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1. Environment Minister participates in Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (Oct. 11, 2022)

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, **Bhupender Yadav** attended the inaugural session of **Sustainable Mountain Development Summit-XI (SMDS-XI)** held at **Leh, Ladakh** from 10-12 October, 2022.

Important facts

- **The theme** for SMDS-XI is '**Harnessing tourism for sustainable mountain development**'.
- The main focus of the summit is to reduce the negative impacts of tourism, while harnessing its positive contribution in building climate and socio-ecological resilience and sustainability.
- Bhupendra Yadav highlighted the establishment of **Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment** and its regional center at **Leh** under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- This regional center is entrusted with the task of research and development activities especially with regard to the sustainability of the Himalayan environment.

About Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS)

- It is a flagship annual event of the **Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI)**, a working and civil society-led forum in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), comprising **10 mountain states, two union territories and four hill districts**.
- Apart from the central event, two integral components of SMDS include the Mountain Legislators' Meet (MLM) and the Indian Himalayan Youth Summit.

2. NMDC Signs MoU with RailTel for ICT and Digital Solutions (Oct. 11, 2022)

Mining major National Mineral Development Corporation (**NMDC**) and **RailTel Corporation** of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 10 October covering NMDC's ICT and Digital Transformation services at their corporate offices and mining premises.

Important facts

- This partnership will focus on optimum utilization of resources and will pave the way for a robust digital transformation in the mining sector.
- As India's leading miner, NMDC has been an early user of automation and digitalization.
- RailTel will provide consultancy, project management and execution services which will enhance efficiency and transparency.
- This is a big step towards retaining NMDC in the top league.

- This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) builds on NMDC's already existing partnership with National Railway Telecom.
- Under this, MPLS VPN at 11 locations of NMDC and Internet Leased Lines (ILL) at 7 locations of NMDC and High-Definition Video Conferencing solutions are being provided for the last 7 years.

3. Home Minister unveil statue of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan at Sitabdiara in Saran district, Bihar (Oct. 11, 2022)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah presides over a function to mark the birth anniversary of socialist icon **Jayaprakash Narayan** at **Sitabdiara** in Bihar's Saran district on October 11, 2022.

Important facts

- He addressed a public meeting after unveiling the **statue of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan** at Sitab Diyara.
- The event was organized by the Union Ministry of Art and Culture.
- This is Amit Shah's second visit to Bihar after the BJP was ousted from power in the state during the political turmoil in Bihar in August this year.

About Jayaprakash Narayan

- On **October 11, 2022**, the birth anniversary of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was celebrated across the country.
- He was born on **11th October, 1902** in Sitabdiara, Bihar.
- He was Influenced by **Marxist ideas and Gandhian ideology**.
- He was educated at universities in the United States where he became a supporter of Marxist ideology.
- On his return to India in the year 1929, he joined the **Indian National Congress**.
- In the year **1932**, he was sentenced to **one year's imprisonment** for participating in the civil disobedience movement against British rule in India.
- In the year **1948**, he left the Congress party along with most of the socialist leaders of the Congress and formed the Praja Socialist Party in the year 1952.
- He soon became dissatisfied with politics and announced in 1954 that he would devote his life to the **Bhoodan movement** which was founded by **Vinoba Bhave**.
- **In 1959**, he introduced the concept of 'reconstruction of Indian politics' **through a four-tier hierarchy of village, district, state and union councils**.
- In the **year 1974**, he started a program against corruption for social change which was termed as **total revolution**.

- A total revolution is a combination of political, social, economic, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual revolutions.
- Jayaprakash Narayan was **posthumously** awarded India's highest civilian award, the **Bharat Ratna (1999)**, for his invaluable contribution to the freedom struggle, upliftment of the poor and downtrodden.
- He died on **October 8, 1979** in Patna.

4. Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurates 4th Heli-India Summit 2022 (Oct. 10, 2022)

Union Civil Aviation Minister **Jyotiraditya Scindia** and Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha** inaugurated the **4th Heli-India Summit 2022** in **Srinagar** on 10 October.

Important facts

- The theme of 4th Heli-India Summit 2022 is '**Helicopters for last Mile Connectivity**'.
- He said that a civil enclave will be built in Jammu at a cost of Rs 861 crores and the Srinagar's present terminal will be expanded three times from 20,000 square meters to 60,000 square meters at a cost of Rs 1500 crores.
- He said that the decrease in VAT on **Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF)** from 26.5 percent to one percent by the J&K government.
- The **HeliSewa portal** is completely online and is being used by all operators to obtain landing permissions for helipads, and is also creating a database of helipads in the country.
- **Helidisha**, guidance material on helicopter operations for the state administration has been distributed in 780 districts.
- Helicopter Accelerator cell is fully proactive in resolving helicopter issues and an advisory group of industry representatives is helping to identify the problem areas.
- Three helicopter corridors have been built from Mumbai-Pune, Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar and Shamshabad-Begumpet and new IFR corridors are being planned.
- In terms of railway connectivity, Jammu and Kashmir will be connected with Kanyakumari by next year.

5. National Conference on Skilling in Non- Traditional Livelihood for Girls "Betian Bane Kushal" (Oct. 10, 2022)

Women and Child Development Ministry to organize National Conference on Skilling in Non-Traditional Livelihood for Girls '**Betian Bane Kushal**' on 11 October.

Important facts

- The conference is being organized under the banner of **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** on the occasion of **International Day of the Girl Child** on October 11, 2022.
- Under the **Betiyan Bane Kushal initiative**, the emphasis will be on convergence between Ministries and Departments to ensure skill development of girls.
- It will be organized by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The conference will emphasise on the importance of boosting the capacity and skills of girls in **STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)** fields to increase their participation in related professions and research.
- During the conference, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Minority Affairs will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote the skills of young girls so that they can participate in the workforce in an equitable and empowered manner.
- During the event, both these ministries will commit towards focusing on promoting entrepreneurship skills, digital literacy, financial literacy and employability skills of girls and women.

Minister of Women and Child Development - **Smriti Zubin Irani**

Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship - **Dharmendra Pradhan**

6. The Plenary Session of North Eastern Council Concludes (Oct. 10, 2022)

The two-day plenary session of the **North Eastern Council (NEC)**, which was held in **Guwahati**, under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** concluded in Guwahati on 9 October.

Important facts

- The meeting was attended by the Governors, Chief Ministers of North Eastern States, Union Ministers and Ministers of State for North Eastern Affairs and senior officers of various departments of the Centre and North Eastern States.
- In his address, Amit Shah said that there were three major hurdles in the path of development of the Northeast for decades - violence and unrest by extremist groups, lack of rail, road and air connectivity in the Northeast and previous governments' lack of emphasis on development of the Northeast.
- He said that the whole of India considers the languages, cultures, food and costumes of the Northeast of the country as its heritage and the Government of India is making every effort to preserve and promote the natural identity of this region.
- The 70th Plenary meeting reviewed the status of different ongoing social and developmental projects in the North Eastern Region.

NEHHDC Mobile Application launched

- The Home Minister launched the North Eastern Handicrafts & Handlooms Development Corporation Limited (**NEHHDC**) Mobile Application during the session.
- It would help register artisans and weavers online and collect authentic data through the app.

About North Eastern Council

- It is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the **North Eastern Region**.
- It consists of the **eight States** of **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura**.
- It was constituted under the **North Eastern Council Act in 1971**.
- The Council comprises Governors and Chief Ministers of constituent States and three members nominated by the President.
- The Union Cabinet, in June 2018, approved the proposal of the **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER)** to nominate the **Union Home Minister as the ex-officio Chairman** of the North Eastern Council (NEC).
- The Cabinet also approved that the **Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of DoNER** will act as the **Vice-Chairman** of the Council.
- It discusses any matter in which some or all the States represented on the Council have a common interest and advises the Central Government and the respective State Governments as to the action to be taken on any such matter.
- The headquarters - **Shillong**

7. 'Project Mausam': ASI holds two-day meet (Oct. 10, 2022)

Under “**Project Mausam**”, the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** organised a **two-day event** on 7th and 8th October, 2022 at **India Habitat Centre, New Delhi** with an aim to promote future research and broaden our understanding of the subject.

Important facts

- The "**Jaladhipurayatra: Exploring Multi-Cultural Relations among Indian Ocean Rim Countries**" conference covered many aspects of maritime exchanges and interactions.
- The conference was inaugurated by **Arjun Ram Meghwal**, Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs and **Meenakshi Lekhi**, Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs.
- A brochure on the objectives and scope of the Mausam project along with a brief outline of India's maritime heritage and a list of World Heritage properties of India was released on the occasion.

- The conference consisted of a plenary session followed by six academic sessions, each dealing with a particular aspect of India's maritime dialogue.
- On the second day an interaction session with eminent ambassadors of the Indian Ocean Rim countries was organized, which was presided over by the Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs **Meenakshi Lekhi**.

About "Project Mausam"

- It was launched by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, at **UNESCO's 38th World Heritage Committee Meeting** held in Doha, **Qatar**, in 2014.
- Its main objective is to conduct archaeological and historical level research in relation to the multi-faceted Indian Ocean in order to uncover the cultural, commercial and religious interrelationships of this diverse region.
- Presently, the Archaeological Survey of India is in charge of overseeing the project.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- It is the premier organisation for archaeological research and conservation of the nation's cultural heritage.
- It works under the **Ministry of Culture**.
- It manages more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- It was founded in 1861 by **Alexander Cunningham**.
- Alexander Cunningham was the **first Director-General** of ASI.
- He is also known as the **"Father of Indian Archaeology"**.
- It is headed by a Director-General and is headquartered in New Delhi.
- Director General - **V. Vidyavathi**

8. S Jaishankar inaugurates new Indian High Commission Chancery at Wellington in New Zealand (Oct. 10, 2022)

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** on 9 October inaugurated the new **Indian High Commission Chancery in Wellington, New Zealand**.

Important facts

- He said that coordinating each other's potentials is a more prudent way to further deepen the vital ties between India and New Zealand.
- S. Jaishankar, who is on his **first visit to New Zealand** as External Affairs Minister, also said that there is a need to take the ties between the two countries afresh.

- He also said that there is massive potential for partnership between India and New Zealand in the field of agri-business.
- Strong cooperation between India and New Zealand will ensure peace, prosperity and progress in the shared region, he said.
- There is huge potential in business, digital, agriculture, education, skills, traditional medicine and maritime security domains, he said.

About New Zealand

- It is a remote, mountainous group of islands located off the **southeast coast of Australia**.
- Prime Minister - **Jacinda Ardern**
- Capital - **Wellington**
- Currency - **New Zealand dollar**
- New Zealand was the first country to allow **women to vote in 1893**.
- New Zealand's **wetapunga** is one of the **heaviest insects** in the world.
- Major rivers - **Waikato, Clurtha, Rangitaiki, Wanganui, Manawatu, Buller, Rakaia, Waitaki, Waiau**
- Major Mountain Ranges - **Southern Alps, Kaikoura Ranges**
- New Zealand's two main islands - **North and South Islands**, are separated by the **Cook Strait**.

9. U S and India launch a joint task force on energy storage technologies (Oct. 8, 2022)

India and the United States have launched a new task force under the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP), which will focus on the accelerated deployment of energy storage technologies.

Battery energy storage systems (BESS), are devices that enable energy from renewables, like solar and wind, to be stored and then released when customers need power most.

The task force was announced during the meeting of the Union minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas **Hardeep Puri** and the US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm in **Washington** on 7 October 2022.

They also issued a US India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) joint statement which highlighted the importance of bilateral clean energy engagement to strengthen energy security and to accelerate clean, secure, and just energy transition.

10. Solomon PM told Australia, no Chinese military presence in the country (Oct. 8, 2022)

Solomon Islands Prime Minister **Manasseh Sogaware** assured Australia on 7 October that his country would not allow a **Chinese military presence** in its territory.

Important facts

- The island nation has been at the centre of a diplomatic conflict in the southern Pacific Ocean between the **United States, Australia and their allies** on the one hand and **China** on the other.
- Earlier this year, the Solomon Islands struck a **security agreement with China**, saying it needed Beijing's assistance with its domestic security situation.
- The agreement shook the **US and Australia**.
- There was concern that the deal could potentially lead to a **Chinese military base** and power test on the island nation.
- The United States and its regional allies fear that China could open a Chinese naval base, which would significantly increase China's military reach in the **South Pacific**.

About Solomon Islands

- The Solomon Islands is a nation located in **Melanesia, east of Papua New Guinea**, consisting of more than **990 islands**.
- **Melanesia** is a subregion of **Oceania** in the southwestern Pacific Ocean.
- It does not include the **Santa Cruz Islands** and the outlying islands such as **Rennell and Bellona**.
- Its capital is **Honiara**, which is located on the **island of Guadalcanal**.