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1. Maharashtra Cabinet approved the country's first-of-its-kind gene bank programme in the State (May 2, 2022)

Maharashtra government has announced to set up a 'Gene Bank Project' for the conservation of native and endangered animals, crops, marine and biological species.

- The project will be executed by the Maharashtra State Biodiversity Board (MSBB).
- The Maharashtra Gene Bank project will help in the conservation of biodiversity across the state and ensure their availability for generations to come.
- The project will focus on mitigating the impact on the food chain due to climate change.
- Rs 172.39 crore has been allocated for this project for the next five years.
- **The 'Maharashtra Gene Bank Project' will work on seven themes**

1. Marine Biodiversity

2. Variety of Local Crop/Seed

3. Indigenous Cattle Breeds

4. Biodiversity of Pure Water

5. Grasslands, scrub and animal grazing lands Biodiversity.

6. Conservation and Management Plan for Areas Under Forest Rights

7. Rejuvenation of Forest Areas

2. 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.

3. Meghalaya govt launches project to promote music, support budding artists (April 30, 2022)

The music project was launched to promote music and support emerging artists in the northeastern state of Meghalaya.

- Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma unveiled the project while presenting the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to state music icon Lou Mazow.
- This project will help at the grassroots level to provide support to the artists for out-of-state programs.
- This program has been started to encourage and provide a platform to the musicians in the state and link it with tourism.

• About Meghalaya

- Establishment- 1st April 1970
- Capital- Shillong
- District - 11
- Assembly seats - 60
- Lok Sabha seats- 2
- Chief Minister - Conrad Sangma
- Governor - Satya Pal Malik
- Majority of the population of Meghalaya is tribal people, in which Khasi, Garo and Jaintia are prominent.

4. Cabinet approves 540 MW Kwar Hydroelectric project in J&K's Kishtwar (April 28, 2022)

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, has approved the construction of 540 MW Kwar Hydro Electric Project located on the Chenab River in Kishtwar district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

- The project will be implemented by Chenab Valley Power Projects Pvt Ltd which is a joint venture company between NHPC and JKSPDC.
- The project has been approved with an investment of more than Rs 4 thousand 526 crore.
- This project will generate 1975.54 million units of electricity in an average year.
- The construction activities of the project will result in direct and indirect employment to about 2,500 people.
- It is part of the Indus Basin and will be one of at least four upcoming projects in the district, including the 1,000 MW Pakal Dul Hydroelectric Project and the 624 MW Run-of-the-River Kiru Hydroelectric Project.
- Under the 1960 Old Indus Water Treaty (IWT) between India and Pakistan, the two countries share the waters of six rivers in the Indus basin that flow from India to Pakistan.
- Out of these three eastern rivers - Sutlej, Beas and Ravi have full rights by India, while western rivers - Chenab, Jhelum and Indus have rights of Pakistan.

5. PIL against grant of life time 'Cabinet Minister' status to a Goa politician (April 27, 2022)

Senior Goa leader Pratapsingh Rane has been honoured by conferring lifetime "Cabinet Minister" status for completing 50 years as an MLA in the Goa Legislative Assembly. Hence a Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Bombay High Court against this decision.

- It has been said in the PIL that this step of the state government is in violation of the '91st Amendment of the Constitution'.
- The maximum number of members in the Goa cabinet is 12.
- After Rane was given the status of 'Cabinet Minister', the number of 'Cabinet Members' increased to 13, which is more than the maximum limit prescribed by the Constitution.
- **Lifetime Status of the rank of Cabinet minister**
- The former Chief Minister and former Speaker of the Goa Legislative Assembly mr. Rane had completed 50 years as a legislator.
- The cabinet decided that in future also those who complete 50 years and hold posts like CM and Speaker will be given cabinet status even after their retirement.
- **What is the Constitution (91st Amendment) Act, 2003 ?**
- It states that the total number of ministers, including the chief minister, in the council of ministers in a state should not exceed 15% of the total number of members of the legislative assembly of that state.

- It provides a condition that the number of ministers including the chief minister in a state should not be less than twelve.
- A cabinet minister for life would be entitled to 12 staff members – OSDs, support staff, peons, drivers – which would cost the exchequer Rs 90 lakh a year. Hence this decision is not justified.

6. Palli in Jammu becomes India's first carbon-neutral panchayat (April 25, 2022)

Palli village in Jammu's Samba district has become the first panchayat in the country to become carbon neutral, which is completely solar powered.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated this 500 kW solar plant to the nation on 24 April, which has been installed in a record time of about three weeks.
- The plant has been set up by Central Electronics Limited (CEL), a Government of India Enterprise under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology.
- All 1,500 solar panels, installed over a total area of 6,408 square metres, will provide clean electricity to 340 houses of the model panchayat under the Centre's 'Gram Urja Swaraj' programme.
- This village has been recorded as the first carbon-neutral solar village in the history of India.
- The village is located 17 km away from Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir. The project has been completed at a cost of Rs 2.75 crore.
- This is a major step towards achieving the Glasgow goal.
- **What is carbon neutrality?**
- Carbon neutrality refers to the idea that the more carbon dioxide released, the more carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere.
- To achieve this goal, every major economic sector must be environmentally friendly.
- All countries should boost their economy by replacing coal and gas with renewable energy sources such as wind or solar power plants.

7. Manipur celebrates Khongjom Day at Khongjom War Memorial Complex (April 23, 2022)

Khongjom Day was celebrated on 23rd April at Khongjom War Memorial Complex at Khebaching in Thoubal District of Manipur.

- Khongjom Day is celebrated every year on 23 April in Manipur.
- This day is observed in the memory of the brave Manipur warriors who made the supreme sacrifice against the British in the battle of Khongjom during the Anglo-Manipuri War of 1891.

- The day is celebrated annually by the Government of Manipur at Khongjom War Memorial Complex located in Thoubal district.
- The Khongjom War Memorial Complex, a historic war memorial site, houses the world's tallest sword statue built in memory of the soldiers who fought in the war.

- **Anglo-Manipur War**

- The Anglo-Manipur War was an armed conflict between the British Empire and the Kingdom of Manipur, which was fought from 31 March to 27 April 1891.
- This historic war started due to jealousy, discontent, distrust and discord among the princes of Manipur.
- This war was fought at Kheba hills of Khongjom in Manipur and hence the name of this day is Khongjom Day.
- After the war ended on 27 April 1891, Manipur was under direct control of the British.
- After this war, the British government prosecuted many people and sentenced them to death.

8. Jammu & Kashmir Ahead of All Indian States in Creating Self-Employment Under PMEGP (April 22, 2022)

KVIC has set up the maximum number of manufacturing and service units under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program (PMEGP) in Jammu and Kashmir in the year 2021-22 as compared to all other states and union territories in India.

- Under PMEGP, in the year 2021-22, the highest number of 1.73 lakh new jobs have been created in all the states and union territories of India in Jammu and Kashmir alone.
- 21,640 manufacturing and service units were set up in Jammu and Kashmir which is much higher than the larger states like Uttar Pradesh (12,594 units), Madhya Pradesh (8082 units), Tamil Nadu (5972 units), Karnataka (5877) and Gujarat (4140 units).
- For the year 2021-22, KVIC had set a target of 3,360 PMEGP units in J&K but buoyed by the Centre's encouragement for local manufacturing, it has set up 21,640 units over 544 per cent of the target.
- These units have been set up in Jammu and Kashmir with a total capital of Rs 2101 crore. Out of this, KVIC gave a record margin money subsidy of Rs 467 crore which is highest among all the States/UTs in the country.
- Most of the units of PMEGP in J&K in the year 2021-22 have been set up in districts like Baramulla, Budgam, Pulwama, Anantnag, Ganderbal, Kupwara, Bandipora and Doda which are prone to large scale militancy.
- In Jammu and Kashmir, out of 21,640 PMEGP units, 16807 (78 per cent) belong to the service sector, 1933 units (9 per cent) are related to rural engineering and bio-technology and 1770 units (8 per cent) belong to agriculture and food processing industry.

- **About Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program**

- This scheme was started in the year 2008 by merging the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) and Rural Employment Generation Programme.
- This program has been implemented by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India.
- The implementation of this scheme is done by 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission' (KVIC).
- PMEGP i.e. Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program is a business loan linked subsidy program.
- The objective of this program is to generate employment opportunities in rural and urban areas by promoting the development of new self-employment ventures/micro enterprises/projects.

9. India's First Pure Green Hydrogen Plant Commissioned In Jorhat (April 22, 2022)

Exploration and production giant Oil India Limited (OIL) has commissioned "India's first 99.999% pure" green hydrogen plant in Jorhat, Assam.

- The Green Hydrogen production capacity of this plant is 10 kg per day which is expected to increase to 30 kg per day later.
- The plant produces green hydrogen from electricity generated by the existing 500 kW solar plant using a 100 KW ion exchange membrane (AEM) electrolyser array.
- Ion Exchange Membrane (AEM) technology is being used for the first time in India.
- OIL has initiated a study with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Guwahati on blending of green hydrogen with natural gas for commercial applications of blended fuels.
- **About Oil India Limited (OIL) -**
- Oil India Limited (OIL) is the second largest Indian-government owned hydrocarbon explorer and producer.
- It is owned by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India.
- Founded- 18 February 1959.
- headquarters - NOIDA
- Chairman & MD- Sushil Chandra Mishra

10. Assam, Arunachal Pradesh to form district level committees to resolve border disputes (April 21, 2022)

After Meghalaya, Assam and its neighbouring state Arunachal Pradesh decided to form District Level Committees for resolving the boundary disputes between the two states in a time-bound manner.

- The decision was taken during the second Chief Minister level meeting between both states held at State Guest House, Koinadhora in Guwahati in presence of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Arunachal Pradesh counterpart Pema Khandu.
- The district committees will undertake joint surveys in the disputed areas to find tangible solutions to the long-pending issue based on historical perspective, ethnicity, contiguity, people's will and administrative convenience of both the states.

- **Border dispute between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh**

—Arunachal Pradesh, which was earlier a part of Assam, shares a boundary of roughly 800 km with the state.

—The dispute dates back to the British era when in 1873 the British announced inner line regulation.

—British demarcated plains and frontier Hills, which were later designated as North-East frontier tracts in 1915.

—These northeastern frontiers make up present-day Arunachal Pradesh.

—Administrative jurisdiction was handed over to Assam, the border areas were renamed as Northeast Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1954.

—Arunachal Pradesh was declared a Union Territory in 1972 and got statehood in 1987.

—Based on the NEFA committee report, 3648 sq. km of the plain area was transferred from Arunachal Pradesh to Assam's then Darrang and Lakhimpur districts.

—Arunachal Pradesh refused to accept this notification and it has become a matter of dispute.

—Assam feels that the demarcation as per 1951 notification is constitutional and legal.

—But, Arunachal Pradesh believes that the transfer was done without consultation with its people.