

Minimum Support Price (MSP)



❖ Context

- Union Government recently approved increase in MSP for all Rabi Crops for Marketing Season 2023-24.

❖ Key Highlights

- The highest increase of 500 rupees per quintal for lentil has been cleared. The MSP on wheat has been hiked by 110 rupees per quintal and barley by 100 rupees.
- The increase in MSP for Rabi Crops for Marketing Season 2023-24 is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production, aiming at reasonably fair remuneration for the farmers.

❖ About MSP

- Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.

- The minimum support prices are announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.
- MSP is price fixed by Government of India to protect the producer - farmers - against excessive fall in price during bumper production years.
- The minimum support prices are a guarantee price for their produce from the Government.
- The major objectives are to support the farmers from distress sales and to procure food grains for public distribution.
- In case the market price for the commodity falls below the announced minimum price due to bumper production and glut in the market, government agencies purchase the entire quantity offered by the farmers at the announced minimum price.

Juvenile Trial as an Adult

❖ Context

- Recently, **The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)** ordered that a man, who was 16 when he allegedly killed a seven-year-old schoolmate in Gurugram in 2017, will be tried as an adult.



❖ Law on trying a Juvenile as an Adult

- **The Juvenile Justice Act of 2000** was amended in 2015 with a provision allowing for **Children in Conflict with Law (CCL)** to be tried as adults under certain circumstances.
- The Act defines a child as someone who is under age 18.
- For a CCL, age on the date of the offence is the basis for determining whether he or she was a child or an adult.
- The amended Act distinguishes children in **the age group 16-18 as a category which can be tried as adults** if they are alleged to have committed a heinous offence .
- **Heinous Offence-** A crime for which the minimum punishment is seven years imprisonment.
- **Prior to the 2015 amendment** in the original JJ Act, all children below the age of 18 years were treated as juveniles.

❖ Procedure for Trying a Juvenile as an Adult

- The JJB is required to “conduct a preliminary assessment with regard to-
 - His **mental and physical capacity** to commit such offence.
 - **Ability to understand the consequences** of the offence.
 - The **circumstances** in which he allegedly committed the offence.

- The **assessment is required to be done within three months** from the date of first production of the child before the JJB.
- When the JJB does not comprise a practising professional with a degree in child psychology or child psychiatry, **it would have to mandatorily seek the assistance of experts.**
- **When a juvenile is ordered to be treated as an adult-**
 - The **case is transferred before the children’s court.**
 - As per **Section 19** of the amended Act, the court can pass a decision on whether there is a need for trial of the child as an adult, or otherwise.
 - A children’s court has to ensure that the child in conflict with the law is sent to a “**place of safety**” until he reaches the age of 21 years, and is only then transferred to jail.
- **Punishment** : If the child is tried as an adult, the sentence **can go up to life imprisonment.**
 - If the child is tried by the board **as a juvenile**, the maximum sentence can only be **three years** in a special home.

Sprut-SDM1 Light Amphibious Tank

❖ Context

- Russia will field its Sprut-SDM1 light amphibious tank for the Indian Army’s upcoming tender for light tanks and has submitted technical details of the same.



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❖ Key Highlights

- It was the only light amphibious combat vehicle in its class having firepower of a main battle tank and equipped with a **125 mm tank gun**.
- All the ammunition produced in India for T-72M1 and T-90S tanks can be used by the Sprut-SDM1.
- The Sprut can cross water obstacles and fire its gun while afloat, disembark from a ship, operate day and night on terrain - in the high mountains in conditions of thin air, at very high and low temperatures, the official elaborated.
- The tank is equipped with a guided missile system designed to defeat armoured targets, including those equipped with ERA, at ranges up to 5 km.

- Sprut-SDM1 provides fire support for forces engaged in combat with heavily armored targets, eliminates enemy strongholds and defenses, conducts battle surveillance, and maintains combat security.
- The Indian Army is currently looking to equip its light tank with loitering munition, artificial intelligence (AI), tactical surveillance drone integration, and an active protection system to improve situational awareness.
- The presence of light tanks could significantly improve the combat ability of the Indian Army at the High Altitude Areas because of their high level of maneuverability. This will help India secure its high-altitude borders with China.

Green Crackers

❖ Context

- According to the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)**, green crackers are permitted only in cities and towns where air quality is moderate or poor.



❖ About Green Cracker

- It was **Introduced in 2018**.
- They are **developed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**.
- The concept of green crackers essentially entails using **alternative raw materials** - designed to have a **lesser impact on the environment**.
- Unlike traditional crackers, green crackers **do not contain harmful chemicals** such as aluminium, barium, potassium nitrate or carbon.
- Green crackers **emit 30% less pollutants** than regular crackers.
- Moreover, these crackers also **make less noise**, showing a drop to 110 decibels from 160 decibels.
- These somewhat eco-friendly crackers are **available only at places that are registered with the government**.
- To differentiate green crackers from traditional ones, a green logo and **Quick Response (QR)** have been developed.

- Green crackers **falling only in these three categories**- SWAS, SAFAL and STAR.
 - **SWAS** : It is "safe water releaser".
 - It has **small water pocket/droplets** which get released when burst, in the form of vapour.
 - Does **not comprise potassium nitrate and sulphur**.
 - The particulate dust released will reduce approximately by 30 per cent.
 - **STAR** : It is the **safe thermite cracker**.
 - It does not comprise **potassium nitrate and sulphur**.
 - It emits **reduced particulate matter** disposal and reduced sound intensity.
 - **SAFAL** : It is **safe minimal aluminium** which has minimum usage of aluminium, and used magnesium instead.
 - It ensures reduction in sound in comparison to traditional crackers.

Grievance Redressal Index

❖ Context

- Recently UIDAI has topped the Grievance Redressal Index for the 2nd consecutive month.



❖ Key Highlights

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has topped amongst all Group A Ministries, Departments and Autonomous Bodies for resolving public grievances in the rankings report published by **Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG)** for the month of September 2022.
- A coherent system is enabling UIDAI to resolve around 92% of CRM Grievances within a week.
- The organization is facilitating ease of living, and is further committed to strengthen its Grievance Redressal Mechanism.

❖ About Unique Identification Authority of India:

- It is an agency under the central government of India mandated to collect demographic and biometric information of the country's residents, store the data in a central database, and issue to each resident of the country a 12-digit unique identity number called Aadhaar.
- UIDAI was established as per the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial & Other Subsidies, Benefits & Services) Act, 2016.
- The act is also called the Aadhaar Act 2016 in short.
- It comes under the Electronics & IT ministry.
- As per the 2016 Act, UIDAI is accountable for the authentication and enrolment of Aadhaar, and also to safeguard the data protection of identity information of individuals.

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News in Between the Lines

AK-203 Rifles



Key Specifications

CARTRIDGE: 7.62x39 MM
EFFECTIVE RANGE: 400-800M
MUZZLE VELOCITY: 715 M/S
WEIGHT: 3.8 KG W/O MAGAZINE
LENGTH: 890- 950 MM EXTENDED/700 MM FOLDED
CYCLIC RATE OF FIRE (ROUNDS/MIN): 700
OPERATION: GAS- OPERATED, ROTATING BOLT
FIRE MODE: SEMI- AUTOMATIC, FULL AUTOMATIC
SIGHTS: ADJUSTABLE SIGHTS OR PICATINNY RAILS

AK-203



❖ Context

- The **Korwa Ordnance Factory** is ready to start manufacturing **Kalashnikov AK-203** assault rifles by the end of 2022.

❖ Key Highlights

- In 2019, **India and Russia** signed an **intergovernmental agreement** for setting up Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited - a joint venture to manufacture the AK-203 assault rifles.
- The project was announced by Indian PM in collaboration with the Russian President.
- **Aims:** 100% localisation of the production of legendary Russian assault rifles in India.
- Rosoboronexport, which is Russia's state agency for exports/imports of defence products, will be participating in the **mega DefExpo** which began in Gujarat on 18th October, 2022.

❖ What is AK203?

- AK203 is the advanced version of the Kalashnikov assault rifle family, the first of which was the AK-47.
- AK-203 rifles are fitted with integral Picatinny rails for a convenient and easy mounting of sights and tactical accessories, enabling the effective use of weapons in various conditions.

Anti Smog Gun



❖ Context

- This winter, **Delhi will have more anti-smog guns** than in previous years.

❖ Key Highlights

- Supreme Court order from January 2020 mandates the use of anti-smog guns at large construction sites, road construction stretches & dust-prone traffic corridors.

❖ About Anti Smog Gun

What is an anti-smog gun

Anti-smog gun sprays tiny droplets of water into the atmosphere, creating artificial mist

How it helps

Small droplets of water are expected to stick to air-borne pollutants and bring them down to the ground

How it works

- The anti-smog gun is connected with a water tank mounted on a tower
- It converts water into a fine spray by passing it at high pressure through propellers
- Mandatory for large constructions sites (20,000-1.5 lakh sqm)

Distance | Can throw water mist in a radius of 15-100 metres
Height | Spray can reach a height up to 150 ft
Size of droplets | 1 to 50 microns
Capacity | Can spray from 30 to 100 litres per minute

- Useful for construction sites, schools, hotspots, etc

- Anti-smog gun is a **device that sprays atomised water** into the atmosphere to reduce air pollution.
- Those small **water droplets stick to pollutants transported by air and bring them to the ground.**
- Anti-smog guns can spray water up to a **height of 50 meters** to settle **dust particles and PM 2.5.**
- It is **connected to a water tank and mounted on a vehicle.**

- The **device could be taken across the city** to spray water to settle dust and other suspended particles.
- The vehicles that are being used to mount the anti-smog guns are either CNG or BS-VI engines.

National Conference on Tourist Police Scheme



❖ Context

- **Union Ministry of Tourism** is organising the **national conference** of director generals/inspector generals of police department of all states and Union territories "in connection with implementation of uniform **Tourist Police Scheme** at pan India level.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is being organised in co-ordination with **Ministry of Home Affairs** and the **Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).**

❖ About Tourist Police Scheme

- The scheme **aims to provide safer ecosystem** to the **foreign and domestic tourists** in and around tourist destinations.

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- **Objective of the Scheme :**
 - To **bring** Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bureau of Police Research & Development and State Govts/ UT Administration **on the same platform**.
 - To **enable them to work together** in close coordination with the State/UT Police department.
 - To **sensitize them** about the specific requirements of the foreign & domestic tourists for effective implementation of Uniform Tourist Police Scheme at pan-India level.
- **Significance :**
 - This would change the safety & security related perception of India at global level and **will help in making India a must visit destination around the globe**.

Sir Syed Excellence Award



❖ Context

- Recently, **American historian** and internationally acclaimed scholar of South Asian history and Islam, **Barbara D Metcalf** received the **Sir Syed Excellence International Award for 2022**.

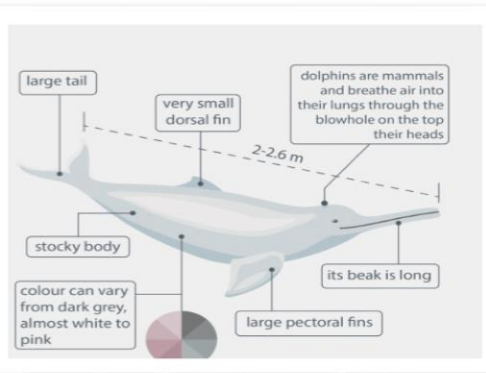
❖ Key Highlights

- The annual award is **given by the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)** on its founder Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's birth anniversary falls on 17th October.
- This year, **AMU is marking the 205th anniversary of Sir Syed**.
- Metcalf's writing has **contributed heavily to the understanding of the history of India and Pakistan's Muslim population**, especially during the colonial period.

❖ Barbara D Metcalf

- Metcalf **completed her PhD at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1974**.
- It was during her postgraduate studies that she developed an interest in the modern history of the South Asia ulema (religious scholars of Islam).
- Her **doctoral dissertation** was on the **history of the Muslim religious scholars of Deoband**, a reformist religious seminary in northern India founded in the late 19th century.

Pink River Dolphins



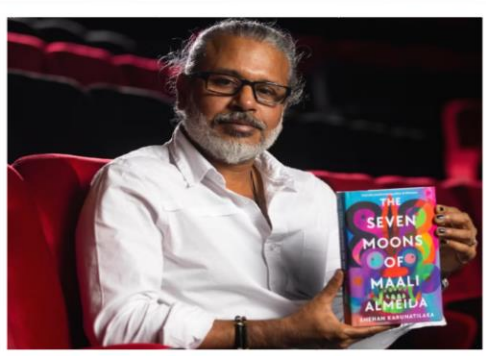
❖ Context

- Recently rescuers using boats and drones worked in a lush stretch of **Bolivia's Amazon rainforest** to find a pair of trapped **pink river dolphins**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Amazon river dolphin, also known as the pink river dolphin or boto, lives only in freshwater.
- It is found throughout much of the Amazon and Orinoco river basins in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, and Venezuela.
- It is a relatively abundant freshwater cetacean with an estimated population in the tens of thousands.
- **IUCN Status** : Endangered.

Booker Prize 2022



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❖ Context

- Recently Sri Lankan writer **Shehan Karunatilaka** won the Booker Prize for his second novel "**The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida**," about a dead war photographer on a mission in the afterlife.

❖ About Booker Prize

- The **Booker Prize**, formerly known as the **Booker Prize for Fiction** (1969–2001) and the **Man Booker Prize** (2002–2019), is a literary prize awarded each year for the best novel written in English and published in the United Kingdom or Ireland.
- The winner of the Booker Prize receives international publicity which usually leads to a sales boost.
- A five-person panel constituted by authors, librarians, literary agents, publishers, and booksellers is appointed by the Booker Prize Foundation each year to choose the winning book.

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