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1. Qutub Minar not a place of worship: ASI (May 25, 2022)

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on 24 May opposed a plea before a Delhi court seeking restoration of Hindu and Jain deities inside the Qutub Minar complex, saying it is not a place of worship and the existing status of the monument cannot be altered.

- The ASI pointed out that when Qutub Minar was first notified as a protected monument in 1914, the complex was not a place of worship.
- The ASI explained that the form or nature of a monument is decided on the date when it comes under protection.

• What is the case?

- The original suit claimed that 27 temples were demolished for the construction of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in the Qutub Minar complex.
- The petition was dismissed last year under the provisions of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.
- The Additional District Judge (ADJ) has now reserved the order.
- The petitioner submitted that it was wrong to dismiss the original suit based on the 1991 Act.
- The Qutub Minar complex comes under the purview of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act of 1958.

• About Qutub Minar

- It is a soaring, 73 metre high victory tower, built in 1193 by Qutab-ud-din Aibak immediately after the defeat of Delhi's last Hindu kingdom.
- It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Mehrauli region of South Delhi.
- It is a five-storied tower made of red sandstone.
- Its Surrounding there is the Alai-Darwaja Gate, a masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311).
- Its construction was started by Qutub-ud-din Aibak in 1193 and finished by Iltutmish.
- Qutub Minar and its monuments were included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1993.

2. Indian Navy - Bangladesh Navy Bilateral EX Bongosagar Commences (May 25, 2022)

The third edition of the Indian Navy (IN) - Bangladesh Navy (BN) bilateral exercise 'Bongosagar' began on 24 May 22 at Port Mongla, Bangladesh.

- The harbor phase of the exercise is scheduled from 24-25 May followed by a sea phase in the North Bay of Bengal from 26-27 May.
- Indian Navy ships Kora, an indigenously built Guided Missile Corvette and Sumedha, an indigenously built offshore patrol vessel, are participating in the exercise.
- The Bangladesh Navy is represented by BNS Abu Ubaidah and Ali Haider, both guided missile frigates.
- **The harbour phase of the exercise**
- This includes professional and social interactions and friendly sportings, besides strategic level planning discussions on the conduct of exercises at sea.
- **The sea phase of the exercise**
- It would facilitate ships from both the navies to participate in intensive surface warfare drills, weapon firing drills, seamanship evolutions and coordinated air operations in a tactical scenario.
- **About Bongosagar bilateral exercise**
- Its first edition was held in 2019.
- Its aim is to develop interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations.

3. Centre launches Swachh Survekshan 2023 under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (May 25, 2022)

The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the 8th edition of Swachh Survekshan – SS-2023 under the Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0.

- It was launched by Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, in a virtual program in New Delhi on 24 May.
- The theme of the survey for this year is "Waste to Wealth", which is aligned to the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) 2.0 and focuses on the central government's vision of 'waste free' cities.
- The survey will give priority to the principle of 3Rs – Reduce, Recycle and Reuse,".
- The 2022 edition of the survey had been completed and its results were being prepared.
- **About Swachh Survekshan**
- Launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan
- Its aim was to make India clean and free from open defecation.
- The first survey was conducted in 2016 and covered 73 cities.
- By 2020, this survey increased to 4242 cities and was said to be the world's largest cleanliness survey.

Nodal Ministry - Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

- **About the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**

- Launched - on 2nd October 2014
- Launched by - Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- Aims - to achieve the vision of a 'Clean India' by 2nd October 2019.
- Slogan - One step towards cleanliness
- It is a restructured version of the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan launched in 2009.
- The first phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission lasted till October 2019.
- Phase 2 is being implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25.

4. QUAD leaders launch Quad fellowship programme for graduate STEM degrees in the US (May 24, 2022)

A new Quad fellowship program has been launched by the leaders of Australia, India, Japan, and the US at the Quad Summit in Tokyo on 24 May.

- Under the program, 100 students from member countries will be sponsored to study in the US for undergraduate degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- This fellowship will act as a bridge connecting the four countries and will empower these countries to provide leadership to address the many challenges faced by them in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world.
- The Quad Fellowship application is live and will be open till June 30.
- The first classes of Quad Fellows will arrive on campus in the autumn of 2023.
- Each Fellow will receive a one-time award of \$50,000 that can be used for tuition, research, fees, books and related educational expenses (eg, registration fees, research-related travel).

- **About Quad**

- This is known as the 'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue' (QSD).
- It is an informal strategic forum comprising four nations - United States of America (USA), India, Australia and Japan.
- It aims to work for a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- The first meeting of the Quad was held in 2007 on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- The Quad Summit provides an opportunity for leaders to exchange views on the development of the Indo-Pacific region and current global issues of mutual interest.

- Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the first to consider the formation of the Quad in 2007.

5. New Development Bank opens regional office in GIFT City, Gujarat (May 24, 2022)

New Development Bank (NDB) has announced the launch of its Indian Regional Office (IRO) at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

- The objective of launching the Bank's regional office is to meet the infrastructure and sustainable development needs in India and Bangladesh, contributing to economic growth and sustainable development in South Asia in line with the mandate of the NDB.
- The Indian Regional Office will work in close coordination with the NDB Headquarters, focusing on technical support including initial project preparation, pipeline development, project implementation and monitoring as well as regional portfolio management.
- The NDB officially opened its Africa Regional Centre (ARC) in Johannesburg in 2017 followed by the establishment of a sub-office in Brasilia with the Americas Regional Office (ARO) in So Paulo by the NDB in 2019.
- In 2020, the NDB established the Eurasian Regional Centre (ERC) in Moscow. The Indian Regional Office (IRO) complements the NDB's global network of offices.

• About New Development Bank

- New Development Bank formerly known as BRICS Bank informally.
- It was established on 15 July 2014 by the countries of the BRICS grouping.
- The idea of setting up the bank was proposed by India at the 4th BRICS Summit held in Delhi in 2012.
- This was agreed upon by the BRICS leaders at the 5th BRICS Summit held in Durban, South Africa on 27 March 2013.
- Headquarters- Shanghai, China
- General Secretary- KV Kamat
- President- Markosh Trayoja

6. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Army Training Command and National Defence University (RRU), Gandhinagar (May 24, 2022)

Army Training Command and Gandhinagar-based National Defence University (RRU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up a Wargame Research and Development Centre in New Delhi.

- The 'Wargame Research and Development Centre' to be developed in New Delhi has been given a prototype name WARDEC.

- It will be the first of its kind simulation-based training centre in India to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to design virtual reality wargames.
- It will be developed by the Army Training Command and the Gandhinagar-based National Defence University (RRU).
- It will be used by the Army to train its soldiers and test their strategies through "Metaverse-enabled gameplay".
- It will be designed to prepare for wars as well as counter-terrorism and counter-terrorism operations.
- **How many countries use such wargaming drills?**
- Since the 9/11 attacks, use of information technology-enabled wargaming is preferred by several countries like the US, Israel, the UK to prepare for possibilities in case of terror attacks or war.

7. Haryana hockey team won the Hockey India Sub-Junior Women's National Championship 2022 (May 24, 2022)

Haryana hockey team won the Hockey India Sub-Junior Women's National Championship 2022 by defeating Jharkhand hockey team 2-0 in the final.

- The 12th National Sub Junior Women's Hockey Championship 2022 was organised in Imphal, Manipur from May 11-22.
- During the final match, Riya scored one goal each in the 13th minute and Sejal in the 39th minute to help Haryana's hockey team win.
- In the competition, Uttar Pradesh defeated Madhya Pradesh 3-0 to finish third in the tournament.
- Uttar Pradesh got the third position in this competition for the second time in a row.

8. The fourth edition of the Jointly Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) between the navies of India and Bangladesh (May 24, 2022)

The fourth edition of the Jointly Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) between the navies of India and Bangladesh was conducted in the North Bay of Bengal from 22-23 May.

- The previous CORPAT between the two countries was held in October 2020.
- In this exercise, indigenous warships INS Kora and INS Sumedha of the Indian Navy along with Bangladesh Navy warships BNS Ali Haider and BNS Abu Ubaidah and maritime patrol aircraft of both the navies participated in joint patrolling.
- Maritime patrol aircraft of both the navies also carried out joint patrols along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) during the CORPAT.

COUNTRY	MILITARY EXERCISES
FRANCE	Shakti Exercise, Varuna Military Exercise
SRI LANKA	SLINEX, Mitra shakti
SINGAPORE	Simbex, 'Bold Kurukshetra Exercise'

- **About Bangladesh**

- Capital- Dhaka
- President- Abdul Hameed
- Prime Minister- Sheikh Hasina
- Currency - taka
- Bangladesh observes 26 March as its Independence Day every year.

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10. Collaboration with The Ministry of Railways and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras (May 24, 2022)

The Ministry of Railways will collaborate with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras in the development of an 'indigenous' Hyperloop system and will also help in setting up a Centre of Excellence for Hyperloop Technology at the Institute.

- The plan to develop Hyperloop technology was launched by the then Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu in the year 2017.
- Indian Railways has taken this important step in the direction of making rail travel fast, easy and modern in the country.
- This project will also help in the goal of reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption.
- According to the Ministry of Railways, a team of students of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) 'Team Avishkar Hyperloop' is working on this transport medium.
- The model proposed by Team Invention can achieve a top speed of over 1,200 kmph and is completely autonomous, safe and clean.
- **What is Hyperloop?**
- Hyperloop is a technology that uses a magnetic field in a low-pressure tube to move people and goods at high speed without friction.
- Specially designed capsules or pods will be used in this.
- The capsules and pods will be driven at high velocity inside a transparent tube pipe.
- In this, the pods will be driven above the ground in very large pipes on an electrical magnet, due to the effect of this magnet, the pods will rise slightly above the track, due to which the speed will increase and friction will be reduced.
- It will have a magnetic track on which the vacuum will be created. With this, the train will be able to move from one place to another very fast.