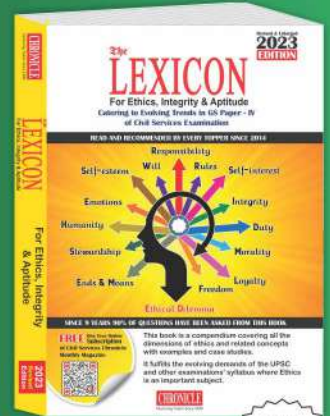


Civil Services
CHRONICLE
 THE NO. 1 MAGAZINE FOR IAS ASPIRANTS SINCE 1990



Prelims 2023 Special-3

Fact & Statement Based
Current Affairs
Roundup 2023

Covering Events in News during 2021-22



- COP27: Earth's Future is at Stake** ●
- Land Degradation & Desertification** ●
- Conservation of Indigenous Seeds** ●
- Technology and Social Change in India** ●
- National Suicide Prevention Strategy** ●
- A Decade of POCSO** ●
- Financing India's Urban Infrastructure Needs** ●
- Artemis I Mission** ●
- 17th G20 Summit** ●



ABHINAV KUMAR

Bihar Judicial Services Examination,
2021 (1st Rank, EWS Category)

PRELIMS 2023 SPECIAL-3

FACT & STATEMENT BASED

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COP27: Earth's Future is at Stake

The hosting of COP27 in the green city of Sharm El-Sheikh marks the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In the thirty years, the world has come a long way in the fight against climate change and its negative impacts on our planet making it easier to better understand the science behind climate change, better assess its impacts, and better develop tools to address its causes and consequences. In light of this, no table was left unturned to ensure that COP27 becomes the moment when the world moved from negotiation to implementation and where words were translated to actions, and where collective action was announced for a path towards sustainability, a just transition and eventually a greener future for coming generations.

■ Deepika Singla

The 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), took place in the Egyptian coastal city of Sharm el-Sheikh from 6 to 20 November 2022. At the conference countries came together to take action towards achieving world's collective climate goals as agreed under the Paris Agreement and the Convention.

Key Outcomes of COP 27

The Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan is an advance over Glasgow in its more categorical commitment to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees centigrade.

COP27 resulted in countries delivering a package of decisions that reaffirmed their commitment to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels:

- **Loss and Damage:** COP27 resulted in agreements to provide "loss and damage" funding for vulnerable countries hit hard by climate disasters. Parties also agreed on the institutional arrangements to operationalize the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage, to catalyze technical assistance to developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
- **Technology:** A new five-year work program was launched at COP27 to promote climate technology solutions in developing countries.
- **Mitigation:** A mitigation work programme was launched which would start immediately following COP27 for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation.
- **Adaptation:** COP27 saw significant progress on adaptation, with governments agreeing on the way to move forward on the Global Goal on Adaptation, which will con-

clude at COP28. The Sharm el-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda was announced enhancing resilience for people living in the most climate-vulnerable communities by 2030.

- **Global Stocktake:** The second technical dialogue of the first global stocktake, a mechanism to raise ambition under the Paris Agreement was concluded. Also, a 'climate ambition summit' will be convened in 2023, ahead of the conclusion of the stocktake at COP28 next year.
- **Synergistic Action:** Countries launched a package of 25 new collaborative actions in five key areas: power, road transport, steel, hydrogen, and agriculture.
- **Boosting Financial Support:** There has been announcement of mobilization of funds for different issues associated with the environment.
 - ♦ **Adaptation Fund:** New pledges, totaling more than USD 230 million, were made to the Adaptation Fund to help many more vulnerable communities adapt to climate change through concrete adaptation solutions.
 - ♦ **Early Warning Systems:** A USD 3.1 billion plan was announced to ensure everyone on the planet is protected by early warning systems within the next five years.
 - ♦ **Global Shield:** The G7 and the V20 ('the Vulnerable Twenty') launched the Global Shield against Climate Risks, with new commitments of over USD 200 million as initial funding. The Shield is aimed at increasing pre-arranged finance to be disbursed before or just after disasters happen.
 - ♦ **Climate Adaptation for Low-lying and Low-income States:** Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Walloon Region of Belgium, announced a total of

Land Degradation & Desertification

An Insight on Sustainable Land Management

Government of India has recognized land degradation as a critical issue today, threatening not only the productivity of land but also water quality, human health and the fundamentals of ecosystems on which all life depend.

■ Chandrakant Singh

According to the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas published by the Environment Ministry in 2021, at least **30% of India's total geographical area** is under the category of "degraded land".

Land degradation is instrumental in major global issues, particularly climate change and biodiversity.

It has been estimated that globally around 24 billion tons of fertile soil and 27,000 bio-species are lost each year. While land degradation is acutely felt in the world's arid lands, some 80 per cent is actually occurring outside these areas.

For this reason, there is an urgent need to halt and reverse land degradation for ensuring food, water and environment security as well improving living conditions of population residing in such areas.

Land Desertification/Degradation

- Desertification is the continuous degradation of land under the influence of natural and anthropological causes in arid, semi-arid and dry-sub humid conditions.

SOIL EROSION/LAND DEGRADATION/ DESERTIFICATION

Soil Erosion is a common term that is often confused with soil degradation as a whole, but, in fact, refers only to absolute soil losses in terms of topsoil and nutrients. This is indeed the most visible effect of soil degradation, but does not cover all of its aspects. Soil erosion is a natural process in mountainous areas, but is often made much worse by poor management practices.

Land Degradation has a wider scope than both soil erosion and soil degradation in that it covers all negative changes in the capacity of the ecosystem to provide goods and services including biological and water related goods and services.

Desertification is another common term used for land degradation in dryland areas and/or the irreversible change of the land to such a state it can no longer be recovered for its original use.

Processes of Desertification /Land Degradation

Vegetative Degradation

- Vegetation degradation is observed mainly as deforestation / forest-blanks / shifting cultivation and degradation

in grazing / grassland as well as in scrubland. Vegetation is an important factor in the protection of soil and soil fertility.

- Destruction of vegetation, most often by human activities accelerates soil degradation leading to desertification. When a soil loses vegetation cover, it becomes more susceptible to wind and water erosion. Removal of top soil by water or wind erosion results in loss of organic material leading to decrease in soil aggregation and stability, and hence soil fertility.

Water Erosion

- **Water erosion** is loss of soil cover mainly due to rainfall and surface runoff water. Water erosion is observed in both hot and cold desert areas, across various land covers and with varying severity levels.
- The **sheet erosion** (mostly within agricultural lands) and **rills** are categorised in slight category, the **narrow** and **shallow gullies** are categorised as moderate erosion, while the deep / wide gullies and ravines are classified as severe erosion.

Wind Erosion

- Wind erosion pertains to the Aeolian activities. It denotes the spread of sand by various processes, even up to lofty altitudes of Himalayas.
- Wind can erode the soil very selectively and intensively in three transporting method, namely - Suspension, Saltation and Soil creep.
- Soil is more vulnerable for wind erosion in conditions such as very sparse or no vegetative cover, increasing wind speed, loose, dry, fine or very light soil, smooth soil surface, large exposed area etc.
- Wind erosion removes the topsoil, which is rich in all plant nutrients and bacterial activities. Removal of topsoil reduces the capacity of the soil to function and restricts its ability to sustain future uses.
- Moreover, wind-blown dust or sand is deposited in cultivated land and buries the lands, thus reducing the production.
- Various kind of sand cover and their severity are classified based on the depth and spread of sand sheet/dunes and barchans.

Conservation of Indigenous Seeds

One of the most adverse impacts of the commercialisation of agriculture is the total dependence by the farmer on external sources for all his farming inputs, including seeds. Unlike earlier times, when farmers used to save and share their seeds, today they depend wholly upon seed companies for their requirements. Indigenous seeds are more suitable to a particular region or situation than any hybrid variety.

■ Satish Kumar Karna

Seed is the basic and most critical input for sustainable agriculture. The response of all other inputs depends on quality of seeds to a large extent. In traditional system of agriculture, local seed material of traditional crop varieties plays an important role for crop production.

Necessity for Conserving Indigenous Seeds

There are a number of reasons why it makes sense to use indigenous or traditional seeds (called heirloom seeds in the West).

Merits of Indigenous Seeds: Compared to hybrid seeds, they are hardy, pest-resistant, withstand unfavorable conditions in the area of their origin, require less water and nutritional inputs, fit in better in the organic method of farming and may even have special characteristics such as nutrition, fragrance or colour.

Demerits of Hybrid Seeds: They are developed for very specific situations and have precise water and nutritional requirements, generally on the higher side.

- They are also more prone to pest attacks and diseases.
- Besides being costlier, hybrids cannot be saved or shared with any benefit to the farmers.
- In fact, even where improved varieties are not hybrids, it is usually illegal for farmers to save or share such seeds.
- In some western countries, it is now illegal for farmers to share or sell even their local seed varieties on the grounds that the seeds are not certified.

Concept of Green Revolution had drastically shifted the focus of agriculture away from biodiversity to high-yielding crops. The use of HYVs led to the extinction of many varieties of native seeds.

In such a situation, the protection of seed material and its conservation for future needs is also of paramount importance. In order to protect the seed material and food grains, local practices by using indigenous plant material and other articles are very useful, eco-friendly, and sustainable.

Impact of Green Revolution

Destruction of Gene Pool: During the Green Revolution, measures initiated by the government, increased the pro-

duction of rice, wheat, pulses, and other crops leading to self-sufficiency of food in the country but it destroyed the diversified gene pool available.

Infertile Land: The productivity of the crops was increased by the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and groundwater resources. However, mismanagement and overuse of chemical fertilizers, pesticide, and lack of crop rotation caused the land to become infertile, and loss of groundwater became a common occurrence in agricultural areas.

Less Resistant Seeds: HYV seeds introduced were less resistant to droughts and floods and needed efficient management of water, chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides.

Economically Unviable: Initially, for 2-3 years, the hybrid or HYV seeds gave us good production though demands for chemical fertilizers increased year by year. Again, these crops attracted more pests forcing farmers to get chemical pesticides from the market to save their crops. So, every year the farmer had to spend more to grow such crops.

- These impacts made the farmers even more miserable, due to the increased expenditure on the cultivation of crops to overcome these shortcomings.

Not suitable to Local Conditions: Hybrid or HYV seeds supplied by government agencies didn't suit to our soil. Birds and other insects preying on pests didn't visit our fields. As new pests started emerging in the fields, the plants didn't grow well and the production either failed or was too less to meet our basic needs.

Huge Socio-Economic Costs

- The higher yield comes at a huge socio-ecological cost such as environmental pollution, biodiversity loss, increased vulnerability to climate change, land degradation, erosion of traditional agricultural knowledge and decline in human health and livelihood.
- The major ecological and societal impacts of the Green Revolution can be summarized as follows:
 - ◆ Loss of landraces that were indigenous to our country,
 - ◆ The loss of soil nutrients making it unproductive,

Technology and Social Change in India Fostering Development through Transformation

Our modes of life and thoughts and all our social institutions are influenced profoundly by mechanization. Modern civilization could not have developed in the absence of its technological base. We witness innovation in everything, starting from the simplest task of our daily lives like brushing our teeth to the most complex problems like fighting a pandemic! Today we are innovating in ways we never would have imagined before. However, the real value from these innovations can be derived when they are used to develop solutions which can address some of our serious social problems.

■ **Sharmila Senthil Kumar**

India has become a dominant player in the information technology (IT) industry globally. IT is a robust industry in its growth. IT is unique with regard to participation of women in the workforce. Every second fresh recruit in the IT industry now is a woman. The E-governance initiative of the government has also opened an opportunity for women empowerment by increasing access to information for women. The major players in the IT industry like Infosys, WIPRO, and HCL - are now offering an environment that will retain the talented women workforce. To develop a women-friendly work environment, leading companies are now offering benefits like lactation centers, extra maternity leave, work from home policies, creches, and option to relocate to the city of their choice in case of transfer of the husband.

Educated women have had significant breakthroughs by breaking the traditional household, child rearing, socially oppressed lifestyle, because of access to IT. IT reduces the impact of barriers of time and distance in organizing and managing the service delivery of businesses. A large part of jobs outsourced are going to women. The freedom to work from anywhere and anytime can become a catalyst for financial independence and empowerment of women by enhancing their extra income.

From the above global example, it is seen that technology is bringing social changes in the form of women empowerment. Technology is helping women to participate in political, economic and social fields. In fact technology has been catalyzing numerous social changes in all aspects of our day to day lives.

The relationship between technology and social change is that these aspects are interrelated and rely on each other. Technological advancement transforms the social lives of individuals. It has become a critical part of our lives.

Role of Technology in Social Change

Technology has affected man's ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and philosophies. Scientific discoveries and inventions have

changed the attitude of men and women towards many rituals, creeds, and religious practices. Space explorations may change these ideas more radically in the near future.

Technology has exerted tremendous effects on family, social values, economic life, social life and the state.

Veblen has regarded technology as the sole explanation of social change. W.F Ogburn says technology changes society by changing our environments to which we in turn adapt. This change is usually in the material environment and the adjustment that we make with these changes often modifies customs and social institutions.

Most technological inventions have either of two purposes:

- (i) Either they are intended to create entirely new products for the direct satisfaction of human desires and needs, or
- (ii) Else their purpose is to produce familiar products more efficiently.

Effects on Family Life

- ◆ Technology leads to the disintegration of the joint family. The structure of family has changed from joint to nuclear.
- ◆ Marriage customs are also not free from the effects of the technology. Love marriages, inter-caste marriages, late marriages are increasing day by day.
- ◆ Modern women being educated and employed do not like to stay in joint families. Urbanization and industrialization have brought women from home to office and factories.
- ◆ Invention of family-planning techniques has enabled people to control birth rate; as a result small family is possible today.
- ◆ By destroying the domestic system of production, modern industrialism has radically changed the family organisation.
- ◆ Technology has decreased the importance of family as an agency of social control. So, other formal agencies are acting as agencies of social control in family life.

- National Suicide Prevention Strategy
- World Bank Report on Financing India's Urban Infrastructure Needs
- A Decade of POCSO
- Artemis I Mission
- 17th G20 Summit

National Suicide Prevention Strategy

On 21st November, 2022, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare announced a National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

It is the first of its kind in the country, with time-bound action plans and multi-sectoral collaborations to achieve reduction in suicide mortality by 10% by 2030.

Salient Features

Establishing Effective Surveillance Mechanisms

- It seeks to establish effective surveillance mechanisms for suicide within the next three establish effective surveillance mechanisms years.

Establish Psychiatric Outpatient Departments

- It seeks to establish psychiatric outpatient departments that will provide suicide prevention services through the District Mental Health Program in all districts within the next five years.

Mental Well-being Curriculum

- It aims to integrate a mental well-being curriculum in all educational institutions within the next eight years.

Generation of Evidence through Evaluation

- Further, it seeks to strengthen surveillance of suicide and further generation of evidence through evaluation that will ensure improvement in the program quality.

Stakeholders in Implementation Framework

- The implementation framework of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy envisions five key stakeholders responsible for realising the objectives.

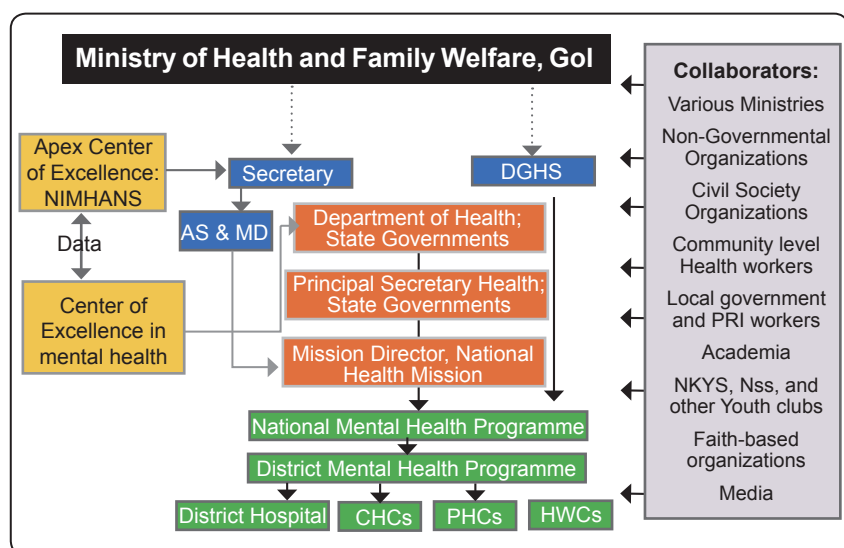
- These include national-level ministerial stakeholders, state-level governmental stakeholders, district-level governmental stakeholders, NIMHANS-Bangalore and other top mental health institutes, and strategic collaborators.

Implementation Mechanism

- Reinforcing leadership, partnerships and institutional capacity in the country;
- Enhancing the capacity of health services to provide suicide prevention services;
- Developing community resilience and societal support for suicide prevention and reduce stigma associated with suicidal behaviours.

Suicide in India

- According to the annual report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), released in August, 2022, 1.64 lakh people died by suicide in 2021 — an increase of 7.2 per cent from 2020.





Polity & Governance

- 22nd Law Commission of India
- Committee to Prepare National Drug Database
- Ninth Schedule of the Constitution
- Radhakrishnan Committee for Higher Educational Institutions

Polity & Governance

22nd Law Commission of India

On 7th November 2022, the Union Government constituted the 22nd Law Commission of India.

Composition

- **Chairman:** Justice (retd.) Rituraj Awasthi, former Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court.
- **Members (5):** Justice KT Sankaran, Prof. Anand Palival, Prof. DP Verma, Prof.(Dr) Raka Arya and Shri M. Karunanithi

Mandate

- Identify laws which are no longer needed or irrelevant and can be immediately repealed.
- Examine the existing laws in the light of Directive Principles of State Policy.
- Suggest ways of improvement and reform and also suggest such legislations as might be necessary to implement the Directive Principles and to attain the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution.
- Revise the Central Acts of general importance so as to simplify them and remove anomalies, ambiguities and inequities.

Tenure

- An official release at the time of Cabinet clearance had said the Commission would have tenure of three years from the date of publication of the Order of Constitution in the Official Gazette.

About Law Commission of India

- It is an executive body, constituted by a notification of the Government of India, with definite terms of reference to carry out research in the field of law.
- It works as an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Internal Security

- No Money for Terror Ministerial Conference
- Maharashtra-Karnataka Border Dispute

Plans/Policies

- Draft Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022
- Demand for Old Pension Scheme
- Efficacy of MGNREGA as a Poverty Alleviation Tool
- Draft Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (Amendment) Bill 2022

Reports

- Mother Tongue Survey of India

News Snippets

- The Commission makes recommendations to the Government (in the form of Reports) as per its terms of reference.

Brief History of the Commission

Pre-Independence

- The first Law Commission was established during colonial rule in India, by the East India Company under the Charter Act of 1833, and was presided by Lord Macaulay.

After Independence

- The first Law Commission of independent India was established in 1955.
- The Chairman of this commission was Mr. M. C. Setalvad, who was also the First Attorney General of India.
- The last chairman of the Law Commission (21st) was retired Supreme Court judge, Justice B. S. Chauhan, who completed his tenure on 31 August 2018.

Achievements/Impact of Law Commission Report

- Based on the recommendations of the pre-independence Law Commissions, many Acts were enacted viz., Religious Endowments Act 1863, Official Trustees Act 1864, Carriers Act 1865, Indian Companies Act 1866, General Clauses Act 1868, Divorce Act 1869, Court fees Act 1870, Land Acquisition Act 1870, Female infanticide prevention Act 1870, code of criminal procedure revised 1872. Indian Contract Act 1872, Indian Evidence Act 1872, Special Marriages Act 1872, etc.
- After independence, the Law Commission of India has a long record of successful law reforms since its establishment in 1955. Of the 277 reports, 92 reports stand implemented by the Government.
- The first Law Commission of India submitted its 14th report titled 'Reforms of Judicial Administration' in 1958 both civil and criminal.
- A comprehensive report for the revision Code of Criminal Procedure, namely the 41st report titled 'The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898' was submitted in 1969.



Indian Society

- All Women Bench of Supreme Court

Social Issues

Indian Society

All Women Bench of Supreme Court

On 1st December, 2022, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has constituted an all-women bench comprising Justices Hima Kohli and Bela M. Trivedi to hear transfer petitions involving matrimonial disputes and bail matters. It is only the third time in its history.

- The first time the Supreme Court had an all-woman bench was in 2013, when Justices Gyan Sudha Misra and Ranjana Prakash Desai sat together.
- The second occasion came in 2018, when Justices R Banumathi and Indira Banerjee shared a bench.

Current Status of Women’s Share in Indian Judiciary

- In High Courts, the percentage of women judges is a mere 11.5%.
- In the Supreme Court, there are four sitting women judges out of 33 in office.

REASONS FOR LOW WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN JUDICIARY

- **Patriarchy:** The primary reason for underrepresentation of women in judiciary is deeply ingrained patriarchy in society.
- **Opaque Collegium System Functioning:** More women tend to enter the lower judiciary at the entry level because of the method of recruitment through an entrance examination.
- **Familial Responsibilities:** Factors of age and family responsibilities also affect the elevation of women judges from the subordinate judicial services to the higher courts.
- **Not Enough Women in Litigation:** Since lawyers elevated from the bar to the bench form a significant proportion of judges in the high courts and Supreme Court, it is worth noting that the number of women advocates is still low, reducing the pool from which women judges can be selected.

- Growing World Population: Implications and Opportunities

Plans/Policies

- Project Unnati
- Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission

Reports

- India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide
- Tribal Development Report 2022

News Snippets

- Out of a total of 37 women candidates recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium for appointment as high court judges, only 17 have been appointed so far, while the rest of the names are pending with the central government.
- For the High Courts, Collegium has recommended 192 candidates so far.
- Out of these 37, that is 19 per cent, were women.
- There are an abysmally low number of 83 women judges out of 680 judges in the high courts and about 30 per cent women judicial officers in the subordinate courts.
- Nearly 17 lakh lawyers practise in the country out of which only 15% are women.

Significance of Women Representation in Judiciary

- **Change Gender Stereotypes:** Female judicial representation can change gender stereotypes. High numbers and greater visibility of women judges can increase confidence of women victims to seek judicial redress.
- **Broader Perspective:** Gender sensitization will provide a diverse perspective to judgments. Women bring to the law a different perspective, one that is built upon their experience. They also have a more nuanced understanding of the differing impacts that certain laws may have on men and women.
- **Implementation of Stringent Laws:** The presence of women as judges and lawyers will substantially improve the justice delivery system. Laws for heinous crimes are not yet effective, especially for acid attack and rape. More inclusion of women in judiciary will impact in proper implementation of such laws.
- **More Empathy:** Lack of empathy reflected in some of the judgments could significantly reduce.
- **Benefit LGBTQ:** It will benefit LGBTQ community as well, as women in general are more accepting towards different orientations of people.
- Gender of a judge does not matter when a citizen goes to court, but with a female judge hearing the person’s comments always makes the citizen (if female) less uncomfortable.



Heritage Art & Culture

Art & Culture

- India's Gifts to G20 Leaders

Art & Culture

India's Gifts to G20 Leaders

At the recently held G20 summit, in Bali (Indonesia) Indian Prime Minister gifted heads of states curated craft pieces from Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

USA: Kangra Miniature Paintings (Kangra, Himachal Pradesh)

- Kangra miniature paintings generally portray 'Shringar Rasa' or depiction of love on a natural backdrop.
- The sentiment of love as a metaphor the devotion to the divine remains the inspiration and the central theme of these Pahari paintings.
- The art originated in a small hill state 'Guler' in the first half of the 18th century when a family of Kashmiri painters trained in Mughal Style of painting sought shelter at the court of Raja Dalip Singh of Guler.

UK: Mata Ni Pachedi (Ahemdabad, Gujarat)

- It is a handmade textile of Gujarat meant to be an offering in the temple shrines which house the Mother Goddess.
- The name is derived from the Gujarati words 'Mata' meaning 'mother goddess', 'Ni' meaning 'belonging to' and 'Pachedi' meaning 'backdrop'.
- Mata Ni Pachedi is crafted by the nomadic community of Waghris.

Australia: Pithora (Chhota Udaipur, Gujarat)

- A Pithora is a ritualistic tribal folk art by the Rathwa artisans from Chhota Udaipur in Gujarat.
- These painting are depiction of the cave paintings that tribals used to make reflecting the social, cultural and mythological life and beliefs of those tribals.
- A Pithora as a mural has a special significance in the annals of the cultural anthropology.
- These paintings bear a striking resemblance the Aboriginal dot painting from the indigenous communities of Australia.

History

- Baliyatra: Symbolising the Glorious Past of Odisha-Bali Connection
- Nyingma Sect of Buddhism

Heritage

- UNESCO Heritage Conservation Awards 2022

Personality

- Govind Guru

News Snippets

France, Germany, Singapore: Agate Bowl (Kutch, Gujarat)

- The semi-precious stone formed of chalcedonic-silica, is found in underground mines of Rajpipla and Ratanpur in riverbeds, and extracted to produce a variety of ornamental objects.
- This precious traditional craft has been passed down through generation of artisans since the Indus Valley civilization days and is currently practised by Artisans of Khambat.

Gift to Indonesia

1. Silver Bowl (Surat, Gujarat)

- The unique and finely crafted bowl is made of pure silver.
- This is a centuries old craft perfected by the traditional and highly skilled metalsmiths of Surat region in Gujarat.
- The process of creating even the simplest of silver products is an intricate one and can involve a group of four to five people.

2. Kinnauri Shawl (Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh)

- Kinnauri shawl, as name suggests, are the specialties of the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh.
- The shawls are made using the extra-weft technique of weaving.- with every element of the design woven using the knotting method -where the weft is inserted by hand and to lock the design, producing the lift in the pattern formed.
- The designs show influence from Central Asia and Tibet.

Gift to Spain: Kanal Brass Set (Mandi & Kullu, Himachal Pradesh)

- Kanal is a large, straight brass trumpet, over a metre long, played in parts of Himalayan India.
- It has a prominent bell resembling a datura flower.
- It is used on ceremonial occasions, such as the processions of village deities. It is also used to welcome the leaders of the Himachal Pradesh.
- It is lip reed musical instrument, and has broader base as saucer of 44 cm is diameter and rest of the portion is brass conical hollow tube. The brass tube of Kanal has two or three round bulges.

ECONOMY WATCH

Agriculture

- PM KISAN: A Game Changer DBT Scheme
- Horticulture Cluster Development Programme
- National Milk Day

Plans/Policies

- India's First Sovereign Green Bonds Framework

Banking and Finance

- Vostro Account
- Loan Write-off
- Credit-Deposit Ratio
- Municipal Bond

Infrastructure

- National Investment and Infrastructure Fund

Industry

- Protech: National Conclave on Technical Textiles

Reports

- Kirit Parikh Committee on Gas Pricing

News Snippets

Agriculture

PM KISAN: A Game Changer DBT Scheme

Recently, the number of beneficiaries under the PM-KISAN scheme has crossed 10 crore, increasing more than three-fold from 3.16 crore farmers covered under the first installment period in early 2019.

About PM-KISAN

- Launched in February, 2019, it is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India.
- Under the scheme an income support of 6,000/- per year in three equal installments will be provided to all land holding farmer families.
- Definition of family for the scheme is husband, wife and minor children.
- State Government and UT administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.
- The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.
- There are various Exclusion Categories for the scheme.

Analysis

- Launch of PM-KISAN was a tectonic shift in the nature of government support to farmers in India. This scheme was aimed at addressing the liquidity constraints of farmers for meeting their expenses for acquisition of agricultural inputs and services.
- This scheme is particularly important in a country like India, where still about half of the farming households do not have access to formal credit. PM KISAN has become a game changer DBT scheme as it has been able to reach out to crores of farmers, with no middlemen involved in between. The middlemen have been one of the major obstacles in increasing farmers' income in India.

- The significance of PM-KISAN is much broader than anyone could expect. The PM-KISAN implementation and the issues associated with it shall incorporate factors that essentially signal the success and the failure. The inherent multiplier effect also adds to the whole governance process, people's participation, and development as a result of introducing a scheme affecting large section of society.
- In rural areas, after the PM-KISAN launch, banking habits of people have significantly improved and their curiosity to learn about financial products have also seen considerable jump. Thus financial inclusion of the large sections of the agrarian society is going without much noise.
- It was observed over the years that the key government programs often subject to elite capture and selection biases. PM-KISAN, with the robust DBT network, has necessarily shunned away the bias associated with the program implementation.
- Enhanced spending ability for the agriculture sector by farmers with support from PM-KISAN is changing the way the marketing of agriculture inputs is being done and has reduced the dependence on moneylenders.
- The amount paid to the farmers is often stated to be inadequate, but the amount paid under the scheme is significant sum from the point of view of small and marginal farmers and also from point of rainfed farming across agro ecological zones while easing them with liquidity constraints affected by variable cost of inputs.

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

On 30th November, 2022, the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare prepared the Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (CDP) to enhance the global competitiveness of the Indian horticulture sector.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Space Science

- PSLV-C54/EOS-06 Mission
- Mission Prarambh

Space Science

PSLV-C54/EOS-06 Mission

On 26th November, 2022, Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C54) successfully placed nine satellites - an Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-06) and eight nano satellites - in multiple orbits.

- The launch took place from the first launch pad (FLP) at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), SHAR.
- The eight nano satellites include ISRO Nano Satellite-2 for Bhutan (INS-2B), Anand, Astrocast (four satellites), and two Thybolt satellites.

The Satellites

EOS-06

- A third-generation satellite in the Oceansat series (Oceansat-3), it is a follow-up to OceanSat-1 or IRS-P4 and OceanSat-2 launched in 1999 and 2009, respectively.
- EOS-06 is envisaged to observe ocean colour data, sea surface temperature and wind vector data to use in oceanography, climatic and meteorological applications.
- The satellite also supports value added products such as potential fishing zone using chlorophyll, SST and wind speed, and land based geophysical parameters.
- **Payloads:** EOS-06 carries four important payloads:
 - ♦ **Ocean Color Monitor (OCM-3):** It will observe the day side of the earth every day and will provide crucial data on the distribution of ocean algae which is the base of the food chain within the marine ecosystem.
 - ♦ **Sea Surface Temperature Monitor (SSTM):** It will provide ocean surface temperature which is a critical ocean parameter to provide various forecasts ranging from fish aggregation to cyclone genesis and movement.
 - ♦ **Ku-Band Pencil Beam Scatterometer:** It will provide a high-resolution wind vector (speed and direction) at the ocean surface.

- JWST Provides Details of Exoplanet's Atmosphere

New Technology & Innovations

- Photonic Crystal

Government Policies/ Initiatives

- Indian Biological Data Centre

Miscellaneous

- World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 2022
- Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence

News Snippets

- ♦ **ARGOS:** It is a communication payload jointly developed with France, and it is used for low-power (energy-efficient) communications including marine robotic floats (Argo floats), fish tags, drifters, and distress alert devices useful for conducting effective search and rescue operations.

ISRO Nano Satellite-2 for Bhutan (INS-2B)

- INS-2B is a collaborative mission between India and Bhutan with the following payloads:
 - ♦ NanoMx, a multispectral optical imaging payload developed by Space Applications Centre (SAC); and
 - ♦ APRS-Digipeater which is jointly developed by DITT-Bhutan and URSC.
- It will provide high-resolution images to Bhutan for the management of the country's natural resources.

Anand

- The Anand three axis stabilized Nano satellite is a technology demonstrator for miniaturized electro-optical payload and all other sub-systems like TTC, power, onboard computer and ADCS from Pixxel, India

Thybolt

- The Thybolt is a 0.5U spacecraft bus that includes a communication payload to enable rapid technology demonstration and constellation development for multiple users from Dhruva Space using their own Orbital Deployer with a minimum lifetime of 1 year.

Astrocast

- It is a 3U spacecraft with four satellites from Spaceflight Inc., USA. It is a technology demonstrator satellite for the Internet of Things (IoT).

Significance

- The launch of Oceansat-3 is significant since this is the first major ocean satellite launch coming from India since the initiation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (UNDOSSD, 2021-2030).
- Oceansat-3 is expected to provide a great boost to the ocean observing capabilities of the global scientific and operational communities in addressing the Ocean Decade objectives and challenges.

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Climate Change

- Mangrove Alliance for Climate

Biodiversity

- CoP 19 of CITES

Sustainable Development

- Global Offshore Wind Alliance
- Deforestation and Emission Reduction Targets

Government Policies/Initiatives

- National Centre of Excellence for Green Port & Shipping

Reports/Indices

- Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report 2022
- Climate Change Performance Index 2023

News Snippets

Climate Change

Mangrove Alliance for Climate

Recently, at the 27th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP27) held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC) was launched with India as a partner.



Key Points

- **Members:** An initiative led by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Indonesia, the Mangrove Alliance for Climate also includes India, Sri Lanka, Australia, Japan and Spain.
- **Objective:** It seeks to educate and spread awareness worldwide on the role of mangroves in curbing global warming and its potential as a solution for climate change.
- **Accountability:** However, the intergovernmental alliance works on a voluntary basis which means that there are no real checks and balances to hold members accountable.
- **Commitments and Deadlines:** The parties will decide their own commitments and deadlines regarding planting and restoring mangroves.
- The members will also share expertise and support each other in researching, managing and protecting coastal areas.

Mangroves and their Significance

- **About:** Mangroves are a diverse group of salt-tolerant plant community of tropical and subtropical intertidal regions of the world.
- **Characteristics:** They exhibit varied morphological and physiological evolutionary adaptations to survive the limiting factors imposed by lack of oxygen, high salinity and diurnal tidal inundation.

- **Crucial Role:** Mangrove forests host diverse marine life. They also support a rich food web, with molluscs and algae-filled substrate acting as a breeding ground for small fish, mud crabs and shrimps, thus providing a livelihood to local artisanal fishers.
- **Carbon Stores:** They act as effective carbon stores, holding up to four times the amount of carbon as other forested ecosystems.
- **Conservation Benefits:** Preservation of mangroves can both aid in removal of carbon from the atmosphere and prevent the release of the same upon their destruction.

Current Status of Mangroves

- South Asia houses some of the most extensive areas of mangroves globally, while Indonesia hosts one-fifth of the overall amount.
- Total mangrove cover in the world is around 1% of the tropical forests of the world. Out of this, Asia has the largest cover of world's mangroves.
- India holds around 3 percent of South Asia's mangrove population.
- Sundarbans in India and Bangladesh is the largest single block of mangrove forest in the world, and is the only mangrove forest in the world colonized with Royal Bengal tigers. Bhitarkanika of Odisha has the second largest cover of mangroves in Indian sub-continent.
- Other mangrove sites in India include Pichavaram and Vedaranyam in Tamil Nadu, Gulf of Kutch and the Kori creek in Gujarat, small tidal estuaries and lagoon in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, coastal zone in Kerala, and the intertidal region of estuaries and creeks in Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra.
- However, infrastructure projects, shifting coastlines, coastal erosion and storms have resulted in a significant decrease in mangrove habitats.
- The Global Mangrove Alliance said in its 2022 report that between 2010 and 2020, around 600 sq km of mangroves were lost of which more than 62% was due to direct human impacts.



WORLD WATCH

International Relations

- 19th ASEAN-India Summit

International Relations

19th ASEAN-India Summit

The 19th ASEAN-India Summit to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations was held in Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia, on 12 November 2022. It was designated as the Commemorative Summit, to mark the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations.

Key Highlights of the Meeting

Act East Policy

- India hailed the deep cultural, economic and civilizational ties that have existed between India and South East Asia from time immemorial and stated that the India-ASEAN relationship forms the central pillar of India's ACT-EAST policy.
- India reiterated its support to ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific.

Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

- ASEAN and India adopted a joint statement announcing the elevation of the existing Strategic Partnership to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- It reiterated the commitment to enhance India-ASEAN cooperation in various areas such as maritime activities, counter-terrorism, cyber security, digital economy, environment, science & technology, tourism, among other areas.

New Dialogue Platforms

- It is to strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity, between the ASEAN member states and India.

Capacity-building Activities

- Activities in digital transformation, digital trade, digital skills, and innovation, as well as Hackathons have been conducted by the India and ASEAN nations to enhance cooperation in the digital economy.

- India-Norway Maritime Cooperation
- Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue 2022
- India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement

World Issues

- India's Chairmanship of Wassenaar Arrangement

News Snippets

Building Smart Cities

- To build cities that are resilient, innovative, well-connected, and technologically advanced, the ASEAN nations and India will foster exchanges of best practices and capacity-building.

Strengthen Healthcare

- They will also strengthen healthcare for their people by increasing collaboration in public health, areas of research and development, and public health emergency.

ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA)

- It is proposed to expedite the review of the AITIGA, to make it more user-friendly, simple, and trade-facilitative, and work together to forge resilient supply chains, and explore cooperation.

Revival of Tourism and Related Industry

- The member states of ASEAN and India decided to revive tourism and related industries through the effective implementation of the ASEAN-India tourism work plans.

ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)

- It was established in August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- Its chairmanship rotates annually, based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States.

Members

- Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam

PRELIMS 2023 SPECIAL-3

Fact & Statement Based Current Affairs Roundup 2023

Covering Events in News During 2021-22

In the UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination, significant change has been observed in the nature of questions being asked in the past few years.

- *In the present scenario, most of the questions are statement based. The questions on current affairs are not being asked directly; rather, the questions are based on the background of topics in news.*
- *Keeping this in view, for comprehensive coverage, in this special section, we have covered current affairs in a new pattern instead of the traditional way. With an exam-oriented focus, we have presented the content related to current events with relevant facts, terminologies, statements, and initiatives, etc.*
- *The content presented in this special section is intended to serve as a source of ready reference for the Civil Services Preliminary Examination.*

We hope you find it helpful in your preparation. Happy reading!

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