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1. India's first National Coalition Forum for Urban Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) (July 2, 2022)

India's first National Coalition Forum for Urban Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) was launched at the 11th World Urban Forum in Poland.

- **Important facts**

- The National Alliance Forum was launched by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), Climate Centre for Cities (NIUA C-Cube), World Resources Institute India (WRI India-World Resources Institute India) and their partners.
- NIUA focuses on research, knowledge management, policy, advocacy and capacity building on urban development and management to develop sustainable, inclusive and productive urban ecosystems in the country.

- **About nature based solutions(NBS)**

- NbS is defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as the act of protecting, sustaining, managing and restoring natural and modified ecosystems that contribute to human well-being and biodiversity while effectively and adaptively addressing social challenges. associated benefits.
- NbS helps in mitigating the impact of climate change as well as providing benefits to many ecosystems including addressing various social challenges, building disadvantaged and vulnerable urban communities most affected by climate change induced disasters.

- **About World Urban Forum**

- The World Urban Forum (WUF) is the premier global conference on sustainable urbanism.
- WUF was established in 2001 by the United Nations to investigate rapid urbanisation and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies.
- WUF11 is co-organized by UN-Habitat, Poland's Ministry of Development Fund and Regional Policy, and the Municipal Office of Katowice, Poland.

2. Ashadhi Bij - The Kutch community's New Year (July 2, 2022)

Ashadhi Beej is celebrated every year on the second day of the month of Ashadha as Hindu New Year by the Kutch community in the Kutch region of Gujarat.

- **Important facts**

- In 2022, it was celebrated on 1 July. It is also known as Kutchi New Year.
- Kutchi New Year is a traditional festival and is celebrated in homes.
- This festival marks the beginning of rains in the Kutch region of Gujarat.
- During Ashadhi seed, the humidity in the atmosphere is tested to predict which crop will do better in the coming monsoon.

- Lord Ganesha, Goddess Lakshmi and other regional deities are worshipped on this occasion.
- In other parts of Gujarat, the Hindu New Year is celebrated on Kartik Shukla Paksha after Diwali.
- **Rann of Kutch**
- The Rann of Kutch in India is located in the Thar Desert biogeographic region in the Indian state of Gujarat. This area is also spread in the Sindh province of Pakistan.
- The Rann of Kutch covers a vast area of about 10,000 square miles and is located between the Gulf of Kutch and the mouth of the Indus River in southern Pakistan.
- In the north-east corner of the Rann of Kutch is the Luni River, which originates from Rajasthan.
- The Rann of Kutch is counted among the wetlands of India.
- The Gulf of Kutch lies to the west of this region and the Gulf of Khambhat is to the east.
- The region is home to a large population of the wild Asian donkey, which is a member of the wild horse family.
- The Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary is famous for the Chote Rann of Kutch.
- The Rann of Kutch is the only region in India that gives refuge to migratory flamingos.
- The region is home to a total of 13 species of lark.
- Some of the other bird species found in the marshlands of Kutch include Ibis, Spoonbill, Common Crane, Pelican etc.
- The Biosphere Reserve of the Rann of Kutch is considered an important area for the conservation of critically endangered vulture species.

3. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is sworn in as the Philippines 17th president (July 2, 2022)

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sworn in as the 17th President of the Philippines.

- Ferdinand Marcos Jr took the oath at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Manila.
- Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will serve as president until 2028.
- Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has replaced Rodrigo Duterte, who served as the President of the Philippines from 2016 to 2022.
- Sara Duterte Carpia has been elected Vice President.
- Marcos Jr. won the presidential election in May with 60 percent of the vote over rival Maria Leonor Robredo.
- The President is the head of the executive branch of the Philippine government. The President is directly elected by the people.

The term of the President in the Philippine Constitution is six years.

- **About Philippines**

- The Philippines is a country located in Southeast Asia.
- It got complete independence on 4 July 1946 after the Second World War.
- It is the country with the fifth longest coastline in the world.
- The Philippines is the second largest producer of geothermal energy in the world, after the United States.
- Capital - Manila
- Currency - peso

4. Habitat World Cities Report 2022 (July 2, 2022)

Recently the United Nations published its report titled "Habitat World Cities Report 2022".

- The urban population in India is projected to reach 675 million in 2035. This will be the second highest figure after China.
- After the COVID-19 pandemic, the global urban population is on the rise again. This will increase to 2.2 billion by 2050.
- India's urban population is expected to reach 675,456,000 in 2035 as compared to 483,099,000 in 2020.
- The percentage of population in India's urban areas will be 43.2 percent by 2035.

- **Global scenario**

- The urban population in China is projected to reach 1.05 billion in 2035.
- The urban population in Asia will increase to 2.99 billion in 2035.
- In the past two decades, India and China experienced rapid urbanisation and economic growth. As a result, the number of people living in poverty has decreased.
- Large economies like China and India account for the bulk of the world's population. The growth trajectory in these countries has affected global inequality.

- **About United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN-Habitat) -**

- It was established in 1978.
- UN-Habitat is the United Nations agency for human settlements assigned by the United Nations General Assembly the task of promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities towards the goal of providing affordable housing for all.
- Headquarters- Nairobi, Kenya
- Executive Director- Maimunah Mohammad Sharif

5. New Manufacturing Facilities at Bharat Dynamics Limited Dedicated to the Nation (July 2, 2022)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicates to the nation new manufacturing facilities at Bharat Dynamics Limited, Bhanur.

- Rajnath Singh visited the Bhanur Unit of Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in Telangana on July 2, 2022.
- During his visit he dedicated to the Nation a number of new manufacturing facilities set up by the Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU).
- These include the Warhead Facility at Bhanur Unit and Radio Frequency (RF) Seeker Facility at Kanchanbagh Unit.
- Rajnath Singh also unveiled a statue of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi in the BDL campus.
- **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)**
- It is a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Defence.
- It was established in Hyderabad in the year 1970.
- It manufactures guided missiles and allied defence equipment for the Indian Armed Forces.
- It has been working in collaboration with DRDO and foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

6. NITI Aayog releases compendium of various Ayush-based initiatives (July 2, 2022)

NITI Aayog has released a compendium of AYUSH based medical interventions from States and Union Territories.

- The name of this compendium is "Mitigation and Management of COVID-19: Compendium of AYUSH-Based Practices from Indian States and Union Territories".
- This compendium gives detailed information on various AYUSH-based initiatives and measures taken by the States and Union Territories in view of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.
- It was released by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Suman Beri and Minister of State for AYUSH and Women and Child Development Dr. Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai.
- In preparing this compendium of AYUSH-based measures, NITI Aayog has contacted all the States and Union Territories and urged them to share the AYUSH measures taken in mitigating and managing the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The report indicated that there is a need to further strengthen the traditional health systems in the country.

The compendium also includes a summary of the Ministry of AYUSH, guidelines and initiatives of the Government of India.

The measures mentioned in the collection were divided into five categories:

1. Information about the targets of the measures adopted by the States and Union Territories
2. AYUSH Human Resource and Infrastructure
3. Quick Actions and Initiatives
4. Digital Platforms and Tele-medicine
5. Issues to arise or to be resolved

• **About NITI Aayog**

- It is the premier policy think tank of the Government of India, it provides directional and policy inputs.
- It designs strategic and long-term policies.
- It also provides relevant technical advice to the Centre, States, and Union Territories.
- The Governing Council of NITI Aayog is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Chief Ministers of all the States and Union Territories and the Lieutenant Governors of other Union Territories.
- It was constituted on January 1, 2015.
- NITI stands for National Institution for Transforming India.
- The Government of India constituted the NITI Aayog to replace the Planning Commission, which was set up in 1950.
- This step was taken to better meet the needs and aspirations of the people.

7. Indian Army, Air Force join to conduct landmark cycling expedition from Delhi to Drass (July 2, 2022)

To commemorate 75 years of India's independence, the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force have joined forces to conduct a historic cycling expedition from Delhi to Drass beginning on 22 July.

- The team of cyclists will be led by Major Srishti Sharma of Corps of Signals.
- The Indian Air Force team is led by Squadron Leader Maneka.
- The team comprises 20 soldiers and air warriors and will be led by two women officers of the Army and Air Force.

- The expedition was flagged off on July 2 at morning from the National War Memorial in New Delhi.
- The cyclists will cover a distance of 1,600 km in 24 days.
- The expedition will culminate on the 26th of this month at the Kargil War Memorial in Drass in memory of the brave martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice during the Kargil War.
- The expedition will proceed through Punjab before entering Himachal Pradesh.
- **Aim of the expedition**
- Cyclists interact with school children at various stages along the way to raise the energy of young Indians towards nationalism.
- They will act as a beacon to guide the immeasurable enthusiasm and zeal of the future leaders of the country.

8. India's largest floating solar plant commissioned in Telangana (July 2, 2022)

NTPC announced commercial operation of the last part of 20 MW capacity out of 100 MW Ramagundam Floating Solar PV Project at Ramagundam, Telangana from July 1.

- With the commissioning of the 100 MW Solar PV Project at Ramagundam, the total commercial operation of floating solar capacity in the Southern Region increased to 217 MW.
- Earlier, NTPC had announced commercial operation of 92 MW floating solar at Kayamkulam (Kerala) and 25 MW floating solar at Simhadri (Andhra Pradesh).
- With this, the standalone installed and commercial capacity of NTPC has become 54,769.20 MW.

• About the 100 MW Floating Solar Project

- The 100 MW Floating Solar Project at Ramagundam is fitted with advanced technology and eco-friendly facilities.
- The project is spread over 500 acres of its reservoir.
- The project has been constructed as an EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) contract by BHEL with the help of Rs 423 crore.
- It is divided into 40 blocks and each having 2.5 MW.
- Each block consists of one floating platform and a formation of 11,200 solar modules.
- The floating platform consists of an inverter, transformer and HT breaker.
- With the presence of floating solar panels, the rate of evaporation from water bodies is reduced, which helps in water conservation.
- About 32.5 lakh cubic meters of water can be saved from evaporation every year.

9. Defence Ministry inaugurated PayRoll Automation for Distribution of Monthly Allowances (PADMA) (July 1, 2022)

Recently the Defence Ministry inaugurated PayRoll Automation for Distribution of Monthly Allowances (PADMA), an automated pay and allowance module for the Indian Coast Guard.

• About PADMA

- PADMA is an automated platform leveraging latest technology that will ensure seamless and timely disbursement of salaries and allowances to around 15,000 Indian Coast Guard personnel.
- This module has been developed under the aegis of Defence Accounts Department and will be operated by Pay Accounts Office, Coast Guard, Noida.

• Importance

- This initiative marks the beginning of a centralised pay system, the foundation of which is being laid by the Defence Accounts Department Headquarters to provide a 'one stop pay accounting' solution for all organisations under the ministry.
- The launch of PADMA will strengthen the concept of Digital India Vision. Also it is a 'Self-reliant India' initiative as the entire module is designed and developed by Indian entrepreneurs assisted by domain experts.

• About Indian Coast Guard

- The Indian Coast Guard was established under the Coast Guard Act, 1978 by Parliament on 18 August 1978 as an independent armed force with the objective of safeguarding the Indian seas in peacetime.
- Motto - "Vayam Raksham: We Protect".
- Headquarters- New Delhi
- Director General- Director General Virender Singh Pathania
- Coast Guard Day - February 1

10. Russia quits Snake Island (July 1, 2022)

Ukrainian forces have taken control of Snake Island in the Black Sea, which was occupied by Russia at the beginning of the war.

- The quitting of the Russians from the island is a major setback, and possibly undermines their control over shipping routes that are vital to Moscow's strategic objectives.
- Last week Ukraine said it had inflicted "significant damage" on Russia in air strikes on the island.
- Ukraine had claimed the first successful use of Harpoon anti-ship missiles.

About Snake Island

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- It is also known as Zmiinyi Island, Snake or Serpent Island.
- It has a small piece of rock less than 700 metres from, that has been described as being “X-shaped”.
- It is located 35 km from the coast in the Black Sea.
- The island is marked on the map as a small village and belongs to Ukraine.
- The island is close to the coast of Romania, with which Ukraine has had a dispute and which was settled in 2009 by the International Court of Justice.
- It drew a new maritime border between the two countries.
- Parts of the Black Sea around Snake Island are believed to have significant oil and gas reserves.
- On 24 February, Russia invaded Ukraine and attacked Snake Island with two modern warships.

About Black Sea

- It is a marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean.
- It is located between Eastern Europe and Western Asia.
- It is bound by Ukraine to the north and northwest, Russia and Georgia to the east, Turkey to the south, and Bulgaria and Romania to the west.
- The Black Sea drains into the Mediterranean Sea via the Turkish Straits and the Aegean Sea.
- It has traditionally been Russia’s warm water gateway to Europe.