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1. Vacancies in High Court (March 22, 2022)

According to the Government of India the total vacancies in the 25 High Courts of India was 404 against the sanctioned strength of 1104 Judges in the High Courts as on 11 March 2022.

- The highest vacancy was in the Allahabad High court . It has 67 vacancies out of the total sanctioned strength of 160(120 are permanent Judges and 40 are additional Judges). It was followed by Bombay and Punjab and Haryana High Court having 36 vacancies each.
- The total strength of the Bombay High Court is 94 (71 permanent Judges and 23 additional Judges) and for Punjab and Haryana High Court it is 85 (64 permanent Judges and 21 additional Judges)
- Only two High Courts, Tripura and Sikkim had no vacancy. Tripura has a sanctioned strength of 5 and Sikkim High Court strength is 3 Judges.
- The Judges of the High Court are appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India, Governor of the state concerned and Chief Justice of the concerned High Court.
- Under 217 of the Constitution High Court Judges are appointed and under article 224 of the constitution the President can appoint additional Judges in the High Court for two years.

Important For Exam

Allahabad High Court has the maximum sanctioned Judges in India. It has 160 sanctioned Judges, 120 permanent Judges and 40 additional Judges.

Total sanctioned strength of Sikkim High Court is 3 only. All 3 are permanent Judges. It has the least number of Judges in a High Court in India.

2. 2nd India Australia Virtual Summit Meeting held (March 22, 2022)

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and **Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Scott Morrison** held the 2nd India-Australia virtual summit on 21 March 2022. The first virtual summit meeting was held in June 2020.

- Prime Minister Modi thanked Mr. Scott Morrison for the special gesture in returning 29 ancient artefacts to India. These artefacts comprise sculptures, paintings and photographs, across centuries, some dating back to the 9th-10th century, from different parts of India.
- The artefacts include 12th century Chola bronzes, 11th-12th century Jain sculptures from Rajasthan, 12th-13th century sandstone Goddess Mahishasura Mardini from Gujarat, 18th-19th century paintings and early gelatin silver photographs.

Australia

- It is the smallest continent by area on Earth after Asia, Africa, North America , South America, Antarctica, Europe and Australia.

- It is the 6th largest country in the world after Russia, Canada, China, United States, and Brazil.
- Australia has been called “the Oldest Continent,” “the Last of Lands,” and “the Last Frontier.”
- Its unique flora and fauna include the only egg-laying mammals on Earth, the Platypus and Echidna. It is also famous for its Kangaroos, Koala bears.
- It is the second driest continent after Antarctica.
- Its highest peak, Mount Kosciuszko, rises to only 7,310 feet (2,228 meters).

Its Capital : **Canberra**

Currency : **Australian Dollar**

Prime Minister : **Scott Morrison**

The United Kingdom Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of the State of Australia.

3. Common Entrance Test for Central University UG Course (March 22, 2022)

The University Grant Commission chairman M Jagadesh Kumar has announced that the admission to the Undergraduate courses in the **45 Central University** will now be solely through a **Common University Entrance Test (CUET)** from the 2022-23 session onwards .

- The Common University Entrance Test (CUET) will be a computerised exam and will be conducted by **the National Testing Agency (NTA)** in the first week of July 2022.
- Admission to undergraduate courses in these universities will henceforth be solely based on the CUET score, and Class 12 Board marks will not carry any weightage,
- CUET will carry multiple choice questions based on NCERT textbooks and students will be marked negatively for incorrect answers. The CUET 2022 will be offered in 13 languages, namely **Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Urdu, Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, Odia and English.**
- International students are exempted from CUET.
- The reserved seats in the Central universities for SC/ST/ or minorities will also be filled through CUET .
- The exam will be conducted in two shifts. In the first shift, candidates will appear for Section I (languages), two chosen domain subjects and the general test. In the second shift, they will appear for the other four domain subjects and an additional language test, if opted for.

Central University is set up by the Government of India . Some of the famous central University in India are **JawaharLal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Jamia Millia Islamia , Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)** etc.

4. Major Plane Crash in China, all 132 passenger feared dead (March 22, 2022)

132 people on board a Eastern China Airlines are feared dead in a plane crash on 21 March 2022. It is the worst air disaster in China since 2010.

The Boeing 737-800 plane took off from Kunming, capital of the southwestern province of Yunnan, to the port city of Guangzhou before it crashed in the mountains of southern Guangxi.

- The regulator of the civil aviation sector in India, Director General Civil Aviation(DGCA) has put Boeing 737s in the country under “enhanced surveillance” after an aircraft of the same model crashed in China.
- This means that DGCA will deploy its teams to monitor flight procedures, airworthiness and operations of these planes in India. Three airlines, Vistara, SpiceJet and Air India Express, have Boeing 737s on their fleet. There are a total 64 of these planes in the country.
- Boeing is an American company which manufactures planes for civilian and military purposes.

5. World's Longest suspension bridge inaugurated in Turkey (March 21, 2022)

The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan inaugurated the world's largest suspension bridge on 18 March 2022 across **Dardanelles Strait** in northwestern Turkey - which cuts travel time between Asia and Europe to six minutes.

- The 1915 Canakkale Bridge was built by Turkish and South Korean firms with an investment of 2.5 billion euros (\$2.8 billion),connecting Turkey's European and Asian shores.
- The 2,023 metre length of its midspan (distance between the two towers) is an allusion to the Turkish Republic's 100th anniversary in 2023.
- Its towers are 318 metres (347.8 yards) high and the total length of the bridge is 4.6 km (2.9 miles) including the approach viaducts.
- Now the second longest suspension bridge in the world is Japan’s Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, which has a 1,992-m-long main span.
- Ambassador Bridge on the river detroit, which connects Canada and the United States of America is the International suspension bridge in the world.

Important for Exam

Dardanelles Strait

It links the Aegean sea with the sea of Marmara .

The Strait is a narrow body of water which connects two large bodies of water .

Dardanelles strait is one of the narrowest international straits and it separates Asian Turkey from European Turkey.

Turkey lies partly in Asia and partly in Europe .

It's currency : Turkish Lira

Capital : Ankara

President :Tayyip Erdogan

6. Russia uses Hypersonic Missile In Ukraine (March 21, 2022)

Russia said on 19 March 2022 that it had used hypersonic Kinzhal (Kh-47M2) missiles to destroy a large weapons depot in Ukraine's western Ivano-Frankivsk region.

It was the first time Russia had deployed the hypersonic Kinzhal system since it sent its troops into Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

The Kinzhal missile can be fired from Mig-31 fighter aircraft. The missile can carry both conventional warheads or nuclear weapons.

Hypersonic Missile

- Hypersonic missiles are those missiles which can fly five times the speed of sound in the upper atmosphere or about 6,200 km per hour.
- The main feature of the missile is its manoeuvrability which makes its detection by radar very difficult.
- At present China has tested the missile and North Korea has also claimed to have tested it. The United States of America do not have these types of missiles.

Defence and Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is also working on developing this technology in India. In 2020 it successfully conducted the maiden test of the High-Speed Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) using an indigenously developed propulsion system.

7. 14th India-Japan Annual Summit held in New Delhi (March 21, 2022)

The 14th India-Japan annual summit meeting was held in New Delhi on 19 March 2022. The Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Kishida Fumio visited India on 19 and 20th for a two day bilateral meeting with the Indian prime Minister Narendra Modi. Both the leader issued a joint statement titled “**Joint Statement Partnership for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Post-COVID World**”.

- This was the first visit of Mr. Kishida Fumio as a Japanese Prime Minister to India . He visited India as a foreign minister earlier.
- The Summit between the Indian and Japanese PMs is taking place three and a half years after the last Summit in Japan in 2018.
- This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of India-Japan diplomatic relations (28 April 1952).

Highlights of the Visit

- Japan will invest \$42 billion (Rs 3.2lakh crore)in India in the next five years.
- Six agreements on cooperation between the countries were signed. These agreements are on cybersecurity, economic partnerships, waste-water management, urban development, a clean energy partnership and an agreement on promoting bamboo-based products from the northeast region.
- The Japanese Prime Minister Invited the Indian Prime Minister for the QUAD summit 2022 meeting to be held in Japan.
- There was no agreement on Russian invasion of Ukraine. While the Japanese government has consistently criticised the Russian Invasion of Ukraine and imposed sanctions on Russia, India has refrained from criticising Russian and has also abstained on any UN resolution criticising Russia.

Importance of Japan for India

- Japan is the fifth largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India after Singapore, USA, Mauritius, Netherlands (April 2014 to August 2021).
- It has invested \$36.2 billion in India since 2000.
- Japan is the largest provider of assistance to India amongst all countries.
- There are 1,455 Japanese companies in India. Eleven Japan Industrial Townships (JIT) have been established, with Neemrana in Rajasthan and Sri City in Andhra Pradesh having the maximum number of companies.
- Japan is helping in setting up a High Speed Rail corridor between Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

Fact File Japan

- Japan is also called as Nihon or Nippon
- It is an archipelago in the western pacific ocean in East Asia.
- It is composed of four main islands Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. Honshu is the largest island of Japan.
- It is separated from the Asian mainland by the Sea of Japan.
- Its highest mountain is Mount Fuji.
- It is the third largest economy in the world after the United States and China.
- It is the only country in the world where atom bomb was dropped. In 1945 the U.S. dropped atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August (bomb name Little Boy) and Nagasaki on 9 August (Bomb name Fat Man).

The capital of Japan : **Tokyo**

Currency of Japan : **Yen**

8. Finland is the Happiest country in the world (March 19, 2022)

For the fifth year in a row, Finland is the world's happiest country, according to the World Happiness Report 2022, of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Denmark was ranked 2nd followed by Iceland, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

India was ranked 136 in 2022 as compared to 139 in 2021.

Afghanistan was ranked the most unhappy country in the world and was ranked at the bottom 146th .

The World Happiness Report is released by the United Nation Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It ranks the countries on the basis of:

- healthy life expectancy;
- GDP per capita;
- social support in times of trouble,;
- low corruption and high social trust;
- generosity in a community where people look after each other and
- freedom to make key life decisions.

The first World Happiness report was released in 2012.

UN Sustainable Sustainable Development Solutions Network

It is a non -profit organisation set up by the United Nation in 2012.

Its Headquarters : New York, United States of America.

Factfile Finland

Finland is located in Northern Europe .

Capital : Helsinki

Currency : Euro

Prime Minister : Sanna Marin

Nokia company is from Finland

9. India to provide fresh \$1 billion line of credit to Sri Lanka (March 19, 2022)

The Government of India has agreed to provide another **USD 1 billion** line of credit to Sri Lanka. An agreement was signed between the **State Bank of India and Sri Lankan government** on 17 March during the visit of the Sri Lankan finance minister's **Basil Rajapakse to India.**

- The loan has been given to Sri Lanka to buy **food, medicine and other essential items.**
- This is the second visit of the Sri Lanka Finance minister's Basil Rajapakse who is the brother of the Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapakse and the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse, since December 2021.
- Sri Lanka's economy is facing a huge economic crisis and ever increasing foreign debt. It has to repay USD 7 billion of foreign loans this year and it is facing an unprecedented food and fuel shortage. It is dependent on imported food and fuel and it has almost no foreign exchange reserves to buy food or fuel. Almost 10% of its external debt is to China.
- The main source of foreign exchange earner for the Sri Lankan economy is tourism. Due to covid situation there has been no flow of international tourists to Sri Lanka in the past two years.

Helping Hand of India

The government of India has provided loans to Sri Lanka to deal with its economic crisis, under its neighbourhood first policy. During Basil Rajapakse's visit to India on December 21, India agreed to help Sri Lanka under its neighbourhood policy. The decision included a four pillar initiative to help Sri Lanka.

The four pillar initiative comprises-

- India will provide loans to Sri Lanka to enable it to purchase food, medicines and fuel from India.
- A **currency swap agreement** to deal with **Sri Lanka's balance of payment issues,**
- An "early" modernisation project of the **Trincomalee oil farms** that India has been pursuing for several years, and
- Sri Lankan commitment to facilitate Indian investments in various sectors

Excluding this loan amount of USD 1 billion, India has provided USD 1.4 billion support to Sri Lanka in 2022. It has provided USD 500 million for import of fuels, deferred repayment of USD 500 billion debt repayment and extended a \$400-million RBI currency swap facility.

Fact File Sri Lanka

- Officially it is called the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka .
- It is a country in the Indian Ocean and is separated from India by the Palk Strait.
- It was called Serendib by the Arabs and the Europeans called it Ceylon .
- It officially became Sri Lanka in 1972.
- It became independent in 1948 from Britain.

Capital : Sri Jayewardenepura

President : Mahinda Rajapakse

Currency : Sri Lankan Rupee

10. ICJ ask Russia to stop military operation in Ukraine (March 17, 2022)

The top United Nation court , International Court of Justice(ICJ), has asked Russia to immediately stop its military operations in Ukraine. In a 13-2 judgement pronounced on 16 March 2022 the court ordered the "Russian Federation to immediately suspend the military operations that it commenced on Feb 24, 2022 on the territory of Ukraine."

- The court also ordered that Russia must also ensure that other forces under its control or supported by Moscow should not continue the military operation.
- Ukraine filed its case at the ICJ shortly after Russia's invasion began on Feb. 24, saying that Moscow's stated justification, that it was acting to prevent a genocide in eastern Ukraine, was unfounded.
- During hearings earlier this month, Ukraine said there was no threat of genocide in eastern Ukraine, and that the U.N.'s 1948 Genocide Convention, which both countries have signed, does not allow an invasion to prevent one.
- Although the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are binding, it has no direct means of enforcing them, and in rare cases in the past countries have ignored them.
- Russia never participated in the ICJ hearing on the Ukraine case and it has rejected the ICJ ruling.

International Court of Justice(ICJ)

- The International Court of Justice is successor to the Permanent Court of Justice set up in 1920 by the League of Nations.
- After the Second World war, it was replaced by the International Court of Justice in 1945. The United Nation replaced the League of Nation in 1945.
- ICJ is one of the six principal organs of the United Nation and is also called the World Court.
- It hears cases relating to disputes between the member states of the United Nations according to International law.
- Headquarters of the ICJ : **The Hague, Netherlands**
- ICJ is composed of 15 Judges elected by the UN for a term of Nine Years .

Four Indian has so far been elected as the Judge of the ICJ

- B.N RAU, in 1952 -53
- NAGENDRA SINGH (He was the President of the ICJ from 1985-1988). He was the first Indian judge to have been elected for a 9 years term
- R.S.Pathak (1989-91)

DALVEER BHANDARI (2012- till date)

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