

Mission Vatsalya Scheme

❖ Context

- Recently funds under the Mission Vatsalya Scheme have been released according to the requirements and demands made by the States/UTs.

❖ Key Highlights

- Mission Vatsalya Scheme is a roadmap to achieve development and child protection priorities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



- It lays emphasis on child rights, advocacy and awareness along with strengthening of the juvenile justice care and protection system with the motto to 'leave no child behind'.

- The Scheme is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in partnership with State Governments and UT Administrations to support the States and UTs in universalizing access and improving quality of services across the country.
- The fund sharing pattern is in the ratio of **60:40 between Centre and State & Union Territories** with Legislature respectively.
- The fund sharing pattern between Centre and State is in the ratio of 90:10 for the North-Eastern States.
- For Union Territories without Legislature, it is **100% central share**.

South Korea's First Moon Orbiter Launched into Space

❖ Context

- South Korea has joined the race to the Moon with the launch of its first lunar orbiter.



❖ Key Highlights

- **Danuri** - meaning "enjoy the Moon" – was carried on a Falcon 9 rocket launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida by aerospace company SpaceX.
- It aims to enter the Moon's orbit in December 2022.
- During the year-long mission, Danuri will use six different instruments to conduct research, including investigating the lunar surface to identify potential landing sites for future missions.

- One of the instruments **will evaluate disruption-tolerant, network-based space communications**, which, according to South Korea's science ministry, is a world first.
- It will also try to develop a wireless Internet environment to link satellites or exploration spacecraft.
- The lunar orbiter will stream **K-pop sensation BTS's** song Dynamite to test the network.
- If this mission succeeds, South Korea will become **the seventh** country in the world to have launched an unmanned probe to the Moon.

Protest in the Region of Hasdeo Aranya

❖ Context

- Over the past one year, protests against mining in this region have erupted several times.
- The Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a private member bill urging the Centre to cancel allocation of all coal mining blocks in the Hasdeo region.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Hasdeo Aranya forests are called the lungs of Chhattisgarh.
- The Hasdeo Aranya (Aranya means forest) lies in the catchment area of the Hasdeo river and is spread across 1,878 sq km in North-Central Chhattisgarh.
- The Hasdeo river is a tributary of the **Mahanadi river** which originates in Chhattisgarh and flows through Odisha into the Bay of Bengal.
- The Hasdeo forests are also the catchment area for the Hasdeo Bango Dam built across the Hasdeo river which irrigates six lakh acres of land, crucial to a State with paddy as its main crop.
- Besides, the forests are ecologically sensitive due to the rich biodiversity they offer and due to the presence of a large migratory corridor for elephants.

- Underneath the Hasdeo Aranya is a coalfield that comprises of 22 coal blocks. In 2010, the Centre categorised Hasdeo Aranya to be a **"no-go"** zone for mining.

❖ What is a Private Member Resolution?

- A private member resolution can be brought in by a private member & if passed, it becomes an expression of what the House thinks.
- Such private member resolutions were passed by the State Assemblies of Punjab & Kerala, during the farm law agitation, where both state legislatures had expressed their displeasure against the then proposed (now withdrawn) farm laws.



Face to Face Centres





More Powers to CCI

❖ Context

- The government has introduced in the Lok Sabha the Competition (Amendment) Bill that effectively widens the ambit of the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The amendment to the **Section 5 of the act** proposes **prior approval of CCI** to be taken for transactions of value of or greater than Rs. 2000 crores.

STRONGER COMPETITION LAW

Salient Features of Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2022

- Permit CCI to seize documents and records during probes
- CCI approval needed if value of the transaction over Rs 2,000 crore
- Assessment in 150 days
- Reduce litigations through penalty
- Incentivise parties during an investigation with lesser penalty



- Many digital business transactions, especially the big tech's offshore ones, do not involve large assets or turnover but were consummated with high valuations.
- These deals did not, until now, fall under the CCI lens, although the companies involved in the transaction had substantial business interests in India.

- They have not come under CCI scrutiny as the **merger control criteria in the existing competition law were based on "assets" and "turnover" thresholds**. It did not cover deal values as a criteria.

❖ Other Key Changes

- Introduction of **settlement and commitment mechanisms** in cases of investigation in relation to anti-competitive agreements and abuse of dominance.
- This will help in the **early closure of investigations** and help reduce litigation. Reduction of the **time-limit for approval** of combinations from 210 days to 150 days.
- Forming of a **prima facie opinion** by the Commission within 20 days for the expeditious approval of combinations.
- Introduction of a **limitation period of three years** for filing information on anti-competitive agreements and abuses of dominant position before the Commission.
- Incentivise parties in an ongoing cartel investigation in terms of a lesser penalty for **disclosing information** regarding other cartels.

Black Sea Green Initiative

❖ Context

- For the first time since the Russian-Ukraine war, a vessel (*M/V Razoni*), destined for Tripoli, carrying maize sailed off Ukraine's Odesa port under the **UN-backed agreement**, the Black Sea Green Initiative.



❖ Key Highlights

- The vessel passed through a specially cleared "**safe humanitarian maritime corridor**" on the **Black Sea** which it had been mined to protect against amphibious attacks by Russia.
- The initiative enables resumption of Ukrainian farm produce exports through three Black sea ports - **Odesa, Chornomorsk and Yuzhny**.
- The initiative involved signing of separate accords by **Russia and Ukraine with the UN and Turkey**.
- Under the deal, the ships are to be **guided by Ukraine's navy** to avoid mined areas.
- They will then proceed to the **Bosphorus strait** along an agreed corridor and then to other parts of the world.
- The ships are to be inspected- to ensure only commercial foodstuffs and fertilisers are carried-by a **joint coordination centre** set up in **Istanbul** with representatives from UN, Ukraine, Russia and Turkey.

❖ Significance

Deal inked for Ukraine grain corridor



International community welcomed the agreement which came to the forefront as Turkey's diplomatic success

The agreement aims to transport grain and food items safely through three Ukrainian ports

The execution and inspection of the plan will be carried out from a center which will be established in Istanbul

- **Ukraine** before the war was :
 - 5th largest exporter of wheat - after Russia, EU, Australia and US.
 - 4th largest exporter of corn - after the US, Argentina and Brazil.
 - 2nd largest exporter of rapeseed - after Canada.
 - Largest exporter of sunflower oil, oilcake/meal and seed.
- **Of the total sunflower oil imported by India in 2020-21, 80% was from Ukraine.**
- Sunflower oil is **India's fourth largest consumed vegetable oil** after palm, soybean and mustard with **70%** of the oil consumption in southern states.

Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme

❖ Context

- The Centre is considering the extension of the popular Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme in the **new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP)** likely to be implemented from October 1, 2022.



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❖ **Key Highlights**

- The current FTP, which came into force on April 1, 2015, for five years, was extended in tranches, till September 30, 2022.
- The scheme allows manufacturers to **import** capital goods for pre-production, production and post-production **at zero customs duty** subject to export obligation.

❖ **Export Obligation**

- Export Obligation imposed in the EPCG Scheme is of two types- **specific export obligation (SEO)** and **average export obligation (AEO)**.
- Under SEO, an exporter has to export goods equal to 6 times of the actual duty saved within 6 years starting from the EPCG licence issue date.

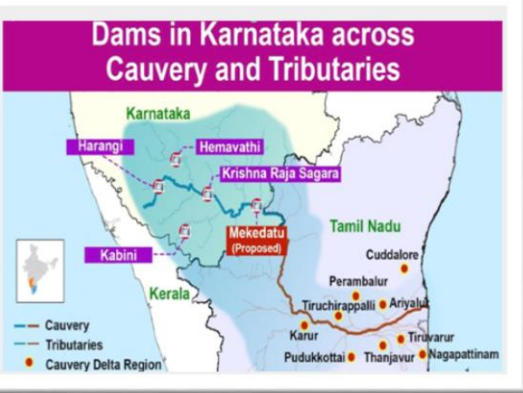
- In AEO obligation, the DGFT wants the exporter to maintain the export performance already achieved in previous financial years.

❖ **WTO's Issues with EPCG**

- In 2019, a WTO dispute panel, on the basis of a complaint filed by the USA, had ruled that a number of export promotion schemes in India, including the EPCG scheme and the SEZ scheme, violated certain provisions of WTO's **Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) Agreement**.
- The agreement prohibits subsidies that are contingent upon export performance.
- The USA alleged that India was only exempt from this provision until its Gross National Product per capita per annum reached \$1,000.

News in Between the Lines

Mekedatu Multi Purpose Project



❖ **Context**

- Feasibility Report (FR) of **Mekedatu Balancing Reservoir cum Drinking Water Project**, Karnataka was submitted to **Central Water Commission (CWC)** for "in principle" clearance for preparation of **Detailed Project Report (DPR)**.

❖ **About Mekedatu Project**

- The project will come up at **Ontigondlu**, about 1.5 km from what is known as Mekedatu (literal meaning, goat's leap), at the confluence of **Cauvery and Arkavathi** rivers, about 90 km southwest of Bengaluru and 4 km from the Tamil Nadu border.
- It's primarily aimed at supplying **4.75 tmcft** (thousand million cubic feet) of drinking water to Bengaluru and surrounding areas but will also generate **400 MW** of hydroelectric power. For this, Karnataka wants to construct a concrete gravity dam at Mekedatu with a storage capacity of **67.16 tmcft**.

AzaadiSAT ISRO



❖ **Context**

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** will launch its smallest commercial rocket to unfurl Tricolour in space.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- The launch will take place from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.
- It will drive India's dreams of breaking into the lucrative and booming small satellite launch market.
- To mark country's celebrations of 'Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the **(Small Satellite Launch Vehicle) SSLV** will have a co-passenger satellite called '**AzaadiSAT**' comprising 75 payloads built by 750 young girl students from 75 rural government schools across India.
- **Significance:** This project was specially conceptualised for the 75th Independence Day year celebrations to encourage scientific temper and create opportunities for young girls to choose space research as their career.

India's All Women Navy Crew Creates History



❖ **Context**

- An all-women Indian Naval crew created history by completing independently the maritime reconnaissance and surveillance mission in the North Arabian Sea onboard a Dornier 228 aircraft.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- It marks a unique achievement for the Armed Forces that a crew of only women officers undertook an independent operational mission in a multi-crew maritime surveillance aircraft.
- **Significance:** It is expected to pave the way for women officers in the aviation cadre to assume greater responsibility and aspire for more challenging roles.

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The Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA)



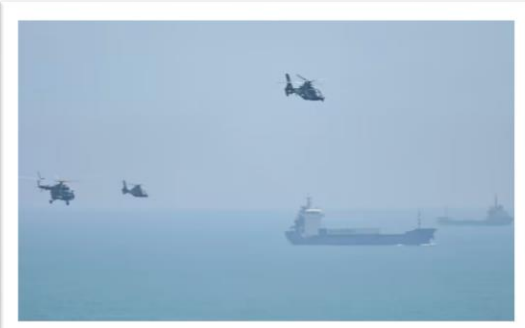
❖ Context

- CPCSEA approved the rescue of about 159 white mice and rats from a prestigious university, putting the spotlight back on animal trials that are carried out without being noticed.

❖ About CPCSEA

- It is a statutory Committee of the **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD)**, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAH&D) constituted under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960**.
- Its mandate is to take all necessary measures to ensure that animals are not subjected to unnecessary pain or suffering before, during or after performance of experiments on them.
- For this purpose, the committee formulated the **Breeding of and Experiments on Animals (Control & Supervision) Rules, 1998** (amended in 2001 & 2006) to regulate the experimentation, breeding and trading of laboratory animals.
- Under the provisions, **establishments** are required to get themselves **registered** with CPCSEA and constitute **Institutional Animals Ethics Committee (IAEC)**.
- IAEC comprises eight persons, recognised and registered by the CPCSEA, including a nominee of CPCSEA.
- Research on small and large animals have to be approved by IAEC & CPCSEA respectively before initiation.
- As per **section 19 of the PCA act**, the committee can prohibit a person or institution from carrying on any such experiments either for a specified period or indefinitely.

Kinmen and Hateruma Islands



❖ Context

- China fired ballistic missiles - Dongfeng, in Taiwan strait, some of which landed in the exclusive economic zone of Japan, off Hateruma islands.

❖ Key Highlights



- **Hateruma** is the southernmost inhabited island of Japan in the Pacific Ocean.
- Taipei also said drones had flown over islets next to Kinmen, the Taiwan-controlled group of islands in Taiwan strait. It is also known as Quemoy.

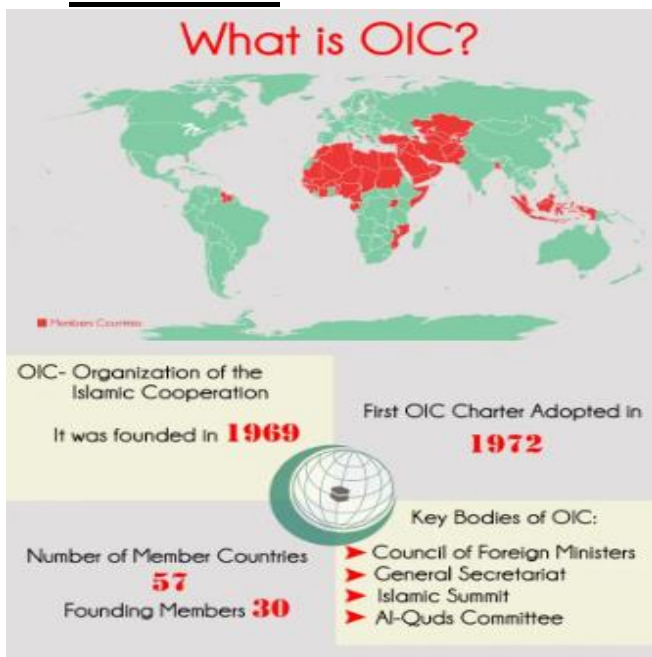
MEA Condemns OIC Secretariat Statement



❖ Context

- Recently Ministry of External Affairs has condemned a statement issued by the General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Jammu and Kashmir.

❖ About OIC



- The **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** is the **second** largest inter-governmental organisation after the United Nations, with the membership of **57** states, covering four continents.
- The OIC is the collective voice of the Muslim world to ensure and safeguard their interest on economic socio and political areas.
- Its Headquarters is in **Jeddah**, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- **General Secretariat**: It is the OIC's executive organ and is entrusted with implementing the decisions of the OIC decision-making bodies.
- It is led by the Secretary General.

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