

Current Affairs search results for tag: national

1. Centre forms task force to monitor Monkeypox situation in country (Aug. 1, 2022)

The Central Government has constituted a task force to monitor and provide guidance on expansion of diagnostic facilities in the wake of monkeypox cases in India and to explore the possibility of vaccination for it in the country.

Important facts

- The decision was taken during a meeting on 1 August which was attended by the Cabinet Secretary, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, Additional Secretary (PMO) and other senior officials.
- The team will be headed by Dr V K Paul, who is the member (Health) of NITI Aayog.
- So far, four cases of monkeypox have been reported in India, three in Kerala and one in Delhi.
- A young man with monkeypox-like symptoms died in Kerala last week, prompting state Health Minister Veena George to launch a high-level investigation.
- As per the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 18,000 cases of monkeypox have been reported from 78 countries.
- According to the WHO, monkeypox is a viral zoonosis – a virus that spreads from animals to humans.
- The symptoms of Monkeypox usually present with fever, rash, and swollen lymph nodes and can lead to a variety of medical complications.

Kindly also see the post dated 15th and 25th July 2022.

2. India, Vietnam 3rd edition army exercise “Ex VINBAX 2022” begin at Chandimandir in Haryana (Aug. 1, 2022)

The third edition of the Vietnam-India bilateral military exercise "EX WINBEX 2022" is being held at Chandimandir from August 1 to 20, 2022.

Important facts

- It is a sequel to the bilateral exercise conducted earlier in Vietnam in 2019 and marks a major milestone in the strengthening of bilateral ties between India and Vietnam.
- Both the countries share a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and defence cooperation is a key pillar of this partnership.
- Vietnam is an important partner in India's Act East policy and Indo-Pacific vision.
- India has a rich legacy of deploying troops in UN missions and has excellent capabilities to provide UN peacekeeping training, including best practices for training potential UN peacekeepers at tactical, operational and strategic levels.

- The joint exercise will also provide an opportunity to the soldiers of both the countries to learn about each other's social and cultural heritage.
- The Indian Army is represented by soldiers from 105 Engineer Regiment.
- **The theme of Ex VINBAX - 2022** - employment and deployment of an Engineer Company and a Medical Team as part of United Nations Contingent for Peacekeeping Operations.

India and Vietnam

- The two countries signed a "Joint Vision" document to "significantly increase the scope and scale" of bilateral ties by 2030 during the recent visit of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Vietnam.
- Both countries are listed among the fastest growing economies in Asia and both aim to enhance peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region through multi-faceted cooperation.
- As emerging economies and important countries, there is a broad convergence of interests with regard to creating alternative supply chains in Asia.
- They are equally concerned about China's aggressive and expansionist policies in the Indo-Pacific.
- The two countries have also shared a comprehensive strategic partnership since 2016 and defence cooperation is a key pillar of this partnership.
- The two countries have also cooperated in UN peacekeeping, ship visits and bilateral exercises.
- The two countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Logistics Support, the first of its kind that Vietnam has signed with any country.

3. Point 5140 at Dras sector named as Gun Hill (July 30, 2022)

Point 5140 in Dras, Kargil Sector has been renamed as Gun Hill, to celebrate the victory of the Indian Armed Forces and to pay tribute to the supreme sacrifice of the Gunners in "Operation Vijay".

Important facts

- The Artillery Regiment of the Indian Army, with lethal and precise firepower, was able to make an impressive impact on the enemy troops including Point 5140, which was a key factor in the early completion of the operation.
- Captain Vikram Batra captured 'Gun Hill' on 20 June 1999 on the strength of the valour of his comrades and hoisted the Indian tricolour.
- The Army has now renamed Point 5140 hill in Dras sector as 'Gun Hill' in memory of the decisive role of Bofors-like cannon and gunners in the victory of Kargil war.

Operation Vijay (Kargil War)

- The Kargil War, popularly known as 'Operation Vijay', began on 3 May 1999 and ended on 26 July 1999.
- It was an armed conflict between India and Pakistan that took place in the Kargil district of Ladakh and other places along the Line of Control (LoC).
- It was fought for over 60 days (between May and July 1999) and finally India regained control of all its territories.
- In the 60-day long struggle, the victory of Tiger Hill was one of the significant achievements.

4. HCL's Roshni Nadar Malhotra is richest woman in India (July 30, 2022)

According to the recently released Hurun Rich List 2021, Roshni Nadar Malhotra, chairperson of the country's top IT company HCL Technologies, has become the richest woman in India.

Important facts

- Roshni Nadar's assets have increased by 54% and with this increase, his net worth has gone up to Rs 84,330 crore.
- **Falguni Nair**- Falguni Nair, founder and CEO of beauty brand Nyka is second in this list. Her wealth has increased by 963% and with this increase her net worth has gone up to Rs 57,520 crore.
- **Kiran Mazumdar Shaw** - Founder and CEO of Biocon Kiran Mazumdar Shaw is at number three in the list, her net worth is Rs 29,030 crore.
- **Neelima Motaparti** - Director of the Commercial Department of Divi's Laboratories is at number four in this list, her total assets have gone up to Rs 28,180 crore.

Other things in the report

- The Kotak Private Banking-Hurun list included 100 women who were born or raised in India and actively managing their own businesses.
- Delhi-NCR has the highest number of 25 women in the list. It is followed by Mumbai (21) and Hyderabad (12).
- Talking about industries, 12 of the top 100 richest women in India are from the pharmaceutical sector, 11 from the health care sector and nine from the consumer goods sector.
- Kanika Tekriwal (33 years) of Bhopal-based JetSetGo is the youngest woman on the list.
- The total assets of these 100 women included in the list increased by 53 percent to Rs 4.16 lakh crore in 2021 from Rs 2.72 lakh crore in 2020.
- These women contribute two percent to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

5. PM launches Power Sector's Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (July 30, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Power Ministry's flagship Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme on 30 July.

Important facts

- PM Modi also unveiled the scheme 'Ujjwal Bharat Ujjwal Bhavishya - Power @2047' through video conferencing.
- During the programme, the Prime Minister dedicated and also laid the foundation stone for various green energy projects of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited worth over Rs 5,200 crore.
- He inaugurated the 100 MW Ramagundam Floating Solar Project in Telangana and the 92 MW Kayamkulam Floating Solar Project in Kerala.
- Modi also laid the foundation stone for the 735 MW Nokh Solar Project in Rajasthan, Green Hydrogen Mobility Project in Leh and Kawas Green Hydrogen Blending Project with Natural Gas in Gujarat.
- He launched the National Solar Rooftop Portal, which will enable online tracking of the process of installation of rooftop solar plants.

About the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme

- It aims to improve operational efficiency and financial stability of Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) and power departments.
- It is being implemented with an outlay of over Rs 3 lakh crore over a period of five years from the financial year 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- The scheme envisages providing financial assistance to DISCOMs for modernization and strengthening of distribution infrastructure with a focus on improving the reliability and quality of supply to the end consumers.

6. UN declares access to clean and healthy environment a universal human right (July 30, 2022)

The United Nations General Assembly in a historic resolution declared on 29 July that everyone on the planet has a right to live in a clean and healthy environment.

Important facts

- The General Assembly said that climate change and environmental degradation are the most serious threats to humanity in the future.
- It called on states to step up efforts to ensure that their people have access to a "clean, healthy and sustainable environment".

- The resolution recognizes the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, which must be essential for the full enjoyment of all human rights.
- Member States can unite in a collective fight against the scourge of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- This declaration highlights almost all the rights related to the health of our environment.
- The resolution is not legally binding on the 193 UN Member States including India.

Historic resolution after 50 years

- 50 years ago, the United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm concluded with a resolution that put environmental issues at the forefront of the global stage.
- Today, more than 176 countries have adopted laws related to the environment on its basis.
- After the Stockholm Declaration of 1972, these rights have been integrated into constitutions, national laws and regional agreements.
- In October 2021, it was recognized by the United Nations Human Rights Council.
- This Healthy environment right was not included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.
- It is a historic resolution that will change the nature of international human rights law.

Other steps by UN general assembly

- On 28 July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the right to water and sanitation through its resolution.
- The Assembly stated that clean drinking water and sanitation “are essential to the realisation of all human rights”.
- In response, governments around the world have changed their laws and regulations regarding water and sanitation.

7. Assam’s Manas Reserve has more tigresses than tigers (July 30, 2022)

According to the annual wildlife monitoring of trans-boundary wildlife preserve the Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam has 2.4 tigresses for every tiger.

Important facts

- According to the latest camera trapping assessment done by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), this vital tiger habitat area of 536.22 sq km has 52 adult tigers along with eight cubs.
- The assessment states that 29 tigers were earlier, while 23 new tigers have been reported.

- The gender of 27 tigers can be ascertained precisely - eight of them are male and 19 are female i.e. sex ratio of 1:2.4.

Manas Tiger Reserve

- Manas Tiger Reserve is located in the State of Assam in North-East India.
- It is a biodiversity hotspot, covering an area of 39,100 hectares, it spans the Manas river and is bounded to the north by the forests of Bhutan.
- It was declared a sanctuary on 1 October, 1928 and was designated a World Heritage site in December 1985.
- It is home to a wide variety of wildlife like tiger, golden langur, wild buffalo, hispid hare, pygmy hog, capped langur, Indian one-horned rhinoceros, elephant, gaur, hog deer, etc.
- It is known for its Project Tigers, Rhinos & Elephants, and is Assam's one of the two Tiger projects.

8. Kerala tops in 2021 Assembly Sittings (July 30, 2022)

According to PRS Legislative Research (PRS), Kerala, which slipped to eighth place in the state assembly sittings in 2020 during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, ranks first in 2021.

Important facts

- The Kerala Legislative Assembly met for 61 days in 2021, the highest for any state.
- Kerala's performance in 2021 was impressive as the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in this year was higher as compared to the year 2000.
- Between 2016 and 2019, Kerala had the distinction of being at the top with an average sitting of 53 days.
- The state legislature, Kerala (Left Democratic Front in power since May 2016) promulgated 144 ordinances, the highest in the country last year.
- Ordinances are promulgated by governments to take immediate action on any urgent matter during the intervening period of two sessions of the legislature.

Other states

- Kerala was followed by Odisha - 43 days, Karnataka - 40 days and Tamil Nadu - 34 days.
- Sittings in 28 state legislatures and one union territory legislature took place for less than 20 days.
- Of them, five - Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Delhi Vidhan Sabhas - met for less than 10 days.
- The figures for Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Punjab were 17, 16 and 11 respectively.

- Andhra Pradesh with 20 ordinances and Maharashtra with 15 followed Kerala, wherein Bills replacing 33 ordinances became Acts.
- Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh also issued ordinances to give effect to budget proposals.
- Education was 21% among the subjects covered in the bills passed in 2021, followed by taxation - 12%, local government - 10%, and land and law and order - 4%.

The minimum sitting rule

- Manipur, Odisha, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh have laid down a minimum number of sitting days through the Rules of Procedure, varying from 40 days in Punjab to 90 days in Uttar Pradesh.
- The minimum sitting should be 60 days as per the conduct of business of Karnataka Government in the State Legislature Act.

9. Government releases target to curb malnutrition (July 29, 2022)

Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani on 28 July Released targets for curbing malnutrition in the country.

What are the targets?

- The aim of the target is to reduce stunting and under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) among children under 6 years by 2% per annum.
- Reducing low birth weight by 2% per year.
- Reducing anemia by 3% per year in children aged six to 59 months and in women and adolescent girls (15 to 49 years).

Other important facts

- As per the findings of the 2019-21 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), nutrition indicators for children under 5 have improved over NFHS-4 (2015-16).
- Stunting has reduced from 38.4% to 35.5%.
- Wasting has reduced from 21.0% to 19.3%.
- underweight prevalence has been down from 35.8% to 32.1%.
- Women (15-49 years) whose BMI is below normal has reduced from 22.9% in NFHS-4 to 18.7% in NFHS-5.
- In spite of this India remains one of the countries with the highest burden of malnutrition in the world.

Status of states

- Meghalaya has the highest number of stunted children (46.5%), followed by Bihar (42.9%).
- Assam, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have stunted children higher than the national average of 35.5%.
- Puducherry and Sikkim have the lowest percentage of stunted children.
- Maharashtra has the highest 25.6% wasted children followed by Gujarat 25.1%.
- Assam, Bihar, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Karnataka and West Bengal have a higher percentage of wasted children than the national average of 19.3%.
- Bihar has the highest number of underweight children (41%), followed by Gujarat (39.7%) and Jharkhand (39.4%).
- Assam, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh have percentages of underweight children higher than the national average of 32.1%.

10. Supreme Court orders status quo on Kaleshwaram Irrigation Project (July 29, 2022)

The Supreme Court on July 27 ordered status quo on the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) after the court was told that the Telangana government was expanding the project without any environmental clearance.

About Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP)

- Project is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Kaleshwaram, Bhupalpally in Telangana.
- It is one of the largest projects in the world.
- Its farthest upstream effect is at the confluence of the Pranhita and Godavari rivers.
- The Pranhita River is the confluence of various minor tributaries including the Wardha, Pinganga and Wainganga rivers.
- The Project is divided into 7 links and 28 packages spanning a distance of approximately 500 km (310 mi) through 13 districts.
- The project aims to produce a total of 240 TMC (195 from Medigadda Barrage).

The biggest lift projects in the world

- The largest lift projects in the world were the Colorado Lift Project in America and the Great Man-Made River in Egypt.
- The capacity of these projects is in horsepower and they took more than three decades to complete.

- Now, the Indian Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project has become the world's biggest in terms of capacities.
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Significance of the Project

- The project will enable farmers in Telangana to have year-round water supply.
- The project will cover many districts that used to face rainfall deficient and groundwater fluoride pollution as well.
- Apart from irrigation, a main component of the project is the supply of drinking water to several towns and villages as well as the cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.