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1. Meeting of National Sagarmala Apex Committee (NSAC) (May 4, 2022)

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal will chair the meeting of the National Sagarmala Apex Committee (NSAC) on May 6, 2022 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

- **About The National Sagarmala Apex Committee (NSAC)**

- It is the apex body to provide policy direction and guidance for port based development- Sagarmala projects and reviews its implementation.
- It was constituted on 13 May 2015 by the Union Cabinet.
- It is chaired by the Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways with Cabinet Ministers from stakeholder central Ministries and Chief Ministers & Administrators of Maritime States and Union territories as members.
- The committee will review the Sagarmala program along with review of development of port-linked road and rail connectivity projects, development of floating jetties and inland waterways.

- **About Sagarmala National Programme**

- It is a National Programme aimed at accelerating economic development in the country by harnessing the potential of India's 7,500 km long coastline and 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways.
- It was announced by the Prime Minister in 2014 and approved by the Union Cabinet on 25th March 2015.
- It takes a vision to reduce the logistics cost for both domestic and EXIM cargo with optimum infrastructure investment.

- **Five pillars of the project**

1. Port modernization & new port development,
2. Port connectivity enhancement,
3. Port-led industrialization,
4. Coastal community development and
5. Coastal shipping and Inland water transport

2. PM Modi pay tributes to philosopher Lord Basavanna on Basava Jayanti (May 4, 2022)

The Prime Minister paid tributes to Jagadguru Basaveshwara (Basavanna) on the auspicious occasion of Basava Jayanti on 3 May.

- According to the Hindu calendar, Basavanna is born on the third day of the month of Vaishakha in the Shukla Paksha.
- **About Jagadguru Basaveshwara**
- He was born in Bagewadi (of the undivided Bijapur district of Karnataka) during 1131 AD.
- He was a 12th-century Kannada social reformer, poet and philosopher during the rule of King Bijjala I of the Kalachuri-dynasty in Karnataka.
- He is the founding saint of the Lingayat sect.
- His philosophy was based on the principles of arivu (true knowledge), ethos (right conduct), and anubhava (divine experience), which brought about a social, religious, and economic revolution in the 12th century.
- He spread social awareness through his poetry, popularly known as Vachan.
- As a social reformer, he worked towards the upliftment of the underprivileged classes and women and believed that all human beings are equal irrespective of class, caste, creed and gender.

3. Indian Oil launches methanol-blended petrol on pilot basis in Assam (May 4, 2022)

Indian Oil Corporation has launched Petrol 'M15' with 15 percent methanol blend in the Tinsukia district of Assam as a pilot project.

- Methanol is being manufactured by Assam Petrochemical Limited near Digboi Refinery.
- This new petrol blending with methanol will reduce fuel costs.
- This new petrol with methanol mixture will contain 15% methanol, so that instead of 100% petrol, only 85% petrol will cost.

• About Indian Oil Corporation

- Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is a Government of India-owned oil and gas exploration and manufacturing company.
- It is under the ownership of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India.
- Founded-30 June 1959
- Headquarters- New Delhi
- Chairman- Shrikant Madhav Vaidya

4. India will be the official country of honour at Cannes Film Market (May 4, 2022)

India will take part as the official country of honour at the Cannes Film Festival to be held from May 17 to May 28.

- This is the first time a country will take part in the 'Honour of Country' at the Cannes Film Festival.
- The Cannes Film Festival, held annually in Cannes, France, is the 75th edition of Cannes.
- **India at Cannes Film Festival 2022-**
- India's Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur will participate in the festival and deliver the welcome address.
- Actress Deepika Padukone will be seen as a jury in the main feature film competition at this year's Cannes Festival.
- Renowned Indian author Satyajit Ray's "Pratidwandi" (1970) and Aravindan Govindan's "The Circus Tent" will be screened at the Cannes Classics strand of the festival.
- In addition, the festival will also see a special screening of Indian filmmaker Shaunak Sen's Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner "All That Breathes".

5. India logs 6.2 percent hike in death rate during 2020 : CRS data (May 4, 2022)

The Central Government has released the Civil Registration System (CRS) Report 2020 on the basis of the Birth and Death Report.

- As per the report, the number of registered births has come down from 2.48 crore in 2019 to 2.42 crore in the year 2020, showing a decrease of around 2.40 per cent.
- The Civil Registration System' for 2020 report said that in the case of registered deaths, the number has increased from 76.4 lakh in the year 2019 to 81.2 lakhs in 2020 showing an increase of 6.2 percent.
- Of the total registered deaths, males accounted for 60.2 per cent and females 39.8 per cent.
- Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Assam, and Haryana have contributed significantly to the increased number of deaths registered from 2019 to 2020.
- According to NITI Aayog, the number of births and deaths included in the report are actual numbers collected from around 3 lakh registration units across the country.
- **About Civil Registration System (CRS)**
- It is a universal, continuous, compulsory, and permanent recording of birth, death, and stillbirth.
- Registration of births and deaths is done under the Birth and Death Registration Act (RBD), 1969.
- Above mentioned figures include deaths due to COVID-19 and other reasons.

6. 4th edition of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (May 4, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today addressed the inaugural session of the 4th edition of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) via video message.

- The fourth edition of ICDRI was organised in a hybrid format in New Delhi from 4-6 May 2022.
- ICDRI 2022 will engage with decision makers, practitioners and communities around the world to discuss challenges, identify good practices, develop collaborations and promote concrete actions.
- This will include multi-sectoral and multi-country discussions around ecologically sensitive design for infrastructure transition, risk governance and finance, innovation and building human-centred, resilient.

• About ICDRI

- The International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) is the annual conference of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- It brings together member states, organisations and institutions to strengthen global discussion on disaster and climate resilient infrastructure.
- In 2018 and 2019, the first and second international workshops on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure took place in New Delhi, India.
- ICDRI 2021 was hosted virtually.

7. France pulls out from India's P-75I Project (May 4, 2022)

Ahead of Modi's scheduled visit to France, French defence major Naval Group has announced that it is unable to participate in the P-75 India (P-75I) project, which seeks to build six conventional submarines in India for the Indian Navy.

Why did France pull out?

- The French firm pulled out of the project as it could not fulfil the conditions of the Request for Proposal (RFI) placed by the Indian Navy.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) requires that the fuel cell be AIP Sea Proven, which is difficult for India as the French Navy does not use such a propulsion system.
- AIP refers to Air-Independent Propulsion.
- AIP technology allows a conventional submarine to remain submerged for much longer than ordinary diesel-electric submarines.
- India wants AIP technology as none of its existing ships have it while Pakistan and China both have AIP-equipped submarines.

What is Project 75?

- In June 1999, the Cabinet Committee on Security had approved a plan for the Indian Navy to indigenously build submarines by 2030.
- Under the first phase of the P-75 in 2005, India and France signed a \$3.75 billion contract to build six Scorpene-class submarines.
- The executing company on the Indian side was Mazagon Docks Limited, and on the French side was DCNS, now called Naval Group.
- The first submarine under the project was commissioned in December 2017.
- Thereafter, another five were built and on 20 April, INS Vagsheer was launched which will be commissioned by 2023.

What is P-75I?

- The Project 75I-class submarine is a follow-up to the Project 75 Kalvari-class submarine for the Indian Navy.
- In the late 1990s, at the time of the Kargil War, a three-decade plan for indigenous construction of submarines took shape.
- This is known as Project 75 and Project 75I, two separate series of submarine building lines in collaboration with foreign entities.
- Under this project, the Indian Navy intends to acquire six diesel-electric submarines, which will also include advanced air-independent propulsion systems.

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9. World Press Freedom Index : India slips to 150th position from 142nd (May 4, 2022)

India's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index has fallen down to 150th position from last year's 142nd rank out of 180 countries.

Highlights of the 2022 report

- **Best performing countries**

1. Norway- 1st
2. Denmark- 2nd
3. Sweden- 3rd
4. Estonia- 4th
5. Finland- 5th

- **Worst performing countries**

- North Korea remained at the bottom of the list.
- Russia is placed at 155th position, slipping from 150th last year.

- According to the global media watchdog, China climbed two places to the 175th position, from 177th place last year.
- **Performance of India;s neighbourhood countries**
- Apart from India, the ranking of its neighbouring countries has also declined except Nepal.
- While Pakistan is ranked 157th, Sri Lanka is at 146th, Bangladesh at 162nd and Myanmar at 176th.
- **About Press Freedom Index**
- It has been published by Reporters Without Borders every year since 2002.
- This is based on the organisation's own assessment of countries' press freedom records in the last year.
- The index ranks 180 countries and territories according to the level of freedom available to journalists.
- The index is prepared on the basis of assessment of the level of pluralism, media freedom, media environment and self-censorship, legal framework, transparency as well as the quality of the existing infrastructure for news and information.

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