



pravahini

# Monthly Compendium

SUCCESS MANTRA (GTB Nagar)

# PREFACE

It gives us great pleasure to release the monthly edition of the PRAVAHINI – Monthly e-Compendium & Weekly e-Periodicals of Current Affairs. The magazine's members have shown considerable cooperation as well as devotion. We at successmantra.in work tirelessly to create this magazine and bring it to you with a great sense of gratitude.

The PRAVAHINI April-2022 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of April. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, Banking, MBA and various other competitive examinations.

Current Affairs play the bigger role in many competitive and government exams. It holds the power of making or breaking your chance of success. Therefore, the candidates should cover the Current Affairs thoroughly and smartly.

The PRAVAHINI April-2022 eBook is divided into different sections keeping in mind the need of various exams. The sections covered namely International, National, Economy, Ecology and Environment, Science & Technology, Legal Affairs, Sports, States News Makers and few others.

We would also be pleased to receive any suggestion that could assist us with the upcoming editions.

Success Mantra (GTB Nagar, Delhi)

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## Our Goal

Our goal at Success Mantra is to provide Quality education at rational price and thereby to create an environment that guides students towards the path of the success. Along with designing the curriculum and delivering the lectures, we work upon the ways the students think and approach problems asked.

*B. S. Shanti*



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# MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

**APRIL 2022**

PRAVAHINI





## MISCELLANEOUS

### #WORLD HEALTH DAY: 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

Every year 7<sup>th</sup> April marks the celebration of **World Health Day**.

- **World Mental Health Day** is observed on 10<sup>th</sup> October every year



### What are the Key Highlights about World Health Day?

- Its idea was conceived at the **First Health Assembly in 1948** and it came into effect in **1950**.
- It is being celebrated today to mark the foundation of the **World Health Organization (WHO)** on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1948.
- Over the years, it has **brought to light important health issues** such as **mental health**, maternal and child care and **climate change**.
- **Theme for 2022:** Our Planet, Our Health

### What are Related Initiatives for the Health Sector?

- **National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019**
- **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana**
- **Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana.**
- **India's Health Index**
- **SAMRIDH Initiative**

### World Health Organization (WHO)

- World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations' specialized agency for Health was founded in 1948.
- Its **headquarters** are situated in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- There are 194 Member States, 150 country offices, six regional offices.
- It is an inter-governmental organization and works in collaboration with its member states usually through the Ministries of Health.
- The WHO provides leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.
- It began functioning on **April 7, 1948** – a date now being celebrated every year as **World Health Day**.
- To act as the **directing and coordinating authority on international health work**.
- **To establish and maintain effective collaboration with the United Nations**, specialized agencies, governmental health administrations, professional groups and such other organizations as may be deemed appropriate.
- To **provide assistance** to the Governments, upon request, **in strengthening health services**.
- To **promote cooperation among scientific and professional groups** which contribute to the advancement of health.

### Related: The Health Budget 2021

- The Budget has committed to an outlay of ₹2,23,846 crore in health and well-being for 2021-22, a **137%** increase over previous year's Budget Estimate of ₹94,452 crores.
- This includes a ₹60,030 crore outlay on drinking water and sanitation, a ₹2,700 crore outlay on nutrition, nearly ₹49,000 crore as Finance Commission grants and ₹35,000 crore toward **vaccination**.
- Water and sanitation sector have received a 179% increase over the previous year's allocation from Rs 21,518 crore to Rs 60,030 crore.
- This is also in line with the **Economic Survey's** recommendation of increasing public health spending to about 2.5-3% of GDP.
- Another important public health-related announcement in Budget 2021 was the government's decision to expand the coverage of the pneumococcal vaccine across the country.
- The launch of **Pradhan Mantri AtmanirbharSwasth Bharat Yojana (PMANSBY)** was also announced under the budget.
- It laid emphasis on the expansion of health and wellness centres along with a ₹13,192 crore **Finance Commission grant** for strengthening the primary health system through local government bodies.
- Recently, the Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare informed the **Rajya Sabha** that **National Health Mission (NHM)** supported health system reforms have resulted in development of resilient health systems.

### About:

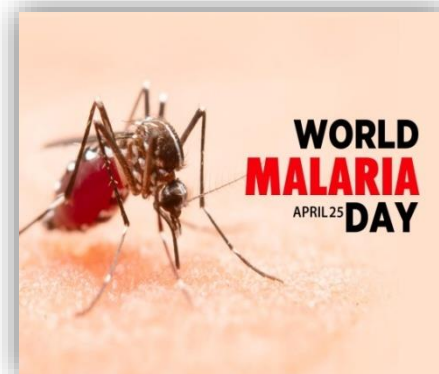
- NHM was launched by the government of India in 2013 subsuming the **National Rural Health Mission** (Launched in 2005) and the **National Urban Health Mission** (Launched in 2013).
- The NHM envisages achievement of **universal access to equitable, affordable & quality health care services** that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.

### Major Initiatives Supported Under NHM:

- **Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK).**
- **Rashtriya Bal SwasthyaKaryakram (RBSK).**
- Implementation of **Free Drugs and Free Diagnostics Service Initiatives.**
- **PM National Dialysis Programme.**
- Implementation of **National Quality Assurance Framework** in all public health facilities.
- **Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) & Tele-consultation services** are also being implemented to improve access to healthcare particularly in rural areas.
- **Ayushman Bharat.**
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).**

**#WORLD MALARIA DAY OBSERVED ON 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

- Annually on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April World Malaria Day is observed across the world to highlight the need for sustained political commitment and continued investment so as to prevent and control malaria across the world.
- The World Health Organization has continuously highlighted the need for and also called for innovations and investments to bring in new vector control approaches, antimalarial medicines, diagnostics, and other tools that will help in fighting against malaria.



### The theme of World Malaria Day 2022

- The theme for this year's world malaria day is **"Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives."**

### Significance of this day

- The day is significant as despite being a treatable disease, **Malaria continues to impact the livelihoods of people all over the world.**
- According to the WHO, in the year 2020 around 241 million new cases of malaria and 6,27,000 fatalities due to malaria in 85 nations were witnessed. In the African region, more than two-thirds of the reported fatalities were among children who were below the age of 5.
- This data shows that in spite of achieving steady advances against malaria from 2000 to 2015, there has been a slowdown in recent years, especially in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

### History of this day

- In 2007, WHO got the idea of observing this **day came from Africa Malaria Day, which is observed by the African government since 2001.**
- At the **WHO-sponsored World Health Assembly's 60<sup>th</sup> session** it was proposed to change the Africa Malaria day to World Malaria Day. This was done with the aim of generating greater awareness regarding the fight against malaria.

### What is the status report of Malaria in India?

- In India Malaria has been a major public health problem as about 95% of the population resides in malaria-endemic areas while 80% of malaria reported is confined to areas consisting of 20% of the population living in hilly, tribal, inaccessible, and difficult areas.
- According to the National Health Mission, the trend of Malaria cases in India has shown a declining trend in 2002. It was 2 million cases annually in the late nineties but in 2020, **the malaria cases in India came down to 0.12 million annually.**

### World Malaria Day 2022: 5 schemes by Indian states to eradicate malaria

- DaMan by Odisha Government**
- A programme called DaMan- DuragamaAnchala Re Malaria Nirakaran was launched by the Government of Odisha in 2017. Under DaMan, mass screenings have been organized twice a year at malaria camps in April-June and September-October in remote locations of the State.
- Under DaMan, the indoor residual spray method is used and the entire population undergoes a malaria test.

The malaria intervention programme in Odisha has helped in bringing down a significant number of cases in the state.

- **Dastak Abhiyan by Uttar Pradesh Government**

- Dastak Abhiyan under which the UP Government aims to become malaria-free by 2030 has been introduced in one of the largest states of the country.
- Dastak Abhiyan has been launched to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including malaria, and ASHA and Anganwadi workers have been given the responsibility to inform people about the scheme.

- **Initiatives taken by Telangana to fight Malaria**

- Telangana has received national appreciation and recognition for its work towards eliminating malaria in the past 6 years between 2016 and 2021, as part of the National Framework for Malaria Elimination in India.

- An inter-sectorial collaboration involving municipalities, public health care facilities, and panchayat departments has been taken up across the state which has led to the decline of malaria cases in Telangana.

- **Malaria MuktbastarAbhiyaan by Chhattisgarh**

- To tackle the problem of Malaria, Chhattisgarh launched 'Malaria MuktbastarAbhiyaan' in January 2020 to combat the issue.
- After the success of the campaign in Bastar, the state government further extended the programme to the rest of the state.
- In 2022, Chhattisgarh has also been selected for a national award to be conferred by the Health Ministry to mark World Malaria Day for excelling in battling malaria.

- **Friday-Dryday initiative by Andhra Pradesh government**

- To implement programs like 'Friday-Dryday', the state health department collaborated with Panchayat Raj, Municipal Administration, and Rural Water Supply at the village and ward secretariat level. They also helped in bringing down the number of malaria cases in the State.
- Andhra Pradesh government has also instructed **everyone to clean their surroundings and control the mosquitoes breeding by following every Friday as a dry day.**

## #WORLD FOOD PRICE INDEX BY FAO

According to the **UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO)**, the **World food price index** averaged 159.3 points in March, breaking an earlier record of 137.6 points scaled **11 years ago in February 2011.**

## What is FAOs Food Price Index?



- It was **introduced in 1996** as a public good to help in monitoring developments in the global agricultural commodity markets.
- The **FAO Food Price Index (FFPI)** is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.



- It measures changes for a basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar.
- **Base Period:** 2014-16.

### What is the Food and Agriculture Organization?

- FAO is a specialised agency of the **United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- **World Food Day** is celebrated every year around the world on 16th October. The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945.
- It is one of the UN food aid organisations based in Rome (Italy). Its sister bodies are the **World Food Programme** and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

### Initiatives Taken:

- **Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).**
- Monitors the **Desert Locust** situation throughout the world.
- The **Codex Alimentarius Commission** or **CAC** is the body responsible for all matters regarding the implementation of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.
- The **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** was adopted by the Thirty-First Session of the Conference of the FAO in 2001.

### Flagship Publications:

- The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).
- The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).
- **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).**
- The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA).
- The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO)

## WORLD FOOD DAY: 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

- World Food Day is celebrated to commemorate the establishment of the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1945.
- FAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.

### About World Food Day:

- It is observed annually on 16<sup>th</sup> October to address the problem of global hunger.
- It emphasises on the Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) i.e. Zero Hunger.
- There has been a renewed focus on food, nutrition, health, immunity and sustainability due to the unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of FAO:

- Over the years, FAO has helped to increase agricultural production and eradicate hunger all over the world, including India and has played an important role in increasing nutrition.
- 2020's Nobel Peace Prize to the World Food Programme is also a major achievement for the FAO as the programme was started by FAO.
- Highlighted Indian Initiatives
- Eat Right India and Fit India Movement along with Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Jal Jeevan Mission and other efforts will improve the health of Indians and heal the environment.
- Introduction of 17 new biofortified varieties of crops to overcome the shortcomings of the common variety of crops which lacks important micronutrients.
- Example: MACS 4028 Wheat, MadhubanGajar, etc.

## #GUJARAT TOPS IN NITI AAYOG'S STATE ENERGY & CLIMATE INDEX

- Gujarat has acquired a top position in the NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index-Round 1 among the larger states with a score of 50.1 points. Gujarat is followed by Kerala and Punjab in second and third place under the same category.
- State Energy and Climate Index aim at ranking the states and the Union Territories on six parameters including energy efficiency, discom's performance, and environmental sustainability.
- Among the smaller states in NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index, Goa is at the top position followed by Tripura and Manipur. On the other hand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand were placed at the bottom among the larger states.



### State Energy and Climate Index: NITI Aayog Ranking of states

| Rank | States  | Score |
|------|---------|-------|
| 1.   | Gujarat | 50.1  |

|     |                  |      |
|-----|------------------|------|
| 2.  | Kerala           | 49.1 |
| 3.  | Punjab           | 48.6 |
| 4.  | Haryana          | 47.9 |
| 5.  | Uttarakhand      | 46.5 |
| 6.  | Maharashtra      | 46.0 |
| 7.  | Himachal Pradesh | 45.4 |
| 8.  | Karnataka        | 43.8 |
| 9.  | Tamil Nadu       | 43.4 |
| 10. | Assam            | 42.6 |

### Smaller States

| Rank | States            | Score |
|------|-------------------|-------|
| 1.   | Goa               | 51.4  |
| 2.   | Tripura           | 45.0  |
| 3.   | Manipur           | 36.0  |
| 4.   | Mizoram           | 35.9  |
| 5.   | Sikkim            | 33.3  |
| 6.   | Meghalaya         | 29.4  |
| 7.   | Nagaland          | 27.9  |
| 8.   | Arunachal Pradesh | 27.0  |

### Union Territories

| Rank | Union Territories | Score |
|------|-------------------|-------|
|------|-------------------|-------|

|    |                   |      |
|----|-------------------|------|
| 1. | Chandigarh        | 55.7 |
| 2. | Delhi             | 55.6 |
| 3. | D&D and D&N       | 53.2 |
| 4. | Puducherry        | 48.5 |
| 5. | Andaman & Nicobar | 29.4 |
| 6. | Jammu & Kashmir   | 29.3 |
| 7. | Lakshadweep       | 26.9 |

### State Energy and Climate Index: Six parameters to measure state's rank

NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index Round-I has ranked the **states and the Union Territories on six parameters. These parameters also include a total of 27 indicators.**

1. Discom's performance
2. Access Affordability and Reliability of Energy
3. Clean Energy Initiatives
4. Energy Efficiency
5. Environmental Sustainability
6. New Initiatives

### State Energy and Climate Index: Background

- NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index Round I was released in the presence of secretaries of various government departments as well as the stakeholders from the energy sectors that were invited.
- **India is part to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** where more than 190 nations have negotiated cuts to restrict the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to the pre-industrial era. India also has a National Mission on Climate Change.

### #INDIA-FRANCE BILATERAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA-2022'

The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2022' is being conducted in the Arabian Sea.

- It has become a **vital part of the India-France strategic bilateral relationship.**

### What are the Key Points?





- The Indian and French Navies **have been conducting bilateral maritime exercises since 1993**. Since 2001, these exercises have been called 'VARUNA'. This is an annual event.
- These interactions further underscore the shared values as partner navies, in ensuring freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive **Indo-Pacific** and a rules-based international order.

### India-France Strategic Relations:

- **Background:** France was one of the first countries with which India signed a "strategic partnership" after the end of the Cold War, in January 1998.
- France was one of the very few countries to support India's decision to test nuclear weapons in 1998.
- **Defence Cooperation:** Both countries have a defence dialogue at the Ministerial level.
- The three services have regular defence exercises; viz
- **Exercise Shakti (Army)**
- **Exercise Varuna (Navy)**
- **Exercise Garuda (Air Force)**
- Recently, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has inducted **French Rafale multi-role combat aircraft**.
- India entered into a contract with a **French firm to build six Scorpene submarines** in India's Malegaon dockyards through a technology-transfer arrangement in 2005.
- The two countries also signed the **Agreement regarding the Provision of Reciprocal Logistics Support**.
- This agreement will help to facilitate the replenishment of fuel, rations, spares, and berthing and maintenance for the other nations' warships, military aircraft and troops during routine port calls, as well as during **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)**.

### Indian Ocean, the Common Shared Interest:

- France needs to protect its colonial territorial possessions like reunion island and Indian ocean being the zone of influence for India.
- Recently, **France became the 23<sup>rd</sup> member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**.
- It is the first time that a country whose mainland is not on the Indian Ocean has been brought into the fold of the IORA.
- **Counter Terrorism:** France backed the India's proposal for a global conference on terrorism. Both the countries also support organising a new "**No Money for Terror**" - an International Conference on Fighting Terrorist Financing.
- **France Backing India:** France also continues to steadfastly back India on Kashmir while its relations with Pakistan have plummeted in the recent past and China has become an object of suspicion.
- **Space:** Both have decided to deepen space cooperation to meet new challenges together, whether it concerns planetary exploration or human spaceflight.
- France has agreed to be part of India's Venus mission, scheduled for 2025.
- ISRO's Venus instrument, **VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker)** has been co-developed by Russian and French agencies.
- **Multilateral Platform:** France has been **extremely supportive of India at the UN Security Council** on Kashmir and Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, among other issues.
- The **Prime Minister of India was a special invitee at the 45<sup>th</sup> G-7 Summit in Biarritz, France** where India was one of the "**Goodwill**" partners.

- **Climate:** The two countries have a close cooperation on climate change, and have formed the **International Solar Alliance**.

## #AUSTRALIA TO HOST 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

- The **Victoria state of Australia** will be hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games. During the games focus will also be given to boosting the economy of the region.
- An exclusive negotiating period was granted to the capital of **Victoria, Melbourne, to secure the hosting rights for the Commonwealth Games.**
- The Commonwealth Games, are losing relevance, **with four of the last five editions being held in Britain or Australia.**
- To host the 2026 editions of the Games, no other nation expressed interest except Australia.
- The 2026 Games will be spread across the cities of Bendigo, Geelong, Gippsland, and Ballarat thus a new multi-city model will be implemented.



## Earlier editions of the Commonwealth Games in Australia

- In 2018, Australia hosted the **Games on the Gold Coast** and the 2006 edition of the games was **hosted in Melbourne.**
- **2022 Edition of the Commonwealth Games**
- **Birmingham, England will be hosting the 2022** edition of the games from 28<sup>th</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> Aug. Earlier, South Africa was supposed to host this year's edition but was stripped of hosting rights due to a lack of progress in their preparations.
- **About Commonwealth Games**
- The Commonwealth Games are also referred to as the Friendly Games. It is an international multi-sport event that is held every four years and involves athletes participating from the Commonwealth of Nations. **The first such games were held in 1930.**

## #RELATED: US GOVERNMENT BOYCOTTED BEIJING OLYMPICS 2022

- The **US Government recently announced the boycott of Olympics 2022.** The Olympics 2022 is to be held in Beijing. The US cited that "China's human rights ATROCITIES" is the main reason for its boycott. The US has named the boycott as "Diplomatic Boycott".
- **What is Diplomatic Boycott?**
- It means that the US is not sending any official or diplomatic representation to the participate in the Olympics. However, US is allowing the American athletes to participate in the Olympics.



## Why is US boycotting Olympics 2022?

- The US is boycotting for the following human rights atrocities of China:
- Situations in **Taiwan and Tibet**

- The crackdown in Hong Kong
- Abuse of minority **Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang**

### US Previously boycotted in 1980

- Previously, the **US boycotted the Olympics completely in 1980**. Then the boycott was to protest against the Soviet Union military presence in Afghanistan.
- In December 1979, the Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan supporting the Afghan communist government. The soviet then remained in Afghanistan till 1989. In 1980, around 60 countries refused to compete in Olympics along with the US. This included China, Japan, Canada, Israel and West Germany.

### China's Boycott

- The Chinese Government boycotted the Olympics in 1972. According to China, in 1972, the International Olympics Committee failed to recognize its team.
- China is hosting both summer and Winter Olympics. This is the first time in the Olympics history that a country is **hosting both summer and Winter Olympics**.
- The **Summer and Winter Olympics** are held once in four years. The Summer Olympics is generally referred to as Olympics with more number of countries participating.
- On the other hand, the Winter Olympics is relatively smaller event. The **summer Olympics** are held once in four years, mainly during the leap years. The winter Olympics are held two years after the leap year. The Summer Olympics were held in 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, etc.
- **And the Winter Olympics were held in 2002, 2006, 2010, etc.** China hosted the Summer Olympics in 2008 and is now to host the Winter Olympics in 2022.

### How is China hosting both Summer and Winter Olympics?

- Around six potential cities of Europe dropped out of the bidding due to doping scandal. Also, the price tag of 51 billion USD also drove away bidders. This led to getting down to two candidates. One was China and the other was Kazakhstan.

### How is Olympic host city chosen?

- The major cities from the world make competitive bids every two years to the **International Olympics Committee**. This is done seven years before the games.
- The IOC then makes rigorous audits to check if the city bided are capable to host the games. This is because, the city has to accommodate large number of sports person, government delegates, should provide security, etc.
- Based on these factors and the bidding, the members cast their votes. **The winning city hosts the games.**

### #PM MODI AWARDED LATA DEENANATH MANGESHKAR AWARD

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the first **Lata DeenanathMangeshkar Award**.

- He got the award for his selfless service to the country and society at the **80<sup>th</sup> annual Master DeenanathMangeshkar Awards ceremony held in Mumbai**.

## What is the Lata DeenanathMangeshkar Award?

- The **Lata DeenanathMangeshkar Award** was instituted in the memory and honor of legendary singer **Lata Mangeshkar**, who had passed away at the age of 92 in February 2022.
- The award will be given every year to only one individual who has made **path-breaking, spectacular and exemplary contributions to the nation**, its people, and the society, as per the statement by the **Master DeenanathMangeshkarSmrutiPratishthan Charitable Trust**.



## Who was Lata Mangeshkar?

- Lata Mangeshkar, also known as the '**Nightingale of India**', was one of the most versatile singers of India.
- She lent her voice to over **5,000 songs in over a thousand Hindi and 36 regional films**.
- In 1974, she became the **first Indian to perform at the Royal Albert Hall (U.K)**. She is the recipient of **three National Film Awards**, 15 Bengal Film Journalists' Association Awards, four Filmfare Best Female Playback Awards, two Filmfare Special Awards, Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award and many more.
- Lata Mangeshkar was bestowed with the **DadasahebPhalke Award in 1989**. In 2001, she was awarded the **Bharat Ratna**, India's highest civilian honour.
- The government of **France conferred on her its highest civilian award (Officer of the Legion of Honour) in 2007**.
- Along with these, Lata Mangeshkar held the distinction of being the **most recorded artist in the history of Indian music in the Guinness Record in 1974**.
- The Indian government honored her with the **Daughter of the Nation award on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in September 2019**.

## What are the Other Awards Won by the PM?

- **Bhutan's Highest Civilian Award (2021):** He was conferred by Bhutan's highest civilian award, '**Order of the DrukGyalpo**' also known as "**NgadagPelgiKhorlo**".



- **Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award (2021):** Awarded by the Cambridge Energy Research Associates CERA for commitment of leadership towards the future of global energy and the environment.
- **Legion of Merit by the US Government (2020):** The United States Armed Forces award given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.
- **First Philip Kotler Presidential award (2019):** Offered to the leader of a nation.
- **Global Goalkeeper Award:** Honour by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (2019)**
- **Order of Zayed Award (2019):** The highest civilian honour of the United Arab Emirates.
- **Order of St. Andrew award (2019):** The highest civilian honour of Russia
- **Order of the Distinguished Rule of Nishan Izzuddin (2019)** The highest honour of the Maldives awarded to foreign dignitaries.
- **King Hamad Order of the Renaissance - First Class (2019):** Bahrain's top honour.
- **Grand Collar of the State of Palestine Award (2018):** The highest honour of Palestine awarded to foreign dignitaries.
- **Seoul Peace Prize (2018):** Seoul Peace Prize Cultural Foundation's biennial award (South Korea) to those individuals who have made their mark through contributions to the harmony of mankind, reconciliation between nations and world peace.
- **Champions of the Earth Award (2018):** The United Nation's highest environmental honour.
- **Order of Abdulaziz Al Saud (2016):** The highest honour of Saudi Arabia awarded to non-muslim dignitaries.
- **State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan (2016):** The highest civilian honour of Afghanistan.

## #VINAY MOHAN KWATRA AS NEW FOREIGN SECY.

- The **Indian government has named Vinay Mohan Kwatra** who is the country's ambassador to Nepal, as India's next Foreign Secretary. He will be taking charge **after incumbent Harsh Vardhan Shringla retires on 30<sup>th</sup> April.**
- Vinay Mohan Kwatra is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer and has **32 years of experience working in a range of assignments.**
- From 2015 to 2017, he has worked in the Prime Minister's office and then went to France as the ambassador of India.



### Working in the permanent mission of India

- In 1988, after joining the IFS he served as the Permanent Mission of **India's third secretary** and later he became the second secretary which he served till 1993.
- He used to handle work related to the Human Rights Commission, and UN specialized agencies. He also obtained a diploma in **International Relations from the Graduate School of International Studies**

### located in Geneva.

- Between the years from 1993 to 2003, he served as a desk officer dealing with the United Nations and also worked in diplomatic missions in Uzbekistan and South Africa. Between the year's 2003 to 2006, he served as the **counsellor and was later promoted as the deputy chief of mission in India's Beijing embassy.**
- He has also represented the country at **the SAARC Secretariat in Nepal as the head of the Trade, Finance Bureau, and Economy.**
- He has also served as the minister (Commerce) in the embassy located in Washington. He also headed the Ministry of External Affairs' Policy Planning & Research Division. He has also served in the foreign ministry's Americas Division and dealt with the country's relations with Canada and the United States.
- **From 2015 to 2017, Kwatra** has served as the joint secretary of the Prime Minister of India's office. From 2017 to 2020, he served as the Indian Ambassador to France. **Since 2020, he has been serving as the Indian ambassador to Nepal.**

## #HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA AS CHIEF CO-ORDINATOR OF G20

- **For the G20 summit**, which will be hosted in 2023 by India, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla has been appointed as its chief coordinator.

### Overview:

- Shringla will be retiring on **30<sup>th</sup> April 2022** and will take charge of this new role from 1<sup>st</sup> May. This role has been newly created by the government to organize the summit.
- The G20 sherpa will remain to be **Piyush Goyal, the Indian Commerce Minister.**

### About the 2023 G20 Summit

- The **G20 summit** that will be held in India in 2023 will be the country's biggest-ever multilateral event that has been hosted in recent years.
- This summit provides a tremendous opportunity for the country to showcase the **nation's rich culture, infrastructure, hospitality, and diversity on the global platform.**

### About Harsh V. Shringla

- Harsh Vardhan Shringla is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer who has served as India's 33rd Foreign Secretary.
- He has also previously served as the Ambassador of India to Thailand, to the United States of America, and as the High Commissioner to Bangladesh.
- He has also published papers related to economic diplomacy, conflict prevention, India-Bangladesh relations, and the Indian diaspora. He joined the Foreign Service in 1984 and has a career that spans over 35 years.

## #WHO IS JYOTIRAO PHULE?

- **Jyotirao Phule was born on 11th April 1827.**
- He was an anti-caste reformer and social activist who along with Savitribai Phule, his wife, worked for the upliftment of children and women of the marginalized communities, and encouraged women's education.



- He belonged to Maharashtra and worked hard to **eradicate caste oppression and untouchability**. Jyotirao Phule started his first girl's school at Bhide Wada, Pune in 1848.
- The **Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers)** was also formed by him along with his followers with the aim of fighting for basic rights for all those who belonged to the lower castes.
- In his association there were people from various castes and religions.
- After getting recognition for his work he was acclaimed throughout the state of Maharashtra.
- The title of 'Mahatma' ('great soul') was given to him in 1888 by another **social activist Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar**.
- In the social reform movement in Maharashtra, he is considered to be an important figure.
- Early life: He was born in **Pune, British India** into a family **belonging to the Mali caste**, growing vegetables, and fruits for a living. The Mali caste was at the bottom of the caste hierarchy.

### Working towards the education of women

- At the young age of 13, he was married off. In 1848 he was rebuked for attending the wedding of a Brahmin friend as he was from a lower caste.
- Soon he realized that women are not treated properly in society and challenged this by first educating his wife Savitribai. Then, in Pune, he started a school for girls.
- The upper-caste society who was very conservative did not approve of the education of girls and the Phule couple were routinely attacked for their stance on female empowerment and education.

### Caste-related horrors witnessed by the Phule

- The Phules witnessed **caste-related horrors wherein** the untouchables were asked to wear a broom on their back while they swept the road so as to clean their own tracks.
- The widows of the society were forced to shave their heads, and the women who were untouchables were paraded naked on the street. Witnessing all this, **their will was boosted to educate the women, teach them about their rights, and uproot caste-based evils**.
- They also campaigned to promote widow remarriage and stop infanticide.

### Abolition of Untouchability:

- **Article 17** abolishes 'untouchability' and forbids its practice in any form. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.
- A person convicted of the offence of 'untouchability' is disqualified for election to the Parliament or state legislature. **The acts of offences include:**
- Preaching untouchability directly or indirectly.
- Preventing any person from entering any shop, hotel, public place of worship and place of public entertainment.
- Refusing to admit persons in hospitals, educational institutions or hostels established for public benefit.
- Justifying untouchability on traditional, religious, philosophical or other grounds.
- Insulting a person belonging to scheduled caste on the ground of untouchability.

**#'MUMBAI & HYDERABAD' AS 2021 TREE CITY OF THE WORLD**

- The **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN-FAO)** along with Arbor Day Foundation has recognized Hyderabad and Mumbai jointly as the '2021 Tree City of the World.'
- The recognition has been won by the two Indian cities due to their commitment to maintaining and growing greenery and urban trees so as to build resilient, healthy, and happy cities.
- This is the **first time Mumbai has made it to the list.**
- Hyderabad has been featured on this list for the second consecutive year.



### 'Tree Cities of the World' tag

- The programme was started by the **UN-FAO and Arbor Day Foundation**, an American non-profit organisation.
- The **aim of starting this programme was to recognise towns and cities** across the world that are committed to ensuring that their trees and urban forests are sustainably managed, properly maintained, and duly celebrated.
- Under this programme assistance, direction, and worldwide recognition is provided to those communities that are showing dedication to their urban forest.
- The programme also provides a framework for a **sustainable and healthy urban forestry programme in a city or a town.**

### How is a city recognized as a Tree City?

- To be **recognized as a 'Tree City,'** a city needs to meet five core standards that show its commitment to caring for its forests and trees.
- For a **city to be recognized as a Tree City,** it must delegate responsibility for the caring of trees within the municipal boundary to a city department, a staff member, or a group of citizens known as a Tree Board. **Also, a law or an official policy must be in place in the city to govern the management of trees and forests.**
- The city must also have an updated assessment or inventory of the local tree resources **so that it can establish an effective long-term plan for caring for, planting, and removing city trees.**
- The city must also have a dedicated annual budget for implementing a tree management plan.
- Also, the city must organise an annual celebration of trees with the aim of raising awareness **among the people and must also acknowledge the citizens who have carried out the tree programme in the city.**

### Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- The Food and Agriculture Organization is an **agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- FAO is also a source of knowledge and information and helps developing countries and countries in transition modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices, ensuring good nutrition and food security for all.
- **Formation: 16 October 1945, in Quebec City, Canada**



- **Headquarters: Rome, Italy**
- Every year, **World Food Day (Theme for 2018- Zero Hunger)** is celebrated on **October 16** to commemorate the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of United Nations in the year 1945.
- The **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-2)** also aims to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” by 2030.

## #38<sup>TH</sup> SIACHEN DAY OBSERVED ON APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>

- Indian Army observed 38th Siachen Day on April 13, 2022. The day is observed every year to commemorate the courage displayed by the Indian Army troops in securing the highest battlefield in the world '**Siachen Glacier**' under Operation Meghdoot.
- The Indian Army had launched '**Operation Meghdoot**' to gain control of Bilafond La and other passes on the Saltoro Ridgeline from Pakistani aggression on April 13, 1984.
- Siachen Day is celebrated largely by the Siachen Warriors Brigade of Fire & Fury Corps.
- Siachen Day not only commemorates the courage and valour of the Indian Army but also honours the brave Siachen Warriors who laid down their lives to capture the icy Siachen glacier and serve their motherland successfully.
- This year completes **38 years since the Indian Army successfully captured Siachen Glacier**.
- Siachen is called the highest and coldest battlefield in the world.



## When was Siachen captured?

- The Indian Army gained control of Siachen on April 13, 1984 after it launched a military operation called 'Operation Meghdoot'.

## What is Operation Meghdoot?

- **Operation Meghdoot was a code name for the Indian Army's operation to secure control over the Siachen glacier in Kashmir.**
- The operation, which was the first military operation of its kind, was carried out on the morning of April 13, 1984. Indian Army is the first and only army in the world to have taken tanks and other heavy military ordnance to such an altitude.
- Late President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam became the first Indian President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces to visit the **troops deployed in 'Operation Meghdoot' in 2003.**

## Operation Meghdoot: Know what happened on April 13, 1984

- The Indian Army decided to take undertake the operation on April 13, 1984 after an intelligence report surfaced claiming that Pakistan was **planning a similar operation under the name 'Operation Ababeel' to occupy the glacier by April 17.**
- Lieutenant General Prem Nath Hoon had led Operation Meghdoot's first phase in March 1984 when Indian troops marched with full battle packs through icy Zoji La pass for days to avoid detection by Pakistani radars.

- Almost 300 Indian troops were deployed on critical peaks and passes of Siachen by April 13, gaining control of the crucial glacier.
- India subsequently gained control over the 70-km-long Siachen Glacier and its tributary glaciers and all the main passes and heights of the **Saltoro Ridge** immediately west of the glacier, including Sia La and Bilafond La. Pakistan could also manage to take control over **Saltoro Ridge's western slopes and foothills**.
- A ceasefire was announced in 2003 but both India and Pakistan maintain a permanent heavy military presence in the area.
- The conflict has resulted in thousands of deaths, mostly due to extreme weather and natural hazards.

### Why is Siachen so important?

- The Siachen Glacier is the highest battleground on earth. The Saltoro Ridge **overlooks the area of Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK)** and guards the routes leading to Leh, the principal town and capital of Ladakh. It is a point of conflict between India and Pakistan since April 13, 1984.

### Siachen Conflict: History and Origin

- The origin of the Siachen dispute lies in the fact that both Karachi Agreement of 1949 and the Shimla Agreement of 1972 did not clearly mention who controlled the glacier.
- The conflict stems from the incompletely demarcated territory on the map beyond the map coordinate known as NJ9842. While Shimla Agreement does not mention the point at all, **the Karachi agreement mentions a ceasefire line that terminates at the point called Pt NJ 9842**.
- Indian interpretation was that Pakistan's territory extended only till the Saltoro Ridge based on the Simla agreement, while Pakistan assumed that their territory continued northeast **from the point till Karakoram Pass. As a result, both nations claim to have rights over the icy Siachen Glacier**.

### #BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF BR AMBEDKAR

The nation celebrated **131<sup>st</sup> birth anniversary of B R Ambedkar** on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

- Dr. Ambedkar was a **social reformer, jurist, economist, author, polyglot** knowing several languages) **orator, a scholar, and thinker of comparative religions**.
- He is known as the Father of the Indian Constitution and was **India's first Law Minister**.
- He was the **Chairman of the Drafting Committee for the new Constitution**.
- He was a **well-known statesman who fought for the rights of the Dalits** and other socially backward classes.

### Contributions:

- He led the **Mahad Satyagraha in March 1927 against Hindus** who were opposing the decision of the Municipal Board.
- **In 1926, the Municipal Board of Mahad (Maharashtra)** passed an order to throw open the tank to all communities. Earlier, the untouchables were not allowed to use water from the Mahad tank.
- He participated in **all three Round Table Conferences**.
- **In 1932, Dr. Ambedkar signed the Poona pact with Mahatma Gandhi**, which abandoned the idea of separate electorates **for the depressed classes** (Communal Award).

- However, the seats reserved for the depressed classes were increased from **71 to 147 in provincial legislatures** and to **18% of the total in the Central Legislature**.
- His ideas before the **Hilton Young Commission** served as the foundation of the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.

### Election and Designation:

- In **1936**, he was elected to the **Bombay Legislative Assembly** as a legislator (MLA).
- He **was appointed** to the **Executive Council of Viceroy** as a Labour member **in 1942**.
- In **1947**, Dr. Ambedkar accepted **PM Nehru's invitation to become Minister of Law** in the first Cabinet of independent India.

### Important Works:

- **Journals:**
- Mooknayak (1920)
- Bahishkrit Bharat (1927)
- Samatha (1929)
- Janata (1930)
- **Books:**
- Annihilation of Caste
- Buddha or Karl Marx
- The Untouchable: Who are They and Why They Have Become Untouchables
- Buddha and His Dhamma
- The Rise and Fall of Hindu Women
- **Organisations:**
- BahishkritHitkarini Sabha (1923)
- Independent Labor Party (1936)
- Scheduled Castes Federation (1942)

### Relevance of Ambedkar in Present Times:

- Caste-based inequality in India still persists.
- While Dalits have acquired a political identity through **reservation** and forming their own political parties, they **lack behind in social dimensions** (health and education) and economic dimension.
- There has been a **rise of communal polarization and communalization of politics**. It is necessary that Ambedkar's vision of constitutional morality must supersede religious morality to avoid permanent damage to the Indian Constitution.

### What were Round Table Conferences?

- **First Round Table Conference:** It was held in London on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1930 but the Congress did not participate in it.
- In March 1931, Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin (Viceroy of India 1926-31) entered into a Pact, called Gandhi-Irwin Pact, by which the Congress called off the Civil Disobedience Movement and agreed to participate in the Round Table Conference.
- **Second Round Table Conference:** It was held in London on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, 1931.

- **Third Round Table Conference:** It was held in London on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November, 1932 to consider the reports of various sub-committees appointed from time to time. It ultimately led to the passage of the Govt. of India Act, 1935.

## #NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICES DAY: 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL

- Prime Minister Modi conferred Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration on National Civil Services Day 2022 which is observed on April 21.
- The 2-Day Civil Services Day function has been organized by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions to celebrate the work of the Civil Servants.**
- PM Modi confers the Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2021 for effective implementation of **identified priority programmes to mark the 15th Civil Services Day.**

## National Civil Services Day 2022

- Every Year the Government of India observes National Civil Services Day on April 21 as an occasion for the Civil Servants to rededicate themselves to the cause of citizens and to renew their commitments to public service and excellence in work.

## Why Awards for Excellence in Public Administration Significant?

- **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** were instituted with a view to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work that has been done by the Districts/implementing units and Central/State organizations for the welfare of common citizens.
- The prestigious awards are also **conferred for an effective implementation of identified priority programmes and innovation.**

## Awards to be conferred in 5 identified priority programmes

| S. No. | Priority Programmes  |
|--------|--|
| 1.     | Promoting Jan Bhagidari or People's Participation in PoshanAbhiyaan    |
| 2.     | Promoting Excellence in Sports and Wellness through Khelo India Scheme |
| 3.     | Digital Payments and Good Governance in PM SVANidhi Yojana             |
| 4.     | Holistic Development through One District One Product Scheme           |
| 5.     | Seamless, End to End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention   |

## #PM AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC ADMN.

Recently, the **UDAN (UdeDeshkaAamNagrik)** Scheme has been selected for **Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2020** under the category "**Innovation (General) – Central**".

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation will receive the award on **21<sup>st</sup> April, i.e. Civil Service Day**. The government of India celebrates Civil Services Day, every year as an **occasion for the civil servants to rededicate themselves** to the cause of serving citizens and renew their commitments to public service and excellence in work.



- The Ministry of Civil Aviation plans and commits to construct **100 new airports by 2024 in India with 1,000 new routes under UDAN Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) scheme by the year 2026.**

### What is the PMs Award for Excellence in Public Administration?

- It was constituted in 2006 by the Government of India **to acknowledge, recognize and reward the extraordinary and innovative work done** by districts and organisations of the Central and State Governments.
- The award consists of **a trophy, scroll and an incentive of Rs. 10 lakh to the awarded district or organisation** to be utilised for implementation of project/ programme or bridging resource gaps in any area of public welfare.
- **Restructuring:** The Scheme was restructured in **2014** for recognizing the **performance of District Collectors in Priority Programs, Innovations and Aspirational Districts.**
- The Scheme was restructured again in **2020, to recognize the performance of District Collectors towards economic development of the District.**
- The Scheme has been **revamped** with a new approach in **2021** with the **objective to encourage Constructive Competition, Innovation, Replication and Institutionalisation of Best Practices.**
- Under this approach emphasis would be on **good governance, qualitative achievement and last mile connectivity**, rather than only on achievement of quantitative targets.

### What is the UDAN Scheme?

- **Launch:** It was launched as a RCS under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in **2016.**
- **Objectives:** To develop the **regional aviation market.**
- To provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on **regional routes to the common man even in small towns.**
- **Features:** The scheme **envisages providing connectivity to un-served and underserved airports of the country through the revival of existing air-strips and airports.** The scheme is operational for a period of 10 years.
- Under-served airports are those which do not have more than one flight a day, while **unserved airports are those where there are no operations.**
- **Financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and under-served airports, and keep airfares affordable.**

### #WORLD HERITAGE DAY: 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

Every year, 18<sup>th</sup> April is celebrated as **International Day for Monuments and Sites**, also known as 'World Heritage Day'.

- The theme for World Heritage Day 2022 is "**Heritage and Climate**".

### What is World Heritage Day?

- The **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** established the day in 1982 and the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** approved it in 1983.
- The aim of the day is to **create awareness about Heritage among communities.**

## What are UNESCO's World Heritage Sites?

- A **World Heritage Site** is a place that is listed by UNESCO for its special cultural or physical significance. The World Heritage Sites is maintained by the international 'World Heritage Programme', **administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee**.



- This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, **adopted by UNESCO in 1972**.

## What are the World Heritage Sites in India?

- India is home to a total of **3691 monuments and sites**. Of these **40 are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- Including places like the Taj Mahal, **Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves**. World Heritage Sites also include natural sites like the **Kaziranga National Park in Assam**.
- Harappan city of **Dholavira** in Gujarat as India's **40<sup>th</sup> world heritage site**.
- **Ramappa Temple (Telangana)** was India's 39th World Heritage Site.
- **Khangchendzonga National Park**, Sikkim has been inscribed as India's first and the only "Mixed World Heritage Site".
- In 2022, the Union Ministry of Culture **nominated Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas temples** for consideration as a **World Heritage site** for the year **2022-2023**
- What is UNESCO?
- It was founded in 1945 to develop the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind" as a means of building lasting peace. It is located in **Paris, France**.
- **Major Initiatives of UNESCO:**
  - **Man and Biosphere Programme**
  - **World Heritage Programme**
  - **Global Geopark Network**
  - **Network of Creative Cities**
  - **Atlas of World Languages in Danger**

## What is ICOMOS?

- It is a **global non-governmental organization** associated with UNESCO. It is located in Paris, France.

- Its mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and sites.
- It is an **Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee** for the implementation of the **World Heritage Convention of UNESCO**.
- As such, it reviews the nominations of cultural world heritage and ensures the conservation status of properties.
- Its **creation in 1965** is the logical outcome of initial conversations between architects, historians and international experts that began in the early twentieth century and that materialized in the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964.

## Natural Sites in India

- **Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (2014)**
- Located in western part of Himalayan mountains in the state of Himachal Pradesh, this Park is well known for its high alpine peaks, alpine meadows and riverine forests.
- It also encloses glacial and snow meltwater sources of several rivers as well as the catchment area.
- It is a biodiversity hotspot with 25 types of forests inhabited by myriads of faunal species, several of which are threatened.
- **Kaziranga National Park (1985)**
- **Keoladeo National Park (1985)**
- This wetland is located in the state of Rajasthan and served as a duck shooting reserve till the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, soon enough the hunting ceased and the area was declared a national park in 1982.
- This National Park is home to 375 bird species and various other life forms. It also serves as a wintering ground to Palaearctic migratory waterfowl, critically endangered Siberian Crane as well as to globally threatened- Greater Spotted Eagle and Imperial Eagle.
- It is acclaimed for its resident population of non-migratory breeding birds.
- **Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)**
- Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is a biodiversity hotspot located in Assam. It is a part of Manas Tiger Reserve and sprawls alongside Manas river.
- A range of forested hills, alluvial grasslands and tropical evergreen forests are responsible for the breathtaking beauty and serene environment of the site.
- It also provides a habitable environment to a range of endangered species such as- tiger, greater one-horned rhino, swamp deer, pygmy hog and Bengal florican.
- **Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988, 2005)**
- Both of these National Parks are exceptionally beautiful high-altitude West Himalayan landscapes and fall within the boundaries of the state of Uttarakhand.
- Nanda Devi National Park boasts rugged and high-mountain wilderness and is dominated by India's second-highest mountain-the peak of Nanda Devi. The Valley of Flowers, in contrast, flaunts aesthetically pleasing meadows of alpine flowers.
- Numerous kinds of floral and faunal species reside in these parks, along with a significant population of globally threatened species including- Snow leopard, Himalayan Musk Deer etc.
- **Sundarban National Park (1987)**
- **Western Ghats (2012)**

- Western Ghats consist of a chain of mountains running parallel to India's Western Coast and passing from the states of Kerala, Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.
- They cover an immense area in a 1600 km long stretch and are interrupted only once by a 30km Palghat gap at around 11 degrees north.
- They also influence the Indian monsoon weather patterns that mediate the warm tropical climate of the region and act as a barrier to rain-laden monsoon winds that sweep in from the south-west.
- Western Ghats are also home to tropical evergreen forests, as well as to 325 globally threatened species.

## What is (UNESCO)?

- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is a specialized agency of the **United Nations (UN)**. It seeks to **build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture**.
- It is also a member of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)**, a coalition of UN agencies and organizations aimed at fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- UNESCO's **Headquarters** are located in **Paris** and the Organization has more than 50 field offices around the world.
- It has **193 Members and 11 Associate Members** (As of April 2020) and is governed by the General Conference and the Executive Board.
- Three UNESCO member states are not UN members: **Cook Islands, Niue, and Palestine**.
- While three UN member states (**Israel, Liechtenstein, United States**) are not UNESCO members.

## Objectives

- Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning
- Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development
- Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges
- Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication
- Focuses on global priority areas - "**Africa**" and "**Gender Equality**".

## History

- In 1942, during the Second World War, the governments of the European countries, which were confronting Germany and its allies, met in the United Kingdom for the **Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME)**.
- Upon the proposal of CAME, a United Nations Conference for the establishment of an educational and cultural organization was convened in London in November 1945.
- At the end of the conference, UNESCO was founded on 16 November 1945.
- The **first session** of the General Conference of UNESCO was held in **Paris** during November-December of 1946.

## #EARTH DAY OBSERVED ON 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL

On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022, the **52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Earth Day** was celebrated. Earth Day is an international event celebrated around the **world to pledge support for environmental protection**.

- The **theme for Earth Day 2022** is "**Invest In our Planet**".





## What is Earth Day?

- **Background:** Earth Day was first observed in 1970 when 20 million took to the streets to protest environmental degradation on the call of US Senator Gaylord Nelson.
- The event was triggered by the **1969 Santa Barbara oil spill**, as well as other issues such as smog and polluted rivers.
- In 2009, the United Nations designated 22<sup>nd</sup> April as '**International Mother Earth Day**'.
- **About:** Earth Day is now globally coordinated by **EARTHDAY.ORG**, which is a non-profit organization. It was formerly known as **Earth Day Network**.
- **It aims to "build the world's largest environmental movement to drive transformative change for people and the planet".**
- It recognizes a collective responsibility, as called for in the **1992 Rio Declaration (Earth Summit)**, to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.
- The landmark **Paris Agreement**, which brings almost 200 countries together in setting a common target to reduce global greenhouse emissions, was also signed on Earth Day 2016.

## What are some Other Important Days?

- 22<sup>nd</sup> March: **World Water Day**
- 22<sup>nd</sup> April: **Earth Day**
- 22<sup>nd</sup> May: **World Biodiversity Day**
- 5<sup>th</sup> June: **World Environment Day**
- **Earth Overshoot Day**

## What is Earth Hour?

- **Earth Hour** is the **World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)**'s annual initiative that began in 2007. It is held every year on the last Saturday of March.
- It encourages people from more than 180 countries to switch off the lights from 8.30 pm to 9.30 pm as per their local time.
- It seeks to raise awareness about **climate change** and the need to save the environment.

## RELATED: WORLD WATER DAY

**World Water Day** is celebrated on **22<sup>nd</sup> March Every Year** to highlight the importance of water.

- On the Occasion of the **World Water Day UN (United Nations)** University's Canadian-based Institute for Water Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) has published an assessment report, showing the **levels of water security in Africa overall are unacceptably low**.
- The World Water Day 2022 theme sets the focus for the **annual World Water Development Report**.
- What is World Water Day?
- **Aim:** The Day aims to **support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030**.
- **Theme:** Groundwater: making the invisible visible.
- The theme was decided by **UN-water at its 30th meeting in Rome**. It was proposed by the **International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC)**.
- **History:**

- The idea for this international day goes back to 1992, the year in which the **UN Conference on Environment and Development** in Rio de Janeiro took place.
- That same year, the **United Nations General Assembly** adopted a **resolution** by which 22nd March of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed **starting in 1993**.
- Later on, other celebrations and events were added. For instance, the **International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sphere 2013**, and the current **International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028**.
- Global Initiatives on Sustainable Development
- **The Stockholm Conference, 1972:** It was the **first step** towards putting environmental concerns on the global agenda. It resulted in the **Stockholm Declaration** which contained **principles** and an **Action Plan** containing recommendations for environmental policy.
- **UNEP** was set up in 1972 to serve as a catalyst in developing and coordinating an environmental focus in the programmes of other organisations.
- **The Earth Summit, 1992:** This was a direct consequence of the **Brundtland Commission's Report**. It was held in Rio de Janeiro. The results of the Conference were the following documents:
  - The Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**)
  - The Convention on Biological Diversity
  - The Statement on Forest Principles
  - The Rio Declaration
  - Agenda 21
- **Kyoto Protocol, 1997**
- **Rio +10, 2002:** A **10-year assessment** of the Rio outcomes (Rio +10) took the shape of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in **Johannesburg**.
- **Ramsar Convention, 1971**

## #NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY: 24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

India commemorates the 12<sup>th</sup> National Panchayati Raj day on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

- The Prime Minister has launched the distribution of **e-property cards under the SWAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas)** scheme on the Day.



### What is National Panchayati Raj Day?

- The first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated in 2010. Since then, the National Panchayati Raj Day is celebrated on 24<sup>th</sup> April every year in India.
- The day **marks the enactment of the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment of the constitution in 1992**.

### Awards Presented on the Day:

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been awarding the best performing Panchayats/States/UTs across the country in recognition of their good work.
- Awards are given under various categories namely,
- DeenDayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar,
- Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar,
- Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award,

- Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award and
- e-Panchayat Puraskar (given to States/UTs only)

### What is Panchayati Raj?

- After the Constitution came into force, **Article 40 made a mention of panchayats and Article 246** empowered the state to legislate with respect to any subject relating to local self-government.
- **Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)** was constitutionalized through the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 to build democracy at the grass roots level and was entrusted with the task of rural development in the country.
- PRI is a system of rural local self-government in India.
- Local Self Government is the management of local affairs by such local bodies who have been elected by the local people.
- To strengthen e-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) across the country, **the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)** has launched eGramSwaraj, a user-friendly web-based portal.
- It unifies the planning, accounting and monitoring functions of Gram Panchayats. Its combination with the Area Profiler application, Local Government Directory (LGD) and the **Public Financial Management System (PFMS)** renders easier reporting and tracking of Gram Panchayat's activities.

### What are the Salient Features of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment?

- The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment **added Part IX titled "The Panchayats"** to the Constitution.
- Basic unit of democratic system-**Gram Sabhas** (villages) comprising all the adult members registered as voters.
- **Three-tier system** of panchayats at village, intermediate block/taluk/mandal and district levels except in States with population is below 20 lakhs (Article 243B).
- Seats at all levels to be filled by **direct elections** (Article 243C (2)).

### Reservation of Seats:

- Seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the chairpersons of the Panchayats at all levels also shall be reserved for SCs and STs in proportion to their population.
- One-third of the total number of seats to be reserved for women.
- One-third offices of chairpersons at all levels reserved for women (Article 243D).
- **Independent Election Commission in each State** for superintendence, direction and control of the electoral rolls (Article 243K).
- **Power of Panchayats:** Panchayats have been authorised to prepare plans for economic development and social justice in respect of subjects illustrated in Eleventh Schedule (Article 243G).
- **Source of Revenue (Article 243H):** State legislature may authorise the Panchayats with
  - Budgetary allocation from State Revenue.
  - Share of revenue of certain taxes.
  - Collection and retention of the revenue it raises.
- **Establish a Finance Commission in each State** to determine the principles on the basis of which adequate financial resources would be ensured for panchayats and municipalities (Article 243I).

### Exemptions:

- The Act does not apply to the states of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram and certain other areas because of socio-cultural and administrative considerations. These areas include:

- The Scheduled areas and the tribal areas (**under Schedule VI of the Constitution**) in the states.
- the hill areas of Manipur for which district councils exist,
- Darjeeling district of West Bengal for which Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council exists.
- However, the Parliament has extended the provisions of Part IX to **Vth schedule** areas through an Act called the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.
- At present, 10 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Telangana have Fifth Schedule Area.

## RELATED: SVAMITVA SCHEME

- **SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas)** scheme is a collaborative effort of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Panchayati Raj Departments, State Revenue Departments and Survey of India**.
- **Aim:** To provide an **integrated property validation solution for rural India**.
- It is a scheme for **mapping** the land parcels in rural areas using **drone technology** and **Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS)**.
- The mapping will be done across the country in a **phase-wise** manner over a period of four years - from 2020 to 2024.

## Benefits:

- The scheme will **help in streamlining planning and revenue collection** in rural areas and ensuring clarity on property rights.
- The scheme will **enable creation of better-quality Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs)**, using the maps created under this programme.
- The Gram Panchayats are **constitutionally mandated** for preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) for economic development and social justice.
- The GPDP is based on a **participatory process** in convergence with schemes of all related Central Ministries/Line Departments related to 29 subjects listed in the **Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution**.
- The program is currently being implemented in **six states - Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand**.

## #WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK: 24<sup>TH</sup> – 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

Recently, **World Immunization Week 2022** was celebrated from **24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022**.

- The theme of 2022 is **Long Life for All** and it aims to **unify people around the idea that vaccines make it possible** for us to follow our dreams, protect our loved ones and live a long, healthy life.



## What is World Immunization Week?

- World Immunization Week is a health campaign coordinated by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and celebrated in the **last week of April, every year**.
- It aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease.
- Immunization saves millions of **lives and is widely recognized as one of the world's most successful and cost-effective health interventions**.



- Yet, there are still nearly **20 million unvaccinated** and under-vaccinated children in the world today.

## Why Does Immunization Matter Now More Than Ever?

- For over 200 years, vaccines have protected **us against diseases that threaten lives and prohibit our development.**
- For more than two centuries, vaccines have helped keep people healthy—from the very **first vaccine developed to protect against smallpox** to the newest **vaccines used to prevent severe cases of Covid-19.**
- With their help, we can progress without the burden of diseases like smallpox and **polio**, which cost humanity hundreds of millions of lives.
- Vaccines themselves continue to advance, bringing us closer to a world free from the likes of **tuberculosis and cervical cancer**, and ending suffering from childhood diseases like tetanus and measles.

## What are recent Immunization Initiatives in India?

- **Universal Immunization Programme**
- **Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0 scheme**
- **Pulse polio programme**

## #NATIONAL VACCINATION DAY OBSERVED ON MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>

- **National Vaccination Day** is observed every year on March 16 to convey the significance of vaccination as well as its role in public health. National Vaccination Day 2022 creates awareness and sends the message that **how vaccination or immunization is the most effective way of preventing highly infectious diseases.**
- National Vaccination Day 2022 is also of certain significance amid the COVID-19 pandemic against which vaccine has come out to be the only solution of preventing the deadly disease.
- **National Vaccination Day 2022 or National Immunization Day** also marks India's victory against Polio disease. Notably, the impact of vaccination is not only limited to improving health or life expectancy, it also has a social or economic impact at the community and the National level.

## National Vaccination Day 2022 Theme

- The theme of National Vaccination Day 2022 is '**Vaccines Work for all**'. National Vaccination Day 2022 theme highlights how vaccines work for all and save lives all around the world.

## National Vaccination Day 2022: History

- National Vaccination Day is observed every year on March 16 as it was the first time on this day that the first dose of Oral Polio vaccine was given in India back in 1995.
- **National Vaccination Day or National Immunization Day** celebrates the Government of India's Pulse Polio Program which was a remarkable initiative to eradicate polio from India.
- According to the program, two drops of Polio vaccine were provided to the children from the age of 0 to 5. The Pulse Polio Program in India became a huge success as in 2014, the World Health Organisation announced India to be a 'Polio Free Country'.
- Reportedly, the last case of polio in India was reported in 2011 in West Bengal. Following the success of

the Polio Program, India began its work on vaccination against severe diseases such as TB, mumps, tetanus, and much more.

### National Vaccination Day 2022: Why Vaccination Day is celebrated in India?

- Vaccines, over the last few decades, have become an important tool to fight life-threatening diseases all over the world. **National Vaccination Day 2022 acknowledges and highlights the role of vaccines** and how in today's world, the role played by them cannot be overlooked.
- According to the **report by the World Health Organisation**, vaccines save almost 2 to 3 million people every year and since the COVID-19 pandemic has been prevailing all over the world, the Government of India is taking every necessary step to vaccinate every citizen of India against the disease.
- **National Vaccination Day 2022** initiates a talk regarding the significance of vaccines and why people must get themselves, their family members and children vaccinated for the protection against certain diseases.

### National Vaccination Day 2022: Facts about Vaccination Day in India

- In 2014, Mission Indradhanush was launched under the **Universal Immunization Program to better the health of mothers and children who are deprived of vaccination.**
- Mission Indradhanush by the **Government of India aims at achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of ending preventable child deaths by 2030.**
- **The world's largest COVID-19 vaccination program** has been launched in India with an aim of vaccinating the entire population against the COVID-19 pandemic.

### #US, CHINA & INDIA LARGEST MILITARY SPENDERS IN THE WORLD

- The world military expenditure touched all-time high of USD 2.1 trillion in 2021, as per a statement by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on April 25, 2022.
- The institute added saying that the United States, China and India were the largest military spenders in the world in 2021.
- The top 5 largest military spenders in 2021 were the **United States, China, India, the United Kingdom and Russia**, which together accounted for almost 62 percent of the world military expenditure, said the Stockholm institute.
- The total world military expenditure increased by **0.7 percent in real terms in 2021 to touch record high of USD 2113 billion.**
- The world military spending touched record levels even amid the economic crisis faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, noted Dr. Diego Lopes da Silva, Senior Researcher with SIPRI's Military Expenditure and Arms Production Programme.



### World Military Expenditure

- The world military expenditure increased by 0.7 percent in real terms in 2021, while in nominal terms, it grew by 6.1 percent. **There was a slowdown in the rate of real-term growth of military expenditure due to high inflation.**
- The defence spending amounted to 2.2 percent of global GDP amid economic recovery from COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. In 2020, the military spending had reached 2.3 percent of global GDP.

## Top 5 Largest Military Spenders in 2021

- **United States:** The US military spending reached USD 801 billion in 2021, which shows a drop of 1.4 per cent in comparison to 2020.
- The United States has increased funding for military research and development by 24 percent and reduced spending on purchase of arms by 6.4 percent between 2012 and 2021.
- **China:** China spent USD 293 billion on military expenditure in 2021, **which shows an increase of 4.7 percent in comparison to 2020.**
- **India:** India's military spending was recorded to be at USD 76.6 billion in 2021, which shows an increase of 0.9 percent in comparison to 2020 and an increase of 33 percent in comparison to 2012. **India's military spending in 2021 has been ranked the third-largest in the world.'**
- Amid the nation's push to strengthen the indigenous arms industry, the government earmarked 64 per cent of capital outlays in the military budget of 2021 for acquisitions of domestically produced arms.
- **United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom's military spending was recorded at **USD 68.4 billion in 2021, which shows an increase of 3 percent since 2020.**
- **Russia:** Russia's military spending was recorded to be USD 65.9 billion in 2021, which shows an increase of 2.9 percent since 2020. This comes at a time when Russia was increasing its troop strength along the Ukrainian border, preparing itself for its military assault. Russia's military expenditure registered a growth for the third consecutive year and reached 4.1 percent of GDP in 2021.

## #Reports of Global Arms Trade: SIPRI

According to a report by **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, which tracks global arms trade, three Indian companies are among the **world's top 100 for combined arms sales in 2020.**

- The three Indian companies are **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**, **Indian Ordnance Factories**, and **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**.
- The **three were ranked among the top 100 in arms sales in 2019 as well.**

## The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

- The SIPRI is an **independent international institute** dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- **Established in 1966 at Stockholm**, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.
- **Top Countries:**
- **The USA has the highest number** of companies in the top 100 worldwide.. Together, their arms sales amounted to USD 285 billion, an increase of 1.9 % compared with 2019.
- **China was second** at 13 %, **followed by the UK** at 7.1 %.
- **Russia and France were fourth and fifth** with 5 % and 4.7 % respectively of the combined arms sales for the top 100 companies.

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