

Current Affairs search results for tag: national

1. India, Germany signs joint declaration of Intent on Forest Landscape Restoration (May 3, 2022)

India and Germany have signed a Joint Declaration of Intent on Forest Landscape Restoration.

- The joint declaration was signed between Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav and Germany's Minister of Environment and Nature Conservation Steffi Lemke.
- The Joint Declaration will provide a platform to further enhance partnership and support in areas such as climate protection and conservation of biodiversity.
- This will also help in strengthening Indo-German cooperation.
- The joint declaration will enable the two countries to successfully partner with each other and expand bilateral cooperation in the areas of forest landscape restoration, environment and climate change.

• About Forest Landscape Restoration

- It is an ongoing process of regaining ecological functionality and enhancing human well-being in deforestation or degraded forest landscapes.
- It is much more than just planting trees – it is restoring entire landscapes to meet current and future needs and for many benefits and land uses over time.
- This manifests through various processes such as: new plantations, managed natural regeneration, agroforestry, or better land management to accommodate the land use mosaic, including agriculture, protected wildlife reserves, managed plantations, riverside plantings, etc.

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3. India, Germany sign agreement on green hydrogen TaskForce (May 3, 2022)

India and Germany agreed to form a task force on green hydrogen. Both the countries have signed a joint declaration in this regard.

- The Joint Declaration was signed by the Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy RK Singh and Germany's Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Change Robert Habeck in a virtual way.
- India has emerged as a global leader in energy transformation. India is at the forefront of the growth of renewable energy capacity in the world.
- India has a transparent bidding system, an open market, an accelerated dispute resolution system, and is globally regarded as one of the most attractive destinations for investment in Renewable Energy (RE).
- India has launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission with the goal of making the country a global hub for green hydrogen production and export.
- Trading in Green Hydrogen and/or its derivatives such as Green Ammonia/Green Methanol will form the cornerstone of the cooperation.
- Institutional cooperation in joint research, lighthouse projects, innovation clusters and hydrogen hubs will catalyze synergistic efforts of the two countries.
- **Capacity of India in renewable energy sector**
- India currently ranks fourth in renewable energy capacity globally.
- India will add 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.
- Presently the renewable energy capacity in India is 136 GW, which is 36% of the total energy capacity in India.
- Solar and wind energy are the main sources of renewable energy.
- Other alternatives such as biomass energy, methanol-based blending and hydrogen are considered the fuel of the future.

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5. GeM reaches all-time high of over Rs 15,000 crore for Financial Year 2021-22 (May 2, 2022)

The purchase orders by the Defence Ministry through the Government e-Market (GeM) portal have reached an all-time high of Rs 15,047.98 crore for the financial year 2021-22.

- This is a jump of over 250 per cent as compared to the previous financial year.
- **Government e-Market (GeM) portal**
- GeM is an acronym for One Stop Government e-Market Place hosted by DGS&D 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.

6. Election Commission inaugurates integrated election complex (May 2, 2022)

The Chief Election Commissioner of India inaugurated the Integrated Election Complex in Delhi recently.

• About Integrated Election Complex

- It has been constructed for storage and management of EVMs and VVPATs of NCT Delhi.
- It has been built by the Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi and Delhi Tourism.
- This is a milestone for the Election Commission of India.
- The complex has been conceptualised with all state-of-the-art facilities and administrative security protocols for storage, security and movement of EVMs.
- It has comprehensive facilities for first level verification of EVMs and VVPATs as per the guidelines of the Election Commission.

• Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)

- EVMs have been used in all elections since 2004.
- EVMs cannot be tampered.
- It provides accurate and timely results establishing their reliability as they were first put into use on pilot basis 4 decades back.
- The VVPAT audit trail initiated since the 2019 General Elections has further established the credibility of EVMs and no mismatch has been found in the counting of votes cast in the EVMs and VVPAT slips.

7. India launches pilot phase of open e-commerce network (May 2, 2022)

India has launched the pilot phase of Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) in five cities.

- ONDC is a UPI-type protocol and the entire exercise is aimed at expanding the reach of the fast-growing e-commerce sector to far-flung areas, helping small retailers and reducing the dominance of online giants.

- The initiative also aims to curb the dominance of the two big multinational e-commerce players, who control more than half of the country's e-commerce business.
- ONDC is a set of standards for voluntary adoption by vendors or logistics providers or payment gateways.
- The pilot phase aims to connect 150 retailers across five cities – Delhi NCR, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Shillong and Coimbatore.
- Presently 80 firms are working with ONDC and they are in various stages of integration.
- These companies are building their apps for sellers, buyers, logistics or payment gateways.

8. Governments ignoring court orders: CJI (May 2, 2022)

Chief Justice of India NV Ramana said non-functioning of various organs of the executive and ambiguity in laws are adding to the litigation burden on the judiciary.

- Contempt petitions are a new category of burden on courts, which are a direct result of disobedience by governments.
- Such actions show the sheer disobedience of the governments towards judicial pronouncements.
- The tendency to delegate the responsibility of decision making to the courts is clearly visible.
- The ambiguity of the legislature, lack of foresight, and public consultation before enacting a law have led to a docket explosion.

• What is Contempt of the Court?

- Contempt of court is the offence of being disobedient to or disrespectful toward a court of law and its officers.
- There are two categories of contempt-

1. Disrespecting the legal authorities in the courtroom.
2. Willfully failing to comply with a court order.

- Article 129 of the Constitution empowered the Supreme Court to punish for contempt of itself.
- Article 215 confers similar power on High Courts.
- The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, gives statutory support to this idea.

9. IRS officer Sangeeta Singh given additional charge of CBDT chairman (May 2, 2022)

Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Sangeeta Singh has been given the additional charge of chairperson of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) after CBDT chief JB Mohapatra retired on April 30.

- Sangeeta Singh was given the additional charge of Chairperson of CBDT for a period of three months or till the appointment of regular Chairman.
- Sangeeta Singh is a 1986 batch IRS officer of Income Tax Cadre.
- Sangeeta Singh is presently Member (Income Tax & Revenue) in CBDT. In addition he also holds the additional charge of Member (Taxpayer Services) in CBDT.
- **About Central Board of Direct Taxes -**
- The Central Board of Direct Taxes is a part of the Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance.
- All matters relating to direct taxes in India were handed over to the Central Board of Direct Taxes with effect from 1 January 1964.
- CBDT provides essential information for policies and schemes of Direct Taxes in India.
- The CBDT consists of six members. The Chairman and other members of the CBDT are selected from the Indian Revenue Service and the premier civil service of India.

10. Bihar CM inaugurates India's first ethanol plant in Purnia (May 2, 2022)

The country's first ethanol plant operated from coarse grains was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Bihar, Nitish Kumar on 30 April 2022 in Purnia district of Bihar.

- This is the first plant set up after the Central Government approved the Ethanol Production and Promotion Policy-2021 of the Government of Bihar.
- Ethanol will be manufactured from maize and broken rice in the plant, which will benefit more than 10000 farmers of Bihar in the coming time.
- The production capacity of the Greenfield Grain Based Ethanol Plant is 65 thousand litres per day.
- The plant has been designed keeping in mind the environment friendly so as to ensure zero liquid discharge and cause less damage to the environment.
- This plant has been set up at a cost of one hundred and five crores.
- Production of ethanol will reduce the cost of petrol in the state and create new employment opportunities.
- **About ethanol-**
- Ethanol is a kind of alcohol, it is also called ethyl alcohol.
- It can be used as fuel in vehicles by mixing it with petrol.
- After sugarcane, the central government is now focusing on preparing ethanol from rice.

- By producing ethanol, farmers can make their economic condition better by earning good profits.
- Ethanol is mainly produced from the sugarcane crop, but it can also be prepared from different types of sugar crops.