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15- 16 August 2024

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 **SAMYAK IAS, NEAR RIDDHI-SIDDHI, JAIPUR**

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Art and Culture

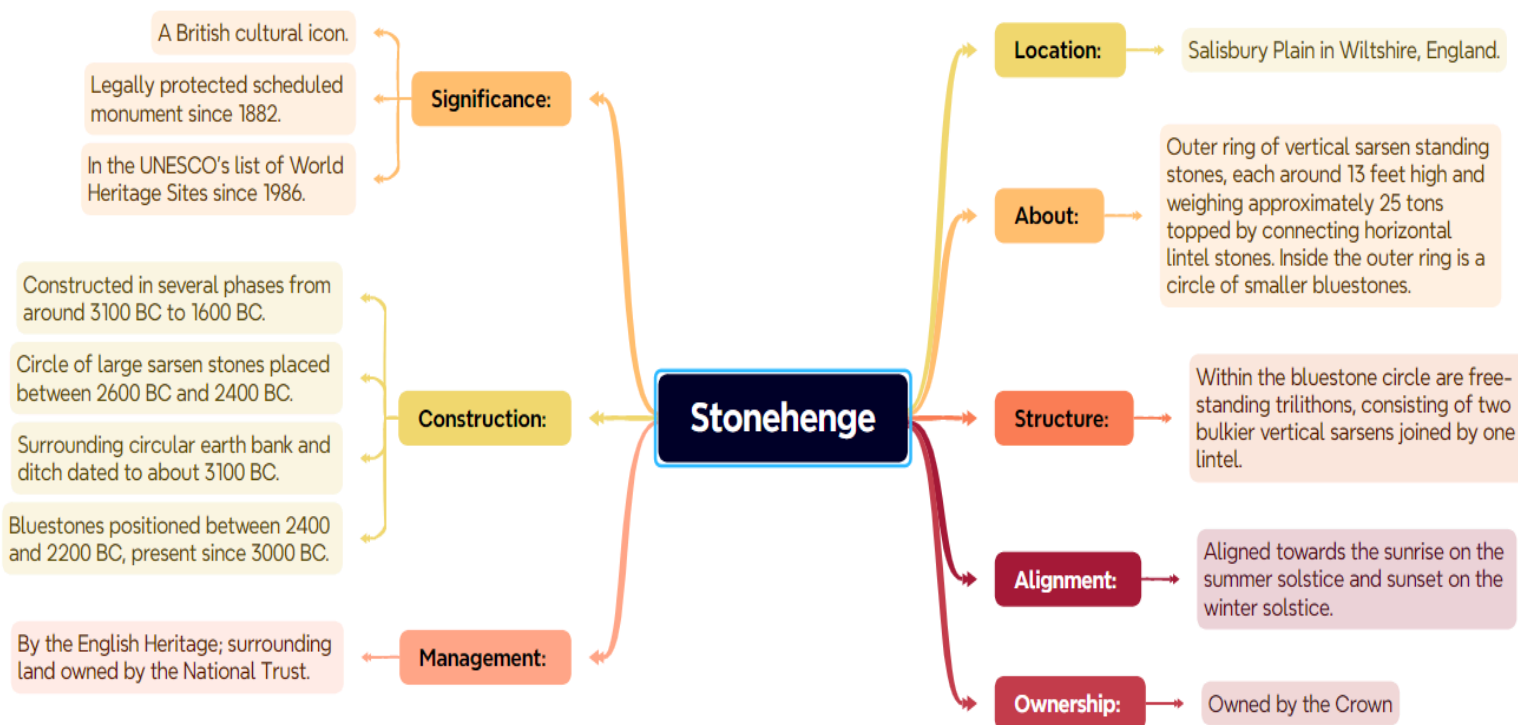
1. Stonehenge - Indian Express

Relevance: Indian Culture - Salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times

Context

New analysis has found that the over six-tonne Altar Stone partially buried at the heart of Stonehenge came from northern Scotland, not south-west Wales as previously thought.

Stonehenge (Prelims)



Geography

2. Somalia - The Hindu

Relevance: Salient features of World's Physical Geography

- **Location:** Situated in the Horn of Africa
- **Borders:**
 - **North:** Gulf of Aden
 - **East:** Indian Ocean
 - **West:** Kenya and Ethiopia
 - **Northwest:** Djibouti.
- **Capital:** Mogadishu (largest city).
- **Terrain:** Arid plains, plateaus, highlands, and mountain ranges.
- **Golis Mountains:** Northern part
- **Savannas and grasslands:** Southern region
- **Climate:** Arid to semi-arid climate with hot temperatures and limited rainfall but coastal areas have a moderate climate due to Indian Ocean.
- **Islands:** Bajuni Islands; Socotra Archipelago (administered by Yemen) including islands like Socotra, Abd al Kuri, and Samha.



With reference to 'Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)' sometimes mentioned in the news while forecasting Indian monsoon, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2017)

1. IOD phenomenon is characterised by a difference in sea surface temperature between tropical Western Indian Ocean and tropical Eastern Pacific Ocean.
2. An IOD phenomenon can influence an El Nino's impact on the monsoon.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Polity

3. PM's UCC pitch: Time for secular civil code, lived 75 yrs with communal one - Indian Express

Relevance: Parliament and State Legislatures

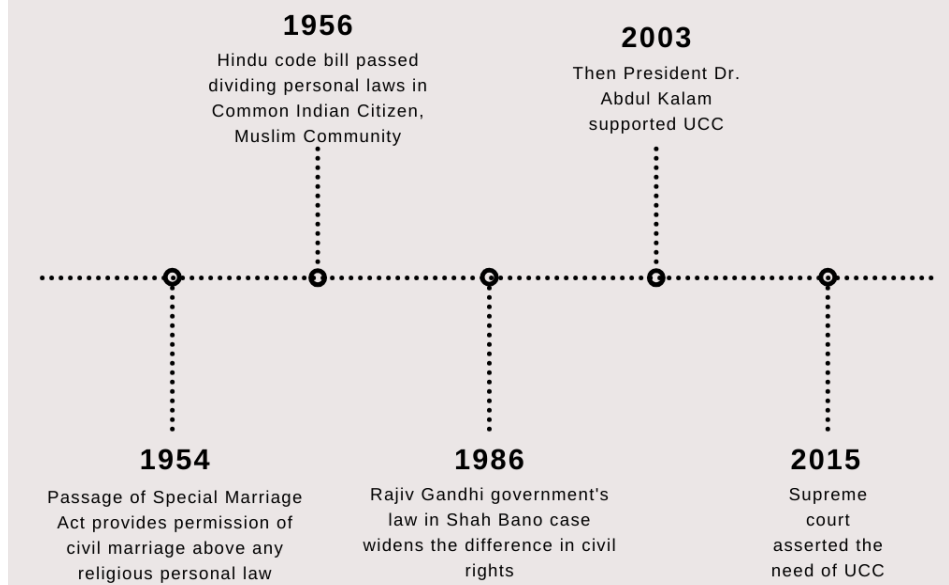
Context

Invoking the Constitution and the Supreme Court, the Indian Prime Minister made a strong pitch for the Uniform Civil Code, saying it's time the country moves towards a civil code that is "secular" and not "communal" and "discriminatory" as the existing one.

Uniform Civil Code (UCC) (Mains)

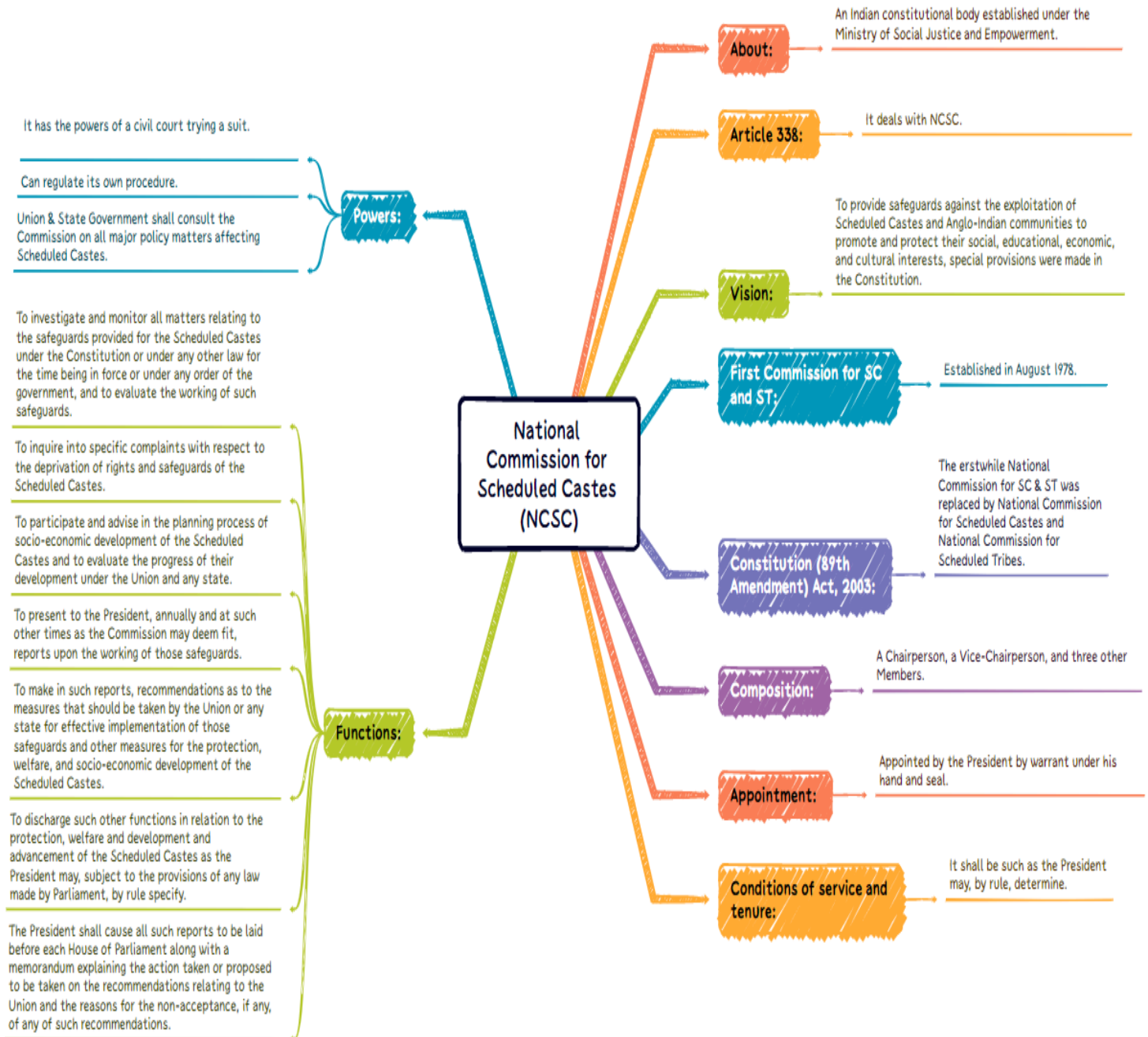


Timeline of UCC



4. National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) - The Hindu

Relevance: Functions and Responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies



5. Centre's guidelines for special assistance to states finalised, \$10K cr for land reforms - Indian Express

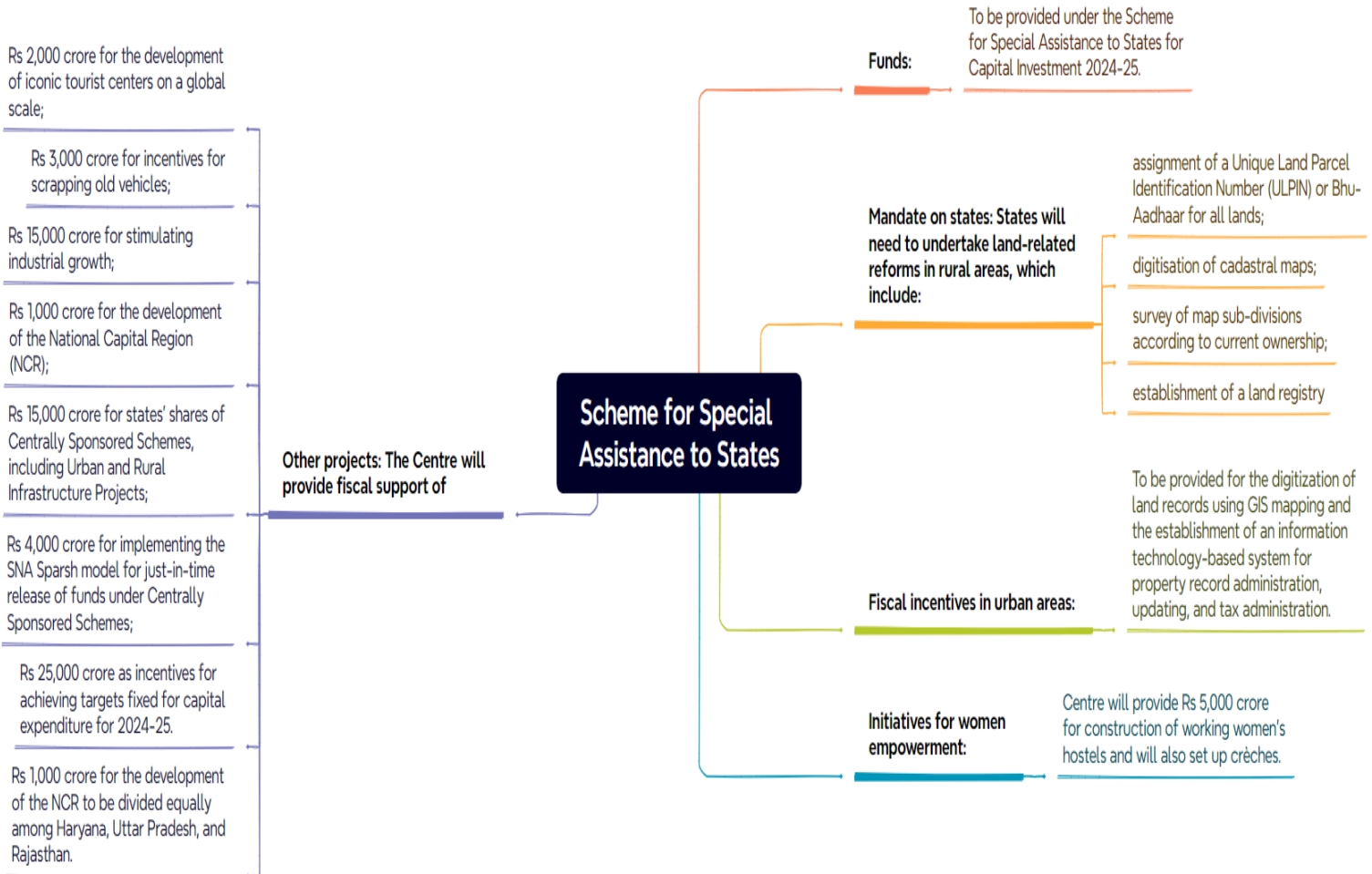
Relevance: Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure,

Devolution of Powers and Finances up to Local Levels and Challenges Therein

Context

The Centre has decided to provide states with Rs 10,000 crore in incentives for implementing land-related reforms in rural and urban areas, and Rs 5,000 crore for creating a Farmers' Registry during the financial year 2024-25 (FY25).

Scheme for Special Assistance to States (Mains Analysis)



6. Why govt has shelved draft Broadcast Bill - Indian Express

Relevance: Parliament and State Legislatures

Context

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting recently withdrew a fresh draft of the Broadcast Bill which it had privately circulated among a handful of industry stakeholders. The draft had triggered widespread criticism from several quarters.

Reasons for withdrawal of the bill (Mains Analysis)

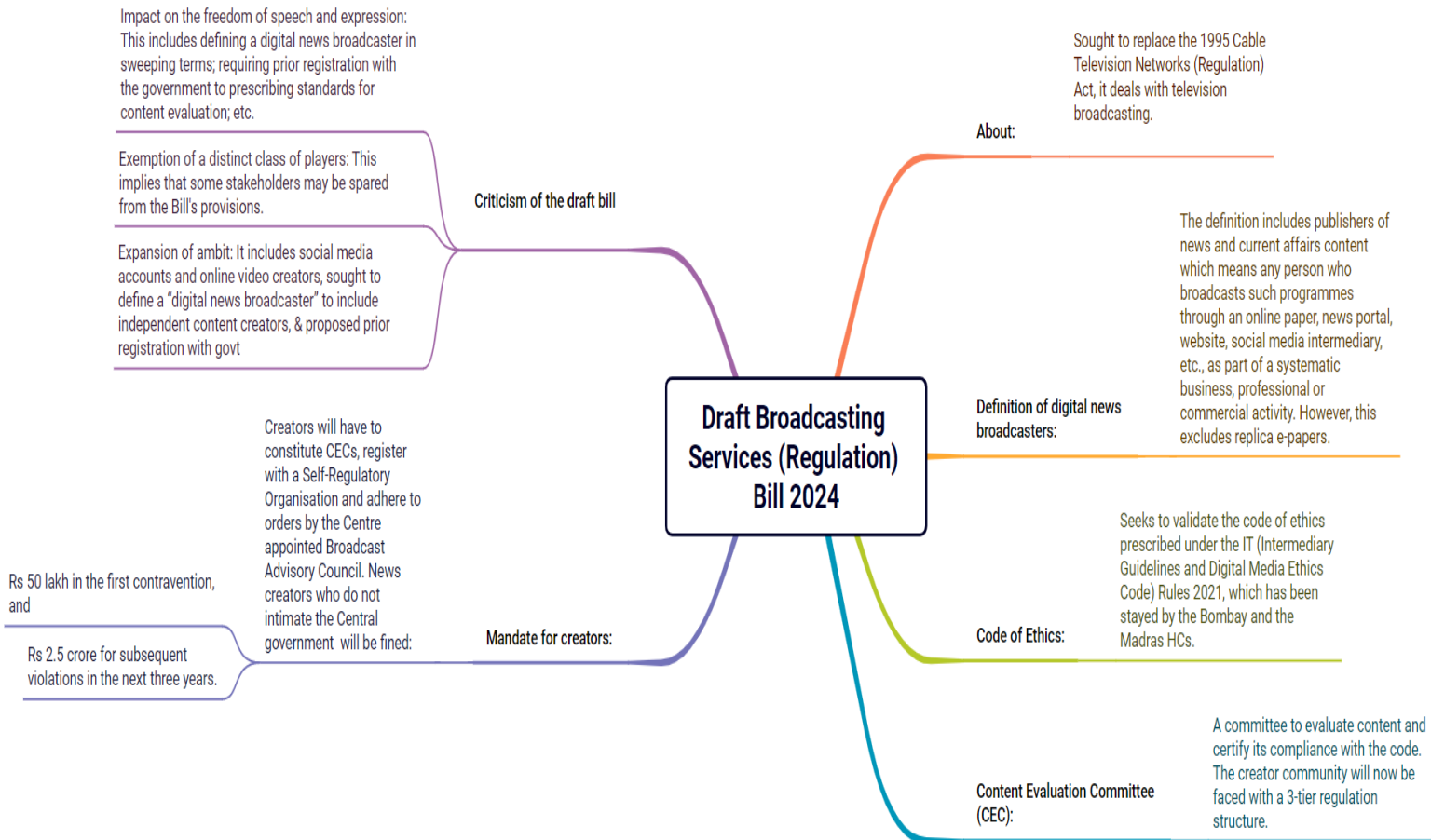
- **Difference of opinion within the ministry:** There were issues on whether the Bill should apply to non-news online content creators. As per the draft

Bill, such creators would have fallen under the category of OTT broadcasters.

Issues and confusion in the draft bill

- **No mention of the 2024 draft.**
- **Secretive nature of consultations that the government engaged in:** Consultations regarding the 2024 draft was held with only some industry bodies, telecom companies, and tech companies.

Draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill 2024



7. Why Delhi HC is hearing a plea against exclusion of IPC Sec 377 in BNS - Indian Express

Relevance: Structure, Organization and Functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary

Context

The Delhi High Court recently directed the Centre to clarify its stance on non-consensual sexual offences against LGBTQIA+ persons and men under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS). The new criminal law came into force on July 1, 2024, and replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC).

Concerns surrounding the removal of Section 377

Chapter V of the BNS:

It provides the definition and punishment for rape under Section 63. However, the language of the section is gendered – it only considers rape in the context of a man committing the crime against a woman.

Section 377:

It severely punished non-consensual intercourse "with any man, woman or animal". Offenders could be punished with imprisonment for life and a fine.

Provision in Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:

No provision for non-consensual sexual offence against male, female, transgender and for bestiality has been made.

Alternative protections under the BNS

Section 36: It provides every person with the "right of private defence" to protect their own body or the body of another person "against any offence affecting the human body". It also extends to protecting property from the offences of "theft, robbery, mischief or criminal trespass".

Section 38: It details the situations where this right allows the "voluntary causing of death or of any other harm to the assailant" which includes situations where a person is faced with "an assault with the intention of committing rape" or "an assault with the intention of gratifying unnatural lust".

Section 140: It punishes kidnapping or abduction where the victim is "subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery, or to the unnatural lust of any person". However, in both cases, "unnatural lust" has not been defined.



World Affairs

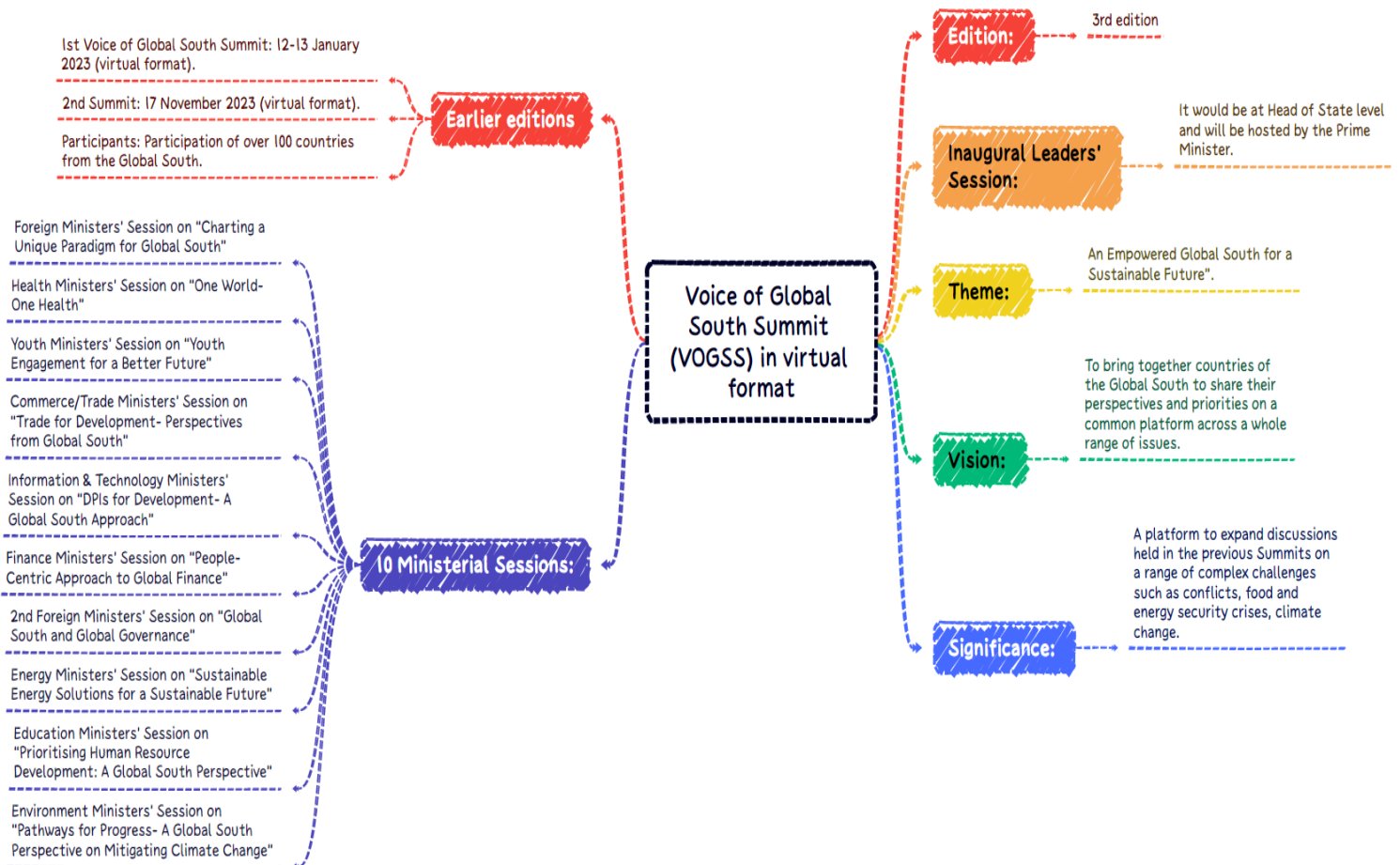
8. India to host third Voice of Global South virtual meet - The Hindu

Relevance: Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests

Context

India will host the third Voice of Global South Summit in the virtual format on August 17 with a view to pitch for a sustainable future for the developing countries.

Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS) in virtual format (Prelims)



Global South (Prelims)

- **About:** Encompasses diverse countries, drawing upon geopolitical, historical, and developmental factors. It broadly represents nations facing developmental challenges.
- **Major countries:**
 - **Countries in the northern hemisphere:** India, China and those in the northern half of Africa.

- **Countries in the southern hemisphere:** Australia and New Zealand.

Brandt Line

- **About:** Proposed by former German Chancellor Willy Brandt in the 1980s as a visual depiction of the north-south divide based upon per-capita GDP.
- **Symbolisation:** It signifies the global economic divide, zigzagging across continents, encompassing parts of Africa, the Middle East, India, and China, excluding Australia and New Zealand.



9. Al-Shabaab: growing from Somalia's ruins - The Hindu

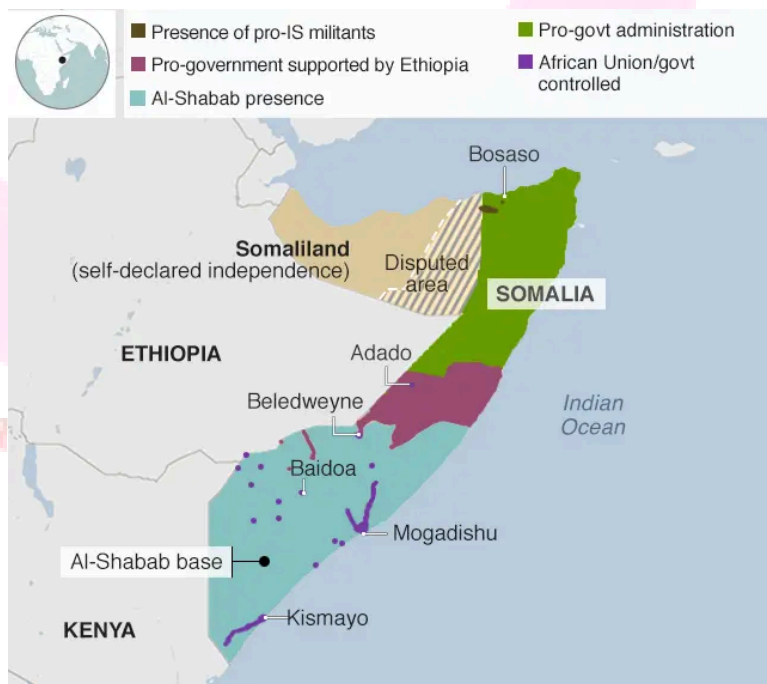
Relevance: Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora

Context

Recently, a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device at the entrance to the Beach View Hotel in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. Before the shock could abate, five attackers stormed the site and started shooting at civilians indiscriminately.

Al-Shabaab (Prelims)

- **Literal meaning:** 'The Youth' in Arabic.
- **Origin:** A militant group preaching the Salafist version of Islam, had spread its roots in Somalia by seizing Mogadishu in 2006.
- **Origin:** Traced back to the al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI), a militant group that gained prominence in the 1990s after the fall of Barre's regime.



- **Members:** Trained in West Asia and funded by the al-Qaeda.
- **Sanctions:** Banned by the United States and the United Kingdom.

Formation of Somalia (Mains Analysis)

- **7th - 19th century:** Somalia and neighbouring regions were ruled by a series of Sultanates, with Islam's Sunni subsect being the primary religion.
- **19th century:** Colonial powers arrived, and the region was shared between British, Italian and French forces.
- **1960:** The British and Italian forces withdrew from the northern and southern regions & the two regions came together and formed modern-day Somalia.
- **1960 -69:** Democracy prevailed for a brief time until 1969 when Siad Barre came to power through a military coup.
- **New administrative policy - 'scientific socialism':** Through it, Siad Barre nationalised banks and insurance companies, promoted literacy and strengthened ties with the Soviet Union.
- **1977:** The first signs of the authoritarian leader's downfall emerged with the Ogaden war that Somalia fought with Ethiopia in 1977.

Ogaden war/ Ethio-Somali War

- **Duration:** 12 July 1977 to 15 March 1978
- **Parties:** Ethiopia and Somalia
- **Reason for the war:** It was over the disputed region of Ogaden in which Ethiopia retaliated the Somalian invasion attempt of the region with the help mainly from Cuba and the USSR.
- **Consequence:** It resulted in the Ethiopian victory.

Economy

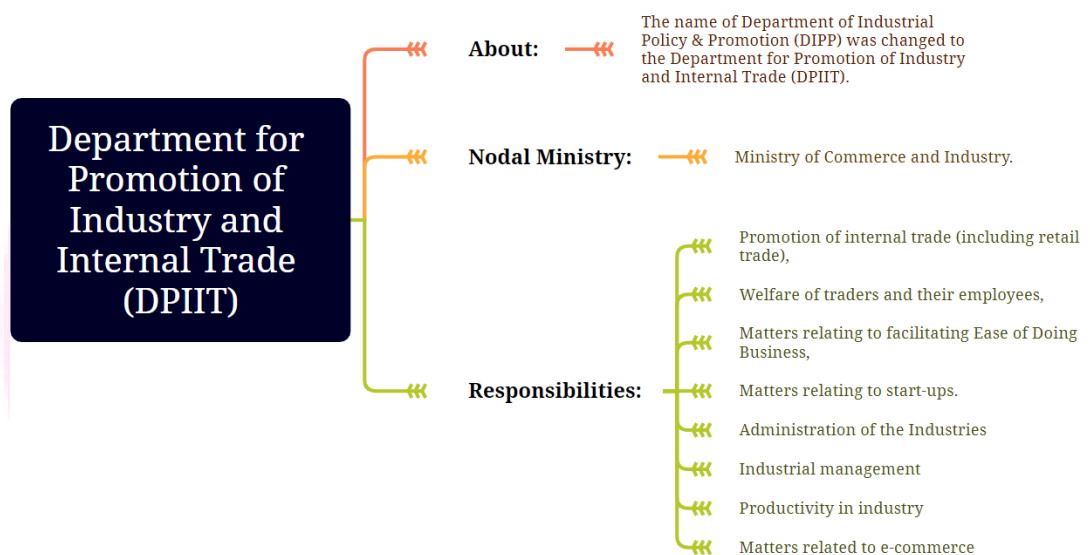
10. DPIIT 'relooking' curbs on Chinese investments - The Hindu

Relevance: Indian Economy

Context

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) may take a relook at the FDI restrictions currently imposed on China as part of its overall review of the country's FDI policy. Stakeholder consultations are still on and a final decision is yet to be taken, sources have said.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) (Prelims)



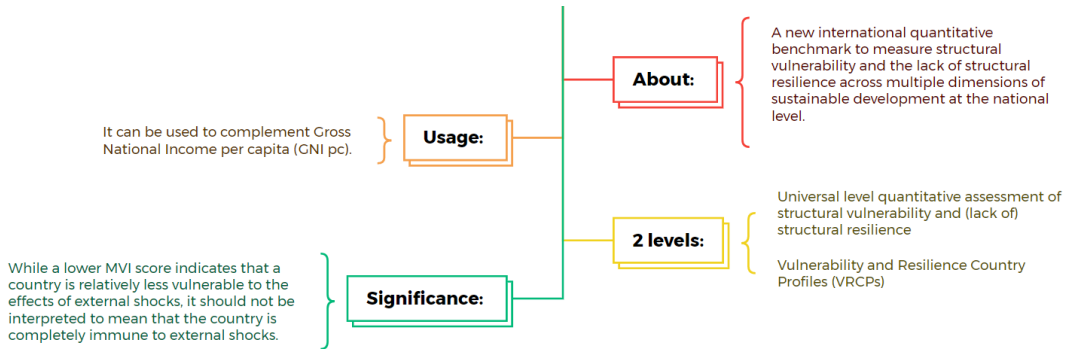
11. UN launches new way to measure nations' economic vulnerability - The Hindu

Relevance: Inclusive Growth and issues arising from it

Context

The UN General Assembly recently officially launched a new data-driven "vulnerability" index that would help small island states and developing nations gain access to low-interest financing.

Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) (Prelims)



12. PM- KUSUM - The Hindu

Relevance: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc

- **Launch:** 2019
- **About:** A scheme for de-dieselisation of the farm sector and enhancing the income of farmers.
- **Aim:** Adding Solar capacity of about 34,800 MW by March 2026 with the total Central Financial support of Rs 34,422 crore.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)
- **Provisions:**
 - A central government subsidy upto 30% or 50% of the total cost is given for the installation of standalone solar pumps and also for the solarization of existing grid-connected agricultural pumps.
 - Farmers can also install grid-connected solar power plants up to 2MW, under the Scheme on their barren/fallow land.
- **3 components:**

| Component A | Component B | Component C |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10,000 MW of solar capacity through the installation of small Solar Power Plants of individual plants of capacity up to 2 MW. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Installation of 20 lakhs of standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For Solarisation of 15 Lakh Grid Connected Agriculture Pumps. Under this Component, individual farmers having grid connected agriculture pump will be supported to solarise pumps. |

- **Eligible categories:**
 - An individual farmer.
 - A group of farmers.
 - FPO or Farmer producer organization.
 - Panchayat.
 - Co-operatives.
 - Water User Associations.

Environment

13. Three more Ramsar wetland sites now in India, taking total to 85 - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation

Context

The Environment Ministry recently said that three more wetlands in India have been designated 'Ramsar sites'. The three new sites are — the Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary; the Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu; and the Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh.

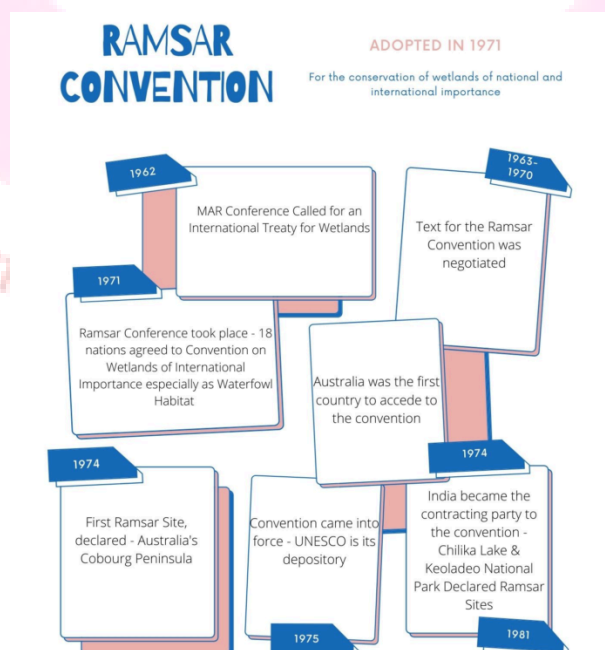
India's Ramsar wetlands (Prelims)

- **Area:** Comprise around 10% of the total wetland area in the country across 18 States.
- **Max. Ramsar sites:** The United Kingdom (175) and Mexico (142)
- **Largest area under Ramsar sites:** Bolivia with 148,000 sq. km. under the Convention's protection.
- **Largest Ramsar site in India:** Sundarbans in West Bengal.

Wetlands

- **About:** Areas where water is the primary factor controlling the environment and the associated plant and animal life.
- **Location:** They occur where the water table is at or near the surface of the land, or where the land is covered by water.
- **Definition:** Lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic eco-systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water.

Ramsar Convention / 'Convention on Wetlands'



Ramsar site

- **About:** A wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- **Ramsar recognition:** Identification of wetlands around the world, which are of international importance, especially if they provide habitat to waterfowl (about 180 species of birds).
- **Criteria to be a Ramsar Site: (Mains Analysis)**

Criterion 1:- The wetland must contain a representative, rare or unique example of natural or near natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.

Criterion 2:- The wetland must support vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.

Criterion 3:- The wetland must support populations of plant and or animal species important to maintain the biodiversity of a particular biogeographic region.

Criterion 4:- The wetland must support plant and or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

Criterion 5:- The wetland must support 20,000 or more waterbirds.

Criterion 6:- The wetland must regularly support 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.

Criterion 7:- The wetland must support a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies.

Criterion 8:- The wetland must be an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery.

Criterion 9:- The wetland must support 1% of the individuals in a population of one species of wetland dependent non-avian animal species.

If a wetland of international importance is brought under the 'Montreux Record', what does it imply? (2014)

- A. Changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur in the wetland as a result of human interference.
- B. The country in which the wetland is located should enact a law to prohibit any human activity within five kilometers from the edge of the wetland.
- C. The survival of the wetland depends on the cultural practices and traditions of certain communities living in its vicinity and therefore the cultural diversity therein should not be destroyed.
- D. It is given the status of 'World Heritage Site.'

14. Namdapha National Park and Tiger Reserve - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation

Context

- **Naming:** Namdapha is the name of a river originating in the park and it meets Noa-Dehing rive, a tributary of the Brahmaputra which flows in the middle of the National Park.
- **Climate:** Mountainous part has a mountain type of climate while the low-lying plains and valleys experience tropical climate.
- **Location:** Arunachal Pradesh
- **Coverage:** 1,985 sq km.

- **Location:** Situated near Indo-Myanmar-China trijunction between the Dapha bum range of the Mishmi Hills and the Patkai range.
- **Size:** Fourth largest national park in India after Hemis National Park in Ladakh, Desert National Park in Rajasthan, and Gangotri National Park in Uttarakhand.
- **Establishment:** 1983
- **Vegetation:** Tropical evergreen forests (Tropical Rain Forests)
- **Significance:**
 - The only park in the world to have the four Feline species of big cat - Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard and Clouded Leopard.
 - It is also famous for Critically Endangered species like the Namdapha flying squirrel.
 - Hoolock Gibbons, the only 'ape' species found in India is found in this National Park.



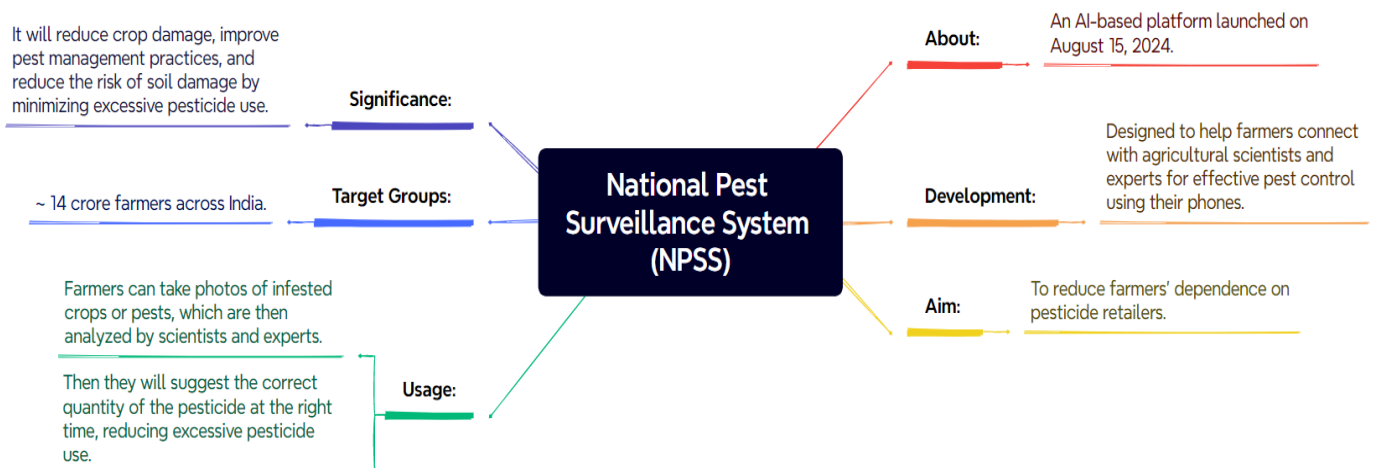
15. Centre launches new AI-based surveillance system to manage pests - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation

Context

The Union Government recently launched the AI-based National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) that will help farmers to connect with agriculture scientists and experts on controlling pests using their phone.

National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) (Prelims)



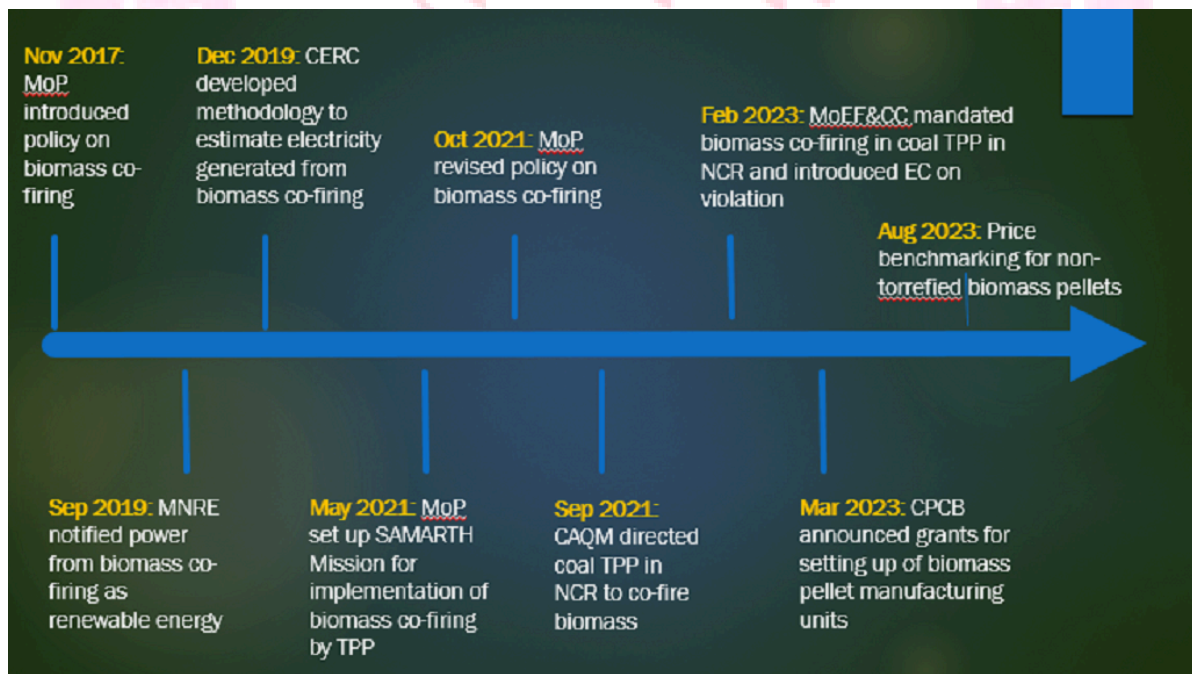
Sci and Tech

16. Biomass co-firing - Indian Express

Relevance: Science and Technology

- **About:** The practice of substituting a part of the fuel with biomass at coal thermal plants.
- **Mechanism:** Coal and biomass are combusted together in boilers that have been designed to burn coal. For this, the existing coal power plant has to be partly reconstructed and retrofitted.
- **Significance:**
 - A globally accepted cost-effective method for decarbonising a coal fleet.
 - An effective way to curb emissions from open burning of crop residue.
 - Decarbonises the process of electricity generation using coal.
- **Challenges:**
 - Existing infrastructure is not robust enough yet.
 - Seasonal availability and unreliable supply of biomass pellets to the utility.
 - Storing biomass pellets for long durations at the plant sites.

Development of biomass- cofiring (Mains Analysis)



17. Californium - Indian Express

Relevance: Science and Technology- Developments

- **About:** A silvery-white synthetic radioactive metal (very strong neutron emitter) with the atomic number 98 on the periodic table.
- **Development:** First made in 1950 at Berkeley, California
- **Usage:** In portable metal detectors for identifying gold and silver ores, to help identify water and oil layers in oil wells, and detect metal fatigue and stress in aeroplanes.
- **Cost:** It is highly radioactive and prohibitively expensive, with one gram costing Rs 17 crore in the international market.

18. Why latest mpox outbreak is 'emergency of international concern' - Indian Express

Relevance: Science and Technology- Developments

Context

The World Health Organisation, sounding its highest level of alarm, declared mpox as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern recently. This is the second time the infection has received the designation in as many years — the outbreak between July 2022 and May 2023 was also declared as PHEIC.

Monkeypox (Prelims)

Monkeypox is a viral zoonosis (a virus transmitted to humans from animals) with symptoms very similar to those seen in the past in smallpox patients, although it is clinically less severe. It occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa and is occasionally found in other regions.



SYMPTOMS

- Patients typically contract fever and also get rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications.
- It is usually a self-limited disease with the symptoms lasting from 2 to 4 weeks.

DIAGNOSIS

- The clinical differential diagnosis that must be considered includes other rash illnesses, such as chickenpox, measles, bacterial skin infections, scabies, syphilis, and medication-associated allergies.

OUTBREAK ACROSS THE WORLD



HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

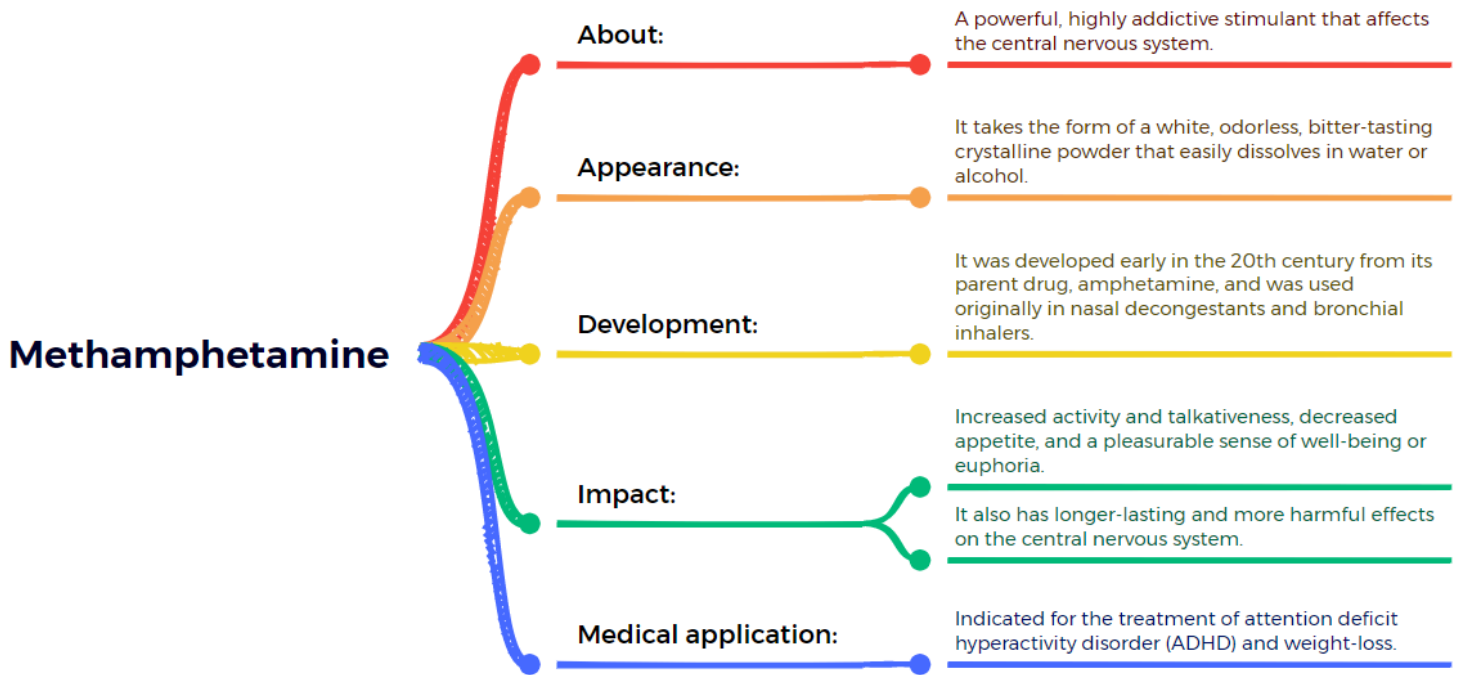
- Monkeypox is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material contaminated with the virus.
- The virus is transmitted from one person to another by close contact with lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets and contaminated materials, such as bedding.

IS THERE A VACCINE?

- Vaccines for smallpox eradication also provide protection against monkeypox.
- Newer vaccines have been developed of which one has been approved for monkeypox.
- An antiviral agent developed for the treatment for smallpox has also been licensed monkeypox.

19. Methamphetamine - Indian Express

Relevance: Science and Technology- Developments

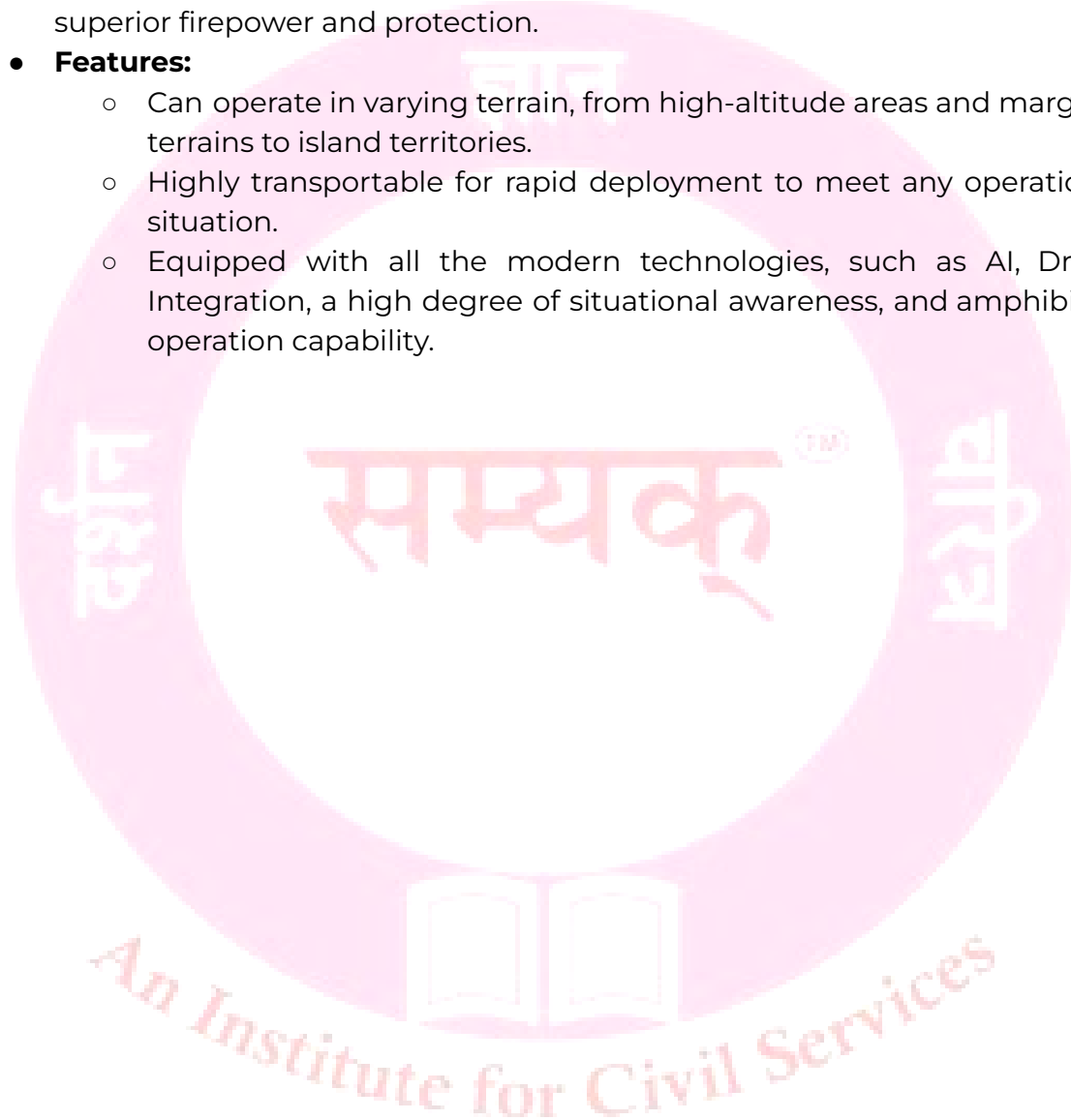


Defence

20. Zorawar Light Tank - Indian Express

Relevance: Indigenization of Technology and Developing New Technology

- **About:** An indigenously designed and developed Light Tank developed by the DRDO in collaboration with Larsen & Toubro Limited.
- **Weight:** Less than 25 tonnes with a high power-to-weight ratio as well as superior firepower and protection.
- **Features:**
 - Can operate in varying terrain, from high-altitude areas and marginal terrains to island territories.
 - Highly transportable for rapid deployment to meet any operational situation.
 - Equipped with all the modern technologies, such as AI, Drone Integration, a high degree of situational awareness, and amphibious operation capability.



Miscellaneous

21. Phase 3 clinical trial opens for indigenous dengue vaccine - The Hindu

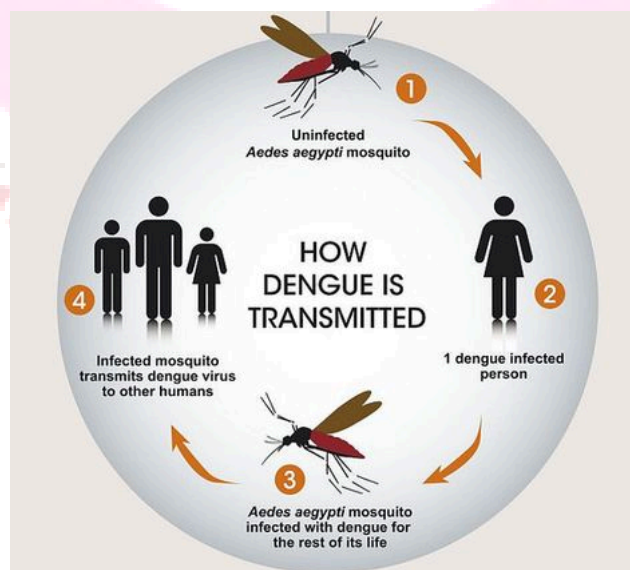
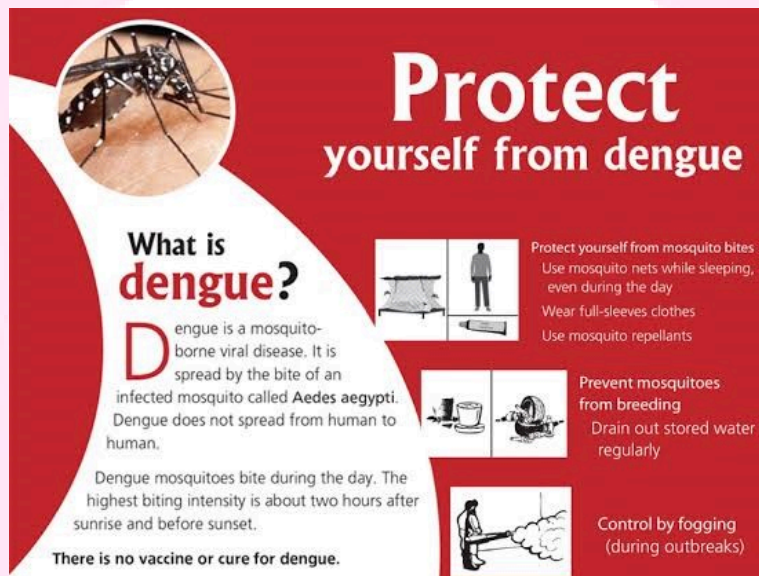
Context

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Panacea Biotec Limited recently announced the initiation of the first ever phase 3 clinical trial for a dengue vaccine in India.

DengiAll

- **Development:** Panacea Biotec.
- **About:** India's indigenous tetravalent dengue vaccine
- **Vaccine status in India:** Currently, there is no antiviral treatment or licensed vaccine against dengue in India.

Dengue



22. International Military- Technical Forum “Army - 2024” - Indian Express

- **About:** Organised from 12- 14 of August 2024, at Patriot Expo, Kubinka Air Base and Alabino military training grounds.
- **Organizer:** Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

