



## History of Russia and Ukraine

**For Prelims:** Geographic Location of Russia and Ukraine, Kyivan Rus' (Rus' land), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

**For Mains:** Russia-Ukraine conflict, Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests.

### Why in News?

Recently, Russia recognised [two independent republics out of Ukraine \(Donetsk and Luhansk - Donbass region\)](#), signaling the **inevitable war** that followed.

- In the declaration of war, the Russian President **described Ukraine with no history or identity**, and was entirely and fully created by the **former Soviet Union (USSR)**.
- Ukraine and Russia share hundreds of years of **cultural, linguistic and familial link**.

### What is the Early History of Ukraine?

- A millennium ago, what is **Ukraine today lay at the heart of the Kyivan Rus' (Rus' land)**.
- Kyivan Rus was a federation of the **East Slavic, Baltic, and Finnic peoples of eastern and northern Europe**, with its **capital in Kyiv**.
  - Modern **Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus** all trace their cultural ancestry to the Kyivan Rus'.
- The Kyivan Rus' reached its **greatest size and power in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries**.
- In the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, the Kyivan Rus', weakened by the **decline of trade as the Byzantine Empire collapsed**, fell apart under the onslaught of the **Mongol Golden Horde**, who sacked Kyiv in 1240.
  - The Byzantine Empire, also called Byzantium, was the eastern half of the Roman Empire, based at Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) that continued on after the western half of the empire collapsed.
  - The Golden Horde was the group of settled Mongols who ruled over Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and the Caucasus from the 1240s until 1502.
- In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, large parts of the former Kyivan Rus' were incorporated into the multi-ethnic **Grand Duchy of Lithuania**.
- By the **Union of Lublin, Poland, in 1569**, the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania came together to form the **Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth**, which was among Europe's biggest countries at the time.
- The beginnings of the **modern Ukrainian national identity** can be traced back to about a century after this event.

### What are other Salient Features of Ukraine?

- **Geography:** Ukraine is in the **east of Europe**, and is **bound by Russia to its northeast**, east, and southeast, and the Black Sea in the south. In the southwest, west, and north, Ukraine shares borders, in the anticlockwise direction, with **Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and Belarus**.
  - It is the **largest country in Europe after Russia** itself, with an area of 6,03,550 sq km,

or **about 6% of the continent.**



- **Demography:** In July 2021, Ukraine's population was **estimated at 43.7 million**. Of this, **77.8% was of Ukrainian ethnicity and 17.3% was Russian**, and Ukrainian and Russian speakers made up **67.5% and 29.6% of the population respectively**.
- **Economy:** Ukraine is the **poorest country in Europe in terms of gross domestic product and gross national income per capita**. It has deposits of iron ore and coal, and exports corn, sunflower oil, iron and iron products, and wheat.
- **Relations With India:** India is Ukraine's **largest export destination in the Asia Pacific region**.
  - The country's **major export to India** is sunflower oil, followed by inorganic chemicals, iron and steel, plastics, and chemicals.
  - Ukraine's **major import from India is pharmaceutical products**.

## When Did Ukraine Incorporate into Russia?

- In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, **Empress Catherine the Great (1762-96) of Russia** absorbed the entire ethnic Ukrainian territory into the Russian Empire.
- The **Tsarist policy of Russification** led to the **suppression of ethnic identities** and languages, including that of the Ukrainians.
- Within the Russian Empire though, many **Ukrainians rose to positions of prosperity and importance**, and significant numbers migrated to settle in other parts of Russia.
- More than 3.5 million Ukrainians fought in **World War I on the side of the Russian Empire**, but a smaller number fought against the Tsar's army with the Austro-Hungarians.
- **Ukraine Becoming part of USSR:** The [World War I](#) led to the **end of both the Tsarist and Ottoman empires**.
  - As a mainly **communist-led Ukrainian national movement emerged, several small Ukrainian states** sprang up.
  - Months after the **Bolsheviks took power in the October Revolution of 1917**, an independent Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed, but a **civil war continued** between various claimants to power, including Ukrainian factions, anarchists, Tsarists, and Poland.
  - In 1922, **Ukraine became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**.
    - The Soviet Union had its roots in the October Revolution of 1917, when the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, overthrew the Russian Provisional Government that had replaced Tsar Nicholas II.

## What was the Ottoman Empire?

- An empire created by Turkish tribes in Anatolia (Asia Minor) that grew to be one of the most

powerful states in the world during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- The Ottoman period spanned more than 600 years and **came to an end only in 1922, when it was replaced by the Turkish Republic** and various successor states in southeastern Europe and the Middle East.
- At its height the empire encompassed most of southeastern Europe to the gates of Vienna, including present-day Hungary, the Balkan region, Greece, and parts of Ukraine; portions of the Middle East now occupied by Iraq, Syria, Israel, and Egypt; North Africa as far west as Algeria; and large parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

## What was the Status of Ukraine After the Collapse of USSR?

- **In 1991, the USSR was dissolved.**
- The Demands for independence had been growing in Ukraine for a couple of years previously, and in 1990, over 300,000 Ukrainians created **a human chain in support of freedom.**
  - This was followed by the **Granite Revolution when students** sought to prevent the signing of a new agreement with the USSR.
- On 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1991, after the failure of the coup to remove **President Mikhail Gorbachev** and restore the communists to power, the parliament of **Ukraine adopted the country's Act of Independence.**
  - Subsequently, **Leonid Kravchuk**, head of the parliament, **was elected Ukraine's first President.**
- In December 1991, the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine formally dissolved the Soviet Union and formed the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).**
- However, **Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada**, never ratified the accession, so Ukraine was legally never a member of the CIS.

## What is the Recent History of Russia-Ukraine Conflict?

- In 2014, **Russia had annexed Crimea from Ukraine following** a hastily called referendum, a move that **sparked fighting between Russia-backed separatists and government forces in eastern Ukraine.**
- Recently, Ukraine has urged the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#) to speed up his **country's membership in the alliance.**
- Russia declared **such a move a "red line"**, and worried about the consequences of the US-led military alliances expanding right up to its doorstep.
- This has led to the present war between Russia and Ukraine.

[Source: IE](#)

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## Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP)

**For Prelims:** Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP), Sugarcane.

**For Mains:** Agricultural Pricing, Sugar production in the Indian Economy, Challenges faced by sugarcane industry.

## Why in News?

Recently, **Maharashtra Government** issued a government resolution which will **allow sugar mills to pay the basic Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) in two tranches.**

### **What are the changes in the government resolution?**

- The first installment would have to be paid within **14 days of delivery of cane**, and would be as per the average recovery of the district.
- Farmers would get the **second installment within 15 days of the closure of the mill** after calculation of the final recovery, which would take into account the sugar produced, and the ethanol produced from 'B heavy' or 'C' molasses.
- Thus, **instead of relying on last season's FRP**, farmers would be paid as per the current season's recovery.

### **Why are farmers in Maharashtra protesting?**

- Farmers argue that this method would **impact their incomes**. They point out that while FRP will be paid in installments, and will **depend on an unknown variable**, their bank loans and other expenses are expected to be paid for as usual.
- Also, farmers mostly require a **lumpsum at the beginning of the season (October-November)**, because their next crop cycle depends on it.

### **What is the FRP?**

- FRP is the **price declared by the government**, which mills are **legally bound** to pay to farmers for the cane procured from them.
  - Mills have the **option of signing an agreement with farmers**, which would allow them to pay the FRP in installments.
  - **Delays in payment can attract an interest** up to 15% per annum, and the **sugar commissioner can recover unpaid FRP** as dues in revenue recovery by attaching properties of the mills.
- The payment of FRP across the country is governed by **the Sugarcane Control order, 1966 issued under the [Essential Commodities Act \(ECA\), 1955](#)** which **mandates payment within 14 days of the date of delivery** of the cane.
- It has been determined on the recommendation of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)** and announced by the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**.
  - CACP is an attached office of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**. It is an advisory body whose **recommendations are not binding on the Government**.
  - CCEA is chaired by the **Prime Minister of India**.
- The FRP is based on the **Rangarajan Committee report** on reorganizing the **[sugarcane industry](#)**.

### **Which Factors are considered for announcing FRP?**

- Cost of production of sugarcane
- Return to the growers from alternative crops and the general trend of prices of agricultural commodities
- Availability of sugar to consumers at a fair price
- Price at which sugar produced from sugarcane is sold by sugar producers
- Recovery of sugar from sugarcane
- The realization made from the sale of by-products viz. molasses, bagasse and press mud or their imputed value
- Reasonable margins for the growers of sugarcane on account of risk and profits

### **How is FRP Paid?**

- The FRP is **based on the recovery of sugar** from the cane.
  - FRP has been fixed at Rs 2,900/tonne at a base recovery of 10% for the sugar season of 2021-22.

- Sugar recovery is the **ratio between sugar produced versus cane crushed**, expressed as a percentage.
- The higher the recovery, the higher is the FRP, and higher is the sugar produced.

## What is Sugarcane?

- **Temperature:** Between 21-27°C with hot and humid climate.
- **Rainfall:** Around 75-100 cm.
- **Soil Type:** Deep rich loamy soil.
- **Top Sugarcane Producing States:** Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar.
- India is the **second largest producer** of sugarcane after Brazil.
- It can be grown on all varieties of soils ranging from **sandy loam to clay loam** given these soils should be well drained.
- It needs manual labour from sowing to harvesting.
- It is the main source of **sugar**, gur (jaggery), khandsari and molasses.
- Scheme for Extending Financial Assistance to Sugar Undertakings (SEFASU) and **National Policy on Biofuels** are two of the government initiatives to support sugarcane production and the sugar industry.

[Source: IE](#)

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## Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti

**For Prelims:** Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti, Arya Samaj.

**For Mains:** Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti and his contribution, Important Personalities, Guiding principles of the Arya Samaj.

## Why in News?

**Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti** is celebrated every year to mark the birth anniversary of the **Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati**.

- This year, the day will be celebrated on **26<sup>th</sup> February**.
- As per the traditional Hindu calendar, Dayanand Saraswati was born on the Dashami Tithi of Phalguna Krishna Paksha.



## Who was Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati?

### ▪ Birth:

- Swami Dayanand Saraswati was born on **12<sup>th</sup> February 1824** in Tankara, Gujarat in a Brahmin family. His parents, Lalji Tiwari and Yashodhabai were orthodox Brahmin.
- He was earlier named **Mool Shankar Tiwari** as he was **born during Mool Nakshatra**.
- He wandered as an **ascetic for fifteen years (1845-60)** in search of truth.
- Dayananda's views were published in his famous work, **Satyarth Prakash (The True Exposition)**.

### ▪ Contribution to the Society:

- He was an **Indian philosopher, social leader and founder of the Arya Samaj**.
  - Arya Samaj is a **reform movement of Vedic dharma** and he was the **first to give the call for Swaraj** as "India for Indian" in 1876.
- He was a **self-taught man and a great leader of India** leaving a significant impact on Indian society. During his life, he made a prominent name for himself and was known among a **wide array of Princes and the public**.
- The **first Arya Samaj** unit was formally set up by him at **Mumbai (then Bombay) in 1875** and later the **headquarters of the Samaj were established at Lahore**.
- His vision of India included a **classless and casteless society**, a united India (**religiously, socially and nationally**), and an India free from foreign rule, with Aryan religion being the common religion of all.
- He took inspiration from the Vedas and considered them to be '**India's Rock of Ages**', the infallible and the true original seed of Hinduism. He gave the slogan "**Back to the Vedas**".
- He subscribed to the **Vedic notion of chaturvarna system** in which a person was **not born in any caste** but was identified as a **brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya or shudra** according to the occupation the person followed.

### ▪ Contribution to the Education System:

- He introduced a **complete overhaul of the education system** and is often considered as **one of the visionaries of modern India**.
- The **DAV (Dayanand Anglo Vedic) schools** came into existence in 1886 to realize the vision of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.
- The **first DAV School** was established at Lahore with Mahatma Hansaraj as the headmaster.

## What is Arya Samaj?

- It aims to **reestablish the Vedas**, the earliest Hindu scriptures, as revealed truth. He rejected all later accretions to the Vedas as degenerate but, in his own interpretation, included much post-Vedic thought.
  - During the 1920s and early 1930s **tension grew around a number of issues. Muslims were angered by "music-before-mosque", by the cow protection movement**, and by the efforts of the Arya Samaj to bring back to the Hindu fold (**shuddhi**) those who had recently converted to Islam.
- The Arya Samaj has always had its **largest following in western and northern India**.
- The Samaj **opposes worship of murtis (images), animal sacrifice, shraddha** (rituals on behalf of ancestors), basing caste upon birth rather than upon merit, **untouchability, child marriage**, pilgrimages, priestly craft, and temple offerings.
- It upholds the **infallibility of the Vedas, the doctrines of karma** (the accumulated effect of past deeds) and samsara (the process of death and rebirth), the sanctity of the cow, the importance of the samskaras (individual sacraments), the efficacy of Vedic oblations to the fire, and programs of social reform.
- It has **worked to further female education and intercaste marriage**, has built missions, orphanages, and homes for widows, has established a network of schools and colleges, and has undertaken famine relief and medical work.



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## Devayatanam: Conference on Temple Architecture

**For Prelims:** World Heritage site, Vesara, Nagara & Dravidian architecture.

**For Mains:** Indian Heritage & Culture, Temple Architecture.

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Culture Minister** inaugurated **Devayatanam, a one-of-a-kind conference on temple architecture** of India, at [Hampi](#), Karnataka.

- It is a part of the celebration under [Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav](#) and is being organized on 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February by the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) of the Ministry of Culture.
- The **temples of Hampi** are already featured in the **World Heritage List of UNESCO** for their Sheer brilliance, Scale of imagination, and Scintillating architecture.
  - Approximately **10 of India's 40 UNESCO World Heritage Inscriptions** are Hindu Temples in different architectural styles, patterns and symmetry.
  - In 2021, [Rudreswara Temple](#), (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Mulugu district, Telangana has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

### What is the Significance of the Conference?

- The conference **provides a platform to discuss, deliberate and disseminate** to the world the grandeur of Indian temples, art and architecture.
- This was in line with the **overall vision of the Prime Minister** which is based on **5 V's**, i. e. Vikas (development), Virasat (heritage), Vishwas (trust), Vignan (knowledge), which lead us to becoming a **vishwaguru** so that India shows the world the way.
- Devayatnam, the house of god is **not only a place to worship** and perform rituals but also a centre for education, fine arts, music, science & technology, rituals & traditions or activities shaping the society.

### How Has the Government Promoted Temple in Recent Times?

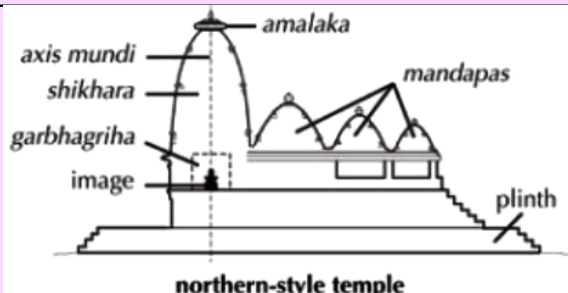
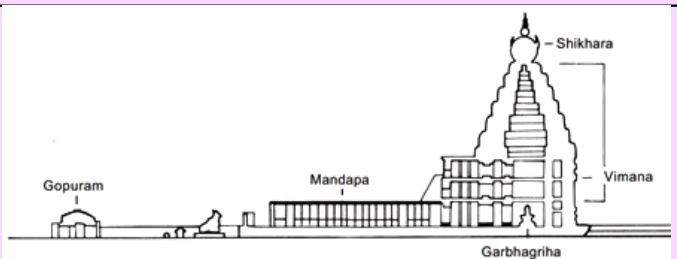
- The Union Government has proposed [Hoysala temples of Belur and Somnathpur](#) to the [UNESCO World Heritage List](#).
- A **grand temple of Lord Ram** that is being built in **Ayodhya**.
- After close to 250 years, the **spiritual capital of India - Kashi**, has been rejuvenated and has more accessibility with amenities and better infrastructure for devotees.
- The state of **Telangana has built 2 large stone carved temples worth Rs. 1,000 crores**.
- The focus is to **make existing spiritual places accessible to devotees** through better infrastructure and world class amenities.
  - [PRASHAD](#) and [SWADESH DARSHAN Scheme](#) to facilitate tourism infrastructure and provide better accessibility and experience at spiritual places with a budget of approximately Rs. 7,000 crores has been conceived.

### What is the Significance of Indian Temples?

- Temples have been **centres of Indian art, knowledge, culture, spirituality, innovation and education**.
- There have been **three major styles of setting up temples in India** known as [Nagara](#), [Dravidian](#) and [Vesara](#).

- **Dashavatar temple** in Devgarh is of Nagara style which is prevalent between the [Himalayas](#) and the **Vindhya mountains**.
- The **Kailasanathar temple in Kanchi** is a Dravidian style temple, developed on the land of Krishna and Kaveri River.
- Papanatha temple is one of the examples of Vesara style. **Vesara** is a **hybrid form Nagara and Dravidian style**.
- A **Hindu temple is a combination of art and science** which includes Shilpa sastra, vastu sastra, geometry and symmetry.
- The temples promote **unity, integrity, and civilization**.
  - It was during the freedom struggle that all the freedom struggles were resolved before temple fire to fight for freedom of the country.

### What is the difference between Nagara and Dravidian Style Temples?

	Nagara or North Indian Temple Style	Dravida or South Indian Temple Style
	 <p>northern-style temple</p>	
<b>Features :</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a <b>stone platform with steps leading up to it</b>.</li> <li>▪ Further, unlike in South India it <b>does not usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways</b>.</li> <li>▪ While the earliest temples had just one tower, or shikhara, later temples had several.</li> <li>▪ The <b>garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unlike the nagara temple, the dravida temple is <b>enclosed within a compound wall</b>.</li> <li>▪ The front wall has <b>an entrance gateway in its centre, which is known as a gopuram</b>.</li> <li>▪ The shape of the main temple tower <b>known as vimana in Tamil Nadu</b>, is like a stepped pyramid that rises up geometrically rather than the curving shikhara of North India.</li> <li>▪ It is common to find <b>a large water reservoir, or a temple tank</b>, enclosed within the complex.</li> <li>▪ Subsidiary shrines are either incorporated within the main temple tower, or located as distinct, separate small shrines beside the main temple.</li> <li>▪ Temples <b>became rich administrative centres</b>, controlling vast areas of land.</li> </ul>
<b>Subdivisions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are many subdivisions of nagara temples <b>depending on the shape of the shikhara</b>.</li> <li>▪ There are different names for the various parts of the temple in different parts of India; however, the most common name for the simple shikhara which is square at</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Just as there are many subdivisions of the main types of nagara temples, there are subdivisions also of dravida temples.</li> <li>▪ These are <b>basically of five different shapes</b>:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ square, usually <b>called kuta</b>, and also caturasra</li> <li>◦ rectangular or <b>shala or ayatasra</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<p>the base and whose walls curve or slope inward to a point on top is called the '<b>latina</b>' or the <b>rekha-prasada type of shikara</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <b>second major type</b> of architectural form in the nagara order is the <b>phamsana</b>, which tends to be broader and shorter than latina ones.</li> <li>▪ Their roofs are composed of several slabs that gently rise to a single point over the centre of the building, unlike the latina ones which look like sharply rising tall towers.</li> <li>▪ The third main sub-type of the nagara building is generally called the <b>valabhi type</b>.</li> <li>▪ These are rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ elliptical, <b>called gaja-prishta</b> or elephant backed, or also called vrittayata, deriving from wagon vaulted shapes of apsidal chaityas with a horse-shoe shaped entrance facade usually called a nasi</li> <li>◦ circular or <b>vritta</b></li> <li>◦ octagonal or <b>ashtasra</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Example s:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Khajuraho Group of temples, Sun temple, Konark, Sun temple at Modhera, Gujarat and Ossian temple, Gujarat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kanchipuram, Thanjavur or Tanjore, Madurai and Kumbakonam are the most famous temple towns of Tamil Nadu</li> </ul>

[Source: PIB](#)

## Gobar-Dhan Plant: 2nd Phase of SBM-U

**For Prelims:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of SBM-U, Bioremediation.

**For Mains:** Significance of Swachh Bharat Mission in making India Clean.

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister has inaugurated "**Gobar-Dhan (Bio-CNG) Plant**" in Indore with the aim of removing lakhs of tonnes of garbage that is occupying thousand acres of land and causing air and water pollution leading to many diseases.

- It has been established under the [second phase of Swachh Bharat Mission \(SBM-U 2.0\)](#).
- The plant is **based on zero landfill models**, whereby no rejects would be generated. Additionally, the project is expected **to yield multiple environmental benefits**, viz. reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, providing green energy along with organic compost as fertilizer.

### What are the Key Points of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0?

- **About:**
  - SBM-U 2.0 was announced in [Budget 2021-22](#), as the continuation of SBM-U first phase.
  - The government is trying to **tap safe containment, transportation, disposal of fecal sludge, and septage from toilets**.
    - SBM-U first phase was launched on **2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014** aiming at making urban India [Open Defecation Free \(ODF\)](#) and achieving 100% scientific management of municipal solid waste. It lasted till October 2019.
  - It will be implemented over five years from **2021 to 2026 with an outlay of Rs.1.41 lakh crore**.
  - The Mission is being implemented under the overarching principles of **“waste to wealth”**, and [“circular economy”](#).
- **Aim:**
  - It focuses on source segregation of garbage, reduction in [single-use plastic](#) and air pollution, by effectively managing waste from construction and demolition activities and [bioremediation of all legacy dump sites](#).
  - Under this mission, all wastewater will be treated properly before it is discharged into water bodies, and the government is trying to make maximum reuse a priority.
- **Mission outcomes:**
  - All statutory towns will become **ODF+ certified** (focuses on toilets with water, maintenance and hygiene)
  - All statutory towns with less than 1 lakh population will become **ODF++ certified** (focuses on toilets with sludge and septage management).
  - 50% of all statutory towns with less than 1 lakh population will become **Water+ certified** (aims to sustain toilets by treating and reuse of water).
  - All statutory towns will be at least [3-star Garbage Free rated](#) as per MoHUA’s Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free cities.
  - Bioremediation of all legacy dumpsites.

[Source: PIB](#)

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## Bhasha Certificate Selfie Campaign

### Why in News?

The **Ministry of Education** launched a campaign ‘**Bhasha Certificate Selfie**’ under [Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat \(EBSB\)](#).

- In 2021, the Ministry of Education launched the [Bhasha Sangam initiative](#) under **EBSB**.

### What are the Key Points?

- It was launched to encourage cultural diversity and promote multilingualism and to foster the spirit EBSB.
- It aims to promote the **Bhasha Sangam mobile app**, developed by the Ministry of Education and MyGov India.
  - Bhasha Sangam mobile app was launched on [Rashtriya Ekta Diwas 2021 \(31st October\)](#).
- It aims to ensure that people acquire basic conversational skills in Indian languages. To achieve this, a target of 75 lakh people acquiring basic conversational skills has been set.
- The ‘Bhasha Certificate Selfie’ initiative is encouraging people to upload their selfie with the certificate from their social media accounts.

## What is Bhasha Sangam Initiative?

- It is an initiative to teach basic sentences of everyday usage in 22 Indian languages ([Eighth Schedule languages](#)).
- It is developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
- The idea is that **people should acquire basic conversational skills in an Indian language** other than their mother tongue.
  - It is available on [DIKSHA](#), [ePathshala](#) and through 22 booklets.

## What is Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Initiative?

- It was launched in 2015 to **promote engagement amongst the people** of different States/UTs so as to enhance mutual understanding and bonding between people of diverse cultures, thereby securing stronger unity and integrity of India.
- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Education**.
- Every State and UT in the country would be paired with another State/UT for a time period, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.

## What is the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution?

- The **Constitutional provisions** relating to the Eighth Schedule **occur in Article 344 (1) and 351 of the Constitution**.
- The **languages listed under Eighth Schedule** are:
  - (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.
- Languages are added through **Constitutional Amendments**.

[Source: PIB](#)

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## PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana

### Why in News?

In the three years, benefits under [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi \(PM-KISAN\)](#) have been provided to about **11.78 Crore farmers and funds amounting to Rs 1.82 lakh crore** in various installments have been released to the eligible beneficiaries of this scheme across India.

### What is PM Kisan?

- **About:**
  - It was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 to supplement financial needs of land holding farmers.
- **Financial Benefits:**

- Financial benefit **of Rs 6000/- per year in three equal installments**, every four month is transferred into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country through [Direct Benefit Transfer \(DBT\) mode](#).
- **Scope of the Scheme:**
  - The scheme was initially meant for **Small and Marginal Farmers (SMFs) having landholding upto 2 hectares** but scope of the scheme was **extended to cover all landholding farmers**.
- **Funding and Implementation:**
  - It is a [Central Sector Scheme](#) with 100% funding from the Government of India.
  - It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- **Objectives:**
  - To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to **ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income** at the end of each crop cycle.
  - To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.
- **PM-KISAN Mobile App:** It was developed and designed by the National Informatics Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Physical Verification Module:** A mandatory physical verification of **5% beneficiary every year is being done as per the provisions** laid down in the scheme.

[Source: PIB](#)

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## Exercise MILAN 2022

### Why in News?

The Indian Navy's multilateral [Exercise MILAN 2022](#) is scheduled to commence from 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022 in the **'City of Destiny', Visakhapatnam**.

- 2020 edition of MILAN was postponed to 2022 due to Covid-19.

### What are the Key Points?

- **MILAN 22:**
  - MILAN 22 will witness its largest ever participation, with more than 40 countries sending their warships/ high level delegations.
  - This edition of MILAN will be larger in **'scope and complexity' with focus on exercises at sea including exercises in surface, sub-surface and air domains** and weapon firings.
  - **Theme 2022:** 'Camaraderie - Cohesion - Collaboration'.
- **MILAN:**
  - MILAN is a **biennial multilateral naval exercise** incepted by Indian Navy in 1995 at Andaman and Nicobar Command.
  - Starting with the participation of only four countries, viz **Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand**, in the 1995 edition, the exercise has since **transitioned leaps and bounds in terms of number of participants and complexity** of exercises.

- Originally conceived in consonance with India's '**Look East Policy**', MILAN expanded in ensuing years with India's '**Act East policy**' and **Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative**, to include participation from island nations in the Western **IOR (Indian Ocean Region)** as also **IOR littorals**.

**Source: PIB**

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