

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE for



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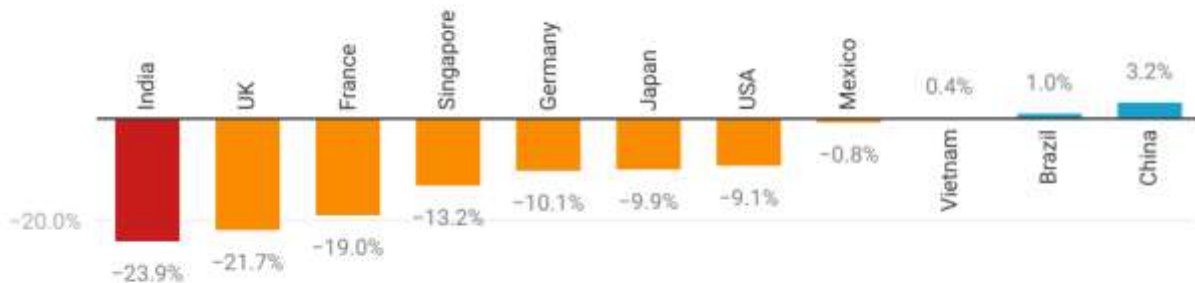
Success is born of action...

Topic 1: GDP Growth rate goes down

Importance for Prelims: Economy

India records worst contraction among global peers

Year-on-year contraction in real GDP



Seasonally adjusted data for some countries, Reuters as source for Mexico, Brazil and Vietnam

Source: Data repositories of respective countries • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

According to data released by the National Statistical Office, India's GDP growth rate **contracted by 23.9% for the April to June quarter**.

- The contraction reflects the **severe impact of the COVID-19 lockdown**, which halted most economic activities, as well as the **slowdown trend of the economy even pre-COVID-19**.
- Economists expect this to contribute to a contraction in annual GDP this year, which may be the **worst in the history of independent India**.
- The Indian economy is in a deeply vicious cycle, where **demand is contracting so heavily**, while the capacity to **neutralise this contraction has also contracted equally because of the tax revenue contraction**.
- Last contraction of the economy occurred in 1979-80, when GDP shrank 5.2%.

- There have been four other instances of minor contraction between 1965-68, and 1972-73.
- **India is among the worst in countries severely impacted by the Covid- 19** pandemic, an analysis of GDP number across major economies has shown.
- While **China**, which many believe to be the epicentre of the Covid-19 outbreak, announced a **surprise 3.2 per cent growth in its GDP** during this quarter compared to the same period last year, others like the UK and Germany witnessed a contraction. For the April-June period, the **UK took a 20.4 per cent hit in its GDP**, while **Germany experienced a “record” 10.1 per cent contraction**.

Topic 2: RetaiChola era inscription

Importance for Prelims: History



A rare inscription dating back to the RenatiChola era has been unearthed in a remote village of Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh

- The inscription was **written in archaic Telugu**, which was readable in 25 lines — the first side with 11 lines and the remaining on the other side.
- It was assigned to the **8th Century A.D.**, when the region was under the rule of the **Chola Maharaja of Renadu**.
- The inscription seems to throw light on the r ecord of a gift of **six marttus (a measuring unit) of land gifted to a person Sidyamayu**, one of the Brahmins serving the temple at Pidukula village.

Topic 3: Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology

Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle



India has for the second time successfully flight-tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV).

- HSTDV is an **unmanned scramjet technology** demonstrator that can cruise up to a **speed of mach 6** (or six times the speed of sound) and **rise up to an altitude of 32 kilometres in 20 seconds**.
- India became the **fourth country after the United States, Russia and China to develop and successfully test hypersonic technology**.
- It was developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) The HSDTV has a range of uses, including missiles of the future for air defence, surveillance and reconnaissance besides in the development of energy-efficient, low cost and reusable satellite-launch vehicles.

Topic 4: Pangong Tso

Importance for Prelims: Geography



Indian Army thwarted an attempt by China to change the status quo near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) by deploying its troops to a previously undeployed area on the southern bank of the Pangong Tso Lake in eastern Ladakh.

- Pangong Tso is an **endorheic lake (landlocked)** that is partly in India's Ladakh region and partly in Tibet.
- Nearly two-thirds of the lake is controlled by China, with just about 45 km under Indian control. The LAC, running north-south, cuts the western part of the lake, aligned east-west.
- Situated at an elevation of about 4,270 m, it is a nearly 135-km long, narrow lake — 6 km at its widest point — and shaped

liked a boomerang

- The lake's water, while **crystal clear**, is **brackish**, making it undrinkable. The lake freezes during the winter, allowing some vehicular movement on it as well

Topic 5: UNICEF and COVAX

Importance for Prelims: IR



Amidst the race amongst individual nations to get hold of a Covid-19 vaccine, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** will **undertake the responsibility of procuring and supplying an effective vaccine** to about 92 low and middle income countries of the world **under the Covax Global Vaccines Facility**.

UNICEF

- UNICEF promotes the **rights and wellbeing of every child**.
Together with partners, **UNICEF work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action**, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.
- UNICEF programmes focus on the most disadvantaged children, including those living in fragile contexts, those with disabilities, those who are affected by rapid urbanization and those affected by environmental degradation.
- UNICEF was created with a distinct purpose in mind: **to work**

with others to overcome the obstacles that poverty, violence, disease and discrimination place in a child's path.

- **UNICEF upholds the Convention on the Rights of the Child.**

COVAX

- **Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) facility is a mechanism designed to guarantee rapid, fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.**
- **The goal of COVAX is to deliver two billion doses of safe, effective vaccines that have passed regulatory approval and/or WHO pre-qualification by the end of 2021.**
- **Earlier, as many as 75 countries expressed interest to protect their populations and those of other nations through joining the vaccine facility, WHO said in a 15 July statement.**
- **COVAX is co-led by Gavi, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and WHO, working in partnership with developed and developing country vaccine manufacturers.**
- **The shots will be delivered equally to participating countries proportional to their populations and deployed initially for healthcare workers.**

6. Baltic states

Importance for Prelims: IR



Baltic states issue travel ban on Belarus President Lukashenko

- Baltic states, northeastern region of Europe containing the countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea

Topic 6: Priority Sector Lending Certificates

Importance for Prelims: Economy



Priority Sector Lending Certificates (PSLCs) are **instruments that enable banks to achieve their priority sector lending targets without actually disbursing loans** to sectors outside their comfort zone.

- PSL certificates allow **banks sitting on surplus loans to a priority sector to sell certificates to banks that haven't met their targets**, pocketing a sizeable fee for this trade. The said loans however do not change hands.
- The RBI **mandates banks to lend a minimum of 40 per cent of their total loans to priority sectors** such as agriculture, education, social housing, and micro enterprises.
- Aside from the overall target, banks are also **required to meet**

sub-targets within this, such as 18 per cent towards agriculture (8 per cent for small and marginal farmers), 7.5 per cent for micro enterprises and 10 per cent for weaker sections.

- While banks almost always meet the overall target, keeping up with the subtargets was getting difficult for banks with limited expertise in certain sectors.
- Also, banks were sceptical about operating out of their niche, fearing poor loan judgments and dents to their profits.
- Earlier, in the event of a shortfall in any specific category, banks had to make good this shortfall by either buying out such priority sector loans from other banks or had to pay a penalty to the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).
- However, from April 2016 onwards, the **RBI launched an online trading platform — the PSLC platform — to allow banks to trade in PSLCs to meet the sectoral sub-targets.** Rather than offering fresh loans, banks were only required to hold PSLCs reflecting lending by others.

Topic 7: Pinaka missile

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



The Ministry of Defence (MoD) had signed contracts with three Indian companies for supply of six regiments of the Pinaka Rocket System to be deployed along borders with Pakistan and China.

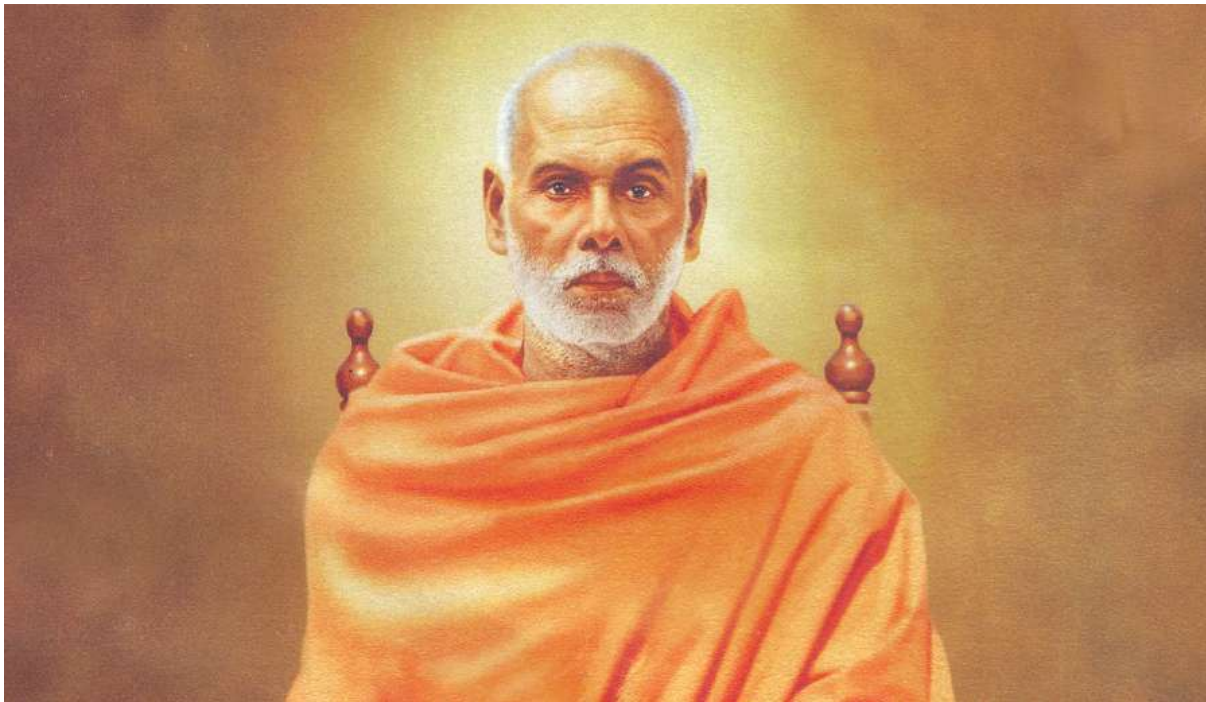
- The Pinaka, which is primarily a **multi-barrel rocket system (MBRL) system**, can fire a salvo of 12 rockets over a period of 44 seconds.
- In the battlefield, **long range artillery systems like Pinaka are used for attacking the adversary targets prior to the close quarter battles** which involve smaller range artillery, armoured elements and the infantry. The development of the Pinaka was **started by the Defence Research and Development**

Organisation (DRDO) in the late 1980s, as an alternative to the multi-barrel rocket launching systems of Russian make, called like the ‘Grad’, which are still in use.

- After successful tests of Pinaka Mark-1 in the late 1990, it was **first used in the battlefield during the Kargil War of 1999**, quite successfully. Subsequently multiple regiments of the system came up over the 2000s.
- The Mark-I version of Pinaka has a range of around 40 kilometres and the Mark- II version can fire up to 75 kilometres.
- The rocket system can operate various modes and can carry different types of warheads.

Topic 8: Sree Narayana guru

Importance for Prelims: History



Home minister pays tributes to Swami Sree Narayana Guru ji on Jayanti

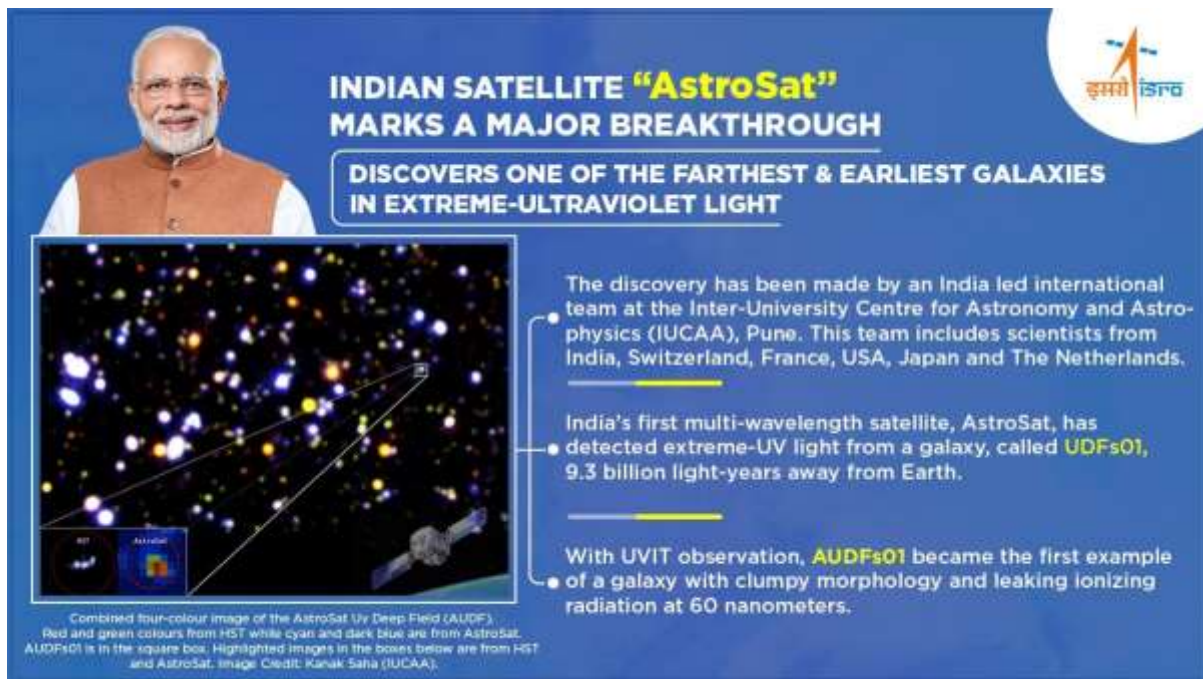
- Shree Narayana Guru (1856–1928), also known as Shree Narayana Guru Swami, was a **saint & social reformer of India**.
- The Guru was **born into an Ezhava family**, in an era when people from backward communities like the Ezhavas faced social injustice in the caste-ridden Kerala society.
- Gurudevan, as he was known among his followers, led **Reform movement in Kerala**, revolted against caste system and worked on propagating new values of freedom in spirituality and social equality which transformed the Kerala society.
- He also gave the **universal message**, “One caste, one religion,

one God.” Aravipuram Movement was launched by Sri Narayana Guru on Shivaratri day of 1888. On that day, Sri Narayana Guru defied the religious restrictions traditionally placed on the Ezhava community, and consecrated an idol of Shiva at Aravipuram. This drew the famous poet KumaranAsan as a disciple of Narayana Guru.

- In 1913, he founded the Advaita Ashram at Aluva. This was an important event in his spiritual quest. This Ashram was dedicated to a great principle – **OmSahodaryamSarvatra** (all men are equal in the eyes of God).

Topic 9: AstroSat

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



INDIAN SATELLITE "AstroSat" MARKS A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH

DISCOVERS ONE OF THE FARTHEST & EARLIEST GALAXIES IN EXTREME-ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT

The discovery has been made by an India led international team at the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune. This team includes scientists from India, Switzerland, France, USA, Japan and The Netherlands.

India's first multi-wavelength satellite, AstroSat, has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy, called **UDFs01**, 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.

With UVIT observation, **AUDFs01** became the first example of a galaxy with clumpy morphology and leaking ionizing radiation at 60 nanometers.

Combined four-colour image of the AstroSat UV Deep Field (AUDF). Red and green colours from HST while cyan and dark blue are from AstroSat. AUDFs01 is in the square box. Highlighted images in the boxes below are from HST and AstroSat. Image Credit: Kanak Saha (IUCAA).

The galaxy called **AUDFs01** was discovered by a team of Astronomers from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics(IUCAA) Pune using AstroSat

- ASTROSAT is **India's first dedicated multi wavelength space observatory.**
- This scientific satellite mission endeavours for a **more detailed understanding of our universe.**
- One of the unique features of ASTROSAT mission is that **enables the simultaneous multi-wavelength observations of various astronomical objects** with a single satellite.
- ASTROSAT observes universe in the optical, Ultraviolet, low and high energy Xray regions of the electromagnetic spectrum,

whereas most other scientific satellites are capable of observing a narrow range of wavelength band.

The scientific objectives of ASTROSAT mission are:

- To understand high energy processes in binary star systems containing neutron stars and black holes
- Estimate magnetic fields of neutron stars
- Study star birth regions and high energy processes in star systems lying beyond our galaxy
- Detect new briefly bright X-ray sources in the sky
- Perform a limited deep field survey of the Universe in the Ultraviolet region

Topic 10: Green Term Ahead Market

Importance for Prelims: Schemes

As a first step towards **Greening the Indian short term power Market**, Indian government has launched **pan-India Green Term Ahead Market (GTAM)** in electricity through video conference

- The introduction of GTAM platform would **lessen the burden on Renewable Energy (RE) -rich States and incentivize them to develop RE capacity beyond their own RPO.**
- This would promote RE merchant capacity addition and help in achieving RE capacity addition targets of the country.
- GTAM platform will lead to **increase in number of participants in renewable energy sector.**
- **It will benefit buyers of RE through competitive prices and**

transparent and flexible procurement. It will also benefit RE sellers by providing access to pan- India market

- The Government of India's target of 175 GW RE Capacity by 2022 is driving accelerated renewable penetration pan-India.
- Green Term Ahead Market contracts will allow additional avenues to the RE generators for sale of renewable energy; enable Obligated entities to procure renewable power at competitive prices to meet their Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPO); and provide a platform to environmentally conscious open access consumers and utilities to buy green power.

Topic 11: Coral reefs

Importance for Prelims: Environment



More life can be supported by ‘dead’ coral rubble than live coral, according to a recent study. A recent study has identified new causes for coral bleaching, namely excessive nutrients from fertilisers and storm-water runoff.

- Coral reefs are among the **most diverse ecosystems in the world**. They provide **shelter and nourishment** to fish and **other marine organisms**.
- Vibrant and healthy reefs form when a **coral and an algae - zooxanthellae- start a symbiotic relationship**.
- The coral provides protection and compounds zooxanthellae's

need for photosynthesis. The algae produces carbohydrates and helps remove the coral's waste.

- But when the **corals are stressed due to change in temperature, light and nutrients, they expel the algae and turn white**. Corals will die if such bleaching extends.
- **Dead' coral reefs supported 'cryptic' animals** hidden sea creatures, including fishes, snails, tiny crabs and worms — who hide under this rubble to save themselves from predation.
- The general perception of life supported by 'live' coral reefs included larger invertebrates like starfish, giant clams and sea cucumbers.

Topic 12: Mission Karmayogi

Importance for Prelims: Governance



Union Cabinet has approved ‘**Mission Karmayogi**’, a new **capacity-building scheme for civil servants** aimed at upgrading the **post-recruitment training mechanism** of the officers and employees at all levels.

- Mission Karmayogi aims to prepare **the Indian Civil Servant for the future by making him more creative, constructive, imaginative, innovative, proactive, professional, progressive, energetic, enabling, transparent and technology-enabled.**
- Mission Karmayogi programme will **be delivered by setting up a digital platform called I GOT Karmayogi.**
- Empowered with specific role-competencies, a civil servant will be able to ensure efficient service delivery of the highest quality

standards, the government said.

- The platform will act as a **launchpad for the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)**, which will **enable a comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus** at the individual, institutional and process levels.

Institutional framework

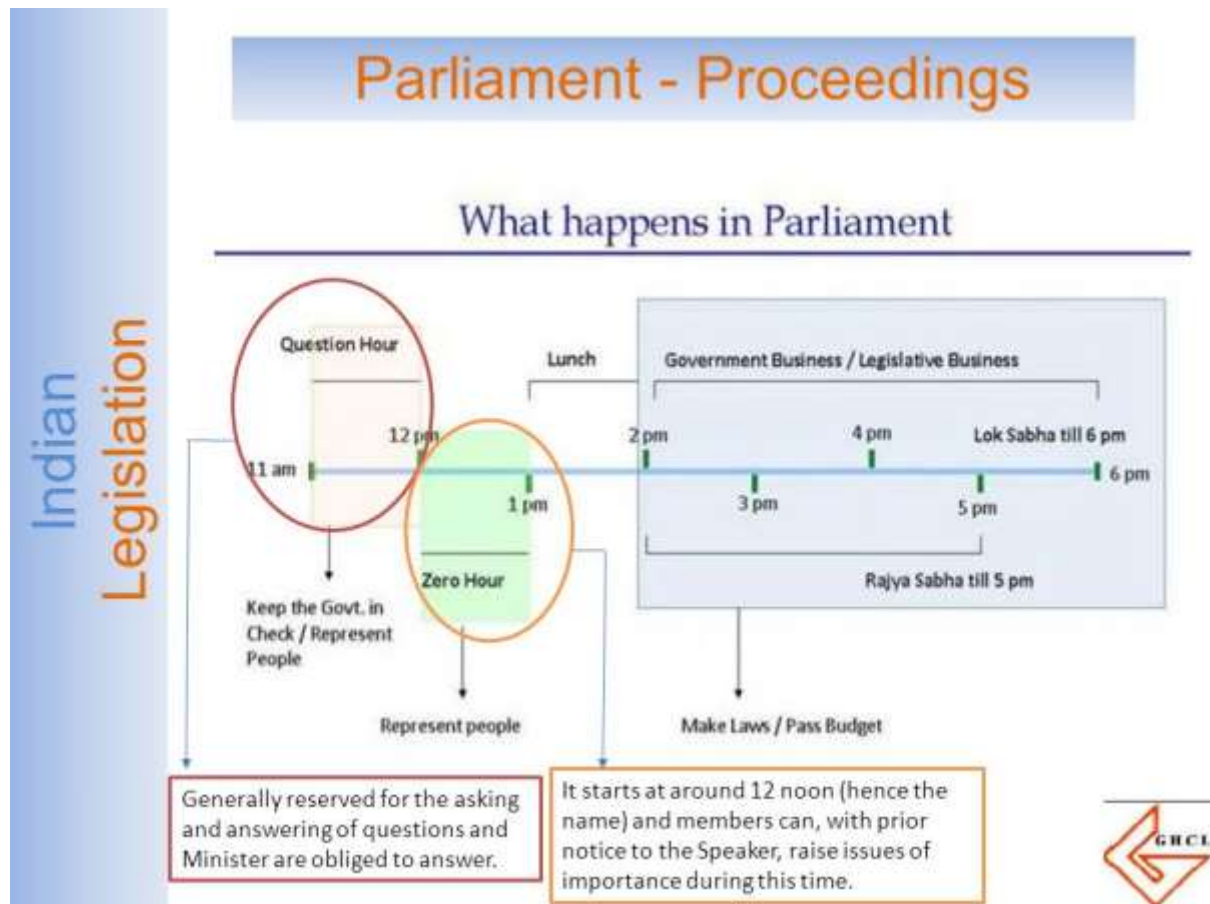
- NPCSCB will be **governed by the Prime Minister's Human Resource Council**, which will also include **state Chief Ministers, Union Cabinet ministers and experts**. This council will approve and review civil service capacity building programmes.
- Besides this, there will be a **Cabinet Secretary Coordination Unit comprising of select secretaries and cadre controlling authorities**.
- Also, there will be a **Capacity Building Commission, which will include experts in related fields and global professionals**. This commission will prepare and monitor annual capacity building plans and audit human resources available in the government.
- Finally, there will be a **wholly-owned Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), which will govern the iGOT-Karmayogi platform**. It will be set up under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- The SPV will be a **“not-for-profit” company and will own**

and manage iGOT-Karmayogi platform. The SPV will create and operationalise the content, market place and manage key business services of iGOT-Karmayogi platform, relating to content validation, independent proctored assessments and telemetry data availability.

- The SPV will own all Intellectual Property Rights on behalf of the Government of India.

Topic 13: Question Hour and Zero Hour

Importance for Prelims: Polity



Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats notified that there will be no Question Hour during the Monsoon Session of Parliament in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, and that Zero Hour will be restricted in both Houses

Question Hour

- The **first hour of every parliamentary sitting** is slotted for this.
- Question Hour is the **liveliest hour in Parliament**. It is during this **one hour that Members of Parliament ask questions of**

ministers and hold them **accountable for the functioning** of their ministries.

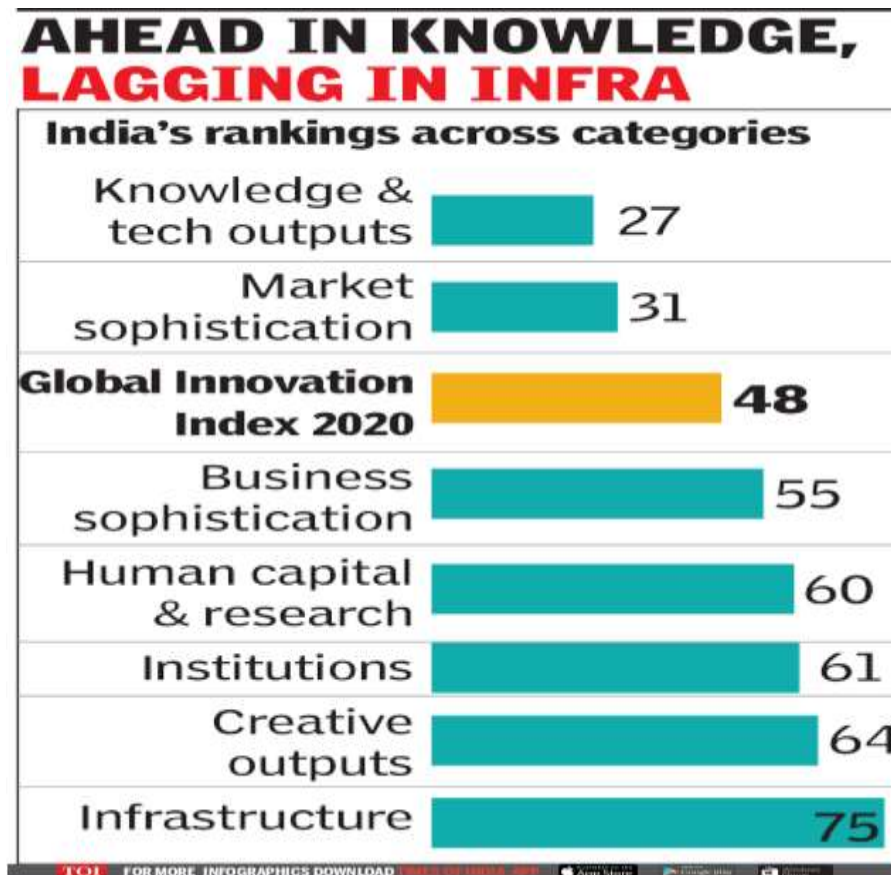
- The questions that MPs ask are designed to **elicit information and trigger suitable action by ministries.**
- The questions are of three kinds, namely, starred, unstarred and short notice.
- Parliament has comprehensive rules for dealing with every aspect of Question Hour.
- And the **presiding officers of the two houses are the final authority with respect to the conduct of Question Hour**

Zero Hour

- Unlike the question hour, the **zero hour is not mentioned in the Rules of Procedure.**
- Thus it is an **informal device available to the members of the Parliament** to raise matters without any prior notice.
- The zero hour **starts immediately after the question hour and lasts until the agenda** for the day (ie, regular business of the House) is taken up.
- In other words, the time gap between the question hour and the agenda is known as zero hour. It is an Indian innovation in the field of parliamentary procedures and has been in existence since 1962.

Topic 14: Global innovation index

Importance for Prelims: IR



India has climbed 4 spots and has been **ranked 48th** by the World Intellectual Property Organization in the Global Innovation Index 2020 rankings

- India was at the 52nd position in 2019 and was ranked 81st in the year 2015.
- It is a remarkable achievement to be in a league of highly innovative developed nations all over the globe.
- The WIPO had also accepted India as **one of the leading innovation achievers of 2019 in the central and southern**

Asian region, as it has shown a consistent improvement in its innovation ranking for the last 5 years.

- The consistent improvement in the global innovation index rankings is **owing to the immense knowledge capital, the vibrant startup ecosystem, and the amazing work done by the public & private research organizations.**
- The scientific ministries like the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Biotechnology and the Department of space have played a pivotal role in the enriching the national innovation Ecosystem.
- The **NITI Aayog has been working tirelessly to ensure optimization of national efforts in this direction by bringing policy led innovation** in different areas such as EVs, biotechnology, Nano technology, Space, alternative energy sources, etc.
- The **India Innovation Index, which was released last year by the NITI Aayog**, has been widely accepted as the major step in the direction of decentralization of innovation across all the states of India. A constant thrust in monitoring and evaluating India's position in global rankings has be provided by the NITI Aayog, including the global innovation index.

Topic 15: Force Majeure

Importance for Prelims: Economy



RBI given moratorium period expired on August 31 so people sought a complete waiver of interest for the moratorium period.

- The term '**force majeure**' has been defined in Black's Law Dictionary, as '**an event or effect that can be neither anticipated nor controlled.**'
- From a **contractual perspective**, a force majeure clause provides temporary **reprieve to a party from performing its obligations** under a contract upon occurrence of a force majeure event.
- While force majeure has **neither been defined nor specifically dealt with**, in Indian statutes, some reference can be found in **Section 32 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872** (the "Contract

Act”) envisages that if a contract is contingent on the happening of an event which event becomes impossible, then the contract becomes void.

- Force majeure clauses can usually be found in various contracts such as **power purchase agreements, supply contracts, manufacturing contracts, distribution agreements**, project finance agreements, agreements between real estate developers and home buyers, etc.

Topic 16: Nutraceutical

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



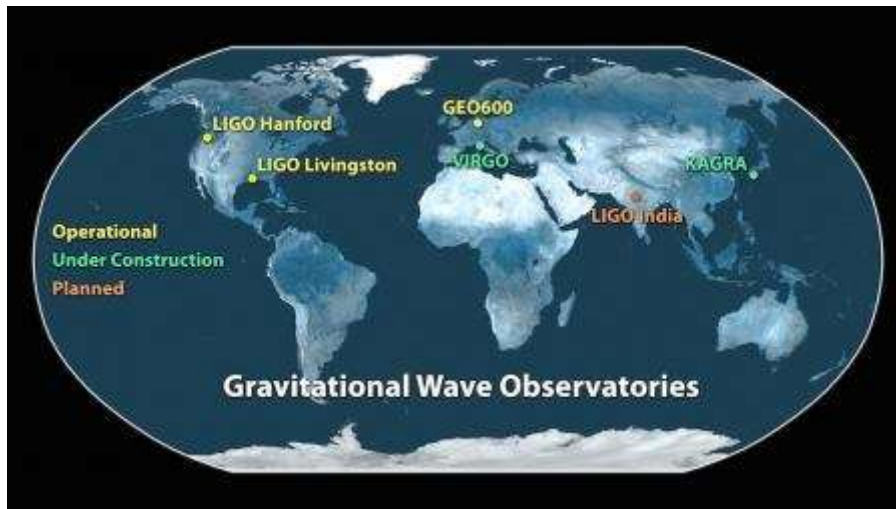
Union Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers has launched new nutraceuticals under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) for sale through Janaushadhi Kendras across country.

- Nutraceuticals is a broad umbrella term that is used to describe **any product derived from food sources with extra health benefits in addition to the basic nutritional value** found in foods.
- They can be considered **non-specific biological therapies used to promote general well-being**, control symptoms and prevent malignant processes.
- The term “nutraceutical” combines two words – “nutrient” (a nourishing food component) and “pharmaceutical” (a medical drug).

- They can be classified on the basis of their natural sources, pharmacological conditions, as well as chemical constitution of the products. Most often they are grouped in the following categories: **dietary supplements, functional food, medicinal food, pharmaceuticals.**

Topic 17: LIGO and VIRGO

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



Billions of years ago, a collision between two black holes sent gravitational waves rippling through the universe. In 2019, signals from these waves were detected at the gravitational wave observatory LIGO and the detector Virgo.

LIGO

- The LIGO Scientific Collaboration (LSC) is a group of scientists **focused on the direct detection of gravitational waves**, using them to **explore the fundamental physics of gravity**, and developing the **emerging field of gravitational wave science as a tool of astronomical discovery**.
- The LSC works toward this goal through research on, and development of techniques for, gravitational wave detection; and the development, commissioning and exploitation of gravitational wave detectors.

- The project operates **three gravitational-wave (GW) detectors**. Two are at Hanford, Washington, north-western US, and one is at Livingston in Louisiana, south-eastern US.
- The proposed **LIGO India project aims to move one advanced LIGO detector from Hanford to India.**

VIRGO

- Virgo is a **giant laser interferometer designed to detect gravitational waves**.
- Virgo has been designed and built by a collaboration of the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and the Italian Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (INFN)
- It is now operated and improved in Cascina, a small town near Pisa on the site of the European Gravitational Observatory (EGO), by an international collaboration of scientists from France, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and Hungary.

Working:

- It consists of two 3-kilometre-long arms, which house the various machinery required to form a laser interferometer.
- A **beam-splitter divides a laser beam into two equal components**, which are subsequently sent into the two interferometer arms.
- In each arm, a two-mirror Fabry-Perot resonant cavity extends the optical length.
- This is **because of multiple reflections that occur within each**

cavity and which consequently amplify the tiny distance variation caused by a gravitational wave.

- The two beams of laser light that return from the two arms are recombined out of phase so that, in principle, no light reaches the so-called ‘dark fringe’ of the detector.
- **Any variation caused by an alteration in the distance between the mirrors** produces a very small shift in phase between the beams and, thus, a **variation of the intensity of the light**, which is proportional to the wave’s amplitude.

Black hole

- Black holes are **imploded stars** that keep its mass and gravity. The black holes are **infinitely small with no real shape**, and can suck in everything that is a certain distance away.
- It **exhibits strong gravitational effects**, due to which, particles and electromagnetic radiation cannot escape from it.
- It acts like an ideal black body reflecting no light. It continues to grow, by absorbing mass from its surroundings.

Black hole merger

- Gravitational waves, postulated by Albert Einstein 100 years ago but discovered only in 2015 do not produce any sound on their own.
- These are just ripples created in the fabric of space-time by moving celestial objects just like a moving boat produces ripples in water.

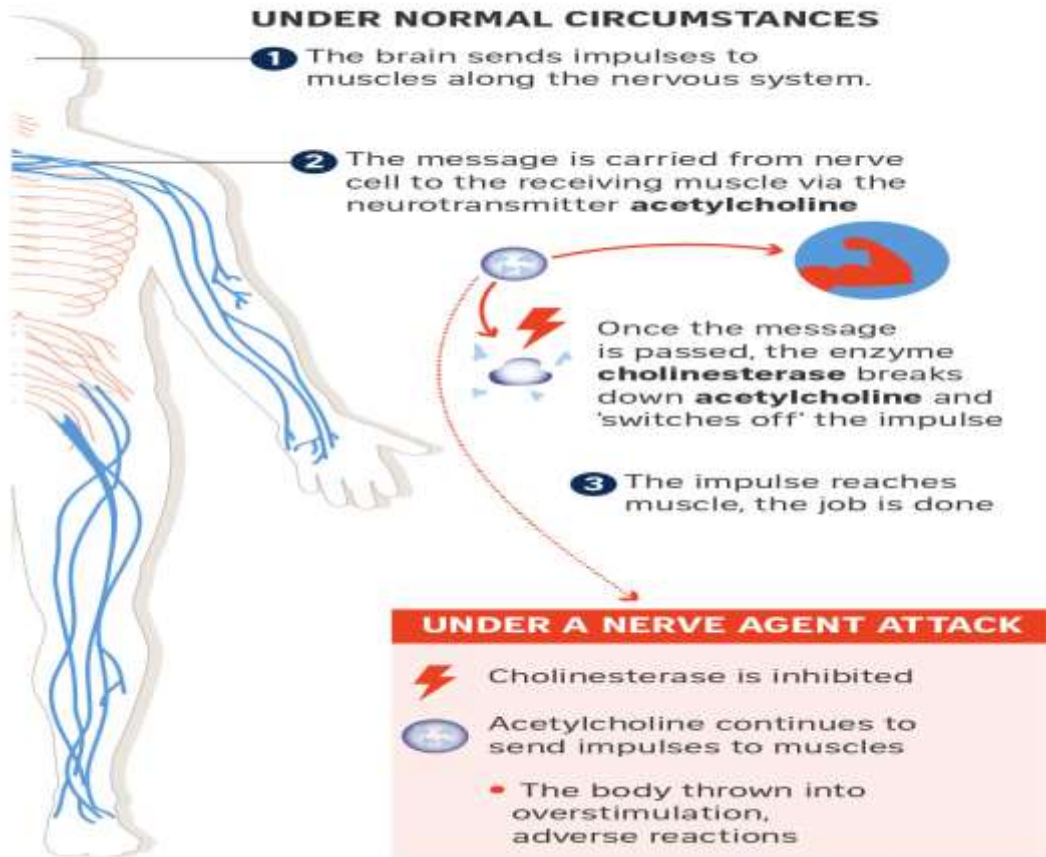
- But when converted into audio signals, these can produce signature sounds that can reveal the origin of the gravitational waves.
- The gravitational wave detected on September 14, 2015, is now known to **have been produced by the merger of two black holes about 1.3 billion years ago.**
- Scientists already knew the kind of sound that gravitational waves emanating from such events were likely to produce.
- As two such dense and massive objects, black holes or neutron stars, are about to merge, **they start rotating around each other at almost the speed of light.** The merger takes place within a fraction of a second.
- The **gravitational waves released in this last bit, when converted into audio signals, produce sound that is within audible range of human beings.**

Topic 18: Novichok

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology

Nerve agent: Novichok

Disrupts signalling along the nervous system, in the same way as other nerve agents such as sarin and VX.



WHAT IS NOVICHOK

- Developed by the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 80s
- Reportedly developed to circumvent the chemical weapons ban by relying on novel chemical structures
- Can be in the form of an ultra-fine powder
- Reported to be 5-8 times more lethal than VX



Source: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Two years after coming in the spotlight after the alleged poisoning of former Russian spy Sergei Skirpal and his daughter Yulia Skirpal in Britain, the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok is back in the news.

- During the **Cold War**, when the Soviet Union and the United States were at loggerheads, the two were also aggressively developing weapons of mass destruction.
- In Soviet Union, the nerve agents were being developed under extreme secrecy, as part of a **programme codenamed 'FOLIANT'**.
- One of the main reasons for the secrecy was to develop such agents whose components resembled ordinary industrial chemicals, so that they would not be detected using the standard 1970s and 1980s NATO chemical detection equipment.
- The chemicals used to make the agent are far less hazardous than the agent themselves, and therefore, it could also circumvent the Chemical Weapons Convention, an arms control treaty that came into effect from April 1997 and has 192 countries as signatories.
- The **first chemical weapon developed by the Foliant scientists was given the code name 'Novichok'**, which in Russian means 'newcomer'.
- The nerve gas is **10 times more effective in killing people than the US equivalent, known as VX.**

Topic 19: Reserve forest

Importance for Prelims: Environment



Maharashtra Chief Minister announced that the state government would designate a 600-acre parcel of land in the heart of urban Mumbai as a reserved forest.

- The land falls under the eco-sensitive zone of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, and is home to around 10,000 individuals who live in 27 tribal hamlets.
- Under **Section 4 of The Indian Forest Act, 1927**, the state government can “constitute any land a reserved forest” by **issuing a notification in the Official Gazette**, “declaring that it has been decided to constitute such land a reserved forest”, and “specifying, as nearly as possible, the situation and limits of such land”.

- Under the law, the government must also appoint a **Forest Settlement Officer (FSO)** “to inquire into and determine the existence, nature and extent of any rights alleged to exist in favour of any person in or over any land comprised within such limits or in or over any forest-produce, and to deal with the same”.
- The FSO will seek suggestions and objections from residents and others within 45 days of initiating the process. After taking into account the suggestions and objections, the process of turning the land into a reserved forest will be completed.
- Thereafter, the area will be protected from any construction.

Topic 20: UNSC 1267

Importance for Prelims: IR



The **United Nations Security Council's 1267 sanctions sub-committee** rejected the last two names of Indian nationals that Pakistan had proposed to be brought under the sanctions regime against terrorists and terror groups.

- **Article 41 of the United Nations Charter** gives the Security Council the authority to use a variety of measures to enforce its decisions. The Council regularly creates subsidiary organs to support or implement these measures.
- Among the most common are those measures that are known as “sanctions”, which are generally supported by a Committee, as

well as Panels/Groups of Experts or other mechanisms to monitor implementation of the sanctions.

- By resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999, the Security Council **established a Committee to oversee the implementation of targeted sanctions** measures against designated individuals, entities and aircraft that were owned, controlled, leased or operated by the Taliban.
- The measures were subsequently modified, particularly by **resolutions 1333 (2000) and 1390 (2002), to include an assets freeze, travel ban and an arms embargo** affecting designated individuals and entities associated with Usama bin Laden, and the Taliban wherever they are located.
- By resolution 2253 (2015) of 17 December 2015, the Security Council **decided to expand the listing criteria to include individuals and entities supporting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).**

Topic 21: Revised PSL guideline

Importance for Prelims: Economy



Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has comprehensively **reviewed the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) guidelines** to enable better **credit penetration** to credit deficient areas and increase the lending to small and marginal farmers and weaker sections.

- The revised PSL norms are aimed at **aligning the same with “emerging national priorities and bring sharper focus on inclusive development.**
- The RBI said bank finance **to start-ups up to Rs 50 crore; loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants** for solarisation of grid-connected agriculture pumps and loans for setting up **Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants** have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority

sector.

- To address regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit, **higher weightage have been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in ‘identified districts’** where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low.
- **The targets prescribed for “small and marginal farmers” and “weaker sections” are being increased in a phased manner.**
- Higher credit limit has been specified for Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs)/Farmers Producers Companies (FPCs) undertaking farming with assured marketing of their produce at a pre-determined price. Loan limits for renewable energy have been increased (doubled).
- For improvement of health infrastructure , **credit limit for health infrastructure (including those under ‘Ayushman Bharat’) has been doubled.**

Concept:

- Priority sector lending refers to **those sectors or areas of the economy which may not get timely and adequate credit.**
- The RBI requires Indian banks **to allocate certain portion of their overall lending for sectors mentioned under PSL.** These areas of focus for PSL include Agriculture, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Export Credit, Education, Housing, Social Infrastructure, Renewable Energy.

- Reserve Bank of India has, from time to time, issued a number of guidelines to banks on Priority Sector Lending. These were last reviewed in April 2015 and for urban and cooperative banks in May 2018.
- PSL guidelines are **applicable to all domestic scheduled commercial banks (excluding Regional Rural Banks and Small Finance Banks) and foreign banks with 20 branches and above.**

Topic 22: Anti-dumping duty

Importance for Prelims: Economy



India has imposed anti-dumping duty on commonly-used anti-bacterial drug Ciprofloxacin imported from China.

- An anti-dumping duty is a **protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports** that it believes are **priced below fair market value**.
- Dumping is a process where a company exports a product at a price lower than the price it normally charges in its own home market.
- The duty is aimed at **ensuring fair trading practices and creating a level playing field for domestic producers vis-a-vis foreign producers and exporters**.
- The duty is imposed only after a thorough investigation by a

quasi-judicial body, such as **Directorate General of Trade Remedies**, in India.

- The imposition of anti-dumping duty is permissible under the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime.

Topic 23: SCO meet

Importance for Prelims: IR

Member states



Peaceful resolution of differences key to ensure regional stability said Indian defence minister at SCO meeting.

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a **permanent intergovernmental international organisation**, the creation of which **was announced on 15 June 2001** in Shanghai (China) by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.
- It was preceded by the **Shanghai Five mechanism**.
- The SCO's main goals are as follows: **strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states; promoting their effective cooperation in politics, trade, the**

economy, research, technology and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas; making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region; and moving towards the establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order.

- The **Heads of State Council (HSC)** is the **supreme decision-making body in the SCO**. It meets once a year and adopts decisions and guidelines on all important matters of the organisation.
- The SCO Heads of Government Council (HGC) meets once a year to discuss the organisation's multilateral cooperation strategy and priority areas, to resolve current important economic and other cooperation issues, and also to approve the organisation's annual budget.
- The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.
- The organisation has **two permanent bodies — the SCO Secretariat based in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) based in Tashkent**.
- SCO comprises **eight member states**, namely India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russian, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Topic 24: Project Dolphin

Importance for Prelims: Environment



PROJECT DOLPHIN
PRESERVING OUR UNDERWATER FRIENDS

-  10-YEAR PROJECT TO FOCUS ON BOTH RIVER AND SEA DOLPHINS
-  AIM TO STRENGTHEN BIODIVERSITY, CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ATTRACT TOURISM
-  KILLING, HABITAT FRAGMENTATION BY DAMS AND BARRAGES AND INDISCRIMINATE FISHING HAS REDUCED THE GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN POPULATION FROM TENS OF THOUSANDS TO AROUND 3,700 OVER THE LAST CENTURY
-  GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, A SPECIES OF FRESHWATER DOLPHINS, IS PRIMARILY FOUND IN GANGA AND BRAHMAPUTRA RIVERS, AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES IN INDIA, BANGLADESH AND NEPAL
-  IN INDIA, THESE DOLPHINS ARE SIGHTED IN DEEP RIVERS IN ASSAM, BIHAR, JHARKHAND, MADHYA PRADESH, RAJASTHAN, UTTAR PRADESH AND WEST BENGAL
-  GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN, OFFICIALLY DISCOVERED IN 1801, CAN LIVE ONLY IN FRESHWATER

Source: Government of India

DIU

In his Independence Day Speech this year, Prime Minister announced the government's plan to launch a Project Dolphin. The proposed project is aimed at saving both river and marine dolphins.

- Project Dolphin will involve **conservation of Dolphins and the aquatic habitat** through use of modern technology especially in enumeration and antipoaching activities.
- The project will **engage the fishermen and other river/ ocean dependent population** and will strive for improving the livelihood of the local communities.
- The conservation of Dolphin will also envisage activities which will also help in the **mitigation of pollution in rivers and in the oceans.**
- It will include **oceanic as well as Gangetic river dolphins**, which were declared a National Aquatic species in 2010.
- **Dolphins are one of the oldest creatures in the world** along with some species of turtles, crocodiles and sharks.
- Ganges river dolphins once lived in the **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.** But the species is extinct from most of its early distribution ranges.
- The Ganges river dolphin can **only live in freshwater and is essentially blind.**
- They hunt by emitting ultrasonic sounds, which bounces off of fish and other prey, enabling them to “see” an image in their mind.

Topic 25: Hydroponic weeds ordered through darknet

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



Hydroponic weed has seen a high demand and is ordered through the Darknet, Narcotics Control Bureau found in drug racket

Hydroponic

- Hydroponics is the **cultivation of plants without using soil**.
Hydroponic flowers, herbs, and vegetables are planted in **inert growing media and supplied with nutrient-rich solutions, oxygen, and water**.
- This system fosters rapid growth, stronger yields, and superior quality.

Darknet

- The “dark net,” also known as the “dark web,” is part of the greater “deep web,” a network of **secret websites that exist on an encrypted network**.

Topic 26: Habitat corridor

Importance for Prelims: Environment



The Assam government has approved the addition of 30.53 sq km to the 884 sq km Kaziranga National Park.

- The additions are **habitat corridors** and would help provide **connectivity to Orang and Nameri National Parks across river Brahmaputra** from KNPTR besides the hills of KarbiAnglong to the south of the park, where the rhino, tiger, deer and other animals take refuge during the floods
- A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which **joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat.**

- Corridors are **critical for the maintenance of ecological processes** including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations.
- By providing landscape connections between larger areas of habitat, corridors **enable migration, colonisation and interbreeding of plants and animals.**

Topic 27: Mission Milk

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



In order to make our country self-reliant and self-sufficient in milk **NDDB** has launched second phase of **National Dairy Plan(NDP)** , which is promoted as '**Mission Milk**'. The project target will be to enhance milk processing capacity, infrastructure of dairy cooperatives and also attempts will be made to establish milk quality testing equipment at critical points in procurement area.

- **National Dairy Plan Phase I** is a central sector scheme for a period of **2011-12 to 2018-19**. NDP I is a scientifically planned multi-state initiative with the following Project Development
- **Objectives:**
 - To help increase productivity of milch animals and thereby increase milk production to meet the rapidly growing demand for milk
 - To help provide rural milk producers with greater access to the organised milk processing sector

- NDP I was focussed on 18 major milk producing states namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujrat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerela, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhatisgarh which together account for over 90 per cent of the country's milk production.
- **National Dairy Plan Phase II** will spread over five years from 2020 -2025, with a financial outlay of Rs 8,000 crore. The targeted growth in milk production is 6 per cent plus with 12 institutes with mass embryo production and 1.20 lakh villages with milk potential.
- Dairy development has seen uneven growth across the country. Some eastern, north -eastern states and aspirational districts are lagging behind.
- To ensure inclusive growth in milk production and procurement, it would be necessary to promote the creation of alternative producer owned institutions in these areas where cooperatives are absent or weak.

Topic 28: Bradykinin storm and Cytokine storm

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology

Better understanding

INTERVENTIONS GUIDED BY BRADYKININ HYPOTHESIS
COULD GREATLY REDUCE COVID FATALITIES

- Strange side-effects like swollen and bruised toes among Covid patients due to Bradykinin storm
- It can also mess with thyroid gland producing symptoms like producing excess thyroid
- Many of the neurological symptoms of Covid-19 could be due to an excess of bradykinin
- During bradykinin storm, blood vessels leak, as a result lungs get filled with fluid

**Bradykinin
storm
hypothesis is
an opportunity
to understand
Covid-19**

A supercomputer's recent analysis of data on the contents collected earlier from the lungs of patients with the **COVID-19 infection** has **showed that a phenomenon called a 'bradykinin storm'**

- Scientists are still trying to **understand the causes for the rapid deterioration in some patients with COVID-19.**
- While **the cytokine storm is able to explain certain aspects** of what goes wrong, doctors treating patients are often foxed by the severity with which the SARS-CoV-2 virus seems to affect some people.

Bradykinin storm

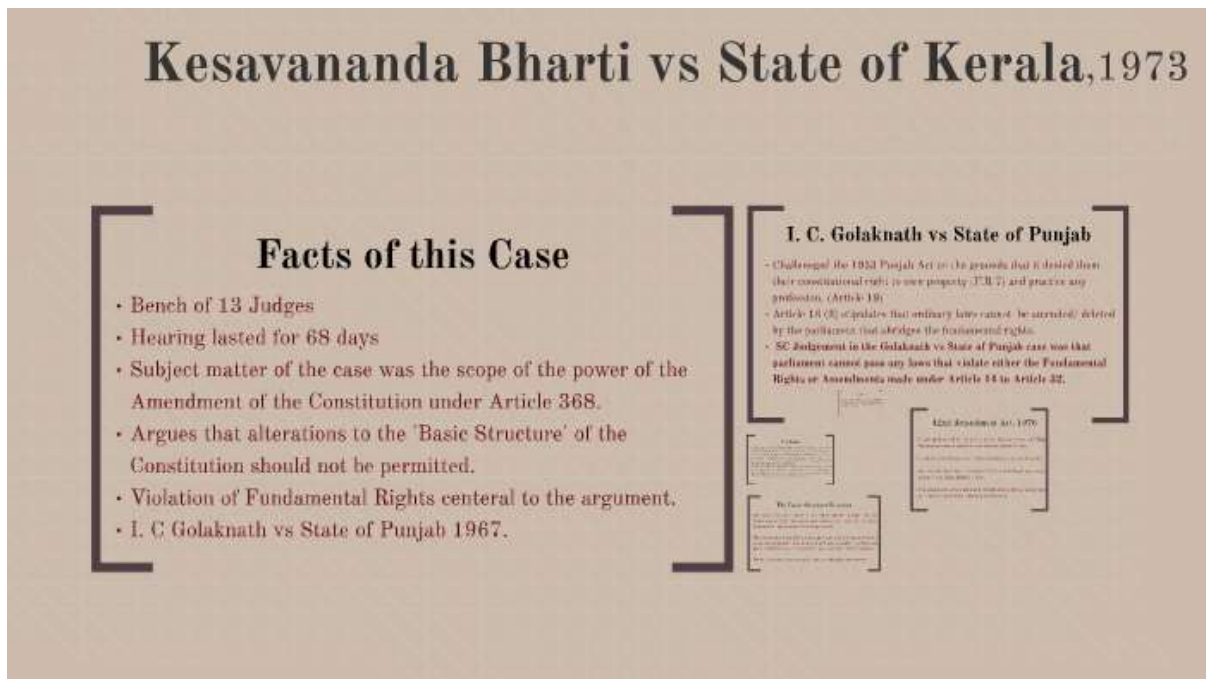
- Bradykinin is a **compound that is related to pain sensation and lowering blood pressure** in the human body.
- According to the researchers, **SARS-CoV-2 uses a human enzyme called ACE2 like a ‘Trojan Horse’ to sneak into the cells** of its host.
- ACE2 lowers blood pressure in the human body and works against another enzyme known as ACE (which has the opposite effect).
- The analyses further found that the **virus caused the levels of ACE to fall in the lungs, and consequently pushed up the levels of ACE2.**
- As a chain reaction, **this increases the levels of the molecule bradykinin in the cells, causing a bradykinin storm.** Bradykinin causes the blood vessels to expand and become leaky, leading to swelling of the surrounding tissue.
- In addition, the **levels of a substance called hyaluronic acid, which can absorb more than 1,000 times its own weight in water to form a hydrogel, increased.**
- In effect, the **bradykinin storm-induced leakage of fluid into the lungs combined with the excess hyaluronic acid would likely result in a Jello-like substance that is preventing oxygen uptake** and carbon dioxide in the lungs of severely affected COVID-19 patients.

Cytokine storm

- An **immune reaction triggered by the body to fight an infection** is known as a cytokine storm when it turns severe.
- The body releases too many cytokines, proteins that are involved in immunomodulation, into the blood too quickly.
- While normally they regulate immune responses, in this case they cause harm and can even cause death.
- Experts have **noticed a violent cytokine storm in several individuals who are critical with COVID infection.**
- These cytokines **dilate blood vessels, increase the temperature and heartbeat, besides throwing blood clots in the system, and suppressing oxygen utilisation.**
- If the cytokine flow is high and continues without cessation, the body's own immune response will lead to hypoxia, insufficient oxygen to the body, multi organ failure and death. Experts say it is not the virus that kills; rather, the cytokine storm.

Topic 29: Basic structure

Importance for Prelims: Polity



Kesavananda Bharati, the petitioner of the landmark ruling in which the Supreme Court announced the basic structure doctrine was dead.

- A **13-judge Bench** was set up by the Supreme Court, the **biggest so far**, and the case was heard over 68 working days spread over six months.
- The case was **primarily about the extent of Parliament's power to amend the Constitution**.
- First, the court was **reviewing a 1967 decision in Golaknath v State of Punjab** which, had ruled that Parliament cannot amend fundamental rights.
- Second, the court was **deciding the constitutional validity of several other amendments**.

- The **executive vs judiciary manoeuvres displayed in the amendments ended with the KesavanandaBharati case**, in which the court had to settle these issues conclusively.
- In its majority ruling, the court held that fundamental rights cannot be taken away by amending them. While the court said that **Parliament had vast powers to amend the Constitution**, it drew the line by observing that certain parts are so **inherent and intrinsic to the Constitution** that even **Parliament cannot touch it**.
- The **origins of the basic structure doctrine are found in the German Constitution** which, after the Nazi regime, was amended to protect some basic laws. The original Weimar Constitution, which gave Parliament to amend the Constitution with a two-thirds majority, was in fact used by Hitler to his advantage to make radical changes. Learning from that experience, the new German Constitution introduced substantive limits on Parliament's powers to amend certain parts of the Constitution which it considered 'basic law'.
- In India, the **basic structure doctrine has formed the bedrock of judicial review of all laws passed by Parliament**.
- The present position is that the **Parliament under Article 368 can amend any part of the Constitution including the Fundamental Rights but without affecting the basic structure of the Constitution**.

- However, the **Supreme Court is yet to define or clarify as to what constitutes the basic structure of the Constitution.**

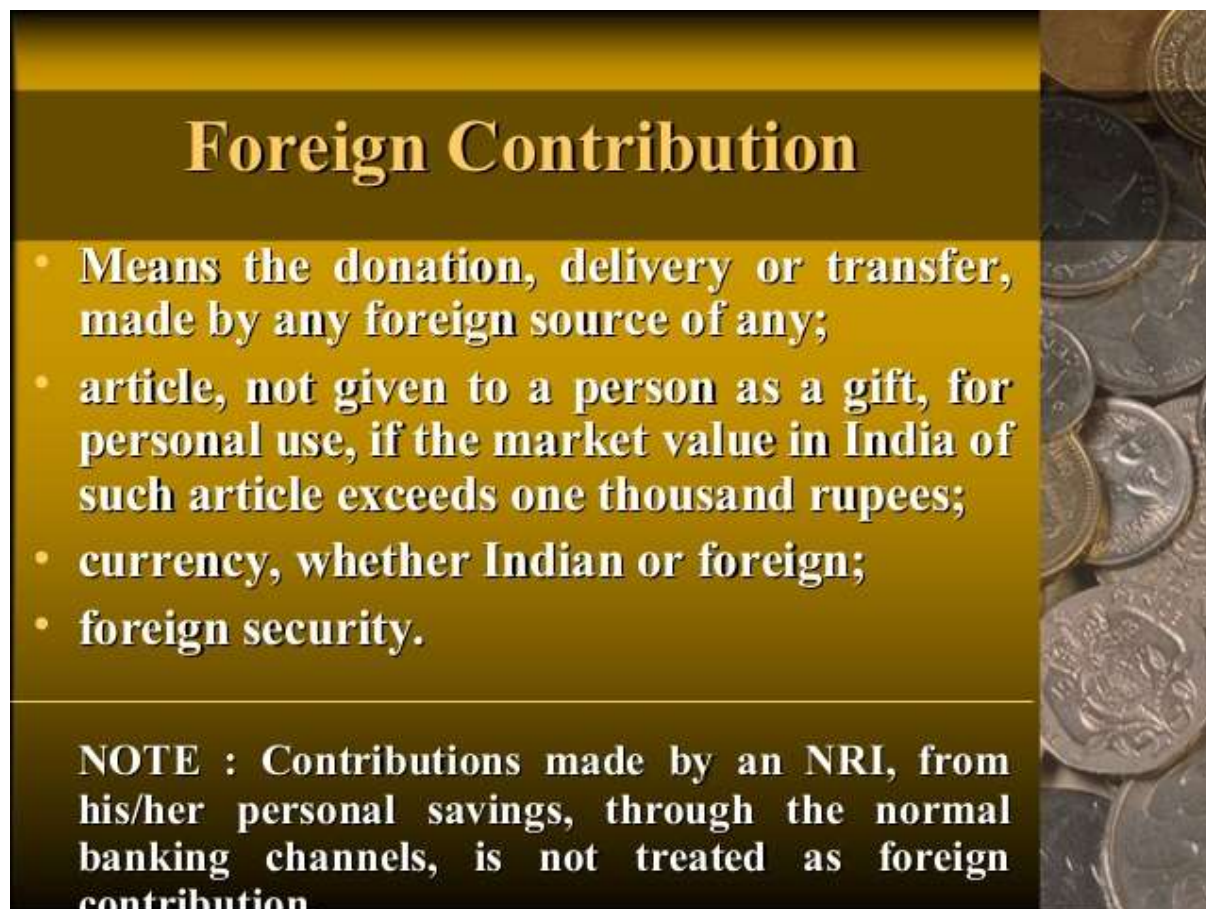
From the various judgments, the following have emerged as basic features of the Constitution or elements / components / ingredients of the 'basic structure' of the constitution:

- Supremacy of the Constitution
- Sovereign, democratic and republican nature of the Indian polity
- Secular character of the Constitution
- Separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary
- Federal character of the Constitution
- Unity and integrity of the nation
- Welfare state (socio-economic justice)
- Judicial review
- Freedom and dignity of the individual
- Parliamentary system
- Rule of law
- Harmony and balance between Fundamental Rights and Directive
- Principles
- Principle of equality
- Free and fair elections
- Independence of Judiciary
- Limited power of Parliament to amend the Constitution

- Effective access to justice
- Principle of reasonableness
- Powers of the Supreme Court under Articles 32, 136, 141 and 142

Topic 30: Foreign Contribution Regulation Act

Importance for Prelims: Economy



Foreign Contribution

- Means the donation, delivery or transfer, made by any foreign source of any;
- article, not given to a person as a gift, for personal use, if the market value in India of such article exceeds one thousand rupees;
- currency, whether Indian or foreign;
- foreign security.

NOTE : Contributions made by an NRI, from his/her personal savings, through the normal banking channels, is not treated as foreign contribution.

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has suspended the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licences of four associations this year

- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and rules framed under it (the “FCRA” or “Act”) **regulate the receipt and usage of foreign contribution by non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”)** in India.
- Since the Act is internal security legislation, despite being a law related to financial legislation, it falls into the **purview of Home**

Ministry and not the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- The focus of the Act is to ensure that **the foreign contribution and foreign hospitality is not utilized to affect or influence electoral politics, public servants, judges** and other people working the important areas of national life like journalists, printers and publishers of newspapers, etc.
- The Act also seeks to regulate flow of foreign funds to voluntary organizations with the objective of **preventing any possible diversion of such funds towards activities detrimental to the national interest** and to ensure that individuals and organizations may function in a manner consistent with the values of the sovereign democratic republic.

Topic 31: Eco-sensitive zone, Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary

Importance for Prelims: Environment



An illegal road coming up within the eco-sensitive zone of Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary, without any permission from the Forest Department could pose a threat to the movement of wildlife

ESZ:

- The basic aim of ESZ is **to regulate certain activities around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries so as to minimise the negative impacts** of such activities on the fragile ecosystem encompassing the protected areas ESZs are notified by MoEFCC, Government of India under **Environment Protection Act 1986**
- The guidelines include a broad list of **activities that could be allowed, promoted, regulated or promoted**. This is an

important checklist for conservationists to keep in mind while identifying threats in ESZs.

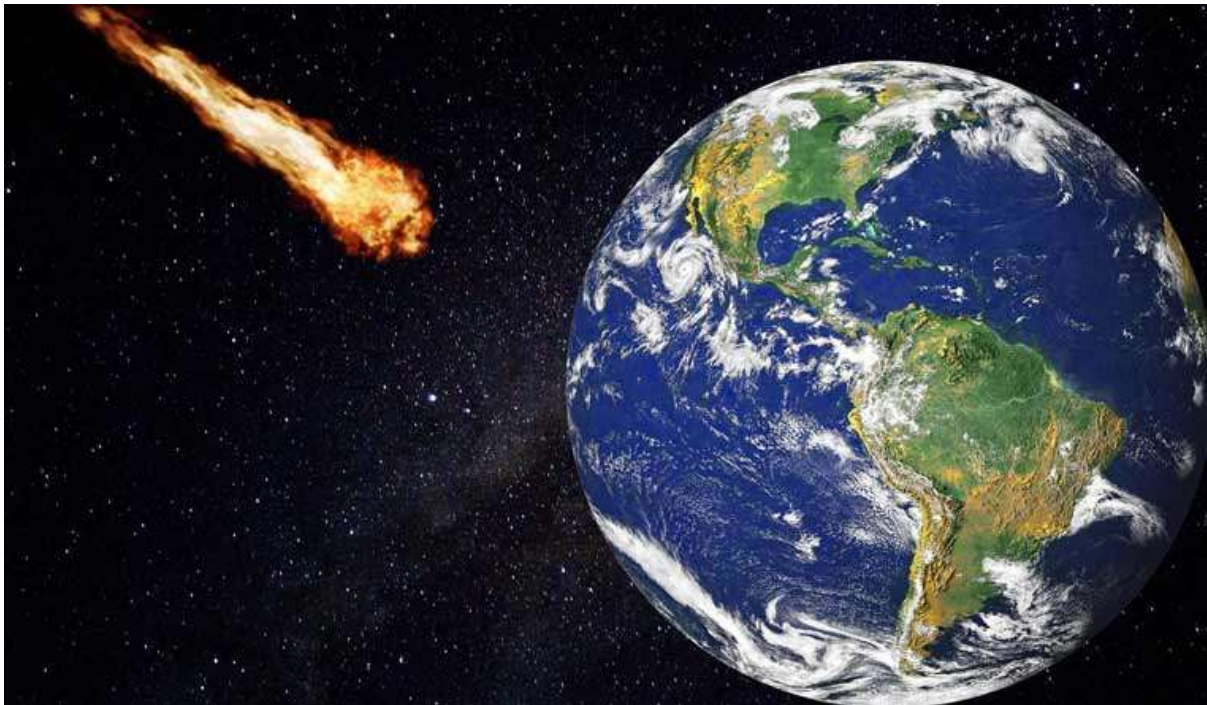
- For this purpose, the ministry has asked **all states to constitute a committee** comprising the wildlife warden, an ecologist and a revenue department official of the area concerned to suggest the requirement of an eco-sensitive zone and its extent.
- The width of the ESZ and type of regulation may vary from protected area to area.
- However, as a general principle, **the width of the ESZ could go up to 10 kms around the protected area.**

Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary

- Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary was established in 1988 to **protect the Near threatened grizzled giant squirrel.**
- Occupying an area of 485.2 km², it is **bordered on the southwest by the Periyar Tiger Reserve** and is one of the best preserved forests south of the Palghat Gap.
- In addition to grizzled giant squirrels, other animals seen here are Bengal tiger, bonnet macaque, common langur, elephants, flying squirrels, gaur, Indian giant squirrel, leopard, lion-tailed macaques, mouse deer, Nilgiri langur, NilgiriTahrs.
- **Mainly dry deciduous with patches of tropical evergreen forests**, Semievergreen forests, moist mixed deciduous forests and grassland.

Topic 32: Asteroids

Importance for Prelims: Geography



Asteroid 465824 2010 FR was expected to cross the Earth's orbit on September 6.

- Asteroids are **rocky objects that orbit the Sun, much smaller than planets**. They are also called minor planets.
- According to NASA, 994,383 is the count for known asteroids, the **remnants from the formation of the solar system over 4.6 billion years ago**.

Asteroids are divided into three classes.

- First, those found in the **main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter**, which is estimated to contain somewhere between 1.1-1.9 million asteroids.
- The second group is that of **trojans, which are asteroids that**

share an orbit with a larger planet. NASA reports the presence of Jupiter, Neptune and Mars trojans. In 2011, they reported an Earth trojan as well.

- The third classification is **Near-Earth Asteroids (NEA)**, which **have orbits that pass close by the Earth**. Those that cross the Earth's orbit are called Earth-crossers. More than 10,000 such asteroids are known, out of which over 1,400 are classified as potentially hazardous asteroids (PHAs).
- Potentially Hazardous Asteroids (PHAs) are currently defined **based on parameters that measure the asteroid's potential to make threatening close approaches to the Earth**. Specifically, all asteroids with a **minimum orbit intersection distance (MOID) of 0.05 au or less** are considered PHA.

Threats:

- NASA's **Near-Earth Object Observations Program** finds, tracks and characterises over 90 per cent of the predicted number of NEOs that are 140 metre or larger which according to the space agency are of "the greatest concern" due to the **level of devastation that their impact is capable of causing**.
- No asteroid larger than 140 metre has a "significant" chance of hitting the Earth for the next 100 years.

Measures:

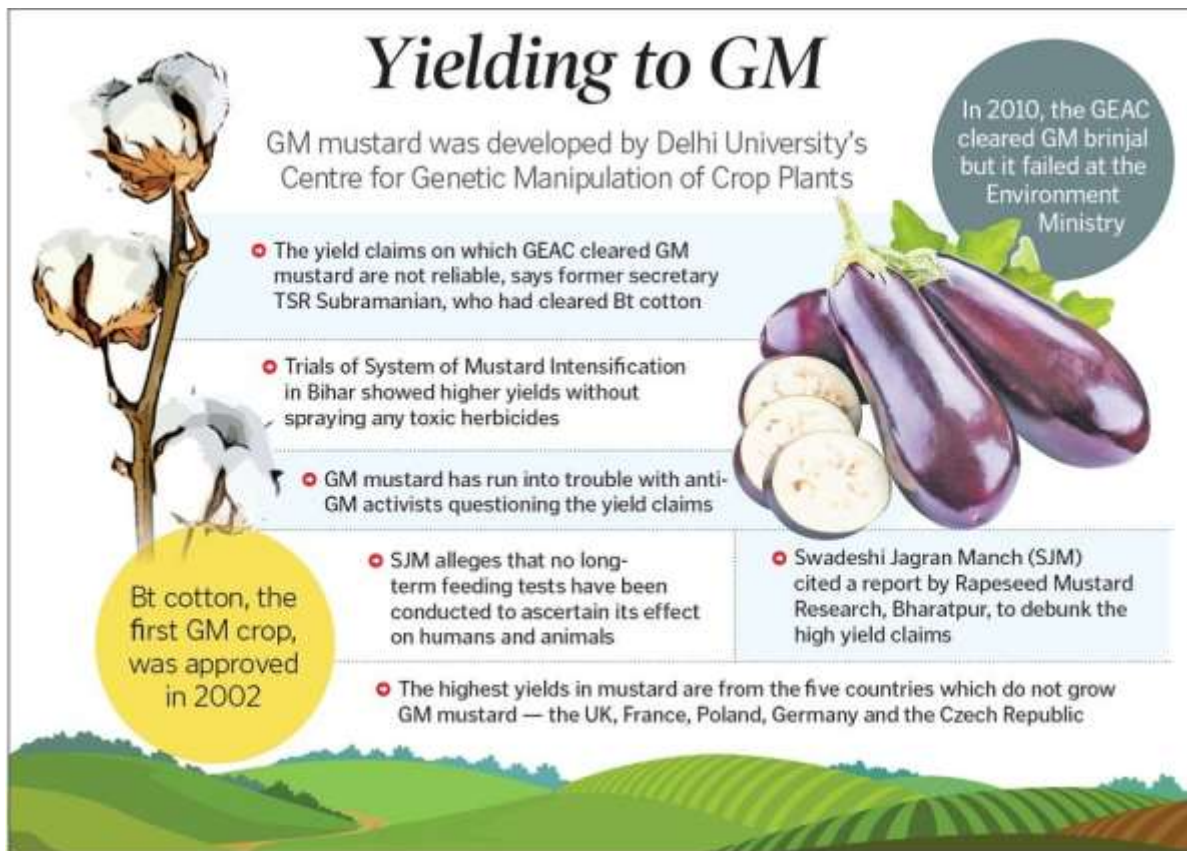
- Over the years, scientists have suggested different ways to ward off such threats, such as **blowing up the asteroid** before it

reaches Earth, or **deflecting it off** its Earth-bound course by hitting it with a spacecraft.

- **Asteroid Impact and Deflection Assessment (AIDA)**, which includes NASA's Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) mission and the European Space Agency's (ESA) Hera. The mission's target is **Didymos, a binary near- Earth asteroid**, one of whose bodies is of the size that could pose the most likely significant threat to Earth.

Topic 33: GEAC AND Nod for BT brinjal

Importance for Prelims: Environment



An approval given for **confined field trials to two new Btbrinjal varieties** for biosafety evaluation by the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) in seven States has left many curious about the government's stand on genetically modified (GM) crops.

GEAC

- **Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)** is the appraisal body that allows for commercial release of GM crops.
- It had allowed the commercial release of Bt cotton in 2002. At present, more than 95 per cent of the country's cotton areas

come under Bt cotton.

- Use of the unapproved GM variant can attract a jail term of 5 years and fine of Rs 1 lakh under the **Environmental Protection Act ,1989**.
- The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) **functions in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)**.
- It is **responsible for appraisal of activities involving large scale use of hazardous microorganisms and recombinants** in research and industrial production from the environmental angle.
- The committee is also responsible for appraisal of proposals relating to release of genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products into the environment including experimental field trials.
- GEAC is **chaired by the Special Secretary/Additional Secretary of MoEF&CC** and co-chaired by a representative from the Department of Biotechnology (DBT). Presently, it has 24 members and meets every month to review the applications in the areas indicated above.

BtBrinjal

- It is a **genetically modified crop** created by **inserting gene from the soil bacterium Bacillus thuringiensis** into Brinjal.
- The insertion of the gene **gives Brinjal plant resistance against**

lepidopteron insects like the Brinjal Fruit and Shoot Borer (Leucinodesorbonalis) and Fruit Borer (Helicoverpaarmigera).

- Upon ingestion of the Bt toxin by the insect, there would be **disruption of digestive processes, ultimately resulting in the death of the insect.**

Topic 34: Rashtriya Poshan Maah

Importance for Prelims: Government initiative

**POSHAN
Abhiyaan**
PM's Overarching
Scheme for Holistic
Nourishment



सही पोषण – देश रोशन

The 3rd Rashtriya Poshan Maah is being celebrated during the month of September 2020. **Ministry of Women and Child Development, being the nodal Ministry for POSHAN Abhiyaan**, is celebrating the Poshan Maah in convergence with partner Ministries and departments, at National, States/UTs, Districts, and grass root level.

- **POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is India's flagship programme**, launched in March 2018 to **improve nutritional status of children up to 6 years, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers** to achieve specific targets for reduction in low birth weight babies, stunting growth, under nutrition and prevalence of anemia over next three years.
- POSHAN Abhiyaan is **not a programme but a Jan Andolan, and Bhagidaari**, meaning "People's Movement".

- This programme incorporates inclusive participation of public representatives of local bodies, government departments of the state, social organizations and the public and private sector at large.
- Under PoshanAbhiyan states/UTs need to **achieve convergence through the close coordination** between the department of women and child welfare; health and family welfare; drinking water and sanitation; rural development; panchayati raj; education; food and other concerned departments.
- To give momentum to POSHAN Abhiyan , **‘National Council on India’s Nutrition Challenges’ on 24th July 2018 decided to celebrate the month of September as RashtriyaPoshanMaah.**
- During this month **activities related to nutrition awareness will be carried out by all the states/UTs up to the grass root level.**
- The implementing departments /agencies like women and child development department through anganwari workers, health and family welfare department through ASHA, ANM, primary health centres, community health centres, school education and literary department through schools, panchayati raj department through panchayat, and rural development through self-help groups will **carry out the activities and spread the message during the month.**