

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 07-12-2023

Table of Content

Mahaparinirvan Diwas	2
J&K Reorganisation and Reservation Bill	2
Inquiry Committees of Parliament	3
Implementation of "Nari Adalat" under Mission Shakti	4
BharatNet Project	4
Char Dham Project and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	6
Agriculture and its Impact on Environment	7
NEWS IN SHORT	
Garba dance of Gujarat makes it to UNESCO list	8
Pompe Disease	9
Miyawaki Plantation Method	9
Google Gemini	9
Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter (OGDC)	10
National Medical Commission	10

MAHAPARINIRVAN DIWAS

News: The death anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar is observed as the **Mahaparinirvan Diwas**.

What does Parinirvana mean?

- **Parinirvana** represents a fundamental concept in **Buddhism**, signifying the **attainment of nirvana** or liberation during one's lifetime and even after death.
- The term "**Parinibbana**" in Pali is employed to convey the fulfillment of nirvana.

About Dr BR Ambedkar

- Dr Ambedkar was a **social reformer, jurist, economist, author, scholar and thinker**.
- He also known as the "**Father of the Indian Constitution**," made significant contributions across various domains in the socio-political landscape of India.

Contributions of Dr BR Ambedkar

- **Advocacy for Social Justice:** Ambedkar was a prominent advocate for the rights of marginalized and oppressed communities, especially Dalits (formerly known as untouchables).
 - ♦ **Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha:** It was founded by him in **1924** to spread education and awareness among the dalits.
 - ♦ **Mahad Satyagraha:** He led the Satyagraha in 1927 in Maharashtra to challenge the regressive customs of the Hindu.
 - ♦ **Kalaram Satyagraha:** A temple entry movement in Nashik for the untouchables started by him in **1930**.
 - ♦ **Round Table Conferences:** He participated in all the three Round Table Conferences in 1930, 1931 and 1932, voicing for untouchables and the depressed class.
 - ♦ **Independent Labour Party:** It was formed in **1936** which was later known as the Scheduled Castes Federation.
- **Role in the Poona Pact:** In **1932** on behalf of untouchables, he signed the Poona Pact with Mahatma Gandhi, who was representing Congress.
 - ♦ The pact provided the provisions for reserved seats for the depressed class in the regional legislative assemblies and Central Council of States.

- **Labour and Industrial Reforms:** He was involved in formulating policies related to labor and industrial issues. **Between 1942-46 he worked as Minister of Labour** in the Viceroy's Executive Council.
- **Architect of the Indian Constitution:** Dr. Ambedkar was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution and played a pivotal role in drafting the Constitution of India.
- **Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha:** He established the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha in **1955** to propagate Buddhism as a means of social and spiritual emancipation.
- **International Representation:** Dr. Ambedkar represented India in the inaugural session of the United Nations General Assembly in **1946**. He raised issues related to human rights and social justice on the international stage.
- In **1956 he embraced Buddhism** along with many of his followers in a public ceremony in Nagpur.

Books and Publications

- Annihilation of Caste
- The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution
 - ♦ Thoughts on Linguistic States
 - ♦ The Buddha and His Dhamma
 - ♦ The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables?
- **Mooknayak:** It was a fortnightly newspaper, started by him In **1920** with the support of Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur.

Source: [Mint](#)

J&K REORGANISATION AND RESERVATION BILL

News: The Lok Sabha recently passed the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023** and the **Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023**.

Background

- **The Special Status of J&K under Article 370 of the Constitution was read down** by Parliament in **August 2019** and the former State was **split into two Union Territories - J&K and Ladakh (through the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019)**.
- The Legislative Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir initially had **100 members, including 24 for**

Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), until 1988 when the seats were increased to 111.

- The 24 Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) seats were not considered in quorum calculation, making the total contestable seats 87, including four for Ladakh.
- After delimitation in 2020, the total seats rose to 114, including those for PoK.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023

- The Bill seeks to amend the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**.
- This bill proposes to increase the total number of seats in the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly **from 107 to 114**, of which seven would be reserved for **scheduled caste members** and nine seats for legislators from scheduled tribes.
- The Bill adds that the **Lieutenant Governor may nominate up to two members from the Kashmiri migrant community** to the Legislative Assembly.
 - ♦ **One of the nominated members must be a woman.**
 - ♦ **"Kashmiri Migrants" are defined** as persons who migrated from the Kashmir Valley or any other part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir after November 1, 1989, and are registered with the Relief Commissioner.
- The Bill adds that the **Lieutenant Governor may nominate to the Legislative Assembly one member representing displaced persons** from **Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir**.
 - ♦ **Displaced persons** refer to individuals from PoK who took refuge in India following the wars with Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1971.

Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023

- The Bill Seeks to amend the **Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004**, which provides for **reservation in jobs and admission in professional institutions** to members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other socially and educationally backward classes.
- The Bill **substitutes weak and under-privileged classes** with other backward classes as declared by the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

Source: TH

INQUIRY COMMITTEES OF PARLIAMENT

News: The ethics committee of the Lok Sabha have recommended the expulsion of Minister of Parliament Mahua Moitra for her "unethical conduct" and "breach of privileges".

Types of Parliament committees

- **Standing Committees:** These are permanent (constituted every year or periodically) and work on a continuous basis.
- **Ad Hoc Committees:** These are temporary and cease to exist on completion of the task assigned to them.

Committees to Inquire

- It is a type of Standing Committee which consist of ;
 - ♦ Committee on Petitions
 - ♦ Committee of Privileges
 - ♦ Ethics Committee

Ethics committee

- It is a **standing Committee** with a **term period of one year** which enforces the code of conduct of members of Parliament.
- The Committee examines complaints filed against members of the House by other members; outsiders through a member; or referred by the Speaker.
- **Appointment and Composition:** The Ethics Committee consists of members appointed by the Speaker, serving a term of one year. It comprises **15 members**.
- The term '**unethical**' is **not defined** and is left to the Committee to decide whether any act is unethical or not.

History of Ethics Committees

- A Presiding Officers' Conference held in 1996 first mooted the idea of ethics panels for the two Houses.
- **Rajya Sabha:** Then Vice President K R Narayanan constituted the Ethics Committee of the Upper House in **1997**, and it was inaugurated that year. The Rules applicable to the Committee of Privileges also apply to the ethics panel.
- **Lok Sabha:** The Committee of Privileges recommended the constitution of an Ethics

Committee during the 13th Lok Sabha. The then Speaker, G M C Balayogi, constituted an ad hoc Ethics Committee in **2000**, which became a permanent part of the House in **2015**.

Privileges Committee

- **The Committee examines** the cases of breach of privileges of the House and its members and recommends appropriate action.
- The functions of this committee are **semi-judicial in nature**.
- The mandate of the Privileges Committee is to safeguard the “freedom, authority, and dignity of Parliament”. These privileges are enjoyed by individual Members as well as the House as a whole.

Difference between Ethics and Privileges Committee

- The work of the Ethics Committee and the Privileges Committee often overlap. An allegation of corruption against an MP can be sent to either body, but usually **more serious accusations go to the Privileges Committee**.
- An MP can be examined for breach of privilege; a non-MP too can be accused of breach of privilege for actions that attack the authority and dignity of the House. However the **Ethics Committee can take up only cases of misconduct that involve MPs**.

Source: TH

IMPLEMENTATION OF “NARI ADALAT” UNDER MISSION SHAKTI

News: The Government has decided to implement the component of “Nari Adalat” in a phased manner under **Mission Shakti**.

About Nari Adalat

- It is women's collectives to promote and facilitate alternative dispute resolution and gender justice in society and within families.
- In the first phase, the State of Assam and the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) have been selected by the Ministry to implement the component of Nari Adalat.

Mission Shakti

- **About:** It is an **initiative by the Ministry of Women and Child Development** designed to enhance efforts in ensuring the safety, security, and empowerment of women.

- **Objective:** To fulfill the government's pledge to foster “women-led development” by tackling women's challenges throughout their life cycle and by actively involving them as equal contributors to nation-building. This is achieved through a strategy of convergence and encouraging citizen ownership.
- **Outlay:** The total approved outlay of ‘Mission Shakti’ for the 15th Finance Commission period is Rs. 20,989 crore, with Central Share of Rs. 15,761 crore and State Share of Rs 5,228 crore.
- **Sub-schemes:** It has two sub-schemes - ‘Sambal’ and ‘Samarthya’.
 - ♦ “Sambal” is for the safety and security of women.
 - It consists of erstwhile schemes of One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) with a new component of Nari Adalats.
 - ♦ The “Samarthya” is for empowerment of women.
 - The components of Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Palna, Shakti Sadan, Sakhi Niwas and Hub for Empowerment of Women are part of ‘Samarthya’ sub scheme.

Significance of Mission Shakti

- It seeks to realise the commitment of “**women-led development**” by addressing issues affecting women on a life-cycle continuum basis and by making them equal partners in nation-building through convergence and citizen-ownership.
- It seeks to make women economically empowered, exercising free choice over their minds and bodies in an atmosphere free from violence and threat.
- It also seeks to reduce the care burden on women and increase female labour force participation by promoting skill development, capacity building, financial literacy, access to microcredit etc.

Source: PIB

BHARATNET PROJECT

News: The Ministry of Communications recently said **6,658 gram panchayats had been made service-ready under the BharatNet Phase II project in Tamil Nadu**.

About:

- BharatNet, also known as the **National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)**, aims to provide **high-speed broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats** in India.
- It is one of the biggest **rural telecom projects** in the world approved by the Union Cabinet on **25.10.2011**.
- It is implemented in a phased manner **to connect all Gram Panchayats** (approximately 2.5 lakh) in the country **by providing non-discriminatory access to broadband connectivity** to all the telecom service providers.
- Objective is **to enable access providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Cable TV operators, content providers to launch various services** such as e-health, e-education and e-governance in rural and remote India.
- The project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) namely **Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL)**, which has been incorporated under **Indian Companies Act 1956**.

Status of the Project

- About 1.94 lakh villages have already been connected, the rest are expected to be connected by 2025.
- Additionally, 583,551 Fibre-To-The-Home (FTTH) connections are commissioned and 104,674 Wi-Fi hotspots are installed to ensure last-mile connectivity. (as on 24.07.2023)

Expected Benefits of the Project

- **Education:** Improved access to educational resources and online learning opportunities in rural areas.
- **Healthcare:** Telemedicine and e-health services can improve access to healthcare in remote areas.
- **Agriculture:** Farmers can access information on market prices, weather forecasts, and agricultural techniques.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Rural entrepreneurs can access e-commerce platforms and online markets.
- **Governance:** Increased transparency and accountability in government services.
 - ♦ It will also help in the expedition of government's initiatives such as Make In India, Start-up India, Stand-up India etc

- **Employment:** It would **provide a boost to the economy** by generating around **10 crore man-days of employment** during the rollout of the project.

Key Issues

- **Infrastructure Challenges:**

- ♦ **Lack of last-mile connectivity:** The project has focused on building the core infrastructure, but extending it to individual households has been slow.
- ♦ **Geographical barriers:** Reaching remote and hilly areas with optical fibre is costly and technically challenging.
- ♦ **Right of Way (RoW) issues:** Obtaining permission to lay fibre cables through public and private land can be time-consuming and bureaucratic.

- **Funding Challenges:**

- ♦ **Cost overruns:** The project has faced significant cost overruns due to factors like unexpected geographical challenges.
- ♦ **Funding gaps:** The project has relied heavily on government funding, which has been affected by budget constraints.
- ♦ **Limited private sector participation:** Private sector investment has been lower than expected due to perceived risks and regulatory hurdles.

- **Implementation Challenges:**

- ♦ **Coordination issues:** There have been coordination challenges between different government agencies involved in the project.
- ♦ **Skill gap:** There is a shortage of skilled manpower required for the installation and maintenance of optical fibre networks.

Measures to address issues

- **Focus on last-mile connectivity:** Use of innovative technologies like aerial fibre and satellite connectivity to bridge the last-mile gap.
- **Public-private partnerships (PPPs):** The government should leverage private capital and expertise through PPPs.
- **Increased funding:** The government must increase the allocation of funds for the project.
- **Capacity building:** The government should invest in training programs to create a skilled workforce for the project.

Source: TH

CHAR DHAM PROJECT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

News: The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) said that the **Char Dham project** in Uttarakhand does not need **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**.

EIA and Char Dham Project: Background

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is needed for the **expansion of National Highways greater than 100 km** involving additional right of way or land acquisition.
- Earlier, MoEFCC had constituted a **High-Powered Committee** to consider the impact of Char Dham Projects on the entire Himalayan valleys **under the directions of the Supreme Court of India**.
 - ♦ The committee is mandated to consider the impact of Char Dham Projects **on the entire Himalayan valleys** and give directions to conduct EIA and rapid EIA.
- However, the MoEFCC said that the **Char Dham Project** is being developed in **smaller parcels of 53 projects**, each with a length of **less than 100 km**, and **each project is independent**, having distinct start and end points.

Chardham Road Project

- It envisages **all-weather connectivity** to four major pilgrimage sites in Uttarakhand - **Kedarnath, Badrinath, Yamunotri and Gangotri**.
- **Administered by:** Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)
- **Construction by:** Border Roads Organization (BRO)
 - ♦ It works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence.
- **Length:** 889 km
- **Established in:** 1960
- **Significance**
 - ♦ To boost tourism, which is the backbone of the state of Uttarakhand.
 - ♦ To reduce the rate of accidents.
 - ♦ To improve border security deployment of India armed forces to the Chinese border.

Concerns related to the Project

- **Disturbing Himalayan Ecosystem:** Unregulated cutting of trees and scooping up land at the base of the hills is irreversibly damaging the ecosystem as well as making the regions the project passes through dangerously prone to landslides.

Road to disaster
Environmentalists concerns that have been highlighted by NGT include:

- Many sites of the mountain slopes along Char Dham highways have become unstable, and critical landslide zones have been activated
- There have been flash floods in Alaknanda valley and Bhagirathi valley, and earthquakes in Chamoli and Uttarkashi
- Road widening activity is a major trigger for landslides
- Cutting of trees loosens the soil and makes slopes unstable, and the project involves cutting the base of steep mountain slopes and Devdhar, Ton and Kail trees

- **Delayed Implementation:** The project was originally scheduled for completion by March 2022. However, it was delayed **mainly due to litigation related to forest and environment clearance** in various Courts of Law.
- **Unplanned Urbanisation:** The unplanned and unauthorised construction has led to the blocking of the natural flow of water, which eventually results in frequent landslides.
 - ♦ Himalayan slopes have become extremely unstable in the last few decades due to increased construction, hydroelectric projects, and the widening of the National Highway.
- **Vulnerability to extreme conditions:** Himalayas are inherently vulnerable to extreme weather conditions such as heavy rains, flash floods, and landslides and are seismically active.
 - ♦ Climate change has added another layer of vulnerability to this ecosystem.

- **Environment Impact Assessment (EIA):** It is one of the processes defined by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a tool to identify the environmental, social, and economic impacts of a project before it is implemented.
- **Features of EIA:** It compares various alternatives for the proposed project, predicts and analyses all possible environmental repercussions in various scenarios.
 - ♦ The EIA also helps decide appropriate mitigation strategies.
- **EIA Process:** The EIA process would need comprehensive, reliable data and would deliver results only if it is designed to seek the most appropriate, relevant and reliable information regarding the project.
 - ♦ Hence, the baseline data on the basis of which future likely impacts are being predicted are very crucial.



- **EIA in India:** In January 1994, the MoEFCC under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986, promulgated the first EIA notification making Environmental Clearance mandatory for setting up some specified new projects and also for expansion or modernisation of some specific activities.
 - ♦ This was later replaced by the EIA 2006 notification.
- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change floated a draft EIA in 2020 for public comments which faced criticisms as it was perceived to be pro industry and compromising the ecological concerns.

Way Forward

- The Char Dham project involves balancing the need for improved infrastructure with the imperative to protect the environment, which includes adhering to environmental norms and regulations, treating slopes to prevent landslides, and responsibly managing construction debris.

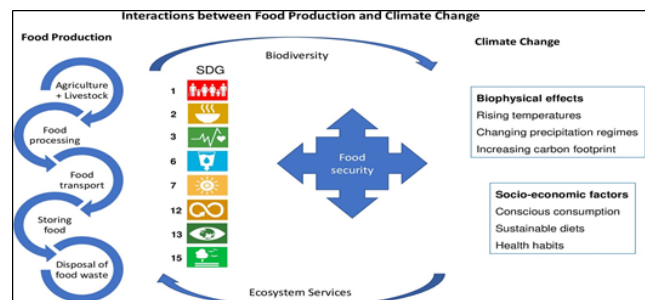
Source: TH

AGRICULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT

News: Recently it has been observed that the ever-increasing demand for agricultural products is leading to significant **social and environmental consequences worldwide.**

Agriculture-based impact

- **India** is a global anchor of the trade in agricultural products due to its vast size and consumer market. It has also undergone remarkable **social and economic development** over the last several decades.
- The **expansion of international trade** has created global supply chains, directly linking consumers to **geographically-distant impacts, including carbon emissions, biodiversity loss, freshwater depletion, soil degradation and labour-rights issues – all of which have local, regional, and global relevance.**



IMPORTANT DATA

- In 2018, **about 11% of the global greenhouse gas emissions were from food the world produced;** of this, the bulk of emissions were from **enteric fermentation** in the digestive systems of ruminant livestock.
- **Another 26% of the agriculture-related emissions were nitrous oxide from livestock manure** applied in fields or dumped.
- Synthetic fertilisers used on crops then added 13% nitrous oxide and methane emissions from rice cultivation contributed 10% of the total agriculture-related emissions.
 - ♦ It's recently been estimated that **the global food system is responsible for about a third of greenhouse gas emissions**—second only to the energy sector; it is the number one source of methane and biodiversity loss.
- The number of **people suffering acute food insecurity increased from 135 million in 2019 to 345 million in 82 countries by June 2022,** as the war in Ukraine, supply chain disruptions, and the continued economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic pushed food prices to all-time highs.

Who is most affected by climatic impacts?

- About **80% of the global population** most at risk from crop failures and hunger from climate change are in *Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia*, where farming families are disproportionately poor and vulnerable.
- A severe drought caused by an El Nino weather pattern or climate change can push millions more people into poverty.

Impact on Farmers

- Up to a certain point, rising temperatures and CO2 can be beneficial for crops. But rising temperatures also accelerate evapotranspiration from plants and soils, and there must also be enough water for crops to thrive.
- **Farmers are the first victims of climate change impacts.**
 - ♦ The **increasing cost of agricultural inputs and the lack of public infrastructure**, including for irrigation, hits their livelihood.
 - ♦ **Increasing food costs** are unaffordable to most consumers and governments step in to import food from intensive farming systems that are also invariably subsidised.
 - ♦ **Farmers are being hit repeatedly by extreme weather events**; their crops are lost to floods, droughts, pest attacks and unseasonal cold and heat.

What could be possible solutions?

- It's possible to reduce emissions and become more resilient, but doing so often requires major social, economic, and technological change.
- **Use water more efficiently and effectively**, combined with policies to manage demand.
 - ♦ It includes **better management of water demand** as well as the use of **advanced water accounting systems and technologies** to assess the amount of water available, including soil moisture sensors and satellite evapotranspiration measurements.
- Switch to **less water-intensive crops**, like rice farmers could switch to crops that require less water such as maize or legumes.
- **Improving soil health** by increasing organic carbon in soil that helps and allows water plants to access water more readily, increasing resilience to drought.
- **Nature-based solutions** to environmental challenges that could deliver 37% of climate change mitigation.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

GARBA DANCE OF GUJARAT MAKES IT TO UNESCO LIST

News: Gujarat's traditional dance form 'Garba' was recently included in the **list of Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO**.

About

- The popular dance form Garba is the **15th cultural item from India to make it to the UNESCO list**.
- The 14 other elements from India are:
 - ♦ Ramlila; yoga; vedic chanting; Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre of Kerala; Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas; Mudi yettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala; Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan; Chhau dance of eastern India; Buddhist chanting of Ladakh; Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur; traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making in Punjab; Nowruz; Kumbh Mela and Durga Puja in Kolkata.
- **Garba is celebrated for nine days during the festival of Navratri.**
 - ♦ The Garba is a unique manifestation of **worshipping the divine feminine energy or Shakti — the primordial goddess**.
 - ♦ The cultural, performative, and visual expressions of this **feminine energy are expressed through the Garba dance**.
- The performative and visual celebration of Garba takes place **within homes and temple courtyards, public spaces** in villages and urban areas.
- There are **different types of garba** like Mataji Garba, Krishna Garba and Lok Garba.



UNESCO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LIST

- It derives from the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- The UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list is a compilation maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that recognizes and safeguards cultural practices, traditions, knowledge, and skills that are considered intangible cultural heritage.

Source: TH

POMPE DISEASE

News: About 50 individuals in India who currently suffer from **Pompe disease**.

About

- Pompe disease is a rare genetic disorder caused by mutations in a gene that makes an **enzyme** called **Acid alpha-glucosidase (GAA)**.
- GAA is used by the body to break down **glycogen**, a stored form of sugar used for energy. The glycogen is converted into glucose in **Lysosomes**.
- In Pompe disease, mutations in the GAA gene reduce or completely eliminate this essential enzyme, resulting in the accumulation of glycogen in cells, particularly in muscles.
- No Cure but there are treatments to manage symptoms. Enzyme replacement therapy can help improve muscle tone and reduce glycogen storage in individuals with Pompe disease.

POMPE DISEASE

■ A rare genetic disorder, it is caused by a deficiency of the enzyme acid alpha-glucosidase.

■ Though there is no cure for the disease, there are treatments to manage symptoms and improve the quality of life.

■ It usually affects one in a million children.

■ It is diagnosed by genetic and enzyme tests.

■ Although there is no cumulative government data, about 50 individuals in India currently suffer from this condition.

Symptoms

Progressive muscle weakness

Difficulties in mobility

Respiratory complications

Cardiac complications

■ Joint contractures and skeletal deformities

■ Delays in achieving motor milestones

Source: Organisation of Rare Disease India

Source: IE

MIYAWAKI PLANTATION METHOD

Context: South Eastern Coalfields Ltd (SECL) uses '**Miyawaki**' Plantation Method to Enhance Green Cover in the **Gevra mine coal belt region of Chhattisgarh**.

About Miyawaki Plantation Method

- It is the **Japanese method** of creating urban dense **forests** in a small area and creating a dense canopy layer of tall trees.
- It was developed in the 1970s and named after *Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki*.
- It involves **planting native trees, shrubs and groundcover plants** within every square metre, and to create an arrangement of fast-growing, dense, varied species of plants, 20 times faster than normal.
- The species chosen for Miyawaki plantation can survive harsh weather and water-scarce conditions and grow rapidly in existing conditions yielding thick pockets of green cover.

Importance

It helps in

- Storing carbon dioxide, improving the health of ecosystems, and increasing groundwater levels etc.
- Absorbing the dust particles;
- Increasing green cover to benefit local communities and wildlife.

Source: PIB

GOOGLE GEMINI

News: Recently, Google launched "Gemini", an Artificial Intelligence technology which is trained to behave like humans.

About

- Gemini is a multimodal AI model, capable of processing and understanding various types of information, including text, code, audio, image, and video.
- Gemini is designed to understand, explain, and generate high-quality code in popular programming languages like Python, Java, C++, and Go.

Gemini vs ChatGPT

- Gemini is described as more flexible than GPT-4 and has the ability to work with video. This makes it more versatile compared to ChatGPT.

- Gemini Nano is available for on-device tasks, suggesting potential offline usage, which could be advantageous in scenarios with limited or no internet connectivity.

Source: **IE**

OIL AND GAS DECARBONIZATION CHARTER (OGDC)

News: Recently, the Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter was released.

About

- **Launch and Purpose:** Launched by UAE (COP28 Presidency) and Saudi Arabia for global climate action.
- **Aims:** To accelerate decarbonization in the oil and gas sectors.
- **Signatories:** Uptill now 50 companies which represent more than 40 percent of global oil production have signed on to the OGDC. National Oil Companies represent over 60 percent of signatories.
- **Commitments:**
 - ♦ The charter urges the oil and gas industry to attain net-zero emissions in their operations by 2050.
 - ♦ It also outlines commitments to accomplish nearly zero methane emissions and eliminate routine flaring by 2030.
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - ♦ Investment in the energy system of the future.
 - ♦ Reduction of emission intensity through industry best practices.
 - ♦ Addressing energy poverty and providing affordable energy.

COP 28 Conference

- COP28 UAE was held at Expo City Dubai from November 30 to December 12, 2023.
- It focussed on the Global Stocktake and a roadmap for global energy transition.

Source: **COP28**

NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

News: Recently, Doctors criticized the **National Medical Commission logo** featuring a vibrant depiction of the physician god Dhanvantri, IMA urges corrective action.

About

- National Medical Commission (NMC) is India's apex medical education regulator.
- It has been constituted by an Act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019
- **Regulatory Role:** NMC plays a key role in regulating medical education and practice.
- **Government Oversight:** NMC operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Policy Formulation:** Involved in formulating policies related to medical education and profession.
- **Aim:** To improve access to quality and affordable medical education, ensuring availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country.



Indian Medical Association (IMA)

- IMA is a premier professional organization for Indian doctors founded in 1928.
- It is a democratic forum working to maintain dignity, honor and social security of the medical fraternity in the country. It strives to provide quality healthcare to each and every citizen of India.

Source: **IE**