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1. Union Minister Giriraj Singh inaugurates Mission Antyodaya Survey 2022-23 (Feb. 9, 2023)

Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister **Giriraj Singh** inaugurated the **Mission Antyodaya Survey (MAS)** 2022-23 in New Delhi on 9 February.

An overview of the news

- The **Rural Development Department** is conducting the Mission Antyodaya survey in all the Gram Panchayats of the country from **2017-18**.
- Survey will be done in all the **2,69,253 Gram Panchayats** whose profiles have been created on **e-Gram Swaraj**.

Objectives of Mission Antyodaya Survey 2022-23

- Through the convergence of various schemes, the outcomes for the lives and livelihood of the people are to be realised.
- Support a participatory planning process for Gram Panchayat Development Planning that will improve service delivery, increase citizenship and improve governance at the local level.
- To conduct an annual survey at the Gram Panchayat level to monitor the progress of the development process in rural areas.
- Preparation of Panchayat wise ranking and gap report on the basis of data collected through survey at Gram Panchayat level.

About 'Mission Antyodaya'

- It was initiated in the **Union Budget 2017-18**.
- It has been brought with the objective of optimum utilisation and management of the resources allocated by **27 Ministries/Departments of the Government** of India under various programs for the development of rural areas.
- **Gram Panchayats** have been kept at its focal point.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Ministry of Rural Development are its **nodal agencies**.
- It aims to eradicate poverty in various dimensions of rural households.

2. Urban-20 City Sherpas' meet begins at Ahmedabad in Gujarat (Feb. 9, 2023)

A two-day **Urban-20 City Sherpas'** meet began on 9 February in **Ahmedabad**.

An overview of the news

- More than **30 international cities** are participating in this two-day event to discuss the **sustainable development of U20 cities**.
- Following the meeting, a draft communique will be finalised which will be issued during the **Mayors Summit** later this year.
- The meeting is being organized by the Union **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** and the **Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation**.
- The purpose of the meeting is to focus on **fostering solidarity** between cities to find common solutions that are in line with the overall objectives of the G20.
- This is the **third meeting** to be held in **Gujarat** as part of India's chairmanship of the G20.

About Urban-20

- The U20, one of the G20's engagement groups, provides a forum for cities in the G20 countries to discuss and collectively address key urban development issues - **climate change, social inclusion, sustainable mobility and affordable housing**.

Six priority areas of U20

- Environment-friendly behaviour,
- Water security,
- Climate finance,
- Local identity,
- Urban planning and administration
- Digitalisation of urban amenities

3. 50% less strength than sanctioned posts in Scheduled Tribes Commission (Feb. 9, 2023)

presented by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** on 6 February in Lok Sabha revealed that the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** is currently functioning with less than **50% of its sanctioned strength**.

About National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- It has been established by amending **Article 338** and inserting a new **Article 338A** in the Indian Constitution through the **89th Amendment Act**.
- It is a **constitutional body**.

- It consists of a **chairman**, a **vice-chairman** and **three whole-time members** (including a woman member).
- Its term is for **3 years** and the chairman is appointed by the **President**.
- It investigates and monitors matters relating to Safeguards provided for STs.
- Chairman - **Harsha Chauhan**
- Union Minister of Tribal Affairs - **Arjun Munda**

NCST's Powers and Functions

- The Commission has the power to inquire into any complaint relating to the **deprivation of rights and safeguards** of the Scheduled Tribes.
- It has all the powers of a **civil court**.
- To examine and monitor matters relating to safeguards available to STs under the Constitution, to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- To participate in and advise on the planning process for the **socio-economic development** of the Scheduled Tribes.
- To evaluate the progress of their development under the **Union and any State**.

4. Maritime India Vision 2030 (Feb. 9, 2023)

To boost the waterways network, the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** has planned several initiatives to develop ports in India at par with global standards.

An overview of the news

- This project has been made under the **Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030**.
- The ministry has planned an investment of Rs **1,00,000 to Rs 1,25,000 crore** for capacity enhancement and development of world-class infrastructure at ports.
- Under the Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 the government aims to make **world-class mega ports, transshipment hubs**.
- The container throughput of Indian ports was **17 million TEUs (Twenty Equipment Unit)** in the period 2020, while that of **China** was **245 million TEUs** in the same period.
- The combined container throughput of the top 20 major global ports stood at 357 million TEUs during the 2020 period.

Maritime India Vision 2030

- It is the master plan to ensure coordinated and accelerated development of India's maritime sector over the **next decade**.
- It identifies over **150 initiatives across 10 themes** covering all aspects of the Indian Maritime Sector.
- It is a comprehensive effort to define and meet the **National Maritime Objectives**.
- It envisages an overall investment of **Rs 3,00,000 - 3,50,000 crore** in the ports, shipping and inland waterways categories.

5. Ashwini Vaishnav launches 'Digital Payments Utsav' to promote digital payments across the country (Feb. 9, 2023)

Electronics & Information Technology and Communications Minister **Ashwini Vaishnav** launched the '**Digital Payments Utsav**' in New Delhi on 9 February.

An overview of the news

- A comprehensive month-long campaign "**Digital Payments Utsav**" has been planned from for the **promotion of Digital Payments** across the country,
- It will focus on **G-20 Digital Economy Working Group event** cities, namely **Lucknow, Hyderabad, Pune and Bengaluru**.
- Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship **Rajeev Chandrasekhar** was the guest of honour at the event.
- **G-20 co-branded QR codes and a coffee table book** showcasing India's journey to global leadership in digital payments and digital inclusion were released at the event.
- The 'Digital Payments Utsav' will also highlight how digital payments are ensuring **financial inclusion** and empowering small traders, street vendors and common people of the country.
- The Digital Payments Utsav will also introduce digital payments as a '**whole of government**' initiative with active participation from other central ministries.
- **MeitY** is striving to increase access to easy and convenient digital payment solutions for all citizens.

6. Earthquake devastation in Turkiye (Feb. 9, 2023)

Earthquake devastation in Turkiye

On 6 February a major **earthquake struck Turkey and Syria**, killing more than **15,000 people**.

An overview of the news

- The **Indian Army** has set up a field hospital in **Iskenderun, Hatay province of Turkey**. The field hospital will treat people affected by the earthquake.
- Three earthquakes measuring **7.8, 7.6 and 6.0 on the Richter scale** hit different regions of **Turkey and neighbouring Syria**.
- The epicentre of the earthquake was **26 km east of the Turkish city of Nurdagi** at a depth of about 18 km on the East Anatolian Fault.
- The earthquake moved northeast, causing devastation in central Turkey and Syria.
- It is the most powerful earthquake to shake the region in more than **100 years**.

Reasons of Turkey's Earthquakes

- **About 95%** of the country's territory is sensitive to earthquakes.
- Major cities of Istanbul and Izmir and the region of East Anatolia are in high risk.

About Earthquake

- In simple words, earthquake refers to the **vibration of the earth**.
- It is a natural phenomenon, in which waves are generated due to the release of energy from inside the earth which spreads in all directions and vibrates the earth.
- The waves produced by an earthquake are called **seismic waves**, which move on the surface of the earth.
- The instruments used to measure earthquakes are called **seismographs**.
- The place below the Earth's surface where the epicenter of an earthquake is located is called the **hypocenter**.
- The place above the surface of the earth where the seismic waves first reach is called the **epicenter**.
- It is measured in the **Richter scale**.

7. 108 Buddhist Pilgrims from Republic of Korea on 43-day walking tour (Feb. 8, 2023)

108 Buddhist Pilgrims from Republic of Korea on 43-day walking tour

A **43-day walking tour of sacred Buddhist sites in India and Nepal is being organised by the Sangwol Society of the Republic of Korea** from February 9 to March 23, 2023.

An overview of the news:

- **108 Buddhist pilgrims** from the Republic of Korea will **travel over 1,100 kilometres** in 43 days as part of the pilgrimage on foot.

- The aim of the pilgrimage is to enhance friendship and cooperation between the two countries.
- Pilgrims will pay obeisance at eight major Buddhist holy sites during the journey.

During the pilgrimage, Buddhist followers will visit the following sites:

- **Bodh Gaya:** Here **Mahatma Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.**
- **Nalanda University:** Nalanda University is one of the ancient universities. It was **founded by the Gupta ruler Kumaragupta I.**
- **Mahaparinirvan Temple:** The Mahaparinirvan Temple, located in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, is considered one of the most sacred temples of Buddhism in the whole world. In this temple, a 6.1 metre high idol of Lord Buddha is kept in the lying posture.
- It is believed to be the **death place of Lord Buddha.**
- **Rajgir:** Rajgir is located in the Nalanda district of Bihar. It is a pilgrimage centre for Jains, Buddhists and Hindus.
- **Rambhar Stupa:** Lord Buddha was cremated at this place in 483 BC. This stupa was built by the Malla king
- **Lumbini:** Lumbini is the **birth place of Lord Buddha.** It is located in Nepal.

8. India received highest ever foreign inward remittances in a single year of \$89,127 million in FY 2021-22 (Feb. 8, 2023)

During the **financial year 2021-22**, India received foreign inward remittance of **\$89,127 million** which is the **highest ever inward remittance** received in a single year.

An overview of the news

- Union Minister of State for Finance **Pankaj Chowdhary** said this in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 7 February.

Data for the past five years on inward remittances

Year	Inward Remittances (US \$ million)
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2017-18	69,129
2018-19	76,396
2019-20	83,195
2020-21	80,185
2021-22	89,127

Share of different countries in inward remittances, 2020-21

Source Country	Share in Total Remittances (Percent)
United States	23.4
United Arab Emirates	18.0
United Kingdom	6.8
Singapore	5.7
Saudi Arabia	5.1

9. Indore becomes the first civic body in the country to launch green bonds (Feb. 8, 2023)

Indore Municipal Corporation has become the first civic body in the country to issue green bonds.

An overview of the news:

- The **corporation plans to raise Rs 244 crore through green bonds.**
- This **amount will be used to set up a 60 MW solar plant at Juladh Pumping Station** in Hum Samraj and Ashukhedi villages on the banks of river Narmada falling in Khargone district with **an investment of about Rs 305 crore.**
- Indore Municipal Corporation pumps water from Juladh Pumping Station for drinking water supply in the city. For this, 25 crore rupees are spent on electricity bill every month. After the commissioning of this plant, the cost of electricity will be reduced by five to six crore rupees annually.
- This bond of Indore Municipal Corporation will open between 10-14 February 2023. And later it will be listed on the National Stock Exchange.

What is Green Bond?

- Green bonds are a means of obtaining debt through which funds are raised for 'green' projects, mainly related to renewable energy, clean transportation, sustainable water management, etc.
- A green bond is issued by an organisation for the purpose of financing or refinancing projects that make a positive contribution to the environment and/or climate.
- Green bonds were first announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the budget for the financial year 2022-23.

10. Nearly 600 sea lions die due to bird flu outbreak in Peru (Feb. 8, 2023)

In Peru, about 585 sea lions and 55,000 wild birds have died in recent weeks due to the **H5N1 bird flu virus.**

An overview of the news

- According to the **Sarnap Natural Area Conservation Agency**, after discovering 55,000 dead birds in eight protected coastal areas, rangers found that all of them died due to bird flu.
- Along with this, 585 sea lions have also died in 7 protected marine areas.
- Dead birds include **pelicans, different types of gulls and penguins.**
- H5N1 has also been confirmed in dead sea lions in laboratory tests. After this the authorities announced the **Biological Vigilance Protocol.**
- Peru's National Forest and Wildlife Service has urged people and their pets to avoid and stay away from sea lions and seabirds at the beach.

Avian Influenza (H5N1)

- **Bird flu**, also known as avian influenza (AI), is a highly **contagious viral disease** that affects species of food-producing birds (chickens, turkeys, quail, guinea fowl, etc.), as well as domesticated birds and wild animals.
- Avian influenza virus subtypes are **A(H5N1), A(H7N9), A(H9N2) and A(H10N3)**.
- Types **B and C** mostly infect **humans** and usually cause mild illness.

About Peru

- Peru is the **third largest country in South America**, after Brazil and Argentina.
- President: **Dina Boluarte**
- Capital: **Lima**
- Currency : **Nuevo Sol**
- Major Mountain Ranges: **Andes**
- Major Rivers: **Amazon, Ucayali, Madre de Dios**