Survekshan** will be conducted in cities to ascertain equitable distribution of water, reuse of wastewater and mapping of water bodies.

#PM MODI INAUGURATED PURVANCHAL EXPRESSWAY

- Recently, the **Prime Minister** inaugurated the **Purvanchal Expressway** in Uttar Pradesh.
- It starts from **Chandsarai village**, located near the existing Lucknow-Sultanpur Road (NH-731), in Lucknow district and it ends at **Haidaria village on National Highway 31** in Ghazipur, 18 km from the UP-Bihar border, in Ghazipur district.
- The expressway will connect with the existing Agra-Lucknow and Agra-Noida Yamuna expressways to form an **industrial corridor**, providing connectivity from the eastern to western borders of UP.
- An **industrial corridor** is basically a corridor consisting of multi-modal transport services that would pass through the states as main arteries.
- The districts falling on this **greenfield expressway** are Lucknow, Barabanki, Amethi, Sultanpur, Ayodhya, Ambedkar Nagar, Azamgarh, Mau and Ghazipur.
- **Features of the Expressway:** It will have **CNG stations, electric recharge stations for vehicles** and will be connected with the **defence corridor** through the Agra and Bundelkhand expressways.

**Expected Benefits:**

- The **eastern region of the state would not only be connected to Lucknow** but also further to the National Capital through Agra-Lucknow and Yamuna Expressways.
- It is going to **give a boost to the economic development** of the eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh.
- The expressway will provide **better and quick access to bigger markets** for agri commodities and other products manufactured in the region.
- **UP's New Network of Expressways:**
- Besides Purvanchal, at least three more expressways, besides the **proposed defence corridor** and already operational Agra-Lucknow and Yamuna expressways, are in various stages of completion in UP.
- The **Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA)** has been given the responsibility of completing these projects.
- **UPEIDA has been set up** under the UP Industrial Area Development Act.

Industrial Corridor

- **About:** India is developing various Industrial Corridor Projects as part of the **National Industrial Corridor programme**.
- National Industrial Corridor Development Programme is **India's most ambitious infrastructure programme** aiming to develop new industrial cities as "Smart Cities" and converging next generation technologies across infrastructure sectors.

Aim:

- It is **aimed at development of futuristic industrial cities in India** which can compete with the best manufacturing and investment destinations in the world.
- The same will **create employment opportunities and economic growth** leading to overall socio-economic development.
- **Implementing Agency:** The development of these eleven industrial corridor projects will be **implemented through the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT)**.

#TENURE OF CBI & ED DIRECTORS EXTENDED

- The central government moved an ordinance on November 14, 2021 proposing an **extension of the tenure of the CBI and ED Directors up to 5 years**. The ordinance was promulgated after it received President Ram Nath Kovind's assent.
- The centre's ordinance had sought three consecutive **one-year term extensions for the directors of CBI and Enforcement Directorate**.
- The current term of CBI and ED Chiefs is two years, as per the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Act, 2003**. The centre is expected to table a law in Parliament to replace the same.
 - **Current CBI Chief:** Subodh Kumar Jaiswal (incumbent since May 25, 2021)
 - **Current ED Director:** Sanjay Kumar Mishra (incumbent since November 19, 2018)
- The **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946** and the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Act, 2003** have been amended to give the government the power to keep the two chiefs in their posts for one year after they have completed their two-year terms.
- The chiefs of the Central agencies currently have a fixed two-year tenure, **but can now be given three annual extensions**.



Amendments in DSPE Act:

- Provided that the **period for which the Director holds the office on his initial appointment may, in public interest, on the recommendation of the Committee** (the committee led by the Prime Minister and leader of Opposition and CJI as members) and for the reasons to be recorded in writing, be **extended up to one year at a time**.
- Provided further that **no such extension shall be granted after the completion of a period of five years** in total including the period mentioned in the initial appointment.

Amendments in CVC Act:

- Provided that the period for which the Director of Enforcement holds the office on his initial appointment may, in public interest, on the **recommendation of the Committee** (comprising of CVC chief, Revenue and Home Secretaries among others) and for the reasons to be recorded in writing, be **extended up to one year at a time**.
- Provided further that **no such extension shall be granted after the completion of a period of five years** in total including the period mentioned in the initial appointment.

Central Bureau of Investigation

- The **CBI was set up in 1963** by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Now, the CBI comes under the administrative control of the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- The establishment of the CBI was **recommended by the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962-1964)**.
- The CBI is not a statutory body. It derives its powers from the DSPE Act, 1946.
- The CBI is the main investigating agency of the Central Government. It also provides assistance to the **Central Vigilance Commission** and **Lokpal**.
- It is also the nodal police agency in India which coordinates investigations on behalf of **Interpol Member countries**.
- The CBI is headed by a **Director**.
- The CBI has jurisdiction to investigate offences pertaining to **69 Central laws, 18 State Acts and 231 offences in the IPC**.

Enforcement Directorate

- Directorate of Enforcement is a **specialized financial investigation agency** under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- On 1st May 1956, an 'Enforcement Unit' was formed, in the **Department of Economic Affairs, for handling Exchange Control Laws violations** under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947.
- In the year 1957, this Unit was renamed as 'Enforcement Directorate'.
- ED enforces the following laws:
 - **Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA)**
 - **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)**

#BHARAT GAURAV SCHEME LAUNCHED BY INDIAN RAILWAYS

Recently, the Indian Railways has announced the new scheme 'Bharat Gaurav' to tap the huge potential of tourism.



- Under the scheme, now trains have a **third segment for tourism**. Till now, the Railways had passenger segments and goods segments.
- These trains are **not regular trains** that will run as per a timetable but will be more on the lines of the **Ramayana Express** being run by the **IRCTC**.
- It was announced under the **theme-based tourist circuit trains**. These trains will be run, by both **private players** and **IRCTC**, in theme-based circuits
- By theme-based tourism (circuits)**, the railways means trains like Guru Kripa that goes to all places related to **Guru Nanak** or a Ramayan-themed train to touch upon places related to **Lord Ram**.
- Anyone, from **societies, trusts, consortia** and even state governments can apply to take these trains and run them on special tourism circuits based on a theme.
- Service Provider will offer all **inclusive packages** to tourists including rail travel, hotel accommodation, sightseeing arrangement, visit to historical/heritage sites, tour guides etc.

Benefits of such Scheme:

- These trains will **help realise India's rich cultural heritage** and magnificent historical places to the people of India and the world. They will also help in **tapping** the vast **tourism potential** of India.
- Other Related Scheme:**
- Swadesh Darshan Scheme**
- PRASHAD Scheme**
- Buddhist Conclave**
- Dekho Apna Desh' Initiative**

Tourism in India

- Tourism in India is **important for the country's economy** and is growing rapidly.
- According to the **World Travel and Tourism Council**, the travel & tourism industry's contribution to the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** was USD 121.9 billion in 2020 and this is expected to reach USD 512 billion by 2028.
- In India, the industry's direct contribution to the GDP is **expected to record an annual growth rate of 10.35%** between 2019 and 2028.
- Also, the **Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019** ranked India **34th out of 140 countries overall**, showing India's efforts to improve in the field.

KARTARPUR SAHIB GURUDWARA CORRIDOR

The government is considering reopening the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara corridor to Pakistan to allow Sikh pilgrims to cross over, more than 20 months after it was shut down due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



- Government is considering opening the route by 19th November (2021), the birth anniversary of the Sikh founder Guru Nanak, known as Gurburab or "Prakash Parv".

About:

- The corridor is one of the rare new initiatives between India and Pakistan amidst ties that have been in a downward spiral in 2019 after the Pulwama attack, Balakot strikes and the decision to amend Article 370 on Jammu and Kashmir, which led to the recall of diplomats on both sides and cancellation of all trade relations.
- The project is also unique as visa-free "Human corridors" of this sort are normally used for emergency situations: refugees fleeing violence or humanitarian disasters, not for pilgrimages.

Kartarpur Corridor:

- The Kartarpur corridor connects the Darbar Sahib Gurdwara in Narowal district of Pakistan with the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district in India's Punjab province.
- The corridor was built to commemorate 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism on 12th November 2019.

Guru Nanak

- Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti is observed on the full-moon day in the month of Katak to celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539).
- He advocated the 'Nirguna' form of bhakti. He rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities and the scriptures of both Hindus and Muslims.
- He set up rules for congregational worship (sangat) involving collective recitation.
- He appointed one of his disciples, Angad, to succeed him as the preceptor (guru), and this practice was followed for nearly 200 years.
- The fifth preceptor, Guru Arjan, compiled Baba Guru Nanak's hymns along with those of his four successors and also other religious poets, like Baba Farid, Ravidas (also known as Raidas) and Kabir, in the Adi Granth Sahib.
- These hymns, called 'Gurbani', are composed in many languages.
- Kartarpur gurudwara is the revered shrine about 4km across the border where Guru Nanak Dev spent the last 18 years of his life.

#7TH INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL SYMPOSIUM (IONS)

The 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs is being hosted by the French Navy at Paris from 15th-16th Nov 21.



- The **inaugural edition of IONS** was held in Feb 2008 at New Delhi, with the Indian Navy as the Chair for two years. The IONS Chair is presently held in France.
- **About:** The IONS is a **voluntary and inclusive initiative that brings together navies of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) littoral states** to increase maritime co-operation and enhance regional security.
- It also serves to develop an effective response mechanism and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) against **natural disasters**.
- The **chairmanship of IONS** has been held by India (2008-10), UAE (2010-12), South Africa (2012-14), Australia (2014-16), Bangladesh (2016-18) and Islamic Republic of Iran (2018-21).
- France assumed the Chairmanship in June 2021 for a two-year tenure.

Members:

- IONS **include 24 member nations that touch or lie within the IOR**, and 8 observer nations.
- The members have been geographically grouped into the following **four sub-regions**:
- **South Asian Littorals:** Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and United Kingdom (British Indian Ocean Territory)
- **West Asian Littorals:** Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates
- **East African Littorals:** France (Reunion), Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, and Tanzania.
- **South East Asian and Australian Littorals:** Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

Significance For India

- IONS fits into **India's three-fold ambitions in the region**:
- Strengthening and **deepening the relations** with the Indian Ocean littoral states,
- Establishing its leadership potential and **aspirations of being a net-security provider**, and
- Fulfilling India's vision of a **rules-based and stable maritime order** in the IOR.
- It will help India **to consolidate its sphere of influence from the Straits of Malacca to Hormuz**.
- IONS can be used **to counterbalance the increasing presence of China** in the region.

Other Important Groupings/Initiatives Associated with IOR:

- **Indian Ocean Rim Association:** The **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** was established in 1997.
- It is aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region.

- **Indian Ocean Commission:** Recently, India has been approved as an **observer of the Indian Ocean Commission**, the inter-governmental organization that coordinates maritime governance in the south-western Indian Ocean.
- **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR):** It was **launched in 2015**.
- Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities.
- **Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR):** It was set up by India in 2018, as an **information-sharing hub of maritime data**.
- **Asia Africa Growth Corridor:** The idea of **Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)** emerged in the joint declaration issued by India and Japan in 2016.
- The AAGC is raised on four pillars of Development and Cooperation Projects, Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity, Enhancing Capacities and Skills and People-to-People partnership.
- **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation:** It is a sub-regional organization that came into being **in 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration**.
- It mainly aims to create an enabling environment for rapid economic development, accelerate social progress, and promote collaboration on matters of common interest in the IOR.

#GANGA UTSAV-THE RIVER FESTIVAL 2021 BEGINS

Recently, the 5th **Ganga Utsav-The River Festival 2021** has begun which celebrates the glory of the **National River Ganga**.

- Ganga was declared as the **National River of India on 4th November 2008**.
- The event will also comprise, **launch of the Ganga Tarang Portal, curtain raiser on Ganga Knowledge Portal and many more**.



About:

- The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** celebrates the festival every year to strengthen the Public – River Connection.
- NMCG is the implementation wing of **National Ganga Council**, set up in 2016, which replaced the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NRGBA).
- The **NMCG has been registered in the Guinness Book of World Records on the first day of Ganga Utsav 2021** for the highest number of photos of handwritten notes that were uploaded on Facebook in an hour.
- The Utsav **celebrates the mystical and cultural river Ganga through** storytelling, folklore, dialogues with eminent personalities, quizzes, displaying traditional artforms, dance and music performances by renowned artists, photo galleries and exhibitions and much more.

- It highlights the **significance of Jan Bhagidari** (People's Participation) in the revival of Ganga, with a **focus on encouraging stakeholder engagement and public participation** towards the rejuvenation of river Ganga.

Government Initiatives on River Ganga:

- **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the **first river action plan** to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion and treatment of domestic sewage.
- The **National River Conservation Plan** is an extension to this plan, which aims at cleaning the Ganga river under **Ganga Action Plan phase-2**.
- **National River Ganga Basin Authority:** It was formed in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the **Environment Protection Act 1986**.
- **Clean Ganga Fund:** In 2014, it was formed for cleaning up of the Ganga, setting up of waste treatment plants and conservation of biotic diversity of the river.
- **Ban on Waste Disposal:** In 2017, the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** banned the disposal of any waste in the Ganga.

NamamiGangeProgramme

- NamamiGangeProgramme is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014 to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
- The program is being implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and its state counterpart organizations i.e., State Program ManagementGroups (SPMGs).

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

- **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** is the implementation wing of National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA).
- It is a registered society, originally formed by Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) on 12th August 2011 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- **Main pillars of the programme include** sewerage treatment infrastructure, river-front development, river-surface cleaning, bio-diversity, afforestation, public awareness industrial effluent monitoring, and ganga gram.
- Its implementation has been divided into Entry-Level Activities (**for immediate visible impact**), **Medium-Term Activities (to be implemented within 5 years of period)** and Long-Term Activities (to be implemented within 10 years).

#WHAT IS RIVER CITIES ALLIANCE (RCA)?

Recently, the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** along with the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has launched the **River Cities Alliance (RCA)**.



- It is a dedicated platform for river cities in India **to ideate, discuss and exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.**
- The Alliance will focus on **three broad themes-** Networking, Capacity Building and Technical Support.
- Although the Alliance began with the **Ganga basin** cities, it was extended to include cities beyond the basin as well. The **participating cities** in the River Cities Alliance are:
- Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Srinagar, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Berhampore, Hooghly-Chinsurah, Howrah, Jangipur, Maheshtala, Rajmahal, Sahibganj, Ayodhya, Bijnor, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, Mathura-Vrindavan, Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Aurangabad, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Pune, Udaipur and Vijayawada.
- The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** and National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) have collaborated together to launch the RCA.

Objectives:

- To provide the member cities with a **platform to discuss and exchange information** on aspects that is **vital for sustainable management of urban rivers.**
- To work towards **adopting and localizing national policies and instruments with key river-related directions.**
- To prepare cities urban river management plans and develop **city-specific sectoral strategies** that are required for sustainable urban river management.
- **Significance:**
- It will enable **cities to learn from each other's successes and failures** as well as connect people with the rivers.
- It can play a **crucial role in connecting cities with their rivers**, and that it can be a model for all cities in the Basin and beyond to emulate.
- It will give an opportunity **to municipal administrators and their teams to take path breaking initiatives** and learn and inspire each other.
- It gives opportunities to the cities to strengthen governance aspects for river cities and **improves their liveability to attract external economic investments**, access state of the art knowledge and frameworks as well as an opportunity to serve as the site for unique demonstration projects.

Related Initiatives

- **NamamiGangeProgramme:** It is an Integrated Conservation Mission to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution and **conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga**.
- **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the first River Action Plan that was taken up by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 1985, to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion, and treatment of domestic sewage.
- **National River Ganga Basin Authority (NRGBA):** It was formed by the Government of India in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.
- **Clean Ganga Fund:** In 2014, it was formed for cleaning up of the Ganga, setting up of waste treatment plants, and conservation of biotic diversity of the river.
- **Bhuvan-Ganga Web App:** It ensures involvement of the public in monitoring of pollution entering into the river Ganga.
- **Ban on Waste Disposal:** In 2017, the **National Green Tribunal** banned the disposal of any waste in the Ganga.

#‘DOSTI TRILATERAL EXERCISE’: INDIA, MALDIVES & SRI LANKA

The 15th edition of the biennial trilateral coast guard exercise ‘Dosti’ involving India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka is underway in the Maldives, which will conclude today.



- The year **2021 marks 30 years** since these exercises were first launched.
- The exercise was **first initiated in 1991**, between the Indian and Maldives Coast Guard. Sri Lanka joined the exercise for the **first time in 2012**.
- The Exercises carried out over the past ten years have **focused on exercises and drills on providing assistance in sea accidents**, eliminating sea pollution, and the Coast Guard's procedure and conduct during situations such as oil spills.
- **Indian Coast Guard vessels Vajra and Apoorva** have been deployed for the exercise (2021).
- **Aim of the Exercise:** To further **fortify the friendship, enhance mutual operational capability**, and exercise interoperability and to build cooperation between the Coast Guards of Maldives, India and Sri Lanka.

Recent Security Related Development:

- In August this year (2021), India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives agreed to work on what are called the “**four pillars**” of security cooperation.
- These involved the areas of marine security, human trafficking, counter-terrorism and cyber security.
- Earlier, the three countries agreed to **expand the scope of intelligence sharing**.
- **Exercise between India and Sri Lanka:**

- **Exercise MITRA SHAKTI** (Military Exercise)
- **SLINEX** (Naval exercise)
- **Exercise between India and Maldives:Exercise Ekuverin** (Military Exercise)

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