

AD-1

❖ Context

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** conducted a successful maiden flight-test of phase-II **Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)** interceptor AD-1 missile.



❖ Key Highlights

- The interceptor missile is capable of neutralising long-range missiles and aircraft.
- It is designed for both low exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric interception.
- The missile is propelled by a **two-stage solid motor**.

❖ India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) Programme

- It aims to provide an air-defence shield from all types of hostile missiles, even the nuclear ones.
- It was launched after the 1999 Kargil war, keeping in mind Pakistan's expanding missile arsenal.
- The entire BMD system includes long-range tracking radars which can detect the launch of missiles from submarines, land-based systems, aerial platforms or warships.

- **Phase I** : It led to the development of a two-tiered defence system capable to intercept any incoming missile launched from 2,000 kilometres away-
 - **Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) Missile** for high altitude interception.
 - **Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Missile** for lower altitude interception.
 - This phase is completed in 2020.
- **Phase II** : Under this phase, two new anti ballistic missiles that can intercept **Intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM)** are being developed.
 - AD-1
 - AD-2
 - These missiles will help to intercept any missile of the 5,000 km strike range.

Indian Ocean Rim Association

❖ Context

- A seminar on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, under the aegis of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), was conducted by the Indian Navy at Goa.



❖ About IORA

- It is an **inter-governmental organisation** which was established on **7 March 1997** to promote sustainable development, maritime security, economic cooperation and free flow of goods, services, investment & technology within the Indian Ocean rim.
- The vision for IORA originated during a visit by late President Nelson Mandela of South Africa to India in 1995.
- The organisation has **23 Member States and 9 Dialogue Partners**.

❖ Structure

- IORA's apex body is the **Council of Foreign Ministers (COM)** which meets annually to discuss the developments of IORA.

- A **committee of senior officials (CSO)** meets twice a year to progress IORA's agenda.
- The Council of Ministers, on voluntary offer by Member States, elects a Chair of the Association for a period of two years.
- **Bangladesh is the current Chair** from October 2021-2023.
- The **secretariat** of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is hosted by the Government of the Republic of **Mauritius at Ebene**.
- There are currently **two specialised agencies** affiliated with IORA:
 - The **Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT)** based in Tehran, Iran.
 - The **Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)** in Muscat, Oman

Pahari community

❖ Context

- The **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** has cleared the way for the inclusion of the 'Pahari ethnic group' on the Scheduled Tribes list of the Union Territory of J&K.



❖ Key Highlights

- The proposal approved by the commission also called for the inclusion of the "**Paddari tribe**", "**Koli**" and "**Gadda Brahman**" communities to be included on the ST list of J&K.
- The suggestion for the inclusion had come from the commission set up for socially and educationally backward classes in the Union Territory, headed by **Justice (Retd.) G.D. Sharma**.

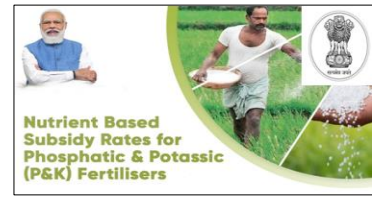
- The Pahari community **includes Hindus and Muslims** and is **largely based on the language spoken** by them in the hills.
- They are largely found in the **region between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers** in the districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu and Uri of Baramulla district and Karnah and Tangdhar in Kupwara district.
- Gujjars and Bakarwals of J&K are already accorded ST status.
- Under **Article 342**, the Parliament may by law can include or exclude a tribe or a tribal community from the list of Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State/UT.

Face to Face Centres

Nutrient Based Subsidy

❖ Context

- Recently, The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs**, chaired by Prime Minister of India approved ₹51,875 crore **subsidy for phosphatic & potassic fertilisers for the rabi season.**



❖ Key Highlights

- This will **enable smooth availability of all P&K fertilizers** to the farmers during Rabi 2022-23 (October-March) at the subsidized / affordable prices of fertilizers.
- It will **support the agriculture sector.**
- The volatility in the international prices of fertilizers and raw materials has been primarily absorbed by the Union Government
- ❖ **Diammonium phosphate (DAP)**
 - DAP is the **world's most widely used** phosphorus fertilizer.
 - It's highly **soluble** and thus dissolves quickly in soil to release plant-available phosphate & ammonium.
 - **DAP (46% P, 18% Nitrogen)** is the preferred source of Phosphorus for farmers.
 - This is **similar to urea**, which is their preferred nitrogenous fertilizer containing 46% N.

❖ About The Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Regime

- The Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme has been **implemented since April 2010.**
- **Implemented by-** The Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.
- A fixed rate of subsidy (in Rs per Kg basis) is announced on nutrients namely **Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P), Potash (K) & Sulfur (S)** by the government on an annual basis.
- The per Kg subsidy rates on the nutrients N, P, K, and S are converted into per tonne subsidies on the various P&K fertilizers covered under the NBS Policy.
- The subsidies on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) are determined taking into account the **international and domestic prices of P&K fertilizers, exchange rate, inventory level in the country etc.**
- NBS policy intends to increase the **consumption of P&K fertilizers** so that optimum balance (N:P:K= 4:2:1) of NPK fertilization is achieved.

Rhinoceroses

❖ Context

- According to a recent study, the **horns of rhinoceroses may have become smaller over time** from the impact of hunting.



❖ Key Highlights

- Rhinos have **long been hunted for their horns.**
- The five surviving rhino species are threatened by habitat loss and hunting.
- The study found that the rate of decline in horn length was highest in the critically endangered Sumatran rhino and lowest in the white rhino of Africa.
- ❖ **Rhinoceroses**
 - It is **second largest land mammal** after the elephant.
 - Also known as the **square-lipped rhinoceros** due to their square (not pointed) upper lip.
 - Two genetically different subspecies exist, **the northern and southern white rhino and are found in two different regions in Africa.**
 - **IUCN Protection Status :**
 - **Northern White Rhino:** Critically Endangered.
 - **Southern White Rhino:** Near Threatened.
 - **Indian rhinoceros IUCN Status-** Vulnerable.
 - There is also a **Javan rhino**, which too, has one horn, and a **Sumatran rhino** which, like the African rhinos, has two horns.
 - Both Javan and Sumatran Rhino are critically endangered in the IUCN Red list.

❖ About Indian Rhinoceros

- The Indian rhinoceros is the **biggest of the three rhinos of Asia**, and, along with the **African white rhino**, is the biggest of all rhino species.
- Its **single black horn** identifies it, along with its gray-brown hide and skin folds, giving it an armor-plated look.
- **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary** in Assam has the highest density of Indian rhinos in the world.
 - In India, rhinos are mainly found in Kaziranga NP, Pobitora WLS, Orang NP, Manas NP in Assam, Jaldapara NP and Gorumara NP in West Bengal Dudhwa TR in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Conservation Status :**
 - **IUCN Red List-** Vulnerable.
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972-** Schedule I.
 - **CITES-** Appendix I.

Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)

❖ Context

- SBTi has made policy changes for stricter compliance for companies with respect to their climate pledges.



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❖ Key Highlights

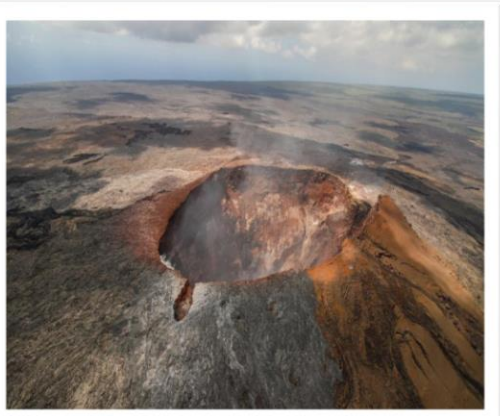
- Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is a collaboration of **World Resources Institute (WRI), CDP, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the UN Global Compact.**
- SBTi works to define a science-based standard for net-zero target setting to ensure that companies' targets translate into action that is consistent with achieving a net-zero world by no later than 2050.
- Over 1,200 companies worldwide have set emissions reduction targets grounded in climate science through the SBTi.
- As of 2019, companies who signed up to the SBTi had operational emissions totaling over 750 million tons of carbon dioxide - more than the annual emissions of France and Spain put together.

❖ About UN Global Compact

- It is a **non-binding United Nations pact** to encourage **businesses and firms** worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation.
- It is a principle-based framework for businesses, stating ten principles in the areas of **human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.**
- It was launched in July 2000.

News in Between the Lines

Mauna Loa



❖ Context

- The shaking ground and swelling at Mauna Loa is indicating that it could erupt.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is the **largest active volcano in the world.**
- It is one of five volcanoes that together make up the Big Island of Hawaii - **Kilauea, Mauna Loa, Mauna Kea, Hualalai and Kohala.** The island is the southernmost island in the Hawaiian archipelago.
- It's the largest of all and makes up about half of the island's land mass.
- It **last erupted in 1984.**
- **Mauna Kea is the tallest of all volcanoes.**
- Hawaii's volcanoes are called **shield volcanoes** because successive lava flowing over hundreds of thousands of years build broad mountains that resemble the shape of a warrior's shield.
- Their **magma is hotter, drier and more fluid** and thus they tend not to have explosive eruptions.
- Shield volcanoes are also found in **California, Idaho, Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in USA** as well as **Iceland and the Galapagos Islands.**

FIFA Football For Schools Programme in India



❖ Context

- Recently, **All India Football Federation (AIFF), Ministry for Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding, MoU to broadbase football across various schools in the country through the Football for Schools programme.

❖ What is the Football for Schools Initiative?

- **The Football for Schools program** is a step towards translating the Prime Minister's **vision of making sports a way of life as well as creating well-rounded citizens.**
- **Aims :** Indian Education Minister said that FIFA was planning to reach out to 700 million children worldwide, including 25 million from India.
- It espouses the spirit of **National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.**

❖ Objectives

- **Empower learners (boys and girls)** with valuable life skills and competencies.
- **Empower and provide coach-educators** with the training to deliver sport and life-skills activities.
- **Build the capacity of stakeholders (Schools, Member Associations and public authorities)** to deliver training in life skills through football.

❖ About FIFA

- FIFA is the **highest governing body of football in the world.**
- It is the international governing body of association football, futsal & beach soccer.
- FIFA is a **non-profit organization, founded in 1904.**
- It is headquartered in **Zurich, Switzerland.**



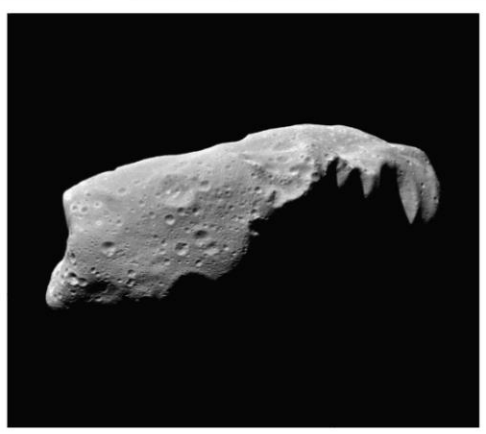
❖ About AIFF

- The AIFF is the organization that manages the game of association football in India. **The AIFF was founded in 1937, and gained FIFA affiliation in the year 1948, after India's independence in 1947.**
- Headquarters : Football House in Dwarka, New Delhi.

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Planet Killer Asteroid



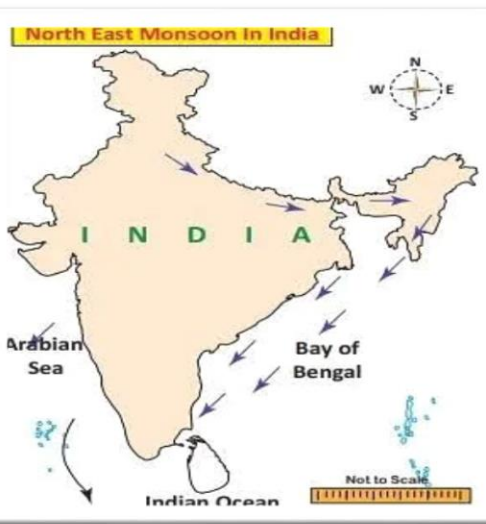
❖ Context

- Recently, a team of astronomers has discovered **three massive near-Earth asteroids** hiding in the glare of the Sun.
- Of these, one called **2022 AP7 is believed to be the largest planet killer-sized asteroid** to be spotted in nearly a decade, and is “potentially hazardous” to Earth.

❖ Key Highlights

- The **3-asteroids** are from a group that is found within the orbits of Earth & Venus.
- They are **tough to spot** as the brightness of the Sun shields them from telescope observations.
- Scientists have so far **discovered only around 25 asteroids** with their orbits within Earth’s orbit.
- **2022 AP7** :
 - It is **1.5-kilometre-wide 2022**.
 - The AP7 asteroid has an orbit that **may someday put it on a collision course with Earth**.
 - Researchers have **little information about the asteroid**, including further details on its possible trajectory and its composition.
- **Asteroids** :
 - Asteroids are **small, rocky objects that orbit the Sun**.
 - Although asteroids orbit the Sun like planets, they are **much smaller than planets**.

Northeast Monsoon



❖ Context

- The **Northeast Monsoon rains have commenced over coastal Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal**, and adjoining areas of south Coastal Andhra Pradesh.

❖ About Northeast Monsoon

- India is situated in a **unique geographic arrangement**, where on one side it is guarded by the Himalayas and on the other, vast oceans.
- This creates a **unique pattern of rain** throughout the country.
- The Indian subcontinent **receives most of its rainfall during the summer months** through the **southwest monsoon** between June to September.
- As the **southwest monsoon retreats**, the coastal region of India receives rain due to the **northeast monsoon** between October and November.
- It is **less powerful** compared to the summer monsoons.
- The rains have an origin in winds that begin their journey in the air above Mongolia and northwestern China.
- The **wind blows from the sea to the land** in this type of monsoon.
- The moisture from the Indian Ocean is carried by the monsoon winds.

Complaint Management System Portal of the CVC



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❖ Context

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India launched the new **Complaint Management System portal of the Central Vigilance Commission** in Delhi during CVC Vigilance Awareness Week.

❖ Key Highlights

- The portal is envisioned to provide end-to-end information to the citizens through regular updates on the status of their complaints.

❖ About CVC

- **Established in 1964** under the recommendations of **Santhanam Committee**.
- Conferred with **statutory status in 2003**.
- **Aim-** It was envisaged to **prevent corruption in governance** and **hold civil servants responsible** for their malafide actions.
- It **submits its report to the President** of India.
- The CVC is **not controlled by any Ministry/Department**.
 - It is an **independent body** which is only **responsible to the Parliament**.
- **Composition** : It is a **multi-member Commission** consisting of a Central Vigilance Commissioner (Chairperson) and **not more than 2 Vigilance Commissioners (Member)**.

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