1. **Sagar Bhavan and Polar Bhavan:** Recently, two state-of-the-art research facilities—'Sagar Bhavan' and 'Polar Bhavan'—were inaugurated at the **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)** in Goa, providing a significant boost to India's capabilities in oceanographic and polar research.
   - **About Polar Bhavan :** India's largest integrated polar research hub.
     - Feature advanced labs, 55 researcher rooms, meeting spaces, a library, canteen, and the Science On Sphere (SOS) 3D visualization platform.
     - Will house India's first Polar and Ocean Museum.
   - **About Sagar Bhavan :** Equipped with ultra-cold -30°C ice core labs and +4°C storage for sediment and biological samples.
   - **About National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)** Founded in 1998, an autonomous institute and India's foremost R&D hub for polar and ocean research {under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)}
     - Leads the **nation's scientific pursuits** in the Polar Regions and the Southern Ocean, including the Arctic, Antarctic, Himalayas, and beyond.
     - Solely responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing **India's polar expeditions** and associated scientific studies.
     - Plays a critical part in national projects such as mapping the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), studying continental shelf margins, and implementing the Deep Ocean Mission.
     - **HQ in Vasco da Gama, Goa** {previously known as the National Center for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR)}
2. **Ideas4LiFE Initiative:** Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) unveiled the 21 winning ideas under the **'Ideas4LiFE' initiative.**
   - **About Ideas4LiFE:** A flagship program supporting the **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment).**
     - Introduced through the dedicated portal ideas4life.in, in collaboration with UNICEF YuWaah.
     - **Purpose**: To gather innovative, citizen-focused, and sustainable solutions encouraging environmentally friendly lifestyles.

- **About Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment):** Launched by India as a global mass movement to inspire individual and community action for environmental protection.
  - Inaugurated at COP26, Glasgow, November 2021.
  - Aims to engage one billion people globally to embrace sustainable lifestyles.
  - Acts as a platform highlighting sustainable goals and climate initiatives from countries and individuals worldwide.
  - Follows the P3 model: Pro Planet, Pro People, promoting shared environmental responsibility.
  - Guided by the principle of a lifestyle "of the planet, for the planet, and by the planet."

3. **Lancet Commission Report :** Recently, the **Second Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing** released a comprehensive report highlighting alarming projections for global adolescent health by 2030.
   - The report warns that without more investment, **half of the world's one billion adolescents** will face complex, multi-burden health challenges.

- **Key Findings** : By 2030, 464 million adolescents will be overweight or obese, an increase of 143 million since 2015.
  - Mental health issues will cause 42 million years of healthy life lost, 2 million more than in 2015.
  - The report calls for increased and better-targeted funding to address adolescent health challenges.
- **About Lancet Commission:** Launched in 2021, the Commission comprised 44 members, including 10 youth representatives. It actively engaged 122 adolescents through Youth Solution Labs to shape its discussions and solutions.

4. **Chagos Islands:** Recently, the **United Kingdom signed an agreement transferring sovereignty** of the **Chagos Islands to Mauritius,** ending decades of colonial-era contention.
   - The deal allows UK and US military operations to continue on Diego Garcia, the archipelago's largest island, through a 99-year lease with an annual payment of £101 million ($136 million) to Mauritius.

- **About Chagos Islands :** Located 500 km south of the Maldives in the Indian Ocean; consists of 58 islands.
  - Originally inhabited by enslaved Africans and Indians under French rule in the 18th century.
  - Ceded to Britain in 1814; detached from Mauritius in 1965 to form British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).
  - Despite Mauritius' 1968 independence, the UK retained control until agreeing to transfer sovereignty in 2024.
- **About Diego Garcia:** Largest island in the Chagos archipelago; coral atoll located 7° south of the equator.
  - Leased to the UK and US in 1967; became a key military base in 1986.
  - 2024 agreement allows UK-US operations to continue under a 99-year lease.
  - International Court of Justice backed Mauritius' sovereignty claim in 2019.
  - Played a major role in the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, and post-9/11 operations.



5. **Mt. Khangchendzonga :** Recently, a team from the National Institute of Mountaineering and Adventure Sports (NIMAS), Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh, became the first Indian team this climbing season to successfully summit Mt. Khangchendzonga.
   - **About Mt. Khangchendzonga:** Borders Sikkim and Nepal and is **India's highest peak.**
     - Ranked as the **world's third-highest** mountain.
     - It is situated within the **Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve**.
       - ✓ Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) was designated a World Heritage Site in 2016 under the 'mixed' category (Mixed heritage sites contain elements of both natural and cultural significance).
     - Protected under the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.
     - Holds spiritual significance and is central to **Pang Lhabsol,** an annual Sikkimese festival honoring the mountain.
     - Its name translates to **"Five Treasures of Snows,"** referring to its **five prominent peaks.**

6. **Gallantry Awards:** Recently, Indian President honored 6 Kirti Chakras and 33 Shaurya Chakras to personnel from the Armed Forces, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), and State & Union Territory Police in recognition of their exceptional bravery and valor.
   - **About Gallantry Awards**: Instituted to recognize exceptional bravery and sacrifice by Armed Forces personnel, lawfully constituted forces, and civilians.



     - **Historical Timeline:**
       - ✓ **January 26, 1950:** Introduction of the first three awards — Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra, and Vir Chakra — with retrospective effect from August 15, 1947.
       - ✓ **January 4, 1952:** Introduction of three additional awards — Ashoka Chakra Class-I, II, and III, also effective from August 15, 1947.
       - ✓ **January 1967:** These were renamed to Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra, and Shaurya Chakra respectively.
     - **Announced twice annually**, on Republic Day and Independence Day.
     - **Classification of Awards:**
       - ✓ **Wartime Gallantry Awards** – For acts of bravery in direct confrontation with the enemy.
       - ✓ **Peacetime Gallantry Awards** – For courageous actions in non-combat situations.
   - **Order of precedence:** Param Vir Chakra, the Ashoka Chakra, the Mahavir Chakra, the Kirti Chakra, the Vir Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra.

7. **Community Seed Banks:** Recently, on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity, the **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE),**called for strong government support for community seed banks.
   - **About:** Community seed banks are **decentralised grassroots initiatives** — a form of **gene banks** — managed by local farmer groups, self-help groups, non-profits and women.
   - **Primary purpose:** To preserve indigenous and climate-resilient seeds and the knowledge around their use. Traditional seeds are more resilient to extreme weather events.

- **Key Highlightes:** Farmers conserving traditional seeds should be recognized as **"custodians of biodiversity"** through certification, public acknowledgment, and inclusion in national biodiversity plans.
  - Increased government support is needed, including financial and technical aid, access to gene banks like **National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources(NBPGR),** and alignment with climate-resilient agriculture policies.
  - Survey across 15 states identified over 887 traditional seed varieties from 71 crops preserved through effective seed collection, storage, and distribution systems.

8. **National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use:** The Union government recently announced plans for a fresh, more extensive nationwide survey to assess substance use across India.
   - This new survey will build on the landmark 2017-18 **National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use,** which was the first comprehensive study estimating illicit drug use in the country**.**
   - **Survey Scale and Scope:** The new survey will have a sample size **3 to 4 times larger** than the 2017-18 survey.
     - For the first time, it will capture substance use data at the district level for more targeted interventions.
     - The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** is finalizing the survey design and formalities
     - It will provide updated insights on changing substance use trends, helping policymakers and health professionals adjust strategies.