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1. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel wins UNESCO Peace Prize 2022 (Aug. 27, 2022)

Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been awarded the 2022 UNESCO Peace Prize for her efforts to welcome refugees.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- All jurors, including jury chairman and 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner Denis Mukwege, have been impressed by Merkel's courageous decision to welcome more than 1.2 million refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea in 2015.
- Additionally, the jury awarded an honorable mention to Julian Lusanz for his commitment to women victims of sexual violence.

Angela Merkel :

- Angela Merkel was born on 17 July 1954 in Hamburg, West Germany.
- In the 2005 national elections, Merkel became the first female chancellor of Germany, and is one of the leading figures in the European Union.
- She became the Chancellor of Germany for the fourth and last time on 14 March 2014.
- Before joining politics, she was working as a research scientist.

About UNESCO Peace Prize :

- Officially it is called the Felix Houphouet-Bougain-UNESCO Peace Prize.
- The honour is named after the former President of Ivory Coast.
- UNESCO's Felix Houphouet-Bogen Peace Prize was created in 1989 to honour living individuals and active public or private bodies or institutions that have made significant contributions to peace.
- The award was established by a resolution supported by 120 countries

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

About UNESCO :

- Establishment of UNESCO - 16 November 1945
- UNESCO Headquarters - Paris, France
- UNESCO members - 193 countries
- UNESCO chief - Audrey Azoulay

2. Government notifies Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022 (Aug. 27, 2022)

Recently the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has published Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022 on 24th August, 2022 to ensure environmentally sound management of waste batteries.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The new rules will replace the Battery (Management and Operation) Rules, 2001.
- The notification of these rules is a transformative step towards implementation of the announcement made by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in his address to the nation on Independence Day on 15th August, 2021, to give a serious boost to the circular or circular economy.
- These regulations cover all types of batteries such as electric vehicle batteries, portable batteries, automotive batteries and industrial batteries.
- These rules encourage the establishment of new industries and entrepreneurship in the collection and recycling/refurbishment of waste batteries.
- These rules will make it possible to set up a centralised online portal for exchange of EPR certificates between producers and recyclers/renewers to meet the obligations of the producers.
- Mandating a minimum percentage of removal of useful material from waste or waste batteries under these rules will bring new technologies and investments into the recycling and renewables industry and create new business opportunities.

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4. For the first time, India votes against Russia in UNSC during procedural vote on Ukraine (Aug. 27, 2022)

India for the first time on August 24 voted against Russia during a “procedural vote” at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on Ukraine.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The UNSC held a meeting to take stock of the six-month-old Russia-Ukraine conflict on the 31st anniversary of Ukraine's independence.
- A procedural vote was requested regarding the participation of the Ukrainian President in the meeting held by video tele-conference.
- The **15-member UNSC** invited Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to address a meeting through a video tele-conference.
- This is the first time India has voted against Russia on the Ukraine-Russia issue since Russian military action began in February.
- So far, India has not participated in the UN Security Council on Ukraine due to the displeasure of the Western powers led by the United States.
- Western countries, including the US, have imposed major economic and other sanctions on Russia after the attack on Ukraine.
- India has so far not criticised Russia for its aggression against Ukraine.
- India has repeatedly called on Russia and Ukraine to return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue.
- India has also expressed its support for all diplomatic efforts to end the conflict between the two countries.

About UNSC :

- It was established in 1945 by the United Nations Charter.

- It is one of the six major organs of the United Nations.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are - the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat.
- It has five permanent members - **China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States**, collectively known as the P5.
- India is currently a non-permanent member of the UNSC for a two-year term, which expires in December.
- Any one of them can veto a resolution.
- Headquarters - **New York**

5. Argentina shows interest in Made in India 'Tejas' fighter aircraft (Aug. 27, 2022)

Argentina has shown interest to buy Tejas fighter aircraft manufactured in India under Make in India.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar acknowledged Argentina's interest in Tejas fighter aircraft and highlighted the importance of the proposal to enhance strategic cooperation of bilateral ties.
- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Argentina Minister of Foreign Affairs Santiago Cafiero jointly presided over a Joint Commission Meeting in Buenos Aires.
- During the meeting, both sides underlined the importance of bilateral relations in defence, nuclear energy, space, pharma, science and technology, yoga, climate change and economic cooperation.
- **Australia, Egypt, the United States, Indonesia and the Philippines** are also interested in Tejas jets.

TEJAS fighter aircraft :

- It is an 'Indigenous Light **Combat Aircraft**'.
- It has been jointly developed by '**Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA)**' and '**Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**'.
- It is the smallest-lightweight single-engine 'Multirole Tactical Fighter Aircraft'.
- It has been designed with an aim to reduce India's dependence on Russia's MiG-21 fighter jets and move towards self-reliance in the field of national security.
- It is designed to carry a range of **air-to-air, air-to-surface weapons**.

- It is capable of refueling in the sky during the journey and has a maximum payload capacity of 4000 kg.
- It can achieve a maximum speed of Mach 1.8 and has a range of 3,000 km.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

Types of tejas :

1. Tejas Trainer
2. LCA Navy
3. LCA Tejas Navy MK2
4. LCA Tejas Mk-1A

Argentina :

- President - **Alberto Fernández**
- Capital - **Buenos Aires**
- Currency - **Argentine peso**
- Official Language - **Spanish**
- location - **South America continent**

6. Arth Ganga Model (Aug. 27, 2022)

The Director General of the National Mission for Clean Ganga mentioned the Arth Ganga model during his virtual keynote address to the Stockholm World Water Week 2022 on 26 August.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

About Arth Ganga Model :

- PM Modi first introduced the concept of Arth Ganga Model during the first National Ganga Council meeting in Kanpur in 2019.
- During the meeting he urged for a shift from **Namami Gange** (cleaning of Ganga) to the model of Arth Ganga.
- Arth Ganga focuses on the sustainable development of the Ganga and its surrounding areas, by focusing on economic activities related to the river.
- The Arth Ganga model seeks to use economics to connect people to the river.
- The scheme seeks to contribute at least 3% of the GDP from the Ganga basin.

Features of Arth Ganga Model :

- **Zero Budget Natural Farming** - This includes chemical free farming on 10 km on either side of the river and promotion of use of cow dung as manure through Govardhan Yojana.
- **Monetization and Reuse of Sludge & Wastewater** - It envisages reuse of treated water for irrigation, industries and revenue generation for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- **Creation of livelihood opportunities** - For example- 'Ghat Mein Haat', promotion of local products, Ayurveda, medicinal plants, capacity building of volunteers like Ganga Praharis.
- **Increase public participation** - To enhance synergy among the stakeholders associated with the river.
- **Promotion of cultural heritage and tourism** - To promote cultural heritage and tourism in and around the Ganga through conduct of boat tours, adventure sports and yoga activities.
- **Improved water governance** - To promote institutional building by empowering local administration for better water administration.

7. 38th Ministerial Meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (Aug. 27, 2022)

The 38th Ministerial Meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission was held in New Delhi on August 25, 2022.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The Indian delegation was chaired by Union Minister of Jal Shakti **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and the Bangladesh delegation was led by Minister of State for Water Resources **Zaheed Farooq**.
- The two countries discussed a wide range of issues related to Ganga, Teesta and several smaller rivers during the meeting.
- The two sides also discussed the exchange of data and information related to floods, river-bank conservation works, general basin management and India's river interlinking project.
- Bangladesh requested for the early completion of the long pending Teesta water sharing treaty.
- Both sides also finalised a draft Memorandum of Understanding to share the waters of the **Kushiyara River** on an interim basis.
- Both sides welcomed the finalization of the design of the **Feni River** Water Drawing Site and its technical infrastructure to meet the drinking water requirements of Sabroom Town in Tripura.

- It is noteworthy that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two countries in this regard in October 2019.
- This meeting was held after a gap of 12 years

Rivers between India and Bangladesh :

- India and Bangladesh share **54 rivers**.
- All are part of the drainage system of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin.
- The Padma (Ganga), Jamuna (Brahmaputra) and Meghna (Barak) and their tributaries play an important role in maintaining food and water security in Bangladesh.
- The dispute between India and Bangladesh regarding water resource allocation dates back to the time when Bangladesh was East Pakistan.
- In 1961, India began construction of the **Farakka Barrage** which was to be operational by April 1975.
- When India began its preliminary planning for the project, Pakistan expressed concerns over the potential effect of the project on East Pakistan.

Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) :

- It was constituted in 1972 between India and Bangladesh.
- It is a bilateral mechanism to address issues of mutual interest on common / border / transboundary rivers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

About Kushiyara River :

- It is a distributary river in Bangladesh and Assam.
- The water of Kushiyara drains into tributaries from Manipur, Mizoram and Assam.

8. Centre identifies 75 tribal districts for focused TB interventions (Aug. 27, 2022)

Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TB Division of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare organised a National Conference to publicise the features of 100 Day Assurance Campaign under 'Tribal TB Initiative' on 24th August at National Tribal Research Institute (NTRI), New Delhi.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- On the occasion of 75 years of India's independence, **75 overburdened tribal districts** have been selected to focus on TB in the coming months.

Three tier strategy for 75 districts :

1. Creating demand for TB services through community mobilisation, increasing awareness of TB symptoms, prevalence and treatment procedures, and continuing engagement with community influencers involved in the recovery process.
2. Improving the delivery of TB services by provision of customised solutions by leveraging PIPs and other sources of funding to bridge implementation gaps by augmenting TB testing and diagnostics infrastructure.
3. Reducing the risk of spreading the disease through active case detection campaigns.

Tribal TB Initiative :

- It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Central TB Division of the Ministry of Health, supported by USAID as a technical partner and by Piramal Health as an implementation partner.
- Through this initiative, the Assurance Campaign was launched on 7 January 2022 to detect active cases of TB in 174 tribal districts of India.
- The initiative was flagged off in Nandurbar district of Maharashtra.
- Under this, door-to-door screening of TB was done in 68,019 villages.
- Based on oral test of 1,03,07,200 persons during the campaign, 3,82,811 people were identified as having TB.
- Of these, 2,79,329 (73 per cent) samples were tested for TB and 9,971 people tested positive for TB.
- All of them were treated as per the protocol of the Government of India.

What is Tuberculosis (TB) ?

- It is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- The bacteria generally attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body, such as the kidneys, spine, and brain.
- Tuberculosis infections began increasing in 1985 because of the emergence of HIV.
- HIV weakens a person's immune system, so it can't fight the TB germs.

Transmission :

- Its bacteria spread from person to person through the air.
- When people with pulmonary (Lung) TB cough, sneeze or spit, they spread TB germs into the air.

Symptoms of TB :

- cough for three or more weeks
- coughing up bloody sputum
- Chest pain, pain with breathing and coughing
- weight loss, Fatigue, Fever and Night sweats etc.

Government Initiatives to Combat TB :

- National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination (2017-2025)
- Nikshay Poshan Yojana (NPY- financial support)
- TB Harega Desh Jeetega Campaign
- Universal Immunisation Programme
- The government of India aims to have a TB-free India by 2025.
- Revised National TB Control Program under National Health Mission
- Ending the TB epidemic by 2030 under United Nations SDG target 3.3.
- Every year World TB Day is celebrated on 24 March.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -***TB Burden :***

- Every year one crore people fall ill with TB and 1.5 million people die from TB every year.
- About half of all people with TB are found in eight countries – Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Africa.
- It is one of the top 10 leading causes of death worldwide.
- India accounts for 30 percent of the world's TB cases, the highest in the world, followed by Indonesia and China.

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10. Thailand constitutional court suspends PM Prayuth Chan-ocha (Aug. 25, 2022)

The constitution court of Thailand on 25 August temporarily suspended prime minister Prayuth Chan-ocha over allegations that he has continued in the post after the expiry of his term.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The court ruled that the PM would remain suspended until the allegations were investigated.
- According to the Constitution of Thailand, the prime minister cannot hold office for more than eight years.
- Prayuth Chan-ocha became prime minister after a coup in 2014, and eight years have passed since then.
- As military leader, Prayuth seized power after a coup in May 2014 and, in August 2014, appointed himself prime minister of the new military government.
- Hence the opposition argues that his term as prime minister began in August 2014 and ended this week.
- The court considered the petition and supporting documents and gave this decision on the basis of factual doubts.
- The court, with a majority of four out of five judges, with effect from 24 August 2022, said that Prayuth be suspended as prime minister until the court issues a final decision.
- Deputy Prime Minister Pravit Wongsuwan will currently be the interim head of government.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -***About Thailand :***

- Capital - Bangkok
- Official Language - Thai