

Right to Repair

❖ Context

- The **Department of Consumer Affairs** has set up a committee for developing an overall framework for the right to repair.

❖ Key Highlights

- The committee in its first meeting **identified sectors** which include farming equipment, mobile phones/ tablets, consumer durables and automobiles/automobile Equipment.
- The rationale behind the “Right to Repair” is that when someone buys a product, **he must own it completely** for which he should be able to repair and modify the product with ease and at reasonable cost.
- **LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)** movement launched by the PM recently includes the concept of reuse and recycling.
- Repair is a critical function of all forms of re-use and even for the sustainable life of the products.

❖ Issues

- Manufacturers have **proprietary control** over spare parts.
- Monopoly on repair processes infringes the customer’s “**right to choose**”.
- Companies avoid the publication of **manuals** that can help users make repairs easily.
- Manufacturers are encouraging a culture of **planned obsolescence** whereby a gadget is designed in such a way that it lasts a particular time only after which it has to be mandatorily replaced.

- **Digital warranty cards** ensure that by getting a product from a “non-recognized” outfit, a customer loses the right to claim a warranty.

❖ International Practices

- The **right to repair has been recognized** in many countries across the globe, including the U.S.A, U.K and European Union.
- In the **USA**, manufacturers have been asked to make sure that consumers can make repairs, either themselves or by a third-party agency.
- The **U.K** has also passed a law that includes all the electronic appliance manufacturers to provide the consumers with spare parts for getting the repair done either by themselves or by the local repair shops.
- **Repair cafes** are a remarkable feature of the **Australian system**. These are free meeting places where volunteer repairmen gather to share their repairing skills.
- The **European Union** passed legislation that required manufacturers to supply parts of products to professional repairmen for a time of 10 years.

Synthetic Dimer

❖ Context

- Scientists at the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**, in collaboration with researchers from the **CSIR-Institute of Microbial Technology**, have developed a novel mechanism to inactivate SARS-CoV-2.

❖ Key Highlights

- **Protein-protein interaction** is often like that of a lock and a key.
- This interaction can be **hampered by a synthetic peptide** that mimics, competes with, and prevents the ‘key’ from binding to the ‘lock’, or vice versa.
- Scientists have designed a new class of synthetic peptides. The designed peptides are helical, hairpin-shaped, each capable of pairing up with another of its kind, forming what is known as a **dimer**.
- **Each dimeric ‘bundle’ presents two ‘faces’ to interact with two target molecules.**

❖ How it Prevented Infection

- The designed peptide targeted interaction between the **Spike (S) protein of SARS-CoV-2** and **ACE2 protein, the SARS-CoV-2 receptor in human cells.**
- The **S protein is a trimer** – a complex of three identical polypeptides. Each polypeptide contains a **Receptor Binding Domain (RBD)** that binds to the ACE2 receptor.
- When the dimer encountered an S protein, one of its faces bound tightly to one of the three RBDs on the S protein trimer, and the other face bound to an RBD from a different S protein. This ‘**cross-linking**’ allowed the dimer to **block both S proteins at the same time** and efficiently inactivated the virus.

Intellectual Heritage Project

❖ Context

- The **Union Education Ministry** is planning to create a dialogue, discussion and research programme known as Intellectual Heritage in Development, on the government’s initiatives.

❖ Key Highlights

- The plan is to hold about **100 conferences across the country on 100 themes** where **research papers** based on secondary data and sources available in ministries or elsewhere will be presented.



- Researchers belonging to higher education institutions will contribute to the papers, which will eventually be published in a **book**.

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Political Party Symbol

❖ Context

- The fallout from the Maharashtra turmoil has become a battle between the Shiv Sena factions to claim the party's brand and get the right to use its iconic bow & arrow symbol.



❖ What is the Governing Law?

- Party symbols fall under the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.
- It aims to "to provide for specification, reservation, choice and allotment of symbols at elections in Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies, for the recognition of political parties in relation thereto and for matters connected therewith".
- The order grants the ECI the authority to **recognise and allot party symbols**.
- Before taking a call on which faction makes up the official party, the ECI looks at the support enjoyed by each claimant in the party's organisational and legislative wings.

- More specifically, the ECI examines the party's Constitution and the list of office-bearers that was submitted when the party was united.
- For support within the party's legislative wing, the ECI looks at the number of MPs and MLAs who support each rival claimant.

❖ What if Majority Support is Unclear?

- In case the ECI finds that there exists no clear majoritarian support for either faction,
- It may freeze the party's symbol and allow the two factions to register themselves **with new party names** or add prefixes and suffixes to the existing party name to make clear distinctions about the new entities that are formed.

Assessing if a Child Should be Tried as an Adult

❖ Context

- The "delicate task" of deciding whether juveniles aged between 16 and 18, accused of heinous offences can be tried like adults should be based on "meticulous psychological investigation" the Supreme Court held in a judgment recently.



❖ What is the Law?

- Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act of 2015 requires a "**preliminary assessment**" to be done of the mental and physical capacity of juveniles, aged between 16 and 18, who are involved in serious crimes.
- The assessment is meant to gauge a child's ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he or she allegedly committed the offence.
- If the Juvenile Justice Board is of the opinion that the juvenile should not be treated as an adult, it would not pass on the case to the children's court and hear the case itself.

- In that case, if the child is found guilty, he would be sent to juvenile care for three years.
- On the other hand, if the Board decides to refer the case to the children's court for trial as an adult, the juvenile, if guilty, would even face **life imprisonment**.
- **Criticism:** The court discovered that there were neither guidelines nor a specific framework in place for conduct of the preliminary assessment.
- **Suggestions:** The Board which conducts the assessment of the child should have at least one child psychologist. It should further take the assistance of experienced psychologists or psycho-social workers.

National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment

❖ Context

- A National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment was conducted by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).



❖ Key Highlights

- After the evaluation results which were released recently, the website of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has been ranked at 1 under the Central Ministries Portal and the Digital Police Portal has been placed at 2 under the Central Ministry Services Portal.
- This is a periodic assessment intended to improve the effectiveness of States/Union Territories and the Central Government in delivery of their online services to citizens.

- There were four main parameters of assessment:-
 - Accessibility.
 - Content Availability.
 - Ease of Use and Information Security.
 - Privacy for Central Ministry Portals.
- An additional three parameters were also used for the Central Ministry Services Portals.
 - End Service Delivery,
 - Integrated Service Delivery and
 - Status and Request Tracking.

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News in Between the Lines

Kill Switch



❖ Context

- It has been revealed recently that a reputed MNC providing cab aggregating services, used the technology to block legitimate access of its records during investigations by government officials of various countries.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is a digital tool that **disables a specific function or stops a certain process instantaneously**.
- Being software based, it is difficult to spot and is triggered when the user is in danger.
- Hackers also embed the switch in their malware to destroy them remotely to avoid being traced if they're spotted.
- It can also be used for protecting privacy and preventing thefts & hacking.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao



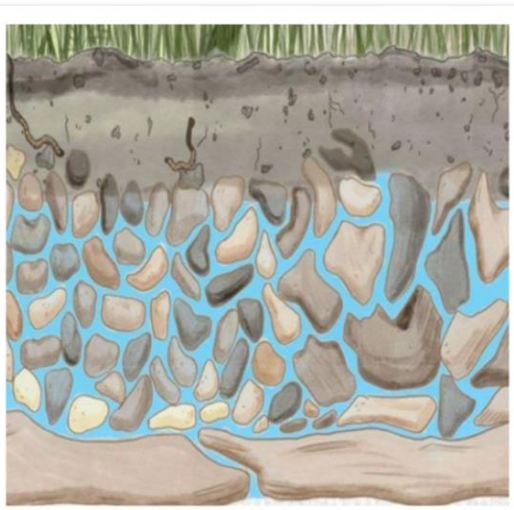
❖ Context

- According to guidelines issued by the **Women and Child Development (WCD) Ministry**, the programme will **now be extended across the country**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Lok Sabha committee on empowerment of women had stated in Dec 2021, that nearly 80% of the funds had been used for advertising and not on sectoral interventions. The ministry now targets improvements in :
 - Sex ratio at birth by 2 points every year.
 - Institutional deliveries at 95% or above.
 - 1% increase in 1st trimester ANC registration per year.
 - 1% increase in enrolment at secondary education level.
- The programme was launched in **2015** to improve **child sex ratio in 100 districts**.

Groundwater Extraction Rules



❖ Context

- **Central ground water authority (CGWA)** providing relief to 2069 industries extended the deadline by three months for applying for NOC .

❖ Key Highlights

- CGWA has been constituted under Environment Protection Act 1986.
- According to the **guidelines issued by Ministry of Jal Shakti in Sept,2020**, all users, except listed below, are required to obtain **No Objection Certificate (NOCs)** from CGWA for extraction of groundwater : **Individual domestic consumers** in rural and urban areas for drinking water and domestic use.
 - **Rural drinking water supply schemes.**
 - **Armed Forces** establishments and Central Armed Police Forces establishments in rural and urban areas.
 - **Agricultural** activities.
 - **Micro and Small Enterprises** drawing less than 10 cubic metres per day.
- The NOCs are issued for a period of **2 to 5 years**, depending on the users and the category of area in which they are located (over exploited, critical, semi-critical and safe).
- However, **CGWA does not regulate the extraction in all states/UTs** like UP, WB, TN, HP, Punjab, Haryana, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, J&K, Ladakh. Here, the respective state/UTs governments regulate.

The Newest SCO Members

❖ Context

- Iran and Belarus are likely to be the two newest additions to the China and Russia-backed Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) grouping.

❖ Key Highlights

- China and Russia are looking to frame the grouping as a counter to the West particularly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- India will host the SCO summit in 2023, and Varanasi has been selected as the SCO region's first **"Tourism and Cultural Capital"**.

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❖ **About SCO:**

- SCO is a permanent intergovernmental international organization.
- It's a **Eurasian political, economic and military** organization aiming to maintain **peace, security and stability in the region**.
- It was created in 2001.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- **Current Members:** China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan and India.
- **Observer States :** Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia.

Addressing the Cost-of-Living Crisis in Developing Countries Report



❖ **Context**

➤ The report was released by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- It measured the impact of inflation, disruptions in supply chain due to the Ukraine crisis and Covid on cost of living.
- It took three poverty lines — \$1.90 per day, \$3.30 per day and \$5.50 per day.
- According to the report, soaring food prices and the energy prices can push up to **71 million people into poverty globally**.
- **Denmark, Sweden, the UK, Italy, Ireland, Australia** are facing the risk of their people falling into poverty, **but India is not in this category**.
- **Impact of inflation on India's poor (BPL) would be negligible** due to the government's immediate & constant support in the form of food & cash transfers.

KVIC launches Knowledge Portal for Khadi



❖ **Context**

➤ The Knowledge Portal for Khadi is a platform developed by the Center of Excellence for Khadi to provide design directions to the Khadi institutions.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- Knowledge Portal for Khadi attempts to disseminate **design knowledge** to a broader section of Khadi Institutions.
- The portal intends to create design intervention by simplifying the trends specially suitable for Khadi.
- Four stories/design directions have been conceptualised and presented in Volume I. Each story has a key theme, colour palette, and directions for woven designs, prints, textures, and surfaces.
- Every story has been separated into two segments - **Home and Apparel**.
- Besides the themes, the portal also provides size charts, silhouette boards, buttons and closures, seams and finishes for both home and apparel.
- The information will be updated twice a year to provide directions according to the seasons and trends.

Jagriti



❖ **Context**

➤ Department of Consumer Affairs launches 'Jagriti', a mascot to empower consumers and generate awareness towards consumer rights.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- Jagriti will be projected as an empowered consumer who is spreading awareness about consumer rights & addressing solutions to the problems faced by the consumers.
- It will be used to generate consumer awareness about **various themes** of the Department like : **provisions of Consumer Protection Act 2019**,
 - Hallmarking, National Consumer Helpline toll free number 1915,
 - provisions of weights & measures Act,
 - decisions of the Central Consumer Protection Authority and testimonials by consumers on grievance redressal.
- **Aims:** It aims to strengthen its consumer awareness campaign presence in digital and multimedia and reinforce a young empowered and informed consumer as a top-of-mind consumer rights awareness recall brand.

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