

Entire Week's पिक

July 10th to 16th



#DAILY UPDATES

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1. 63 students and escort teachers of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas on their way to Japan for an educational exposure visit: PIB

Why is it in news?	Ministry of Education, Government of India in collaboration with Japan Science and Technology (JST) Agency, today flagged off a team of 63 students and escort teachers to Japan for an educational exposure visit to various places of importance - industrial organisations, museums, universities, research institutions etc.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International importance. Mains: General Studies II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests
Important concepts	Sakura Science Exchange Program

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2006

Consider the following statements:

1. Free and compulsory education to the children of 6-14 years age-group by the State by the seventy-sixth Amendment to the Constitution of India.
2. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan seeks to provide computer education even in rural areas.
3. Education was included in the Concurrent List by the Forty-second Amendment, 1976 to the Constitution of India'.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) 1 and 3

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Sakura Science Exchange Program?

- a) It is a bilateral program between India and Japan to promote science and technology cooperation.
- b) It is funded by the Japan Science and Technology (JST) Agency.
- c) It provides educational exposure visits to Japan for Indian students and teachers.
- d) All of the above

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Sakura Science Exchange Program is a bilateral program between India and Japan to promote science and technology cooperation. It is funded by the Japan Science and Technology (JST) Agency. It provides educational exposure visits to Japan for Indian students and teachers.

Mains PYQ exercise:

The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole. Comment

Today's mains practice question:

Discuss the significance and benefits of the Sakura Science Exchange Program for India-Japan relations and for the development of science and technology in both countries.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Sakura Science Exchange Program:

- The Sakura Science Exchange Program is a program that invites aspiring youth from various countries and regions to Japan for a short period of time and promotes the exchange in the field of science and technology. It is organized by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

- The program has two types: the Sakura Invitation Program and the Sakura Online Program². The former involves inviting participants to Japan for face-to-face exchange activities, while the latter involves conducting online exchange activities without traveling to Japan

2. Culture Working Group under India' G20 Presidency sets Guinness World Record for 'Largest Display of Lambani Items– PIB

Why is it in news?	Guinness World Record for the largest display of Lambani Items was created on the sidelines of G-20 Culture Working Group Meeting at Hampi in Karnataka.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies Paper I : Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.</p>
Important concepts	Lambani Items

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2007

Where is the famous Vijaya Vittala temple having its 56 carved pillars emitting musical notes located?

- (a) Belur
- (b) Bhadrachalam
- (c) Hampi
- (d) Srirangam

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Lambani embroidery?

- It is a form of textile embellishment characterized by colourful threads, mirror work, and a rich array of stitch patterns.

2. It is practised by the Lambani community of Karnataka, who are also known as Banjaras or Gypsies.
3. It has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: d

- Lambani embroidery is a form of textile embellishment characterized by colourful threads, mirror work, and a rich array of stitch patterns. It is practised by the Lambani community of Karnataka, who are also known as Banjaras or Gypsies. They are believed to have migrated from Afghanistan and Rajasthan centuries ago. It has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of India in 2010, under the name of Sandur Lambani Embroidery.

Mains PYQ exercise:

Given the diversities among the tribal communities in India, in which specific contexts should they be considered as a single category?

Today's mains practice question:

What are the objectives and priorities of the Culture Working Group of G20? How does this initiative reflect India's role and vision as a global leader in culture and creativity?

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Lambani Items:

- Lambani items are embroidered patches made by the Lambani community of Karnataka, using colourful threads, mirror work, and a rich array of stitch patterns. The Lambanis are also known as Banjaras or Gypsies, and are believed to have migrated from Afghanistan and

Rajasthan centuries ago. Lambani embroidery is a vibrant and intricate form of textile embellishment that reflects the culture and identity of the Lambani people.

- Lambani items are used to decorate various household and personal accessories, such as bed sheets, cushion covers, bags, pouches, dupattas, table covers, wall hangings and even ready-to-wear garments. Lambani items are also made from scrap materials, such as old saris, cloth patches, cowrie shells, beads and coins. This makes them an example of sustainable and eco-friendly craft practice.
- Lambani items have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of India in 2010, under the name of Sandur Lambani Embroidery. The GI tag is a sign that identifies a product as originating from a particular place and having a distinct quality or reputation. Lambani items are made by skilled women artisans of the Lambani community, who earn their livelihood and empowerment through this craft. Lambani items also promote the creative economy and cultural diversity of Karnataka and India.

MODEL MAINS ANSWER FOR TODAY'S EXPECTED MAINS QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance and benefits of the Sakura Science Exchange Program for India-Japan relations and for the development of science and technology in both countries?

<p>Why this question</p>	<p>The question theme is reflected several times in UPSC (including prelims) and APPSC mains.</p> <p>UPSC PYQs</p> <p>Economic ties between India and Japan while growing in the recent years are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth.</p>
<p><u>First step is to understand the demand of the question</u></p>	<p>Question has Two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Significance and benefits of the Sakura Science Exchange Program 2. Benefits of the Sakura Science Exchange Program

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>The Sakura Science Exchange Program is a program that invites outstanding human resources from around the world, who will lead society in the new era, to Japan for a short period of time to experience Japan's cutting-edge science, technology and culture. The program aims to promote the exchange in the field of science and technology between Japan and other countries and regions, and to foster friendship and cooperation</p>								
<p>Body</p>	<p>The significance and benefits the Sakura Science Exchange Program for India-Japan relations and for the development of science and technology in both countries are as follows</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Dimension</th><th>Content</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td>It enhances the mutual understanding and trust between the two countries, which share common values and strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The program also contributes to the realization of the vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>It provides opportunities for young Indian researchers, students and professionals to learn from Japan's advanced scientific and technological achievements, and to interact with their Japanese counterparts. This helps to stimulate their curiosity, creativity and innovation, and to inspire them to pursue careers in science and technology</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>It facilitates the collaboration and networking between the scientific and technological communities of both countries, which have complementary strengths and potentials. The program also supports the joint research projects and initiatives that address the</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Dimension	Content		It enhances the mutual understanding and trust between the two countries, which share common values and strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region. The program also contributes to the realization of the vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific		It provides opportunities for young Indian researchers, students and professionals to learn from Japan's advanced scientific and technological achievements, and to interact with their Japanese counterparts. This helps to stimulate their curiosity, creativity and innovation, and to inspire them to pursue careers in science and technology		It facilitates the collaboration and networking between the scientific and technological communities of both countries, which have complementary strengths and potentials. The program also supports the joint research projects and initiatives that address the
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		common challenges and goals of both countries, such as climate change, disaster management, health care, energy security, etc	
		The program fosters the cultural exchange and appreciation between the two countries, which have a long history of friendship and cooperation. It also promotes the diversity and inclusiveness of both societies, which are enriched by their respective traditions, values and cultures	
Conclusion:	Sakura Science Exchange Program is a valuable platform for strengthening the India-Japan relations and for advancing the science and technology development in both countries. The program also serves as a model for other countries and regions to emulate and benefit from. Therefore, it is important to continue and expand the program in the future.		

1. UN says India registers remarkable reduction in poverty with 41.5 cr people coming out of it in 15 yrs: AIR

Why is it in news?	The UN said, 25 countries, including India, successfully halved their global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) values within 15 years, showing that rapid progress is attainable.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International importance. Mains: General Studies Paper III: Poverty and developmental issues
Important concepts	Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)
Q. 1999 Persons below the poverty line in India are classified as such based whether: (a) they are entitled to a minimum prescribed food basket days in a year (b) they get work for a prescribed minimum number of (c) they belong to agricultural labourer household and the scheduled caste/tribe social group (d) their daily wages fall below the prescribed minimum wages	
<p style="text-align: center;">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI)?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> India was among the 25 countries that successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years. India lifted 41.5 crore people out of poverty between 2005-06 and 2019-20, 14 crore of which were since 2015-16. India still has the largest number of poor people worldwide, followed by China. <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2 only</p>	

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which is a measure of poverty that captures the multiple deprivations that poor people face in health, education and living standards. The MPI has three dimensions and 10 indicators, each with a different weight. A person is considered multidimensionally poor if they are deprived in at least one third of the weighted indicators.
- The global MPI value is the product of the incidence of poverty (the percentage of people who are poor) and the intensity of poverty (the average percentage of deprivations that poor people experience). India successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years.
- India lifted 41.5 crore people out of poverty between 2005-06 and 2019-20, 14 crore of which were since 2015-16. This means that the number of multidimensionally poor people in India decreased from 63.4 crore in 2005-06 to 21.9 crore in 2019-20, with a faster reduction in the last four years.
- India is followed by Nigeria, in terms of the number of poor people worldwide. According to the report, India has 228.9 million poor people, Nigeria has 96.7 million (projected in 2020), and China has 31.8 million (in 2017). China has reduced its MPI value by more than 90% since 2000.

Mains PYQ exercise:

Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India remain mere show pieces until and unless they are backed by political will'. Discuss with reference to the performance of the major poverty alleviation programmes in India

Today's mains practice question:

Critically analyse the performance of India in reducing multidimensional poverty as per the latest Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report

- The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2022 is the latest edition of the report that measures the complexities of poor people's lives, individually and collectively, using health, education and living standards indicators. The report provides a comprehensive picture of global trends in multidimensional poverty, covering 5.9 billion people in 111 developing countries.
- The report also unpacks deprivation bundles, which are recurring patterns of poverty that commonly impact those who live in multidimensional poverty across the world. The report uses the data to identify the poverty profiles that are more common in certain places, which can help design strategies that address multiple aspects of poverty at the same time. The report also highlights the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the current cost-of-living crisis on poverty reduction efforts.

Some of the key highlights of the report are:

- 1.2 billion people are multidimensionally poor, which is nearly double the number who are seen as poor when poverty is defined as living on less than \$1.90 per day.
- Nearly half of them live in severe poverty, meaning they are deprived in at least half of the weighted indicators.
- 593 million (about half) of the multidimensionally poor are children under age 18.
- 579 million of the multidimensionally poor live in Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by South Asia (385 million).
- 72 out of 81 countries with trend data, covering roughly 5 billion people, experienced a statistically significant reduction in absolute terms in MPI value during at least one of the periods analysed.
- The most common deprivation bundle among the multidimensionally poor is lack of access to clean cooking fuel, sanitation and electricity.

- The most common poverty profile among the multidimensionally poor is rural, female-headed household with low education and high child mortality

2. PM greets citizens of Tripura on occasion of Ker Puja– PIB

Why is it in news?	The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has greeted the citizens of Tripura on occasion of Ker Puja
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies Paper I : Indian Heritage and Culture, History</p>
Important concepts	<p>Ker Puja</p> <p>Tripura</p>
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q. 2000</p> <p>The native state of Tripura became involved in the freedom movement early in the 20th century because:</p> <p>(a) the kings of Tripura were always anti-British</p> <p>(b) the Bengal revolutionaries took shelter in Tripura</p> <p>(c) the tribes of the state were fiercely freedom loving</p> <p>(d) there were already some groups fighting against the kingship and its protector, the British</p>	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q.</p> <p>Which of the following statements is/are correct about Ker Puja, a festival celebrated in Tripura?</p> <p>a) It is held two weeks after the Kharchi Puja to honor Ker, the guardian deity of Vastu Devata.</p> <p>b) It is a three-day festival that involves animal sacrifices and offerings to the deity.</p> <p>c) It is a mandatory festival for the Halam tribe, one of the Scheduled Tribes of Tripura.</p> <p>d) All of the above</p>	

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Ker Puja is a Hindu religious festival and a state holiday in the northeastern state of Tripura.
- It is celebrated to worship Ker, the guardian deity of Vastu Devata, who protects the people and the state from calamities and external aggression.
- It is held two weeks after the Kharchi Puja, which is another popular festival of Tripura.
- It is a three-day festival that involves animal sacrifices and offerings to the deity.
- It has strict rules and rituals, such as closing the entrances of the capital city, Agartala, and prohibiting dancing, wearing shoes, or starting fires.
- It was initiated by the Tripura rajas and is mandatory for the Halam tribe, one of the Scheduled Tribes of Tripura.
- It reflects the cultural and religious diversity of Tripura and its secularism and pluralism in the context of India

Mains PYQ exercise:

The north-eastern region of India has been infested with insurgency for a very long time. Analyze the major reasons for the survival of armed insurgency in this region.

Today's mains practice question:

Discuss the diversity and richness of the culture of Northeast India. How can the cultural heritage of this region be preserved and promoted?

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Ker Puja:

- Ker Puja is a Hindu religious festival and a state holiday in the northeastern state of Tripura
- It is celebrated two weeks after Kharchi Puja, another popular festival in Tripura, to honor Ker, the guardian deity of Vastu Devata
- It is believed that Ker protects the people and the state from calamities, diseases, and external aggression
- The puja was initiated by the Tripura rajas and is mandatory for the Halam tribe

- The puja lasts for two and a half days, during which the entrances of the capital city, Agartala, are closed and strict rules are followed by the participants
- The rules include not wearing shoes, lighting a fire, dancing, singing, or performing any other ceremonies. If someone breaks the rules, the puja has to start afresh at their cost
- The puja begins and ends with the firing of cannons or guns by the Tripura police. The head priest, or Chantai, holds the highest authority during the puja.
- A large piece of bamboo curved in the shape of Ker is swung during the celebration. Animal sacrifices and offerings are made as part of the rituals
- The puja is a symbol of gratitude, devotion, and unity among the people of Tripura. It also reflects their cultural heritage and identity.

Tripura:

- Tripura is a state in North-East India, bordered by Bangladesh on three sides and by Assam and Mizoram on the east
- The capital of Tripura is Agartala and the state has eight districts. The official languages are Bengali, Kokborok and English.
- The Hindu Bengali people make up the majority of Tripura's population and scheduled tribes (indigenous communities) account for roughly 30% of the state's population. Among the 19 notified Scheduled Tribes in Tripura, Tripuris (aka Tipra and Tiprasas) are the largest.
- Tripura was a kingdom ruled by the Manikya dynasty from the late 13th century until 1949, when it merged with the Indian Union. It became a Union Territory in 1956 and a full-fledged state in 1972.
- It has a rich cultural heritage and is known for its festivals, dances, music, handicrafts, temples, and wildlife sanctuaries. Some of the famous festivals are Garia, Durga Puja, Buddha Purnima, Kharchi, Pous Sankranti, and Bijhu. Some of the popular dances are Hoza Giri, Garia, Dhamail, and Kabi Gaan
- It has a hilly terrain with forests covering more than half of its area. The main rivers are Gomti, Khowai, Howrah, Longai, Dhalai, Muhuri, Feni, Manu, and Burima. The state has four wildlife sanctuaries (Shepahijala, Trishna, Rowa, and Clouded Leopard) and one national park (Clouded Leopard)

- It is one of the major producers of natural rubber in India. It also grows paddy, wheat, sugarcane, potato, jute, mesta, cotton etc. The state has industries such as bamboo and cane handicrafts, handloom weaving, sericulture, rubber-based industries etc
- It has a Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC) under the sixth schedule of the Constitution to ensure development and safeguard the rights and cultural heritage of the tribal communities. The TTADC covers 68% of the state's area and is home to 12 lakh people belonging to 19 tribes

3. India and Bangladesh start bilateral trade in rupees-- PIB

Why is it in news?	India and Bangladesh have started bilateral trade in rupees. It was launched at an event jointly organised by Bangladesh Bank and High Commission of India in Dhaka.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies Paper II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.</p>
Important concepts	Bangladesh
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q 2006</p> <p>Other than India and China, which one of the following groups of countries border Myanmar?</p> <p>(a) Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam</p> <p>(b) Cambodia, Laos and Malaysia</p> <p>(c) Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia</p> <p>(d) Thailand, Laos and Bangladesh</p>	
<p>Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q.</p> <p>Consider the following statements</p> <p>1. Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second largest trade partner of Bangladesh in Asia.</p>	

2. India and Bangladesh have started bilateral trade in rupees
3. It will help Bangladesh to ease its dollar crunch and boost its foreign exchange reserves

How many of the above statements given above is / are correct

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Bangladesh has the highest trade volume with India, and among the countries in Asia, India has the second highest trade volume with Bangladesh. Trade volume is the total value of goods and services exchanged between two countries in a given period of time. According to the latest official data from Dhaka, exports from Bangladesh to India amount to USD 2 billion, while Bangladesh's imports from India are worth USD 13.69 billion.
- India and Bangladesh have agreed to use their local currencies, rupee and taka, for some of their trade transactions, besides the US dollar. The trade settlement through Indian rupee will only apply to export amount from Bangladesh while the rest of imports from India will be settled in US dollars.
- A dollar crunch is a situation where a country faces a shortage of US dollars to pay for its imports or external debts. By using rupees for some of its exports, Bangladesh can reduce its demand for dollars and save them for other purposes. Foreign exchange reserves are the assets held by a central bank in foreign currencies, such as US dollars, euros, pounds, etc. They are used to maintain the value of the local currency, intervene in the foreign exchange market, and pay for international obligations. By increasing its exports in rupees, Bangladesh can earn more foreign exchange reserves and strengthen its taka.

Mains PYQ
exercise:

Critically examine the compulsions which prompted India to play a decisive roles in the emergence of Bangladesh.

**Today's mains
practice question:**

What are the benefits and challenges of internationalizing the Indian rupee?
Discuss the recent initiatives taken by India to promote rupee trade with its neighbouring countries.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Bangladesh:

- Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second largest trade partner of Bangladesh in Asia. The trade volume between the two countries was around USD 15.69 billion in the last fiscal year.
- Bangladesh shares its border with two countries: India and Myanmar. The length of the Bangladesh-India border is 4,096.7 km, which is the seventh-longest border in the world and the longest border that India shares with any of its neighbours. The length of the Bangladesh-Myanmar border is 271 km, which is a short land and water frontier. Bangladesh also has a maritime border with India and Myanmar in the Bay of Bengal.
- India and Bangladesh share a long and complex history, cultural, linguistic and religious ties, and a common struggle for independence from Pakistan in 1971. India was the first country to recognize Bangladesh as a separate and independent state and established diplomatic relations with the country immediately after its independence.
- India and Bangladesh have resolved several outstanding issues in their bilateral relations, such as the land boundary agreement, the exchange of enclaves, the sharing of river waters, the connectivity projects, the cooperation in energy and security sectors, etc. India has also extended several lines of credit and development assistance to Bangladesh.
- India and Bangladesh have also faced some challenges and irritants in their relations, such as the illegal migration, the border killings, the trade imbalance, the Rohingya refugee crisis, the radicalization and terrorism, the Chinese influence, etc. Both countries have tried to address these issues through dialogue and cooperation

4. Myanmar, South China Sea tensions top agenda at ASEAN meet In Indonesia-- PIB

Why is it in news?	Southeast Asia's top diplomats are gathering in Indonesia today amid pressure to address a bloody political crisis in Myanmar and resolve tensions in the South China Sea where some ASEAN members have overlapping territorial claims with China
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies Paper II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.</p>
Important concepts	<p>ASEAN</p> <p>Myanmar</p>
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q 2018 Consider the following countries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Australia 2. Canada 3. China 4. India 5. Japan 6. USA <p>Which of the above are among the 'free-trade partners' of ASEAN?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5 (b) 3, 4, 5 and 6 (c) 1, 3, 4 and 5 (d) 2, 3, 4 and 6 	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q. Which of the following is/are the objectives of ASEAN as stated in the ASEAN Declaration?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region. 	

- 2.To promote regional peace and stability based on respect for justice and the rule of law.
- 3.To establish a common market and a customs union among the member states.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- © 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

According to the ASEAN Declaration, the objectives of ASEAN are:

- To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;
- To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
- To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
- To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
- To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilisation of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples.

Mains PYQ exercise:	What are the main objectives of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM)-Plus? What are the benefits of India's participation in this forum? (10 marks) (2019)
Today's mains practice question:	How far has ASEAN been successful in achieving its objectives of economic growth, social progress, cultural development and regional peace and stability? Discuss the achievements and challenges of ASEAN in the context of changing regional and global dynamics

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

ASEAN:

- ASEAN stands for Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a regional organization that was established in 1967 to promote political and social stability, economic growth, cultural development and regional peace among its members.
- The motto of ASEAN is "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" and the 8th August is observed as ASEAN Day.
- The ASEAN Secretariat is located in Indonesia, Jakarta.
- The member nations of ASEAN are: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- The objectives of ASEAN are: to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development; to promote regional peace and stability; to collaborate on matters of common interest; to enhance cooperation with other international and regional organizations; and to promote Southeast Asian studies.
- The fundamental principles of ASEAN are: mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; the right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference; non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means; renunciation of the threat or use of force; and effective cooperation among themselves.

- The ASEAN Community was launched in 2015 and is comprised of three pillars: ASEAN Political-Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.
- The ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations were established in 1992 and have been upgraded to a strategic partnership in 2012. India and ASEAN celebrated the 30th anniversary of their dialogue relations in 2022.
- The key areas of cooperation between India and ASEAN are: trade and investment, connectivity, defence and security, vaccine production and distribution, clean energy, disaster management, education, culture and tourism.
- India and ASEAN have also agreed to review the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) to make it more user-friendly and trade facilitative.

Myanmar:

- Myanmar is a Southeast Asian country that shares borders with India, Bangladesh, China, Laos and Thailand.
- Myanmar was a British colony until 1948, when it gained independence. Since then, it has experienced several military coups and periods of civil unrest. The most recent coup took place in February 2021, when the military overthrew the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and detained her and other political leaders.
- The military coup sparked widespread protests and resistance from the people of Myanmar, who demanded the restoration of democracy and the release of political prisoners. The security forces responded with violence and repression, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing thousands more.
- India and Myanmar also share security interests in combating terrorism, insurgency, drug trafficking and cross-border crimes. India has provided training and equipment to the Myanmar armed forces and has conducted joint military exercises with them. India has also supported Myanmar's efforts to achieve peace and national reconciliation with various ethnic armed groups.

MODEL MAINS ANSWER FOR TODAY'S EXPECTED MAINS QUESTION

Q. What are the benefits and challenges of internationalizing the Indian rupee? Discuss the recent initiatives taken by India to promote rupee trade with its neighbouring countries?

<p>Why this question</p>	<p>The question theme is reflected several times in UPSC (including prelims) and APPSC mains.</p> <p>UPSC PYQs</p> <p>How would the recent phenomena of protectionism and currency manipulations in world trade affect macroeconomic stability of India? (250 Words, 15 Marks) (2018)</p>				
<p><u>First step is to understand the demand of the question</u></p>	<p>Question has Two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benefits and challenges of internationalizing the Indian rupee 2. Initiatives taken by India to promote rupee trade with its neighbouring countries 				
<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Internationalisation of the rupee is a process that involves increasing the use and acceptance of the rupee outside India, for trade, investment, reserve and other purposes. The Indian rupee is most widely used currencies in South Asia. However, its role in the global financial system is still limited compared to other major currencies such as the US dollar, the Euro, the Japanese yen and the Chinese renminbi.</p>				
<p>Body</p>	<p>Benefits of Internationalizing the Indian Rupee</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Dimension</th><th>Content</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Benefits</td><td> <p>Less exposure to currency fluctuations:</p> <p>Internationalization can make India less reliant on foreign currencies for trade and investment activities, thus reducing the impact of currency risks and exchange rate changes. It can provide more predictability and security</p> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Dimension	Content	Benefits	<p>Less exposure to currency fluctuations:</p> <p>Internationalization can make India less reliant on foreign currencies for trade and investment activities, thus reducing the impact of currency risks and exchange rate changes. It can provide more predictability and security</p>
Dimension	Content				
Benefits	<p>Less exposure to currency fluctuations:</p> <p>Internationalization can make India less reliant on foreign currencies for trade and investment activities, thus reducing the impact of currency risks and exchange rate changes. It can provide more predictability and security</p>				

		to businesses involved in international trade with India.
		Enhanced economic influence: A widely accepted and internationalized currency strengthens the economic influence of a country. It can increase India's prominence in global financial markets, attract foreign investment, and enhance its role in international economic decision-making.
		Reduced transaction costs: Internationalization can lead to higher efficiency in cross-border transactions, saving transaction costs for businesses and individuals. By avoiding the need for currency conversion, it can simplify international trade and investment processes.
		More control over monetary policy: Internationalization gives more control over monetary policy. A widely used rupee can enable the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to exert more influence over interest rates, inflation, and other monetary measures, without being affected by external shocks as much.
	Challenges of Internationalizing the Indian Rupee	
		Stability in macroeconomic indicators: Before internationalizing the rupee, India must ensure stability in its macroeconomic

	Challenges	<p>indicators, such as inflation, fiscal deficit, and external balance. Lack of stability could erode confidence in the currency and discourage international acceptance.</p> <p>Development of financial markets: For internationalization to be successful, India needs to develop deep and liquid financial markets, including debt and equity markets, to support increased demand for rupee-denominated assets. This requires regulatory reforms, improved market infrastructure, and investor confidence.</p> <p>Free movement of capital: Internationalization requires allowing free movement of capital across borders. Gradually achieving capital account convertibility while managing risks and maintaining financial stability is a complex process that requires careful sequencing and reforms.</p> <p>Competition from established currencies: The rupee would face competition from well-established international currencies like the US dollar, euro, and yen. These currencies have established networks, global recognition, and the backing of stable economies. Convincing international users to adopt the rupee can be challenging.</p> <p>Exchange rate fluctuations: The rupee's exchange rate is subject to fluctuations due to various factors like</p>	
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economic indicators, capital flows, and geopolitical events. This fluctuations could deter international users from adopting the rupee, especially if they perceive it as risky or unstable.

Some of the recent initiatives taken by India to promote rupee trade with its neighbouring countries are

Dimension	Content
Initiatives taken by India	In July 2022, the RBI introduced a mechanism for the “international settlement of trade in Indian rupee,” marking the beginning of the internationalization of the Indian rupee. The RBI’s move was aimed at facilitating bilateral trade with Russia, which was facing sanctions from the US.
	In December 2022, India used the Indian rupee to make its first successful trade with Russia. Due to the Indian rupee’s internationalization, both Indian citizens and non-citizens can now freely use it in foreign markets, including for international trade and as a reserve currency.
	Initially, this was intended to save bilateral trade with Russia from US sanctions. But soon, other countries started to be interested in the system. In the end, 35 countries in Asia, Africa, and Scandinavia said they were interested in using the Indian rupee to settle trade.

		India also encourages cross-border trade with other countries, especially neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh, in Indian Rupee instead of other currencies. This will increase the demand for the Indian Rupee in these countries, thereby promoting its internationalization.	
Conclusion:	The rupee's internationalization can benefit India and its partners, but also has challenges and risks. India needs stability, markets, capital flows, and currency competition. It also needs to handle volatility and balance goals. India has promoted rupee trade with its neighbours, especially those under sanctions or dollar shortages. This can aid the rupee's internationalization. But India also needs to widen and diversify its trade and investment with other regions and countries. The rupee's internationalization can boost economic growth and development for India and the world.		

1. Cancer-fighting drugs, medicines for rare diseases and food products for special medical purposes exempted from GST: AIR

Why is it in the news?	The GST Council has decided to exempt cancer-fighting drugs, medicines for rare diseases, and food products for special medical purposes from the GST regime
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International importance. Mains: General Studies II: Inclusive growth and issues arising from it. Government Budget
Important concepts	Goods and Service Tax (GST)

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q.

What is/are the most likely advantages of implementing 'Goods and Services Tax (GST)'?

1. It will replace multiple taxes collected by multiple authorities and will thus create a single market in India.
2. It will drastically reduce the 'Current Account Deficit' of India and will enable it to increase its foreign exchange reserves.
3. It will enormously increase the growth and size of economy of India and will enable it to overtake China in the near future.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Today's prelims practice question:

Q. Consider the following.

1. Cancer-fighting drugs
- 2) Medicines for rare diseases
- 3) Food products for special medical purposes

How many of the above items given above is/are exempted from GST.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The GST Council has decided to exempt cancer-fighting drugs, medicines for rare diseases, and food products for special medical purposes from the GST regime.
- This was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a press conference after chairing the 50th GST Council meeting in New Delhi yesterday.
- The finance minister also announced that 28 percent tax will be levied on online gaming, horse racing, and casinos. She informed that the Council has also decided to exempt GST of satellite launch services by private operators

Mains PYQ exercise:

Explain the rationale behind the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act of 2017. How has COVID-19 impacted the GST compensation fund and created new federal tensions? (Answer in 250 words) 15 (2020)

Today's mains practice question:

Discuss the objectives, benefits, and challenges of GST in the Indian economy. How has the GST Council addressed some of the issues faced by various sectors and stakeholders in the GST regime? Give examples.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Goods and Service Tax (GST):

- GST is a value-added tax levied on most goods and services sold for domestic consumption. It is paid by consumers but remitted to the government by the businesses selling the goods and services¹. GST was introduced in India in 2017 as a major taxation reform to boost the economic growth of India. It replaced many central and state taxes and created a common national market.

Some of the key features of GST are:

- It is applicable on the supply side of goods or services, not on the manufacture, sale or provision of them¹.
- It is based on the principle of destination-based consumption taxation, meaning the tax is collected by the state where the goods or services are consumed, not where they are produced.
- It is a dual GST with the Centre and the States simultaneously levying tax on a common base. The GST levied by the Centre is called Central GST (CGST) and that by the States is called State GST (SGST). There is also an Integrated GST (IGST) for inter-state supplies and imports, which is collected by the Centre and shared with the States.
- The GST rates are decided by the GST Council, which is a constitutional body headed by the Union Finance Minister and comprising representatives of all the States. The Council also makes recommendations on various issues related to GST.
- The GST has multiple rates, ranging from 0% to 28%, depending on the category of goods or services. There are also some exemptions and special provisions for certain sectors or items.

Some of the benefits of GST are:

- It reduces the cascading effect of taxes, meaning there is no tax on tax, and thus lowers the overall tax burden on goods and services.
- It simplifies the tax administration and compliance, as there is a single tax regime for the entire country and a unified online portal for registration, filing returns and payment of taxes.
- It enhances the competitiveness of Indian products in the domestic and international markets, as it eliminates the distortions caused by differential taxation across states and ensures full credit of input taxes across the value chain of production.

- It improves the revenue collection of both the Centre and the States, as it widens the tax base, reduces tax evasion and leakage, and ensures better enforcement of tax laws.

Some of the challenges or criticisms of GST are:

- It has increased the compliance burden for small businesses and traders, who have to deal with multiple registrations, returns and audits under different GST laws.
- It has created some confusion and uncertainty among taxpayers and consumers due to frequent changes in rates, rules and procedures, as well as technical glitches in the online portal.
- It has adversely affected some sectors or states that have lost their fiscal autonomy or revenue sources due to GST. For example, petroleum products, alcohol and electricity are still outside the purview of GST, which affects the revenue of states that heavily depend on these items. Similarly, states that are net exporters of goods or services have seen a decline in their revenue due to destination-based taxation.
- It has not been able to fully compensate the states for their revenue loss due to GST implementation, as promised by the Centre. The Centre had committed to pay 14% annual growth in revenue to states for five years from 2017 to 2022 from a compensation fund. However, due to lower-than-expected GST collections and economic slowdown, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a shortfall in this fund, leading to disputes between the Centre and states over how to bridge this gap.

2. Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates 'SAGAR SAMPARK' Differential Global Navigation Satellite System to Strengthen Maritime sector– PIB.

Why is it in the news?

To further the digital initiative in maritime sector the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the indigenous Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS) 'SAGAR SAMPARK'.

UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance. Mains: General Studies II: Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nanotechnology, biotechnology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.
Important concepts	SAGAR SAMPARK

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q.

In which of the following areas can GPS Technology be used?

1. Mobile Phone Operations
2. Banking Operations
3. Controlling the Power Grids

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS) 'SAGAR SAMPARK' launched by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways in July 2023?

1. It is a terrestrial based enhancement system which corrects the errors and inaccuracies in the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS).
2. It is a 'Made in India' system that will provide more accurate information to the ships for safe navigation.

3. The latest DGNSS system is now able to transmit corrections of GPS and GLONASS and It significantly improves the accuracy of GPS positioning, reducing errors caused by the atmospheric inferences, satellite clock drift and other factors.

How many of the statements given above is /are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- DGNSS uses a network of ground-based reference stations that measure the errors and inaccuracies in the satellite signals from GNSS (such as GPS or GLONASS) and broadcast them to the users (also called rovers) who can apply them to improve their position accuracy. DGNSS does not assure the integrity of the GNSS signals, which means it does not warn the users if the signals are unreliable or corrupted.
- DGNSS 'SAGAR SAMPARK' is an indigenous system developed by India's Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships to provide more accurate positioning information to the ships within 100 nautical miles from the Indian coastlines. This will help the ships to avoid collisions, groundings, and accidents in the port and harbor areas and to move more safely and efficiently.
- The latest DGNSS system is now able to transmit corrections of GPS and GLONASS. The DGNSS significantly improves the accuracy of GPS positioning, reducing errors caused by atmospheric inferences, satellite clock drift and other factors.

Mains PYQ exercise:

Why is Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) needed?
How does it help in navigation?

**Today's mains
practice question:**

Discuss the significance and benefits of the DGNSS 'SAGAR SAMPARK' system launched by India for the maritime sector. How does it enhance the safety and efficiency of navigation? (15 marks)

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

SAGAR SAMPARK

- It is the name of the Indigenous DGNSS launched by India in July 2023.
- DGNSS is a terrestrial based enhancement system that corrects the errors and inaccuracies in the GNSS such as GPS and GLONASS.
- It provides more accurate positioning information to the ships for safe navigation within 100 nautical miles from the Indian coastlines.
- It is a 'Made in India' system that aims to further the digital initiative in the maritime sector and to fulfil the international obligations of IMO, SOLAS and IALA.
- It improves the safety and efficiency of navigation by reducing the risk of collisions, groundings, and accidents in the port and harbor areas.

1. Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission bags SKOCH Award under “State of Governance India 2047” in gold category: AIR

Why is it in the news?	The Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) has bagged the SKOCH Award under the theme “State of Governance India 2047” in gold category for its outstanding efforts in creating marketing avenues for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the Union Territory.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International importance.</p> <p>Mains: GS Paper-II: Pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity. Salient features of the Representation of People’s Act</p>
Important concepts	Goods and Service Tax (GST)

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2012

How does the National Rural Livelihood Mission seek to improve livelihood options of rural poor?

1. By setting up a large number of new manufacturing industries and agribusiness centres in rural areas
2. By strengthening ‘self-help groups’ and providing skill development
3. By supplying seeds, fertilizers, diesel pump-sets and micro-irrigation equipment free of cost to farmers

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Today's prelims practice question:

Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM)?

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development.
2. It has recently won the SKOCH Award in the Gold category for creating marketing avenues for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the Union Territory.
3. It has launched the AVSAR scheme to provide skill development and employment opportunities to rural youth.

How many of the statements given above are /are correct.

- (a) One only
- (b) Two only
- (c) All three
- (d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development, but it is implemented by the UT administration.
- The JKRLM has bagged the SKOCH Award under the theme “State of Governance India 2047” in gold category for its outstanding efforts in creating marketing avenues for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the Union Territory.
- The AVSAR scheme is launched by the Jammu and Kashmir Skill Development Mission (JKSDM). The JKRLM has launched other schemes such as UMEED, MKSP and SVEP to empower rural women and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Mains PYQ exercise:	The legitimacy and accountability of self-Help groups (SHGs) and their patrons, the microfinance outfits, need systematic assessment and scrutiny for the sustained success of the concept. Discuss (2013)
Today's mains practice question:	Discuss the role and achievements of the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) in empowering rural women and enhancing their income opportunities. Give examples of some of the innovative initiatives launched by the JKRLM to create marketing avenues for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the Union Territory.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM):

- The JKRLM is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development, but it is implemented by the UT administration.
- It aims to reduce poverty by building strong grass-root institutions for the poor in Jammu and Kashmir engaging them in gainful livelihood intervention and ensuring appreciable improvement in their income.
- It has four major projects: UMEED, MKSP, SVEP and SHG Products. UMEED is the flagship project that mobilizes rural women into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and provides them with financial and social empowerment. MKSP is a sub-component of UMEED that empowers women in agriculture. SVEP is a sub-scheme of UMEED that helps rural households to set up enterprises. SHG Products is an initiative to showcase and market the products made by SHGs.
- It has recently won the SKOCH Award in Gold category for creating marketing avenues for SHGs in the Union Territory. The award marks a significant milestone for the JKRLM, being the first award received since the inception of the scheme.
- It has introduced several groundbreaking initiatives that have transformed the lives of countless women associated with SHGs. The AVSAR scheme, Umeed Women's Haat, and District Rural Haat, SHG products available on e-commerce platforms are prime examples

of these initiatives, which have not only provided a platform for SHGs to showcase their products but have also opened up new marketing avenues for them.

2. CEC Rajiv Kumar participates in the 11th meeting of the Executive Board of Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) – PIB

Why is it in the news?	Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar led a three-member Election Commission of India (ECI) delegation to Cartagena, Colombia to attend the 11 th meeting of the Executive Board of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies I: Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies. Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies</p>
Important concepts	Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q. 2006</p> <p>Which one among the following commission was set up in pursuance of a definite provision under an Article of the Constitution of India?</p> <p>(a) University Grants Commission</p> <p>(b) National Human Rights Commission</p> <p>(c) Election Commission</p> <p>(d) Central Vigilance Commission</p>	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q.</p> <p>Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)?</p> <p>1. It was established in 2013 in South Korea.</p>	

2. It is the first global organization of election management bodies.
3. It has 119 EMBs as members and 20 regional associations as associate members.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) was formally inaugurated on October 14, 2013, in Song-do, South Korea. The idea of creating a global organization of election management bodies was first proposed by the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea in 2010 to the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA). After a series of working group meetings, a charter was drawn up and the name A-WEB was chosen upon the suggestion of the Election Commission of India.
- It is the first international association that exclusively consists of election management bodies (EMBs), which are the institutions or agencies responsible for conducting elections and ensuring their integrity. A-WEB aims to foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge and best practices among EMBs and to promote democracy and electoral participation worldwide.
- It has a large and diverse membership that covers most of the regions and continents of the world. As of July 2023, A-WEB has 119 EMBs from 108 countries as its members and 20 regional associations or organizations as its associate members.
- The regional associations include the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), the Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA), the Association of Caribbean

Electoral Organizations (ACEO), the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO), the Association of Electoral Commissions Forum for SADC Countries (ECF-SADC), etc.

Mains PYQ exercise:

In the light of recent controversy regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machines, what are the challenges before the election commission of India to ensure the trustworthiness of elections in India? (2018)

Today's mains practice question:

What is the significance of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) for India and the world? Discuss the role and achievements of A-WEB in promoting free, fair and transparent elections. (15 marks)

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)

- Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) is the largest association of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) worldwide with 119 EMBs from 108 countries as its members and 20 regional associations as associate members.
- It was established on October 14, 2013, in Song-do, South Korea by the initiative of the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea and the Election Commission of India.
- It aims to foster efficiency and effectiveness in conducting free, fair, transparent and participative elections worldwide by providing training programs, country programs, election observation programs, election visitor programs and knowledge sharing among EMBs.
- It has three main bodies: the Executive Board, which meets yearly to make decisions on A-WEB's general direction and elects the Chairperson and the Secretary General; the General Assembly, which convenes once every two years and votes on important issues related to A-WEB and confirms the induction of new members; and the Secretariat, which carries out the general administrative work of A-WEB and is based in Seoul, South Korea.

- A-WEB also has regional offices, including the A-WEB India Centre, which was set up in New Delhi in 2019 and conducts documentation, research, training and capacity building for EMBs. It also publishes the 'A-Web India Journal of Election'.

3. Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana: Empowering the Elderly for a Dignified Life -- PIB

Why is it in the news?	The Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), introduced by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, is a comprehensive initiative aimed at empowering senior citizens in India
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies II: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.</p>
Important concepts	Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q. 2019</p> <p>Atal innovation mission is set up under the</p> <p>(a) Department of science of technology</p> <p>(b) Ministry of labour and employment</p> <p>(c) NITI Ayog</p> <p>(d) Ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship</p>	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q.</p> <p>Consider the following statements with reference to Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)?</p> <p>1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme that provides financial assistance to state governments for implementing various welfare programmes for senior citizens.</p>	

2. It has subsumed the earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrc) and has two main components: Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC) and Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY).
3. It provides eligible senior citizens suffering from any age-related disability or infirmity with assisted living devices such as walking sticks, wheelchairs, hearing aids, dentures, etc.
4. It has launched a national helpline number namely Elderline for Senior Citizens that operates from 8 am to 8 pm, all 7 days of the week in 31 States/UTs.

How many of the statements given above are /are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All four

Answer: c

- AVYAY is a central sector scheme that provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining various programmes and services for senior citizens.
- AVYAY has replaced the earlier NAPSrc, which was launched in 1999 as a policy framework for the welfare of senior citizens. AVYAY has two main components: IPSrC and RVY. IPSrC provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining senior citizen homes, continuous care homes, mobile medicare units, and physiotherapy clinics. RVY provides eligible senior citizens suffering from any age-related disability or infirmity with assisted living devices such as walking sticks, wheelchairs, hearing aids, dentures, etc.
- RVY aims to provide senior citizens with assisted living devices that can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions, overcoming the disability or infirmity manifested due to ageing. The financial criteria for beneficiaries are either they belong to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, or they have income up to Rs. 15,000 per month.
- Elderline is a toll-free number (14567) that was launched on 1st October 2021 to provide free information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention in cases of abuse and

rescue to senior citizens. Elderline is operational from 8 am to 8 pm, all 7 days of the week in 31 States/UTs. It aims to improve the quality of life of senior citizens by addressing their issues and grievances.

Mains PYQ exercise:

Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process- Discuss. (2019)

Today's mains practice question:

Discuss the significance and challenges of the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) for the welfare and empowerment of senior citizens in India

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)

Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) is a scheme launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in India to empower senior citizens and ensure their well-being and social inclusion. The scheme was introduced in April 2021 by subsuming the earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrc), which was a policy framework for the welfare of senior citizens since 1999.

The scheme has nine sub-schemes or components that cater to the various needs and aspirations of senior citizens, such as:

Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):

- This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining senior citizen homes, continuous care homes, mobile medicare units, and physiotherapy clinics. The aim is to provide basic amenities, health care, and entertainment opportunities to the destitute and indigent senior citizens and encourage productive and active ageing.

State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC):

- This component provides financial assistance to state governments for implementing various welfare programmes for senior citizens, such as old age pension, health insurance, legal aid, etc. The aim is to strengthen the state-level mechanisms and institutions for the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of senior citizens.

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY):

- This component provides eligible senior citizens suffering from any age-related disability or infirmity with assisted living devices such as walking sticks, wheelchairs, hearing aids, dentures, etc. The aim is to restore near normalcy in their bodily functions and enhance their quality of life. The financial criteria for beneficiaries are either they belong to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, or they have income up to Rs. 15,000 per month.

Senior Able Citizens for Re-employment in Dignity (SACRED):

- This component provides skill development and employment opportunities to senior citizens who are willing and able to work. The aim is to enable them to earn a dignified livelihood and contribute to the economy and society. The component also facilitates the creation of a database of senior citizens who are looking for jobs and employers who are willing to hire them.

Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR):

- This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for undertaking social service activities that involve senior citizens as volunteers or beneficiaries. The aim is to foster a culture of social responsibility and civic engagement among senior citizens and create a positive impact on society. The activities may include awareness campaigns, advocacy initiatives, community development projects, etc.

Senior-care Aging Growth Engine (SAGE)-Silver economy for Senior Citizens:

- This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for promoting entrepreneurship and innovation among senior citizens. The aim is to create a conducive ecosystem for the development of products and services that cater to the needs and preferences of senior citizens. The component also supports the creation of a network of mentors, investors, incubators, etc., who can provide guidance and resources to senior citizen entrepreneurs.

Elderline – National Helpline for Senior Citizen:

- This component provides a toll-free number (14567) that operates from 8 am to 8 pm, all 7 days of the week in 31 States/UTs. The aim is to provide free information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention in cases of abuse and rescue to senior citizens. The helpline also connects senior citizens with various government schemes and services that they are entitled to.

Channelizing the CSR fund for elderly care:

- This component provides a platform for facilitating the collaboration between corporate entities and eligible organizations for undertaking various projects and programmes for elderly care under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. The aim is to leverage the resources and expertise of the private sector for enhancing the welfare and empowerment of senior citizens.

Training and capacity building for senior citizens:

- This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for conducting training and capacity building programmes for senior citizens on various topics such as health, nutrition, legal rights, digital literacy, etc. The aim is to enhance their knowledge, skills, confidence, and self-reliance.

MODEL MAINS ANSWER FOR TODAY'S EXPECTED MAINS QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance and challenges of the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) for the welfare and empowerment of senior citizens in India?

<p>Why this question</p>	<p>The question theme is reflected several times in UPSC (including prelims) and APPSC mains.</p> <p>UPSC PYQs</p> <p>Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process- Discuss. (2019)</p>				
<p><u>First step is to understand the demand of the question</u></p>	<p>Question has Two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Significance of Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) Scheme 2. Challenges in Implementing the Scheme 				
<p>Introduction</p>	<p>The Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) is a scheme launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in India to empower senior citizens and ensure their well-being and social inclusion. The scheme was introduced in April 2021 by subsuming the earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrC), which was a policy framework for the welfare of senior citizens since 1999.</p>				
<p>Body</p>	<p>The scheme has nine sub-schemes or components that cater to the various needs and aspirations of senior citizens, such as:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 1491 1318 2027"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="427 1491 651 1552">Dimension</th><th data-bbox="651 1491 1318 1552">Content</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="427 1552 651 2027"></td><td data-bbox="651 1552 1318 2027"> <p>Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):</p> <p>This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining senior citizen homes, continuous care homes, mobile medicare units, and physiotherapy clinics.</p> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Dimension	Content		<p>Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):</p> <p>This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining senior citizen homes, continuous care homes, mobile medicare units, and physiotherapy clinics.</p>
Dimension	Content				
	<p>Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrC):</p> <p>This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for running and maintaining senior citizen homes, continuous care homes, mobile medicare units, and physiotherapy clinics.</p>				

		State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSrC): This component provides financial assistance to state governments for implementing various welfare programmes for senior citizens, such as old age pension, health insurance, legal aid, etc.	
		Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction (AGRASR): This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for undertaking social service activities that involve senior citizens as volunteers or beneficiaries.	
		Senior Able Citizens for Re-employment in Dignity (SACRED): This component provides skill development and employment opportunities to senior citizens who are willing and able to work.	
		Elderline – National Helpline for Senior Citizen: This component provides a toll-free number (14567) that operates from 8 am to 8 pm, all 7 days of the week in 31 States/UTs. The aim is to provide free information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention in cases of abuse and rescue to senior citizens.	
		Channelizing the CSR fund for elderly care: This component provides a platform for facilitating the collaboration between corporate entities and eligible organizations	

		for undertaking various projects and programmes for elderly care under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.	
		Training and capacity building for senior citizens: This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for conducting training and capacity building programmes for senior citizens on various topics such as health, nutrition, legal rights, digital literacy, etc.	
		Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY): This component provides eligible senior citizens suffering from any age-related disability or infirmity with assisted living devices such as walking sticks, wheelchairs, hearing aids, dentures, etc.	
		Senior-care Aging Growth Engine (SAGE)- Silver economy for Senior Citizens: This component provides financial assistance to eligible organizations for promoting entrepreneurship and innovation among senior citizens.	
	Some of the challenges faced by AVYAY are:		
		Lack of awareness and outreach: Many senior citizens may not be aware of the various benefits and services offered by the scheme or how to access them.	
Lack of coordination and convergence:			

	Challenges	There may be a lack of coordination and convergence among the various stakeholders involved in the implementation of the scheme, such as central government, state governments, NGOs, corporate entities, etc.	
		Lack of infrastructure and resources: There may be a lack of adequate infrastructure and resources to cater to the growing demand and expectations of senior citizens.	
		Lack of quality and standards: There may be a lack of quality and standards in the provision of various facilities and services under the scheme.	
		Lack of participation and empowerment: There may be a lack of participation and empowerment of senior citizens in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the scheme.	
Conclusion:	AVYAY is a commendable initiative that aims to empower senior citizens for a dignified life and ensure their well-being and social inclusion. However, there are some challenges that need to be addressed to make the scheme more effective and impactful. The government should work in collaboration with various stakeholders to create more awareness, coordination, convergence, infrastructure, resources, quality, standards, participation, and empowerment for senior citizens. The scheme should also be regularly monitored, evaluated, and revised based on the feedback and suggestions from senior citizens.		

1. India's third moon mission, Chandrayaan-3 launched successfully from Sathish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota: PIB

Why is it in news?	The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully launched LVM3 M 4 rocket carrying Chandrayaan 3 at 2.35 PM from the second launch pad of India's spaceport at Sriharikota
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International importance.</p> <p>Mains: GS Paper III: Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nanotechnology, biotechnology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.</p>
Important concepts	<p>Chandrayaan 3</p> <p>LVM3 M 4 rocket</p>

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q.

Consider the following statements.

The Mangalyaan launched by ISRO.

1. is called Mars Orbiter Mission
2. made Indian to have the second country to have a spacecraft orbit the Mars after USA
3. made India the only country to be successful in making its spacecraft orbit the mars in its very first attempt

Which of the following statements given above is/are correct

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Consider the following statements regarding Chandrayan 3?

1. The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully launched LVM3 M 4 rocket carrying Chandrayaan 3
2. Chandrayaan-3 of an orbiter, a lander, and a rover that will explore the lunar South Pole.
3. It aims to demonstrate a safe and soft landing on the lunar surface and perform in-situ scientific experiments.
4. Chandrayaan-3 does not have an orbiter, but its propulsion module behaves like a communication relay satellite.

How many of the statements given above is /are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only three
- d) All Four

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched LVM3 M 4 rocket carrying Chandrayaan-3 on 14 July 2023 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh.
- An orbiter is a spacecraft that orbits around a celestial body, such as the Moon. Chandrayaan-2 had an orbiter, which is still operational and studying the Moon from above. Chandrayaan-3 only has a lander and a rover, which are designed to land and explore the lunar surface.
- Chandrayaan-3 does not have an orbiter, but its propulsion module behaves like a communication relay satellite. A propulsion module is a spacecraft that provides thrust and maneuvering for another spacecraft, such as the lander. A communication relay satellite is a spacecraft that relays signals between two or more other spacecraft or ground stations. In Chandrayaan-3, the propulsion module carries the lander and rover configuration until the spacecraft is in a 100 km lunar orbit. Then, it separates from the lander and rover and stays in orbit to relay communications between them and the ground station.

Mains PYQ exercise:	India has achieved remarkable successes in unmanned space missions including the Chandrayaan and Mars Orbiter Mission, but has not ventured into manned space mission, both in terms of technology and logistics? Explain critically.
Today's mains practice question:	Evaluate the achievements and learnings of Chandrayaan-2 mission. How will Chandrayaan-3 overcome the challenges faced by its predecessor and advance India's lunar exploration goals

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Chandrayaan 3:

- Chandrayaan 3 is the third lunar exploration mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)
- It consists of a lander and the Pragyan rover similar to Chandrayaan 2 but does not have an orbiter. Its propulsion module behaves like a communication relay satellite.
- It aims to achieve a soft landing on the moon, increasing India's potential in space science.
- The launch of Chandrayaan 3 took place on 14 July 2023 at 2:35 pm IST from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota using a Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM 3) rocket.
- The lander and rover are expected to land near the lunar south pole region on 23 August 2023 at 17:47 IST.
- The mission duration of the lander and rover is one lunar day (~14 Earth days).
- The mission carries eight science payloads, four on the lander and four on the rover, to study various aspects of the lunar surface and environment.

Payload	Description
RAMBHA	Radio Anatomy of Moon Bound Hypersensitive ionosphere and Atmosphere
ChaSTE	Chandra's Surface Thermo physical Experiment
ILSA	Instrument for Lunar Seismic Activity
LRA	Laser Retroreflector Array
APXS	Alpha Particle X-Ray Spectrometer
LIBS	Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscope
SHAPE	Spectro-polarimetry of HABitable Planet Earth
LIRAP	Laser Inertial Referencing and Accelerometer Package

- The mission is a follow-up to Chandrayaan 2, where a last-minute glitch in the landing guidance software led to the lander crashing after entering lunar orbit.
- The mission is also a precursor to the Lunar Polar Exploration Mission proposed in partnership with Japan for 2025, which will include site sampling and lunar night survival technologies.
- The mission is supported by the European Space Tracking (ESTRACK) operated by European Space Agency (ESA) during critical flight operations.

LVM3 M 4 rocket

- LVM3 M 4 stands for Launch Vehicle Mark-3 Mission 4. It is the fourth operational mission of the LVM3 rocket, formerly known as GSLV Mk III.
- LVM3 is India's heaviest and most powerful rocket, capable of launching 4-tonne class satellites into geostationary transfer orbit or 8-tonne class satellites into low Earth orbit.
- LVM3 M 4 rocket lifted off successfully from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on 14 July 2023 carrying the Chandrayaan 3 spacecraft.

- The rocket has a three-stage configuration, consisting of two solid strap-on boosters (S200), a liquid core stage (L110) and a cryogenic upper stage (C25)
- The rocket has a height of 43.43 m, a diameter of 4 m and a lift-off mass of 640 tonnes.
- The rocket placed the Chandrayaan 3 spacecraft into an elliptical orbit of 170 x 36500 km around the Earth, from where it will perform a series of manoeuvres to reach the lunar orbit.
- The rocket also carries a scientific payload called SHAPE (Spectro-polarimetry of Habitable Planet Earth), which will study the spectral and polarimetric measurements of Earth from the lunar orbit.

2. Prime Minister attends the Bastille Day Parade as Guest of Honour– PIB

Why is it in news?	Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended Bastille Day Parade as Guest of Honour at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France, on the Champs-Élysées on 14 July 2023.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.</p>
Important concepts	<p>Bastille Day</p> <p>Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour</p>
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q. 2007</p> <p>Through which one of the following Straits, does a tunnel connect the United Kingdom and France?</p> <p>a) Davis Strait</p> <p>b) Denmark Strait</p> <p>c) Strait of Dover</p> <p>d) Strait of Gibraltar</p>	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p>	

Q.

Consider the following statement with reference to PM Narendra Modi's Visit to France

1. Narendra Modi is the Chief Guest of Honor at the Bastille Day Parade
2. President Macron conferred the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, the highest French honour in military or civilian orders, on PM Modi
3. Indian Tourists would be able to make payments in Rupees through UPI at the Eiffel Tower

How many of the statements given above is/are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- PM Modi was invited by President Macron to attend the French National Day celebrations in Paris on July 14, 2023. The Bastille Day Parade is a military and civilian parade that takes place every year on this day to commemorate the storming of the Bastille prison in 1789, which marked the beginning of the French Revolution. PM Modi was the Guest of Honor at this parade, which is a sign of respect and friendship between India and France.
- PM Modi was awarded the highest distinction that France can bestow upon a foreign dignitary. The Legion of Honour is a French order of merit that was established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. The Grand Cross is the highest rank in this order, and it is given to heads of state or government who have made exceptional contributions to France or to the ideals it upholds. PM Modi received this honour during a private dinner with President Macron at the Elysee Palace on July 13, 2023.
- Indian tourists visiting the Eiffel Tower, one of the most famous landmarks in Paris, would be able to use their mobile phones and a digital payment system called Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to pay for their tickets or souvenirs in Indian currency. UPI is an instant payment system that allows users to transfer money between bank accounts using a virtual address or a QR code.

Mains PYQ exercise:	(COMPARING Constitution) What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism (10m 150 words)
Today's mains practice question:	India and France have emerged as strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific region, with converging interests and shared values. Discuss the key areas of cooperation and challenges in their bilateral relationship.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Bastille Day:

- Bastille Day is the National Day of France, which is celebrated on 14 July each year.
- It commemorates the Storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789, a major event of the French Revolution, as well as the Fête de la Fédération that celebrated the unity of the French people on 14 July 1790
- The Bastille was a fortress-prison in Paris that symbolized the oppressive rule of the bourbon monarchy. It held political prisoners and citizens detained by royal orders without trial.
- On 14 July 1789, a crowd of Parisians, fearing an attack by the royal army, stormed the Bastille to obtain arms and ammunition. They were joined by some mutinous soldiers and managed to capture the prison and free the seven inmates inside.
- The taking of the Bastille marked the beginning of the French Revolution and the end of the ancien régime (old order). It became a symbol of popular sovereignty and democratic ideals.
- Bastille Day became an official holiday in 1880. It is celebrated with military parades, fireworks, concerts, and balls throughout France. The largest parade is held on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, in front of the President of the Republic and other officials and guests.
- Bastille Day is also observed in former French colonies and territories, as well as by Francophiles around the world. It is a day to celebrate French culture, history, and values.

Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour:

- The Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour is the highest French decoration, both civil and military, and is one of the most famous national honours in the world.
- The Legion of Honour was established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802 and has been presented for more than two centuries on behalf of the French Head of State to its most deserving citizens in all fields of activity.
- The motto of the Legion of Honour is Honneur et Patrie, French for Honour and Fatherland
- The award badge is a five-armed Maltese asterisk hung on an oak and laurel wreath. On the obverse is the effigy of the Republic and on the reverse two tricolour flags surrounded by the motto Honneur et Patrie
- The Grand Cross is the highest rank of the Legion of Honour, followed by Grand Officer, Commander, Officer, and Knight. It is worn on a sash around the waist and comes with a silver star with an eagle on the left breast.
- The Grand Cross is normally conferred upon high dignitaries on a state visit to France, or for exceptional services rendered to France or humanity. Foreigners are honoured for their support to France.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first Indian PM to receive the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, conferred by French President Emmanuel Macron on July 13, 2023. He is also the Guest of Honour at the French National Day (Bastille Day) parade in Paris.

3. Shri Bhupender Yadav leads Mangrove Plantation drive in Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu as part of the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme envisioned by the Prime Minister

Why is it in news?

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India today organised a mangrove plantation program at Kovalam Panchayat in Chengalpattu District in Tamil Nadu. Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav led the plantation drive as part of the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme of Government of India

UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance. Mains: General Studies III: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Important concepts	Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2002

Match List-I (Mangrove) with List-II (State) and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

List-I(Mangrove)

- A. Achra Ratnagiri
- B. Coondapur
- C. Pichavaram
- D. Vembanad

List-II (State)

- 1. Karnataka
- 2. Kerala
- 3. Andhra Pradesh
- 4. Maharashtra
- 5. Tamil Nadu

Codes:

- a) A-2; B-1; C-5; D-4
- b) A-4; B-5; C-3; D-2
- c) A-2; B-5; C-3; D-4
- d) A-4; B-1; C-5; D-2

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Which of the following statements is/are correct about the MISHTI scheme?

- 1. It is a scheme for promoting mangrove plantation along India's coastline and on salt pan lands.
- 2. It is a scheme for promoting organic farming and soil health in the coastal regions.
- 3. It is a scheme for promoting eco-tourism and cultural heritage in the wetland ecosystems.

4. It is a scheme for promoting renewable energy and green hydrogen production in the coastal areas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 3 only
- d) None of the above

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The MISHTI scheme is a new programme that will facilitate mangrove plantation along India's coastline and on salt pan lands. Mangroves are trees and shrubs that grow in saline coastal habitats. They provide many ecosystem services such as biodiversity conservation, coastal protection, carbon sequestration and livelihood generation. The MISHTI scheme will aim at intensive afforestation of coastal mangrove forests through convergence of various funds and sources, community participation and public-private partnership.

Mains PYQ exercise:	Discuss the causes of depletion of Mangroves and explain their importance in maintaining coastal ecology
Today's mains practice question:	Discuss the significance of mangrove ecosystems for India's coastal regions and the challenges faced in their conservation. Evaluate the performance and impact of the MISHTI scheme and suggest ways to improve it.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme

- The Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme is a new programme that will facilitate mangrove plantation along India's coastline and on salt pan lands.

- The scheme will aim at intensive afforestation of coastal mangrove forests, which are vital for biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, coastal protection and livelihood support.
- The scheme will operate through convergence between MGNREGS, Campa Fund and other sources. It will also involve public-private partnership for resource mobilization.
- The scheme envisages to comprehensively explore the possible area for development of Mangroves covering approximately 540 Sq. Kms spreading across 11 States and 2 Union Territories during five years commencing FY 2023-24 onwards.
- The scheme will also promote the sharing of best practices on plantation techniques, conservation measures, management practices and resources mobilization.
- The scheme will also enhance the tangible incomes of the local communities by providing them with ecotourism opportunities, carbon credits, fisheries, honey production, etc.

MODEL MAINS ANSWER FOR TODAY'S EXPECTED MAINS QUESTION

Q. Evaluate the achievements and learnings of Chandrayaan-2 mission. How will Chandrayaan-3 overcome the challenges faced by its predecessor and advance India's lunar exploration goals?

Why this question	<p>The question theme is reflected several times in UPSC (including prelims) and APPSC mains.</p> <p>UPSC PYQs</p>
<u>First step is to understand the demand of the question</u>	<p>Question has two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievements and learnings of Chandrayaan-2 mission 2. How will Chandrayaan-3 overcome the challenges faced by its predecessor and advance India's lunar exploration goals?
Introduction	<p>Chandrayaan-2 was India's second lunar exploration mission, which consisted of an orbiter, a lander and a rover. The mission aimed to study the lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, exosphere and water ice on the Moon, especially near the south polar region. The mission was</p>

launched on 22 July 2019, but the lander failed to make a soft landing on 6 September 2019. Chandrayaan-3 is a follow-up mission that will re-attempt a soft landing near the lunar south pole region in 2023.

Achievements and learnings of Chandrayaan-2 mission.

Dimension	Content
	Successfully launching the heaviest payload (3,850 kg) by India's most powerful rocket GSLV Mk III-M1
	Successfully inserting the orbiter into a 100 km circular orbit around the Moon Successfully deploying the Vikram lander and Pragyan rover from the orbiter
	Successfully performing the first de-orbiting manoeuvre of the lander
	Successfully capturing high-resolution images and data of the lunar surface and atmosphere by the orbiter's eight scientific instruments
	Successfully detecting the presence of argon-40, a noble gas, in the lunar exosphere by the orbiter's Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2) payload
	Successfully measuring the solar X-ray spectrum and its variability by the orbiter's Solar X-ray Monitor (XSM) payload
	Successfully demonstrating India's technological capabilities and scientific aspirations in lunar exploration

Body

	The learnings of Chandrayaan-2 include:	
		Identifying the causes and consequences of the hard landing of the Vikram lander, which deviated from its intended trajectory due to a software glitch in the braking system
		Analysing the data from the lander's sensors and cameras to understand the dynamics and challenges of powered descent and soft landing on the Moon
		Improving the communication and navigation systems between the orbiter, lander and rover
		Enhancing the reliability and robustness of the mission design and execution
		Incorporating the feedback and recommendations from various experts and committees for future missions
	Chandrayaan-3 is expected to overcome the challenges faced by Chandrayaan-2 and advance India's lunar exploration goals by:	
	Dimension	Content
		Re-attempting a soft landing near the lunar south pole region, which is of scientific interest due to its potential for water ice deposits and craters
		Carrying an improved version of the Vikram lander with enhanced software, sensors and thrusters
		Carrying a new version of the Pragyan rover with upgraded wheels, cameras and payloads
		Leveraging the existing orbiter of Chandrayaan-2 for communication and relay purposes

		Contributing to India's scientific and strategic interests in terms of lunar resources, geology, environment and exploration potential.	
Conclusion:	Chandrayaan-2 was a milestone in India's space programme, despite its partial success. It showcased India's technological prowess and scientific curiosity in exploring the Moon. Chandrayaan-3 is a promising mission that will build on the achievements and learnings of Chandrayaan-2 and enhance India's position as a leading space-faring nation.		



1. India-UAE: Joint Statement on Climate Change: PIB

Why is it in the news?	Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) recognized the urgent need to address the global challenge of climate change through global collective action while respecting the foundational principles and obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International importance.</p> <p>Mains: GS Paper II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests</p>
Important concepts	<p>United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC)</p> <p>Paris Agreement.</p> <p>UAE</p>

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2010

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international treaty drawn at.

- (a) United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 1972
- (b) UN 'Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992
- (c) World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002
- (d) UN Climate' Change Conference, Copenhagen, 2009

Today's prelims practice question:

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the joint statement on climate change issued by India and UAE in 2023?

1. It calls for expedited efforts to preserve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement through the fulfilment of nationally determined contributions and the display of solidarity and support.
2. It highlights the importance of the global stocktake and its successful conclusion at COP28, an ambitious exercise designed to take stock of global collective action to achieve the objectives of the Conventions and the goals of the Paris Agreement.
3. It stresses on the imperative of fortifying the adaptation capacities of developing countries in the face of climate impacts and operationalising the loss and damage fund and funding arrangements of COP28.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- It calls for expedited efforts to preserve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement through the fulfilment of nationally determined contributions and the display of solidarity and support.
- The Paris Agreement is a global pact to combat climate change by limiting the rise in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. The agreement requires each country to submit its own plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs), and to update them every five years. The statement urges the international community to speed up their efforts to achieve these goals and to show solidarity and support, especially to the developing and vulnerable countries.

- The global stocktake (GST) is a periodic assessment of the collective progress of the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement towards achieving their long-term goals. The GST is meant to inform parties on how to enhance their actions and support in a nationally determined manner. The first GST is scheduled to take place in 2023 at COP28, which will be hosted by UAE.
- Adaptation is the process of adjusting to the actual or expected effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, droughts, floods, etc. Developing countries are more vulnerable to these impacts due to their limited resources, capacities, and resilience.
- Loss and damage refer to the adverse effects of climate change that cannot be avoided or adapted to, such as displacement, loss of lives, livelihoods, ecosystems, etc. The statement expresses the need to accelerate efforts to respond to these issues and to operationalise a fund and funding arrangements at COP28 to provide financial assistance to the affected countries.

Mains PYQ exercise:

Explain the purpose of the Green Grid Initiative launched at World Leaders Summit of the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November 2021. When was this idea first floated in the International Solar Alliance (ISA)? (2021)

Today's mains practice question:

Critically analyse the joint statement on climate change issued by India and UAE in 2023. How does it reflect the common interests and challenges of the two countries in addressing the global climate crisis

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- The UNFCCC is an international environmental treaty that was adopted in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and entered into force in 1994. It has near-universal membership with 197 parties as of 2023.

- The ultimate aim of the UNFCCC is to prevent “dangerous human interference with the climate system” by stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would allow ecosystems to adapt naturally, ensure food security, and enable sustainable development.
- It also establishes a system of reporting, review, and verification of the parties’ actions and support, as well as a mechanism for resolving disputes. It also sets up several bodies and institutions to facilitate the implementation of the treaty, such as the Conference of the Parties (COP), the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), the Secretariat, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- It is a framework convention that does not set binding emission targets or timetables for the parties, but rather provides a platform for negotiating more specific and ambitious agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the Paris Agreement in 2015. These agreements build on the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC and aim to enhance the global response to climate change.

Paris Agreement:

- The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change that was adopted by 196 parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015. It entered into force on 4 November 2016.
- The overarching goal of the Paris Agreement is to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, recognizing that this would substantially reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.
- The Paris Agreement requires all parties to submit their national climate action plans, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs), which outline their targets and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. Each successive NDC should reflect a progression in ambition compared to the previous one.

- The Paris Agreement also establishes a global stocktake (GST) every five years, starting from 2023, to assess the collective progress of the parties towards achieving the long-term goals of the treaty and inform the preparation of future NDCs.
- The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because it brings all nations together to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. It also builds on the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is the parent treaty of the Paris Agreement

United Arab Emirates (UAE):

- The UAE is a federation of seven emirates located on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. It has coastlines along the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf and shares borders with Saudi Arabia and Oman.
- It is also home to a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna, including endangered species such as the Arabian oryx, the houbara bustard, and the dugong.
- The UAE was formed in 1971 after the British withdrew from the region. It was previously known as the Trucial States or the Trucial Coast, a group of sheikhdoms that signed treaties with the British in the 19th century to protect their trade interests and security. The federation initially consisted of six emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and Fujairah. Ras al-Khaimah joined in 1972. The UAE has had several border disputes with its neighbors, especially over islands and oil fields.
- The UAE is a constitutional monarchy with a federal system of government. The president is the head of state and is elected by the Supreme Council of Rulers, which consists of the rulers of the seven emirates. The prime minister is the head of government and is appointed by the president. The Federal National Council is the legislative body with 40 members, half elected by an electoral college and half appointed by the rulers. The UAE has a dual legal system based on Islamic law (sharia) and civil law.
- The UAE has one of the most diversified and developed economies in the Middle East. It is a major oil producer and exporter, but it has also invested in other sectors such as tourism, trade, finance, manufacturing, and renewable energy. The UAE is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC),

and the World Trade Organization (WTO). It has also established free trade zones and special economic zones to attract foreign investment.

2. MoU signed to establish 1st campus of IIT Delhi in Abu Dhabi – PIB

Why is it in the news?	A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Ministry of Education and Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) to establish 1st campus of IIT Delhi in Abu Dhabi.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: GS Paper II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests</p>
Important concepts	IIT Delhi
<p align="center">Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:</p> <p>Q. 2008</p> <p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ajman is one of the seven emirates of the UAE. 2. Ras al-Khaimah was the last Sheikhdom to join the UAE. <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	
<p align="center">Today's prelims practice question:</p> <p>Q.</p> <p>Consider the following statements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 1st campus of IIT Delhi will be set up in Abu Dhabi. 2. IIT Delhi recently ranked among the world's top 50 institutions for engineering and technology 3. IIT Delhi is at top 30 rank for global employability in the 2022 QS World University Rankings. 	

How many of the statements given above are /are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a formal agreement between two or more parties to cooperate on a common goal or project. IIT Delhi has recently signed a MoU with Khalifa University of Science and Technology (KUST), a public research university in Abu Dhabi, UAE, to establish its first campus in Abu Dhabi. The MoU aims to leverage the UAE-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which is a proposed free trade agreement between the two countries that covers areas such as trade, investment, and innovation. The MoU also aims to enhance the bilateral cooperation between UAE and India in the field of higher education and research.
- QS World University Rankings is an annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). It ranks the world's top universities based on six indicators: academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio. According to the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023, IIT Delhi is ranked at 48th position in the engineering and technology category, which covers disciplines such as computer science, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, etc. This is an improvement from its previous rank of 72nd in 2022.
- QS World University Rankings also publishes a Graduate Employability Ranking, which measures how well universities prepare their students for the workplace. It uses five indicators: employer reputation, alumni outcomes, partnerships with employers, employer-student connections, and graduate employment rate. According to the QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2022, IIT Delhi is ranked at 27th position globally and 2nd in India for its employability outcomes. This is an improvement from its previous rank of 43rd in 2020.

Mains PYQ exercise:	How will 12U2 (India, Israel, UAE and USA) grouping transform India's position in global politics? (2022)
Today's mains practice question:	Discuss the significance and implications of the MoU signed between IIT Delhi and Khalifa University of Science and Technology to establish IIT Delhi's first campus in Abu Dhabi. How does it reflect the growing partnership between UAE and India in the domains of higher education and research? (15 marks)

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

IIT Delhi

It is one of the 23 IITs created to be Centres of Excellence for training, research and development in science, engineering and technology in India. It was established in 1961 as a College of Engineering and Technology with the assistance of the UK Government and the Federation of British Industries. It was later declared as an Institution of National Importance under the Institutes of Technology (Amendment) Act, 1963 and renamed as Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

3. India-Mongolia joint military exercise “Nomadic Elephant – 2023” to commence in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia-- PIB

Why is it in the news?	Indian Army contingent comprising of 43 personnel left for Mongolia today. The contingent will participate in the 15th edition of bilateral joint military exercise “NOMADIC ELEPHANT-23”
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance. Mains: General Studies II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests
Important concepts	Nomadic Elephant – 2023 Mongolia

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2008

‘Hand-in-Hand 2007’, a joint anti -terrorism military training was held by the officers of the Indian Army and officers of Army of which one of the following countries?

- (a) China
- (b) Japan
- (c) Russia
- (d) USA.

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

“Nomadic Elephant” a joint military exercise is being held between India and which of the following country?

- a) China
- b) Mangolia
- c) Sri Lanka
- d) USA

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Nomadic Elephant is a joint military exercise that involves the participation of soldiers from both India and Mongolia. The purpose of this exercise is to enhance the skills and capabilities of the troops in dealing with situations like terrorism and insurgency, which are threats to peace and security. The exercise also helps to promote defence cooperation and friendship between the two countries. The exercise is held every year, either in India or in Mongolia. This year, it will be held in Mongolia’s capital city, Ulaanbaatar.

Mains PYQ exercise:

QUAD is the transforming itself into a trade bloc from a military alliance.
On present times Discuss.

**Today's mains
practice question:**

Discuss the significance and challenges of the Nomadic Elephant joint military exercise between India and Mongolia in the context of regional security and cooperation.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Nomadic Elephant – 2023:

- Nomadic Elephant – 2023 is the name of a joint military exercise between India and Mongolia that is scheduled to be conducted at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from July 17-31, 2023. This will be the 15th edition of the exercise between the two nations.
- The exercise aims to enhance military relations, exchange best practices, and develop interoperability, bonhomie, camaraderie and friendship between the two armies. The exercise will primarily focus on counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain under a United Nations mandate.
- Soldiers of the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 and Indian Army jawans from the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regiment will be participating in the exercise. The scope of this exercise involves a Platoon.

level Field Training Exercise (FTX). During the exercise, Indian and Mongolian troops will engage in various training activities designed to enhance their skills and capabilities.

Mangolia

- Mongolia is a landlocked country in East Asia, bordered by China and Russia.
- India and Mongolia have also cooperated in regional and international forums, such as the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). They have shared common views on issues such as terrorism, climate change, disarmament and human rights.
- India and Mongolia have also strengthened their cultural and people-to-people ties. India has set up an Indian Cultural Centre in Ulaanbaatar, which organizes various cultural events and activities. India has also offered scholarships and training programs to Mongolian students and professionals. India has also reprinted 108 volumes of Mongolian Kanjur, a sacred Buddhist text, as a gift to Mongolia in 2020.

4. India and UAE signed historic Memorandum of Understanding on LCS system-- AIR.

Why is it in the news?	In a significant move to strengthen economic ties, India and the United Arab Emirates have signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding on the Local Currency Settlement (LCS) system.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	<p>Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.</p> <p>Mains: General Studies II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests</p>
Important concepts	Local Currency Settlement

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2002

India has the maximum volume of foreign trade with:

- (a) USA
- (b) Japan
- (c) Germany
- (d) UAE

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Consider the following statements with reference to the Local Currency Settlement (LCS) system between India and the UAE?

- 1.It was signed between the Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of the UAE in July 2023.
- 2.It allows for the use of the Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham in bilateral trade.
- 3.It is India's first-ever LCS arrangement with any country.

How many of the statements given above are/are correct.

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies was signed by the Governors of the respective Central Banks on 15 July 2023. The MoU was witnessed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during the former's visit to Abu Dhabi.
- The MoU aims to put in place a Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) to promote the use of INR (Indian rupee) and AED (UAE Dirham) bilaterally. The LCSS covers all current account transactions and permitted capital account transactions. The creation of the LCSS would enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their respective domestic currencies, which in turn would enable the development of an INR-AED foreign exchange market.
- The MoU marks India's first-ever LCS arrangement with any country. India had earlier announced a framework for settling global trade in rupees, primarily targeting trade with Russia, but this is yet to take off in a substantive manner. The LCS arrangement with the UAE is expected to have a transformative impact on transaction costs and processing time while also increasing reliance on local currencies.

Mains PYQ exercise:

How would the recent phenomena of protectionism and currency manipulations in world trade affect macroeconomic stability of India?
(250 Words, 15 Marks) (2018)

**Today's mains
practice question:**

Discuss the significance and implications of the Local Currency Settlement (LCS) system between India and the UAE for bilateral trade and economic cooperation

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Local Currency Settlement:

- Local Currency Settlement (LCS) system is an international payment process in which two parties involved in a transaction agree to make payments in their respective local currencies,

without having to change currency into another currency. This reduces the dependency on a third currency, such as the US dollar, and lowers the transaction costs and risks associated with exchange rate fluctuations. LCS system also facilitates trade and investment flows between the two countries and promotes the use of local currencies in the global market.

- India and the UAE have signed a historic MoU to establish a framework for the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions between the two countries on 15 July 2023.
- The MoU was signed by the Governors of the Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of the UAE and witnessed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during the former's visit to Abu Dhabi.
- The LCS system allows for the use of the Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham in bilateral trade, marking India's first-ever LCS arrangement with any country.
- The LCS system covers all current account transactions and permitted capital account transactions.
- The creation of the LCS system would enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their respective domestic currencies, which in turn would enable the development of an INR-AED foreign exchange market.
- The LCS system is expected to have a transformative impact on transaction costs and processing time while also increasing reliance on local currencies.
- The LCS system would also promote investments and remittances between the two countries.
- The LCS system would enable India to use this mechanism to pay for crude oil and other imports from the UAE, which is currently made in US dollars. India is the third largest oil importer in the world and the UAE was its fourth biggest supplier of crude last year.
- The LCS system is part of India's ongoing efforts to promote the use of the rupee for international transactions. India had earlier announced a framework for settling global trade in rupees, primarily targeting trade with Russia, but this is yet to take off in a substantive manner.

5. India, UAE sign MoU on linking of India's Unified Payments Interface with Instant Payment Platform of UAE; PM Modi says it will enhance economic collaboration-- AIR.

Why is it in the news?	India and the UAE has signed three MoUs in banking and education sectors. The MoUs in the banking sector pertain to the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions and cooperation for interlinking their payment and messaging systems.
UPSC SYLLABUS RELEVANCE for prelims and Mains	Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance. Mains: General Studies II: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests
Important concepts	Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

Prelims PYQ Exercise-Find answer:

Q. 2017

Which of the following is a most likely consequence of implementing the 'Unified Payments Interface (UPI)'?

- (a) Mobile wallets will not be necessary for online payments.
- (b) Digital currency will totally replace the physical currency in about two decades.
- (c) FDI inflows will drastically increase.
- (d) Direct transfer of subsidies to poor people will become very effective

Today's prelims practice question:

Q.

Consider the following statements regarding the MoUs signed between India and UAE on linking their payment systems and promoting the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions?

1. The MoUs aim to create a Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) that covers current accounts and permitted capital account transactions.
2. The MoUs include the linking of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of India with the Instant Payment Platform (IPP) of UAE, as well as their respective Card Switches (RuPay switch and UAESWITCH).
3. The MoUs also include the integration of payments messaging systems (SFMS) of India with the messaging system in UAE.

How many of the statements given above are /are correct.

- a) Only One

- b) Only Two
- c) All three
- d) None

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The MoUs establish a framework for the use of Indian rupee (INR) and UAE Dirham (AED) in cross-border transactions, covering both trade and investment flows. This will allow exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their domestic currencies, reducing transaction costs and settlement time. It will also promote the development of an INR-AED foreign exchange market.
- MoUs focus on linking their Fast Payment Systems (FPSs), which are digital platforms that enable instant and secure transfer of funds between bank accounts using mobile phones or cards. UPI is India's FPS, while IPP is UAE's FPS.
- The MoUs also include the linking of their respective Card Switches, which are networks that facilitate the processing of card transactions. RuPay is India's Card Switch, while UAESWITCH is UAE's Card Switch. The linking of these systems will enable fast, convenient, secure, and cost-effective cross-border funds transfers, as well as mutual acceptance of domestic cards and processing of card transactions.
- MoUs also aim to facilitate bilateral financial messaging between the two countries. Financial messaging systems are systems that enable the exchange of information and instructions related to financial transactions. SFMS is India's financial messaging system, while UAE has its own messaging system. The integration of these systems will enhance the efficiency and security of cross-border payments.

**Mains PYQ
exercise:**

Money laundering poses a serious threat to country's economic sovereignty. What is its significance for India and what steps are required to be taken to control this menace?

Today's mains practice question:	Discuss the significance and implications of the MoUs signed between India and UAE on linking their payment systems and promoting the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions
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DETAILED EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- It is a real-time payment system that allows instant transfers between bank accounts using a mobile app. It is created and regulated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). UPI users can pay or request money using a unique ID or QR code, access multiple bank accounts, and perform various banking features. UPI was launched in 2016 and has grown to be used by over 200 banks and 100 million users.
- UPI works by using a smartphone app that allows users to link one or more bank accounts and make fund transfers using a virtual payment address (VPA) or a QR code. The app acts as a payment service provider (PSP) that connects the user's bank account with the NPCI's UPI platform. The NPCI is a non-profit organisation that acts as a switch to route the payment requests and responses between the banks and the PSPs. The UPI platform uses the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) infrastructure to enable real-time and 24/7 transactions.

MODEL MAINS ANSWER FOR TODAY'S EXPECTED MAINS QUESTION

Q. Critically analyse the joint statement on climate change issued by India and UAE in 2023. How does it reflect the common interests and challenges of the two countries in addressing the global climate crisis?

Why this question	<p>The question theme is reflected several times in UPSC (including prelims) and APPSC mains.</p> <p>UPSC PYQs</p> <p>How will 12U2 (India, Israel, UAE and USA) grouping transform India's position in global politics? (2022)</p>
First step is to	Question has two parts:

<p><u>understand the demand of the question</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint statement on climate change issued by India and UAE. 2. The common interests and challenges of the two countries in addressing the global climate crisis 										
<p>Introduction</p>	<p>India and UAE issued a joint statement on climate change during PM Modi's visit to Abu Dhabi. The statement recognized the urgency of global climate action under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.</p> <p>The statement also committed to enhance cooperation on climate ambition, decarbonization, and clean energy, and work together for COP28 outcomes.</p>										
<p>Body</p>	<p>The joint statement reflects the common interests and challenges of India and UAE in addressing the global climate crisis, such as</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="432 815 1318 1895"> <thead> <tr> <th>Dimension</th><th>Content</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td>Both are vulnerable to climate impacts, such as sea level rise, extreme weather, water scarcity, food insecurity, and health risks.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Both are major energy consumers and producers and have a stake in ensuring a just and sustainable energy transition.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Both have shown leadership in pursuing low-carbon development, by setting targets and implementing policies and initiatives for renewable energy, energy efficiency, green hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, and natural carbon sinks.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Both have demonstrated solidarity and support for the developing countries, by providing financial and technical assistance, capacity building, and technology transfer for climate action.</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The joint statement also highlights the opportunities and potential areas of cooperation between India and UAE in advancing the global climate agenda, such as:</p>	Dimension	Content		Both are vulnerable to climate impacts, such as sea level rise, extreme weather, water scarcity, food insecurity, and health risks.		Both are major energy consumers and producers and have a stake in ensuring a just and sustainable energy transition.		Both have shown leadership in pursuing low-carbon development, by setting targets and implementing policies and initiatives for renewable energy, energy efficiency, green hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, and natural carbon sinks.		Both have demonstrated solidarity and support for the developing countries, by providing financial and technical assistance, capacity building, and technology transfer for climate action.
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	Both have demonstrated solidarity and support for the developing countries, by providing financial and technical assistance, capacity building, and technology transfer for climate action.										

		Leveraging their roles in the G20, which is being hosted by India in 2023, to foster cooperation in combating climate change, with emphasis on finance and technology.	
		Supporting the successful conclusion of the global stocktake (GST) at COP28 and using its outcomes to strengthen their national commitments.	
		Collaborating on innovation, research and development, best practices, and joint projects in areas such as clean energy, green hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, natural carbon sinks, adaptation, resilience, and disaster risk reduction.	
		Enhancing bilateral dialogue and partnership on climate change through regular consultations, exchanges, and joint working groups.	
Conclusion:	<p>The joint statement on climate change is a significant step in strengthening the strategic partnership and cooperation between India and UAE on one of the most pressing global challenges.</p> <p>The statement reflects their common interests and challenges in addressing the global climate crisis, as well as their shared vision for a low-carbon future that is equitable, inclusive and sustainable.</p> <p>The statement also opens up new avenues for collaboration between the two countries in advancing the global climate agenda, especially for COP28, which will be a crucial milestone for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.</p>		