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MK Yadav Sir

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DTE

Apr 8

NOAA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env & Eco)

Carbon dioxide in 2023 comparable to 4.3 billion years ago as global greenhouse gas levels hit all-time high: NOAA

Context: Recently, data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) disclosed that global carbon dioxide levels soared to a record high in 2023.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- **About**: NOAA is an agency that enriches life through science, extending its reach from the sun's surface to the depths of the ocean floor.
- **Headquarters**: Washington, D.C.
- **Establishment and Mandate**: It was established in 1970 within the Department of Commerce with the mandate to study Earth's oceans, atmosphere, and coastal areas as they affect the United States.
- **Global Mission**: NOAA's mission extends beyond national borders to better understand the natural world and protect its resources, collaborating globally to monitor weather, climate, and environmental changes.
- **Leadership in International Policies**: It holds key leadership roles in shaping international policies concerning ocean, fisheries, climate, space, and weather, contributing to global **initiatives for sustainable resource management.**
- **Essential Resources and Expertise**: NOAA boasts numerous essential resources, including research programs, vessels, satellites, science centers, laboratories, and a distinguished pool of scientists and experts, all of which are internationally recognized for their contributions.

Key Facts of the study by NOAA:

- Global carbon dioxide levels reached a record high in 2023. This surge places us in the **Pliocene epoch**, a period roughly 4.3 million years ago. The Pliocene epoch was a time of significant environmental change.
- The 2023 increase was the **third-largest in the last decade** and is likely a result of an ongoing increase of fossil fuel carbon dioxide emissions.
- The NOAA analysis also found **record high levels of another greenhouse gas: Methane.**
    - More than 85 per cent of the increase from 2006 to 2021 was due to increased microbial emissions generated by livestock, agriculture, human and agricultural waste, wetlands and other aquatic sources The rest could be coming from fossil fuel emissions.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 13

VOTER VERIFIED PAPER AUDIT TRAIL

(Syllabus GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Why VVPAT was brought in, why Oppn wants all slips verified

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 8

WITH THE first phase of voting set to take place on April 19, the Supreme Court (SC) last week said that petitions seeking 100% verification of Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips would be taken up soon.

In March 2023, the Association for Democratic Reforms had filed a petition before the apex court saying that to ensure free and fair elections, the tally from Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) should be cross-verified with the VVPATs. To make sure that this process is carried out as fast as possible, ADR suggested the use of barcodes on VVPAT slips.

DECISION 2024

What is a VVPAT machine? How does it work?

The VPAT machine is attached to the ballot unit of the EVM, and provides visual verification for the vote cast by a voter by printing a slip of paper with the voter's choice on it. This slip of paper, containing the candidate's serial number, name, and party symbol, is displayed in the machine behind a glass window, giving the voter seven seconds to verify her vote. Following this, the slip falls into a compartment underneath.

No voter can take the VVPAT slip back home, as it is later used to verify votes cast in five randomly selected polling booths. The idea is that by allowing for a physical verification of the electronically cast vote, both voters and political parties have greater faith in the process — that their vote is being recorded correctly.

Why did the Election Commission introduce VVPATs?

The idea of the VVPAT machine first emerged in 2010, when the Election Commission of India (EC), held a meeting with political parties to discuss how to make the EVM-based polling process more transparent.

After a prototype was prepared, field trials were held in Ladakh, Thiruvananthapuram, Cherrapunjee, East Delhi, and Jaisalmer in July 2011. After fine-tuning the design, holding more trials, and taking feedback from political parties, an EC expert committee approved the design in February 2013.

Later that year, the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 were amended to allow for a printer with a drop box to be attached to the EVM. The VVPAT was used for the first time in all 21 polling stations of the Noksen Assembly constituency of Nagaland in 2013, after which the EC decided to introduce VVPATs in a phased manner. By June 2017, there was 100% adoption of VVPATs.



A demo VVPAT machine at a school in Delhi in 2019. *Abhinav Saha*

Why are VVPAT slips of only five polling booths randomly counted?

To determine what percentage of VVPAT machines' slips need to be counted to verify the accuracy of an election, the EC, in 2018, asked the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) to come up with a "mathematically sound, statistically robust and practically cogent sample size for the internal audit of the VVPAT slips with electronic result of EVMs", the EC mentioned in an affidavit it has filed in the Supreme Court.

In February 2018, the EC mandated the counting of VVPAT slips of one randomly selected polling station per Assembly constituency. This was increased to five polling stations per Assembly seat, following a Supreme Court judgment in April 2019 on a petition filed by TDP leader Chandrababu Naidu. The five polling stations are selected by a draw of lots by the Returning Officer concerned, in the presence of candidates/their agents.

What have been the legal cases surrounding the VVPAT?

The VVPAT has been a subject of multiple legal cases, starting with *Subramanian Swamy vs Election Commission of India*, in which the SC ruled that a paper trail was indispensable for free and fair elections, and ordered the government to provide funding for the roll-out of VVPATs.

In 2019, Chandrababu Naidu moved the SC asking for a minimum 50% randomised VVPAT slips to be counted. The EC, however, argued that if this were to happen, results would be delayed by five to six days. Moreover, it pointed to ISI's calculations which found that even counting of slips from 479 randomly selected VVPATs across the country would guarantee over 99% accuracy — but the EC's guideline at the time of verifying slips from one polling station per constituency would have led to counting of 4,125 VVPATs.

Nonetheless, the court ordered the EC to count VVPATS in five polling stations instead.

Why does the EC not want to count 50% VVPAT slips?

As per a previous submission in the SC, the EC claims that it takes about an hour for election officers to match VVPAT slips with the EVM count in one polling station. Moreover, since the counting of VVPAT slips can begin only after EVM votes for the concerned polling station have been tabulated, for five polling stations, it would mean a delay of five hours in all, EC sources said. The EC has also highlighted infrastructure challenges, including the availability of manpower, as obstacles to increasing the number of polling booths where VVPAT slips are counted.

Why are political parties demanding widened verification of VVPAT slips?

Opposition parties continue to call for verification of more polling booths to make voting more transparent. They argue that the sanctity of a fair election outweighs the concern of delay in the declaration of results.

Parties have called for anything from 50% to 100% verification of VVPAT slips. In December, the Opposition INDIA alliance, which includes the Congress, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Communist Party of India, the Trinamool Congress, the DMK and the Samajwadi Party, passed a resolution demanding 100% verification of VVPAT slips. The INDIA Alliance has sought time to meet Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar to discuss their concerns.

However, the EC has, thus far, been reluctant to do so. As per EC sources, the EVM and VVPAT concerns have been litigated and addressed by the Commission many times.

Context: Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) announced that petitions advocating for 100% verification of Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips would be addressed soon, just ahead of the first phase of voting scheduled for April 19.

Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)

- **About:** It is an independent system [consists of two parts, namely, VVPAT Printer and VVPAT Status Display Unit (VSDU)] attached with the **Electronic Voting Machines** that allows the voters to verify that their votes are cast as intended.
- **Objective:**
  - To allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly.
  - To detect possible election fraud or malfunction.
  - To provide a means to audit the stored electronic results.
- **Developed by:** Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Electronics Corporation of India (ECIL).
- **Trails:** Field trials in various locations, including Ladakh, Thiruvananthapuram, Cherrapunjee, East Delhi, and Jaisalmer, took place in July 2011.
- **Beginning:** The Government of India notified the amended **Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 in 2013,** enabling the Commission to use VVPAT with EVMs.
  - The SC in **Subramanian Swamy v ECI (2013)** held that VVPAT is an "indispensable requirement of free and fair elections.
  - The VVPAT was used for the first time in all 21 polling stations of the Noksen Assembly constituency of Nagaland in 2013.
  - 2019 Lok Sabha elections became the first general election to have 100% of EVMs being attached to VVPATs.
- **VVPAT slips counting:** EC mandated the counting of VVPAT slips of one randomly selected polling station per Assembly constituency. **This was increased to five polling stations per Assembly seat.**

TSAT-1A SATELLITE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Sci and Tech)

SpaceX deploys TSAT-1A satellite

Tata Advanced Systems Limited on Monday announced the "successful deployment" into space of its sub-metre optical satellite that was assembled and tested in India. SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket launched TSAT-1A satellite from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, in the US on Sunday (7 April), Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) said in a statement.

"TSAT-1A will deliver high-resolution optical satellite images with increased collection capacity, dynamic range, and low-latency delivery through its multispectral and hyperspectral capabilities," the company said.

A wholly owned subsidiary of Tata Sons, TASL is a significant player for aerospace and defence solutions in India. TASL, India's leading private sector player for aerospace and defence solutions, and Satellogic Inc., a leader in sub-metre resolution Earth Observation data collection, "today announced the successful deployment into space of TASL's TSAT-1A satellite aboard the Bandwagon-1 mission, which SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket", it said. PTI

Context: Recently, the satellite TSAT-1A was launched from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, USA, by SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket.

TSAT-1A Satellite

- **About:** It is a result of the successful collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) and Satellogic, showcasing the synergy between two industry leaders in satellite technology.
- **Expert Assembly**: Assembled at TASL's AIT plant in Karnataka, the satellite leverages Satellogic's expertise in Earth observation technology and TASL's proficiency in complex system integration.
- **TSAT-1A Capabilities**:
  - **Sub-Meter Resolution**: Capable of capturing incredibly detailed images, the satellite facilitates precise observation of Earth's features, enhancing our understanding of the planet's dynamics.
  - **Multispectral and Hyperspectral Imaging**: Equipped with advanced technology, the satellite can collect data across a wide range of wavelengths, providing comprehensive insights into the observed environment.
  - **Enhanced Performance**: The TSAT-1A offers increased collection capacity, dynamic range, and low-latency delivery, ensuring timely access to valuable data, thus enhancing the efficiency of Earth observation missions.

Impactful Applications:

- **Agriculture**: The satellite's data will be instrumental in monitoring crop health, assessing soil conditions, and improving agricultural practices, thereby contributing to food security and sustainability.
- **Disaster Management:** By providing real-time data for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, the TSAT-1A satellite aids in mitigating the impact of natural calamities and saving lives.
- **Urban Planning**: The satellite's imagery supports infrastructure development and urban planning initiatives by providing valuable insights into land use, population density, and spatial trends.
- **Environmental Monitoring**: With its capability to track deforestation, pollution levels, and other environmental changes, the TSAT-1A satellite plays a crucial role in monitoring and preserving Earth's ecosystems.

INDIAN EXPRESS

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CICADAS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

DUAL EMERGENCE (OF CICADAS)

For the first time since 1803, two broods of 'periodical cicadas' will emerge in the United States this summer

IN A rare occurrence, 1 trillion cicadas from two different broods are expected to begin appearing in the Midwest and Southeast regions of the United States at the end of April.

It's the first time since 1803 that Brood XIX, or the Great Southern Brood, and Brood XIII, or the Northern Illinois Brood, will appear together in an event known as a dual emergence.

A roughly 16-state area will be center stage for these periodical cicadas, which differ from those that appear annually in smaller numbers.

One trillion cicadas, each just over an inch long, would cover 15,782,828 miles if they were placed end to end, said Floyd W Shockley, an entomologist and collections manager at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.



An adult cicada flies from a clover flower in Washington. *AP*

When are the cicadas coming out?

The first cicadas are expected to start emerging in late April. Temperature determines when they come out, said Gene Kritsky, a retired professor of biology at Mount St Joseph University in Cincinnati.

Kritsky said first the soil needs to reach 17.78 degree Celsius, about 6 inches deep, and "then you get a good soaking rain, and that's when they really pop," he said.

How long will dual emergence last?

The Midwest and Southeast should be buzzing for about six weeks.

In most cases, Shockley said, the cicadas, which live about a month, will die not far from where they had emerged.

Are cicadas dangerous?

Cicadas don't bite or sting, nor do they carry any diseases. But since they're "not great flyers and even worse landers," cicadas often end up on sidewalks and city streets, where they can be squished by people or cars and "could conceivably make things slick."

How do you get rid of cicadas?

The short answer is: You don't. If you have delicate plants that you want to protect, then use special netting created for that purpose.

The bugs are beneficial to the environment, acting as natural tree gardeners. The holes they leave behind when they emerge from the ground help aerate the soil and allow for rainwater to get underground and nourish tree roots in hot summer months.

The slits they make in trees can cause some branches to break, and the leaves then turn brown in a process known as "flagging," which is a kind of natural pruning. When the branch grows again, the fruits it yields will tend to be larger. When they die, the cicadas' rotting bodies provide nutrients that trees need.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Context: In a rare occurrence, 1 trillion cicadas from two different broods are recently expected to begin appearing in the Midwest and Southeast regions of the United States at the end of April.

Cicadas

- **About:** Cicadas are **hemipteran insects** known for their loud, complex and species-specific acoustic signals or songs.
  - Most cicadas are canopy dwellers and are found in natural forests with large trees.
- **Scientific name**: Cicadoidea
- **Distribution**: At least 3,000 cicada species are distributed worldwide, in essentially any habitat that has deciduous trees, with the majority being in the tropics.
  - The **generic diversity of cicadas in India and Bangladesh ranks the highest** in the world, followed by China.
- **Benefits:** Cicadas, with their acoustic signatures, act as indicators of a healthy forest ecosystem. They prune mature trees, aerate the soil, and once they die, their bodies serve as an important source of nitrogen for growing trees.
- **Food:** They are mostly herbivorous and have piercing-sucking mouthparts that they use to feed on the sap of trees and plants.
- **Species Diversity**: With over 3,000 species, cicadas can be broadly categorized into annual cicadas, seen every year, and periodical cicadas, which emerge once every decade or two.

INDIA TODAY Apr 8

POLAR VORTEX

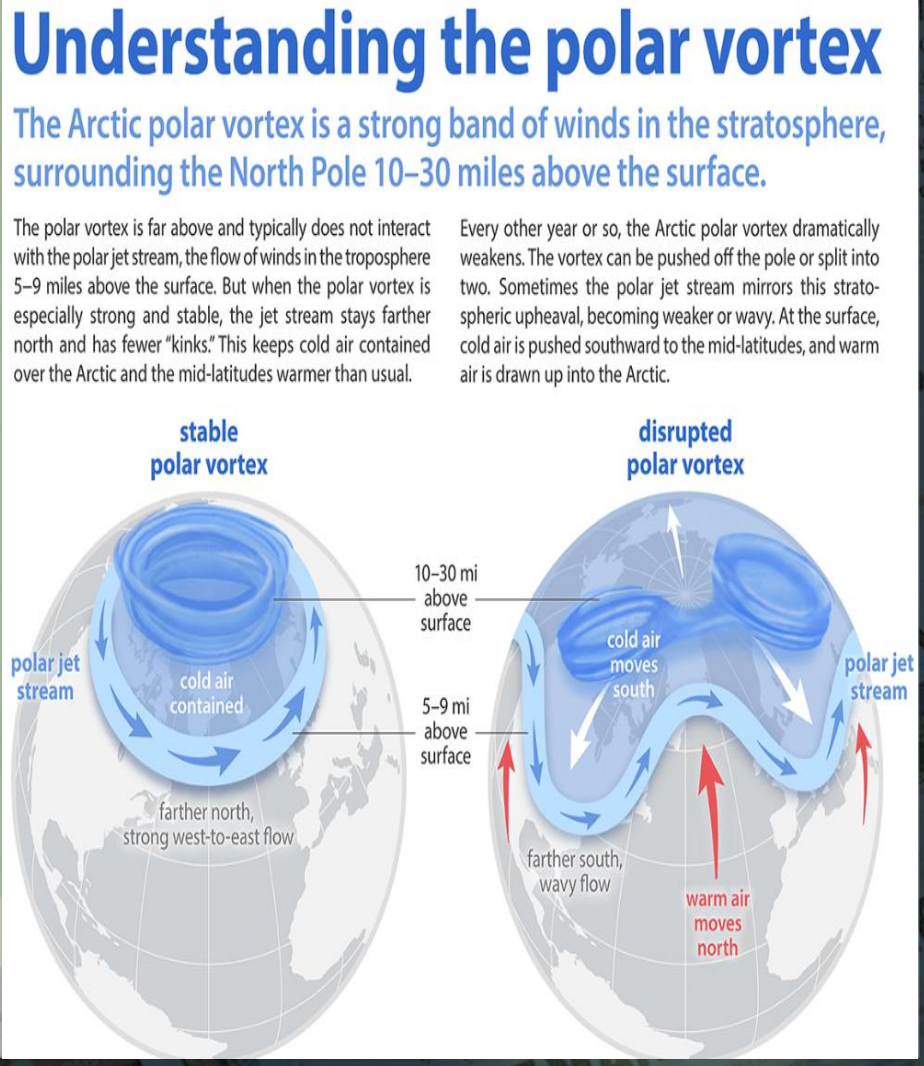
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

Earth's polar vortex has mysteriously reversed

Context: Recently, scientists made the intriguing discovery that the Earth's polar vortex has undergone a mysterious reversal.

Polar Vortex

- **About**: refers to the circulation of strong, high-altitude winds in the stratosphere during winter in the hemisphere facing away from the sun.
- **Emergence**: It emerges during winter when the pole is tilted away from the sun, causing darkness and cooling in the polar stratosphere.
- **Temperature Dynamics**: The cooling of the polar stratosphere in contrast to the warmer tropical stratosphere creates a temperature gradient that drives the polar vortex.
- **Formation of Arctic Polar Vortex**: The resultant temperature contrast leads to the formation of robust west-to-east winds in the stratosphere, known as the Arctic polar vortex.
- **Impacts of Polar Vortex Variability**: Under certain weather conditions, the polar vortex can weaken and expand, allowing frigid Arctic air to spill southward into regions unaccustomed to such cold.
- **Consequences of Polar Vortex Disruptions**: This can trigger extreme cold snaps, snowstorms, and other severe winter weather events in areas like North America, Europe, and Asia.



TIMES OF INDIA

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PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1/3 – Women Related Issues/Security Forces)

'Must march with time': SC to govt on permanent stint for women in Coast Guard

Dhananjay.Mahapatra@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: After granting permanent commission to women short service commission officers in Army, Navy and Air Force, Supreme Court on Monday decided to examine similar career opportunity to women short service agreement (SSA) officers in Indian Coast Guard while ordering interim reinstatement of a woman officer who was discharged in Dec 2023 after a 14-year stint.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also ordered transfer of the petition by the woman SSA officer Priyanka Tyagi from Delhi high court, which had declined to grant interim relief to her while agreeing to examine the larger issue of PC for women in ICG, to Supreme Court saying it presented a national issue of gender equality.

In a virtual one-sided hearing of Tyagi's lawyer, senior advocate Archana Pathak Dave, the bench said when different branches of armed forces have granted PC to women short service commission officer, ICG cannot remain an outlier. "The petition needs to be heard given the broader constitutional mandate of Article 15 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth)," it said.

When attorney general R Venkataramani and additional solicitor general Vikramjit Banerjee attempted to convey the factual aspects of the denial of permanent commission to Tyagi, the bench said, "Look at the resistance you have for absorbing women in permanent commission in ICG, which must march with time."

In her 14-year stint with ICG as an SSA officer in the rank of assistant commandant, Tyagi saved more than 300 lives in the sea, logged 4,500 flying hours — the highest among men and women in armed forces, and in 2016, was part of first-ever all women crew on Dornier aircraft to undertake maritime patrolling on the eastern region.



SC ordered transfer of a plea regarding permanent commission to women in ICG to itself from Delhi HC saying it presented a national issue of gender equality

Yet for all her accomplishments, she was denied permanent entry into ICG, which issued an order in May last year for releasing her from service on Dec 30, 2023. Citing grant of permanent commission to women in all three wings of armed forces, she moved Delhi HC seeking similar relief. Though HC entertained her petition, it refused to grant her interim relief by directing ICG to continue her service till a judicial decision on her plea.

Tyagi said there is no policy for permanent absorption of SSA women officers in ICG. The petitioner said she cleared a special aviation medical test and completed 13 months of flying training to qualify as a navigator. She said she has highest-flying hours as per her seniority in all the forces including male and female — 4,500 hours on the Dornier Aircraft — and has saved more than 300 lives at sea.

Context: Recently, the Supreme Court examined extending permanent commission to women short service commission officers across the Indian Force, while also ordering interim reinstatement for a discharged woman officer from the Indian Coast Guard, following a 14-year tenure, as it considers similar career opportunities for women short service agreement (SSA) officers.

Permanent Commission

- **About**: It means a career in the Army till retirement age.
  - For PC, the entry is through National Defence Academy (NDA), Pune, Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun, and Officers Training Academy (OTA), Gaya.
- **Short Service Commission**: It provides an option for women for joining the Army and serving as a Commissioned Officer for 10/14 years.
  - After 10 years, a woman officer can either opt for a PC or opt-out or have the option of a 4 years extension, during which they can resign at any time.

Women's Entry into Armed Forces

- **Origin**: The induction of women officers in the Army started in 1992.
  - They were commissioned for a period of five years in certain chosen streams such as the Army Education Corps, Corps of Signals, Intelligence Corps, and Corps of Engineers.
- **Women Special Entry Scheme (WSES)**: Recruits under the Women Special Entry Scheme (WSES) had a shorter pre-commission training period than their male counterparts who were commissioned under the Short Service Commission (SSC) scheme.
  - In 2006, the WSES scheme was replaced with the SSC scheme, which was extended to women officers. They were commissioned for a period of 10 years, extendable up to 14 years.
- **Permanent Commission for Women**: The Ministry of Defence has taken steps to ensure the implementation of the grant of PC to women officers in the Armed Forces.
  - **Indian Air Force**: All Branches, including Fighter Pilots, are open for female officers.
  - **Indian Navy**: All non-seagoing Branches/Cadre/Specialisation has been opened for induction of women officers through SSC.
  - **Indian Army**: Women officers are granted PC in the Indian Army in all the ten branches where women are inducted for SSC.
- **Extension**: In 2008, the government extended the permanent commission to women in two branches - Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Educational Corps (AEC).

DTE Apr 8

EMPS 2024
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Schemes)

EMPS 2024: Steering India's electric vehicle market towards a post-incentive era

Context: Recently, on April 1, 2024, India implemented the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS), 2024, aiming to incentivize the adoption of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers and foster the growth of an electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing ecosystem.

Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024

- **About:** The Ministry of Heavy Industries, Government of India, in collaboration with the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, is launching the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024 (EMPS 2024).
- **Objective**: EMPS 2024 aims to expedite the uptake of Electric Vehicles (EVs) across India.
- **Financial Allocation**: EMPS 2024 is a fund-limited scheme with a total budget of Rs. 500 crore.
- **Duration of the Scheme**: The scheme is set to operate for a duration of four months, commencing from April 1, 2024, to July 31, 2024.
- **Focus**: EMPS 2024 prioritizes the adoption of electric two-wheelers (e-2W) and three-wheelers (e-3W) to bolster green mobility initiatives and foster the growth of the EV manufacturing ecosystem.
- **Eligible EV categories:** Two Wheelers (electric) (e-2W) and Three-wheeler (electric) including registered e-rickshaws & e-carts and L5 (e-3W).
- **Components of EMPS 2024:**
    - **Subsidies/Demand Incentive**: incentive for electric 2W (e-2W) and electric 3 W including registered e-rickshaws & e-carts and L5 (e-3W)
    - **Administration of scheme:** Including IEC (Information, Education & Communication) activities and fee for Project Management Agency.

Multiple Caps

- **Incentive Caps**: EMPS and FAME II both impose caps on incentives for electric vehicles (EVs), but with different structures.
- **Impact on Price and Incentives**: EMPS's multiple caps lead to reduced monetary support, potentially increasing vehicle prices.
- **Effect on Vehicle Affordability**: CSE estimates significant reductions in incentives under EMPS, notably by 63% for two-wheelers and 37-38% for e-autos and e-rickshaws.

LIVEMINT Page 8

EARLY WARNING FOR ALL INITIATIVE
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management)

'India to help with warning systems'

India is helping Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Mauritius develop early warning systems to reduce the loss of life and property due to extreme weather events, India Meteorological Department (IMD) chief Mrutyunjay Mohapatra has said.

In a conversation with *PTI* editors, the IMD director general said India will play the role of a big brother and a peer advisor to Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Mauritius in the efforts to guard against the impact of extreme weather events. India's efforts are part of the 'Early Warnings for All' initiative announced by the United Nations in 2022 to ensure that everyone is protected from hazardous weather, water or climate events through life-saving early warning systems by the end of 2027. Mohapatra said India is helping five of the 30 countries identified across the world for the first phase of the initiative of establishing early warning systems. PTI

Context: India is helping Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Mauritius develop early warning systems to reduce the loss of life and property due to extreme weather events.

Early Warning for All Initiative

- **About**: It is an initiative announced by the United Nations in 2022.
- **Aim:** To ensure that everyone is protected from hazardous weather, water or climate events through life-saving early warning systems by the end of 2027.
- **Need:** 50% of the countries do not have an early warning system.
- **India's efforts:** India is helping five of the 30 countries identified across the world for the first phase of the initiative of establishing early warning systems.

Early Warning System:

- **About:** It is a collection of capacities aimed at producing and distributing timely and relevant warning information regarding potential extreme events or disasters.
- **Types of Threats Addressed**: EWS covers a range of threats including floods, droughts, fires, earthquakes, and tsunamis, which pose risks to human lives and livelihoods.
- **Elements**
  - **Risk Knowledge**: It is crucial for prioritizing mitigation and prevention strategies.
  - **Monitoring and Predicting**: Systems with monitoring and predictive capabilities provide timely risk estimates.
  - **Disseminating Information**: Communication systems deliver reliable and understandable warning messages to affected areas.
  - **Response**: Effective coordination, governance, action plans, and public education are essential for response.

Role of Early Warning Systems

- **Life Preservation and Economic Impact Reduction**: Early warning systems save lives and reduce economic losses from natural hazards.
- **Global Targets**: Increasing multi-hazard early warning systems aligns with global disaster risk reduction goals.
- **Coastal Warning for Fishermen**: EWS provide crucial alerts, such as advising fishermen to avoid hazardous seas.

TIMES OF INDIA

Apr 8

SUVIDHA PORTAL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Lok Sabha polls: Suvidha portal gets over 73,000 applications for campaign-related activities

Context: Recently, the Election Commission announced that its Suvidha portal has garnered over 73,000 applications since the declaration of the Lok Sabha polls.

Suvidha Portal

- **About:** It is an initiative by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to uphold democratic principles in elections.
- **Streamlining Processes**: It simplifies the process of obtaining and addressing requests for permissions and facilities during elections.
- **Diverse Permission Requests:** Suvidha Portal handles a wide range of permission requests transparently, following the First in First Out principle.
- **Online Accessibility**: Political parties and candidates can conveniently submit permission requests online from any location, at any time, with offline submission options also available.
- **Permission Catering**: It caters to permissions for various election-related activities such as rallies, setting up temporary party offices, canvassing, etc.
- **Supported by**: IT platform, Suvidha Portal is managed by nodal officers across state departments, ensuring efficient management of requests.
- **Companion App**: The portal offers a companion app that allows applicants to track the real-time status of their requests.

DECCAN HERALD

Apr 8

JENU KURUBA COMMUNITY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Issues related to SC/ST)

Tuning into better future: When 'The Kattunayakkars' outgrew token tribal festivals

Context: Basic facilities have recently remained a distant dream for the Jenu Kuruba settlement in Kodagu, even decades after independence.

Jenu Kuruba Community

- **About:** This community primarily resides in the forested areas spanning **across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala**, with a significant presence in the districts of Mysore and Coorg, covering over 3000 square kilometers.
- **Cultural Identity:** With a population exceeding 40,000, the Jenukuruba tribe stands out for its unique appearance and cultural traditions, as noted by Narayan K in 1995.
- **Meaning**: In Kannada, 'Jenu' translates to honey, while 'kuruba' denotes the caste, reflecting the tribe's traditional occupation as honey gatherers within the lush forests of the Western Ghats in Southern India.
- **About the People**
  - **Physical Characteristics**: Characterized by dark skin, medium build, and curly hair.
  - **Occupation**: The Jenukuruba people historically engaged in various activities such as food gathering, collection of minor forest produce, and craftsmanship in handling elephants.
  - **Lifestyle**: Jenukurubas typically reside in small settlements known as Hadi, where they have traditionally practiced shifting cultivation, leading a semi-nomadic lifestyle.
  - **Social Organization**: Jenukuruba society operates on a semi-nomadic structure, where authority and decision-making processes are decentralized within settlements, led by a head-man (yajamana) and a ritual head or shaman (gudda), with religious matters centralized under the guidance of religious heads.

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