

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

❖ Context

- Recently, union home minister said that the government will set-up branches of the NIA in all the states by 2024 to deal with terrorism cases.
- Currently, NIA has 15 branches in Delhi, Hyderabad, Guwahati, Kochi, Lucknow, Mumbai, Kolkata, Raipur, Jammu, Chandigarh, Ranchi, Chennai, Imphal, Bengaluru and Patna.

❖ National Investigation Agency:

- **About** : The NIA was constituted in the wake of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack in November 2008.
 - It addresses terrorism, counterfeit currency, human trafficking, narcotics, and other crimes.
 - The NIA serves as India's Central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.
- **Statutory Body** : It was constituted under the NIA Act, 2008.
- **Mandate** : It is a central agency mandated to investigate -
 - All the offenses affecting the sovereignty, security and integrity of India.
 - All the offenses affecting Friendly relations with foreign states.
 - The offenses under the statutory laws enacted to implement international treaties, agreements, conventions and resolutions of the United Nations, its agencies and other international organizations.
- **Power** : The agency has the power to search, seize, arrest and prosecute those involved in such offenses.
- **Headquartered** : Delhi

- **NIA's Jurisdiction** : The law under which the agency operates extends to the whole of India.
 - It also applies to-
 - Indian citizens outside the country.
 - Persons in the service of the government wherever they are posted.
 - Persons on ships and aircraft registered in India wherever they may be.
 - Persons who commit a scheduled offense beyond India against the Indian citizen or affecting the interest of India.
- **Scheduled Offenses** : The list includes-
 - The Explosive Substances Act.
 - Atomic Energy Act.
 - Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.
 - Anti-Hijacking Act.
 - Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act.
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act etc.
- **Process for Taking Over a Case** : State governments can refer the cases pertaining to the scheduled offenses to the Central government for NIA investigation.
 - Even when the Central government is of the opinion that a scheduled offense has been committed which is required to be investigated under the Act, it may, suo motu, direct the agency to take up/over the probe.
 - Where the Central government finds that a scheduled offense has been committed at any place outside India to which this Act extends, it can also direct the NIA to register the case and take up investigation.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

❖ Context

- Recently, the Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs of India attended the 7th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

WORLD BANK	IMF	ADB	AIIB
1944	1944	1966	2015
188 MEMBER COUNTRIES	188 MEMBER COUNTRIES	67 MEMBERS	57 FOUNDED MEMBERS
US LARGEST SHAREHOLDER	US LARGEST SHAREHOLDER	JAPAN LARGEST SHAREHOLDER	CHINA LARGEST SHAREHOLDER
REDUCE POVERTY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL	PROMOTE MONETARY STABILITY GOAL	REDUCE POVERTY GOAL	ADDRESS ASIA'S INFRASTRUCTURE GAP GOAL
12,000 STAFF	2,600 STAFF	3,000 STAFF	IN PLANNING
130 NATIONS	147 NATIONS	60 NATIONS	
\$225 BILLION SUBSCRIBED CAPITAL	\$370 BILLION SUBSCRIBED CAPITAL	\$165 BILLION SUBSCRIBED CAPITAL	\$100 BILLION AND ABOVE SUBSCRIBED CAPITAL
US VETO POWER	US VETO POWER	NO VETO POWER	CHINA TO POSSIBLY VETO
WASHINGTON	WASHINGTON	MANILA	BEIJING

❖ Key Highlights

- Every year at the Annual Meeting, the Board of Governors meets to take key decisions on important matters relating to AIIB.
- The theme of this year's Annual Meeting was "Sustainable Infrastructure Toward a Connected World".
- **About AIIB**
- AIIB is a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia and beyond.

- It is established by the AIIB Articles of Agreement (entered into force December 2015) which is a multilateral treaty.
- **Aim** : By investing in sustainable infrastructure and other productive sectors today, it aims to connect people, services and markets that over time will impact the lives of billions and build a better future.
- **Headquarter** : It is headquartered in Beijing (China) and began its operations in January 2016.
- **Membership** : There are more than 100 members now.
- **Voting Rights** : China is the largest shareholder with 26.61 % voting shares in the bank followed by India (7.6%), Russia (6.01%) and Germany (4.2 %). The regional members hold 75% of the total voting power in the Bank.

Face to Face Centres



News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority (NBDSA)

❖ Context

- Recently, The **News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority (NBDSA)** has fined the Hindi TV channel News18 India Rs 50,000.

❖ Key Highlights

- The channel was fined for turning a news debate on hijab into a “communal issue” and not adhering to guidelines.
- The NBDSA held that the programme was in violation of the principles relating to impartiality, neutrality, fairness and good taste and decency.
- **About NBDSA:**
 - NBDSA is an **independent body**.
 - It was **set up by the News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA)**, which serves as a representative of private television news, current affairs and digital broadcasters.
- **Members and Funding :**
 - It is funded **entirely by its members**.
 - The NBDA has **26 news and current affairs broadcasters** (comprising 119 news and current affairs channels) as its members.

- **Chairperson and Other Member :** The body includes a **Chairperson who is to be an eminent jurist**.
 - Other members such as **news editors**, and those **experienced in the field of law, education, literature, public administration**, etc are nominated by a majority of the Board.
- **Function :** The NBDSA has to “lay-down and **foster high standards, ethics and practices** in news broadcasting.
 - These standards mention a **focus on objectivity, impartiality, maintaining discretion** when reporting on crime against women and children, not endangering national security, etc.
 - The Authority may **initiate proceedings on its own** and issue notice or take action in respect to any matter which falls within its regulations.

Bats Evicted from a Manipur Cave

❖ Context

- A colony of bats was evicted from a Manipur cave system with a Palaeolithic past to make it tourist friendly.

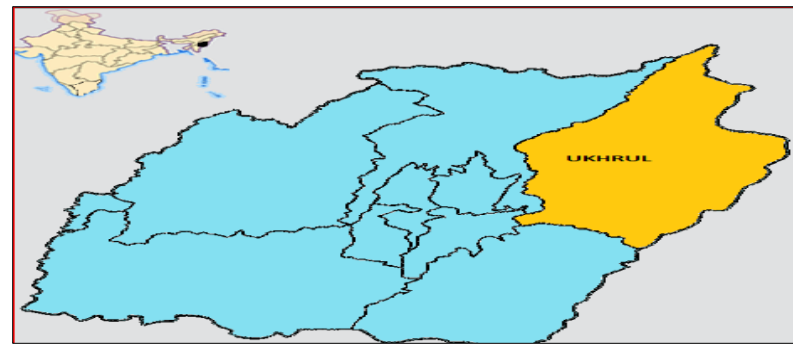


❖ Key Highlights

- The **Khangkhui**, locally called Khangkhui Mangsor, is a natural limestone cave about 15 km from Ukhrul, the headquarters of Ukhrul district.
- Excavations carried out by Manipur’s archaeologists had revealed the cave was home to Stone Age communities.
- The cave was also used as a shelter by the local people during the Second World War after the Japanese forces advanced to Manipur and the adjoining Nagaland.
- The cave housed large roosting populations of bats belonging to the **Rhinolophidae and Hipposideridae families**.
- The cave has been steeped in the folklore of the dominant **Tangkhul community**, whose ancestors believed it was the abode of a protective deity.
- **Note:** The **Tangkhuls** are a major ethnic group living in the Indo-Burma border area, occupying the Ukhrul district and Kamjong district in Manipur, India and the Somra tract hills, Layshi township, Homalin township and Tamu Township in Burma.

❖ Key Issues

- The study mentions places in Manipur where bats are eaten for “supposed medicinal properties or as a supplementary source of protein”.
- People do occasionally hunt bats in a cave though this practice is not widespread throughout the State. Another serious threat we noticed is the death of bats as unintended victims of illegal bird traps.



NavIC

❖ Context

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is working on a series of improvements to the NavIC, or India’s equivalent of the Global Positioning System (GPS), so that more people are motivated to install it and use it.



❖ Key Highlights

- NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation), or the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), is a constellation of seven satellites that is akin to the American GPS, the **European Galileo** and the Russian **GLONASS**, and can be used to track location.

Face to Face Centres

- **Not in regular use:** Though available for use in mainland India as well as a range of 1,500 km around it, it isn't in wide regular use in India primarily because mobile phones haven't been made compatible to process its signals.
- **L1 band:** A major forthcoming change, is to add the L1 band into NavIC.
- This bandwidth is part of the GPS and is the most used for civilian navigational use. "Currently NavIC is only compatible with the **L5 and S bands** and hasn't easily penetrated into the civilian sector.
- **Need Long Code:** Currently (NavIC) only provides short code. This has to become Long Code for the use of the strategic sector.

#TransformingIndia
NAVIC - India's own GPS
Example of #MakeInIndia, 'Made in India' & 'Made for Indians'

7 satellites complete the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS)

Provides accurate real-time positioning and timing services

Benefits fishermen, farmers, and all other people of entire India & SAARC region

Benefits

- Terrestrial, Aerial and Marine Navigation
- Disaster Management
- Vehicle tracking and fleet management
- Integration with mobile phones
- Precise Timing
- Visual and voice navigation for drivers
- Mapping and Geodetic data capture
- Terrestrial navigation aid for hikers and travellers

Herbicide Glyphosate

Context

- The Centre has officially restricted the use of the widely used herbicide, glyphosate, fearing risk to human and animal health.



Key Highlights

- From now, glyphosate will be applied only through **pest control operators (PCOs)**.
- PCOs are licensed to use deadly chemicals for treating pests such as rodents.
- Though the official order did not mention it explicitly, many experts believe it is intended to curb the rampant spread of glyphosate by farmers.
- Glyphosate has been majorly used in tea plantations in India where it is applied to control herbicides.
- The chemical is also used on non-crop areas to control unwanted growth.
- These include areas alongside irrigation channels, railway sidings, fallow land, bunds, farm borders, parks, industrial and military premises, airports, power stations, etc.

- Traces of glyphosate have been even found in crops such as chana where farmers use it to desiccate the produce.
- The use of glyphosate rose manifold once Ht BT cotton started getting illegally cultivated in India.
- To implement the order, all certificates of registration for the chemical that companies have to get for its manufacture or sale have now to be returned to the registration committee.
- Glyphosate is already banned in some states.

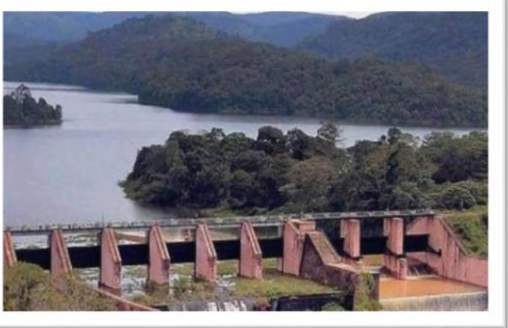
➤ Glyphosate herbicide is used widely, right from gardens to huge plantations, despite attempts by some states to control its use, according to a report by NGOs Pesticide Action Network India and PAN Asia Pacific

➤ Though Kerala had temporarily banned its use in 2019, it has not been effective

Impact on health: Exposure to weedicide causes burning sensation, eye irritation, nausea, vomiting, dysentery, headache, fever, skin fissures, increased heart rate, eye irritation, urinary infections, body pain and general weakness

News in Between the Lines

Mullaperiyar Dam



Context

- The government of Kerala has formulated a six-member technical committee responsible for forming an Emergency Plan of Action for the downstream part of the Mullaperiyar dam in the Idukki district.



About the Dam

- The Mullaperiyar, a 126-year-old dam, is located on the confluence of the Mullayar and Periyar rivers in Kerala's Idukki district.
- It has a height of 53.6 m (176 ft) from the foundation, and a length of 365.7 m (1,200 ft).
- The dam is built at the confluence of Mullayar and Periyar rivers. The dam is located in Kerala on the river Periyar.

UNSC's Counter-Terrorism Meeting

Context

- The UNSC's counter-terrorism meeting will be hosted in Mumbai and Delhi on 28 and 29 October 2022 respectively.

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❖ Key Highlights

- The overarching theme of the meeting would be '**countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes**'.
- The focus will be specifically on rapid development, growing use by member states and increasing threat of use for terrorist purposes of 3 significant technologies –
 - internet, including social media,
 - new payment technologies and fundraising methods,
 - unmanned aerial systems, including drones,”.
- Mindful of addressing these issues while also recognising potential of technologies to increase effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts.
- The meeting will help in strengthening systems to ensure that plans by terrorists to use emerging technologies are thwarted.

Overhauser Magnetometer



❖ Context

- Recently, Indian scientists have developed an Overhauser Magnetometer.

❖ Key Highlights

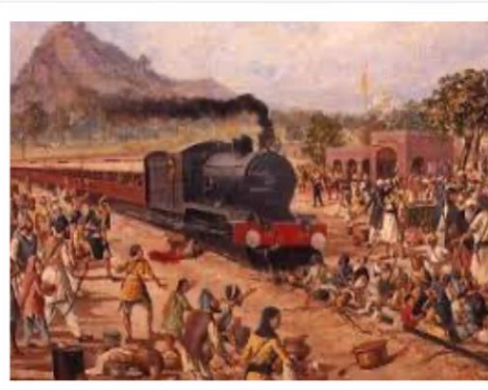
- The **Indian Institute of Geomagnetism (IIG)**, an autonomous research institution under DST, Government of India, has **developed the magnetometer** as part of its technology development program.
- It is one of the most accurate magnetometers extensively used by all magnetic observatories around the world.
- **Significance :**
 - It is making way for **reducing the cost of sampling and sensing experiments** essential for geomagnetic sampling.
 - The sensor **installed at Alibag Magnetic Observatory (MO)** can absolve India's dependence on commercial OVH magnetometers for performing geomagnetic field measurements.



• Side Note :

- **OVH magnetometers** are known for their **higher accuracy, higher sensitivity, and efficient power consumption** and hence find applications in all magnetic observatories worldwide as well as in international space programs.
- It has so far been **imported for such purposes in India.**

Saka Panja Sahib



❖ Context

- The gurdwara management bodies from India and Pakistan will jointly observe the centenary of Shaheedi Saka Panja Sahib (martyrdom massacre), at Hasan Abdal city of Attock district, Punjab province of Pakistan.

❖ About Saka Panja Sahib

- On October 30, 1922, the railway authorities under the then-**British government refused to stop the train at Hasan Abdal railway station**, ferrying Sikh prisoners from Amritsar to Attock.
- **Two Sikhs died** and several other Sikh protesters, including women, were injured
- The Sikhs from nearby Panja Sahib **wanted to serve langar** (community kitchen food) to the Sikh prisoners.
- They were told by the station master that the train would not stop at the station. In protest, the Sikhs squatted on the railway tracks.
- The train finally came to a screeching halt, but only after crushing many of Sikh protesters - of whom **Bhai Karam Singh and Bhai Partap Singh** died after sustaining serious injuries.
- Since then, **both Sikhs are hailed as martyrs of Saka Panja Sahib.**

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