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# Daily News Discussion (DND)

13th & 14th May 2021

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### Note -

- The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.
- Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .

Click [here](#) to watch the following topics on YouTube

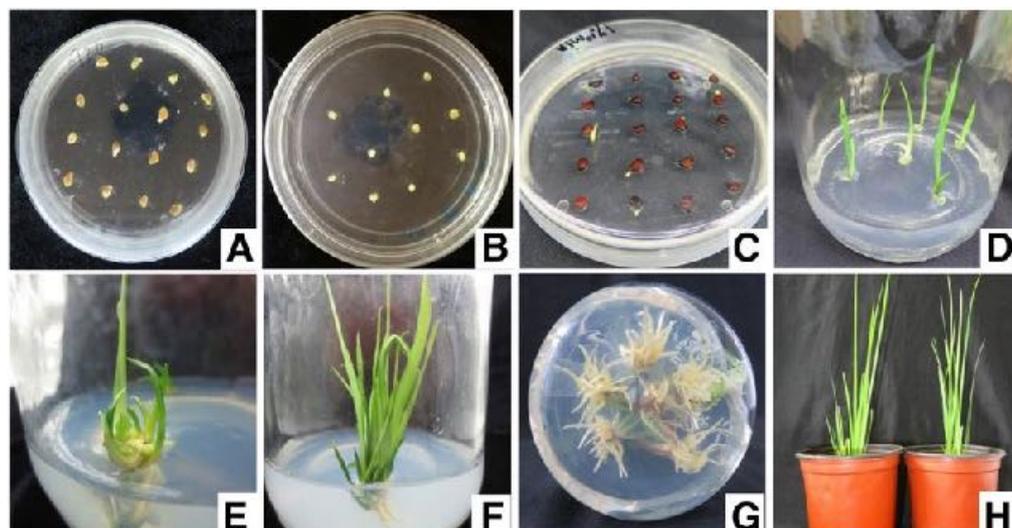
# 1. Environment

## 1.1.A wonder bamboo to mitigate climate change

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) has designed an 'oxygen park' within its premises at Coimbatore with Beema Bamboo.

### Beema Bamboo

- is a superior clone, selected from **Bambusa balcooa**, a higher biomass yielding bamboo species.
- This bamboo clone has been developed by the **conventional breeding method**.
- This species is considered to be one of the fastest-growing plants.
- It grows **one-and-a-half feet per day** under tropical conditions. It is said to be the best 'carbon sink' to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions
- A fully-grown bamboo tree may generate over **300 kilograms of oxygen annually** and it may be sufficient for one person for one year.
- Beema Bamboo has been **developed by N Bharathi of Growmore Biotech Ltd**, the agri-technology company based at Hosur, Tamil Nadu.
- This clone is thorn-less and sterile.
- The plants developed through tissue culture are **free from pest and disease**, vigorous and superior and they can grow in the field for more than hundred years without any replanting
- Beema Bamboo is **not a product of genetically modified organisms**.
- In this case, new culms only grow around the mother shoot and hence it is **non-invasive**.
- A culm is the hollow stem of a grass or cereal plant, especially that bearing the flower.
- As it is **sterile, this bamboo does not produce any seed** and does not die also for several hundred years and keeps growing without death.



- As a result, this particular bamboo species can be able to establish permanent green cover
- Its certified **high energy value (4500 kcal/kg)** and **low ash content** make it an outstanding biomass feedstock for energy generation
- The **bamboo's calorific value is equal to that of coal**. Cement industries are buying this bamboo species for their boilers. Bamboo fibre is used by the textile industry for making fabric and garments.

### **Bamboo rice (2019)-Odisha**

- Grown out of a **dying bamboo shoot**.
- When the bamboo shoot breathes its last, it **flowers into a rare variety of rice seeds, which are known as bamboo rice**.
- **Chandaka-Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary** in Cuttack district Odisha
- Grows **only twice or thrice in a century**
- looks like **paddy rice and tastes more like wheat**.
- low glycaemic index
- It's **rich in proteins** and does not contain any fat.

## 2. Science & Technology

### 2.1.OSIRIS-REx

- On May 11, NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft will **depart asteroid Bennu, and start its two-year long journey back to Earth**
- In October 2020, the spacecraft briefly touched **asteroid Bennu**, from where it **collected samples of dust and pebbles.**
- **Bennu is considered to be an ancient asteroid that has not gone through a lot of composition-altering change** through billions of years, which means that **below its surface lie chemicals and rocks from the birth of the solar system.**

#### What are asteroids made of

- C-type-Carbonaceous material**
- 75% Of total**
- Mostly water & hardly any metallic element**
- S-type-Silicate material**
- 17% of total asteroids**
- Fe,Nickel,Mg**
- Hardly any water but little brighter than C type**
- M-type-Metal**
- Platinum**
- Large amount of platinum on earth come from this asteroid**

#### Hayabusa-JAXA

- Sample return mission**
- Near earth asteroid-Itokawa**
- Launch-2003---return 2010**
- First asteroid sample return**

#### Hayabusa-2

- 2014**
- Ryugu asteroid (C-type)**
- Return-2020**
- Organic matter+ water**

#### OSIRIS-Rex-NASA

- Lauch-2016**
- Return-2023**
- Bennu(B-type)**

#### Asteroid Bennu

- Asteroids are rocky objects that orbit the Sun, much smaller than planets. They are also called **minor planets**
- Bennu is a B-type asteroid, implying that it **contains significant amounts of carbon** and various other minerals.

- Because of its high carbon content, the asteroid **reflects about four per cent of the light that hits it**, which is very low when compared with a planet like **Venus, which reflects about 65 per cent** of the light that hits it.
- Earth reflects about **30 per cent**.
- here is a slight possibility that Bennu, which is **classified as a Near Earth Object (NEO)**, might strike the Earth in the next century, between the years 2175 and 2199.
- **NEOs are comets and asteroids nudged by the gravitational attraction of nearby planets** into orbits which allow them to enter the Earth's neighbourhood.

### Why is the asteroid named "Bennu"?

- Bennu is named after an Egyptian deity.
- The name was **suggested by a nine-year-old boy** from North Carolina in 2013, who wWhat did the spacecraft do in October 2020?
- In October 2020, the spacecraft contacted the surface of the asteroid successfully and **fired a burst of nitrogen gas meant to stir rocks and soil**.
- Once the surface was disturbed, the spacecraft's robotic arm captured some samples.

### What will scientists do with the samples?

- When the spacecraft finally returns in September 2023, it will bring back the largest sample collected by a NASA mission since the Apollo astronauts collected samples of Moon rock.
- There is no straight path back to Earth.
- The spacecraft will **circle the Sun twice**, covering 1.4 billion miles (2.3 billion kilometers) over to catch up with Earth
- Scientists will **use the asteroid samples to study the formation of the solar system** and of habitable planets such as Earth.
- NASA will also **distribute a part of the samples to laboratories worldwide** and will **reserve about 75 per cent of the samples for future generations** who can study it with technologies not yet created.

### What is the OSIRIS-REx mission?

- This is **NASA's first mission meant to return a sample from the ancient asteroid**.
- The mission was launched in 2016, it reached its target in 2018 and since then, the spacecraft has been trying to match the velocity of the asteroid using small rocket thrusters.
- The spacecraft contains five instruments meant to explore Bennu including cameras, a spectrometer and a laser altimeter.

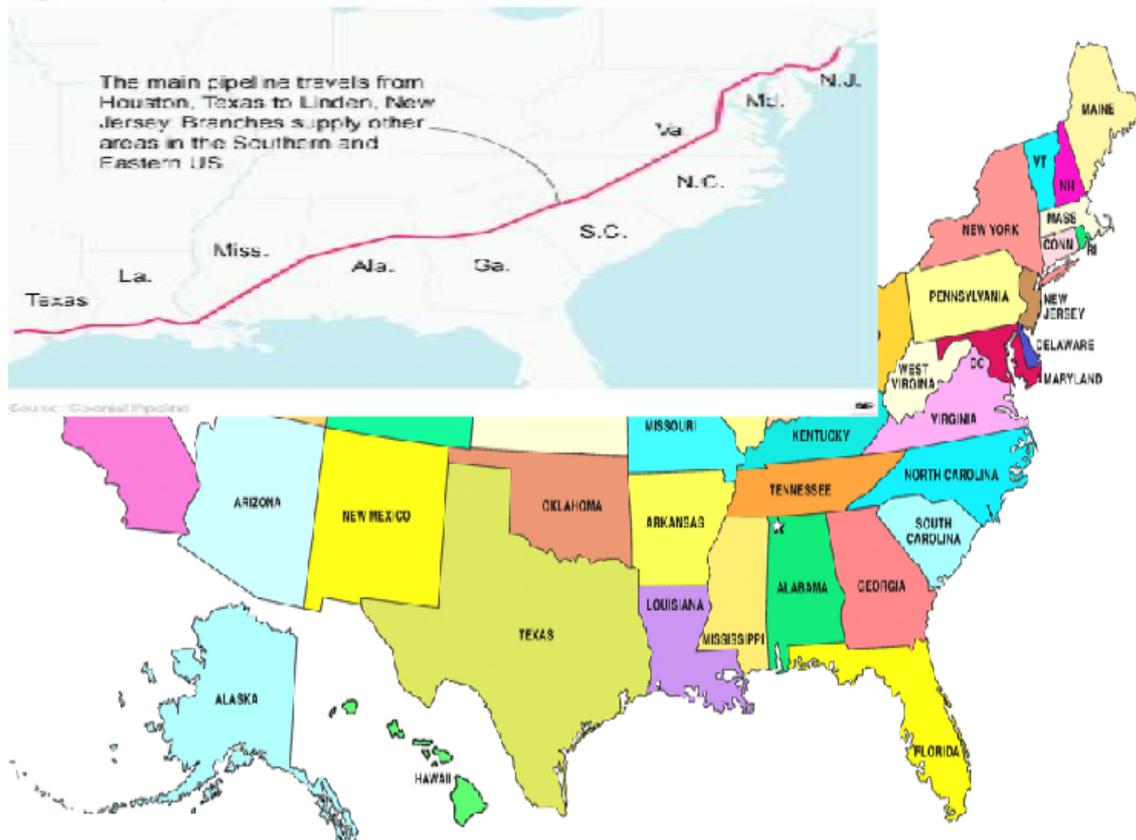


## 3. Security

### 3.1.A ransomware attack on a key US pipeline network

- Colonial Pipeline Company, which transports about 45 per cent of all petrol and diesel consumed on the east coast of the US was forced to shut down operations after a cyberattack on May 7.
- The shutdown led to the US federal government declaring a regional emergency to allow transportation of fuels through tanker trucks to tide over the impact of shortages.

#### Pipeline spans more than 5,500 miles



#### What is a ransomware attack?

- A ransomware attack is a cyber-attack using malware that **encrypts the victim's files and requires users pay a ransom to decrypt the files.**
- In the case of the Colonial Pipeline attack, also added the element of downloading all the data on an enterprise network before encrypting it.
- The hackers can then **threaten to leak** the data if the ransom is not paid.
- The US Federal Bureau of Investigation confirmed that a criminal gang called **Darkside** was responsible for compromising the Colonial Pipeline network

#### How did this attack impact oil prices?

- Oil prices rose in response to the attack on Colonial Pipeline, with the **price of Brent crude rising to \$69 per barrel on Monday before falling to \$67.8**

- Could push up petrol prices in the US as demand peaks during the summer.
- An increase in the price of petroleum products in Asia could provide a further push to petrol and diesel prices in India, which are already at record high levels.
- Crude oil prices have risen over the past fortnight despite a surge in Covid-19 infections in Asia due to expectations of increasing crude oil demand from the US and Europe

### How can oil and gas companies deal with such attacks?

- Experts noted that there was a need to move towards fortifying approaches to prevent attacks including employing a **zero-trust security framework** in enterprise networks.
- A zero-trust approach means anything is suspected whenever any activity is done on the network, and **every user, including the CEO, will have to be verified time and again**
- This expert added that other measures such as **Cloud Access Security Brokers (CPAB)**, which act as intermediaries between users and cloud service providers, could “give teeth” to an overall cybersecurity strategy.
- The expert noted that **India’s oil and gas PSUs were making efforts to beef up security**, and that organisations managing critical infrastructure such as pipelines and refineries were required by the government to implement certain security measures.



## 4. Polity

### 4.1. What is Article 311 (2)

- Suspended police officer **Sachin Waze**, arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with the Mukesh Ambani terror scare case, **was dismissed from service by Mumbai Police Commissioner under Article 311 (2) (b) without a departmental enquiry.**

#### Article 311

- Dismissal, removal or reduction in rank of persons employed in civil capacities under the Union or a State
- ✓ **No person who is a member of a civil service** of the Union or an all India service or a civil service of a State or holds a civil post under the Union or a State shall be dismissed or removed by a authority subordinate to that by which he was appointed
- ✓ No such person as aforesaid shall be dismissed or removed or reduced in rank **except after an inquiry.** Provided further that this clause shall not apply
  - ❖ where a person is dismissed or removed or reduced in rank on the ground of **conduct which has led to his conviction on a criminal charge; or**
  - ❖ where the authority empowered to dismiss or remove a person or to reduce him in rank is **satisfied that for some reason, to be recorded by that authority in writing, it is not reasonably practicable to hold such inquiry; or**
  - ❖ where the **President or the Governor**, as the case may be, is satisfied that **in the interest of the security of the State, it is not expedient to hold such inquiry**

#### What is the process of a departmental enquiry?

- In a departmental enquiry, **after an enquiry officer is appointed**, the civil servant is given a formal **chargesheet** of the charges.
- The civil servant can represent himself/herself or choose to have a lawyer.
- Witnesses can be called during the departmental enquiry following which the **enquiry officer can prepare a report and submit it to the government for further action.**

#### Can the dismissal under section 311 (2) be challenged by the government employee?

- **Yes**, the government employee dismissed under these provisions can approach either **tribunals like the state administrative tribunal** – in Waze's case it would be the Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal – or **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) or the courts**

### 4.2. Rajasthan to use MLA fund for vaccination

- As part of the efforts to mobilise financial resources for COVID-19 vaccination of people in the age group of 18 to 44 years, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved a proposal to provide ₹3 crore each from the MLA Local Area Development (LAD) Fund. For meeting the expenses, the fund for each legislator has been increased from ₹2.25 crore to ₹5 crore a year.
- ✓ It is the **States' version of a central government scheme - Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLAD).**

✓ The **objective** of this scheme is to **create local need based infrastructure**, to create **assets of public utility** and to **remove regional imbalances** in development.

- As part of the efforts to mobilise financial resources for COVID-19 vaccination of people in the age group of 18 to 44 years, **Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved a proposal to provide ₹3 crore each from the MLA Local Area Development (LAD) Fund.**

## **Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)-Announced in 1993**

- Initially the MPLADS was under the control of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- The MPLAD Scheme was transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in October 1994.
- Amount
  - ✓ Rs. 5 lakh per MP, Later one crore ,Rs. 2 crore from 1998-99 and now it is Rs.5 crore from the financial year 2011-12
- **The MoSPI** has been responsible for the **policy formulation, release of funds and prescribing monitoring mechanism** for implementation of the Scheme.
- A **Department in each State/UT is designated as the Nodal Department with the overall responsibility of supervision, monitoring and coordination** of the MPLADS implementation with the districts and other Line Departments.
- The Government of India informs the State Nodal Department about the **MPLADS funds released to the District Authorities.**
- **The District Authorities report the status of MPLADS implementation** to the Government of India and State Nodal Department.
- Funds are released in the **form of grants in-aid directly to the district authorities**
- The **MPs have a recommendatory** role under the scheme.
- The funds released under the scheme are **non-lapsable.**
- **At least 10% of the projects under implementation in the district are to be inspected every year** by the district authority.
- MPLADS is a Plan Scheme **fully funded by Government of India.**
- **Lok Sabha Members** can recommend works **within their Constituencies**
- **Elected Members of Rajya Sabha** can recommend works **within the State of Election**
- **Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha** can recommend works **anywhere in the country**
- If a **Lok Sabha Constituency is spread over more than one District**, the Member of Parliament can choose any one of the **Districts as Nodal District** in his/her constituency
- M.Ps are to recommend every year, works costing **at least 15 per cent of the MPLADS entitlement** for the year for areas inhabited by **Scheduled Caste population** and 7.5 per cent for areas inhabited by S.T. population.

- In order to **encourage trusts and societies for the betterment of tribal people**, a ceiling of Rs. 75 lakh is stipulated for building assets by trusts and societies subject to conditions prescribed in the scheme guidelines.
- The **District Authorities should maintain information and data on implementation** of the provision for SC/ST areas including inter changeability of funds and also furnish the same on quarterly basis to the nodal department of the State Government.

### **Natural & Man-made Calamities**

- **MPLADS works can also be implemented in the areas prone to or affected by the calamities** like floods, cyclone, Tsunami, earthquake, hailstorm, avalanche, cloud burst, pest attack, landslides, tornado, drought, fire, chemical, biological and radiological hazards.
- **Lok Sabha MPs from the non-affected areas of the State can also recommend permissible works up to a maximum of Rs.25 lakh per annum** in the affected area(s) in that State.
- The funds would be released by the **Nodal district of the MP concerned to the District Authority** of the affected district.
- **In the event of “Calamity of severe nature”** in any part of the country, an **MP can recommend works up to a maximum of Rs.1 crore** for the affected district.
- **Whether a calamity is of severe nature or not, will be decided by the Government of India.**

### **Completion of abandoned/suspended works:**

- In case, there is still any abandoned/suspended MPLAD work under the Scheme, it shall be **completed by the State Government from their own funds**
- MPLAD Scheme can be **converged in individual/stand- alone projects of other Central and State Government schemes provided such works of Central/State Governments Schemes are eligible under MPLADS.**

### **Prohibited work under MPLAD like-**

- **Office and residential buildings belonging to Central and State Government**
- Office and residential buildings and other works belonging to **private and commercial organizations**
- Naming of assets after any person.
- Acquisition of land or any compensation for land acquired.
- **Works within the places of religious worship** and on land belonging to or owned by religious faith/ group. (However, construction of crematoriums and structures on burial/ cremation grounds irrespective of religious faith **can be taken up under the MPLADS** regardless of the location being adjacent to or falling within the area under the places of religious worship)
- Execution of works in unauthorized colonies

### **Permissible**

- Convergence of MPLADS with **MGNREGA**
- Convergence of MPLADS with Khelo India: National Programme for Development of Sports of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

- Utilisation of MPLADS Fund for welfare of the differently abled persons
- **Purchase of computers** for Government and Government aided educational institutions

### 4.3. Most NGOs don't have SBI account

- Only **16% registered NGOs have active bank accounts with the State Bank of India's main branch in Delhi**, a **compulsory requirement** to receive foreign funds from April 1, according to submission made by a non-governmental organisation in the Delhi High Court on Wednesday.
- An Assam-based NGO has also moved the **Gauhati High Court** against another amended provision of the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)** that makes **Aadhaar mandatory for opening and operating the account in Delhi**.
- The **Gauhati High Court** on May 5 sent a notice to the SBI asking it to explain **why Aadhaar was necessary to open a bank account, when in 2018, the Supreme Court in the K.S. Puttaswamy (Aadhaar) case had ruled that mandatorily linking Aadhaar to a bank account "does not satisfy the test of proportionality"**.
- Triple test laid down in the Puttaswamy (Privacy) judgment
  - ✓ **Existence of a law** - backed by the statute i.e. the Aadhaar Act
  - ✓ **Legitimate state interest** - to ensure that social benefit schemes reach the deserving community
  - ✓ **Test of proportionality** - balances the professed benefits of Aadhaar and the potential threat it carries to the fundamental right to privacy

## 5. Economy

### 5.1. Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2021-22

- The Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, has **decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds**

#### Sovereign Gold Bonds scheme

- The Bonds will be sold through Scheduled Commercial banks (**except Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks**), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices, and recognised stock exchanges viz., National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited

#### Issuance

- To be issued by Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the Government of India

#### Eligibility

- The Bonds will be restricted for sale to **resident individuals, HUFs, Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.**

#### Denomination

- The Bonds will be denominated in multiples of gram(s) of gold with a **basic unit of 1 gram**

#### Tenor

- The tenor of the Bond will be for a period of **8 years** with **exit option after 5th year** to be exercised on the next interest payment dates.

#### Minimum size

- Minimum permissible investment will be **1 gram of gold.**

#### Maximum limit

- The maximum limit of subscription shall be **4 KG for individual, 4 Kg for HUF and 20 Kg for trusts**

#### Issue price

- Price of Bond will be **fixed in Indian Rupees** on the basis of simple average of closing price of gold of 999 purity, published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association Limited for the last 3 working days of the week preceding the subscription period.

#### Payment option

- Payment for the Bonds will be **through cash payment (upto a maximum of `20,000) or demand draft or cheque or electronic banking.**

#### Issuance form

- The Gold Bonds will be issued as Government of India Stock under GS Act, 2006.
- The investors will be **issued a Holding Certificate** for the same.
- The Bonds are **eligible for conversion into demat form.**

## Interest rate

- The investors will be compensated at a **fixed rate of 2.50 percent per annum** payable semi-annually on the nominal value.

## Collateral

- Bonds can be used as **collateral for loans**

## Tax treatment

- The **interest on Gold Bonds** shall be taxable as per the provision of Income Tax Act, 1961 (43 of 1961)

## SLR eligibility

- Bonds acquired by the banks shall be **counted towards Statutory Liquidity Ratio**

## 5.2.The World Food Prize

- Dr Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted, a global nutrition expert of Indian descent has won the prestigious 2021 World Food Prize
- Thilsted's research on **small native fish species in Bangladesh led to the development of nutrition-sensitive approaches** to aquatic food systems at all levels, from the farm to food processing to final consumers, resulting in improved diets for millions of the most vulnerable people in Asia and Africa

### World food prize (Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture)

- Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his work in global agriculture, **envisioned a prize** that would honor those who have made significant and measurable contributions to improving the world's food supply
- It is open for any individual without regard to race, religion, nationality or political beliefs. Cash Prize: \$2,50,000.
- It is presented by the **World Food Prize Foundation** which has over 80 companies, individuals, etc. as donors

### Nomination Criteria

- The World Food Prize is awarded for a specific, exceptionally significant, individual achievement.
- **Fields of achievement include**, but are not limited to: soil and land; plant and animal science; food science and technology; nutrition; rural development; marketing; food processing, packaging and storage; water and the environment; natural resource conservation; physical infrastructure; transportation and distribution; special or extraordinary feeding programs; social organization and poverty elimination; economics and finance; policy analysis and implementation; and public advocacy.
- It must be clearly shown that this increase in food security was the direct result of the specific actions
- A nominee **must be living** and in sufficiently good health to attend the World Food Prize Award Ceremony.
- The Prize is intended to be **awarded to one person**.
- In **exceptional circumstances** where an additional person (or persons) has collaborated in an indispensable way, more than one person may be included in the nomination.

## Current affairs Worksheet ( 13th & 14th May 2021)

### Factual sheet for Quick revision

Topic	Description	Update
Environment	Beema Bamboo	
	Bamboo rice	
S n T	OSIRIS ReX	
	Hayabusa	
	Darkside	
	Cloud Access Security Brokers (CPAB)	
Polity	Cloud computing Vs Edge computing	
	Article 311	
	MPLAD & MLA-LAD	
Economy	Triple test	
	Sovereign Gold Bonds scheme	
	World food prize	