



Arunachal Pradesh and Assam Border Dispute

For Prelims: Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border dispute, Article 263 of the Constitution

For Mains: Northeast border disputes and related issues and way ahead

Why in News?

Recently, the **Governments of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam** have decided to form **district-level committees** for resolving boundary disputes.

- The **district committees** will undertake joint surveys in the **disputed areas to find tangible solutions** to the long-pending issue based on **historical perspective, ethnicity, contiguity, peoples' will** and administrative convenience of both states.

What are the Border Disputes in the Country?

Assam-Arunachal Pradesh:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assam shares an 804.10 km inter-state boundary with Arunachal Pradesh.▪ The state of Arunachal Pradesh, created in 1987, claims some land that traditionally given to Assam.▪ A tripartite committee had recommended that certain territories be transferred from Arunachal Pradesh to Assam. The two states have since been battling it out in the court over the issue.
Assam-Mizoram:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mizoram used to be a district of Assam before being carved out as a separate union territory and later another state.▪ Mizoram shares a border with the districts Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj of Assam.▪ Over time, the two states started having different perceptions about where the border should be.▪ While Mizoram wants it to be along an inner line notified in 1875 to protect tribal lands, Assam feels that the area in question is part of their historical homeland, Assam wants it to be demarcated according to the outer line notified later.
Assam-Nagaland:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The border dispute between the two states has been going on since the formation of Nagaland.▪ The two states lay claim to Merapani, a small village next to the plains of Assam's Goalpara district.▪ There have been reports of violent clashes in the region since the 1960s.
Assam-Meghalaya:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Meghalaya has identified close to a dozen areas on which it has a dispute with Assam.
Haryana-Himachal Pradesh:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The two northern states have a border dispute over the Parwanoo region, which lies in the state of Haryana.▪ Haryana has laid a claim to a large part of the land in the area and has accused the Himachal Pradesh government of encroaching on its territory.
Ladakh-Himachal Pradesh:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The union territory of Ladakh and Himachal both claim Sarchu, a major halt point on the Srinagar-Manali highway.▪ The region is located between Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul and Spiti district and Ladakh's Leh district.
Maharashtra-Karnataka:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Perhaps the biggest border dispute in the country is between Maharashtra and Karnataka.▪ Belgaum has a sizable population of both Marathi and Kannada speaking people and has been a part of both states at different points in the past.▪ The area used to be part of the Bombay presidency from the time of the Britishers but was transferred to Karnataka during the states reorganisation exercise in 1956.

Why do inter-state border disputes remain unresolved?

- **Linguistic Idea of Reorganization:** Although the [States Reorganization Commission, 1956](#) was based on administrative convenience, states reorganized largely resembled the idea of one language one state.
- **Geographical Complexity:** The other complexity has been terrain — **rivers, hills and forests straddle two states** in many places and borders cannot be physically marked.
 - Colonial maps had left out large tracts of the northeast outside Assam as “thick forests” or marked them “unexplored”.
- **Indigenous Communities:** Indigenous communities were, for the most part, left alone. Boundaries would be drawn for administrative convenience when the “need” arose.
 - The **1956 demarcation** did not resolve the discrepancies.
 - When new states were carved out of **Assam (Nagaland in 1963, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur in 1972, and Arunachal Pradesh in 1987), it was still not addressed.**

Way Forward

- Boundary disputes between the states can be settled by using satellite mapping of the actual border locations.
- Reviving the Inter-state council can be an option for resolution of an Inter-state dispute.
 - Under **Article 263 of the Constitution**, the Inter-state council is expected to inquire and advise on disputes, discuss subjects common to all states and make recommendations for better policy coordination.
- Similarly, [Zonal councils](#) need to be revived to discuss the matters of common concern to states in each zone—matters relating to social and economic planning, border disputes, inter-state transport, etc.
- India is the epitome of unity in diversity. However, to strengthen this unity furthermore, both the centre and state governments need to imbibe the ethos of [cooperative federalism](#).

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Which was the Capital of Andhra State when it was made a separate State in the year 1953? (2008)

- (a) Guntur
- (b) Kurnool
- (c) Nellore
- (d) Warangal

Ans: (b)

- In 1953, following the death of Potti Sreeramulu (popularly called as Amarajeevi) due to fast unto death, Andhra State was carved out of Madras Presidency on linguistic basis with grouping of Telugu-speaking northern districts – Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra, but it was only in 1956 that present-day Telangana was merged in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh became the first State to be constituted under the State Reorganisation Act, 1956.
- Kurnool was the capital of Andhra State; and in 1956, Hyderabad was made capital of Andhra Pradesh.

[Source: TH](#)

Integrated Command and Control Center: Smart Cities Mission

For Prelims: Municipal Corporation, Initiatives Related to Urban Development.

For Mains: Smart Cities Mission, Issues related to Development, Government Policies and Interventions.

Why in News?

Recently, the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has announced that all 100 smart cities will have **Integrated Command and Control Centers (ICCCs)**, under [Smart Cities Mission \(SCM\)](#).

- These ICCCs are spread across various states that have been developing Smart Cities, with states such as Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat leading in terms of the total number of ICCCs set up.

What is an Integrated Command and Control Centre?

- **About:**
 - ICCC will act as the **“nerve center” for operations management in the city with day-to-day exception handling** and disaster management.
 - ICCCs provide **smart solutions to the [city's municipal corporation](#)** and help manage safety and surveillance of the city.
 - The centres comprise video walls for real-time monitoring, emergency response system, operations planning to include critical ones and 24x7 manual maintenance.
 - The centres are being established to enable smart living, smart environment, smart economy, smart governance, smart population and smart mobility.
 - The centre will also provide valuable insights by processing complex data sets at an aggregated level to derive intelligence for improved planning and policymaking.
 - The ICCCs are now also **linked to the [CCTNS](#)** (Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems) network under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Aim:**
 - To aggregate information across multiple applications and sensors deployed across the city and provide actionable information with appropriate visualization for decision-makers.

What is the Smart Cities Mission?

- **About:**
 - It is a [Centrally Sponsored Scheme](#), **launched in June 2015 to transform 100 cities** to provide the necessary core infrastructure and clean and sustainable environment to enable a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of **"Smart Solutions"**.
 - The mission aims to meet the aspirations of India's population living in cities through various urban development projects.
- **Features:**
 - Among its strategic components is 'area-based development', which includes city improvement (retrofitting), city renewal (redevelopment) and city extension (greenfield development), plus a pan-city initiative in which 'smart solutions' are applied covering larger parts of the city.
 - Key focus areas of the scheme include **construction of walkways, pedestrian crossings, cycling tracks, efficient waste-management systems, integrated traffic management and assessment**.
 - The scheme also assesses **various indices to track urban development such as the [Ease of Living Index](#), [Municipal Performance Index](#), [City GDP framework](#), [Climate Smart](#)**

[Cities assessment framework](#), etc.

▪ **Status:**

- The period of implementation of SCM has been extended to June 2023.
- The SCM has so far covered over 140 public-private partnerships, 340 'smart roads', 78 'vibrant public places', 118 'smart water' projects and over 63 solar projects.

What is a Smart City?

- There is no standard definition or template of a smart city. In the context of our country, the **six fundamental principles** on which the concept of Smart Cities is based are:



What are the other Initiatives Related to Urban Development?

- [Atal Mission for Urban Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation \(AMRUT\)](#).
- [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban \(PMAY-U\)](#).
- [Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework 2.0](#).
- [TULIP-The Urban Learning Internship Program](#).

[Source: IE](#)

Fincluvation

For Prelims: Fincluvation, India Post Payments Bank, RBI, Start up, Financial Inclusion, Digital India, Department of Post.

For Mains: Growth & Development, Mobilization of Resources, Issues Relating to Development, Banking Sector & NBFCs, Government Policies & Interventions, Financial Inclusion, Digital India.

Why in News?

Recently, the [India Post Payments Bank](#) (IPPB) launched the **Fincluvation Platform** to **promote innovative solutions** in collaboration with [fintech startups](#) to **accelerate financial inclusion** among the underserved and unserved population.

- The term **Fintech (Financial Technology)** refers to software and other modern technologies

used by businesses that provide automated and improved financial services.

What is Fincluvation?

- Fincluvation will be a **permanent platform of IPPB to co-create inclusive financial solutions with participating start-ups.**
 - IPPB and Department of Post (DoP) collectively serve close to 430 million customers through post offices and at their doorsteps via more than 4,00,000 Post Office employees and Gramin Dak Sevaks - making it one of the **largest and most trusted postal networks in the world.**
- It is an **Industry first initiative** to create a powerful platform to **mobilize the start-up community towards building meaningful financial products** aimed at financial inclusion.
- Startups are encouraged to develop solutions aligned with any of the following tracks:
 - **Creditization** - Develop Innovative & Inclusive credit products aligned with the use cases of target customers and take them to their doorsteps through Postal network.
 - **Digitization** - Bring convenience through convergence of traditional services with Digital Payment Technologies such as making the traditional Money Order service as Interoperable Banking service.
 - **Market Led Solution** - Any Market-led solutions that can help solve any other problem relevant to IPPB and/or DoP in serving the target customers.
- Fincluvation mentors will work closely with the startups to tweak products to the customer needs and align the go-to-market strategies with operating models of IPPB and DoP.

What is the Need of Fincluvation in India?

- **To Grab New Opportunities:** Intersection of technology with financial services coupled with traditional distribution networks is opening up a **new set of business opportunities.**
- **To Increase User Experience:** Conventional model of technology procurement led product creation by banks often **lacks value in user experience** leaving a huge gap between customer expectations and service delivery.
- **Failure of Traditional Technologies:** Traditional technology firms **fail to meet the service expectations of customers with a deficit of ownership** in product creation. Indian citizens have varied and complex needs that need careful thought, empathetic product design, and rapid prototyping among users.

What is India Post Payments Bank?

- IPPB was **launched by the Prime Minister in 2018** with 100% equity owned by the Government of India.
- It is a payments bank of the Indian postal department which works through a network of post offices and nearly 4 lakh postmen. It is governed by the [Reserve Bank of India \(RBI\)](#).
- The bank has been set up with the vision to build the most **accessible, affordable and trusted bank for the common man in India.** The fundamental mandate of IPPB is to remove barriers for the unbanked and under-banked and reach the last mile.
- IPPB is committed to providing a fillip to a **less cash economy and contribute to the vision of [Digital India](#).**

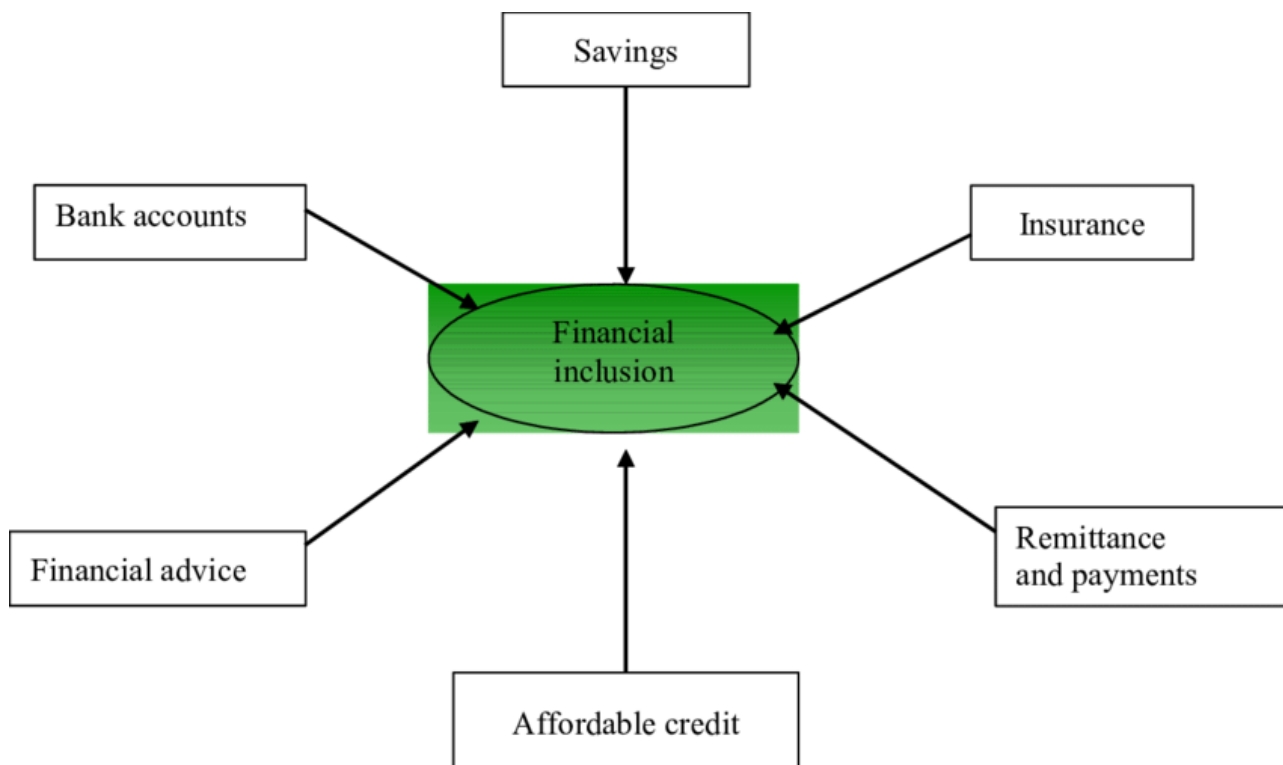
What is Financial Inclusion?

- Financial inclusion is the **process of ensuring access to appropriate financial products** and services needed by individuals and businesses including vulnerable groups such as **weaker sections and low-income groups** at an affordable cost in a fair and transparent manner by mainstream institutional players.

What are Some other Initiatives for Financial Inclusion?

- [Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana](#),
- [Stand-Up India Scheme](#)

- [Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana](#)
- [Atal Pension Yojana](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana](#)



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. With reference to India, consider the following: (2010)

1. Nationalization of Banks
2. Formation of Regional Rural Banks
3. Adoption of village by Bank Branches

Which of the above can be considered as steps taken to achieve the “financial inclusion” in India?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

- Nationalization of banks helped in branch expansion and thereby reaching a greater number of people. Besides, credit to agriculture, small scale industries and allied sectors has also increased. **Hence, 1 is correct.**
- Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) were set up as government-sponsored, region based rural lending institutions under the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976. RRBs were configured as hybrid micro banking institutions, combining the local orientation and small-scale lending culture of the cooperatives and the business culture of commercial banks. **Hence, 2 is correct.**
- A village adoption scheme was introduced by the banks in the 1960s in India with a view to

enhancing their reach besides encouraging agri-lending in a cost-effective manner. **Hence, 3 is correct.**

[Source: PIB](#)

Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs)

For Prelims: SPACs, Company Law Committee 2022, IPO, Shell Companies, Escrow Account, SEBI.

For Mains: Significance of the SPACs and ways to address the concerns.

Why in News?

Considering the recent recommendations of the [Company Law Committee 2022](#), the government is looking at putting in place a **regulatory framework for Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPAC)** in the statutes to aid the possible listing of Indian companies in the country through this route.

- The Company Law Committee was **set up in 2019 to make recommendations** to boost [ease of doing business](#) in India.

What are SPACs?

- A **Special Purpose Acquisition Company (SPAC)** is a **corporation formed for the sole purpose of raising investment capital through an [Initial Public Offering \(IPO\)](#)**.
 - At the time of their IPOs, SPACs have no existing business operations or even stated targets for acquisition.
- Such a business structure allows investors to contribute money towards a fund, which is then used to acquire one or more unspecified businesses to be identified after the IPO.
 - Therefore, this sort of shell firm structure is often called a **“blank-check company”** in popular media.
- Once the money is **raised from the public**, it is kept in an escrow account, which can be accessed while making the acquisition.
 - If the **acquisition is not made within two years of the IPO**, the SPAC is delisted and the money is returned to the investors.

What were the Recommendations of the Company Law Committee 2022?

- It recommends introducing an **enabling framework to recognise SPACs** under the Companies Act, 2013 and allow entrepreneurs to list a SPAC incorporated in India on domestic and global exchanges.
- In order to **align SPACs with the existing scheme of the Act**, the Committee has also recommended that an **exit option should be provided to shareholders** that do not agree with the choice of the target company.
- Further, it also **underscores the need to suitably modify provisions relating to striking off companies** in their application to SPACs, since they do not have any operating business of their own.

What is the Significance of the SPACs?

- **Cost Efficient:**
 - A company can go public within months if it merges or is acquired by a SPAC.
 - SPACs particularly position investors as unique opportunities to niche Indian businesses that intend **to get listed on foreign stock exchanges**, without incurring the mammoth costs associated with the process.
 - For instance, the recent listing of Renew Power Private Limited, an Indian renewable energy company, on NASDAQ (an American Stock Market) through an internationally incorporated SPAC in August 2021, speaks to the popularity of SPACs.
- **Minimize Risk and Assure Security:**
 - Listing through SPACs is considered remarkable since the entire process takes place pursuant to a **definitive agreement, with minimum risk and assured certainty.**
- **Provide Safeguard to Dissenting Shareholders:**
 - It also **safeguards the interests of the dissenting SPAC shareholders** as those that vote against the proposed acquisition are allowed to exit by selling their shares to the SPAC promoters.
- **Attractive to Investors:**
 - These are **attractive to investors**, despite them essentially being **shell companies**, as the blank-cheque companies are people sponsoring.
- **Opportunity for Exposure to Countries and Consumer Bases:**
 - For certain businesses, SPACs also **provide an opportunity for exposure to countries and consumer bases** where demand for such niche products exist, consequently allowing such companies to attain higher valuation.

Shell Companies

- A shell company is a **firm that does not conduct any operations in the economy**, but it is formally registered, incorporated, or legally organized in the economy.
- These are **sometimes used illegitimately**, such as to disguise business ownership from law enforcement or the public.

Initial Public Offering

- IPO is the **selling of securities to the public** in the primary market.
 - Primary market **deals with new securities** being issued for the first time. It is also known as the new issues market.
 - It is **different from the Secondary market** where existing securities are bought and sold. It is **also known as the [stock market or stock exchange](#).**
- It is when an unlisted company makes either a fresh issue of securities or an offer for sale of its existing securities or both for the first time to the public.
 - Unlisted companies are companies that are not listed on the stock exchange.

Escrow Account

- It is a legal concept describing a financial instrument whereby an asset or escrow money is held by a third party on behalf of two other parties that are in the process of completing a transaction.
- The third-party holds the funds until both parties have fulfilled their contractual requirements.
- Escrow is associated with real estate transactions, but it can apply to any situation where funds will pass from one party to another.

What are the Concerns related to SPACs?

- **Can limit the returns for the Retail Investors:**
 - The boom in investor firms going for SPACs and then looking for target companies have tilted the scales in favour of investee firms. This has the potential, theoretically, to limit returns for retail (individual) investors post-merger.
- **Not Every SPACs are able to Attract Targets:**
 - Because the SPACs are **required to begin seeking a target entity after listing**, and the overall transaction is expected to be completed within a strict timeline, many **SPACs are scrambling to find appealing target businesses.**
- **Deal could result in Hasty Decision:**
 - The time-bound hunt – SPACs exist for two years – **for an attractive deal could result in hasty decisions**, thereby inducing dissenting shareholders to exit and reducing overall gains for investors.
- **Disappointing Results could Initiate Investigations:**
 - In multiple cases, **disappointing results have caused shareholders to commence class action suits and initiate investigations** against SPAC sponsors in the US.
 - The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has noted the need for more disclosures to investors and called for greater protection against fraud and conflict of interest.

Way Forward

- **India Should Reap the Benefits of SPACs:**
 - For India, it is to **tread SPACs with cautious optimism and greater regulatory oversight**, given that instances of underwhelming performances by SPACs have slowly begun to surface.
 - In order to strengthen the regulatory framework governing them and mitigate accompanying risks, it is **necessary to extend statutory recognition to such companies** and employ sophisticated safeguards to protect the interests of investors.
- **SPACs should also be allowed for Global Exchanges:**
 - It is essential that **SPACs incorporated in India should be allowed to list not only on domestic stock exchanges, but also on global exchanges**, to enable target companies to ride the SPACs wave and achieve their fullest possible potential.
- **Need to Analyse the Issues Related to SPACs:**
 - While **recognising SPACs within the contours of the Companies Act is a welcome step**, it may still require a more sophisticated analysis of SPAC-related issues based on prevailing market practices, in consultation with [Securities and Exchange Board of India \(SEBI\)](#).
 - Additionally, the foreign listing of Indian incorporated SPACs **can only be achieved after the commencement of Section 23(3) and Section 23(4) of the Companies Act**, which enables certain classes of companies to list their securities on stock exchanges in permissible foreign jurisdictions.

[Source: IE](#)

Draft Battery Swapping Policy for Electric Vehicles

For Prelims: Battery Swapping, NITI Aayog, Government Schemes for EV Promotion

For Mains: Draft Battery Swapping Policy for Electric Vehicles, Net-zero target by 2070

Why in News?

Recently, the [NITI Aayog](#) released the **draft battery swapping policy for [Electric Vehicles \(EVs\)](#)** in the country.

- The policy aims to **improve the efficiency of the battery swapping ecosystem** for electric scooters and three-wheeler electric rickshaws, thereby driving EV adoption.
- As per the draft policy, **all metropolitan cities with a population above 40 lakhs will be prioritized** for the development of a battery swapping network under the first phase.

What is Battery Swapping?

- **Battery swapping is a mechanism** that involves exchanging discharged batteries for charged ones.
- This provides the flexibility to **charge these batteries separately** and keeps the vehicle in operational mode with negligible downtime.
- Battery swapping is generally used for smaller vehicles such as **two-wheelers and three-wheelers with smaller batteries** that are easier to swap, compared to four-wheelers and e-buses, although solutions are emerging for these larger segments as well.

What are the key points of the draft Policy?

- **About:** As per the draft policy, battery swapping will **fall under the Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS) business model**, and such models would have to **ensure interoperability between EVs and batteries** for a successful mainstreaming of battery swapping as an alternative.
- **Objectives:**
 - **Minimum Technical Standards:** This Policy stipulates the **minimum technical and operational requirements** that battery swapping ecosystems would need to fulfil, to enable effective, efficient, reliable, safe, and customer-friendly implementation of battery-swapping infrastructure.
 - **Financial Support:** Providing direct and indirect financial support **to Battery Providers** (for the cost of batteries) and EV users.
 - **Lowering Taxes:** The draft policy has suggested that the [Goods & Services Tax Council](#) considers reducing the differential across the tax rates on [Lithium-ion batteries](#) and electric vehicle supply equipment.
 - Currently, the tax rate on the former is 18% and 5% on the latter.
 - **Unique Identification Number:** The policy also proposes to assign a **Unique Identification Number (UIN)** to swappable batteries at the manufacturing stage to help track and monitor them.
- **Nodal Agency:** The [Bureau of Energy Efficiency \(BEE\)](#) is the Central Nodal Agency responsible for the rollout of EV public charging infrastructure and will be responsible for the implementation of battery swapping networks across the country.

What is the Need for the Policy?

- EVs are traditionally purchased with “fixed” batteries which can only be charged using the power supply while housed within the EV.
- Like fueling stations for conventional vehicles, adequate, affordable, accessible, and **reliable charging networks are a prerequisite for mass EV adoption**.
- Efforts are underway in India to boost the availability of charging infrastructure
- However, **developing charging infrastructure still takes a significantly longer time** and there is a constraint of space in urban areas.
- Therefore, the Government of India in [Budget speech 2022-23](#) had announced that the Centre would be introducing a battery swapping policy and interoperability standards in order to improve efficiency in the EV ecosystem.

What is the Significance of the Policy?

- **Decarbonizing Transport Sector:** India is a signatory to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#), which was signed in 2021.
 - Under the mandate, India is committed to achieving a net-zero target by 2070.
 - To decarbonize transport, the transition to clean mobility, led by electric vehicles (EVs), is paramount.
 - The road transport sector is one of the major contributors to carbon emissions and forms nearly 33% of the particulate matter emissions.
- **Leveraging EV Market:** The overall Indian EV market was pegged at USD 1,434.04 Billion in 2021 and is expected to grow to USD 15,397.19 Billion by 2027 at a CAGR of 47.09%.

What are Related Government Schemes for EV Promotion?

- The government had launched the [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of \(Hybrid and\) Electric Vehicles \(FAME\) scheme](#) in 2015 to give a push to EVs and hybrid vehicles.
- Apart from that, it also approved the [Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) scheme](#) for manufacturing [Advanced Chemistry Cell \(ACC\)](#) batteries in 2021.
- Another PLI Scheme, which also covers EV startups, was also approved for the automotive sector with a budgetary outlay.

[Source: IE](#)

Guru Tegh Bahadur

For Prelims: Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nank Dev and other Gurus of Sikhism, Sikhism.

For Mains: Ancient Indian History, Guru Teg Bahadur and his teachings, Sikhism.

Why in News?

The Prime Minister will give an address from the Red Fort to mark the **401st birth anniversary of [Guru Tegh Bahadur \(1621-1675\)](#).**

Who was Guru Teg Bahadur?

- Tegh Bahadur was born in **Amritsar on 21st April 1621 to Mata Nanki and Guru Hargobind**, the sixth Sikh guru, who raised an army against the Mughals and introduced the concept of warrior saints.
- As a boy, Tegh Bahadur was **called Tyag Mal because of his ascetic nature**. He spent his early childhood in Amritsar under the tutelage of **Bhai Gurdas, who taught him Gurmukhi, Hindi, Sanskrit, and Indian religious philosophy**, while **Baba Budha trained him in swordsmanship, archery, and horse-riding**.
- He was only 13 **when he distinguished himself in a battle against a Mughal chieftain**.
- His writings are housed in the sacred text, **'[Guru Granth Sahib](#),**' in the form of 116 poetic hymns.
- He was also an **avid traveler and played a key role in setting up preaching centers throughout the Indian subcontinent**.
- During one such mission, he founded the town **of Chak-Nanki in Punjab, which later became a part of Punjab's Anandpur Sahib**.
- In the year **1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in Delhi** under the orders of the **Mughal**

Emperor Aurangzeb.

What is Sikhism?

- The word '**Sikh**' in the Punjabi language means '**disciple**'. Sikhs are the disciples of God who follow the writings and teachings of the Ten Sikh Gurus.
- Sikhs believe in one **God (Ek Onkar)**. They believe they should remember God in everything they do. This is called Simran.
- The Sikhs call their **faith Gurmat (Punjabi: "the Way of the Guru")**. According to Sikh tradition, **Sikhism was established by Guru Nanak (1469-1539)** and subsequently led by a succession of nine other Gurus.
- The development of Sikhism was **influenced by the [Bhakti movement](#) and Vaishnava Hinduism**.
- The **Khalsa upholds the highest Sikh virtues** of commitment, dedication and a social conscience.
 - The **Khalsa are men and women who have undergone the Sikh baptism** ceremony and who strictly follow the Sikh Code of Conduct and Conventions.
 - They wear the prescribed physical articles of the faith (**5K's: Kesh** (uncut hair), **Kangha** (a wooden comb), **Kara** (an iron bracelet), **Kachera** (cotton underpants) and **Kirpan** (an iron dagger).
- Sikhism **condemns blind rituals** such as fasting, visiting places of pilgrimage, superstitions, worship of the dead, idol worship etc.
- It preaches **that people of different races, religions, or sex are all equal in the eyes of God**.
- **The Sikh Literature:**
 - The **Adi Granth** is believed by Sikhs to be the abode of the eternal Guru, and for that reason it is known to all Sikhs as the Guru Granth Sahib.
 - The **Dasam Granth** is controversial in the Panth because of questions concerning its authorship and composition.
- **Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee:**
 - Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, Punjab (India), **an apex democratically elected body of Sikhs** residing all over the world was established under a special Act of **Parliament** in 1925 to look after the religious affairs, cultural and historical monuments.

Ten Gurus of Sikh Religion

Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He was the first guru of Sikh and the founder of Sikh religion.▪ He started the GURU KA LANGAR.▪ He was the contemporary of Babur.▪ Kartarpur corridor was commemorated on the 550th birth anniversary
Guru Angad (1504-1552)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He invented the new script called Guru-Mukhi and popularized and expanded it.
Guru Amar Das (1479-1574)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He introduced the ceremony of the Anand Karaj Marriage.▪ He abolished the custom of Sati and Purdah system among the Sikhs.▪ He was a contemporary of Akbar.
Guru Ram Das (1534-1581)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He founded Amritsar in 1577 on the land granted by Akbar.▪ He started the construction of Golden Temple/Swarna mandir at Amritsar.
Guru Arjun Dev (1563-1606)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He composed the Adi Granth in 1604.▪ He led to the completion of construction of Golden temple.▪ He was acclaimed as Shaheeden-de-Sartaj.▪ He was executed by Jahangir on charges of helping prince Khusrau.
Guru Hargobind	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He led to the transformation of the Sikh Community into a Military community.

(1594-1644)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He led to the establishment of Akal Takht and fortified the Amritsar City. ▪ He waged wars against Jahangir and Shah Jahan.
Guru Har Rai (1630-1661)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He was a man of peace thus devoted most of his life in maintaining peace v
Guru Har Krishan (1656-1664)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He was the youngest guru of all and was given the title of Guru at a very ea ▪ He was summoned by Aurangzeb against anti-islamic blasphemy.
Guru Teg Bahadur (1621-1675)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He founded Anandpur Sahib.
Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He founded a warrior community known as Khalsa in 1699. ▪ He introduced a new rite "Pahul". ▪ He joined Bahadur Shah's as a noble. ▪ He was the last Sikh Guru in human form and he passed the Guruship of Sik

[Source: IE](#)

Submarine Vagsheer

Why in News?

Recently, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders launched the sixth [Scorpene Submarine](#) 'Vagsheer' of [Project-75](#).



What is a Scorpene Class Submarine?

- The submarines in the Project-75 Scorpene Class are powered by diesel-electric propulsion systems.
- Scorpene is one of the most sophisticated submarines, capable of undertaking multifarious missions including anti-surface ship warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying, and area surveillance.
- The Scorpene class is the Navy's first modern conventional submarine series in almost two decades since INS Sindhusastra, procured from Russia in July 2000.

What is Submarine Vagsheer?

▪ About:

- Vagsheer is named after the sand fish, **a deep sea predator of the Indian Ocean.**
- The first submarine Vagsheer, from Russia, was commissioned into the **Indian Navy in December, 1974, and was decommissioned in April, 1997.**
- It is the last of the Scorpene class submarines made under the P75 project and can join the Navy fleet within 12-18 months after sea trials.

▪ Features:

- Vagsheer is **a diesel attack submarine, designed to perform sea denial as well as access denial warfare** against the adversary.
- It is enabled with a **C303 anti-torpedo countermeasure system.**
- It can carry up to 18 torpedoes or Exocet anti-ship missiles, or 30 mines in place of torpedoes.
- Its superior stealth features include advanced acoustic absorption techniques, low radiated noise levels, hydro-dynamically optimized shape, and it can launch a crippling attack using precision guided weapons, underwater or on surface.

What is Project-75?

- P 75 is one of two lines of submarines, the other being **P75I**, as part of a plan approved in 1999 for indigenous submarine construction with technology taken from overseas firms.
- The contract for six submarines under P75 was given to Mazgaon dock in October 2005 and delivery was to start from 2012, but the project has faced delays.
 - The programme has been undertaken with **transfer of technology from French company** Naval Group (formerly known as DCNS) at the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).
- Under P75, **INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj and INS Vela have been commissioned.**
- Sea trials are on for **Vagir.**
- Vagsheer is the sixth; its production was delayed due to the pandemic.

[Source: TH](#)

Earth Day

Why in News?

On 22nd April 2022, the **52nd anniversary of Earth Day** was celebrated. Earth Day is an international event celebrated around the **world to pledge support for environmental protection.**

- The **theme for Earth Day 2022** is "**Invest In our Planet**".

What is Earth Day?

- **Background:** Earth Day was first observed in 1970 when 20 million took to the streets to protest environmental degradation on the call of US Senator Gaylord Nelson.
 - The event was triggered by the **1969 Santa Barbara oil spill**, as well as other issues such as smog and polluted rivers.
 - In 2009, the United Nations designated 22nd April as **'International Mother Earth Day.**
- **About:** Earth Day is now globally coordinated by **EARTHDAY.ORG**, which is a non-profit organization. It was formerly known as **Earth Day Network.**
 - **It aims to "build the world's largest environmental movement to drive**

transformative change for people and the planet”.

- It recognizes a collective responsibility, as called for in the [1992 Rio Declaration \(Earth Summit\)](#), to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.
- The landmark [Paris Agreement](#), which brings almost 200 countries together in setting a common target to reduce global greenhouse emissions, was also signed on Earth Day 2016.

What are some Other Important Days?

- 22nd March: [World Water Day](#)
- 22nd April: Earth Day
- 22nd May: [World Biodiversity Day](#)
- 5th June: [World Environment Day](#)
- [Earth Overshoot Day](#)

What is Earth Hour?

- [Earth Hour](#) is the [World Wildlife Fund for Nature \(WWF\)](#)'s annual initiative that began in 2007. It is held every year on the last Saturday of March.
- It encourages people from more than 180 countries to switch off the lights from 8.30 pm to 9.30 pm as per their local time.
- It seeks to raise awareness about [climate change](#) and the need to save the environment.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding 'Earth Hour': (2014)

1. It is an initiative of UNEP and UNESCO.
2. It is a movement in which the participants switch off the lights for one hour on a certain day every year.
3. It is a movement to raise awareness about the climate change and the need to save the planet.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (c)

Source: IE

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