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1. 30th Southern Zonal Council meet (Sept. 4, 2022)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the **30th Southern Zonal Council meeting** of South Indian States and Union Territories in **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala** on 3 September.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The objective of the meeting was to promote regional cooperation between the states on issues of common national importance.
- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, chief ministers of other southern states - Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana - and the lieutenant governors of the southern union territories of Puducherry, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands attended the meeting.
- During the meeting, 26 issues were discussed, nine were resolved, 17 were put up for further consideration, of which nine were related to the reorganisation of Andhra Pradesh.
- The Union Home Minister called upon the southern states to find an amicable solution to end all issues, especially those related to river water sharing.
- The Home Minister said that the Ministry of Home Affairs is trying to check the drug menace by emphasising the need for regular NCORD (Narco Coordination Centre) meetings between the states.
- Since 2015, Rs 4,206 crore has been approved for the Fisheries Infrastructure Development Fund scheme in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.

About Zonal Councils :

- In 1956 first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru give the idea of creation of Zonal Councils.
- There are five Zonal Councils in India which were established in 1957 under Section 15-22 of the States Reorganization Act, 1956.
- A Standing Committee is constituted by each Zonal Council consisting of the Chief Secretaries of their respective Zonal Councils of the Member States.
- These Standing Committees meet from time to time to resolve the issues.
- Chairman - The Union Home Minister is the Chairman of each of these Councils
- Vice-chairman - Chief Minister of the host state

2. 64th Ramon Magsaysay award 2022 announced (Sept. 3, 2022)

The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), Manila, Philippines has announced the winners of the 64th Ramon Magsaysay award 2022 on 31 August 2022.

It is given to Individuals and organisation for providing solutions to some of the most challenging problems of human development in Asia or the world.

The award which is considered to be equivalent to the '**Asian Nobel Prize**' will be given to Tadashi Hattori, Gary Benchehib, Sotheara Chhim, and Bernadette J. Madrid on 30 November 2022.

Awardee of 2022

Sotheara Chhim

He is from Cambodia. He has been honoured for his role as an Psychiatrist and mental health advocate who has played a key role in providing treatment of thousands of traumatized survivors of the Khmer Rouge's brutal rule and other patients in his country

Tadashi Hattori

He is from Japan. He is an ophthalmologist and humanitarian who has been honoured for his commitment in providing free eye surgeries in Vietnam.

Bernadette J.Madrid

She is a paediatrician from the Philippines. She has been honoured for her work as championing the Filipino child's right to protection by creating safe spaces for abused children nationwide.

Gary Benchehib

He is from France. He has been honoured for his work in eradicating marine plastic pollution in Bali, Indonesia.

Ramon Magsaysay Award

- The Ramon Magsaysay Award was founded in 1957 in memory of the Philippines President Ramon Magsaysay who died in a plane crash in 1957.
- The award was established by the American philanthropist Rockfellers Brothers fund.
- The first award was given on 31 August 1958 and **Vinoba Bhave** of India was amongst the first five awardee.
- It was till 2008 given in 6 categories annually. They were Community Leadership, Public Service, Government Service, Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts, Peace and International Understanding, Emergent Leadership.
- Starting in 2009, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is no longer being given in fixed Award categories, except for Emergent Leadership.

3. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla unveils first statue of Swami Vivekananda in Mexico (Sept. 4, 2022)

Lok Sabha Speaker **Om Birla** on 3 September unveiled a **statue of Swami Vivekananda** at University of State of Hidalgo in **Mexico**.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- This is the **first statue** of Swami Vivekananda in Latin America.
- Birla said that the teachings and personality of Swami Vivekananda have inspired people not only in India but across the world.
- This statue will be a source of inspiration to the youth to strive and bring change that will take their country to new heights.
- Today, people across the world are embracing his ideals and taking a pledge to follow them for the betterment of their lives and society.
- Om Birla is leading the Indian Parliamentary Delegation to Mexico.
- Om Birla on 2 September also unveiled a statue of freedom fighter Dr Pandurang Khankhoje at Chapingo University in Mexico.
- Earlier, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha had inaugurated the Indo-Mexico Friendship Garden in the Mexican Parliament Complex.

About Swami Vivekananda :

- **Born - January 12, 1863**
- Childhood Name - **Narendranath Dutt**
- He is best known for his speech at the World Parliament of Religions in **Chicago in the year 1893.**
- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose called him "**the architect of modern India**".
- He introduced the world to the Indian philosophy of Vedanta and Yoga.

Mexico :

- Mexico is a country in **southern North America.**
- It is the third largest country in Latin America after Brazil and Argentina.
- President - **Andrés Manuel López Obrador**
- Capital - **Mexico City**
- Currency - **Mexican peso**
- Official Language - **Spanish**

4. Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) (Sept. 3, 2022)

At least seven states and one union territory have not uploaded a single alert on the Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) portal since its launch in March 2020.

Important facts

- West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim and the Union Territories of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu have not uploaded a single alert on the platform.
- Delhi, Assam and Haryana uploaded the highest number of alerts on the portal.

About Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC)

- **Launched** - 2020 by the Ministry of Home Affairs(MHA)
- **Objective** - To share information on crime and criminals 24×7 with various law enforcement agencies and ensure seamless flow of information between them.
- **Implementation** - The application is implemented by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Significance of the portal

- It facilitates dissemination of information on important crimes including human trafficking across the country on a real time basis and enables inter-state coordination.
- It helps in the detection, identification of victims of trafficking as well as in crime prevention and investigation.

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6. Special maternity leave in case of infant death (Sept. 3, 2022)

All women employees of the Central Government will get 60 days special maternity leave in case of immediate death of a newborn baby or birth of a stillborn child.

Important facts

- According to the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, this decision has been taken keeping in mind the mental agony of death of the child before birth or soon after birth.
- The ministry said that such cases have far-reaching effects on the life of the mother.
- If the child dies immediately after birth or within **28 days**, the mother will be eligible for special maternity leave.
- This special leave will be given to the mother even if the baby dies in the womb after **28 weeks** or so.
- Special Maternity Leave will be given to only those women employees of the Central Government who have less than **two surviving children** and the delivery takes place in an **authorized hospital**.

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8. GMR Group to sell its entire 40% stake in Philippines' Cebu airport (Sept. 3, 2022)

The New Delhi based Multinational GMR Group, on 2 September 2022, has said that it will divest its entire 40 per cent stake in Cebu international airport in Philippines for a payment of Rs 1,330 crore.

However the GMR will continue to provide consultancy service to the Airport till 2026 and will earn revenue for it.

According to GMR, the company will now focus on high growth opportunities. It will now use the capital to invest in the **Kualanamu International Airport** at Medan, Indonesia. The Kualanamu International Airport is being developed and operated by GMR Airports International.

Mactan Cebu International Airport

It is the second largest Airport of the Philippines after the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Manila.

In 2014, GMR Infrastructure in partnership with Megawide Construction Corporation of Philippines won the bid to operate and develop the Mactan Cebu International Airport.

Both the Megawide Construction Company and GMR are selling their stake to Aboitiz InfraCapital Inc. of Philippines.

Currency of Philippines: Philippine pesos

GMR Airports International

GMR Airports International is a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure Ltd

GMR Group operates the **IGI Delhi International Airport, Rajiv Gandhi Hyderabad International Airport** and **Bidar** Airport in (Karnataka).

It is building a Greenfield airport at **Mopa in North Goa** and an International Greenfield Airport at **Bhogapuram, Vizianagaram,** and Andhra Pradesh.

It is the **only Indian company** to develop and operate foreign International airport. It is developing airports in **Indonesia, Greece.**

The GMR group was founded by Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao. It is in the business of Infrastructure, Energy, transportation etc.

9. United States announces hosting first-ever US-Pacific Island Country Summit (Sept. 3, 2022)

The United States has announced to host the **US-Pacific Island Country Summit** for the **first time** in the last week of this month amid China's growing influence in the **Indo-Pacific region**.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- This summit will be held in **Washington** from 28 to 29 September.
- US President **Joe Biden** will host the summit.
- The summit will showcase the United States' deep and enduring partnership with Pacific island countries and the Pacific region that is based on shared history, values, and people-to-people ties.
- The conference was announced a week after the US accused Beijing of expanding its nuclear arsenal.
- The US has claimed that the process of building an excessive nuclear arsenal by China could harm the stability of the Indo-Pacific region.
- The White House has invited 12 Pacific Island countries, including the Solomon Islands, which signed a security pact with China in April 2022.

About Indo-Pacific :

- It covers half of the world's population and more than **60 percent** of the global GDP.
- It is a geopolitical region that spans two regions of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.
- Extending from the west coast of the United States of America to the west coast of India, the Indo-Pacific is a regional structure of **24 countries**.
- It includes the tropical waters of the **Indian Ocean, western and central Pacific Ocean**.

10. CCRAS 'SPARK' Program to Support Innovative Research in Ayurveda (Sept. 3, 2022)

The Central Council of Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has prepared the '**Studentship Program for Ayurveda Research Ken' (SPARK)** for the students of Ayurveda (BAMS) studying in recognized Ayurveda colleges.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- Pramod Kumar Pathak, Special Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India and Vaidya Jayant Yashwant Devapujari, Chairman, National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) launched this fellowship scheme and its application portal at an event held on 2nd September, 2022.

Studentship Program for Ayurveda Research Ken (SPARK) :

- SPARK is a unique initiative to support the research efforts of young talent of the country.
- The SPARK program has been developed primarily to help students develop research skills and to further support and encourage their research ideas.
- The application process for SPARK will be completely online through the portal www.spark.ccras.nic.in.
- Interested candidates have to submit their research proposal through SPARK portal.
- These proposals will be evaluated by eminent experts and reviewers.
- Under this fellowship, a financial assistance of Rs 50,000 will be offered to the selected research scholar.
- Initially, there will be a total of 100 seats in each session.

Purpose of SPARK :

- It aims to support the research ideas of young undergraduate students enrolled in Ayurveda colleges across the country.

Central Council of Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) :

- CCRAS is an institute located in **New Delhi** to promote Ayurvedic science and research work on it in the country and abroad.
- The Council is currently working on various R&D projects in collaboration with leading research institutions from **Romania, Germany, Israel, USA, Canada** and the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**.
- In order to complement the efforts of the Ministry of AYUSH for the promotion and dissemination of Ayurveda education across the world, the Council has partnered with leading educational institutions across the world and established Ayurveda Chairs in **11 countries**.