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28-29 July 2024

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

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Art and Culture

1. GAZA'S TELL UMM AMER NOW A WORLD HERITAGE SITE: WHY THIS MATTERS - Indian Express

Context

The World Heritage Committee (WHC) recently decided to include the Palestinian site of Tell Umm Amer in both the UNESCO World Heritage Site List and the Lost of World Heritage in Danger during its 46th session in New Delhi.

Tell Umm Amer



It opens the door to enhanced international technical & financial assistance mechanisms to guarantee protection of property & to help facilitate its rehabilitation.

Significance of inclusion on list of World Heritage in Danger:

The monastery was likely abandoned after a seventh century earthquake, only to be uncovered by local archaeologists in 1999.

Excavation:

The ruins comprise "five successive churches, bath and sanctuary complexes, geometric mosaics, and an expansive crypt" making the monastery "one of the largest in the Middle East".

Components:

Other name:

'Monastery of Saint Hilarion'

Location:

Gaza Strip - situated on the coastal dunes of the Nuseirat Municipality, just 10 km south of Gaza city.

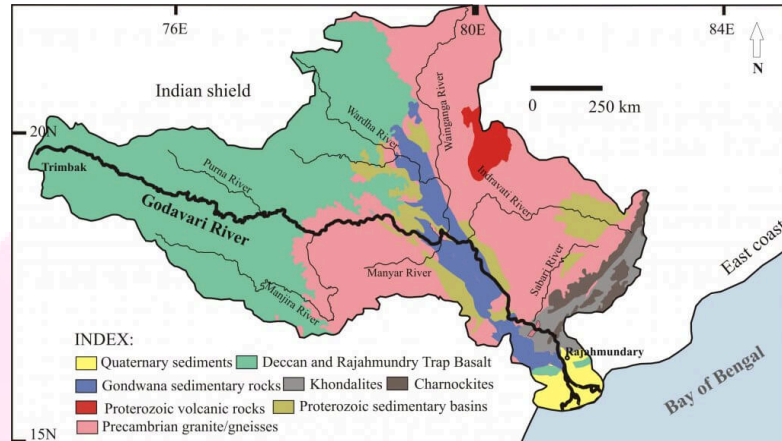
Establishment:

The ancient Christian monastery was founded in 4th century by Hilarion the Great (291-371 CE) - the father of Palestinian monasticism.

Tell Umm Amer

Geography

2. Godavari/ Dakshin Ganga - The Hindu



Polavaram Irrigation Project

Kaleshwaram

Sadarmatt Anicut

Inchampalli project

Sriram Sagar Project (SRSP)

Projects on Godavari:

Nashik and Aurangabad

Industries:

Nagpur, Aurangabad, Nashik, Rajahmundry.

Urban Centers:

Kumbh Mela takes place on the banks of the Godavari River in Nashik.

Cultural Significance:

Pravara, Manjira and Maner.

Right bank tributaries:

Tributaries:

Purna, Pranhita, Indravathi and Sabari

Left bank tributaries:

About: The largest Peninsular River system.

Boundaries:

North - Satmala hills

South - Ajanta range and the Mahadeo hills

East - Eastern Ghats

West - Western Ghats

Origin:

Trimbakeshwar near Nashik in Maharashtra

Length:

1465 km

Outflow:

Bay of Bengal.

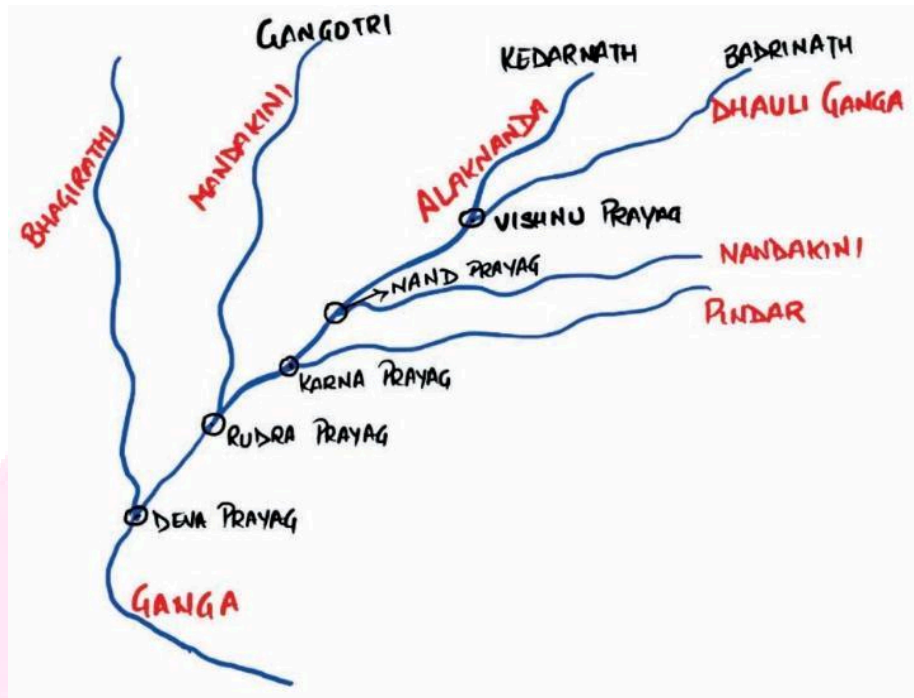
Drainage Basin:

Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha & smaller parts in MP, Karnataka & UT of Puducherry.

Godavari

3. Mandakini River - The Hindu

- **About:** A tributary of the Alaknanda River in Uttarakhand.
- **Length:** The river runs for approximately 81 kilometers between the Rudraprayag and Sonprayag areas
- **Origin:** Chorabari Glacier.
- **Confluence:** It merges with river Songanga at Sonprayag and flows past the Madhyamaheshwar temple at Ukhimath.
- **Mouth:** At the end of its course it drains into the Alaknanda, which flows into the Ganges.



Society

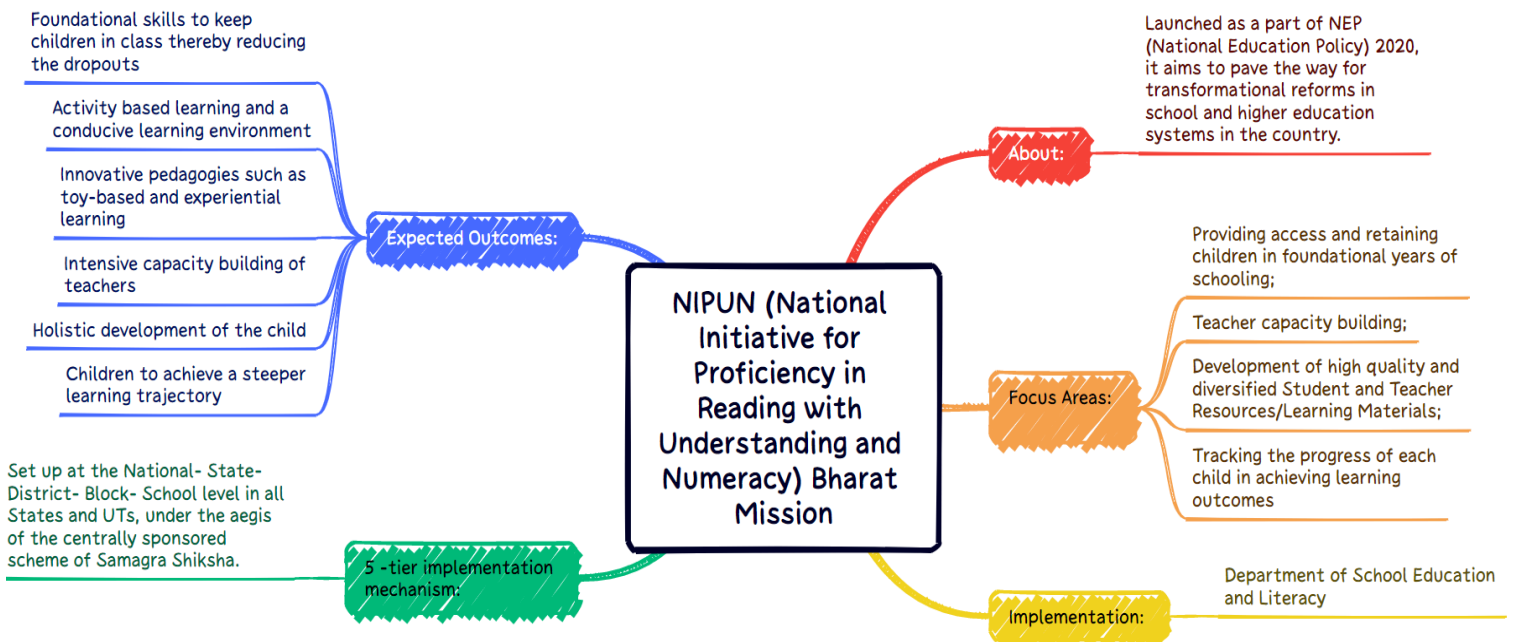
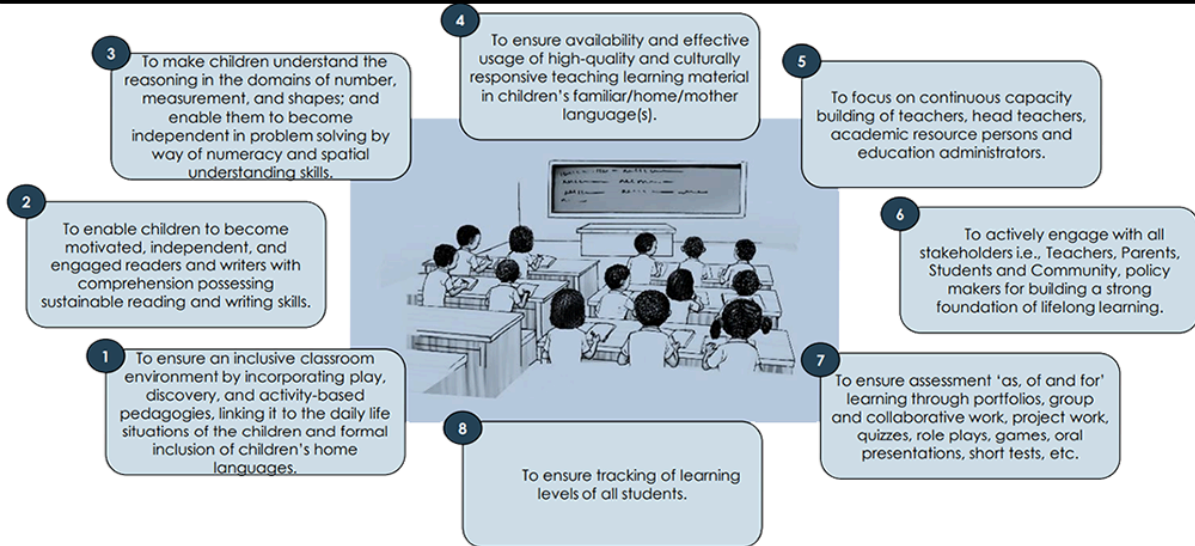
4. How educated mothers of young kids can be asset for NIPUN - Indian Express

Context

The new National Education Policy (NEP 2020) was launched four years ago. One of NEP 2020's key recommendations was to ensure that by the time children reach Grade 3, they have acquired foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat Mission

Objectives of the Mission



Polity

5. On reservations and the OBC creamy layer - The Hindu

Context

The allotment of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) to Puja Khedkar as an Other Backward Class (OBC) Non-Creamy Layer (NCL) candidate coupled with multiple disabilities has raised issues surrounding the creamy layer in OBC reservation.

History of reservation

- **Articles 15 and 16:** They guarantee equality to all citizens in any policy of the government and public employment respectively.
- **Current quota:** Reservations for SC and ST are fixed at 15% and 7.5% respectively, in jobs, educational institutions and PSUs at the central level.
- **OBC quota:** It was in 1990, when V. P. Singh was Prime Minister, that 27% reservation for OBC was implemented in central government employment based on Mandal Commission (1980) recommendations.
- **EWS quota:** In 2019, 10% reservation was enabled for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the unreserved category.
- **Identifying a person as part of the OBC creamy layer:** Based on the recommendations of the Justice Ram Nandan Prasad Committee (1993).

Criteria

- **Parental income,** excluding income from salary and agricultural income, being more than ₹8 lakh in each year in the last three consecutive financial years.
- **Other categories of applicants are also considered as belonging to creamy layer :**
 - parents, either of whom entered government service (centre or State) as Group A/Class I officer or parents, both of whom entered as Group B/Class II officers or father, who was recruited in Group B/Class II post and promoted to Group A/Class I before 40 years of age;
 - either of the parents employed in a managerial position in PSUs; (c) either of the parents holding constitutional posts.

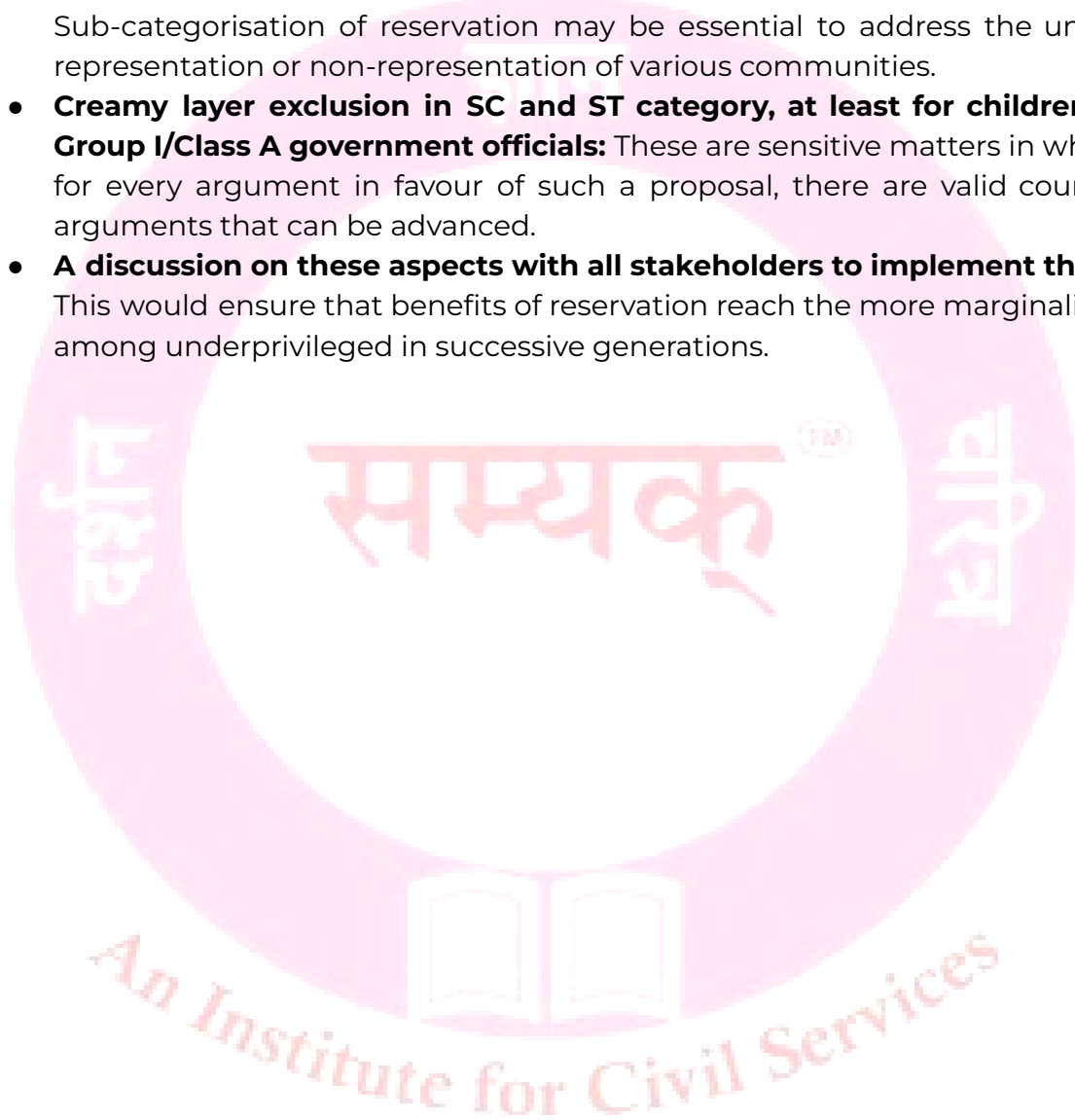
Issues

- **Inadequacies in the process:** There are allegations that some applicants manage to obtain NCL or EWS certificate through dubious means.
- **Issues with respect to disability certificates:** To take benefit of the 4% of seats reserved for persons with disabilities in central government jobs.
- **Allegations of applicants & their parents adopting strategies to get around the creamy layer exclusion:** Gifting of assets, taking premature retirement etc., since the applicant's or his/her spouse's income is not considered for such exclusion.
- **Concentration of reservation benefits:** Rohini Commission set up for providing recommendation on sub-categorisation among OBC castes, has

estimated that 97% of reserved jobs & seats in educational institutions have been garnered by just around 25% of the OBC castes/sub-castes at the central level.

Way forward

- **Plugging the loopholes in the issue of NCL, EWS and disability certificates:** There must be thorough scrutiny to ensure that only eligible applicants obtain these benefits.
- **Vacancies for reserved communities to be filled without backlogs:** Sub-categorisation of reservation may be essential to address the under representation or non-representation of various communities.
- **Creamy layer exclusion in SC and ST category, at least for children of Group I/Class A government officials:** These are sensitive matters in which for every argument in favour of such a proposal, there are valid counter arguments that can be advanced.
- **A discussion on these aspects with all stakeholders to implement them:** This would ensure that benefits of reservation reach the more marginalised among underprivileged in successive generations.



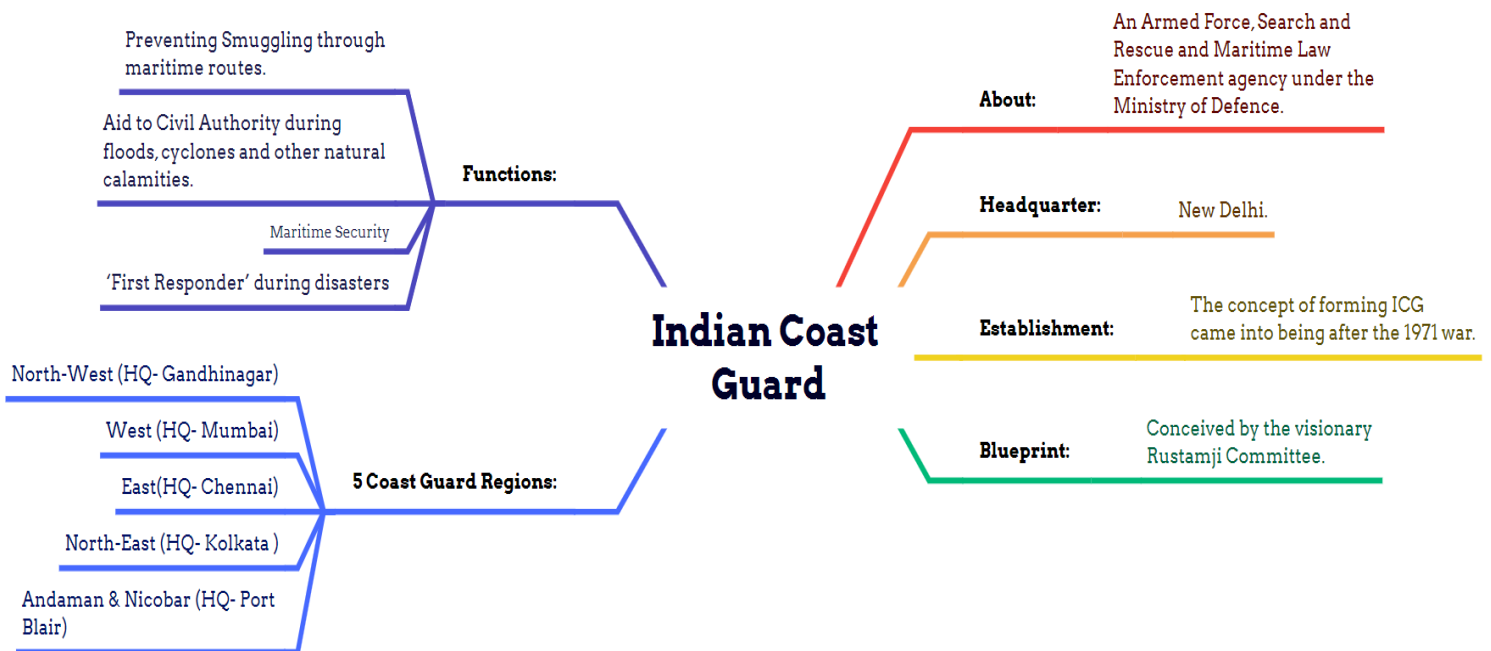
Economy

6. Cargo carrier structurally stable and operational after fire: Coast Guard - The Hindu

Context

The Indian Coast Guard has deployed five ships, two helicopters and one Dornier aircraft for rescue operations over 10 days after MV Maersk Frankfurt, a Panamanian flag cargo carrier, reported a major fire on July 19.

Indian Coast Guard

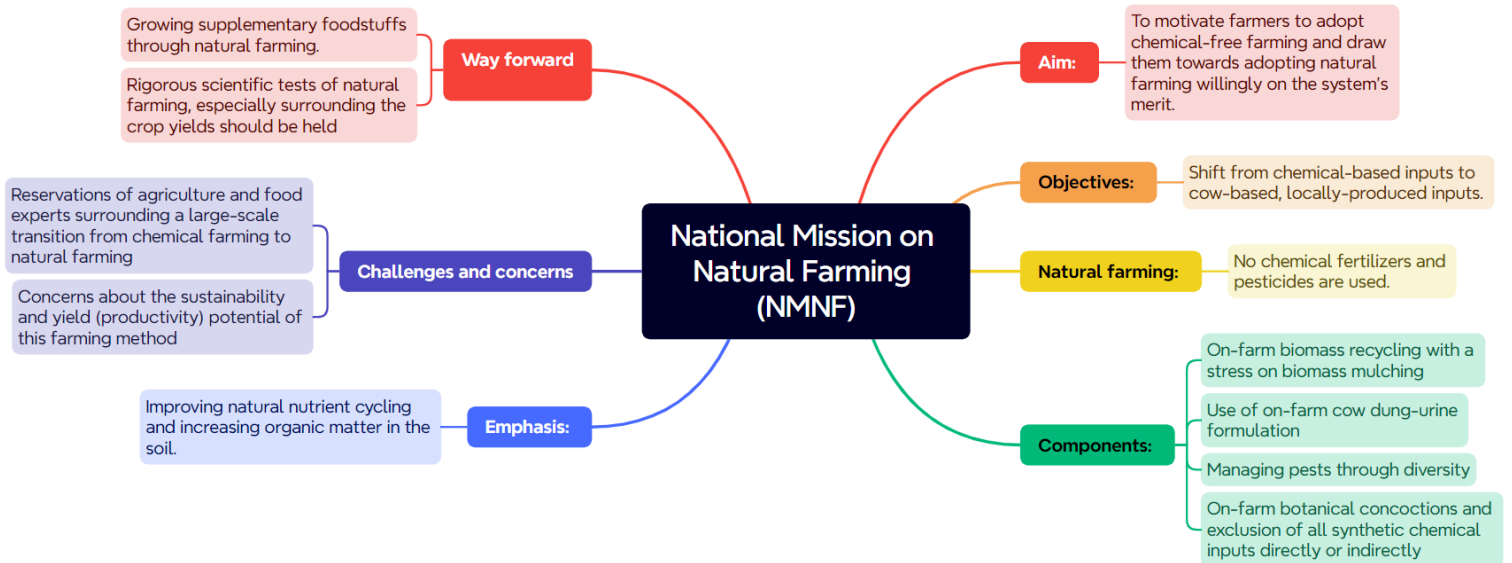


7. Should India focus on natural farming? - The Hindu

Context

In her Budget proposals for 2024-25, Union Finance Minister recently announced that in the next two years, 1 crore farmers across the country will be initiated into natural farming supported by certification and branding.

National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)



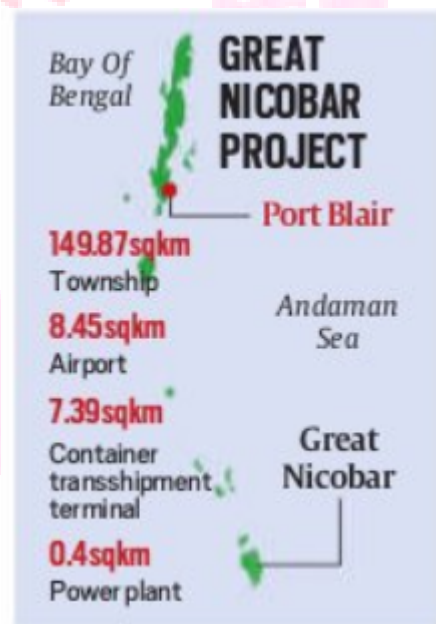
8. Nicobar port plan: Flagged in no-go zone earlier, now in permitted area - Indian Express

Context

A high-powered committee (HPC), appointed by the NGT and tasked with revisiting the green clearance for the Great Nicobar infrastructure project, has concluded that a proposed transshipment port does not fall in the Island Coastal Regulation Zone-IA (ICRZ-IA), where ports are prohibited, but is in ICRZ-IB where these are permitted.

Great Nicobar Island Project

- **About:** A mega project to be implemented at the southern end of the Andaman and Nicobar islands.
- **Components:** International container transshipment terminal, a greenfield international airport, township development, and a 450 MVA gas and solar based power plant over an extent of 16,610 hectares in the island.

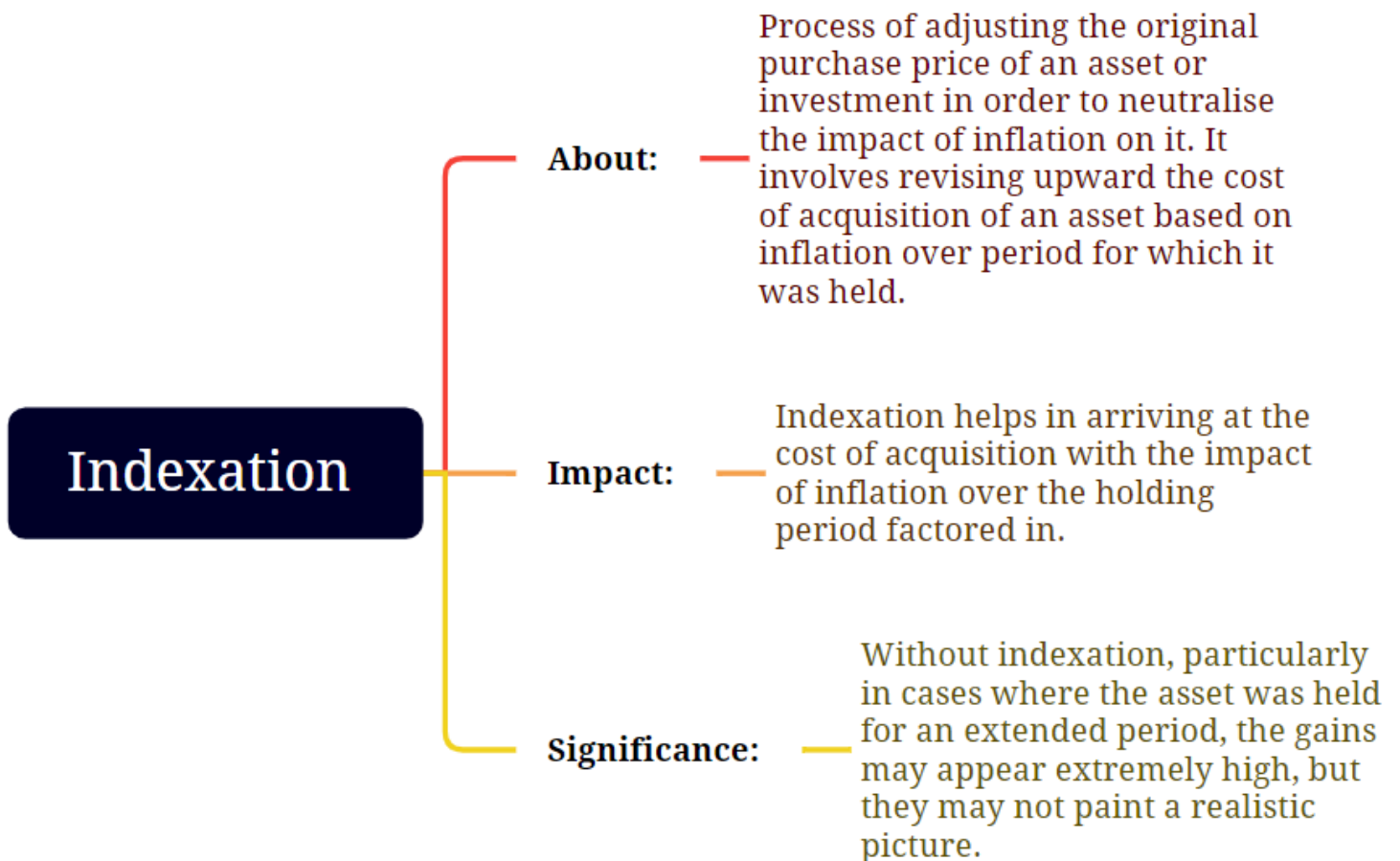


9. LTCCG taxation: Withdrawal of indexation benefit, and the slugfest over it - Indian Express

Context

The changes in the long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax regime, particularly the withdrawal of the indexation benefit, has emerged as one of the most contentious decisions announced in the Union Budget for 2024-25. The announcement initially led to confusion and trepidation among various sections, prompting the government to issue a string of clarifications and explanations, claiming that it will be beneficial in most cases.

Indexation



Capital gains tax

- **About:** A tax imposed on the sale of an asset calculated as the difference between the sale price of the property and its purchase price.
- **Types:** Short-term Capital Gains and Long-term Capital Gains.

10. Private sector owns over 52% of installed power generation capacity in the country - Indian Express

Private sector owns over 52% of installed power generation capacity in the country

Private sector owns over 52% of the total installed power generation capacity of 446GW in the country, playing an important role in the sector, Parliament was recently informed

4,46,190 MW

Total installed capacity in the country as on June 30, 2024

2,34,065 MW

Approximate contribution of the private sector, i.e. 52.5% of the total

"Generation is a de-licensed activity as per the Electricity Act, 2003 and 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the power sector in India is permitted for generation from all sources (except atomic energy)," Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik said in a written reply in Lok Sabha



In another reply to the House, the Minister said that with the rapid expansion & growth of the Indian economy, the demand of electricity is also witnessing an unprecedented growth

9% growth in electricity demand in India for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23

Total emissions have increased commensurate with the increase in generation of electricity. However, due to the increasing share of renewable energy, the carbon intensity of the grid is reducing

9% decrease in average carbon emission factor of the grid electricity in India from 2013-14 to 2022-23

In order to meet estimated demand by 2031-32, generation planning studies have been carried out by Central Electricity Authority

Source: PTI

Environment

11. Central body urges southern States to intensify energy efficiency efforts - The Hindu


Context


The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) urged the State Designated Agencies (SDAs) of all southern States, particularly the proactive ones like Andhra Pradesh (A.P.), to intensify their focus on energy efficiency and Mission LiFE in order to realise the immense potential for attracting global investments in key sectors such as industry, urban development, agriculture and building.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)

- **Establishment:** 2002 under the provisions of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- **Objective:** To reduce energy intensity in the Indian economy.
- **Functions:**
 - Develop minimum energy performance standards for equipment and appliances under Standards and Labelling
 - Develop minimum energy performance standards for Commercial Buildings
 - Develop Energy Consumption Norms for Designated Consumers
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Power

Bureau of Energy Efficiency



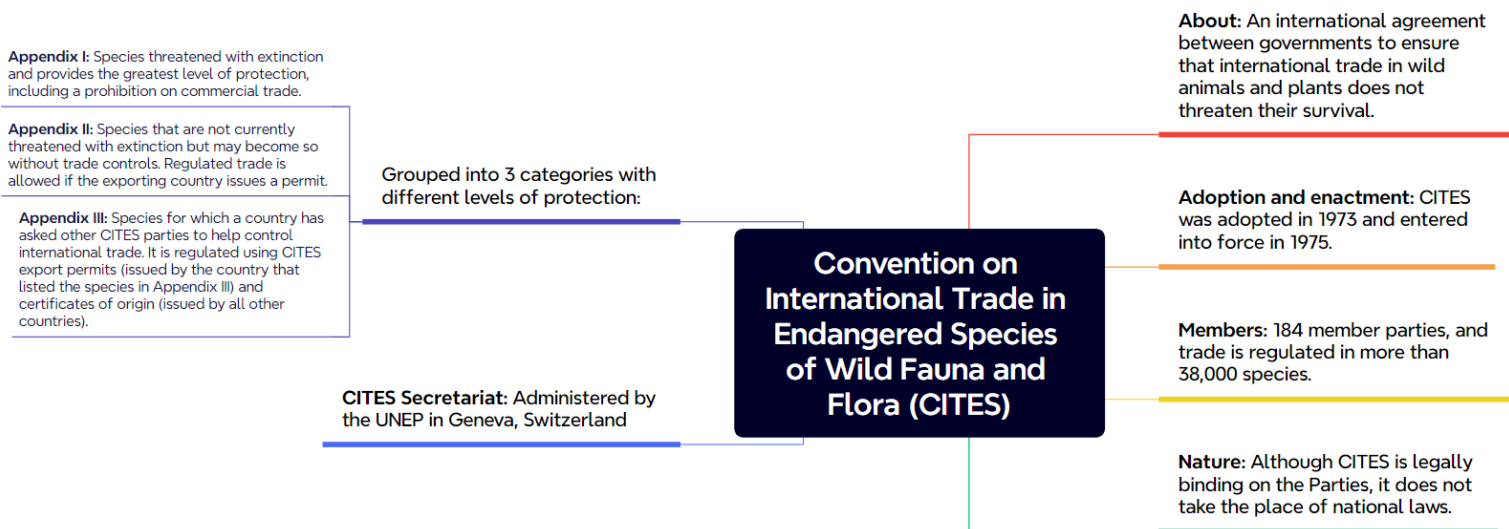
<p>Energy Conservation (EC) Act 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Norms for Energy Intensive Industries• Standard & Labeling• Energy Conservation Building Code• Demand Side Management• Certification of Energy Professionals		<p>BEE Established on 1st March 2002 under EC Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement regulatory and promotional functions of EC Act.• Reduce Energy Intensity of our country• Has State Designated Agencies in each state for enforcement and awareness
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12. CITES eases norms for agarwood export; move to benefit lakhs of farmers from the Northeast - The Hindu

Context

India has successfully prevented inclusion of *Aquilaria malaccensis* (agarwood) in the Review of Significant Trade (RST) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The CITES also notified a new export quota of highly valuable and aromatic resinous wood and oil of *Aquilaria malaccensis* (agarwood) from India from April 2024.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)



Aquilaria malaccensis (agarwood)

- **About:** A large evergreen tree about 20 meters tall and 1.5–2.4 meters in girth with somewhat straight and fluted bole.
- **Use:** Used as fragrant and in preparation of drugs.
- **Floral Characteristics:** Flowers are white in colour, bisexual.
- **Distribution:** Bengal and North-Eastern States of India namely Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland.
- **Climate:** A tropical tree which grows over high rainfall tract throughout humid regions.
- **Soil:** It grows over sandy loam and slightly acidic soils.

13. Surprising 'dark oxygen' discovery could ensnarl deep-sea mining - The Hindu

Context

An unknown process is producing oxygen deep in the world's oceans, where it is too dark for photosynthesis, scientists reported on July 22 in the journal Nature

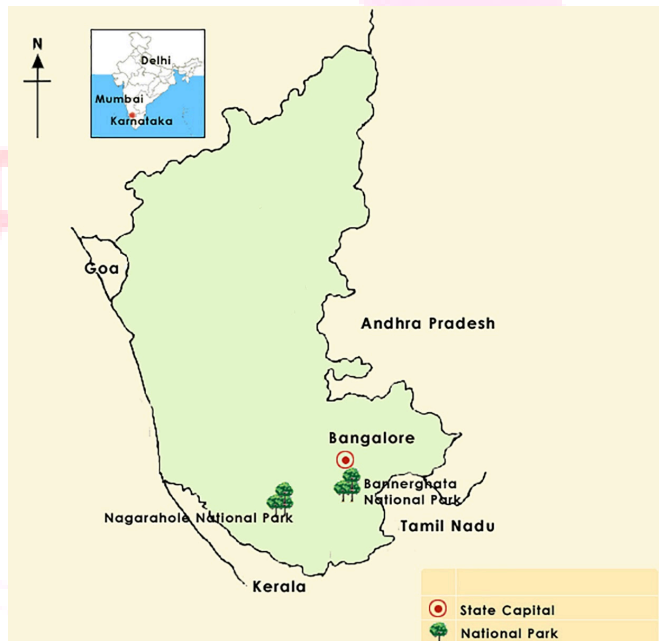
Geoscience. The finding has important implications because oxygen helps support life and the discovery implies the existence of previously unknown ecosystems.

Dark Oxygen

- **About:** Oxygen being produced in complete darkness thousands of feet below the ocean surface is termed dark oxygen.
- **Production:** The oxygen comes out of Polymetallic nodules (PMN) made up of metals like manganese, iron, cobalt, nickel, copper, and lithium which can generate oxygen through electrochemical activity without light.
- **Mechanism:** PMN H₂O molecules into hydrogen and oxygen.

14. Bannerghatta Biological Park - The Hindu

- **Location:** Near Bangalore, Karnataka, in the hills of the Anekal range.
- **Designation:** It was declared as a National Park in 1974.
- **Significance:** In 2002 a portion of the park became a biological reserve, the Bannerghatta Biological Park. It is the first biological park in India to have a fenced forested elephant sanctuary.
- **Butterfly reserve:** In 2006, India's first butterfly enclosure was inaugurated at the park.
- **River:** Suvarnamukhi stream, the main source of water for the animals of the park, runs through the centre of the park.
- **Vegetation:** Dry Deciduous Scrub Forests, Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests and Southern Tropical Moist Mixed Forests.
- **Flora:** Narcissus latifolia, Schleicheria oleosa, Sandalwood, Neem, Tamarind, Bamboo, Eucalyptus etc.
- **Fauna:** Asian Elephant, Indian gaur, Tiger, Sambar deer, Spotted deer, Leopard, Wild dog, Wild pig, Sloth bear, Common mongoose, Pangolin, Slender loris, Black-naped hare, etc.



Sci and Tech

15. Ariel - The Hindu

- **Discovery:** Oct. 24, 1851 by William Lassell, one of 19th century England's astronomers.
- **Materials:** A Uranus' moon consisting mostly of roughly equal amounts of water ice and silicate rock. Carbon dioxide has also been detected on Ariel.
- **Features:** It has few large craters and many small ones, indicating that fairly recent low-impact collisions wiped out the large craters that would have been left by much earlier, bigger strikes.

16. What are the various efforts being taken to mitigate caller ID spoofing? - The Hindu

Context

Several friends and family members of mine received a call from a North American (+1) phone number which played a pre-recorded message informing them of a supposed court summons.

Caller ID spoofing

- **About:** A technique with which the phone number that a call appears to originate from can be falsified.
- **Usage:**
 - Malicious individuals use caller ID spoofing primarily to shield their identity when engaging in illicit activity.
 - It is used by these individuals to carry out social engineering attacks, where the spoofed caller ID is abused for the implicit trust that the receiving party associates with it.
 - It can also be used to circumvent standard call blocking systems, and even for exploiting vulnerabilities in insecure Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems.

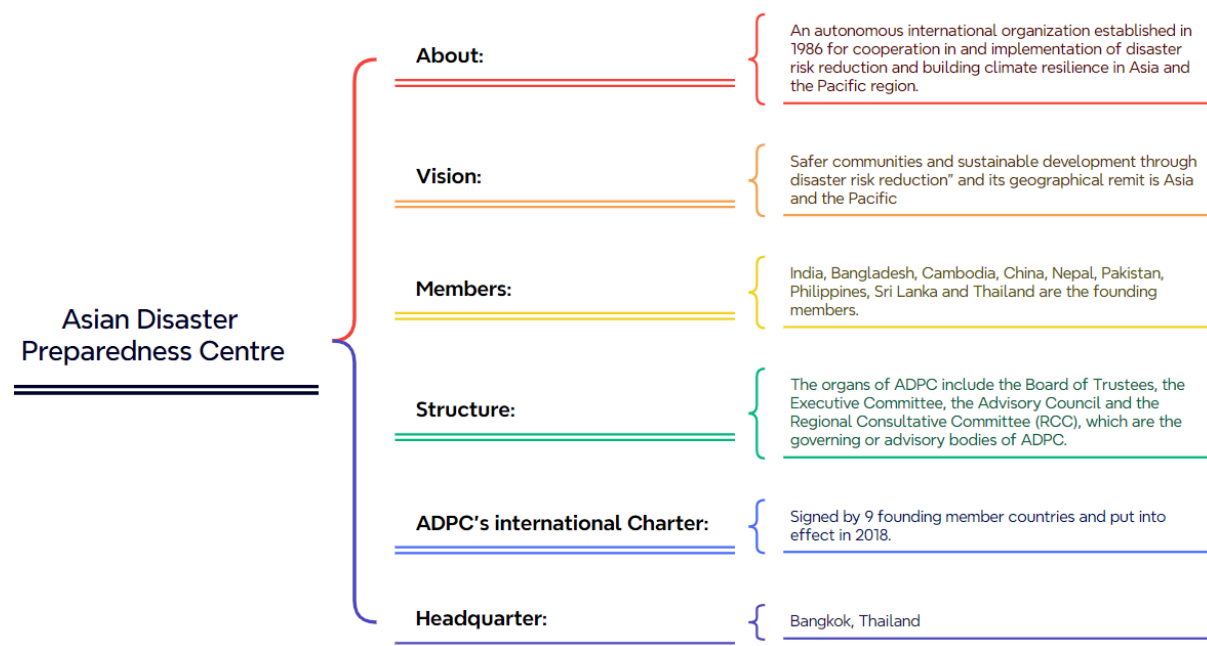
Miscellaneous

17. India assumes the Chair of Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) - PIB

Context

Under Prime Minister, India is playing a global and regional leadership role in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). India has taken a number of global initiatives in DRR, especially establishing an international Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre



18. Rashtrapati Bhavan to auction selected gift items received by the Presidents through E-Upahaar portal - PIB

Context

Rashtrapati Bhavan will auction selected gift items, presented to the President and former Presidents on various occasions, through an online portal called E-Upahaar. The portal was launched by the President of India on July 25, 2024, on the completion of two years of her Presidency.

E-Upahaar Portal

- **About:** An auction portal of the President's Secretariat (office of the President of India), Rashtrapati Bhavan for auctioning of gift items presented to Hon'ble President and former Presidents of India.

- **Design and development:** National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Aim:** To increase citizen engagement & to support noble causes.
- **Proceeds:** All proceeds from the auction will be donated to help children in need.

19. Mettur dam - The Hindu

Mettur dam	About:	One of the largest dams in India, built in 1934.
	Location:	Salem in Tamil Nadu.
	River:	It is constructed in a gorge, where the Kaveri River enters the plains.
	Features:	It is a masonry gravity dam.
	Dimensions:	The length of the dam is 1700 m with a maximum level of 120 feet and a capacity of 93.4 tmc ft.
	Reservoir:	Stanley Reservoir.
	Use:	It provides irrigation facilities to parts of Salem, the length of Erode, Namakkal, Karur, Tiruchirappali, and Thanjavur districts for 271,000 acres (110,000 ha) of farmland.

Rajasthan Current Affairs

1. Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde becomes the new Governor of Rajasthan

- Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde has been appointed as the new Governor of Rajasthan (45th Governor).
- He has been the Speaker of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly from 2014 to 2019.
- He has also been the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies, Horticulture Minister in Maharashtra.
- Bagde is from Aurangabad district of Maharashtra.
- He was elected MLA for the first time in 1985.
- Mr. Gulab Chand Kataria of Rajasthan (earlier Governor of Assam) has also been appointed as the Governor of Punjab and Administrator of Chandigarh.
- BJP leader of Rajasthan Om Prakash Mathur has been appointed as the Governor of Sikkim.

2. National Conference on Traditional Water Conservation Techniques

- A three-day National Conference on Traditional Water Conservation Techniques was organized in Jaipur from 27 to 29 July 2024.
- It was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
- It was agreed in the conference to include a chapter on water conservation in primary education.
- Under this, traditional methods of water conservation like Bawdi, Kuan, Johar and Nadi etc. will be renovated to improve the groundwater level.
- Emphasis was laid on public cooperation along with the government and administration to adopt traditional methods of water conservation.

3. 'Operation Seema'

- It is an initiative of Sri Ganganagar District Administration and District Police.
- Its objective is to prevent the increasing trend of drug addiction in the district and make the district drug free.
- Under this, the Education Department organized a workshop in the higher secondary schools of the district to spread awareness among the children.