

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE for



U.P.S.C. - C.S.E.

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8 November to 15 November



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Mob.: 91453 39324 / 25

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THANE Address:

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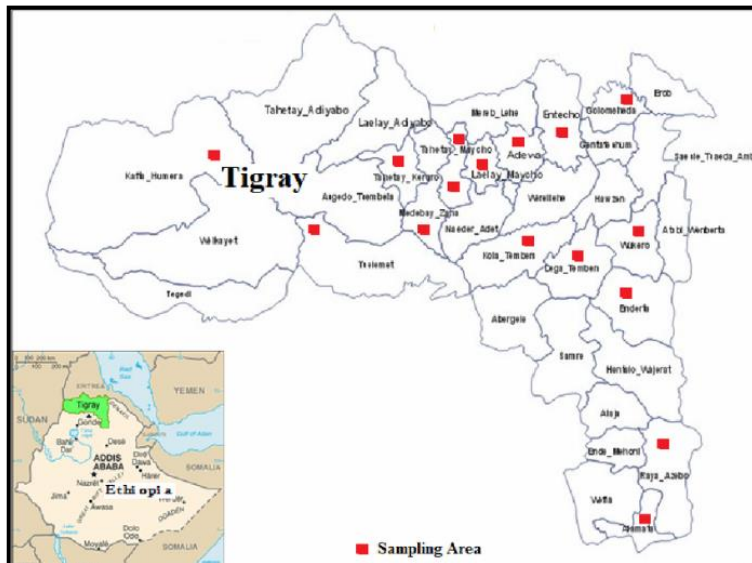
DADAR Address:

306/7/8, 3rd flr, Blue Pearl Society, Senapati Bapat Road, Plot No. 14, Near Janata Cloth Market, Near Dadar Railway Station, Dadar (W), Mumbai-400 028
Mob : 93241 69627 / 91375 41508

Success is born of action...

Topic 1: TIGRAY REGION

Importance for Prelims: Geography



Ethiopia is on the brink of a civil war after Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced that he had ordered troops to counter an allegedly violent attack by armed forces in the country's northern Tigray region.

Background :

- In early November 2020, the region and the Ethiopian federal government entered into conflict, with some gunfire being reported in the capital of Tigray, Mekelle.
- The conflict escalated in September, when Tigray held local elections in insubordination of the Ethiopian federal government. these elections were considered “illegal” by the federal government, further leading to conflict with Tigray authorities.

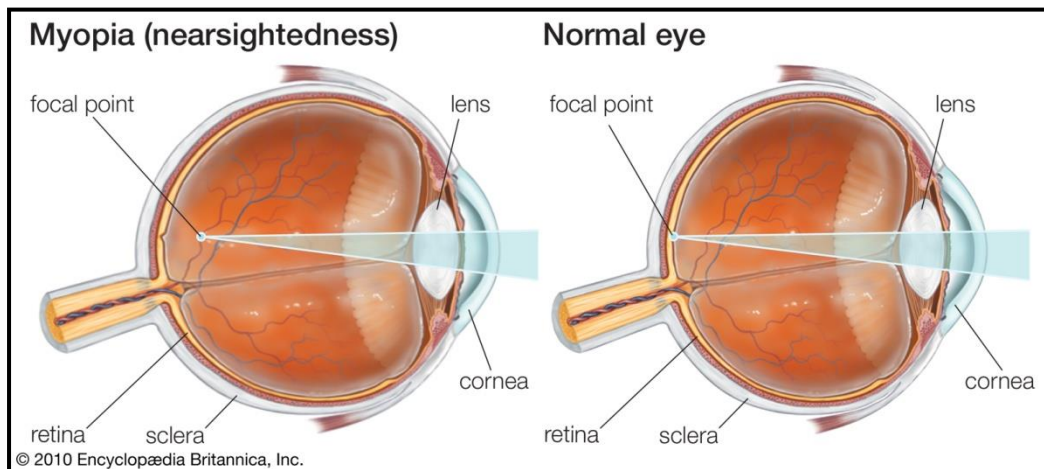
Tigray Region :

- The Tigray Region is the northernmost of the nine regions (kililat) of Ethiopia.
- Tigray is the homeland of the Tigrayan, Irob and Kunama peoples.
- Tigray is also known as Region 1 according to the federal constitution.

- Its capital and largest city is Mekelle.
- Tigray is bordered by Eritrea to the north, Sudan to the west, the Amhara Region to the south and the Afar Region to the east and south east.

Topic 2: MYOPIA

Importance for Prelims: Science & tech



Myopia or shortsightedness is turning out to be an epidemic across India, and indeed even more in Southeast Asia. If this rate continues , by 2050 , 64 million children in Urban India may have Myopia.

- Myopia occurs because of the potential role of myopic genes and also local environmental conditions such as the prolonged ‘near work’ and/or less sunlight exposure, and not because of any infection due to harmful germs.
- It will not become a worldwide pandemic, as COVID-19 has. Yet, drastic changes in lifestyle (becoming more indoor-centric) and the timing and levels of sunlight we receive, it is time to take measures to counteract myopia, which may well become a global pandemic.

What is myopia?

- Myopia occurs when the eyeball becomes longer, relative to the focusing power of the cornea and the lens; this leads to focus not on the surface of the retina, but at a point before it.
- This leads you to find it difficult to focus distant objects clearly, though

you can see close-up objects such as while reading and using the computer use.

Policy Suggestions :

- Mandatory 60 minutes of recess time in all schools during the school hours every day, by locking the classrooms to keep the students in sunlight, starting from primary level to the high schools.
- Have a structured recess time incorporated into all their curricula. Make it mandatory for schools to have enough space for playgrounds.
- Create public awareness among parents about the importance of proper eyesight and control the use of near-vision devices such as smartphones.
- Recommend/promote community centres in each locality to organise outdoor programmes weekly or at least twice a month.

Topic 3: AIM–SIRIUS INNOVATION PROGRAMME 3.0

Importance for Prelims: Govt Schemes

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Sirius, Russia launched ‘AIM–Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0’– a 14-day virtual programme for Indian and Russian schoolchildren

- The first Indo-Russian bilateral youth innovation initiative, the AIM–Sirius programme seeks to develop technological solutions (both web- and mobilebased) for the two countries.
- Over a two-week programme, from 7–21 November 2020, 48 students and 16 educators and mentors will create 8 virtual products and mobile applications addressing global challenges in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic.
- Innovations developed by the student teams will leverage 21st-century technologies such as app development, artificial intelligence, blockchain, machine learning etc.

Topic 4: NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICE DAY

Importance for Prelims: Polity



The National Legal Services Day is celebrated on 9th November to spread awareness for ensuring reasonable fair and justice procedure for all citizens

- National Legal Services Day (NLSD) was first started by Supreme Court of India in 1995 to provide help and support to poor and weaker sections of the society.
- Free legal services are provided in matters before Civil, Criminal and Revenue Courts, Tribunals or any other authority exercising judicial or quasi judicial functions.

Objectives of Legal Services Authorities are:

- ✓ Provide free legal aid and advice.
- ✓ Spread legal awareness.
- ✓ Organise lok adalats.
- Promote settlements of disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanisms.
- Various kinds of ADR mechanisms are Arbitration, Conciliation, Judicial settlement including settlement through Lok Adalat, or Mediation.
- Provide compensation to victims of crime.

Persons Eligible for Free Legal Services:

- Women and Children Persons with disability.

- Member of Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes Industrial Workmen Persons in custody Victims of natural disasters, ethnic/caste violence, industrial disaster Victims of Human Trafficking or Begar Persons with an annual income of less than Rs. 1,00,000/- or as notified by the Central/State Governments.

Legal Services Institutions for providing Free Legal Services:

- National Level : National Legal Services Authority.
- State Level : State Legal Services Authority. It is headed by the Chief Justice of the.
- State High Court who is its Patron-in-Chief. A serving or retired Judge of the High Court is nominated as its Executive Chairman.
- District Level : District Legal Services Authority. The District Judge of the District is its ex-officio Chairman.
- Taluka/ Sub-Division Level : Taluka/ Sub-Divisional Legal Services Committee. It is headed by a senior Civil Judge.
- High Court : High Court Legal Services Committee
- Supreme Court: Supreme Court Legal Services Committee.

National Legal Services Authority

- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) was constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 which came into force on 9th November, 1995 to establish a nationwide uniform network for providing free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society.
- The Chief Justice of India is the Patron-in-Chief and the second senior most Judge of Supreme Court of India is the Executive Chairman of the Authority.
- Article 39 A of the Constitution provides for free legal aid to the poor and weaker sections of the society, to promote justice on the basis of equal opportunity.

- Article 14 and Article 22 (1), obligates State to ensure equality before law.
- It can be noted that the role played by NALSA and its networks is very much relevant to achieving the **Sustainable Development Goal-16** , which seeks to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.

Topic 5: SICHUAN-TIBET RAILWAY

Importance for Prelims: International Relations



Chinese President Xi Jinping instructed officials to expedite the construction of the new railway project connecting the country's southwest Sichuan province to Linzhi in Tibet close to the Indian border in Arunachal Pradesh, saying it would play a key role in safeguarding stability in the border areas.

- The Sichuan-Tibet Railway will be the second railway line into Tibet after the Qinghai-Tibet Railway project.
- It will go through the southeast of the Qinghai- Tibet Plateau, one of the world's most geologically active areas.
- The Sichuan-Tibet Railway starts from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province and travels through Ya'an and enters Tibet via Qamdo, shortening the journey from Chengdu to Lhasa from 48 hours to 13 hours.
- Linzhi, also known as Nyingchi, is located close to the Arunachal Pradesh border.
- The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control, the de-facto border between the two countries. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of south Tibet which is firmly rejected by India.

Topic 6: PM KUSUM

Importance for Prelims: Schemes Govt Schemes



The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has issued an order for the scale-up and expansion of the PM-KUSUM Scheme. The target now is to achieve enhanced solar capacity of 30.8 gigawatt (GW) by 2022.

- Kisan urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM) is a farmer-oriented solar power scheme that will allow setting up grid-connected solar plants in rural areas and off-grid solar pumps.
- This scheme is implemented by Ministry of new and renewable energy.
- Under the scheme, the government plans to incentivise farmers to run solar farm, water pumps and use barren land for generating power for extra income up to Rs 60,000 per acre every year.
- It aims at boosting farmers' income by allowing them to sell additional power to the grid through solar plants.
- It's previous target is to set up 25,750 megawatts (MW) solar capacity by 2022 to power irrigation pumps.
- It comprises of three components: Setting up of 10,000 MW of decentralised ground / stilt-mounted grid-connected solar or other renewable energy based power plants Installation of 17.5 lakh standalone solar agriculture pumps Solarisation of 10 lakh grid-connected agriculture pumps Subsidy for buying solar pumps: 30% central + 30% state

government +bank loans for 30% of the cost(If farmer needs).

Topic 7: 15th FC REPORT SUBMITTED

Importance for Prelims: Polity

	12 th FC	13 th FC	14 th FC	15 FC (2020-2021)
Arunachal Pradesh	0.288	0.328	1.370	1.760
Assam	3.235	3.628	3.311	3.131
Manipur	0.362	0.451	0.617	0.718
Meghalaya	0.371	0.408	0.642	0.765
Mizoram	0.239	0.269	0.460	0.506
Nagaland	0.263	0.314	0.498	0.573
Sikkim	0.227	0.239	0.367	0.388
Tripura	0.428	0.511	0.642	0.709
Total (NE states)	5.413	6.146	7.907	8.54

The Fifteenth Finance Commission (XVFC) led by Chairman N K Singh, submitted its Report for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 to the President of India.

- As per the terms of reference (ToR), the Commission was mandated to give its recommendations for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by 30 October, 2020.
- Last year, the Commission had submitted its report containing recommendations for the year 2020-21 which was accepted by the Union Government and tabled in the Parliament on 30 January 2020.

The Report will be available in the public domain once it is tabled in the Parliament by the Union Government.

Terms of reference (ToR):

- The Commission was asked to give its recommendations on many unique and wide-ranging issues in its terms of reference.
- Apart from the vertical and horizontal tax devolution, local government grants, disaster management grant, the Commission was also asked to examine and recommend performance incentives for States in many areas like power sector, adoption of DBT, solid waste management etc.
- The Commission was also asked to examine whether a separate

mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up and if so how such a mechanism could be operationalised.

Topic 8: COMPETITION COMMISSION

Importance for Prelims: National Organisations

Google will be probed by India's Competition Commission for allegedly abusing dominance' to push its payments app.

Competition Commission of India

- Competition Commission of India is a statutory body responsible for enforcing the objectives of the Competition Act, 2002.
- CCI has been established by the Central Government with effect from 14th October 2003.
- Composition: A Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the Central Government.

Duty of the Commission:

- ✓ To eliminate practices having adverse effects on competition.
- ✓ Promote and sustain competition.
- ✓ Protect the interests of consumers.
- ✓ Ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India.
- The Commission is also required to give opinion on competition issues on a reference received from a statutory authority established under any law and to undertake competition advocacy, create public awareness and impart training on competition issues.

The Competition Act

- The Competition Act, 2002, as amended by the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2007, follows the philosophy of modern competition laws.
- The Act prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominant position by enterprises and regulates combinations (acquisition, acquiring of control and M&A), which causes or likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition within India.

Topic 9: NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

Importance for Prelims: National Organisation

National Green Tribunal restricts use of firecrackers for all festivals this year.

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialized body that was formed under the NGT Act, 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases that are related to the protection and conservation of the environment, forests, and other natural resources.
- India has become the third country in the world after Australia and New Zealand, for setting up a specialized environmental tribunal and also the first developing country to do so.
- The National Green Tribunal has a total of five places of sittings namely: Bhopal, Pune, New Delhi, Kolkata, and Chennai, amongst which, New Delhi is the Principal place of sitting.

Objectives of National Green Tribunal (NGT)

- Effective and expeditious disposal of cases that are related to the protection and conservation of the environment, forests, and other natural resources.
- To give relief and compensations for any damages caused to persons and properties.
- To handle various environmental disputes that involve multi-disciplinary issues.

Structure of NGT

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) comprises three major bodies namely: the Chairperson, the Judicial Members, and the Expert Members. Also, there should be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 fulltime Judicial as well as Expert members in the NGT.
- All these members are required to **hold the office for five years and are**

not eligible for reappointment.

- The Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) is appointed by the Central Government of India in accordance with the Chief Justice of India.
- A Selection Committee is formed by the central government of India for the appointment of Judicial Members and Expert Members.

Powers of NGT

- NGT provides a way for the evolution of environmental jurisprudence through the development of an alternative dispute resolution mechanism.
- It helps in the reduction of the litigation burden on environmental matters in the higher courts.
- NGT provides a faster solution for various environment-related disputes that are less formal and less expensive.
- It curbs environment-damaging activities. NGT ensures the strict observation of the Environment Impact Assessment process.
- NGT provides reliefs and compensations for any damages caused to persons and properties.
- The National Green Tribunal **resolves various civil cases under the following seven laws** that are related to the environment:
 - ✓ Water Act (Prevention and Control of Pollution), 1974
 - ✓ Water Cess Act (Prevention and Control of Pollution), 1977
 - ✓ Forest Act (Conservation), 1980
 - ✓ Air Act (Prevention and Control of Pollution), 1981
 - ✓ Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
 - ✓ Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
 - ✓ Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

Topic 10: PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

Importance for Prelims: International Relations

Russia brokered a new peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the two countries that have been in a military conflict for over six weeks over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh in the South Caucasus.

- As per the new peace deal, both sides will now maintain positions in the areas that they currently hold, which will mean a significant gain for Azerbaijan as it has reclaimed over 15-20 per cent of its lost territory during the recent conflict, the AFP reported.
- Further, under this agreement, all military operations are suspended, Russian peacekeepers will be deployed along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Lachin corridor that connects the region to Armenia.
- Straddling western Asia and Eastern Europe, Nagorno-Karabakh is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan, but most of the region is controlled by Armenian separatists.

Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)

- Russia's role in the conflict has been somewhat opaque since it supplies arms to both countries and is in a military alliance with Armenia called the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).
- CSTO is an intergovernmental military alliance that was signed on 15 May 1992.
- In 1992, six post-Soviet states belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States signed the Collective Security Treaty (also referred to as the "Tashkent Pact" or "Tashkent Treaty").
- Its 6 members are: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Headquarters: Moscow, Russia.

Topic 11: SCO SUMMIT

Importance for Prelims: International Relations

PM Narendra Modi highlighted during the 20th SCO Summit that India believes that to enhance connectivity it is important that we move forward while respecting one another's sovereignty and territorial integrity..

- SCO is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation.
- It's a Eurasian political, economic and military organisation aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- It was created in 2001. The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- It is a statutory document which outlines the organisation's goals and principles, as well as its structure and core activities.
- The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.

Genesis

- Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five.
- Shanghai Five (1996) emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.
- Following the accession of Uzbekistan to the organisation in 2001, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
- India and Pakistan became members in 2017.

Membership

- Kazakhstan ,China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

Objectives

- Strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states.
- Promoting effective cooperation in -politics, trade & economy, research

& technology and culture.

- Enhancing ties in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, etc.
- Maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region.
- Establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political & economic order.

Guiding Principle – Based on Shanghai Spirit

- Internal policy based on the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for cultural diversity, and a desire for common development.
- External policy in accordance with the principles of non-alignment, non-targeting any third country, and openness.

Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

- Heads of State Council – The supreme SCO body which decides its internal functioning and its interaction with other States & international organisations, and considers international issues.
- Heads of Government Council – Approves the budget, considers and decides upon issues related economic spheres of interaction within SCO.
- Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs – Considers issues related to day-to-day activities.
- Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) – Established to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- SCO Secretariat – Based in Beijing to provide informational, analytical & organisational support.

Topic 12: RECOUNTING OF VOTES

Importance for Prelims: Polity

Some political parties have demanded recount of votes in the Bihar election

- The ultimate round of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) counting doesn't start unless the counting of postal ballots is over. In case the victory margin is less than the total number of postal ballots received, then a re-verification is done even if no candidate or agent has asked for it.
- On Tuesday, the Commission referred to this instruction when asked about the request from the Left parties for a recount in three seats.
- Apart from this provision, Rule 63 of the Conduct of Election Rules explicitly allows a candidate or his agent to demand a recount of postal ballots or EVM votes before the result is formally declared.
- The application for a partial or complete recount has to be made in writing along with strong reasons for the demand. The Returning Officer considers the grounds provided and may allow the recount in part or whole.
- However, the recheck of EVM votes and recounting of postal ballots can only be done before the formal declaration of results on Form 21C. After that, a candidate's only recourse is an election petition.

Topic 13: SAFAR

Importance for Prelims: Environment

The air quality in Delhi continues to remain in ‘severe’ category. The Systemn of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research, SAFAR has advised people to avoid all physical activity outdoors.

About:

- Agencies involved: It was indigenously developed by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune and is run by India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- Objective: To provide Real-time air quality index on 24×7 basis with colour coding along with 72-hour advance weather forecast; To issue Health advisory to preparecitizens well in advance.

Parameters monitored:

- Pollutants: PM1, PM2.5, PM10, Ozone, CO, NO_x (NO, NO₂), SO₂, BC, Methane (CH₄), Non-methane hydrocarbons (NMHC), Black Carbon, VOC's, Benzene and Mercury.
- Meteorological Parameters: UV Radiation, Rainfall, Temperature, Humidity, Wind speed, Wind direction, solar radiation.

Topic 14: FCRA

Importance for Prelims: Polity

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has relaxed norms for farmer, student, religious and other groups who are not directly aligned to any political party to receive foreign funds if the groups are not involved in “active politics”.

- The Ministry notified new rules under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010 on Wednesday thereby amending the FCRA Rules, 2011.
- The new rule said, “The organisations specified under clauses (v) and (vi) of subrule (1) shall be considered to be of political nature, if they participate in active politics or party politics, as the case may be.
- It is mandatory to have FCRA clearance from the Home Ministry for any organisation to receive foreign funds.
- Foreign funding of voluntary organizations in India is regulated under FCRA act and is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Key provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010:

- Under the Act, organisations require to register themselves every five years.
- As per the amended FCRA rules, all NGOs registered or granted prior permission under FCRA are now required to upload details of foreign contributions received and utilized by them every three months on their website or the FCRA website.
- NGOs now need to file their annual returns online, with the hard copy version dispensed with.

Who cannot accept Foreign Contribution?

- Election candidate.
- Member of any legislature (MP and MLAs) Political party or office

bearer thereof Organization of a political nature Correspondent, columnist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publishers of a registered Newspaper.

- Judge, government servant or employee of any corporation or any other body controlled on owned by the Government.
- Association or company engaged in the production or broadcast of audio news, audio visual news or current affairs programmes through any electronic mode.
- Any other individuals or associations who have been specifically prohibited by the Central Government.

What is the eligibility criteria for grant of registration?

- The Association must be registered (under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or Indian Trusts Act 1882 or section 8 of Companies Act, 2013 etc.)
- It should normally be in existence for at least 3 years.
- It has undertaken reasonable activity in its field for the benefit of the society.
- It has spent at least Rs.10,00,000/- (Rs. ten lakh) over the last three years on its activities.

Topic 15: RED SANDALWOOD

Importance for Prelims: Environment

The India Customs intercepted an 18-tonne shipment of red sandalwood destined for the United Arab Emirates, during a month-long “Operation Thunder 2020”, coordinated by the Interpol and the World Customs Organisation.

- Pterocarpus santalinus or Red Sanders is an endemic tree of South India.
- They are found in Tropical Dry Deciduous forest of the Palakonda and Seshachalam hill ranges of Andhra Pradesh and also found in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.
- Red Sanders usually grow in the rocky, degraded and fallow lands with Red Soil and hot and dry climate.
- IUCN has put it under the category of endangered species in the Red List due to the dwindling population because of illegal felling and smuggling.
- Its export is banned in India in accordance with the CITES and Wildlife Protection Act 1972.
- It is used for various purposes such as immunity medicine, furniture, radiation absorbent, musical instrument, food dyes and spices, Ayurveda and Siddha medicine, decorative and ornamental purposes etc.

Topic 16: WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Importance for Prelims: International Organisation

The Director-General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has called for “fair allocation” of Covid-19 vaccine.

World Health Assembly

- The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO.
- It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board.
- The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed programme budget.
- The Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.

Topic 17: AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ROZGAR YOJANA

Importance for Prelims: Economy

Union Minister for Finance announced a new scheme to incentivize job creation during COVID-19 recovery has been launched.

- If EPFO-registered establishments take in new employees without EPFO registration or those who lost jobs earlier, the Yojana will benefit these employees.

Beneficiaries / New Employees under the scheme would be:

- Any new employee joining employment in EPFO registered establishments on monthly wages less than Rs.15,000 EPF members drawing monthly wage of less than Rs.15,000 who made exit from employment during COVID Pandemic from 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 and is employed on or after 01.10.2020.
- Central Govt. will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new eligible employees engaged on or after 01.10.2020 at following scale:
- For Establishments employing up to 1000 employees: Employee's contributions (12% of Wages) & Employer's contributions (12% of wages) totalling 24% of wages For Establishments employing more than 1000 employees: Only Employee's EPF contributions (12% of EPF wages) The scheme will be effective from October 1, 2020 and operational till 30th June 2021.
- Certain other eligibility criteria would have to be met, and Central Government will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new eligible employees.

Topic 18: CONTEMPT OF COURT

Importance for Prelims: Polity

Kunal Kamra, a stand-up comedian, will face contempt of court charges for his tweets following the Supreme Court's decision to grant interim bail to television anchor Arnab Goswami.

- According to the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, contempt of court can either be civil contempt or criminal contempt.
- **Civil contempt means** wilful disobedience of any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court, or wilful breach of an undertaking given to a court.
- **Criminal contempt**, on the other hand, is attracted by the publication (whether by words, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations, or otherwise) of any matter or the doing of any other act whatsoever which: scandalises or tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court; or prejudices, or interferes or tends to interfere with, the due course of any judicial proceeding; or interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner.
- In 2006, the government brought in an amendment, which now provides “truth” as defence provided it is bona fide and in public interest.
- **A-G's consent to initiate contempt of court proceedings:** In the case of a criminal contempt the court may take action on its own motion or on a motion made by (a) the Advocate-General, or (b) any other person, with the consent in writing of the Attorney-General of India.

Topic 19: SARNA TRIBAL RELIGION

Importance for Prelims: Polity

The Jharkhand government passed a resolution to send the Centre a letter to recognize Sarna religion and include it as a separate code in the Census of 2021.

- The followers of Sarna faith believe pray to nature. The holy grail of the faith is “Jal, Jungle, Zameen” and its followers pray to the trees and hills while believing in protecting the forest areas.
- It is believed that 50 lakhs tribal in the entire country put their religion as ‘Sarna’ in the 2011 census, although it was not a code.
- Jharkhand has 32 tribal groups of which eight are from Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- While many follow Hindu religion, some have converted to Christianity — this has become one of the planks of demanding a separate code “to save religious identity”— as various tribal organisations put it.

Topic 20: TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Importance for Prelims: Health

The World Health Organisation announced on Friday that it will set up a Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed confidence that just like the country has emerged as the ‘pharmacy of the world’, the WHO institution will become the centre for global wellness.
- **Traditional Medicine (TM):** The sum-total of the knowledge, skill and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.
- **Complementary Medicine (CM) or Alternative Medicine (AM):** A broad set of healthcare practices that are not part of that country’s own tradition or conventional medicine and area not fully integrated into the dominant healthcare system.

Different Types Of Alternative and Traditional Medicine System:

- **Ayurveda:** The Ayurvedic System of Medicine evolved nearly 5000 years ago (3000 BC). The word Ayurveda means ‘Science of Life’ and employs treatment modalities, such as purification, palliation, prescription of various diets, exercises and the avoidance of disease causing factors.
- **Unani Medicine:** Unani Medicine originated in the Arab world. Unani medicine treats a patient with diet, pharmacotherapy, exercise, massages and surgery. It was introduced in India around the 10th century AD.
- **Homeopathy:** The word ‘Homeopathy’ is derived from the Greek words, ‘Homois’ meaning ‘similar’ and ‘pathos’ means ‘suffering’. It originated in Germany and was introduced in India around 1810-1839.

- Homeopathy is based on the law of healing- “similia Similibus Curantur” which means ‘likes are cured by likes’. It uses highly individualized remedies selected to address specific symptoms or symptom profiles.
- **Siddha:** This system has originated in India and is amongst the oldest systems of medicine in the country. It takes into account the patient, his/her surroundings, age, sex, race, habitat, diet, appetite, physical condition etc. to arrive at the diagnosis.
- Siddha System uses minerals, metals and alloys and drugs and inorganic compounds to treat the patients. Unlike most T&CM, this system is largely therapeutic in nature.
- Siddha literature is in Tamilnadu.
- **Sowa-Ripa:** The word combination means the ‘science of healing’ and its considered one of the oldest living and well-documented medical traditions of the world. It originated from Tibet and is widely practiced in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia and Russia.
- **Yo; ga & Naturopathy:** The concepts and practices of Yoga are reported to have originated in India. Naturopathy or the naturopathic medicine is a drugless, noninvasive system of medicine imparting treatments with natural elements based on the theories of vitality, toxemia and the self-healing capacity of the body as well as the principles of healthy living.
- The common naturopathy modalities include counseling, diet and fasting therapy, mud therapy, hydrotherapy, massage therapy, acupressure, acupuncture, magnet therapy and yoga therapy.

Topic 21: BIO BUBBLE

Importance for Prelims: Health

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly on Wednesday acknowledged that it was mentally tough for players to be in the just-concluded Indian Premier League's biobubble and thanked them for showing resolve to make the tournament a success.

- A bio-bubble is a safe and secure environment isolated from the outside world to minimise the risk of COVID-19 infection.
- It permits only authorised sports persons, support staff and match officials to enter the protected area after testing negative for COVID-19.
- Naturally, individuals must be regularly tested, temperature checked with respective health reports filed accordingly.

Topic 22: NIIF

Importance for Prelims: Economy

Government has decided to infuse Rs 6000 cr in NIIF debt platform to increase infrastructure funding.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF):

- NIIF is India's first sovereign wealth fund set up by the Government of India in 2015.
- It is an investor-owned fund manager, anchored by the Government of India (GoI) in collaboration with leading global and domestic institutional investors.
- NIIF's mandate includes investing in areas such as energy, transportation, housing, water, waste management and other infrastructure-related sectors in India.

Functioning:

- It is being operationalized by establishing three Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) under the SEBI Regulations.
- The proposed corpus of NIIF is Rs. 40,000 Crores funded of 49% from Government of India.
- Rest from strategic anchor partners (Overseas sovereign/quasisovereign/multilateral/bilateral investors).

NIIF and Three Funds:

- NIIF currently manages three funds each with its distinctive investment mandate.

Master Fund:

- A fund focused on creating scalable sectoral platforms in core infrastructure and in collaboration with strong and reputed operating and financial partners.

Fund of Funds:

- A fund focused on anchoring and investing incredible and reputed third-party managers with a strong track record across diversified sectors within infrastructure services and allied sectors.

Strategic Investment Fund:

- A fund focused on investing in strategic assets and projects with longer-term horizon across various stages of development.

ADDITIONAL FACTS :

- India's retail inflation remained above 7% in October for a second straight month as vegetable prices stayed at elevated levels, worrying policymakers, who are struggling to pull Asia's third-largest economy from a deep slump.
- October's retail inflation of 7.61% was higher than the forecast of 7.3% in a Reuters' poll of economists. It was 7.27% in September, official data showed on Thursday.
- Retail inflation has remained above 4%, the middle-point of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) target of 2%-6%, for more than a year, giving it little room to cut interest rates.
- Rating agency Moody's Investors Service has revised upward its forecast for India's GDP for calendar year 2020 to an 8.9% contraction from its earlier projection for a contraction of 9.6%
- Overall, G-20 economies were expected to collectively contract 3.8% in 2020, followed by 4.9% growth in 2021 and 3.8% growth in 2022, Moody's said.
- Kerala State Election Commission has issued Notification for Local Body Elections. For the first time, Postal Ballot is to be issued to enable COVID 19 patients and persons in quarantine to cast their votes.

Topic 23: QRSAM

Importance for Prelims: Defence

India Successfully test fired the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile System.

- Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile System (QRSAM) is a Short Range Surface to Air Missile system.
- QRSAM is designed to protect moving armoured columns from aerial attacks.
- The entire weapon system is configured on highly mobile platforms and is capable of providing air defence on the move.
- QRSAM Weapon Systems is being inducted into the Indian Army.
- The missile is propelled by a single stage solid propellant rocket motor and uses all indigenous subsystems

Topic 24: TRACK OF DIPLOMACY

Importance for Prelims: International Relations

Indian Council on Global Relations will welcome Canada and India's top diplomats on Tuesday to discuss the growing strategic partnership between Canada and India in the era of COVID-19. This is the third Canada-India Track 1.5 Dialogue on Innovation, Growth and Prosperity meeting.

- **Track 1.5 Diplomacy:** This term is used when both officials and non-officials are involved in diplomatic negotiations. Often foreign leaders travel with businessmen is an example.

Track 1 Diplomacy:

- **Official discussions** typically involving high-level political and military leaders and focusing on cease-fires, peace talks, and treaties and other agreements. Heads of states meet, have hi-tea, discuss issues and release joint statements etc.

Track 2 Diplomacy:

- **Unofficial dialogue** and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the official process. Since it is unofficial, you can expect to see influential academic, religious, and NGO leaders and other civil society actors who can interact more freely than high-ranking officials.

Track 3 Diplomacy:

- **People-to-people diplomacy** undertaken by individuals and private groups. Normally focused at the grassroots level, this type of diplomacy often involves organizing meetings and conferences, generating media exposure, and political and legal advocacy for marginalized people and communities.

Multi-track Diplomacy:

- A term for operating on several tracks simultaneously, including official

and unofficial conflict resolution efforts, citizen and scientific exchanges, international business negotiations, international cultural and athletic activities, and other cooperative efforts.

Topic 25: . KALVARI-CLASS SUBMARINES

Importance for Prelims: Defence

Indian Navy's fifth Kalvari-class Diesel Electric attack submarine INS Vagir was launched at Mazgaon Dock in Mumbai.

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Vagir is the fifth among the six Kalvari-class submarines being constructed by the public sector shipbuilder Mazagon Dock Ltd (MDL) in Mumbai.
- The other vessels in the class are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, INS Vela and INS Vagsheer.
- **Status:** Of these Kalvari and Khanderi have been commissioned in 2017 and 2019, Vela and Karanj and undergoing sea trials, Vagir has now been launched and Vagsheer is under construction.

Technical details

- The design of Kalvari class of submarines is based on Scorpene submarines designed and developed by French defence major Naval Group formerly DCNS and Spanish state owned entity Navantia.
- This class of submarines have Diesel Electric transmission systems and these are primarily attack submarines or 'hunter-killer' type which means they are designed to target and sink adversary naval vessels.
- These submarines are around 220 feet long and have a height of 40 feet. It can reach the highest speeds of 11 knots when surfaced and 20 knots when submerged.
- The modern variants of the Scorpene class of submarines have what is called **the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP)** which enables non-nuclear submarines to operate for a long time without access to surface oxygen.

Topic 26: NDRF & SDRF

Importance for Prelims: Disaster Management

Union Home Ministry releases 4382 Crore Rupees to six states under National Disaster Response Fund

National Disaster Response Fund:

- Defined under **sec 46 of Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act)**.
- It is a fund managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster.
- Constituted to supplement the funds of the State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF) of the states to facilitate immediate relief in case of calamities of a severe nature.
- National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.

What is it to be used for?

- NDRF amount can be spent only towards meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation.
- For projects exclusively for the purpose of mitigation, i.e, measures aimed at reducing the risk, impact or effect of a disaster or threatening disaster situation a separate fund called National Disaster Mitigation Fund has to be constituted.

Sources of Financing NDRF:

- Financed through the levy of a cess on certain items, chargeable to excise and customs duty, and approved annually through the Finance Bill.
- The requirement for funds beyond what is available under the NDRF is met through general budgetary resources.

- Currently, a **National Calamity Contingency Duty (NCCD)** is levied to finance the NDRF and additional budgetary support is provided as and when necessary.
- A provision also exists in the **DM Act, 2005** to encourage any person or institution to make a contribution to the NDRF.

Key features of NDRF:

- Located in the “**Public Accounts**” of Government of India under “Reserve Funds not bearing interest”.
- Department of Agriculture and Cooperation under Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) monitors relief activities for calamities associated with drought, hailstorms, pest attacks and cold wave /frost while rest of the natural calamities are monitored by **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- **Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)** audits the accounts of NDRF.

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF):

- SDRF has been constituted by each state under the provisions of **Disaster Management act 2005**. It was constituted based on the recommendations of the **13th Finance Commission**.
- The government of India contributes 75% and 90% of the total yearly allocation of SDRF to general states and special category states respectively.
- The **state executive committee** headed by the **Chief Secretary** is authorized to decide on all matters relating to the financing of the relief expenditure from the SDRF.
- **Disaster (s) covered under SDRF:** Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.

- **Local Disaster:** A State Government may use up to 10 percent of the funds available under the SDRF for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be ‘disasters’ within the local context in the State and which are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs. State Government has to list the State specific natural disasters and notify clear and transparent guidelines for such disasters with the approval of the State Authority, i.e., the State Executive Authority (SEC).

Features of SDRF:

- SDRF is located in the ‘ **Public Account**’ under ‘Reserve Fund’. (But direct expenditures are not made from Public Account.)
- State Government has to pay interest on a half yearly basis to the funds in SDRF, at the rate applicable to overdrafts.
- The aggregate size of the SDRF for each state, for each year, is as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission.
- The share of GoI to the SDRF is treated as a ‘grant in aid’.
- The financing of relief measures out of SDRF are decided by the State Executive Committee (SEC) constituted under Section 20 of the DM Act. SEC is responsible for the overall administration of the SDRF.
- However, the administrative expenses of SEC are borne by the State Government from its normal budgetary provisions and not from the SDRF or NDRF.
- Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal ministry for overseeing the operation of the SDRF and monitors compliance with prescribed processes.
- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) audit the SDRF every year.

Right to work:

- Context: The lockdown enforced to control COVID-19 led to huge job losses. In this context, MNREGA and Right to Work has become very important.

Status of Right to Work:

- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, both of which were acceded by India, in **Article 23** and **Article 6** respectively, recognise the right to work in an employment of one's choice and the State's responsibility to safeguard this right.

Right to Work in Indian Constitution:

- The Indian Constitution does not explicitly recognise the 'right to work' as a **fundamental right**.
- It is placed in **Part IV (Directive Principles of State Policy)** of the Constitution under **Article 41**, which hence makes it **unenforceable** in the court of law.
- Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Olga Tellis & Ors. v Bombay Municipal Corporation & Ors** recognised 'right to work' as a **fundamental right inherent in the 'right to life'**.

MNREGA

- The Act guarantees the right to work to by providing **100 days** of guaranteed **wage employment** in a financial year to every rural household whose **adult members** are willing to do **unskilled manual work**.

Topic 27: SWAMI VIVEKANANDHA

Importance for Prelims: Culture

PM Modi unveiled a life-size statue of Swami Vivekananda on JNU campus through videoconferencing.

- Swami Vivekananda is credited with introducing the West to the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga.
- He worked in the field of social service.
- He spoke to people in India and urged them to eliminate the caste system and promote science and industrialisation.
- He also worked against superstitions and advocated the upliftment of women's position in society.
- He wanted the people to embrace the spirit of equality and free-thinking.
- His interpretation of Vedanta is called **neo-Vedanta**.
- Reverence and admiration for him among Bengali elites led to the formation of the Ramakrishna Mission by Swami Vivekananda.
- The four pillars of nationalism according to Swami Vivekananda are: Consciousness and pride in the ancient glory of India. Development of moral and physical strength. Awakening of the masses.
- Unity based on common spiritual ideas.

Vedanta

- It was based on **Upanishads and their interpretation**.
- Its aim was to enquire about 'Brahman' (ultimate reality) which was the central concept of Upanishads.
- It saw Veda as the ultimate source of information and whose authority could not be questioned.
- It emphasized on path of knowledge (jnana) as opposed to that of sacrifice (karma).
- Ultimate aim of knowledge was 'Moksha' i.e. liberation from 'sansara'.

Ramakrishna Mission

- It is an embodiment of the synthesis of ancient Indian and modern western cultures.
- Formally, the Mission was founded in May 1897 by Paramahansa's disciple, Narendranath Dutta, who was later on known as Swami Vivekananda (1863- 1902).
- The Mission has given top priority to the idea of social service, both in terms of philanthropic work and upliftment of religious and spiritual life.
- It has been successful in propagating the universal principle of Vedanta and giving a true picture of India to the western world.
- The Mission has opened many schools and dispensaries, and helped the victims of natural calamities.