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## News Analysis (14 Aug, 2020)

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### Israel-UAE Peace Deal

#### Why in News

Recently, the President of the USA has announced that **Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** have **agreed to establish full diplomatic ties** as part of a deal to **halt the annexation of occupied land sought by the Palestinians** for their future state.

Both the UAE and Israel are the **USA's close allies in West Asia.**



## Key Points

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- The UAE has become the **first Gulf Arab state** to do so and only the **third Arab nation to have active diplomatic ties with Israel**.
  - **Egypt** made a peace deal with Israel in **1979**, followed by **Jordan** in **1994**.
- Under the deal, **Israel would suspend its plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank**.
  - The West Bank is **sandwiched between Israel and Jordan**. One of its major cities is **Ramallah**, the **de facto administrative capital of Palestine**.
  - Israel took control of it in the **Six-day Arab-Israeli war, 1967** and has over the years established settlements there.
- A **joint statement from the USA, the UAE and Israel** has been issued which says that **delegations would meet in the coming weeks** to sign deals on direct flights, security, telecommunications, energy, tourism and health care.
  - Both nations will also partner on fighting the **Covid-19 pandemic** together.
- It **remains unclear** what prompted Israel and the UAE to make the announcement now.
  - In June 2020, the UAE's ambassador to the USA **warned that Israel's plan to annex the Jordan Valley and other parts of the occupied West Bank would upend Israel's efforts to improve ties** with Arab nations.
- **Background:**
  - **Formed in 1971**, the UAE is a **USA-allied federation of seven sheikhdoms** on the Arabian Peninsula which **did not recognise Israel** over its occupation of land home to the Palestinians.
  - The UAE **relied on white-collar** (people who perform professional, desk, managerial or administrative work) **Palestinians** in creating its nation and **maintained its stance that Israel should allow the creation of a Palestinian state** on land it seized in the **1967 war**.
  - In recent years, **ties between Gulf Arab nations and Israel have quietly grown**, in part over their **shared enmity of Iran** and the **Lebanese militant group Hezbollah**.
  - The UAE also shares Israel's distrust of Islamist groups like the **Muslim Brotherhood** and the **militant group Hamas** that holds the Gaza Strip.
- **Impact on the UAE:**
  - The deal **smoothens the UAE's international campaign** to be seen as a beacon of tolerance in the Middle East despite being governed by autocratic rulers.
  - It **puts the UAE out first in a regional recognition race** among neighbouring Gulf Arab states.

- **Impact on Israel:**

- The announcement **justifies** the year-long claims of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that his **government enjoys closer ties to Arab nations** than publicly acknowledged.
- The deal gives Netanyahu a **domestic boost** at a time when Israel's coalition government is facing infighting and the possibility of early elections.

- **Impact on the USA:**

The recognition **grants a diplomatic win** to the USA President Donald Trump ahead of the November election.

Neither his efforts to bring the war in Afghanistan to an end nor efforts to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians have been successful yet.

- **For Palestine:**

For Palestinians, who long have relied on Arab backing in their struggle for independence, the announcement **marked both a win and setback** for the **Israel-Palestine relations**.

While the deal **halts Israeli annexation plans**, the Palestinians have repeatedly **urged Arab governments not to normalize relations with Israel until a peace agreement** establishing an independent Palestinian state is reached.

## Way Forward

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- The deal marks a historic day and a significant step forward for peace in the Middle East.
- Opening direct ties between two of the Middle East's most dynamic societies and advanced economies will transform the region by spurring economic growth, enhancing technological innovation and forging closer people-to-people relations.

## Source: IE

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## Universal Ratification to Child Labour Convention

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### Why in News

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Recently, **International Labour Organization (ILO)**'s convention on **Worst Forms of Child Labour** also known as **Convention No. 182** received **universal ratification** after the **Kingdom of Tonga** ratified the same.



## Key Points

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- **Universal Ratification:**

It means ratification by all the members of an organisation. **Convention No. 182** has received ratification from all the 187 members of ILO.

- **Child Labour:**

- The ILO **defines** child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development.
- In the least developed countries, slightly **more than one in four children (ages 5 to 17)** are engaged in labour that is considered detrimental to their health and development.
- The eradication of child labour is part of the **Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7.**
- The **UN General Assembly** has declared **2021 as the year for the elimination of child labour.**

- **Convention No. 182:**

- The convention was **adopted by ILO** member states meeting in Geneva in **1999.**
- It **aims to protect children from the worst forms of child labour,** which include slavery, prostitution, trafficking, deployment of children in armed conflict and other conditions that compromise their overall well-being.

- **Other International Laws on Child Labour:**
  - **The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989:** It contains the idea that children are not just objects who belong to their parents and for whom decisions are made, or adults in training. Rather, **they are human beings and individuals** with their own rights.
  - **Minimum Age Convention 1973:** It aims to prevent the employment of children below a lower age threshold.
    - Both **Convention No. 182** and the **1973 Minimum Age Convention** are among the **eight core ILO Conventions** regarded as embodying the spirit of the 1998 declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work.
  - **India ratified the Convention No. 182** and the **1973 Minimum Age Convention** in 2017.
- **Impact of Laws on Child Labour:**
  - According to ILO, **incidence of child labour and its worst forms dropped** by almost 40% between 2000 and 2016 as ratification rates on child labour increased and countries adopted laws and policies.
  - The conventions have resulted in **significant increases in enrolments in primary education.**
  - These conventions also **provide the necessary framework to counteract the predominance of informality** in the conditions of work and ought to be a priority for governments.
- **Challenges Related to Child Labour:**
  - The Sustainable Developmental Goal (SDG) aims at **complete abolition of child labour by 2025.** However, still an **estimated 152 million are trapped in child labour and 72 million of them are engaged in hazardous work.**
  - The **Covid-19 pandemic** is also threatening the reversal of recent gains, with widespread job losses, deterioration in conditions of work, decline in household incomes and temporary school closures.

## Way Forward

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- The **cycle of poverty and its implications must be addressed** properly, so families can find other means to survive. Many **NGOs like Bachpan Bachao Andolan, ChildFund, CARE India**, etc. have been working to eradicate child labour in India.
- Right kind of focus and orientation with state level authorities is also needed to avoid the practice of child labour. **Forced Child Labour** requires an urgent action from governments and the international communities.

**Source: TH**

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## Meeting of Vaccine Panel

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19** held its first meeting to consider the **logistics and ethical aspects** of procurement and administration of Covid-19 vaccine.

The **World Health Organisation** (WHO) chief scientist has **cautioned against 'vaccine nationalism'** and held that it is in everybody's self-interest to **take an equitable approach to vaccine distribution and deployment**.

### Key Points

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- India would **leverage domestic vaccine manufacturing capacity** as well as **engage with all international players** for the early delivery of vaccines in India and also in low and middle-income countries.
- **Discussions were held on:**
  - **'Conceptualisation and Implementation Mechanism'** to create a digital infrastructure for inventory management and delivery mechanism of the vaccine, including tracking of the vaccination process, with particular focus on the last-mile delivery.
  - **Financial resources required for procurement** of vaccines and various options for financing the same.
  - **Available options in terms of delivery platforms, cold chain and associated infrastructure** for the rollout of Covid-19 vaccination.
  - **India's support to its key neighbours and development partner countries** for vaccines.
- This group is also **expected to deliberate on the availability of a vaccine to Indians** after it is fully developed.
  - The **Serum Institute of India (SII), Pune** is in the **process of developing** around 100 million doses by the end of 2020 but it is not clear how many of them will be available to Indians.
    - The **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)** has given approval to the SII to conduct Phase II/III clinical trials of **Covishield** in India.
  - **Russia has also given regulatory approval to its home-grown vaccine (Sputnik V)**. However, **details on its early trial performance are not available** and Indian officials have not commented on whether there is any **India-Russia** partnership to either test or procure the vaccine.

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## Vaccine Nationalism

- **Vaccine nationalism** occurs when a country manages to **secure doses of vaccine for its own citizens or residents** before they are made available in other countries. This is done through **pre-purchase agreements between a government and a vaccine manufacturer**.
  - Currently, there are over 200 Covid-19 vaccine candidates in development and 27 of them on clinical trials across the world.
  - Countries like **India, the USA and Russia have not joined the Access to Covid-19 Tools Accelerator**, which was launched by the WHO to promote collaboration among countries in the development and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines and treatments.
- **Concerns:**
  - It would be **impossible for the world to go back to normal** and for the economies to recover if **only pockets of people are protected** as it will create imbalance by allocating vaccines to moderately at-risk populations in wealthy countries over populations at higher risk in developing economies.
    - During the **Swine Flu (H1N1) pandemic, high-income countries cornered vaccines** leaving very little for low-income countries.
    - They **gave up some of their stockpiled vaccines** for distribution in low-income countries **only after knowing that the pandemic was not so serious**.
    - **Covid-19 pandemic** is far severe as apart from the **other spreading methods**, there is a fear of **aerosol transmission** too which could happen in certain situations in what is called as **“opportunistic aerosolisation”**.
      - In **opportunistic aerosolisation**, airborne infections transmit under **favourable conditions like a closed environment and poor ventilation** where the virus could circulate in the environment for hours.
  - It **disadvantages countries with fewer resources and low bargaining power** and deprives populations from timely access to vital public health goods.
  - Vaccine nationalism also runs **against the fundamental principles of vaccine development and global public health** which involve several parties from multiple countries.
  - **Political leaders have a responsibility** towards their own people so they will think about protecting their own people first.
  - **Getting a consensus** on which set of people would get the vaccine first, is a big concern in itself.

- **Suggestions:**

- The **first batch** of the vaccines **should be made available to all frontline, health and social care workers, police and others who are at high risk** of getting the infection, instead of the otherwise healthy adult population.
  - 10% of all infections have occurred in healthcare workers and it would be unfair not to protect them before everyone.
- **Vaccines distribution can learn from the example of the WHO's Solidarity Trials** in which 25 countries participated and over 6,500 patients were recruited.
- **Pre-purchase agreements and contracts should not trump equitable access** to global public health goods and **developed countries should pledge to refrain from reserving vaccines** for their populations during public health crises.
- **International institutions**, including the WHO, should **coordinate negotiations** to produce a framework for equitable access to vaccines during public health crises.

## Way Forward

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- Vaccine candidates are being developed in India which will allow it to play a major role in manufacturing and scaling of vaccines apart from the research and development.
- Nations should stop engaging in overly nationalistic behaviours as it harms patient populations across the globe. It can eventually harm a nation's own citizens and residents and perpetuate structural inequalities in the health care system.
- A nationalistic stance toward the pandemic will prolong this global health and economic crisis so there is a need to have a multilateral or global approach to vaccine deployment and distribution.
- A vaccine can end the pandemic but only if all countries ensure timely, equitable, global access to it and if it is allocated on the basis of the best evidence of what will stop transmission and protect the most vulnerable groups.

## Source: TH

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## Demand for 6th Schedule Status: Arunachal Pradesh

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### Why in News

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The recent revival of the demand for two **autonomous councils** in Arunachal Pradesh has led to the call for bringing the entire Arunachal Pradesh under the ambit of the **6<sup>th</sup> Schedule** or **Article 371 (A)** of the Constitution.



- Currently Arunachal Pradesh is **neither under 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule nor under 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule**. It is under the **Inner Line Permit (ILP)** system.
  - The **6<sup>th</sup> Schedule** is applied in **Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura**.
  - The **5<sup>th</sup> Schedule** areas are declared in the States of **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan**.
- On the other hand, **Article 371 A** is applied in **Nagaland** which provides special status to Nagaland.

## Key Points

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- **6<sup>th</sup> Schedule:**
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution **provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram to safeguard the rights of the tribal population** in these states. This special provision is provided under **Article 244(2)** and **Article 275(1)** of the Constitution.
 

The **tribes in the above states have not assimilated** much with the life and ways of the other people in these states. These areas still have the presence of **anthropological specimens**.
  - Based on the reports of the **Bordoloi Committee** formed by the Constituent Assembly, the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule was formulated to provide **limited autonomy** to the **tribal regions of North-East**.
    - The committee report stated that there was a need for a system of administration that would allow tribal areas to become developed.
    - The report also called for the protection of these tribal areas from exploitation by the people in the plains and preserving their distinct social customs.

- **Administration in the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule:**

- The tribal areas in the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule area have been constituted as **autonomous districts**. The autonomous districts have been given varying degrees of autonomy within the State Legislature.
  - There are **10 autonomous districts** – three in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram and one in Tripura.
  - Each autonomous district can also have a separate **regional council**.

<p><b>MEGHALAYA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mara Autonomous District Council</li> </ul>
<p><b>MIZORAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council</li> <li>● Garo Hills Autonomous District Council</li> <li>● Chakma Autonomous District Council</li> <li>● Lai Autonomous District Council</li> </ul>	<p><b>TRIPURA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council</li> </ul>
	<p><b>ASSAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dima Hasao Autonomous Council</li> <li>● Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council</li> <li>● Bodoland Territorial Council</li> </ul>

- The tribals have been given **freedom to exercise legislative and executive powers** through an **autonomous regional council** and **autonomous district councils (ADCs)**.
- The ADCs are empowered with **civil and judicial powers**. They can **also make laws on matters** like land, forests, fisheries, social security, etc. **with due approval from the governor**.
- The **Acts passed by Parliament and state legislatures may or may not be levied in these regions** unless the President and the governor gives her or his approval, with or without modifications in the laws for the autonomous regions.
- **Governor's Control:**
  - Despite various degrees of autonomy, the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule area **does not fall outside the executive authority of the state concerned**.
  - The **governor is empowered** to organise and re-organise the autonomous districts. He can increase or decrease the areas of autonomous districts or change their names or define their boundaries and so on.

If there are different tribes in an autonomous district, **the governor can also divide the district into several autonomous regions**.

- **Composition of Autonomous Councils:**
  - Each autonomous district and regional council consists of **not more than 30 members**, of which **four are nominated by the governor** and the rest via elections. All of them **remain in power for a term of five years**.
  - However, the **Bodoland Territorial Council is an exception** as it can constitute up to 46 members.
- **Article 371 A:**

The Acts of Parliament relating to the following matters **would not apply to Nagaland** unless decided by the State Legislative Assembly:

  - Religious or social practices of the Nagas.
  - Naga customary law and procedure.
  - Administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law.
  - Ownership and transfer of land and its resources.

**Source: TH**

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## **Seed Bombs: Solution to Man-Animal Conflict**

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### **Why in News**

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**Odisha's Athagarh Forest Division** has started **casting seed balls (or bombs)** inside different reserve forest areas to enrich food stock for wild elephants.

This has been done to **prevent man-elephant conflict**.

- On the eve of **World Elephant Day 2020**, the Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change has launched a **portal on Human Elephant Conflict 'Surakhsya'**.
- Further, the Government has taken initiative for fodder and water augmentation in forest areas so that animals get food and water in forest areas and not come outside. **LiDAR technology** is being used for the same.

### **Key Points**

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- Villagers who bear the brunt of the elephant attacks have come forward to prepare the bamboo seed balls and scatter them in 38 reserve forests under the Athagarh Forest Division.
- The **growth in bamboo plantations is expected to meet the needs of the elephants**, which often stray out of the forests and raid human habitations.

- Athagarh Forest Division is **one of the worst-hit areas** as far as man-elephant conflict is concerned.
  - Elephants frequently raid villages coming under Athagarh and Khuntuni range and damage standing paddy crops. Even fruit-bearing trees and vegetable plants are not spared.
  - The situation becomes extremely volatile when any human gets killed by elephants.
- In 2019, the division had thrown seed balls using 950 kg of bamboo seeds inside the forest. The survival rate ranged between 50-60%.

## Seed Bomb

- A seed bomb is a **little ball generally made up of a combination of compost, clay and seeds.**
  - The compost and clay act as a carrier for the seeds so they can be launched over walls or fences and into inaccessible areas such as wasteland or railways.
  - The **compost offers nutrients** for the seeds to germinate and grow strong during their infancy and the **clay binds the seed bomb**, making it hard enough not to break when it hits the ground.
- It is used in **re-vegetation and reforestation** of the fragile ecosystems.
- The plantation technique wherein seed balls are sprayed using aerial devices, including planes, helicopters or drones, is known as **aerial seeding**.
- **Recent Initiatives:**
  - **Udaipur** has been chosen for experimenting the seed bombing technique to increase forest cover in Rajasthan.
  - The **Haryana government** has employed aerial seeding techniques to improve green cover in the **Aravalli** area of the State.



## MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICTS

**98** Deaths due to tiger attacks from 2013-14 to 2016-17

**2,804** Deaths due to elephant attacks from 2009-10 to 2015-16

**₹15cr** Money spent on conflict mitigation (2013-14 to 2016-17)

### STEPS TAKEN TO MITIGATE CONFLICT

**584km** of elephant-proof trenches

**1,501km** of solar-powered fences

**35km** of elephant-proof walls

**3.5km** of stone-pitched trenches

**259km** of boundary walls and 43km of bio-fences

“ There are locations, where elephant-proof trenches, walls and solar-powered fences exist in parallel

– Expert report on human-wildlife conflict mitigation

## Way Forward

- India has a large population of the **tiger**, Asian elephant, leopard, sloth bear, **gaur** and many others. Keeping these animals restricted to a few hundred kilometers of protected areas can be difficult. Thus, coordinated and collaborative conservation actions are required to motivate **communities to shift from conflict to coexistence with wildlife.**
- **Inclusive development** with a long-term vision that cares for the environment is a solution to man-animal conflict.

## **National Flag of India**

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### **Why in News**

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India will celebrate its **74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day in 2020**, and like every year the Prime Minister of India will **hoist the National Flag at the Red Fort** to commemorate the day.

### **Key Points**

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- **Design:** The design of the **Indian tricolour** is largely attributed to **Pingali Venkayya**, an Indian freedom fighter.
  - He proposed a basic design of the flag, consisting of **two red and green bands** to symbolise the **two major communities, Hindus and Muslims**. Mahatma Gandhi arguably suggested adding a **white band to represent peace and the rest of the communities** living in India, and a **spinning wheel** to symbolise the progress of the country.
  - He passed away in 1963 and was posthumously **honoured with a postage stamp in 2009** for his contribution towards Indian freedom struggle. In 2014, his name was also proposed for the Bharat Ratna.

- **History:**

- **1906:** Arguably the **first national flag of India** is said to have been hoisted on **7<sup>th</sup> August 1906, in Kolkata** at the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park). It comprised **three horizontal strips of red, yellow and green, with Vande Mataram** written in the middle. The red strip on the flag had symbols of the sun and a crescent moon, and the green strip had eight half-open lotuses.
- **1907: Madame Cama** and her group of exiled revolutionaries hoisted an Indian flag in **Germany in 1907** — this was the **first Indian flag to be hoisted in a foreign land.**
- **1917: Dr Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak** adopted a new flag as part of the **Home Rule Movement.** It had five alternate red and four green horizontal stripes, and seven stars in the saptarishi configuration. A white crescent and star occupied one top corner, and the other had Union Jack.
- **1931: The Congress Committee met in Karachi** and adopted the tricolour (that of **Pingali Venkayya**) as India's national flag. **Red was replaced with saffron** and the order of the colours was changed. The flag was to have **no religious interpretation.**
  - Saffron on top symbolises “**strength and courage**”, **white** in the middle represents “**peace and truth**” and green at the bottom stands for “**fertility, growth and auspiciousness of the land**”.
  - **The Ashok Chakra** with 24 spokes replaced the spinning wheel as the emblem on the flag. It is intended “**to show that there is life in movement and death in stagnation**”.
  - The National Flag should be rectangular in shape with a **length to width ratio of 3:2.**

- **Constitutional and Legal Aspect:**

- The Constituent Assembly adopted the motion of national flag on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1947.

The motion proposed that “the National Flag of India shall be horizontal tricolour of **deep saffron (kesari), white and dark green in equal proportion.**” The white band was to have a wheel in navy blue (the charkha being replaced by the chakra), which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka

- One of the minor committees of the Constituent Assembly, the **Ad-hoc Committee on the National Flag** was headed by **Dr. Rajendra Prasad.**
- The **Part IV-A of the Constitution (which consists of only one Article 51-A)** specifies the **eleven Fundamental Duties.** According to **Article 51A (a)**, it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem.
- A person who is convicted for the following offences under the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act of 1971** is disqualified to contest in the elections to the Parliament and state legislature for 6 years.
  - Offence of insulting the National Flag,
  - Offence of insulting the Constitution of India,
  - Offence of preventing the singing of the National Anthem.

**Source: IE**

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## **OPV Sarthak**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, an **Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** was launched and named as **Indian Coast Guard Ship ‘Sarthak’.**

- OPV Sarthak is the **4<sup>th</sup> in the series of the indigenous project for 05 OPVs.**
- OPVs are long-range surface ships capable of coastal and offshore patrolling, policing maritime zones, control and surveillance, anti-smuggling and anti-piracy operations with limited wartime roles.

### **Key Points**

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- **Development:** OPV Sarthak has been **designed & built indigenously** by M/s Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) in line with the government's vision of '**Make in India**'.

It has about **70% indigenous content**, thus providing the necessary fillip to the **Indian shipbuilding industry** and a giant leap towards achieving '**Atmanirbar Bharat**'.

- **Features:**

- The Ship is fitted with **state-of-the-art Navigation and Communication equipment**, sensor and machinery.
- It is designed to embark and carry a twin-engine helicopter, four high speed boats and one inflatable boat for swift boarding and Search & Rescue operations.
- It is also capable of carrying limited **pollution response equipment** to undertake **oil spill** pollution response at sea.

- **Use:**

The ship will be deployed extensively for **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** surveillance, Coastal Security and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard charter of duties, to safeguard the maritime interests of the Nation.

## Indian Coast Guard

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- The Indian Coast Guard was formally inaugurated on **19<sup>th</sup> August, 1978**. It operates under the **Ministry of Defence**.
- The organization is **headed by the Director General Indian Coast Guard (DGICG)** exercising his overall command and superintendence from the Coast Guard **Headquarters (CGHQ)** located at **New Delhi**.
- For effective command and control, the **Maritime Zones of India are divided into five Coast Guard Regions**, namely, North-West, West, East, North-East and Andaman & Nicobar, with the respective Regional Headquarters located at Gandhinagar, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Port Blair.
- Further, it keeps an eye on the **Indian exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.
- ICG has been a pioneer in inducting indigenous assets which has enabled it to remain operationally available throughout the year.
  - The mere presence of ICG units at sea serves **dual objectives of "Deterrence" and "Reassurance"**.
  - It deters people with ill-intent and at the same time reassures the maritime community, as they are aware that ICG will swiftly respond to any distress call or life-threatening situation at sea.
- The deterrence created by the ICG is **not limited to the Indian waters**, but collaboration with friendly littoral states as per provisions of bilateral cooperation agreements resulted in successful apprehension and seizure of drugs in **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.

**Source: PIB**

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## **Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation** (NIIO) has been launched by the Defence Minister of India.

### **Key Points**

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- **Objective:** To foster innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence in keeping with the vision of **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
  - It will put in place dedicated structures for the end-users to interact with academia and industry.
- **Structure:** The NIIO is a **three-tiered organisation**.
  - **Naval Technology Acceleration Council** (N-TAC) will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation and provide apex level directives.
  - **Working group under the N-TAC** will implement the projects.
  - **Technology Development Acceleration Cell** (TDAC) has been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.
- Indian Navy already has a functional **Directorate of Indigenisation** (DoI) and the new structures will build upon the **ongoing indigenisation initiatives**, as well as focus on innovation.
- A **compendium** (concise collection of information) of **Indian Navy's indigenisation perspective plans** titled 'SWAVLAMBAN' has also been released.
- The **Draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020** envisages Service Headquarters establishing an **Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation** within existing resources.
- The defence minister highlighted the Indian Navy's **significant progress in indigenous design of warships** and suggested to **focus on design and development of armaments**.
  - The Navy has an **in-house design bureau**, which has made **progress in designing the 'float' and 'move' (propulsion) components**.
  - However, there is a **heavy reliance on imports for armaments**, called the **'fight' component**.

**Source: PIB**

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## **PURA Initiative**

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## Why in News

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The Pune Rural Administration has been able to implement the **Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) initiative** amid **Covid-19 pandemic**.

## Key Points

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- PURA was **mooted by the former President Dr. Abdul Kalam in January 2003** as a way of empowering and accelerating rural development.
- The **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** implemented the PURA scheme on a pilot basis in seven clusters for a period of three years (2004- 05 to 2006-07).
- **PURA 2.0 as a central sector scheme was launched in 2012** focussing on the development of potential growth centres such as **census towns**.
- **Objective:** Provision of livelihood opportunities and urban amenities in rural areas to bridge the rural – **urban divide**.
- **Mission:** Holistic and accelerated development of compact areas around a potential growth centre in a Gram Panchayat (or a group of Gram Panchayats) through **Public Private Partnership (PPP) framework** for providing livelihood opportunities and urban amenities to improve the quality of life in rural areas.
- **Amenities and economic activities provided under PURA include** Water and Sewerage, Construction and maintenance of Village streets, Drainage, Solid Waste Management, Skill Development, village street lighting, telecom, electricity generation, village linked tourism, etc.
- In **2014-15**, the government made **no allocation to the PURA scheme** and instead **introduced the Rurban Mission** with an initial allocation of **Rs. 100 crore**.

The aim of the Rurban Mission is to **create 300 rural growth clusters** across the country.

**Source: TH**

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