

MARCH -2023 Set-2



**Weekly Periodicals of
Current Affairs**

By

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 MARCH-2023 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of MARCH. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, CUET, 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 MARCH-2023 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.

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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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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF 73RD & 74TH AMENDMENT

- The year 2023 marks the 30th anniversary of the 73rd and 74th Amendment to the Indian Constitution. But still India's local government requires many technical, administrative and financial fixes.
- *What are the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments?*
- *73rd Constitutional Amendment Act:*
- Panchayati Raj Institution was constitutionalized through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. This **act has added a new Part-IX to the Constitution of India** and consists of provisions from Articles 243 to 243 O.
- In addition, the act has also added a new **11th Schedule to the Constitution and contains 29 functional items of the panchayats.**
- *74th Constitutional Amendment Act:*
- Urban local governments were constitutionalized through the **74th Amendment Act during the regime of P.V. Narsimha Rao's government in 1992.** It came into force on 1st June 1993. It added Part IX -A and consists of provisions from Articles 243-P to 243-ZG. In addition, the act also added the 12th Schedule to the Constitution. **It contains 18 functional items of Municipalities.**

MANIPUR GOVERNMENT WITHDRAWS SoO PACT

- On March 10, 2023 the Manipur government decided to withdraw from the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with two militant groups, **Kuki National Army (KNA) and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)**, alleging their involvement in inciting agitation among forest encroachers.
- *What is Kuki Insurgency?*



- The **Kuki insurgency began after ethnic clashes with the Nagas of Manipur** in the early 1990s, with the Kukis arming themselves against Naga aggression.
- The major reason for clashes is **the land claimed by the Kukis as their "homeland" in the Manipur hills overlaps** with the imagined Naga homeland of Greater Nagaland or Nagalim.
- *What is the Suspension of Operations (SoO) Pact?*
- The **SoO agreement with Kuki was signed in 2008 as a ceasefire agreement** between the Indian government and various Kuki militant groups operating in the northeastern states of Manipur and Nagaland.
- Under the agreement, the Kuki militant groups agreed to stop carrying out violent activities and come to designated camps to be monitored by security forces. **In return, the Indian government agreed to suspend its operations against the Kuki groups**

KALAKKAD–MUNDANTHURAI TIGER RESERVE (KMTR)

- Researchers from Tamil Nadu have spotted a rare moth species for the first time in India in the buffer zone of **Kalakkad–Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR)** after it was last sighted 127 years ago in Sri Lanka in 1893.
- **Mimeusemia ceylonica** is a moth species belonging to the subfamily Agaristinae and family Noctuidae.
- KMTR was created in 1988 by combining the existing and contiguous Kalakkad and Mundanthurai wildlife sanctuaries. **Kalakkad – Mundanthurai was declared as the first Tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu.**
- It occupies the southern part of the Western Ghats and consists of wet evergreen forests; it is the catchment area of 14 rivers. **It is also part of the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve.**
- Apart from tigers, the forest is home to **Sambar, spotted deer, elephants, leopards, wild dogs, etc., and a large number of bird species, reptiles, etc.**



- The **tourism industry in India** has always been a major contributor to the country's economy. It not only generates employment opportunities but also promotes cultural exchange and supports local businesses.
- However, the rapid growth of tourism has also led to its negative impacts, including environmental degradation, overcrowding, and exploitation of local communities.
- To address these challenges and promote sustainable tourism, the **Union Ministry of Tourism launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme (SDS) in 2014.**
- The SDS aimed to develop theme-based tourist circuits across India, such as spiritual, heritage, and eco-tourism circuits. However, the **scheme was criticized for its lack of sustainability and community involvement.**
- ***Revamped Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Programme***
- In response to the criticism, the **Ministry of Tourism has launched the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0)** programme, which seeks to develop sustainable and responsible tourist destinations.
- The **SD2.0 aims to address the negative impacts of tourism and promote responsible tourism practices** while also increasing private sector investments in the industry.



CYCLONE FREDDY: DEADLY TROPICAL CYCLONE

- In **February and March 2023**, the world witnessed the **remarkable persistence of a tropical cyclone named Freddy**. The storm crossed the Indian Ocean over a span of more than five weeks, causing severe damage and destruction in its path.
- **Freddy was classified as the fourth named storm of the 2022-23 Australian region cyclone season** and the second very intense tropical cyclone of the 2022-23 South-West Indian Ocean cyclone season. It caused deaths of over hundreds of people. Let's take a closer look at this deadly storm.



- Freddy emerged as a disturbance within the monsoon trough in the Australian region cyclone basin. The storm quickly intensified into a Category 4 severe tropical cyclone, causing significant damage and destruction in its path.
- **As Freddy moved into the South-West Indian Ocean basin**, it intensified even further, becoming a very intense tropical cyclone. The storm's wind speeds reached 155 mph, **equivalent to a Category 5 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale.**

WHAT IS THE PM MITRA SCHEME?

- The Centre has selected sites in **Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh** to set up new textile parks under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme.
- The parks will be set up by 2026-27. The total outlay for the project is Rs 4,445 crore, though the initial allocation in the 2023-24 Budget is only Rs 200 crore.
- *What is the PM MITRA Scheme?*
- **PM MITRA Park will be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle** which will be owned by the Central and State Government and in a Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode.
- **Each MITRA Park will have an incubation center, common processing house** and a common effluent treatment plant and other textile related facilities such as design centers and testing centers.
- **Implementation:**
- **Special Purpose Vehicle:** An SPV owned by the Centre and State Government will be set up for each park which will oversee the implementation of the project.
- **Development Capital Support:** The Ministry of Textiles will provide financial support in the **form of Development Capital Support upto Rs 500 crore per park to the park SPV.**



BCI ALLOWS FOREIGN LAWYERS TO PRACTICE IN INDIA

- Recently, the **Bar Council of India (BCI)** has notified Rules for Registration and Regulation of Foreign Lawyers and Foreign Law Firms in India, 2022, **allowing foreign lawyers and law firms to practice in India.**



- However, it did not allow them to appear before courts, tribunals or other statutory or regulatory authorities.

- ***What is the BCI Decision?***

- For over a decade, **BCI was opposed to allowing foreign law firms in India.** Now, the BCI has reasoned that its move will address concerns about the flow of Foreign Direct Investment in the country and make India a hub of International Commercial Arbitration.

- The rules bring legal clarity to foreign law firms that **currently operate in a very limited way in India. The BCI said it** “resolves to implement these Rules enabling the foreign lawyers and Foreign Law Firms to practice foreign law and diverse international law and international arbitration matters in India on the principle of reciprocity in a well-defined, regulated and controlled manner.

MSME COMPETITIVE LEAN SCHEME

- Recently, the **Ministry of MSMEs launched the MSME Competitive (LEAN) Scheme** to provide a roadmap to global competitiveness for the MSMEs of India.

- The idea is to **improve quality, productivity, performance and capability** to change the mind-sets of manufacturers and transform them into world class manufacturers.



- ***What are the Key Points of the Scheme?***

- Through the LEAN journey, MSMEs can reduce wastage substantially, increase productivity, improve quality, work safely, expand their markets, and finally become competitive and profitable.

- **Tools:** Under the scheme, MSMEs will implement LEAN manufacturing tools like **5S, Kaizen, KANBAN, Visual workplace, Poka Yoka** etc under the able guidance of trained and competent LEAN Consultants to attain LEAN levels like Basic, Intermediate and Advanced.

- **Government Support:** The government will contribute 90% of implementation cost for handholding and consultancy fees.
- There will be an **additional contribution of 5% for the MSMEs which are part of SFURTI clusters**, owned by Women/SC/ST and located in the Northeast region.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

ARREST WARRANT ISSUED AGAINST PUTIN BY ICC

- On March 17, 2023, the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** issued arrest warrants against Russian **President Vladimir Putin and Russia's Commissioner for Child Rights, Maria Lvova-Belova**, for the alleged war crime of unlawfully deporting and transferring children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation.
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- This move has been made under articles 8(2)(a)(vii) and 8(2)(b)(viii) of the Rome Statute, **which relate to the direct or indirect transfer of an occupying power's own civilian population** into occupied territory or the deportation or transfer of the population of the occupied territory within or outside its territory.
 - The **ICC issued arrest warrants against Putin and Belova** because they are allegedly responsible for unlawfully deporting and transferring children **from Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation.**
 - The **ICC believes that Putin bears individual criminal responsibility for these crimes** and has reasonable grounds to believe that he committed the acts directly, jointly with others, and/or through others under article 25(3)(a) of the Rome Statute.
 - The ICC has also accused Putin of failing to exercise control properly over civilian and military subordinates under his effective authority, committing or allowing the commission of such acts under article 28(b) of the Rome Statute.
 - *What is the ICC?*
 - The **ICC is headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands**, and was established under the 1998 treaty called the "Rome Statute."
 - It investigates and, where warranted, tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to **the international community, including genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the crime of aggression.**

- Presently, 123 countries are **party to the Rome Statute, including Britain, Japan, Afghanistan, and Germany.**

EXERCISE AL MOHAMMED AL HINDI 23

- The Indian Navy Forces and Royal Saudi Naval Forces met in Mumbai recently to finalize preparations for the upcoming **joint naval exercise, 'Al-Mohammed-Al Hindi-23'**, which is set to take place in May 2023 in Jubail, Saudi Arabia.
- This is the second such exercise between the two countries, following the first in August 2021.
- The aim of the exercise is **to enhance interoperability between the two naval forces** by conducting tactical maneuvers, search and rescue operations, and an electronic warfare drill. It will provide a platform for the **two countries to strengthen their military ties and deepen cooperation between their navies.**
- The decision to **hold joint naval exercises was taken during the Riyadh Summit held in 2019**, which marked a turning point in India-Saudi Arabia relations.
- The summit was attended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who emphasized the need to deepen cooperation in various sectors. Over the past five years, the relationship between the two countries have been strengthened.



NUCLEAR POWERED ATTACK SUBMARINE & AUKUS

- The United States, Australia and Britain unveiled details of a plan to provide Australia with **nuclear-powered attack submarines from the early 2030s to counter China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific.**
- The agreement is included under the 2021 AUKUS partnership as part of a shared commitment to a free-and-open Indo-Pacific region.
- In September 2021, the US announced a new trilateral security partnership for the **Indo-Pacific, between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS).**

- The major highlight of this arrangement is the sharing of **US** nuclear submarine technology to Australia. Its **Indo-pacific orientation makes it an alliance against China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.**

BIENNIAL SEA DRAGON 23 EXERCISE

- The **Sea Dragon 23 exercise is a biennial coordinated multilateral anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercise** for long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft.
- The **exercise is hosted by the United States Navy**, and it involves the participation of other friendly navies from Japan, Canada, South Korea, and India.
- The exercise aims to achieve high levels of synergy and coordination between the participating countries based on their **shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific.**
- It is being held from March 15 to 30 this year. This is the **third edition of the Sea Dragon Exercise**, which was held for the first time in 2015.
- The **exercise's primary objective is to improve coordination among participating countries** in the multilateral anti-submarine warfare drills.
- The exercise will include advanced ASW drills and simulated scenarios that will test the participating aircraft's capabilities in detecting and tracking underwater targets. **The exercise also aims to foster mutual expertise and knowledge sharing among the participating countries.**
- *About P8I Aircraft*
- The P8I aircraft is a long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft equipped with advanced sensors, radars, and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. **The aircraft is designed to detect, track, and engage enemy submarines and other maritime threats.**

THIRD EDITION OF MULTILATERAL EXERCISE LA PEROUSE

- The **third edition of the multilateral exercise La Perouse** is scheduled to be **conducted in the Indian Ocean Region from 13 to 14 March 2023.**
- This edition will witness participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of **Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy.**
- The **biennial exercise La Perouse** is conducted by the French Navy and is aimed at enhancing maritime domain awareness and optimizing maritime coordination **amongst the participating navies in the Indo-Pacific Region.**
- **Indigenously built guided missile frigate INS Sahyadri** and fleet tanker **INS Jyoti** will be participating in this edition of the exercise.
- Participation of the Indian Navy in the exercise showcases the **high levels of synergy, coordination and interoperability between the friendly navies,** and their commitment to a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific region.



ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

WHAT IS FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVE?

- **Foreign exchange reserves are the assets** that a country's central bank or monetary authority holds to ensure a balance of payments in the country, maintain stability in the financial market, and **influence the foreign exchange rates of the currency.**
- These reserves are made up of foreign currency assets, gold, special drawing rights (SDRs), and reserves with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF).**
- ***India's Foreign Exchange Reserve Falls to 3-Month Low***
- According to the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) statistical supplement,** India's foreign exchange reserves have declined to a three-month low as of March 10 this year.



- **The reserves stood at \$560 billion**, which is their lowest since early December. In the week to March 3, the reserves were at \$562.40 billion.

AWARDS & HONOR

RRR'S 'NAATU NAATU' WON BEST ORIGINAL SONG AT OSCARS

- The **95th Academy Awards (Oscars 2023)** have announced that RRR's "Naatu Naatu" won **Best Original Song**. The song had to beat out songs like "Applause" from Tell It Like a Woman, "Hold My Hand" from Top Gun: Maverick, "Lift Me Up" from Black Panther: Wakanda Forever, and "This is Life" from Everything Everywhere All At Once.
- The **song's words were written by Chandrabose, with music by MM Keeravaani**, and it was performed by Kala Bhairava and Rahul Sipligunj. "Naatu Naatu" received the Golden Globe for best song.
- RRR became the first Indian film to win a Golden Globe as a result of the victory. **The Elephant Whisperers, a Netflix documentary short** from Kartiki Gonsalves and Guneet Monga, has won the 95th Academy Awards' Best Documentary Short award.
- The movie was up against 'Stranger At The Gate', 'Haulout', and 'How Do You Measure a Year?' The award is an honour of "my motherland, India," said director Gonzalves.



IMPORTANT DAYS & DATES

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY OBSERVED ON MARCH 8TH

- **International Women's Day is celebrated annually on March 8th.** Its origins can be traced back to the activities of labor movements in **North America and Europe** at the turn of the twentieth century. It was first observed in 1911 by a few European countries. **It was officially recognized in 1977.**



- ***The theme of International Women's Day 2023***
- Theme for this year's International Women's Day is Embrace Equity or #EmbraceEquity, which aims to highlight the importance of gender equity in every society.
- The difference between equity and equality is also emphasized, with equity recognizing that each person has different circumstances and allocating resources and opportunities accordingly to achieve an equal outcome.

NATIONAL VACCINATION DAY OBSERVED ON MARCH 16TH

- **National Vaccination Day, also known as Immunization Day or Polio Ravivar,** is an annual event celebrated in India on March 16th.
- The day holds significant importance in India's public health calendar, **as it promotes vaccination campaigns and raises awareness about the importance of vaccines in preventing infectious diseases.**



- ***When National Vaccine Day was first observed?***
- The **first National Vaccination Day was celebrated in India in 1995** to eradicate polio from the country. At that time, polio was a major public health concern in India, with thousands of children being affected every year.
- Since then, **National Vaccination Day has become an essential event in India's public health calendar.**

WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY OBSERVED ON MARCH 15TH

- **World Consumer Rights Day 2023** was celebrated on March 15 with the theme **“Empowering consumers through clean energy transitions.”**
- The Department of Consumer Affairs marked this day by leveraging technology to minimize the dependence on traditional energy sources and **promote a rapid transition to clean energy solutions that are sustainable, secure, affordable, and accessible to consumers.**
- **World Consumer Rights Day** has been celebrated since March 15, 1983, with the goal of empowering and protecting consumers worldwide.
- It originated from **US President John F. Kennedy’s address to Congress on March 15, 1962**, where he highlighted the importance of consumer rights and was the first world leader to do so.
- Since then, organizations such as Consumer International commemorate the day **by hosting various activities and campaigns to defend consumer rights.**
- The Indian Parliament passed the Consumer Protection Act on December 9, 1986, to give customers **more power and create consumer councils, forums, and appellate courts for the resolution of consumer complaints.**
- This Act significantly improved the rights of consumers in India, giving them protection against unfair trade practices, access to goods and services at competitive prices, and the right to be informed about the quality, standard, and price of goods and services.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(NASA-ISRO SYNTHETIC APERTURE RADAR)

- **NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) Mission** is a collaborative project between NASA and ISRO aimed at building and launching an Earth observation satellite equipped with dual-frequency synthetic aperture radar.
- Notably, the satellite carries the **most advanced radar system ever to be launched in a NASA Mission**. It also has the largest radar antenna of its type.
- The satellite will be the first of its kind and will be used to remotely sense natural phenomena on Earth, such as the Antarctic cryosphere. NISAR is expected to be **the most expensive Earth-imaging satellite, with a total cost of around 1.5 billion USD**.
- The **mission will map the elevations on the earth's surface**. It will mainly focus on the ice masses. The mapping is to be done four to six times a month.
- The **resolution of the mapping is to be in the range of 5m to 10m**. With this, the mission will provide details about ice sheet collapses, landslides, etc.



WHAT IS MOON TIME ZONE?

- The **Moon Time Zone** has been proposed for establishing a universal timekeeping system that will simplify communication and coordination among different lunar missions.
- The proposal has come in response to the increasing number of lunar missions being planned and launched by different countries and entities- with some of the upcoming missions including **Japan's M1 lunar lander and the Nova-C lander** of Houston-based Intuitive Machines.



- Its creation will help in future space explorations, including the possibility of establishing a Martian time zone.
- The **European Space Agency (ESA)** has recently proposed the need for a lunar time zone. It has called for international coordination and consensus to establish it. One of the questions that need to be settled is whether lunar time should be set on the moon or synchronized with Earth.
- *What is the Moon's Time Zone?*
- Like the **GMT of the earth which has 24 different time zones, a moon time zone is the need of the moment. The earth time zone is divided into 24.** The difference between the consecutive zones of the earth is one hour and each time zone is 15 degrees wide.
- The zero time zone starts at Greenwich Meridian. Similarly, based on the rotations and revolutions of the moon, a time zone should be created for the moon. **This is referred to as the Moon Time Zone.**

MEDIUM RANGE SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE (MRSAM)

- On March 7 this year, the Indian Navy conducted a successful test-firing of a **Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) from INS Visakhapatnam**, a frontline warship.
- The successful test-firing validated the capability to use the **weapon as an anti-ship missile, demonstrating the Navy's preparedness** to safeguard its assets from attacks by adversary forces.
- The MRSAM was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The missile was produced at Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).
- The **MRSAM technology is an important milestone for India's indigenous defense industry** and is expected to enhance India's self-reliance in defense technology. The **Army and Air Force use different variants of missiles.**
- *What is MRSAM?*
- The missile can be used against any kind of airborne threat. This includes helicopters, combat jets, cruise missiles, aircraft, etc. **It was jointly developed by India and Israel.**



- It is a medium-range missile. Meaning, the range of the missile is between 1000 km and 3000 km. Most of the medium-range missiles developed by India including the MRSAM are theater ballistic missiles.

NASA's MULTI-ANGLE IMAGER FOR AEROSOLS (MAIA) MISSIONS

- **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Italian Space Agency (Agenzia Spaziale Italiana: ASI)** will build and launch the Multi-Angle Imager for Aerosols (MAIA) missions before 2024.
- The three-year mission will focus on 11 primary target areas including New Delhi from India. **MAIA is a satellite instrument that will collect data to examine the health effects of different types of air pollution.**
- It will use measurements of sunlight reflecting off airborne particles to **determine the abundance, size, chemical composition, and optical properties of pollutants in the atmosphere.** The data will be collected from sensors on the ground and atmospheric models. These results will then **be related to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, adverse reproductive outcomes, and human birth, death and hospitalization records** to understand impacts of contaminated air we breathe.
- The observatory **will consist of the PLATiNO-2 satellite, which ASI will provide.**
- The observatory's science instrument contains a pointable spectropolarimetric camera, which captures **digital images at multiple angles in the ultraviolet, visible, near-infrared and shortwave infrared portions of the electromagnetic spectrum.**



WHAT IS CHANDRAYAAN-3 SPACECRAFT?

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has achieved yet another milestone in its space exploration journey. The space agency announced that the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft has successfully completed crucial tests that confirm its capability to endure the **harsh acoustic and vibration conditions during its launch.**
- This significant accomplishment brings the mission one step closer to its scheduled launch in June 2023.



- **Chandrayaan-3** is India's third lunar exploration mission, following the Chandrayaan-1 in 2008 and the Chandrayaan-2 mission in 2019. The **primary objective of the Chandrayaan-3 mission is to demonstrate a soft landing on the lunar surface, which was not achieved in the Chandrayaan-2 mission.**
- The spacecraft will include a lander, rover, and propulsion module **that will act as a communication relay satellite.**
- The propulsion module will carry the lander and rover configuration to the 100 km lunar orbit. Once in lunar orbit, the lander and rover will detach from the propulsion module and make a soft landing on the lunar surface. The lander and rover will then carry out scientific experiments on the lunar surface.

MISCELLANEOUS

WORLD'S LONGEST RAILWAY PLATFORM IN HUBBALLI

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated **World's longest railway platform of 1.5 kilometers** at Sri Siddharoodha railway station in Hubballi in the state of Karnataka.
- The inauguration of the platform was done during the PM's Karnataka visit in the **presence of Union Minister Pralhad Joshi**.
- It is to be noted that **Indian Railways, South Western Railway Zones Hubli** is now registered in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the longest platform.
- *Gorakhpur platform slips to 2nd in the ranking:*
- Gorakhpur platform in **Uttar Pradesh** is the **second longest at 1,366.33 meters**, and **Kollam Junction in Kerala** has the **third longest platform** at 1,180.5 meters.
- Meanwhile, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** also inaugurated the **118-km long Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway**.
- This new project is expected to aid the social and economic growth in the region.
- The new e-way built at a cost of Rs 8,480 crore will reduce the travel time **between the cities from 3 hours to around 75 minutes**. Furthermore, the project entails widening NH 275 to six lanes along the **Bengaluru-Nidaghatta-Mysore stretch**.

GREEN & SELF-POWERED DESALINATION PLANT

- Recently, the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), an autonomous institute under the **Union Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** is establishing a Green and Self-powered Desalination Plant in Lakshadweep.
- The NIOT is working on an initiative to provide potable water in six islands of Lakshadweep using Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) technology. The NIOT is now trying to make this process emission-free.



- Currently, the desalination plants, each of which provides at least 100,000 liters of potable water every day, are powered by diesel generator sets.
- *What is the Green and Self-powered Desalination Plant?*
- The **proposed desalination plant will use a combination of renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and wave energy** to power the plant. The plant will be equipped with reverse osmosis (RO) technology to desalinate seawater and produce potable water.
- The NIOT plans to set up the plant in one of the islands, where there is a high potential for renewable energy generation.
- The plant is the first of its kind in the world as it will generate drinking water from sea water using indigenous technology, green energy and environmentally friendly processes and it is self-powered.

INDIA' BAN ON BLOOD DONATIONS BY GAY & TRANSGENDER

- In India, **gay and transgender individuals face discrimination in many forms**. One such discrimination is the ban on them donating blood.
- After a petition was filed to challenge this ban, the Indian government defended the exclusion by citing scientific evidence that **categorized the transgender and gay community in the “at-risk” group** for HIV, Hepatitis B, and C infections.
- The ban on gay and transgender people donating blood was **introduced in the 1980s when information on detecting and transmitting HIV/AIDS** was less advanced.
- At that time, people were not fully aware of the modes of transmission of the virus, **and there was no reliable test to detect HIV in blood donations**. The **fear of HIV transmission led to the exclusion of gay and transgender people** from donating blood in many countries, including India.
- The Indian government justifies the ban on scientific grounds, stating that the community is at a **higher risk of HIV, Hepatitis B, and C infections**.



- However, activists argue that the ban is discriminatory and violates the fundamental right to equality. They argue that the government's stand is based on outdated stereotypes and is not in line with the current medical knowledge of HIV transmission and prevention.

WHAT IS NET NEUTRALITY?

- The **Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)**, which represents **Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, and Reliance Jio**, the three major telecom operators in India, has been demanding that platforms such as YouTube and WhatsApp pay a share of revenue to make up for the network costs.
- This has reignited the debate around net neutrality.
- *What are the Arguments and Recent Developments on the Issue?*
- Telecom operators are demanding payment for enormous usage on their networks. **Telecom operators in the European Union** are also demanding similar usage fees from content providers.
- Content providers argue that imposing such a fee, even on a limited number of large players, **was a distortion of the internet's architecture.**
- In 2016, the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** ruled in favor of net neutrality. In 2018, the Department of Telecommunications embedded the net neutrality concept into the Unified Licence, whose conditions all telecom operators and internet providers are bound by.
- *What is Net Neutrality?*
- Net neutrality is the principle that all internet traffic should be treated equally, **without discrimination or preference given to any particular website, service, or application.**
- Net neutrality ensures that everyone has equal access to information and services on the internet, regardless of **their financial resources or the size and power of the websites they use.**
- It is an important principle that **helps to ensure a level playing field on the internet, and to protect the free flow of information and ideas.** Without net neutrality, **Internet Service Providers could potentially use their market power** to steer users towards certain websites and services, or to limit access to others.

WHAT IS INLAND WATER TRANSPORT (IWT)?

- Government intends to **increase the share of Inland Water Transport (IWT)** to 5% as per Maritime India Vision (MIV)-2030.
- *What is the IWT?*
- Inland water transport refers to the transportation of people, goods, and materials via waterways such as rivers, canals, lakes, **and other navigable bodies of water that are located within a country's boundaries.**
- IWT is the most economical mode of transportation, especially for **bulk cargo like coal, iron ore, cement, food grains and fertilizer**. Presently, it remains underutilized at a share of 2% in India's modal mix.
- *Socio-Economic Benefits of IWT:*
 - Cheaper **operating cost and relatively lesser fuel consumption**
 - Less polluting mode of transportation
 - Lesser requirement of land relative to other modes of transportation
 - **More environment friendly mode of transportation**
 - Moreover, waterways can be used for recreational purposes such as boating and fishing.

THE HINDU DAILY ARTICLES' ANALYSIS BY SUCCESS MANTRA SMART COACHING

In this competitive world, the demand for "authentic Current Affairs updates" from a reliable source has been increasing for the past few years, with the growth of awareness and aspirants' educational goals.

Keeping this in mind, Success Mantra Smart Coaching, via its YouTube Channel 'Success Mantra Digital', aims to make 'The Hindu Daily Articles Analysis' accessible to everyone and everywhere across the platform. It offers the latest important news with a minute update, especially for aspirants who are preparing for their dream entrance exams like CLAT, AILET, CUET, DU-LLB, MH-CET, IPU-CET, NCHM and many more.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHZTJwt8JFo&list=PLDrM_6OH0o1lcuxmRN-icOWj7UIhevklf

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