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1. 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign to mark 75 years of India's Independence to kick off today (Aug. 13, 2022)

The '**Har Ghar Tiranga**' campaign is starting from August 13 to encourage people to bring home and hoist the tricolour to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence.

What is the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign?

- This campaign will run till 15th August.
- The campaign envisages to inspire Indians everywhere to hoist the national flag at their home.
- Since the announcement of the campaign, more than 20 crore national flags have been made available to the people.
- The idea behind this initiative is to inculcate the feeling of patriotism in the hearts of the people and promote awareness about the tricolour.
- Apart from homes, the flag will also be hoisted in public undertakings, local self-governing bodies, government, educational institutions, commercial establishments and private firms.

About National Flag

- On 22 July 1947, the Constituent Assembly adopted the national flag.
- The flag which was chosen has undergone several changes since it was originally designed by Pingali Venkayya in 1923.
- Venkayya was a freedom fighter.
- He was known as Jhanda Venkayya because he published a book on 30 designs for the Indian flag in 1916.
- His 146th birth anniversary was on 2 August 2022.

Flag Code of Conduct, 2002

- The rules for the use, display and hoisting of the National Flag are laid down in the Flag Code of Conduct, 2002.
- This code of conduct was implemented on 26 January 2002.
- The Flag Code of Conduct, 2002, allows unrestricted display of the tricolour while maintaining the honour and dignity of the flag.
- The Flag Code of India, 2002 is divided into three parts-
- The first part contains a general description of the national flag.

- The second part deals with the display of the national flag by members of the public, private organisations, educational institutions, etc.
- The third part gives information about the hoisting of the national flag by the central and state governments and their organisations and agencies. It mentions that the tricolour cannot be used for commercial purposes.
- Apart from this, the flag should not be used as a festival or for the purposes of any kind of decoration.
- For official display only flags conforming to the specifications prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards and bearing its mark may be used.

Hoisting the national flag is a fundamental right

- A bench headed by Chief Justice of India **VN Khare** in its judgement said that under **Article 19(1)(a)** of the Constitution of India, citizens have a fundamental right to hoist the national flag in its premises throughout the year.
- However, it was also held by the court that the dignity of the national flag should be maintained in the premises.

Constitutional and Statutory Provisions

- **Article 51A(a)** - To abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem.
- Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950
- Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971

2. 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo (Aug. 12, 2022)

On the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Maharshi Aurobindo and the 75th Year of Independence, the Union Ministry of Culture is commemorating the life and philosophy of Shri Aurobindo by undertaking Spiritual Programmes in 75 prisons across the nation from 12 to 15th August.

Important facts

- These programs aim to transform the lives of inmates by imbibing Aurobindo's philosophy and adopting yoga and meditation.
- The ministry has partnered with notable spiritual leaders and organizations to carry out these programs.
- Mainly keeping in mind the association with the national freedom struggle, the Ministry of Culture has identified 75 prisons across the country where these events will be held.
- Five organizations including Ramakrishna Mission, Patanjali, Art of Living, Isha Foundation and Satsang Foundation have been roped in to organize the programme.

Who was Maharshi Aurobindo?

- He was born in Calcutta on 15th August 1872.
- He was a yogi, seer, philosopher, poet and Indian nationalist.
- He propounded the principle of divine life philosophy on earth through spiritual development.
- His education began at a Christian convent school in Darjeeling.
- He entered the University of Cambridge, where he mastered two classical and several modern European languages.
- He cleared the ICS exam securing 11th rank out of 250 candidates.
- He also studied yoga and Indian languages, including classical Sanskrit.

Role in Indian Revolutionary Movement

- He participated in the struggle to free India from the British from the year 1902 to 1910.
- He was imprisoned by the British in the year 1908 in the Alipore Bomb Case.
- Two years later he fled British India and took refuge in the French colony of Pondicherry.
- He converted his entire life in Pondicherry into a complete and spiritual form and devoted himself to the development of yoga.
- In Pondicherry he founded a community of spiritual seekers which took shape in the year 1926 as Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

His literary works

- Bhagavad Gita and Its Message
- Bases of Yoga
- The Future Evolution of Man
- Rebirth and Karma
- Hour of God

3. Latvia and Estonia withdraw from cooperation group between China and Central and Eastern European countries (Aug. 12, 2022)

Latvia and Estonia have withdrawn from a cooperation group between China and more than a dozen Central and Eastern European countries.

Important facts

- The move comes amid Western criticism of China over increasing military pressure on Taiwan.
- Relations between Lithuania and China deteriorated after Taiwan was allowed to open a de facto embassy late last year.
- Latvia and Estonia said they would continue to work towards a constructive and pragmatic relationship with China while respecting a rules-based international order and human rights.

China and Central & Eastern European (CEE) 17+1 cooperation group

- It is a China-led format founded in 2012 in Budapest.
- It aims to expand cooperation between Beijing and Central and Eastern European (CEE) member states with investment and trade for the development of the CEE region.
- It also aims at the development of infrastructure projects such as modernization of bridges, motorways, railway lines and ports in the member states.
- It includes twelve EU member states and five Balkan states.
- Name of the countries in 17+1 - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

4. India-UK conclude fifth round of FTA talks (Aug. 12, 2022)

India and the United Kingdom (UK) concluded the fifth round of talks for an FTA on the 29th of last month.

Important facts

- In the fifth round of talks, technical experts from both sides came together to discuss 15 policy areas.
- Currently, India is holding FTA talks with some of its trading partners including the European Union, Canada and Israel.

Consensus between both countries

- Officials in India and the UK will continue to work intensively throughout the summer to finalize talks on a comprehensive and balanced free trade agreement by the end of October 2022.
- UK agrees to end duties on Indian rice and textile items.
- India may allow duty-free entry of British apples, medical equipment and machinery manufactured in the UK.
- India initially proposed an early harvest agreement or interim FTA that would be ready by Diwali.

- Through this agreement, India-UK bilateral trade is estimated to double to about \$100 billion by 2030.
- An agreement is also expected to be reached on mutual recognition of higher education qualifications.
- India is likely to get more skill visas, as the UK currently faces a shortage of experts in the IT and programming sectors.
- The India-UK FTA agreement is also expected to give a boost to the domestic textile sectors.

What is Free Trade Agreement (FTA)?

- Under this agreement, customs duties, regulatory laws, subsidies and quotas etc. are simplified on the products under import-export between two countries.
- Its main objective is to simplify trade.
- A major advantage of FTA is that the cost of production of the two countries between which this agreement is made becomes cheaper as compared to other countries.
- This encourages trade and gives impetus to the economy.

5. India expresses concern over shelling near Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant (Aug. 12, 2022)

India has expressed concern over reports of shelling near the **Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant** in Ukraine and called for mutual restraint to ensure that the safety and security of nuclear facilities is not endangered.

Important facts

- India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ruchira Kamboj said that India expresses its concern over reports of shelling near the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant.
- The statement came as Ukraine again accused Russia of shelling the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) on 11 August.
- India attaches high importance to ensuring the safety and security of nuclear plants, as any accidents involving nuclear facilities can potentially have serious consequences for public health and the environment.
- In March 2022, the Russian military took control of Europe's largest nuclear power plant, the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant.
- An emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council was held on this development regarding the plant.
- On February 24, Russia launched a "special military operation" in Ukraine, which the West called a "war without cause".
- As a result, Western countries have also imposed severe sanctions on Moscow.

About Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

- It was built between 1984 and 1995, is the largest nuclear power plant in Europe and the sixth largest in the world.
- It is located in south-east Ukraine in Enerhodar on the banks of the Kakhovka reservoir on the Dnieper river.
- It is located about 200 km from the disputed Donbass region and 550 km south-east of Kyiv.
- In normal times it generates one-fifth of Ukraine's total electricity.

World's largest nuclear power plants

1. **Kashiwazaki-Kariwa** - Japan - capacity - 7,965 megawatts
2. **Bruce Nuclear Generating Station** - Canada - 6,384 MW
3. **Kori Nuclear Power Plant** - South Korea - 6,040 MW
4. **Hanul Nuclear Power Plant** - South Korea - 5,928 MW
5. **Hanbit Nuclear Power Plant** - South Korea - 5,875 MW
6. **Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant** - Ukraine - 5,700 MW

6. Argentine Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Ríos appointed Chief Military Observer of UNMOGIP (Aug. 12, 2022)

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed a veteran Argentine naval officer as Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer for the United Nations Military Observer Group (UNMOGIP) in India and Pakistan.

Important facts

- Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Ríos of Argentina has replaced Major General Jose Eladio Alcán of Uruguay.
- After graduating as a Middle Shipman from the Naval Academy, Rear Admiral Ríos has had a distinguished career in the Argentine Navy since 1988.
- He, most recently, served as the General Director of Education, Training and Doctrine of the Joint Staff (2022).
- Prior to this, he was Marine Infantry Commander (Core Commander) (2020-2021).
- He has also served as Marine Infantry Fleet Commander (Brigade Commander) (2019), Head of Education, Navy Warfare School (2018) and Defence, Military, Navy and Air Force in Russia (2016-2018).
- He has also been a training officer in the United States Marine Corps Regiment under the United States and Argentina Marine Exchange Program (2002-2003).

- Ríos has served in two peacekeeping missions, including the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in 1993 and 1994, and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) in 2007.
- He has also served as a Humanitarian Mining Observer with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Angola (1997–1998).
- He holds a master's degree from the Naval University Institute and E-Salad University in Argentina.

About UNMOGIP

- UNMOGIP was established in January 1949.
- Following the Indo-Pakistani War and the Armistice Agreement in 1971, UNMOGIP's main tasks are to oversee developments related to strict adherence to the ceasefire.
- It has 44 military observers, 25 international civilian personnel from 10 countries and 47 local civilian staff.
- India has maintained that UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the establishment of the Line of Control (LoC).
- The last report of the Secretary-General of the Security Council on UNMOGIP was published in 1972.
- The group is financed by the United Nations.

Simla Agreement

- It was signed by India and Pakistan in July 1972.
- It established the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir, which was similar to the ceasefire line established by the Karachi Accords.
- Under this, India and Pakistan mutually agreed on certain principles.
- They emphasised respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, not interfering in each other's internal affairs.

7. Ceasefire between Palestine, Israel takes effect in Gaza (Aug. 9, 2022)

A ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian militants went into effect on 8 August and was agreed to end nearly three days of violence that left dozens of Palestinians dead.

Important facts

- In early 2022, tensions escalated between Palestinians and Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- Israeli jets hit targets of Islamic Jihad leaders in Gaza.

- In response, the Iranian-backed Palestinian Jihad terrorist group fired dozens of rockets at Israel.
- According to an Israeli military statement, militants fired about 580 rockets towards Israel in Gaza.

UNSC meeting

- The United Nations Security Council has scheduled an emergency meeting to end the violence.
- China scheduled the session in response to a request from the United Arab Emirates.
- China will preside over the UNSC for August 2022, representing Arab countries in the council.

What is the dispute between Israel and Palestine?

- Under the United Nations Original Partition Plan of 1947, Jerusalem was proposed as an international city.
- In the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Israelis captured half of the city of Jerusalem.
- The eastern part of this city where Haram al-Sharif is located was captured by Jordan.
- In 1967, the Six-Day War was followed by an armed conflict between Israel and a coalition of Arab states that mainly included Jordan, Syria and Egypt.
- Israel annexed Jordan-controlled East Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War.
- Israel sees the entire city as its "unified, eternal capital".
- Whereas Palestine does not want to accept any settlement for a future Palestinian state until East Jerusalem is recognized as its capital.

8. Amit Shah e-launched the presence of cooperatives on the Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal (Aug. 9, 2022)

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on 9 August e-launched the onboarding of cooperatives on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal in New Delhi.

Important facts

- 589 cooperative societies have been selected as eligible for onboarding.
- Recently, the Ministry of Cooperation in its advisory made NCUI as the nodal or lead agency to facilitate the presence of cooperatives on GeM, to coordinate with the officials of GeM and to guide the cooperatives in the process of this presence.
- NCUI has prepared a list of cooperative societies having turnover/deposit amounting to Rs 100 crore and asked to initiate their onboarding process on GeM.

- A helpdesk of the GEM technical team has been set up at NCUI to help the cooperatives in the entire process.
- Onboarding of Cooperative Societies/Banks on GeM will be done in a phased manner.

Government e-Market (GeM) portal

- GeM is an acronym for One Stop Government e-Market Place hosted by DGS&D ((Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals) where common user goods and services can be procured.
- GeM is a dynamic, self-sustaining and user-friendly portal for procurement by government officials.
- Public procurement is a very important part of government activity and reform of public procurement is one of the top priorities of the present government.
- The Government e-Marketplace originated in January 2016 based on the recommendations of two Groups of Secretaries.
- Apart from reforms in DGS&D, they recommended setting up of a dedicated e-market for various goods and services bought or sold by the Government/PSUs.
- Subsequently, the Finance Minister in his budget speech for the financial year 2016-17 announced the setting up of a technology driven platform to facilitate procurement of goods and services by various ministries and agencies of the government.
- DGS&D with technical support from the National e-Governance Division (Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology) has developed a GeM portal for procurement of both products and services.
- The portal was launched on 9 August 2016 by the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

9. Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine (Aug. 9, 2022)

The Government of India has established the Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy.

Important facts

- It will be a subordinate office under the Ministry of Ayush.
- The government has merged the Pharmacopoeia Commission of Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) and two central laboratories – Pharmacopoeia Laboratory for Indian Medicine (PLIM), Ghaziabad and Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory (HPL).

Functions of the Commission

- It will work for the development of pharmacopoeial standards for Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy medicines.
- It will also work as Central Drug Testing cum Appellate Laboratory for Indian systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy.

What is Pharmacopoeia?

- Pharmacopoeia is an officially recognized book of standards of medicines as per the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945 thereunder.
- As per the Second Schedule to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, it is designated as the Official Book of Standards for drugs imported for sale or distribution in India and/or manufactured for sale, stock or exhibition.
- It specifies the standards of drugs manufactured and marketed in India in terms of their identity, purity and potency.

10. India begins cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces (Aug. 9, 2022)

India began cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)

Background

- In April 2022, during the India-US 2+2 talks, India announced that it would join the CMF as an associate partner to strengthen cooperation in regional security in the western Indian Ocean.
- In July 2022, India formally commenced cooperation with the Joint Maritime Force (CMF), a multilateral partnership based in Bahrain.

What are Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)?

- The CMF is a multinational naval partnership to promote security, stability and prosperity in the approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which include some of the world's most important shipping lanes.
- The Group of 34 Nations is commanded by a Vice Admiral of the US Navy, who also serves as Commander US Naval Forces Centcom and US Fifth Fleet.
- All three commands are co-located in US Naval Support Activity Bahrain. Pakistan is a full member of the CMF.
- India is the 35th member of this group.
- **It consists of four task forces -**

1. CTF 150 (maritime security and counter-terrorism)
2. CTF 151 (counter-piracy)
3. CTF 152 (Arabian Gulf security and cooperation)
4. CTF 153 (Maritime security in the Red Sea & Gulf of Aden)

Significance of CMF

- Curb illegal fishing
- Counter-piracy
- Counter-terrorism
- Protection of trade routes

About Bahrain

- Prime Minister - Salman ibn Hamad Al Khalifah
- Capital - Manama
- Official Language - Arabic
- Official Religion - Islam
- Currency - Bahraini Dinars