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1. Defence Ministry launches 75 newly Artificial Intelligence products in New Delhi (July 11, 2022)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the first-ever 'Artificial Intelligence in Defence' (AIDef) symposium and exhibition, organised by the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence, at **Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi** on 11 July.

• **Important facts**

- The event featured an exhibition showcasing the latest AI-enabled solutions developed by research organisations, industry and start-ups and innovators and the launch of AI products for the market.
- This is a major event where 75 newly developed AI products/technologies in Defence were launched as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.
- These products will promote the 'Aatmanirbharta' initiative in Defence.
- These products are being tested and will soon be deployed in the security of the nation.
- Apart from the 75 products being launched, another 100 are in various stages of development.
- Panel discussions on 'Deploying AI in Defence', 'GenNext AI Solutions' and 'AI in Defence - Industry Perspective' were also held at the event.

• **Products are in the following domains-**

1. Automation/unmanned/robotics systems
2. Cyber security and human behaviour analysis
3. Intelligent monitoring system
4. Logistics and supply chain management
5. Control, Communication, Computer and Intelligence
6. Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems
7. Operational data analytics

• **Artificial Intelligence in defence**

- The AI Task Force on Defence was set up in 2018 to provide a road map for promoting AI in defence.
- A Defence AI Council, headed by the Defence Minister, is working in this direction.
- The Defence Minister had announced that "25 defence-specific AI products" would be developed by 2024.

- A Defence AI Project Agency (DAIPA) has also been created under the defence production secretary for AI-enabled projects.
- The Navy is also building an AI Centre of Excellence at INS Valsura in Jamnagar, which already has a modern laboratory on AI and Big Data analysis.
- **What is Artificial Intelligence?**
- It is a broad branch of computer science that deals with the creation of smart machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.

2. Army opens 20 bedded medical facility in Galwan (July 11, 2022)

The Indian Army for the first time has set up a Field Dressing Station (FDS), a 20-bed medical facility at **Galwan**, that will provide treatment to soldiers injured by gunshot wounds at an altitude of more than 14,000 feet.

• Important facts

- This medical facility was started two years after 20 Indian soldiers were martyred in a violent clash with the Chinese Army in Galwan, Ladakh.
- India and China have been keeping watch at several places along the undefined Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh for more than two years.
- It is capable of carrying out all types of treatments that a field hospital would have but the facilities are limited.
- The inauguration of the medical facility at such a height is significant as earlier there was no such arrangement and any patient in critical condition was either airlifted or brought down by road to the Leh field hospital more than 200 km away.
- It will have material to treat gunshot wounded soldiers or critical patients, and they can then be referred to a field hospital in Leh.

• Disputed area Galwan valley

- Galwan Valley refers to the land, which is situated between the hills present near the Galwan River.
- The source of the Galvan River is present in Aksai Chin towards China and later it meets the Shyok River of India.
- This valley is situated between Ladakh in the west and Aksai Chin in the east, due to which it is strategically important.
- Its eastern part is very close to China's Xinjiang Tibet Road, which is called the G219 Highway.

• Line of Actual Control

- LAC is a type of demarcation line, which separates Indian-controlled territory and Chinese-controlled territory from each other.

- India believes that the length of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is about 3,440 km while
- China considers this line to be about 2,000 km long.

3. IIT-Kanpur to establish network of air-quality sensors to measure pollution in rural India (July 11, 2022)

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) **Kanpur** has announced that it will undertake a USD 2.5 million (₹19 crore) project to install around 1,400 sensors in rural blocks of **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar**.

- IIT Kanpur is undertaking this project to promote measurement of air pollution in rural India.
- Air pollution is a serious problem in India's cities, burning of biomass, and dependence on diesel gensets for electricity is deteriorating air quality even in villages.
- **Benefit of the project**
- The outcome of this project will help local communities, policy makers and researchers to understand the real situation.
- The three-year pilot project will pave the way for a national network of air quality sensors in rural India.
- The data from this network will also be made available in real time to enable actionable and evidence-based decision making.
- **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**
- It was launched in 2019 by the government of India.
- Under this, a national target has been set to reduce the PM 2.5 and PM10 particulate matter present in the air by 20 to 30 percent, taking 2017 as the base year.
- Under this scheme, initially 122 cities with the highest air pollution in India have been targeted primarily.
- Upon its launch, there was a commitment by the government to increase the network of rural air pollution monitoring sensors, but little progress has been made on that front.
- The country's current annual safe limits for PM 2.5 and PM 10 are 40 micrograms/per cubic metre (ug/m³) and 60 micrograms/per cubic metre.

4. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches SVANidhi Mahotsav (July 9, 2022)

The Svanidhi Mahotsav, which runs from July 9 to 31, is being organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

- **Important facts**

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri inaugurated the Svanidhi Festival.
- Svanidhi Mahotsav is a cultural festival being celebrated to commemorate the success of PM Svanidhi Yojana.
- It is being conducted in 75 cities across 33 states and union territories.
- Digital transaction training, loan fair and cultural activities will be organised during the festival.
- Street plays will also be organised to share the benefits, features and experiences of street vendors during this time.

- **About PM Svanidhi Yojana**

- PM Svanidhi Yojana was launched on June 1, 2020.
- This scheme was started with the aim of providing financial support to small shopkeepers and hawkers.
- Under the PM Svanidhi Yojana, people who sell goods on the street tracks or do other small jobs can take a loan of up to ₹ 10,000 from the bank.
- After repaying the loan taken in the first instance, the beneficiary can get a loan of up to ₹ 20,000 in the second time and up to ₹ 50,000 in the third time.
- The tenure of the Svanidhi scheme was earlier till March 2022, but the government has extended the deadline of the Svanidhi scheme till December 2024.
- So far 53.7 lakh applications have been received under this scheme, out of which 36.6 lakh applications have been approved and 33.2 lakh loans have been disbursed.
- An amount of Rs 3,592 crore has been disbursed under the scheme so far.

5. Gita Gopinath becomes first woman to feature on IMF's 'wall of former chief economists' (July 9, 2022)

inscribed on the wall of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) former chief economists.

- **Important facts**

- The first Indian to receive this honour was Raghuram Rajan, who was the IMF's Chief Economist and Director of Research between 2003 and 2006.
- Gita Gopinath was appointed Chief Economist of the IMF in October 2018 and was later promoted as the first Deputy Managing Director of the IMF in December 2021.
- Gita Gopinath served as the first female chief economist of the Washington-based Monetary Fund for three years.
- Gita Gopinath is one of the foremost economists. She is also known for her research on international finance and macroeconomics.

- Geeta is the third woman to become a tenured professor (permanent professor) of Harvard's Department of Economics and the second Indian after Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.
- In 2019, Geeta was awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman by the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, which is the highest honour for Indians living outside the country.

- **About International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF), a United Nations (UN) specialised agency, was established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference to secure international monetary policies.
- The International Monetary Fund is an organisation with 189 member countries.
- First Deputy Managing Director- Geeta Gopinath
- Headquarters- Washington, D.C., U.S.
- Managing Director- Kristalina Georgieva
- Chief Economist - Pierre Olivier Gourinchas

6. Mangarh Hill to be declared monument of national importance (July 9, 2022)

A report by the National Monuments Authority (NMA) has announced to name the top of Mangarh hill in Rajasthan as a national monument in honour of 1500 Bhil tribal freedom fighters.

- **Mangarh Hill**

- The hill, located on the Gujarat-Rajasthan border, is the site of a tribal revolt where more than 1500 Bhil tribal freedom fighters were killed in the year 1913.
- This place is also known as Adivasi Jallianwala and there has been a demand to build a memorial here.
- On November 17, 1913, the British army opened fire on tribals gathering in protest, led by a leader of the Govind Guru community, killing more than 1,500 people.

- **Bhil tribe**

- The Bhils are commonly known as the Dhanushdharis of Rajasthan. It is the largest tribal community in India.
- It is the largest tribe of South Asia.
- Generally these are classified into two forms:
 - middle or pure bhil
 - Eastern or Rajput Bhil

- Central Bhils are found in the mountainous regions of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan in India and are also found in the north-western regions of Tripura.
- They are considered a Scheduled Tribe in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tripura.
- The Bhils are members of the pre-Aryan caste.
- The name Bhil is also mentioned in the ancient epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana.
- **About National Monuments Authority (NMA)**
- The National Monuments Authority was enacted in March 2010 in accordance with the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Recognition) Act, under the Ministry of Culture.
- The NMA has been entrusted with a number of functions related to the conservation of monuments and sites through the management of restricted and regulated areas around centrally protected monuments.
- National ancient monuments are defined under the Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.

7. Health and Panchayati Raj Ministry sign MoU to eliminate TB in India (July 9, 2022)

The Union Ministry of Health and Ministry of Panchayati Raj has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with an aim to eliminate TB in India.

• Important facts

- The MoU was signed by Dr. Bijay Kumar Behera, Economic Adviser on behalf of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Dr. P. Ashok Babu, Joint Secretary on behalf of the Ministry of Health.
- This MoU will create inter-ministerial cooperation and strategic partnership with the aim of achieving the Prime Minister's ambitious goal of eliminating TB in India by 2025.
- The MoU is expected to pave the way for coordinated efforts at the grassroots level to create public awareness in rural areas to end the stigma and discrimination associated with tuberculosis.
- This MoU will prove to be a milestone in achieving the objective and goal of TB Free India Campaign.

• 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.

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.

8. State mourning across the country on July 9 over the death of Shinzo Abe (July 9, 2022)

The government has decided to observe a one-day state mourning across the country on **July 9** in honour of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. He passed away on 8 July.

Important facts

- Prime Minister Modi expressed deep grief over the incident and declared a day of national mourning on 9 July in the country as a mark of deep respect for him.
- On the day of mourning, on all buildings where the National Flag is flown regularly, the National Flag will remain at half-mast.
- **Awarded Padma Vibhushan in 2021**
- In January 2021, the Indian government honoured Shinzo Abe with the Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award.
- Abe is considered to have played an important role in better relations between India and Japan.
- **Visited India most times while being the PM of Japan**
- Shinzo Abe visited India three times during his tenure as Prime Minister.
- He was on official visits to India in January 2014, December 2015 and September 2017.
- No other Prime Minister of Japan has made so many visits to India.
- He was the first Japanese prime minister to be the chief guest at the Republic Day parade in 2014.
- **India-Japan relations under Shinzo Abe**
- The foundation for the "**Global Partnership between Japan and India**" was laid in 2001, and the annual bilateral summit was agreed in 2005, with Abe accelerating the pace of relations with India since 2012.
- In August 2007, during his first visit to India as Prime Minister, he delivered the famous "**confluence of two seas**" speech which laid the foundation for the **concept of Indo-Pacific**.
- In September 2014, Modi and Abe agreed to upgrade bilateral ties to a "**Special Strategic and Global Partnership**".
- During Abe's tenure, the two countries decided to hold a meeting of foreign and defence ministers (**2+2**).
- In November 2019, the first 2+2 meeting was held in **New Delhi**.
- An agreement for transfer of defence equipment and technology was also signed in 2015.
- During his tenure, India and Japan came closer in the **Indo-Pacific**.
- Abe had given the concept of **Quad in 2007** and it was formed.
- The Quad is a diplomatic network of four countries committed to supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and resilient.
- During Abe's visit in 2015, India decided to introduce a **bullet train**.
- Under Abe's leadership, India and Japan formed the **Act East Forum** and it is important for development in **Northeast India**.

• **Kindly also see 8 July 2022 post**

9. NMA recommends two sites connected to Ambedkar to be declared as monuments of national importance (July 9, 2022)

The National Monuments Authority (NMA) on July 9 has recommended the declaration of two sites associated with BR Ambedkar in Gujarat and Maharashtra as monuments of national importance.

- These recommendations have been placed before Minister of State for Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal by the National Monuments Authority.

• Name the two sites

1. Sankalp Bhumi banyan tree campus

It is located in Vadodara, Gujrat where Dr. Ambedkar had taken a resolve to eradicate untouchability on 23th September, 1917.

The site is more than a hundred years old and witnesses the beginning of the social respect revolution initiated by Ambedkar, who is regarded as the architect of the Constitution of India.

2. PratapRao Bhosale High School, Satara, Maharashtra

Dr Ambedkar received his primary education in PratapRao Bhosale High School.

This school is under Satara Zilla Parishad and presently the condition of the school is dilapidated.

The school's register still shows the signature of a student, Bhim Rao, in Marathi.

• National Monuments Authority (NMA)

- Established - in 2010
- Ministry - Union Ministry of Culture
- Established under The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010
- Composition - a Chairperson and up to 5 Whole Time and 5 Part Time Members and a Member Secretary
- The Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is its ex-officio member.
- Headquarters - New Delhi

10. Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant named new G20 Sherpa (July 8, 2022)

Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant has been appointed as India's Sherpa for the G20 organisation.

- **Important facts**

- Till now Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was India's Sherpa for G20.
- The main reason for the appointment of a full-time G-20 Sherpa is India's presidency of the G20 later this year.
- In a way, Sherpa does the main job of coordinating this event between all the agencies within the country and foreign agencies.
- The G-20 meeting is the biggest event to be held in India in recent decades, in which the heads of state of the world's 20 richest countries with their foreign ministers, finance ministers, and other officials will be held at different times.
- The G-20 meeting for the year 2022 is scheduled to be held in Bali (Indonesia) in November 2022.
- The chairmanship of the organisation will be handed over to India from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023.

- **Who is Sherpa?**

- The personal representative of a country attending international summits like G-20 and G-8 is called Sherpa.
- Sherpas discuss economic, political and global agendas with representatives of member states.
- Sherpa is derived from the popular word Sherpa in Nepal. Sherpas act as guides for mountaineers in Nepal. Similarly, Sherpas act as guides in international conferences.
- They are appointed by the government of the country concerned. Officers or senior leaders with diplomatic, political or administrative experience can be appointed to this post.
- Suresh Prabhu, Arvind Panagariya, Shaktikanta Das, Montek Singh Ahluwalia have also been Sherpas from India's side.