



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

JANUARY, 2022

Week-3

15-21 Jan, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

15th JANUARY 2022

Project 'Niramay'

- National Health Mission, Assam in collaboration with Piramal Swasthya and Cisco launched the project "Niramay".
- Its objective is to demonstrate the integration of digital health technology to strengthen public health care delivery in the state.

Key Highlights:

- It is a step towards strengthening public health delivery in the state of Assam by realizing the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of the National Digital Health Mission.
- This initiative is based on Piramal Swasthya's indigenous integrated health technology platform 'AMRIT'(Accessible Medical Records via Integrated Technologies).
- This project will work towards strengthening digital infrastructure to enable telemedicine interactions, rapid diagnostics, patient's health records and data collection at the grass-root level in three aspirational districts(Barpeta, Darrang and Baksa) in Assam.

NOTE:

- AMRIT (Accessible Medical Records via Integrated Technologies) is an integrated technology platform developed by Piramal Swasthya to create and store electronic health records of beneficiaries for public primary healthcare.
- It is a public good primary healthcare technology platform. It helps the government in evidence-based decision making by ensuring the collection of quality data.

India and UK Free Trade Agreement

- Recently, India has launched the Free Trade Agreement negotiations with the United Kingdom.

Key Points:

- The FTA is expected to facilitate the target of doubling bilateral trade between India and the United Kingdom by 2030, set by the Prime Ministers of both the nations in May 2021.
- Observing that the UK was a major trade partner of India with substantial bilateral volume of trade in goods and services, the cooperation was extended across areas like: tourism, technology, startups, education, climate change, etc.
- The two nations were looking forward to a mutually beneficial trade deal with balanced concessions and market access packages in a wide range of sectors.
- It was also agreed to explore during the FTA negotiations the possibility of an Interim Agreement to provide quick gains for benefiting businesses in both nations. The focus is to deliver a comprehensive, balanced, fair and equitable FTA, to benefit small, medium and micro-enterprises in both nations.

India State of Forest Report 2021

- Recently, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released the 'India State of Forest Report 2021'

Major Findings:

- The total forest and tree cover of the country is 80.9 million hectares which are 24.62 per cent of the geographical area of the country.
- As compared to the assessment of 2019, there is an increase of 2,261 sq km in the total forest and tree cover of the country. An increase in forest cover has been observed in the open forest followed by a very dense forest.
- The top three states showing an increase in forest cover are Andhra Pradesh (647 sq km) followed by Telangana (632 sq km) and Odisha (537 sq km).
- **Areas wise:** Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.

- Forest cover as a percentage: In terms of forest cover as a percentage of total geographical area, the top five States are Mizoram (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya (76.00%), Manipur (74.34%) and Nagaland (73.90%).
- 17 states/UT's have above 33 per cent of the geographical area under forest cover.
- The total mangrove cover in the country is 4,992 sq km. An increase of 17 sq Km in mangrove cover has been observed as compared to the previous assessment of 2019.
- The forest cover in tiger corridors has increased by 37.15 sq km (0.32%) between 2011-2021 but decreased by 22.6 sq km (0.04%) in tiger reserves.
- The purpose of the SVP is to honor schools that have undertaken significant steps towards fulfilling the mandate of the Swachh Vidyalaya Campaign.
- The SVP 2021-22 is open to all categories of schools. i.e. Government, Government aided and Private schools in both rural and urban areas.
- The schools will be assessed through an online portal & mobile app in 6 sub-categories: Water, Sanitation, Hand Washing with soap, Operation and Maintenance, Behaviour Change and Capacity Building and the newly added category on COVID-19 Preparedness and Response.
- Schools shall be awarded at the District, State and National level based on an internationally recognized five-star rating system.

About India State of Forest Report

- It is published every two years by the Forest Survey of India under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The first survey was published in 1987, and ISFR 2021 is the 17th.
- The ISFR-2021 provides information on forest cover, tree cover, mangrove cover, growing stock, carbon stock in India's forests, forest fire monitoring, forest cover in tiger reserve areas, above ground estimates of biomass.
- In the present ISFR 2021, FSI has included a new chapter related to the assessment of forest cover in the Tiger Reserves, Corridors and Lion conservation area of India.

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Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-2022

- Recently, the Minister of State for Education virtually launched Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) 2021 – 2022.

Key Points:

- Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar has been instituted by the Ministry of Education to recognize, inspire and celebrate excellence in sanitation and hygiene practice in schools. It was first instituted in 2016-17.

WEF: Global Risks Report 2022

- Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released the Global Risks Report 2022.

Major Finding:

- Social cohesion erosion", "livelihood crises" and "mental health deterioration" are three of the five risks seen as the most concerning threats to the world in the next two years.
- Environmental risks in particular, "extreme weather" and "climate action failure" appear as top risks in the short-, medium-and long-term outlooks.
- In the medium term, economic risks such as "debt crises" and "asset bubble burst" also emerge as governments struggle to balance fiscal priorities.
- In the longer-term horizon, geopolitical and technological risks are of concern too—including "geoeconomic confrontations", "geopolitical resource contestation" and "cybersecurity failure".
- Environmental risks have the potential to yield the most damage to people and the planet, followed by societal challenges.

About Global Risks Report:

- The Global Risks Report series tracks global risks perceptions among risk experts and world leaders in business, government, and civil society.

- It examines risks across five categories: Economic, Environmental, Geopolitical, Societal and Technological.

Kala Kumbh

- **Context:** Recently, the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) celebrated 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' with Kala Kumbh.

Key Points:

- It is an artist workshop for painting scrolls measuring approximately 750 metres, representing the tales of valour of unsung heroes of India's freedom movement.
- The scrolls reflect traditional forms of art as well as contemporary expressions, which showcase the essence of the rich cultural and artistic heritage of India
- These have been diligently researched upon and painted enthusiastically by more than five hundred artists spread over two locations, Odisha and Chandigarh
- It is intended to inspire people about the rich national heritage and legacy of Bharat in its true sense.

17th JANUARY 2022

Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC)

- **Context:** Ratings by Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) for the news channels will resume, after the organization revised its procedures and protocols.
- Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) is a Joint Industry Body founded by stakeholder bodies that represent Broadcasters, Advertisers, and Advertising and Media Agencies.
- BARC India owns and manages a transparent, accurate, and inclusive TV audience measurement system.

Key Points:

- The resumption comes after over a year of TRPs being suspended following allegations of manipulation of ratings that emerged in 2020.
- The reconstitution of the Board and the Technical Committee to allow for the induction of Independent Members has also been initiated by the BARC.
- A permanent Oversight Committee has also been formed.
- The access protocols for data have been revamped and tightened.
- **A working group under the chairmanship of the Prasar Bharati, Shashi Shekhar Vempati:** for the consideration of leveraging the Return Path Data (RPD) capabilities for the use of TRP services has also been set up which is also recommended by TRAI and the TRP Committee Report.
- **RPD capabilities:** Imply that the set top box which is receiving the signal will be able to convey data on how the subscriber is using the box.

Web3: A vision for the future

- The concept of Web3 used to describe a potential next phase of the internet, created quite a buzz in 2021.

Key Points:

- Web3 is a decentralised internet to be run on Blockchain technology. Gavin Wood, the founder of Ethereum (a blockchain technology company) used the term Web3 first in 2014 and in the past few years, many others have added to the idea of Web3.
- It would be different from the versions in use, Web 1.0 and Web 2.0.
- In web3, users will have ownership stakes in platforms and applications unlike now where tech giants control the platforms.
- Web3 will deliver a "decentralized and fair internet where users control their own data". It enables peer to peer (seller to buyer) transactions by eliminating the role of the intermediary.

Earlier versions

- **Web 1.0:**
 - It is the worldwide web or the internet that was invented in 1989. It became popular in 1993.
 - The internet in the Web 1.0 days was mostly static web pages where users would go to a website and then read and interact with the static information.
- **Web 2.0:**
 - It started in some form in the late 1990s itself though 2004 was when most of its features were fully available. It is still the age of Web 2.0 now.
 - The differentiating characteristic of Web 2.0 compared to Web1.0 is that users can create content.
 - In Web 2.0, most of the data on the internet and the internet traffic is owned or handled by very few behemoth companies. This has created issues related to data privacy, data security and abuse of such data.
- **Web3** offers a solution to these problems.

Alan Hills (ALH) 84001 Meteorite

- The Recent study explains the existence of organic compounds on the surface of Meteorite ALH 84001.
- The study put forward that the organic compounds found in the meteorite were a result of the interactions between water and rocks that occurred on Mars. These interactions were similar to those that happen on Earth.
- These kinds of non-biological, geological reactions are responsible for a pool of organic carbon compounds from which life could have evolved and represent a background signal that must be taken into consideration when searching for evidence of past life on Mars.

About Alan Hills (ALH) 84001:

- It was found during a snowmobile ride in December 1984, in the Far Western Icefield of Allan Hills in Antarctica by a US meteorite hunting expedition. At the time of its discovery, it was recognised as the most unusual rock collected.

- At that time, it was described as shaped like a rounded brick or a large potato, about 6 inches long by 4 inches by 3 inches, and was partly covered with black glass (like it was dipped in tar).
- In 1996 NASA scientists who carried out microscopic and chemical analyses on ALH84001 touched off a controversy by suggesting that the carbonates in the meteorite had been produced by Martian microorganisms.

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Purple Revolution: Aroma Mission

- **Context:** The Union Minister of State Science & Technology highlighted that “Purple Revolution” is Jammu & Kashmir’s contribution to “Start-ups India”.

Key Points:

- The Aroma Mission was launched by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology through the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), this has led to the well-known “Purple Revolution” in India.
- Its aim is to boost cultivation of plants like lavender that have aromatic medicinal properties.
- CSIR introduced high-value essential oil-bearing lavender crops through its Jammu based laboratory, Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines (IIIM) for cultivation in districts Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri and later also in the other districts including Ramban, Pulwama, etc. In a brief span of time, aroma/lavender cultivation has become a popular option in farming for agricultural Start-up.
- It is a hardy plant that can grow on degraded soils. In addition, resistant pests & diseases also.
- The ideal climatic conditions of lavender are cool winters and cool summers. Lavender is a temperate plant and can tolerate drought and frost conditions.

NOTE:

Lavender is a crop native to Europe, but was introduced in the temperate regions of this state by the CSIR Aroma Mission.

Pandit Birju Maharaj

- **Context:** Recently, India's leading Kathak exponent and Padma Vibhushan awardee, Pandit Birju Maharaj passed away.
- He was born on February 4, 1938, into the family of Kathak revivalist Ishwari Prasadji.
- Initially his name was 'Dukh Haran', which was later changed to 'Brijmohan', a synonym of Krishna. Brijmohan Nath Misra was then shortened to 'Birju'.
- He was the torchbearer of the Kalka-Bindadin gharana of the Lucknow style of Kathak.
- He was conferred the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award at the young age of 28. He has variously received the Kalidas Samman, Nritya Choodamani, Andhra Ratna, Nritya Vilas, Adharshila Shikhar Samman, Soviet Land Nehru Award, Shiromani Samman, and Rajiv Gandhi Peace Award apart from an honorary doctorate from Banaras Hindu University.

Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme

- **Context:** Recently, the Ministry of Electronics and Information (MeitY) started seeking applications from 100 domestic companies under its Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme.

Key Points about Scheme:

- Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme was announced in December 2021 by MeitY.
- Under this, financial incentives and design infrastructure support will be extended to domestic companies, startups and MSMEs across various stages of development and deployment of semiconductor design for Integrated Circuits (ICs), Chipsets, System on Chips (SoCs), Systems & IP Cores and semiconductor linked design for over 5 years.
- It aims to create a vibrant ecosystem for Semiconductor Chip Design in the country and to promote the domestic manufacturing of semiconductors and allied devices.

- The scheme is expected to provide a globally competitive incentive package to companies in semiconductors and display manufacturing as well as design.
- C-DAC (Center for Development of Advanced Computing), a scientific society operating under MeitY, will serve as the nodal agency for the implementation of the DLI scheme.

19th JANUARY 2022

Katrol Hill Fault

- **Context:** According to recent study, earthquakes have led to major changes in the landscape of the Katrol Hill Fault.
- A study of sediment showed that Seismicity in the Kutch region is highly complex as it is characterized by multiple seismic sources in the form of several East-West trending fault lines, which release continuously accumulating tectonic stresses at intervals producing earthquakes.
- The samples showed features indicative of surface faulting.

About Katrol Hill Fault (KHF):

- It is situated in the Kachchh region in Gujarat.
- The Katrol Hill Fault (KHF) has produced high magnitude seismic events during the past ~30,000 years and is, therefore, a credible seismic source capable of generating surface rupture hazards in the Kachchh Basin.
- Field-based geomorphological studies revealed that the events resulted in spectacular changes in the landscape, as evidenced by the disruption and reorganization of the channel of the Gunawari River in the fault zone.
- The study calls for a revised seismic hazard assessment and mitigation strategies in the Kutch Basin, owing to its proximity to the industrial corridor and major settlements, including Bhuj.

ABC Framework

- The Centre has brought all recognised higher education institutions, irrespective of their accreditation or rankings, under the ambit of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC).
- The government has brought the IITs, IIMs and other Institutions of National Importance (INIs) under the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) framework, which allows students to pursue up to 50 per cent of a course from institutions other than the one with which they are enrolled.

Key points:

- Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) is proposed under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) Set-up by the University Grants Commission (UGC).
- Under the ABC, students will be given multiple entry and exit options.
- This enables students to leave a degree or course and get a corresponding certification and rejoin studies after a certain time and be able to start from where they had left.
- It will also provide students with the flexibility to move between institutes while pursuing one degree or leave a course.
- ABC will keep records of the academic credits of a student. It will not accept any credit course document directly from the students for any course they might be pursuing, but only from higher education institutes, who will have to make deposits in students' accounts.
- ABC will help in credit verification, credit accumulation, credit transfer and redemption of students, and promotion of the students.

Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), announced ten winning cities for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge.

- At the event, the Ministry also launched Season-2 of India Cycles4Change and Streets for People Challenges and a book titled 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge: Stories from the Field'.
- The winning cities are Bengaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Indore, Jabalpur, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Rourkela, Vadodara, and Warangal.

About Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge

- Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge was launched in the first week of November 2020.
- It is a 3-year initiative hosted by the Smart Cities Mission, MoHUA in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation and World Resources Institute (WRI) India.
- The Challenge enables Indian cities to adopt an early childhood lens in designing neighbourhood-level improvements that promote the health and well-being of young children and their caregivers.
- Through the Challenge, selected cities will receive technical assistance and capacity-building to improve public spaces, mobility, neighbourhood planning, early childhood services and data management.

Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020

- Recently, the Haryana government passed a Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020 that provides 75 percent reservation in the private sector to job seekers from the state.

Key Highlights:

- It applies to "all the Companies, Societies, Trusts, Limited Liability Partnership firms, Partnership Firm and any person employing ten or more persons and an entity, as may be notified by the Government, from time to time".
- Post its implementation, priority for jobs would be given to the youth of Haryana in all private sector companies, institutions, trusts, societies and industries established in the state.

- The state government also relaxed the residency requirement from 15 to five years for a person to get a bona fide resident certificate in the state to provide some flexibility to the private companies in hiring.
- A dedicated portal has also been created by the Labour Department along with a helpline number.
- It envisages reservation for local youth in the private sector with an upper limit of gross monthly salary up to Rs 30,000.
- Time period of three months is available for compliance. Non-Compliance will attract a fine of between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 1,00,000.

20th JANUARY 2022

Goat Head Yogini

- **Context:** Recently, the Union Minister of Culture announced that a 10th century stone idol of Goat Head Yogini is being returned to India.

Key Points:

- Goat headed Yogini is a 10th Century Stone Idol. It originally belonged to a group of stone deities in sandstone and was installed in Lokhari temple.
- The idol had been illegally removed from a temple in Lokhari, Banda, Uttar Pradesh in the 1980s.
- In October 2021, the idol was discovered in London. And now it is being returned to the Archeological Survey of India, New Delhi.
- Yoginis are a group of powerful female divinities associated with the Tantrik mode of worship. They are worshiped as a group, often 64 and are believed to possess infinite powers.

National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)

- Recently, The Ministry of Textiles cleared 20 strategic research projects worth INR 30 crores in the areas of Specialty fibers and Geotextiles under the Flagship Programme 'National Technical Textiles Mission.'
- The 20 strategic projects worth Rs. 30 crores. Previously, 11 research projects worth Rs. 78. crores were cleared by the Ministry of Textiles in March 2021.

About Mission:

- It was launched by the Ministry of Textiles.
- **Period:** 4 years (2020-21 to 2023-24)
- The aim of the mission is to position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles.
- The Mission has a target to take the domestic market size of the technical textile sector to \$ 40-50 Bn by the year 2024 with an average growth rate of 15-20% per annum.
- It also supports the 'Make in India' initiative promoting domestic manufacturing of related machinery and equipment.
- This will reduce India's import dependence and promote the domestic manufacturing of capital goods in the sector.

Davos Agenda 2022

- In a video conferencing address, the Prime Minister addressed the World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda.
- Every year, the world's top leaders meet in Davos (Switzerland) to shape global, regional, and industry agendas.
- Agenda 2022 will see the launch of other WEF initiatives meant for accelerating the mission to net-zero emissions on the economic opportunity of nature-positive solutions and on cyber resilience.

Key issues discussed:

- Climate action failure, extreme weather and biodiversity loss are ranked the top three most-severe risks for the world over the next decade according to the Forum's Global Risks Report 2022.
- Vaccine inequities, addressing antimicrobial resistance, disparities in health coverage and outcomes, and the importance of mental healthcare for all (and especially our global health workforce) will be discussed.
- After decades of progress in addressing poverty and income inequality, COVID-19 set us back – bringing the first rise in extreme poverty in a generation. This will be discussed here.

21st JANUARY 2022

Artificial Moon

- **Context:** Recently, China has built an artificial moon facility to simulate lunar conditions and the environment for scientists to test new tech and future missions.

Key Points:

- It is located in the eastern city of Xuzhou, in Jiangsu province, China
- It will use powerful magnetic fields inside a 2-foot-diameter (60 centimetres) vacuum chamber to make gravity "disappear."
- The chamber will be filled with rocks and dust to imitate the lunar surface.
- It is the "first of its kind in the world" and it could maintain such low-gravity conditions for as long as one wants.
- Its objective is to test out instruments and technology in a low-gravity environment similar to that of the moon, and see whether its experiments can be successful on the lunar surface.

Eastern Swamp Deer

- **Context:** The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve released the Wetland Bird Estimation Report for 2021-2022.
- This is also the first time that Eastern Swamp Deer was estimated in the whole of the region.

Key Points:

- The 4th Wetland Bird Estimation was conducted from December 21 to 27, 2021, in which a total of 66,776 birds of 126 species were enumerated using the Point Count method.
- As per the report, the ten most populous species include Bar-headed Goose, Northern Pintail, Common Teal, Little Cormorant, Greylag Goose, Lesser Whistling Duck, Gadwall, Ferruginous Duck, Eurasian Coot, and Eurasian Wigeon.

Eastern Swamp Deer

- The population of the vulnerable eastern swamp deer, extinct elsewhere in South Asia, has dipped in the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.
- The eastern swamp deer is endemic to Kaziranga and is not the primary prey of the park's carnivores, primarily the tiger.
- **IUCN status:** Vulnerable

