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Daily News Discussion (DND)

16th-17th June 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. New software to keep fishing vessels away from Gahiramatha

- The fisheries department of Odisha has started installing a software in the Global Positioning Systems (GPS) of all mechanised fishing vessels to prevent them from entering the Gahiramatha marine sanctuary, famous for its Olive Ridley turtles.

About

- Fishing vessel owners will purchase GPS and the software engineers of the fisheries department will install the software in it.
- Such GPS will alert fishermen to not enter the marine sanctuary as it is a restricted zone for fishing

Recent happenings

- The **Orissa High Court** had directed the state government March 16, 2021 to install the geo coordinates of the sanctuary's boundary in GPS systems of all fishing boats to track their movements.
- The court's action followed a February 4 report in **Down to Earth** that 800 Olive Ridley turtles had died since January this year due to the negligence of the state's forest and fisheries department.
- The court took suo motu cognisance of the report February 23 and registered a case. It constituted a **three-member panel**
- The court has also directed the forest department to physically demarcate the marine sanctuary.
- The **forest department** has accordingly **demarcated the sanctuary area** covering 1,435 square kilometers in the sea from Hukitola to Dhamara by installing 15 buoys

Past issue

- Due to the non-demarcation of the 'No Fishing Zone' in Gahirmatha, forest and coast guard officials used to arrest many fishermen each year on charges of fishing in the sanctuary.
- Most of these entries were made inadvertently by fishermen as the sanctuary was not demarcated.
- Now, we hope fishermen will not enter the sanctuary.

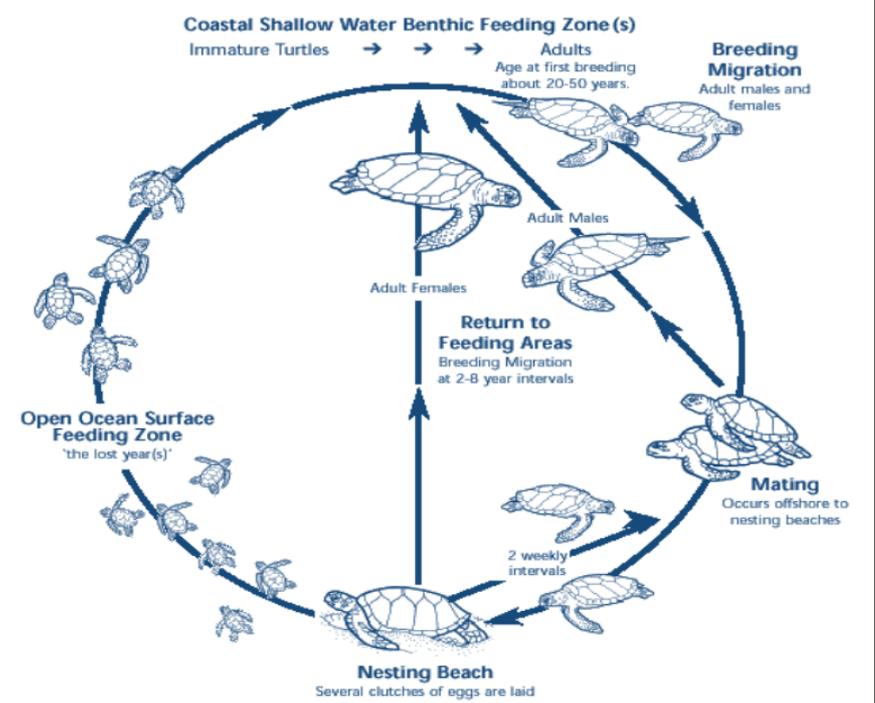
Olive ridley sea Turtle(CMS I/II)					
IUCN	CITES	WLP act	Habitat	Diet	Threat
Vul	I	I	Mostly shallow water North coast S.America W Africa, Indian ocean, Aust, SE Asia	Carnivorous Crabs, shrimp, jellyfish	Habitat loss Trade Pollution Light pollution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles in the world. ❑ Egg harvesting-illegal ❑ Exploited for food, oil, leather, fertilizers (meat not delicious) 					

Arribadas (Mass nesting)

- Nesting Ground in India
 - ✓ Odisha largest nesting ground
 - ✓ Gahirmatha beach (Odisha)
 - ✓ Astaranga coast (Odisha)
 - ✓ Rushikulya river (Odisha)
 - ✓ Devi river Mouth (Odisha)
 - ✓ Hope island of coringa WLS (An P)

Olive ridley sea Turtle (CMS I/II)

- Why Odisha coast
- Estuaries, rivers, creeks, Salty and sweet water
- Estuaries-Breeding grounds
- River mouth-feeding grounds
- 2016 delayed mass nesting
 - ✓ R@ erosion build sand wall
 - ✓ R@ rain tighten sand
 - ✓ R@ delay in wind from land to sea which always coincide with mass nesting



Conservation effort

- OdishaGovt-Turtle excluder device Net design with exit cover-allow turtle to escape.
- Fencing, awareness programmes.
- WWF-Local communities-
 - ✓ Protection of beach
 - ✓ coastal zone planning

1.2.UN dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently said India is on track to achieve its national commitment on land degradation neutrality, and that it's working to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030
- He was delivering the keynote address at a United Nations high-level dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought

Significance

- It will contribute to India's commitment to achieving an additional **carbon sink** of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent
- If left unchecked, it will **erode the very foundations of our societies**, economies, food security, health, safety and quality of life

UNCCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. ● 2018-30 Plan- To achieve land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)
LDN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems
Global effort	<p>The Bonn Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world's deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030 ● launched in 2011 by the Government of Germany and IUCN, and later endorsed and extended by the New York Declaration on Forests at the 2014 UN Climate Summit. <p>Delhi Declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commitment for a range of issues, including gender and health, ecosystem restoration, taking action on climate change, private sector engagement etc <p>Drought toolbox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To assess the drought risk in advance & suggest measures
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 2016 report by the ISRO found that about 29% of India's land (in 2011-13) was degraded, this being a 0.57% increase from 2003-05. ● 3 million hectares of forest cover has been added over last 10 years ● Working to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. ● Unique method- Banni grassland ● Other efforts-MGNREGA, National afforestation plan, SHC, PMKSY, CAMPA

1.3. Massive spider webs have blanketed a region in Australia

- After heavy rains and floods struck Australia's southeastern state of Victoria, lakhs of spiders have spun webs stretching across trees, road signs and paddocks, creating huge "**gossamer**" sheets.



Reason

- Intense rainfall have caused spiders to climb to higher ground using a survival tactic called "**ballooning**", in which the insects throw out silk that latches on to vegetation, allowing them to escape.
- Because this ballooning silk is lighter than air, it latches on to objects such as tree tops, tall grass and road signs, allowing the spiders to climb up
- spiders which lay such webs are called "**vagrant hunters**", which typically live on the ground and do not build a web.
- Even while ballooning after a flood, each spider throws up only one thread – meaning every line in the massive web blanket seen this week is made by a **different insect**; their total thus being expected in the millions.

Recent incidents of animals wreaking havoc

- Also this year, Australia's eastern states witnessed a "mice rain"– a devastating mouse plague that has affected farmers, community members and residents.
- To end the crisis, the government had to authorise the use of an otherwise outlawed poison called bromadiolone.
- In January last year, the South Australia state carried out a five- day culling of up to 10,000 camels, using sniper fire from helicopters.
- Camels in Australia, which number over 10 lakh, were first brought to the continent in the late 19th century from India, when the country's massive interior region was first being explored.
- The feral camels have since **threatened scarce reserves of food** and water, besides damaging infrastructure and creating a hazard for drivers

Full year Current Affairs Revision Through MCQs

Environment & Ecology - Day 2

1. Consider the following statements

1. Species richness is the number of different species represented in an ecological community
2. Species richness and species diversity are always same for the two community with same number of species.

Select the correct answer code:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None of the above

2. Consider the following statements in context to Lichen

1. It is a symbiotic partnership of fungus and tree
2. Lichen can be used to determine the level of pollution and age of rocks.
3. Recently Himachal Pradesh government developed country's first lichen park.

Select the correct answer code:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 2 only
- D. All of the above

3. Due to some reason if there is huge fall in population of species of butterflies , what could be its likely consequences

1. Pollination of some plants could be adversely affected.
2. There could be drastically increase in the fungal infection of some cultivated plants.
3. It could lead to fall in the population of some species of wasp , spider and bird.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

4. Consider the following matches in context to ecosystem services

1. Provisioning services Wood and Fiber
2. Supporting services Nutrient cycling
3. Regulating services Water purification

Select the correct answer code:

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 3 only
- D. All of the above

5. Which of the following adaptation exhibited by Tundra species for their survival:

1. Thick layer of fat
2. Small body & long legs
3. Quick reproduction to prevent extinction
4. Hibernation

Select the correct answer using codes given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2, 3 and 4 only
- C. 1, 3 and 4 only

D. 1 and 4 only

2. Science & Technology

2.1. New Shepard

- Recently **Blue Origin** concluded the online auction for the first seat on New Shepard, a rocket system meant to take tourists to space

What is New Shepard

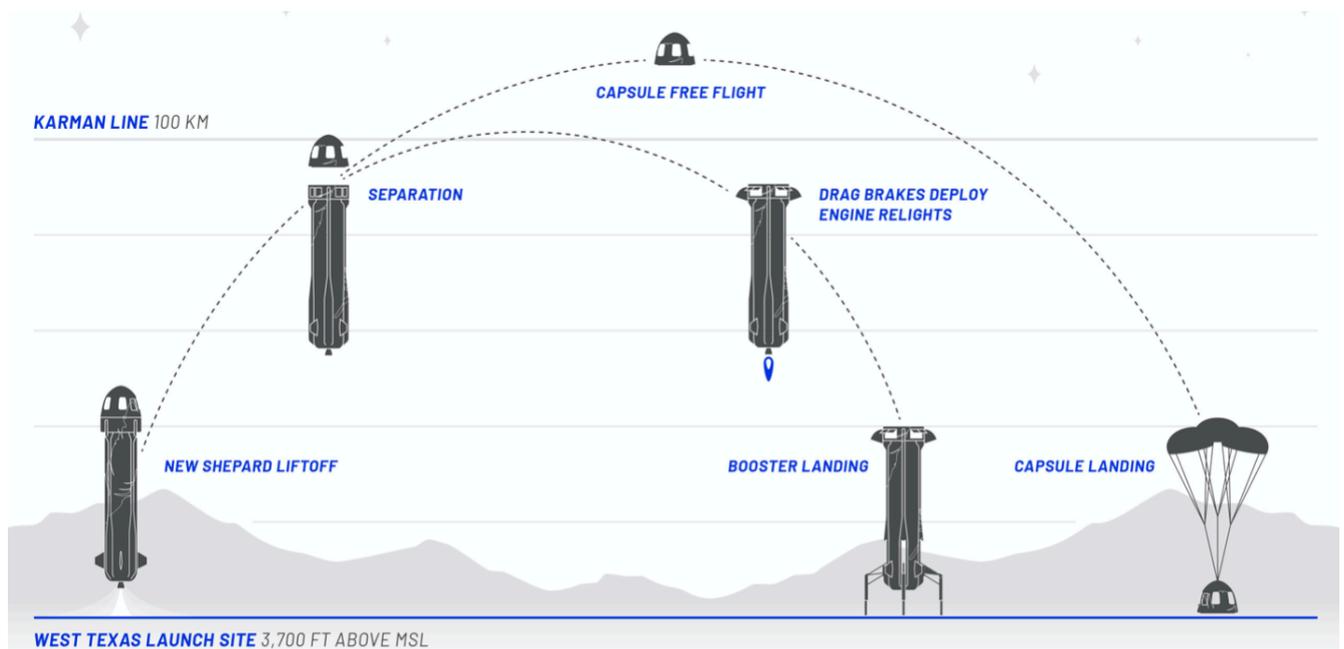
- Named after astronaut Alan Shepard – the first American to go to space – and offers flights to **space over 100 km above the Earth** and accommodation for payloads.
- Essentially, it is a **rocket system** that has been designed to take astronauts and research payloads past the **Karman line** – the internationally recognized boundary of space.

Significance

- The idea is to provide **easier and more cost-effective access to space** meant for purposes such as **academic research, corporate technology development** and entrepreneurial ventures among others.
- It will also allow space tourists to experience **microgravity** by taking them 100 km above the Earth. Space tourism seeks to give lay people the **ability to go to space for recreational, leisure or business purposes**.
- The idea is to make space more **accessible to those individuals** who are not astronauts and want to go to space for non-scientific purposes.

Past

- The first space tourist was **US millionaire Dennis Tito**, who in 2001 paid USD 20 million to hitch a ride on a **Russian Soyuz spacecraft** to visit the international space station and spent eight days there
- **Space Adventures** is the **only private company** to send paying customers to orbital space so far.
- In 2004, test pilot Mike Melville became the first private astronaut to fly beyond the Karman Line.



2.2. Biosafety Level

- All research work has to follow a process and action will be taken if protocols are not followed, said the Health Ministry recently

Issue

- The issue arises to a question on a probe into a filovirus **study of bats in Nagaland undertaken by the Bengaluru-based National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).**
- The Ministry is also concerned about the storage of the Nagaland bat samples.
- The Ministry wants the samples to be at the Biosafety Level-4 (BSL-4) standard facility at the National Institute of Virology laboratory in Pune rather than NCBS's Bengaluru facilities that are rated BSL-3.
- It said samples must be handled in a laboratory equipped for "biosafety and biosecurity conditions" as they can pose a "significant public health hazard"

Biological Safety Levels (BSL)

- are a series of protections relegated to autoclave-related activities that take place in particular biological labs.
- They are individual safeguards designed to protect laboratory personnel, as well as the surrounding environment and community

Biosafety Level	BSL-1	BSL-2	BSL-3	BSL-4
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No Containment · Defined organisms · Unlikely to cause disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Containment · Moderate Risk · Disease of varying severity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · High Containment · Aerosol Transmission · Serious/Potentially lethal disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Max Containment · "Exotic," High-Risk Agents · Life-threatening disease
Sample Organisms	E.Coli	Influenza, HIV, Lyme Disease	Tuberculosis	Ebola Virus
Pathogen Type	Agents that present minimal potential hazard to personnel & the environment.	Agents associated with human disease & pose moderate hazards to personnel & the environment.	Indigenous or exotic agents, agents that present a potential for aerosol transmission, & agents causing serious or potentially lethal disease.	Dangerous & exotic agents that pose a high risk of aerosol-transmitted laboratory infections & life-threatening disease.
Autoclave Requirements	None	None	Pass-thru autoclave with Bioseal required in laboratory room.	Pass-thru autoclave with Bioseal required in laboratory room.

2.3.Drones might ferry vaccines

- Drones could soon be used for delivering COVID-19 vaccines in remote and hard to reach geographies in the country

About

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has invited expression of interest from drone operators to “develop a delivery model”
- The tender document lays down the technical specifications required, which include the ability of drones to fly “**beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS)**”, carry a payload of up to 4 kg and cover a distance of up to 35 km.
- These **experimental flights start from June 18** and are likely to conclude by October.
- Based on learnings from these test flights, the government will frame the **guidelines for BVLOS** operations and they could be finalised by March 31 next year
- Vaccines are carried in **ice boxes** containing dry ice in order to maintain required temperature levels.
- These boxes contain data loggers, which **have 4G network** connectivity to relay **live recording of temperature** through a mobile app to an operator on the ground

Need

- We need smart vaccination instead of mass vaccination to stem an epidemic.
- For this, we need to focus not only on areas where the infection is intense but also on places where there are indications that the test **positivity rate is still low** and that if you saturate the priority groups there through innovative vaccine delivery mechanism, you can stop a surge.
- This is known as **ring-fencing**

3. Geography

3.1. India to launch deep ocean mission

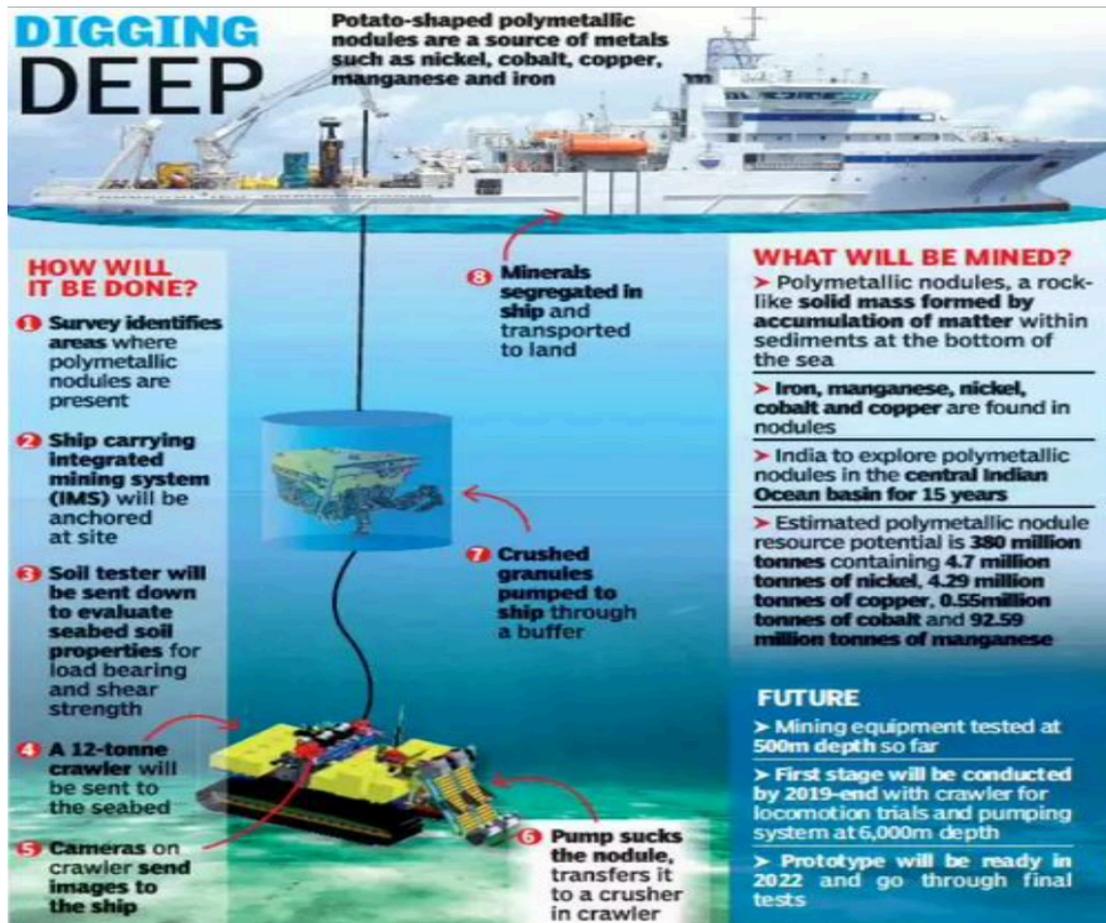
- The Union Cabinet has approved the long-pending deep ocean mission, which among other things involves developing a submersible vehicle that will allow a crew to plunge 6,000 metres into the ocean and hunt the floor for precious metals
 - ✓ In the works since 2018, the mission is expected to cost ₹4,077 crore over the next five years. The estimated cost for the first phase of three years (2021-24) would be ₹2,823.4 crore.
 - ✓ The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional mission

There are six components to the programme.

- First
 - ✓ A manned submersible will be developed to carry three people to a depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools.
 - ✓ An integrated mining system will be also developed for mining polymetallic nodules at those depths in the central Indian Ocean.
- Second
 - ✓ It involves developing Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services, which entails developing a suite of observations and models to understand and provide future projections of important climate variables on seasonal to decadal time scales.
- Third
 - ✓ searching for deep sea flora and fauna, including microbes, and studying ways to sustainably utilise them
- Fourth
 - ✓ The fourth component is to explore and identify potential sources of hydrothermal minerals that are sources of precious metals formed from the earth's crust along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges
- Fifth
 - ✓ The fifth component involves studying and preparing detailed engineering design for offshore Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) powered desalination plants.
- Sixth
 - ✓ aimed at grooming experts in the field of ocean biology and engineering. This component aims to translate research into industrial applications and product development through on-site business incubator facilities.

About Deep ocean Mission

- The Deep Ocean Mission was in 2019 envisaged as a ₹8,000 crore mission
- India has been allotted a site of 75,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN).
- These are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt.
- Being able to lay hands on a fraction of that reserve can meet the energy requirement of India for the next 100 years



UNCLOS

- As a law of the sea, came into operation and became effective from 16th November 1982.
- The features and highlights of the same can be explained as follows:
 - ✓ UNCLOS as the currently prevailing law of the sea is **binding** completely.
 - ✓ UN does not have any major functional role in the working of UNCLOS .

UNCLOS Initiative

- International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)
 - ✓ Independent **judicial body** that adjudicates disputes arising out of the convention.
- International Seabed Authority



✓ It was formed in 1994 for regulating the exploration and exploitation of marine non-living resources of oceans in international waters.

● **Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)**

✓ Facilitating the implementation of UNCLOS with respect to the establishment of the outer limits of the continental shelf **beyond 200 nautical miles.**

4. Economy

4.1. Rice for ethanol production

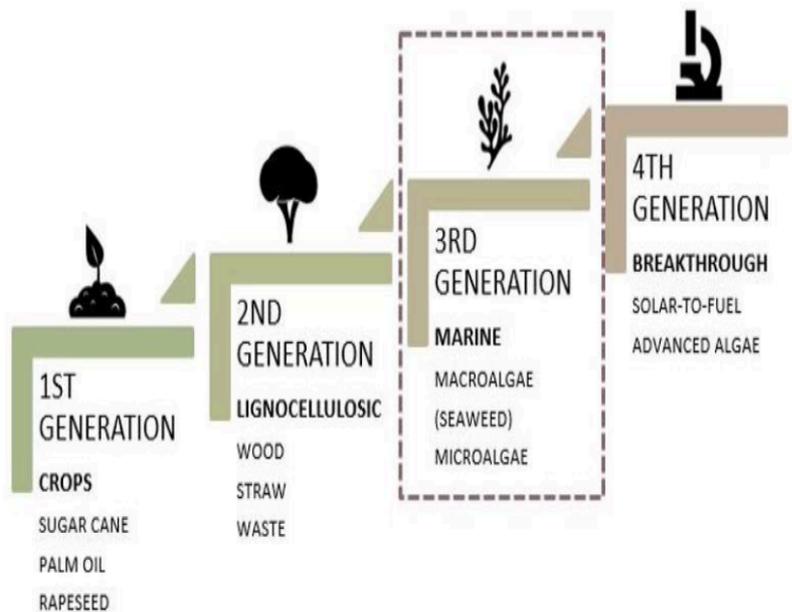
- Centre has allocated about 78,000 tonnes of rice from Food Corporation of India (FCI) stocks at a subsidised rate of Rs 20 per kg to distilleries for ethanol production

About

- The government has set a target of **blending 20-percent ethanol** with petrol by 2025-26.
- To achieve that target, over 1,000 crore liters of ethanol will be required to blend with the petrol. While half of this will come from the **sugar** the rest will come grain-based distilleries
- As per the data available with the food ministry, **till 31st May 2021**, ethanol blending has **reached 7.7%** and by end of the current ethanol year, the government expects to achieve 8-8.5% blending.

Criticism

- This move has been **criticised** on the grounds that **how can the government waste food stock for fuel** when the considerable number of the population **doesn't have food** and is **suffering from malnutrition**.



National Policy on Biofuels, 2018 (For detail watch DND-6 May)

Objective

- To achieve 20% ethanol-blending and 5% biodiesel-blending by the year 2030
- It also expands the scope of feedstock for ethanol production and has provided for incentives for production of advanced biofuels

Categorises biofuels

- **First Generation (1G):** Bio-alcohols, Biodiesel, etc.
- **Advanced Biofuels or Second Generation (2G):** Ethanol, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to drop-in fuels, etc.
- **Third Generation (3G):** Butanol.
- **Fourth Generation (4G) :** Fuel from genetically engineered crops.

Expansion of raw material

- It expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production by allowing use of sugarcane juice, sugar containing materials like sugar beet, sweet sorghum, starch containing materials like corn, cassava, damaged food grains like wheat, broken rice, rotten potatoes which are **unfit for human consumption**.

4.2.Hallmarking of gold

- The government recently announced the **phased implementation of mandatory hallmarking** of gold jewellery with effect from June 16
- In the first phase, gold hallmarking will be **available in only in 256 districts** and **jewellers having annual turnover above Rs 40 lakh** will come under its purview

What is hallmarking of gold?

- The Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), which operates **gold and silver hallmarking scheme in India**, **defines hallmarking as the accurate determination and official recording** of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles.
- So, it is a **guarantee of purity or fineness** of precious metal articles

Which metals are covered hallmarking in India?

- The government, through a notification issued on June 14, 2018, notified two categories—**gold jewellery and gold artefacts**; and **silver jewellery and silver artefacts**—under the purview of hallmarking. So, hallmarking in India is available for jewellery of only two metals—gold and silver

Exemption

- Export and re-import of jewellery as per Trade Policy of Government of India – **Jewellery for international exhibitions, jewellery for government- approved B2B domestic exhibitions** will be exempted from mandatory Hallmarking.
- **Watches, fountain pens and special types of jewellery such as Kundan, Polki and Jadau** will be exempted from hallmarking.

Will there be any penalty on jewellers for non-compliance with the hallmarking norm?

- No penalty will be imposed till August 2021

Are all jewellers covered under the purview of hallmarking?

- No. Jewellers with annual turnover up to Rs 40 lakh will be exempted from mandatory hallmarking

What are the purity standards for gold and silver under the hallmarking scheme?

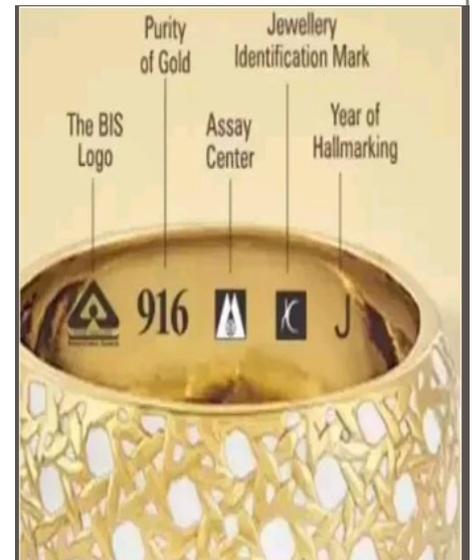
- As per BIS standards, there are **three categories** of hallmarking based on purity of gold—**22 carat, 18 carat and 14 carat**.
- However, the ministry on 15 June announced that “Gold of Additional carats **20, 23 and 24** will also be allowed for Hallmarking
- The ministry further said that jewellers can continue to buy back old gold jewellery without a hallmark from consumers.

What was the need of making hallmarking mandatory?

- India is the biggest consumer of gold. However, the level of hallmarked jewellery is very low in the country. According to the ministry, at present, only 30% of Indian gold jewellery is hallmarked.

What is the infrastructure available?

- In the last five years there has been a 25% increase in the number of assaying & hallmarking centres (A&H centres) in India. The number such centres have risen from 454 to 945. At present, 940 assaying and hallmarking centres are operative. Of this, 84 centres have been set up under the government subsidy scheme in various districts. These centres can hallmark 1,500 articles in a day and the estimated hallmarking capacity of these centres per year is 14 crore articles.
- According to World Gold Council, India has about 4 lakh jewellers, of whom only 35,879 have been BIS-certified



5. Polity

5.1. Tulu Language

- Various organisations initiated a Twitter campaign demanding official language status to Tulu in Karnataka and Kerala

About Tulu Language

- Tulu is a Dravidian language spoken mainly in two coastal districts Dakshina Kannada and Udupi of Karnataka and Kasaragod district of Kerala.
- As per the **2011 Census report**, there are **18,46,427 Tulu-speaking** people in India.
- Some scholars suggest Tulu is among the **earliest Dravidian languages** with a history of 2000 years
- Tulu has a rich oral literature tradition with **folk-song forms like paddana, and traditional folk theatre yakshagana.**
- Tulu also has an **active tradition of cinema** with around 5 to 7 Tulu language movies produced a year

Demand by Tulu speakers

- To give it official language status and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution.

Present status of Tulu

- Tulu are confined to regions of Karnataka and Kerala, informally known as Tulu Nadu.
- At present, Tulu is **not an official language** in the country
- The Karnataka government introduced Tulu as a language in schools a few years ago.
- According to the state education department, in the year 2020, a total of 956 children from Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts **wrote Tulu as the third optional language in SSLC (Class 10) examination**

Official Language or Languages of a State

- **Part XVII of the Indian Constitution** deals with the official language in **Articles 343 to 351.**

Article 345

- The **Legislature of a State** may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State

Eighth Schedule of the Constitution (Article 344 (1) and 351)

Initial 14 Languages	Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu
21 st Amendment Act of 1967	Sindhi
71 st Amendment Act of 1992	Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali
92 nd Amendment Act of 2003	Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali

5.2. Four engineering colleges in State get AICTE-IDEA labs

- Four engineering colleges in the State (Tamil Nadu) will offer 24x7 laboratory facility where students can work on an idea and take it to the prototype stage. They are among the 49 institutions chosen across the country.

AICTE-IDEA

- The All India Council for Technical Education launched IDEA (idea development, evaluation and application) labs to set up **infrastructure to encourage students to experiment** with the fundamental application of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and enable product visualisation.
- The labs will **provide facilities under one roof** to convert an idea into a prototype.
- According to the Council, the labs will be available round-the-clock to **encourage students and faculty to take up creative work.**

Technical education

- **1943** -Constitution of the Technical Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE)
- **1944** -Preparation of the Sergeant Report
- **1945** -Formation of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) **1987-The All India Council For Technical Education Act 1987**

The AICTE Act

- Constituted to provide for the establishment of an **All India Council for Technical Education** with a view to proper planning and co-ordinated development of a technical education system throughout the country.

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

- Set up in November 1945 as a **national-level apex advisory body to conduct** a survey on the facilities available for technical education and to promote development in the country in a coordinated and integrated manner. And to ensure the same, as stipulated in the National Policy of Education (1986), AICTE was vested with:
 - **Statutory authority** for planning, formulation, and maintenance of norms & standards
 - Quality assurance through accreditation
 - Funding in priority areas, monitoring, and evaluation
 - Maintaining parity of certification & awards
 - The management of technical education in the country

5.3. Twitter's 'failure to comply' with Govt guidelines

- Micro-blogging platform Twitter is facing fresh heat from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for failing to adhere to norms while appointing executives in the roles of Resident Grievance Officer, Nodal Officer and Chief Compliance Officer.
- This, according to the government, means that the protection under Section 79 of the Information Technology (IT) Act, accorded to Twitter for being a social media intermediary, now stands withdrawn.

What is the protection accorded to intermediaries under Section 79 of IT Act?

- Section 79 says that any intermediary shall not be held legally or otherwise liable for any third party information, data, or communication link made available or hosted on its platform.
This means that as long as a platform acts just as the messenger carrying a message from point A to point B, without interfering with its content in any manner, it will be safe from any legal prosecution brought upon due to the message being transmitted

How does this impact Twitter, then?

- In the short run, since the protection accorded to Twitter under Section 79 of the IT Act is now gone This means that if someone puts out any content on Twitter that leads to some form of violence, or violates any Indian law with respect to content, not only the person that has put out the tweet will be held responsible, even Twitter will be legally liable for the content as it no longer has the protection
- In the longer run, there is also the theoretical possibility that Twitter might be subjected to the 26 per cent cap of direct foreign investment in media and publishing, which in turn means that the platform may be forced to look for an Indian buyer for the remaining 74 per cent stake

Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

Who is an Intermediary?

- An 'intermediary' has been defined in Section 2(w) of the Act as "any person who on behalf of another person receives, stores or transmits that record or provides any service with respect to that record and includes telecom service providers, web-housing service providers, search engines, online payment sites, online auction sites, online market places and cyber cafes"

Intermediary Liability under the Information Technology Act, 2000

- Section 79 of the Act is a 'safe harbour' provision which grants conditional immunity to intermediaries from liability for third party acts.
- Section 79(1) of the Act grants intermediaries a conditional immunity with regard to any third party information, data or communication link made available or hosted by them. This immunity is subject to section 79 (2) and 79 (3) of the Act.

Intermediary Liability under the Information Technology Act, 2000

- 79(2) to be applicable, intermediaries are to have neither knowledge nor control over the information which is transmitted or stored.
- Furthermore, Section 79(3)(b) envisages a 'notice and take down' regime, wherein the intermediary is required to take down unlawful content upon receiving actual knowledge of its existence.

- Section 79 states that an intermediary (Digital media and OTTs) shall **not be liable for any third party information, data, or communication**

2011 guidelines

- After the amendment to the IT Act in 2008, the Government of India introduced the Intermediary Guidelines, **which were mandatory for all intermediaries to follow for claiming safe harbour protection.**
- Intermediaries to **publish rules and regulations**, privacy policy and user agreement;
- **Rules and regulations, terms and conditions or user agreement shall specify all prohibited acts**, i.e. belonging to other persons, **grossly harmful, harassing** or unlawful, harms minors, infringes any intellectual property rights, violates any law, is deceiving or misleading, impersonates any person, contains virus, threatens India etc. and the intermediary should inform users that violation of same shall lead to termination of access

2011 guidelines

- Intermediaries to **disable such information within 36 hours** and storage of same for 90 days for investigation purposes,
- Intermediaries to **appointment and publish the details of a Grievance Officer** on its website

issues

- **Ambiguity in prohibited content** and forced decision by intermediaries.
- Further, **any person could request the intermediaries** to take down the unlawful content.

Shreya Singhal v Union of India (2015)

- In **Shreya Singhal vs. UOI**, the Supreme Court read down Section 79(3)(b) to mean that an **“intermediary upon receiving actual knowledge from a court order or on being notified by the appropriate government or its agency that unlawful acts relating to Article 19 (2) are going to be committed then fails to expeditiously remove or disable access to such material”**.
- Thus, an intermediary is **only required to act upon receiving a court order or a notification from the appropriate government** or its agency.
- The intermediary is **not required to exercise its own discretion regarding the material which is to be removed or disabled.**

New IT rules

Reason

Users

- Bigger user base over **44.8 Crore YouTube users**, over **53 crore WhatsApp users**, and **41 Crore Facebook users**.

Existing loopholes

- **Section 69** of the IT Act gives **power to the government to issue directions “to intercept, decrypt or monitor...any information generated, transmitted, received or stored”** in any digital equipment.

- The **Intermediaries are required to preserve and retain specified information**. Further, they have to obey the directions issued by the government from time to time.

Sec 79

- By adhering to government rules, they will **get protected from legal action for any user-generated content under Section 79**.
- Section 79 states that an intermediary (Digital media and OTTs) shall not be liable for any third party information, data, or communication

New IT Rules related to Social Media:

● Publishing unlawful information

✓ Social media companies are **prohibited from hosting or publishing any unlawful information** in relation to the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, public order, friendly relations with foreign countries, etc.

✓ Government role- the **government can take down prohibited information within 24 hours**. The user will be given a notice before his/her content is taken down.

● Monthly compliance report

✓ social media companies need to **publish a monthly compliance report**.

● Traceability

✓ The government can direct messaging platforms to **tie the identity of the user with the message transmitted** by him/her for strengthening traceability.

● Safe harbour provisions

✓ The safe harbour provisions have been defined under **Section 79 of the IT Act**, and protect social media intermediaries by giving them immunity from legal prosecution for any content posted on their platforms.

✓ In case, due diligence is not followed by the intermediary, **safe harbour provisions** will not apply to them

● Safety and Dignity of Users

✓ Intermediaries shall **remove or disable access within 24 hours of receipt of complaints** of contents that exposes the private areas of individuals, show such individuals in full or partial nudity or in sexual act or is in the nature of impersonation including morphed images etc.

✓ Such a complaint can be filed either by the individual or by any other person on his/her behalf.

● Grievance Redressal Mechanism is Mandatory

✓ Intermediaries shall **appoint a Grievance Officer** to deal with complaints and share the name and contact details of such officers.

✓ Grievance Officer shall acknowledge the complaint within **twenty four hours and resolve it within fifteen days from its receipt**.

- Categories of Social Media Intermediaries

- ✓ Based on the number of users, on the social media platform intermediaries have been divided in two groups:

- ❖ **Social media intermediaries.**

- ❖ **Significant social media intermediaries.**

Additional Due Diligence for the Significant Social Media Intermediaries

- Appointments

- ✓ Appoint a **Chief Compliance Officer** who shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the Act and Rules. Such a person should be a **resident of India**.

- ✓ Appoint a **Nodal Contact Person** for 24×7 coordination with law enforcement agencies. Such a person shall be a **resident in India**.

- ✓ Appoint a **Resident Grievance Officer** who shall perform the functions mentioned under the Grievance Redressal Mechanism. Such a person shall be a **resident in India**

- Identity of the Originator

- ✓ Significant social media intermediaries providing services primarily in the nature of messaging shall **enable identification of the first originator of the information**.

- ✓ **Required only** for the purposes of prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution or punishment of an offence related to **sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, or public order**, Or of incitement to an offence relating to the above or in relation with rape, sexually explicit material or child sexual abuse material punishable with **imprisonment for a term of not less than five years**.

- Compliance report

- ✓ Need to publish a **monthly compliance report mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken** on the complaints as well as details of contents removed proactively.

New IT Rules related to Digital media and OTT platforms:

- A Code of Ethics has been prescribed for OTT platforms and digital media entities.

- ✓ The streaming platforms (Like Netflix and Amazon Prime) will have to self-classify content on **five age-based categories**:

- ✓ U (universal), U/A 7+, U/A 13+, U/A 16+, and A (Adult).

- Parental lock

- ✓ Platforms would be required to **implement parental locks for content classified as U/A 13+ or higher**, and reliable age verification mechanisms for content classified as "A".

- News publisher

- ✓ **Publishers of news** on digital media will have to observe the norms of **journalistic conduct of the Press Council of India and the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act**.

✓ A **three-level grievance redressal mechanism** has also been established:

- A three-level grievance redressal mechanism has also been established:

- **Grievance Redressal Mechanism**

✓ A three-level grievance redressal mechanism has been established under the rules with different levels of self-regulation.

- **Level-I: Self-regulation by the publishers**

✓ Publisher shall appoint a **Grievance Redressal Officer** based in India who shall be responsible for the redressal of grievances received by it.

✓ The officer shall **take decision** on every grievance received by it **within 15 days**.

- **Level-II: Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the publishers;**

- **Self-Regulatory Body**

✓ There may be one or more self-regulatory bodies of publishers.

✓ Such a body shall be **headed by a retired judge of the SC, a High Court or independent eminent person and have not more than six members**.

✓ Such a body will have to **register with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**.

✓ This body will **oversee the adherence by the publisher to the Code of Ethics and address grievances that have not been resolved by the publisher within 15 days**.

- **Level-III: Oversight mechanism.**

- **Oversight Mechanism**

✓ **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** shall formulate an oversight mechanism.

✓ It shall publish a charter for self-regulating bodies, including Codes of Practices. It shall establish an Inter-Departmental Committee for hearing grievances.

Display Rating

- Shall prominently **display the classification rating specific to each content or programme together** with a content descriptor **informing the user about the nature of the content**, and advising on viewer description (if applicable) at the beginning of every programme enabling the user to make an informed decision, prior to watching the programme.

Current affairs Worksheet (16th - 17th June 2021)

Factual sheet for Quick revision

Topic	Description	Update
Env	Olive ridley sea turtle UNCCD land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) The Bonn Challenge Drought toolbox Delhi Declaration gossamer” sheets.	
Sc n T	New Shephard Biosafety Level	

Economy	Biofuel policy Hallmarking of gold	
Polity	Tulu Language Eighth Schedule languages AICTE-IDEA IT rules 2021	
Geography	Deep ocean Mission ISA PMN	