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For the 3rd Week

of

March 2021

(15th March to 20th March)

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1. Geography

1.1. Global Risk Report

- World Economic Forum – 16th edition
- The report describes changes occurring in the global risks landscape from year to year.
- The report also explores the interconnectedness of risks, and considers how the strategies for the mitigation of global risks might be structured.
- The report was released based on the Global Risks Perception Survey undertaken by more than 650 members of World Economic Forum, followed by analysis of growing social, economic and industrial divisions, their interconnections, and their implications on our ability to resolve major global risks requiring societal cohesion and global cooperation.
- The report is concluded with proposals for enhancing resilience, drawing from the lessons of the pandemic as well as historical risk analysis.

Key Findings

- Economic fragility and societal divisions are set to increase.
- Growing digital divides and technology adoption pose concerns which are further accelerated by COVID-19.
- A polarized industrial landscape may emerge in the post-pandemic economy.
- Climate continues to be a looming risk as global cooperation weakens

Top Risks

by likelihood

- 1 Extreme weather
- 2 Climate action failure
- 3 Human environmental damage
- 4 Infectious diseases
- 5 Biodiversity loss
- 6 Digital power concentration
- 7 Digital inequality
- 8 Interstate relations fracture
- 9 Cybersecurity failure
- 10 Livelihood crises

Top Risks

by impact

- 1 Infectious diseases
- 2 Climate action failure
- 3 Weapons of mass destruction
- 4 Biodiversity loss
- 5 Natural resource crises
- 6 Human environmental damage
- 7 Livelihood crises
- 8 Extreme weather
- 9 Debt crises
- 10 IT infrastructure breakdown

Recommendations

- According to the report, Response to COVID-19 offers four governance opportunities to strengthen overall resilience of countries, businesses and international community:
 - ✓ Formulating analytical frameworks that take a holistic and systems-based view of risk impacts.
 - ✓ Investing in high-profile risk champions to encourage national leadership and international co-operation.
 - ✓ Improving risk communications and combating misinformation.
 - ✓ Exploring new forms of public-private partnership on risk preparedness.

IMPORTANT REPORTS (WEF)

- Global Competitiveness Report
- Global Gender Gap Report
- Global Travel and Tourism Report

2. History

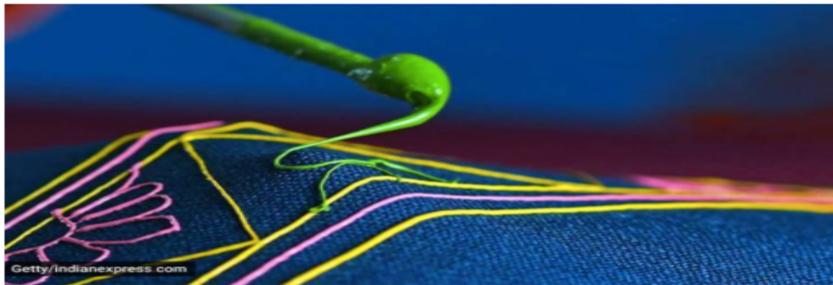
2.1. Rogan School of Art

Dying crafts of India: Into the world of colourful Rogan textile art

Initially, Rogan graced mainly ghaghra-cholis, bridal trousseaus, bedsheets, and tablecloths but they now adorn more contemporary items



Written by **Anjali Jha** | New Delhi |
July 8, 2020 7:10:50 pm



About

- It is an art of cloth printing practised in the Kutch District of Gujarat, India.
- In this craft, paint made from boiled oil and vegetable dyes is laid down on fabric using either a metal block or a stylus.
- The craft nearly died out in the late 20th century, with Rogan painting being practiced by only two families in the same village.

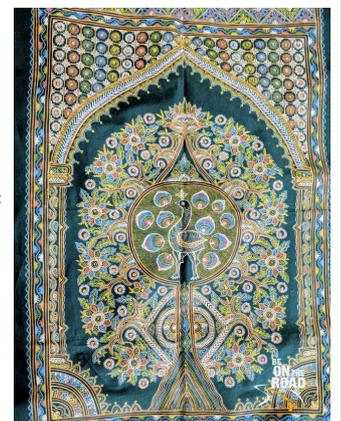
Resurgence of the Art

- In 2014, PM Narendra Modi visited the US White House and gave President Obama two rogan paintings including “A Tree of Life”.
- “Tree of life painting” or “Kalp Variksha” is a famous work of Rogan school of Art.



Process

- Rogan Art is produced by boiling castor oil for about two days and then adding vegetable pigments and a binding agent, thus the resulting paint is thick and shiny.
- The pattern is applied using metal blocks with patterns carved on them.
- Elaborate designs are produced freehand, by trailing thread like strands of paint off a stylus.
- Unique feature - half of a design is painted, then the cloth is folded in half, transferring a mirror image to the other half of the fabric. The designs include floral motifs, animals, and local folk art.



3. Polity & Governance

3.1. Inner Line Permit Uttarakhand

Removal of ILP in Uttarakhand

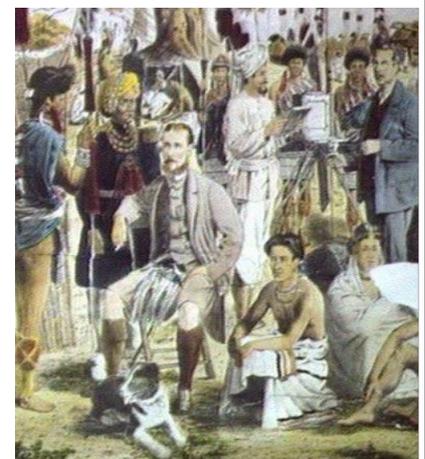
- The Uttarakhand government, in a recent meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had sought withdrawal of “inner-line permit” (ILP) system in Niti Valley of Chamoli district and Nelang Valley of Uttarkashi.

Why

- They have requested the same for better border management and expansion of tourism and other economic activities in villages located there.
- The ILP system restricts movement in areas close to the border for everyone other than those with a formal permission. In Uttarakhand, tourists have to obtain ILP for locations near China border, at least in the three districts of Uttarkashi, Pithoragarh and Chamoli.
- Local authorities in these districts say there shouldn't be any ILP for other places as well so that economic activities increase and villages are rehabilitated so that locals could also act as ‘eyes’ and ‘ears’ at border for surveillance.
- It will also stop outward migration. According to officials in these districts, most of the border villages see outward migration owing to lack of livelihood opportunities.
- Uttarakhand shares a 350-km border with China and a 275-km boundary with Nepal. Five of the state's 13 districts are border districts.

What is ILP

- The Constitution of India provides for all Indian citizens are free to live and work in any state of the country, but entry to certain states with a protected status requires authorisation by the concerned state government i.e special permissions are required to visit these areas.
- Inner Line Permit (ILP) is an official travel document issued by the concerned state government to allow inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period.
- The concept comes from the colonial area. Under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873, the British framed regulations restricting the entry and regulating the stay of outsiders in designated areas.
- This was to protect the Crown's own commercial interests by preventing “British subjects” (Indians) from trading within these regions. In 1950, the Indian government replaced “British subjects” with “Citizen of India”.
- This was to address local concerns about protecting the interests of the indigenous people from outsiders belonging to other Indian states.



4. Economy

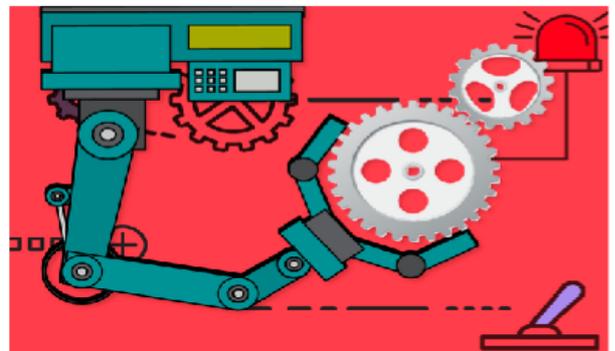
4.1. Production Linked Incentives Scheme

What is the PLI Scheme ?

- Production-Linked Incentive or PLI scheme is a scheme that aims to give companies incentives on incremental sales from products manufactured in domestic units.



- PLIs are provided by the Central government to identified sectors, in order to encourage manufacturing in India.
- The scheme invites foreign companies to set up units in India while also aiming to encourage local companies to set up or expand existing manufacturing units.
- It will also generate more employment and cut down the country's reliance on imports from other countries.



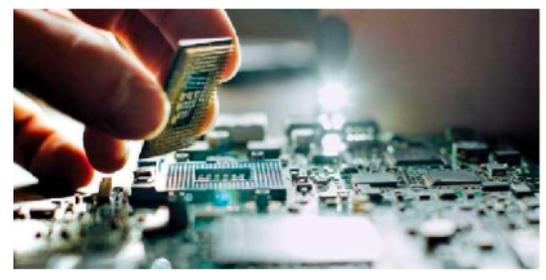
How does the scheme work ?

- Companies registered in India and having one or more manufacturing locations in the country are eligible for the scheme.
- These companies receive an incentive in the form of a cash subsidy on the new sales of goods manufactured in India for about five years from the base year.
- The incentive is tied to incremental investments made during the period.



Start of the Scheme

- As a part of the National Policy on Electronics, In April 2020, the IT Ministry notified a scheme which would give incentives of 4-6% to electronics companies which manufacture mobile phones and other electronic components (such as transistors, diodes, thyristors, resistors, capacitors and nano-electronic components such as micro electromechanical systems).
- According to the scheme, companies that make mobile phones which sell for a certain value or more will receive an incentive of up to 6 per cent on incremental sales of all such mobile phones made in India.



Benefits of the Scheme

- The scheme is believed to attract foreign investment in the sector, while also encouraging domestic mobile phone makers to expand their units and presence in India.
- Previously, the PLI Scheme was for select sectors such as mobile phones and allied equipment manufacturing, pharmaceutical ingredients and medical devices.
 - ✓ To protect identified product areas
 - ✓ To introduce non-tariff measures that make imports more expensive.
 - ✓ To acknowledge the relevance of exports in overall growth strategy but focus more on the domestic market
 - ✓ To promote manufacturing at home by offering production incentives and encourage investments both from within and outside.

Expanding Reach
Scheme proposed to be extended to:

Textiles, food processing, auto components, battery mfg & network products

India has core competence in these sectors

Fiscal incentives worth ₹ 50,000 cr likely on incremental production

HOW WILL IT HELP?

- Attract investments in India
- Help draw firms from China
- Help them penetrate global markets

Create big players in India

WHAT THE SCHEME SEEKS TO ACHIEVE

- Make domestic mfg competitive & efficient
- Create economies of scale
- Make India part of global supply chain
- Attract investment in core mfg & cutting edge tech
- Competitive mfg would in turn lift exports

Eligibility criteria of the PLI scheme

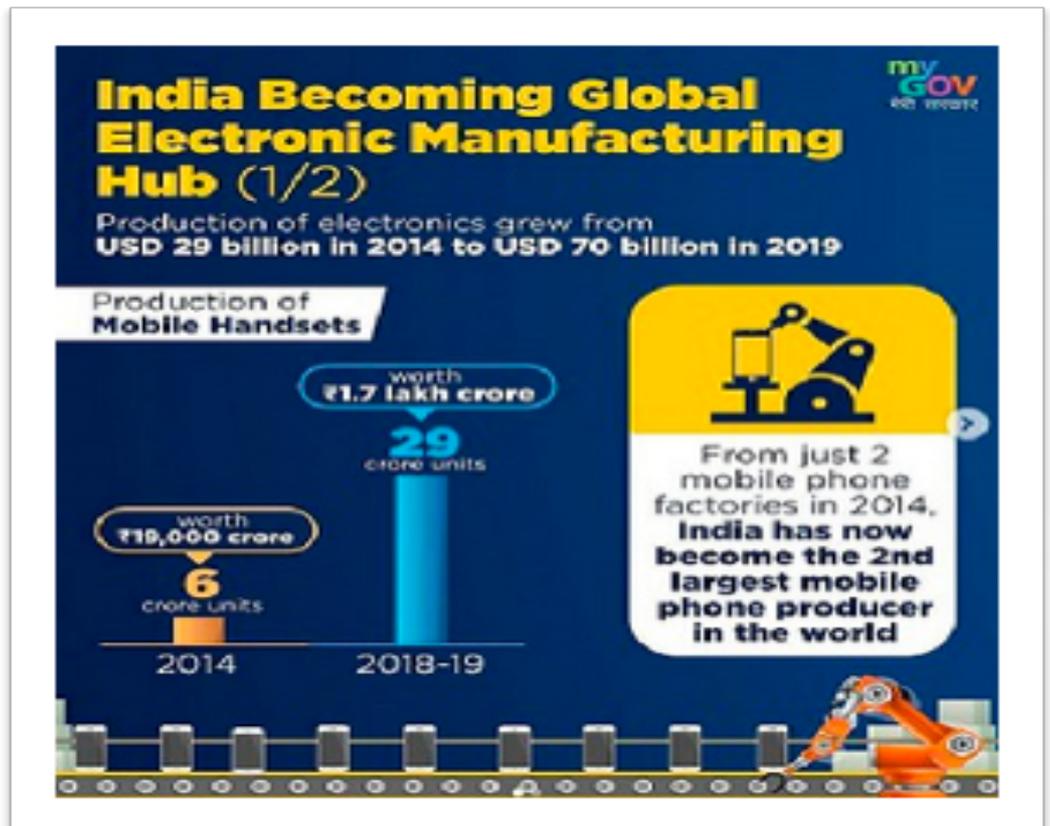
- Companies have to be registered in India.
- An applicant must meet threshold criteria (i.e. incremental investment) that is a minimum of INR 10 crore (MSME) or INR 100 crore (Others) and a maximum of INR 1000 crore to be eligible for disbursement of incentive.
- To meet the threshold criteria of Incremental Investment for any year, the cumulative value of investment done till such year (including the year under consideration) over the Base Year (2019-20) shall be considered.
- Some sectors also have threshold criteria for incremental sales.

- The applicant can operate existing or new manufacturing unit at one or more locations in the country.
- Any additional expenditure incurred by companies on plant, machinery, equipment, research and development and transfer of technology for manufacture in the target segments will be eligible for the incentive scheme.

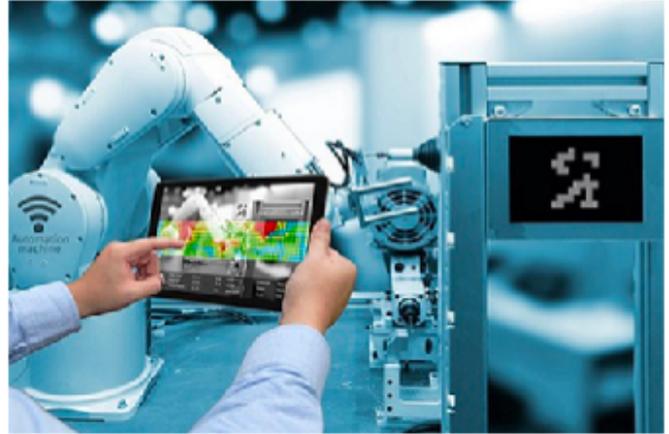
Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme			
Priority	Sectors	Implementing Ministry/Department	Approved financial outlay over a five-year period
1.	Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery	NITI Aayog and Department of Heavy Industries	Rs 18,100 crore
2.	Electronic/Technology Products	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Rs 5,000 crore
3.	Automobiles and Auto Components	Department of Heavy Industries	Rs 57,042 crore
4.	Pharmaceuticals drugs	Department of Pharmaceuticals	Rs 15,000 crore
5.	Telecom & Networking Products	Department of Telecom	Rs 12,195 crore
6.	Textile Products MMF segment and technical textiles	Ministry of Textiles	Rs 10,683 crore
7.	Food Products	Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Rs 10,900 crore
8.	High Efficiency Solar PV Modules	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy	Rs 4,500 crore
9.	White Goods (ACs & LED)	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Rs 6,238 crore
10.	Speciality Steel	Ministry of Steel	Rs 6,322 crore
Total			Rs 145,980 crore

Some additional points to consider

- PLI aims to encourage local manufacturing alongwith other initiatives like 15 per cent tax rate for new manufacturing companies, increase in import duties on various goods.
- PLI also provides an opportunity for India to take on China in the global supply chain.
- PLI for solar PV panels will reduce the import dependence.



- The domestic electronics hardware manufacturing sector faces lack of a level playing field vis-à-vis competing nations.
- The sector suffers disability of around 8.5% to 11% on account of lack of adequate infrastructure, domestic supply chain and logistics; high cost of finance; inadequate availability of quality power; limited design capabilities and focus on R&D by the industry; and inadequacies in skill development.
- The vision of National Policy on Electronics 2019 (NPE 2019) aimed to position India as a global hub for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) by encouraging and driving capabilities in the country for developing core components and creating an enabling environment for the industry to compete globally.
- Scheme is also applicable on Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units of electronics.



5. Environment & Ecology

5.1.NDC Synthesis Report

Introduction

- The NDC synthesis report is prepared in response to the requests from COP 21 (Paris, 2015) and CMA 2 (Madrid, 2019) to the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report of the NDCs submitted by Parties before COP 26.
- In view of the postponement of COP 26 to November 2021 and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the NDC preparation process, the secretariat decided to issue the NDC synthesis report in two editions:
 - ✓ an initial version by 28 February 2021 and the final version in advance of COP 26 (date to be determined yet).
- This report was released by the UNFCCC.
- This report measures the progress of national climate action plans in the backdrop of upcoming 26th session of Conference of its Parties (COP26) in November 2021 in Glasgow.
- This report has also urged the other countries to initiate more ambitious plans in order to reach the Paris Agreement goals.
- 2021 is a make or break year to confront the global climate emergency. The science is clear, to limit global temperature rise to 1.5C, we must cut global emissions by 45% by 2030 from 2010 levels.
- The interim report from the UNFCCC is a red alert for our planet.
- It shows governments are nowhere close to the level of ambition needed to limit climate change to 1.5 degrees and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.
- The major emitters must step up with much more ambitious emissions reductions targets for 2030 in their Nationally Determined Contributions well before the November UN Climate Conference in Glasgow.
- This report covered the submissions from countries up to December 31, 2020.
- As per the submission, 75 countries which are Parties to the Framework Convention communicated a new or updated NDC which represents 30 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Features

- The United Kingdom and the European Union are the only regions among 18 of the world's biggest emitters that have significantly increased their greenhouse gas reduction targets.
- Of the 197 Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), only 75 have submitted new or updated nationally determined contributions (NDC) till December 31, 2020.
- These Parties account for 30 per cent of the global greenhouse emissions.
- Other major emitters either submitted NDCs presenting a very low increase in their ambition level or have not presented NDCs yet.

- Sixteen of the world's biggest emitters have not increased their emission reduction targets substantially or at all.
- More countries reported on mitigation co-benefits of adaptation action and economic diversification plans.
- Adaptation actions and economic diversification plans with mitigation co-benefits include -
- climate-smart agriculture, adapting coastal ecosystems, increasing the share of renewable sources in energy generation, carbon dioxide capture and storage, fuel switch and fuel price reforms in the transport sector, and moving to a circular economy for better waste management.
- While a majority of countries increased their individual levels of ambition to reduce emissions, their combined impact will help achieve only a 1 per cent reduction by 2030 compared to 2010 levels.
- Global emissions, however, need to reduce by 45 per cent in order to meet the 1.5°C goal, according to Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Conclusion

- Participating nations will get more time to review and update their NDCs.
- This will be compiled in the final synthesis report to be brought out ahead of COP 26.
- This report has shown that nations must redouble efforts and submit stronger, more ambitious national climate action plans in 2021 if they're to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise by 2°C—ideally 1.5°C—by the end of the century.

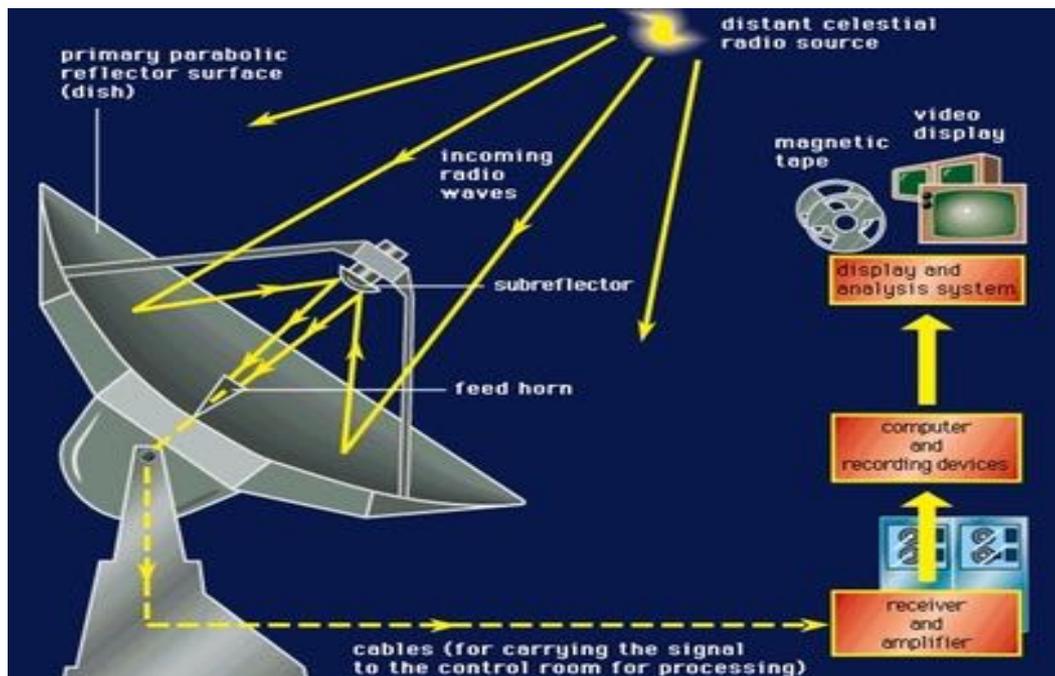
6. Science & Technology

6.1. Square Kilometre Array

- Recently, the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) Council held its maiden meeting and approved the establishment of the world's largest radio telescope.
- SKAO is a new intergovernmental organisation dedicated to radio astronomy and is headquartered in the UK.
- At the moment, organisations from ten countries are a part of the SKAO. These include Australia, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK.

Radio Telescopes

- Unlike optical telescopes, radio telescopes can detect invisible gas and, therefore, they can reveal areas of space that may be obscured by cosmic dust.
- Significantly, since the first radio signals were detected by physicist Karl Jansky in the 1930s, astronomers have used radio telescopes to detect radio waves emitted by different objects in the universe and explore it.
- According to NASA, the field of radio astronomy evolved after World War II and became one of the most important tools for making astronomical observations since.



- The Arecibo telescope in Puerto Rico, which was the second-largest single-dish radio telescope in the world, collapsed in December 2020.

Significance

- The telescope, proposed to be the largest radio telescope in the world, will be located in Africa and Australia whose operation, maintenance and construction will be overseen by SKAO.

- The completion is expected to take nearly a decade at a cost of over £1.8 billion.
- As per NASA, the telescope will accomplish its scientific goals by measuring neutral hydrogen over cosmic time, accurately timing the signals from pulsars in the Milky Way, and detecting millions of galaxies out to high redshifts.
 - ✓ Scientists hope to address following concepts using this telescope
 - ✓ the beginning of the universe,
 - ✓ how and when the first stars were born,
 - ✓ the life-cycle of a galaxy,
 - ✓ exploring the possibility of detecting technologically-active civilisations elsewhere in our galaxy
 - ✓ and understanding where gravitational waves come from.
- Significantly, the development of SKA will use the results of various surveys undertaken using another powerful telescope called the Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder (ASKAP), which is developed and operated by the country's science agency CSIRO.
- This telescope, which has been fully operational since February 2019 mapped over three million galaxies in a record 300 hours during its first all-sky survey conducted late last year.
- ASKAP surveys are designed to map the structure and evolution of the Universe, which it does by observing galaxies and the hydrogen gas that they contain.

Prelims Test Series

This course includes 25 GS Tests

- 4 Tests for Current Affairs of 2019 (Jan-Feb-March; Apr-May-June; July-Aug-Sept; Oct-Nov-Dec)
 - 12 Sectional Tests – 2 Tests each for History, Polity, Economy, Geography, Sci & Tech, and Environment, including Current Affairs of 12 months of 2020, one month in each test
 - 4 Half-Length Tests – 2 Tests each for Hist + Pol + Eco, and Geo + Env + Sci & Tech
 - 5 Full-Length Tests
- Bonus Test for Economic Survey and India Year Book

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