



## Producer Responsibility Organisations (PRO)

### ❖ Context

- A proposed framework by the centre for regulating e-waste in India has upset a key link of India's electronic waste collection system, PROs.

### ❖ Background

- Electronic waste and electronic goods that are past their productive life and old parts, are largely handled by India's vast **informal sector**.
- Spent goods are dismantled and viable working parts refurbished, with the rest making their way into **chemical dismantling units**.
- Many of these units are run out of **unregulated sweatshops** that employ child labour and hazardous extraction techniques.
- This electronic detritus contaminates soil and aggravates plastic pollution.
- To address all of this, the Environment Ministry brought the **E-waste (Management) Rules, 2016**, which introduced a system of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

### ❖ Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

- It compels **makers of electronic goods** to ensure a proportion of the goods they sold every year was recycled.
- They are expected to maintain records annually demonstrating this.
- Most companies however did not maintain an in-house unit in charge of recycling.
- This gave rise to a network of government-registered companies, called producer responsibility organisations (PRO).

### ❖ PROs

- They act as an **intermediary** between manufacturers of electronic goods and formal recycling units and are technologically equipped to recycle end-of-life electronic goods safely and efficiently.
- They bid for contracts from companies and arrange for specified quantities of goods to be recycled.
- They provide companies **certified proof of recycling** that they then maintain as part of their records.
- As of March, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has registered **74 PROs and 468 authorised dismantlers**, which have a collective recycling capacity of about **1.3 million tonnes**.

### ❖ What does the Government Propose?

- In order to improve accountability, the proposed framework **does away with the PROs and dismantlers**.
- The proposed rules **shifts responsibility for controlling e-waste away from producers of goods to recyclers**.
- **Recyclers** will source a quantity of waste, recycle them and generate **electronic certificates**.
- Companies can buy these certificates equivalent to their annual committed target and thus do not have to be involved with engaging the PROs and dismantlers.

### ❖ Issues with Proposal

- There were **too few recyclers across India** and predominant in the big cities. In the absence of dismantlers, goods would now **have to travel greater distances** to be recycled.

## EX VINBAX 2022

### ❖ Context

- The 3rd Edition of Vietnam India Bilateral Army Exercise "Ex VINBAX 2022" is scheduled to be conducted at **Chandimandir** from 01 to 20 Aug 2022.



### ❖ Key Highlights

- The exercise is a sequel to previously conducted bilateral exercise in Vietnam in 2019 and a major milestone in strengthening the bilateral relations between India and Vietnam.
- India and Vietnam share a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and defence cooperation is a key pillar of this partnership.
- Vietnam is an important partner in **India's Act East policy** and the Indo-Pacific vision.
- The theme of Ex VINBAX – 2022 is **employment and deployment of an Engineer Company and a Medical Team** as part of United Nations Contingent for Peace Keeping Operations.

- The conduct of Ex VINBAX – 2022 as a field training exercise with enhanced scope from previous editions of bilateral exercise will strengthen:



- mutual confidence,
- inter-operability and
- enable sharing of best practices between the Indian Army and Vietnam People's Army.
- learn about the social and cultural heritage of each other.
- Indian Army is being represented by troops from the **105 Engineer Regiment**.
- A 48 hours **Validation Exercise** is part of the schedule to assess the standards achieved by both contingents while executing technical military operations under similar scenarios in UN missions.

## Face to Face Centres



## Gujarat Announces Semiconductor Policy – 2022-27



### ❖ Context

- Gujarat has become the first state in the country to have dedicated semiconductor policy.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- The policy has been made with a view to generate at least 2,00,000 new employment opportunities during a period of five years.
- In addition, the state proposes to develop a special “Semicon City” which would be part of the Dholera Special Investment Region.
- In the new policy the state government has decided to give heavy subsidies on **power, land and water tariffs** for entrepreneurs interested in investing in semiconductors or display fabrication manufacturing in the state.
- The policy will facilitate effective and timely execution of the eligible projects for setting up a robust semiconductor and display fabrication ecosystem.
- The Gujarat policy focuses on guiding a significant portion of investments made under these (**India Semiconductor Mission**)ISM policies towards Gujarat.

- Under the policy Gujarat will provide additional capital assistance at **40 % of the capex** assistance extended by the Centre for the projects approved under ISM.
- As per the policy one project each of semiconductor and display fabrication will get support.
- In case of multiple applications, the State-appointed high-powered committee will make recommendations on the basis of credentials of projects.
- **The main objective** of the policy is to make Gujarat a pioneer in developing the **Electronics System Design & Manufacturing (ESDM)** ecosystem.
- **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**: It is a specialized and independent Business Division within the **Digital India Corporation** that aims to build a vibrant semiconductor and display ecosystem to enable India’s emergence as a global hub for electronics manufacturing and design.

## AL NAJAH-IV

### ❖ Context

- The joint military Exercise **AL NAJAH-IV** between contingents of Indian Army and the Royal Army of Oman is starting at the Foreign Training Node of Mahajan Field Firing Range in Bikaner, Rajasthan.



### ❖ Key Highlights

- The Royal Army of Oman contingent comprising 60 personnel from the Sultan of Oman Parachute Regiment have already arrived at the exercise location.
- The Indian Army is represented by troops from the **18 Mechanised Infantry Battalion**.
- The joint exercise would focus on :
  - Counter Terrorism Operations,
  - Regional Security Operations and Peace Keeping Operations under United Nations charter apart from organising joint physical training schedules,
  - tactical drills, techniques and procedures.



- Joint military exercise aims to enhance the level of defence co-operation between **Indian Army and Royal Army of Oman** and will further manifest in enhancing the bilateral relations between the two nations.

## Sathuranga Vallabhanathar

### ❖ Context

- Located in Thirupooanur, this temple dedicated to Lord Shiva represents TN’s historical connection to chess.



### ❖ About the Temple

- Sathurangam is the Tamil name for chess.
- Tamil Saviite poet-saint Tirunavukkarasar had sung in praise of the temple in Thevaram. “The vimana of the main deity seems to be of a later period; probably belongs to the 13th or 14th Century.
- Eleven inscriptions have been copied from the temple by the Department of Epigraphy, Mysore (now Mysuru), in 1946-47.

- They roughly date back to the 13th to 16th Century and belong to the periods of the later Pandyas and Vijayanayagar kings.
- Most of the inscriptions are fragmentary or damaged and mostly pertain to endowments.
- The temple documents that chess had been played in Tamil Nadu even **1,500 years ago**.
- Chess in its early forms had originated in India and travelled to Europe, though it had undergone some minor changes.

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## News in Between the Lines

### Godhan Nyay Yojana



#### ❖ Context

- The **Chhattisgarh** government expanded the ambit of its Godhan Nyay Yojana and decided to **procure cow urine at Rs 4 per litre**.

#### ❖ Key Highlights

- Cow urine from **'gauthans'** (cow shelters) will be procured by gauthan samitis and self-help groups to make **Brahmastra** (pesticides) & **Jeevamrit** (fertilisers).



- The flagship programme of the state government was launched in **2020** under which it had started procuring **cow dung at Rs 2 per kg** to make organic fertilisers.

- **Brahmastra** is a natural pesticide against large and small insects such as borer, pod borer, and fruit borer. This natural pesticide mixture can be made by farmers easily at home.

### EPFO New Facility For Life Certificates



#### ❖ Context

- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) launched a **face authentication facility** to allow its 72 lakh pensioners to submit **digital life certificates** from any location.

#### ❖ Key Highlights

- The pensioners had been facing difficulties in getting their biometrics (fingerprint and iris) captured due to old age.
- Other initiatives taken by the EPFO:
  - The CBT gave in-principle approval for **centralised disbursement of pension**.
  - Launched a **pension and employees deposit linked insurance scheme calculator**, providing an online facility to pensioners and subscribers to calculate the benefits of Pension and Death Linked Insurance Benefit for which they are eligible.

### Bauhinia Vahlii



#### ❖ Context

- The **Himachal Pradesh** government is promoting planting specific species such as 'Bauhinia vahlii' in the forest adjoining the villages.

#### ❖ Key Highlights

- The initiative comes in the wake of rising **demand for eco-friendly traditional leaf plates and bowls** due to ban of single use plastic items, w.e.f July 1.
- Bauhinia vahlii is an **evergreen, fast-growing climbing shrub** up to 30 m long and 20 cm in diameter. It can grow into tops of the trees.
- The **inner bark** is a source of fibre used in making ropes. The **stems** are used for basketry, matting, and wickerwork. The **leaves** are used as a thatch.
- Other Names: *Adda, Bhorla, Chambul, Jallur, Mahulan, Maljhan, Malu, Moharain, Namarain, Sihar.*

### Kerala To Replace Wheat With Ragi And Chickpea



#### ❖ Context

- The **Kerala** government has sought central assistance to distribute ragi powder and chickpea instead of wheat atta to target **anaemia and lifestyle related diseases like diabetes**.

#### ❖ Key Highlights

- Kerala Health Department and the State Food Commission had recommended millets and pulses for **anaemia-hit districts such as Wayanad, Palakkad and Idukki**.
- Thus, it is planning to provide **one kg of white gram or chickpea per card**, as a protein supplement.

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• As per NFSA, **foodgrains means** rice, wheat or coarse grains or any combination thereof conforming to such quality norms as may be determined, by order, by the Central Government from time to time.

## MIKE Programme



### ❖ Context

➤ The **Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants** programme, is mandated by the Conference of Parties to the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)**.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- It is a **site-based system** designed to monitor trends in levels of illegal killing of elephants and build capacity in sites spread across the range of African and Asian elephants.
- It aims to provide a reliable, robust and impartial information base to support discussions and decision making on elephant conservation and management.
- The 10 MIKE sites in India are Chirang-Ripu and Dihing-Patkai in **Assam**, Deomali in **Arunachal Pradesh**, Garo Hills in **Meghalaya**, Eastern Dooars in **West Bengal**, Mayurbhanj in **Odisha**, Shivalik in **Uttarakhand**, Mysore in **Karnataka**, Wayanad in **Kerala** and Nilgiri in **Tamil Nadu**.

## India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX)



### ❖ Context

➤ The PM inaugurated the exchange recently at **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar**.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- It is **India's first global gold exchange**.
- It aims to create a **regional bullion hub**, on the lines of the Shanghai Gold Exchange and Borsa Istanbul, that will allow more jewellers to import the precious metal.
- The bourse will allow **qualified jewellers to directly import gold**, a change from current rules where only some banks and nominated agencies approved by the central bank can do so.
- The spot exchange will trade in **bullion depository receipts**.
- **India is the world's second-biggest consumer of gold, after China**.

## Point 5140



### ❖ Context

➤ Recently to commemorate the victory of the Armed Forces and pay tribute to the supreme sacrifice of the Gunners in 'Operation Vijay', Point 5140 at Dras has been named as 'Gun Hill'.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- The highest enemy-occupied mountain peak was captured by Kargil war hero Captain **Vikram Batra-led troops**.
- A wreath was laid at Kargil War Memorial in Dras Director General of Artillery along with Veteran Gunners who had participated in the operation.
- The ceremony was conducted in the presence of veterans from all Artillery Regiments, which got the honour title 'Kargil' in Operation Vijay.
- The Army had declared victory in Kargil War on July 26, 1999.

## Chabahar Day



### ❖ Context

➤ Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) in association with India Ports Global observed '**Chabahar Day**' to mark the Chabahar – Link to INSTC - Connecting Central Asian Markets in Mumbai .

### ❖ Key Highlights

- The Chabahar Port located in Iran is the commercial transit center for the region and especially Central Asia.
- **INSTC** (International North-South Transport Corridor) is India's vision and initiative to reduce the time taken for EXIM shipments to reach Russia, Europe, and enter the central Asian markets.

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