the IAS hub
Be Your Dream.

DECEMBER
10

CRUX 10

10 News. 10 Sources. One Place

THE HINDU
ET
BS
TOI
The Indian EXPRESS
livemint
pib
DownToEarth
FORTNIGHTLY ON POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH
Science Reporter
सत्यमेव जयते
विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Table of Contents

1. Himalayan Medicinal Plants
2. SIAC
3. Privatisation of PSBs
4. Securitization of Loans
5. Private Member Bills
6. Okhla Bird Sanctuary
7. Mission Defspace
8. Pm Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan
9. Okavango Delta
10. India's Renewable Power Capacity

THE HINDU Page 12

HIMALAYAN MEDICINAL PLANTS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Three Himalayan medicinal plants enter IUCN Red List

Under threat: Meizotropis pellita is 'critically endangered' and *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* (right) is 'endangered'. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Three medicinal plant species found in the Himalayas have made it to IUCN Red List of Threatened Species following a recent assessment. *Meizotropis pellita* has been assessed as 'critically endangered', *Fritilloria cirrhosa* as 'vulnerable', and *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* as 'endangered'.

Meizotropis pellita, commonly known as Patwa, is a perennial shrub with restricted distribution that is endemic to Uttarakhand. "The species is listed as 'critically endangered' based on its limited area of occupancy (less than 10 sq. km)," the study stated. The species is threatened by deforestation, habitat fragmentation and forest fires.

"The essential oil extracted from the leaves possesses strong antioxidants and can be a promising natural substitute for synthetic antioxidants in pharmaceutical industries," it said.

Fritillaria cirrhosa (Himalayan fritillary) is a perennial bulbous herb. "It is reasonable to conclude a decline of at least 30% of its population over the assessment period (22 to 26 years). Considering the rate of decline, long generation length, poor germination potential, high trade value, extensive harvesting pressure and illegal trade, the species is listed as 'vulnerable,'" it said.

In China, the species is used for the treatment of bronchial disorders and pneumonia. The plant is also a strong cough suppressant, the IUCN assessment said.

The third listed species, *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* (Salampanja), is threatened by habitat loss, livestock grazing, deforestation, and climate change. It is extensively used in Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and other alternative systems of medicine to cure dysentery, gastritis, chronic fever, cough and stomach aches.

"The assessment of these plants will set our conservation priorities and help protect the species," said Harsh Kumar Chauhan, member, IUCN Species Survival Commission, Medicinal Plant Specialist Group.

Context: Three medicinal plant species found in the Himalayas have made it to IUCN Red List of Threatened Species following a recent assessment.

- **Meizotropis pellita** has been assessed as 'critically endangered', **Fritilloria cirrhosa** as 'vulnerable', and **Dactylorhiza hatagirea** as 'endangered'.

3 Himalayan medicinal plants

- **Meizotropis pellita**: Commonly known as **Patwa**, is a **perennial shrub** with restricted distribution that is **endemic to Uttarakhand**.
  - **Threat**: The species is threatened by deforestation, habitat fragmentation and forest fires.
  - **IUCN Status**: The species is listed as '**critically endangered**' based on its limited area of occupancy (less than 10 sq. km).
  - **Significance**: The essential oil extracted from the leaves of the species possesses **strong antioxidants** and can be a promising natural substitute for synthetic antioxidants in pharmaceutical industries.
- **Fritillaria cirrhosa (Himalayan fritillary)**: A **perennial bulbous herb.**
  - **Threat:** High rate of decline, long generation length, poor germination potential, high trade value, extensive harvesting pressure and **illegal trade.**
  - **IUCN Status**: **Vulnerable**.
  - **Significance**: In China, the species is used for the **treatment of bronchial disorders and pneumonia.**
    - The plant is also a **strong cough suppressant** and source of expectorant drugs in traditional Chinese medicine.
- **Dactylorhiza hatagirea (Salampanja)**: It is a **perennial tuberous species endemic to the Hindu Kush and Himalayan ranges** of Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan.
  - **Threat**: Threatened by habitat loss, livestock grazing, **deforestation**, and climate change.
  - **IUCN Status**: **Endangered**.
  - **Significance**: It is extensively used in **Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and other alternative systems of medicine** to cure dysentery, gastritis, chronic fever, cough and stomach aches.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

BharatPe files arbitration to claw back Ashneer's 1.4% shares

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, 9 December

Fintech unicorn BharatPe has filed an arbitration for clawing back its former managing director (MD) and co-founder Ashneer Grover's restricted shareholding and founder title, sources said.

The arbitration was filed on Thursday under Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) rules, sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. If relief is granted, Grover may lose his unvested shares and right to use the founder title.

Grover, who BharatPe has accused of cheating and embezzlement of funds, holds about 8.5 per cent of the company. Of this, 1.4 per cent is not vested. The company did not immediately offer any comment. The action follows a detailed corporate governance review by the company's board into allegations of lapses and misdoings during the tenure of Grover as MD.

The proceedings were initiated after Grover refused to comply with the shareholders' agreement, sources said without elaborating.

This is BharatPe's third legal action against Grover after a civil suit at the Delhi High Court and a criminal complaint with the Economic Offences Wing. BharatPe, in the suit running into 2,800 pages, alleged that Grover, his wife Madhuri Jain, and other family members created fake bills, fictitious enlisted vendors to provide services to the company, and overcharged the firm for recruitment. It is seeking up to ₹88.67 crore in damages.

Arbitration was filed under SIAC rules, and if relief is granted, Grover may lose his unvested shares and right to use the founder title

The corporate governance review by Alvarez and Marsal, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas and PwC led to Jain and Grover resigning from the company and its board in March. Sources said the company had earlier sent a legal notice for clawback and has now initiated arbitration proceedings.

Context: Fintech unicorn BharatPe has filed an arbitration for clawing back its former managing director (MD) and cofounder Ashneer Grover´s restricted shareholding and founder title.

- The arbitration was filed under **Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) rules**

Singapore International Arbitration Centre

- **About**: It is a **not-for-profit international arbitration organisation** based in Singapore.
- **Functions**: It administers arbitrations under its **own rules of arbitration** and the **United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Arbitration Rules.**
- **Neutral ground for dispute resolution:** Foreign investors investing in India typically want to avoid the rigmarole of the Indian courts. Foreign investors feel that **Singapore is neutral ground for dispute resolution.**
  - According to the 2019 annual report of SIAC, **India was the top user of its arbitration seat with 485 cases being referred to SIAC**, followed by Philippines at 122, China at 76 and the United States at 65.
- **Procedure**: Once a dispute is referred to arbitration, the **process of appointment of the arbitral tribunal** takes place.
  - Typically, in case of a **three member tribunal**, both the parties appoint one member each to the tribunal, while the third member is jointly appointed by the two nominees or, if they fail to agree, by SIAC.
  - Under the rules of SIAC, **parties can move SIAC to appoint an emergency arbitrator** to get urgent interim relief, even as the process of appointment of the main arbitral tribunal is underway.
  - Currently under Indian law, there is **no express mechanism for enforcement of the orders of the Emergency Arbitrator.** But, the parties voluntarily comply with the Emergency Award.
  - However, if the parties don't comply with the order voluntarily, then the party which has won the emergency award can move the High Court in India under **Section 9 of the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, 1996**, to get similar reliefs as granted by the Emergency Arbitrator.

India's Status

- In India, arbitration is governed by the **Arbitration & Conciliation Act,1996.**
  - Part I of the Act (Sections 2 to 43) **applies only to arbitrations seated in India** except in certain circumstances.
  - Part II of the Act **applies to foreign awards** and governs their enforcement in India.
- **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2021** amends the Arbitration and Conciliation Act (A&C Act 1996) so as to:
  - Enable automatic stay on awards in certain cases.
  - Specify by regulations the qualifications, experience and norms for accreditation of arbitrators.
- India now has its own **international arbitration centre in Mumbai.**

INDIAN EXPRESS

Page 19

PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Govt extends IDBI bidding till January

PRASANTA SAHU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 9

THE GOVERNMENT will extend the deadline for potential bidders to submit expressions of interest (EoI) for IDBI Bank to early January, a senior finance ministry official said on Friday, indicating that it expects more robust investor interest in the lender. The deadline was December 16.

Given the extended year-end holidays overseas, several potential investors had requested transaction adviser KPMG India for an extension, the official added.

The government, meanwhile, is banking on a few offers for sale (OFS), including in Hindustan Zinc (HZL), to maximise disinvestment receipts in the remainder of the current financial year as all strategic sales on the cards will materialise only in FY24, the official said. The department of investment and public asset management (Dipam) will invite EoI for a 30.8 per cent stake (worth about Rs 14,500 crore at the current market prices) sale in ConCor in January, the official added.

"The size of stake sale in HZL will depend on market appetite," the official said, adding that the government is not chasing the annual disinvestment target and will disinvest minority stakes in CPSEs if it sees value. FE

INVESTOR INTEREST

- Several potential investors had requested transaction adviser KPMG India for an extension
- The government is banking on new OFS, including in Hindustan Zinc, to maximise disinvestment

Context: The deadline to submit preliminary **bids for IDBI Bank privatisation** is likely to be extended by almost a month till early January.

Privatisation of Public Sector Banks

- **About**: Union **Budget 2021-22** has proposed privatisation of two banks in addition to IDBI Bank and General Insurance company.
  - The two banks that will now be privatised will be selected **through a process in which NITI Aayog** will make recommendations, which will be considered by a core group of secretaries on disinvestment and then the Alternative Mechanism (or Group of Ministers).
- **4 strategic sectors:** Laying down a clear policy roadmap for disinvestment, the government has identified four strategic sectors in which it will have **bare minimum presence:**
  - Atomic energy,space and defence;
  - Transport and telecommunications;
  - Power, petroleum, coal and other minerals;
  - Banking, insurance and financial services.
- **Current Status:** Currently, there are **ten nationalised banks in addition to IDBI Bank and SBI.**
  - PSU banks are under **dual control,** with the RBI supervising the banking operations and the Finance Ministry handling ownership issues.
  - **Many Committees and Working Groups** have proposed privatisation. Few Examples:
    - **Narasimham Committee**: Proposed bringing down the government stake to 33%.
    - **P J Nayak Committee:** suggested reducing Government stake below 50%.
    - **RBI Working Group:** It recently suggested the entry of business houses into the banking sector.
  - A recent paper by **Poonam Gupta of NCAER and Arvind Panagariya** argues that "the government should move as rapidly as politically feasible". Meaning privatizing all except the State Bank of India.
- **Reasons for Privatising Public Sector Banks:**
  - Previous reform measures have not yielded results
  - Bare Minimum Presence
  - Huge losses
  - To align with Long Term Goal
  - To reduce Government Burden
  - Rationalisation of Banks in Post-COVID Scenario
  - Changed Approach to Financial Sector Problems
  - Private Participation promotes innovation in market

LIVEMINT Page 16

SECURITIZATION OF LOANS
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

RBI rule on loan securitization may hit fintech lenders

Shayan Ghosh
shayan.g@livemint.com
MUMBAI

The circular bars lenders from securitizing loans that mature in less than 365 days. PTI

A new Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guideline prohibiting securitization of loans with a residual maturity of less than a year is set to impact fintech lenders who deal in short-term loans, analysts said.

On 5 December, RBI updated its 2021 guidelines on the securitization of standard assets or those regularly repaid. This circular bars lenders from securitizing loans that mature in less than 365 days.

Securitization is the pooling of assets into repackaged interest-bearing securities.

"Fintech lenders in India typically lend short term, comprising three-six-month products. They have developed expertise in this segment. We were seeing fintechs tapping the securitization market of late, and some transactions have already been completed," said Vineet Jain, senior director of Care Ratings Ltd.

Jain said while not many fintechs are doing it, the RBI circular, among other things, restricts them from accessing the market, which has been gaining traction. Securitization is not only a funding avenue for fintechs but also allows these lenders to showcase to investors their ability to originate and service loans.

Care Ratings said in a note on 8 November that the overall secondary market volumes of gold loan financiers and microfinance institutions (MFI) may not get significantly impacted as there is no such limitation on the balance tenure for loans sold under the transfer of loan exposures.

It said the proportion of contracts with balance tenure shorter than one year was very small for most asset classes, and those assets would most likely be sold through the direct assignment route.

Others believe that asset classes that have short-tenor loans, such as MFIs, gold loans,

TURN TO PAGE 13

Context: A new Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guideline **prohibiting securitization of loans** with a residual maturity of less than a year is set to impact fintech lenders who deal in short-term loans.

Securitization of loans

- **About**: Securitization is **a process by which a company clubs** its different financial assets/debts to form a consolidated financial instrument which is issued to investors. In return, the investors in such securities get interest.
- **Significance**: This serves as a useful tool, especially for financial companies, as its **helps them raise funds.**
  - If such a company has already issued a large number of loans to its customers and wants to further add to the number, then the practice of securitization can come to its rescue.
  - This e**nables the firm to raise capital** and provide more loans to its customers. On the other hand, investors are able to diversify their portfolios and earn quality returns.
  - This process **enhances liquidity in the market.**
- **Legislation in India:** Securitisation in India started taking shape in an unregulated environment (with the first securitisation transaction having been concluded in the early 1990s) and, until 2006, there were **no specific regulations governing securitisation transactions** (in relation to performing assets) in India.
  - The **Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002** (Securitisation Act) largely dealt with resolving, restructuring and securitisation of non-performing assets (NPAs) and accordingly, references to securitisation in this chapter concern only securitisation of standard (or performing) assets.
  - The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) formulated guidelines in 2006** (which were modified in 2012 and then in 2021) for governing securitisation of standard assets (Securitisation Guidelines).
    - Standard assets (or performing assets) under Indian law, would generally be assets where amounts due have not been outstanding for more than 90 days.
  - Following the global economic crisis and an unfavourable interpretation of tax laws applicable to securitisation trusts, securitisation transactions in India came to a **halt in 2008.**
  - Securitisation transactions made a comeback in the Indian market in 2013 after the **RBI revised the Securitisation Guidelines.**
- **Current status**: Under the latest Securitisation Guidelines, the **RBI has removed the restriction on securitisation of acquired assets** and furthermore, the RBI has provided clarity that loans that have a bullet payment structure for principal but frequent payments of interest can be securitised (i.e., only loans with bullet payment structure for both principal and interest cannot be securitised).

ECONOMIC TIMES

Page 2

PRIVATE MEMBER BILLS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Context: More than **50 private member bills**, including the one seeking to revert to the old system of voting through ballot papers instead of EVMs, were introduced in Lok Sabha.

More Than 50 Pvt Members Bills

More than 50 private member bills, including the one seeking to revert to the old system of voting through ballot papers instead of EVMs, were introduced in Lok Sabha on Friday

NJC Bill introduced in Rajya Sabha, AAP opposes

New Delhi: A private member bill to regulate the appointment of judges through the National Judicial Commission was on Friday introduced in Rajya Sabha by CPM's Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya but was opposed by AAP MP Raghav Chadha.

The National Judicial Commission Bill, 2022, was introduced after the majority of voice votes were in its favour. Bhattacharyya moved the bill that aims to regulate the procedure to be followed by the National Judicial Commission for recommending people for appointment as the Chief Justice of India and other judges of the Supreme Court and chief justices and other judges of High Courts.—PTI

Chirag Raises Issue of 'Rising' Crimes in Bihar

New Delhi: Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan on Friday raised in Lok Sabha the issue of alleged rise in crimes, especially against Dalits, in Bihar and said Parliament can't be mum when the state government is maintaining "silence". The Jamui MP noted that a woman and her five-year-old daughter were burnt in Arwal after their house was set ablaze by people trying to assault the mother.—PTI

'500%' Jump in Passport Services: MoS

New Delhi: Passport services have improved by "500%" ever since 2014, Union Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said on Friday. "Passport services have improved very much in the last eight years, I would say 500%. The number of offices which process passport applications was 110 before 2014 and the number now stands at above 550," Muraleedharan said in LS.—PTI

No Data on Death Due to Pollution: Govt

New Delhi: There is no conclusive data available to establish a direct correlation of death or disease exclusively due to air pollution, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar told the Lok Sabha on Friday. The minister, however, said air pollution is one of the many factors affecting respiratory ailments and associated diseases.—PTI

Private member bills

- **About**: A bill introduced by the **Member of Parliament (MP) who is not a Minister,** i.e., a non-government member is known as the Private Members' bill.
  - Members of Parliament of **both the ruling party as well as the opposition** can introduce a Private Member Bill.
  - Such Bills can be **introduced and discussed only on Fridays.**
  - Number of private member bills has been capped to **3 per session of Parliament.**
- **Private members**: Members of Parliament (MPs) **other than ministers** are private members.
  - Private Members **can also move legislative proposal or bill** which he/she thinks is appropriate to be present in the Statute Book.
  - However, it must be noted that a **private member can give a maximum of three notices** for the introduction of Private Members Bills during a Session.
- **Admissibility of a Private Member's Bill**: The admissibility is d**ecided by the Chairman for Rajya Sabha and Speaker in the case of Lok Sabha**.
- **Procedure**: The procedure is roughly the **same for both Houses.**
  - The Member must give at least a **month's notice before** the Bill can be listed for introduction.
  - The House secretariat examines it for **compliance with constitutional provisions and rules** on legislation before listing.
- **President's role in a Private Member Bill:** Once passed in both houses, **Presidential assent is also mandatory** for the bill to become an Act.
  - According to the preset traditions, the President of India can use his powers of absolute veto and can easily discard a private members' bill.
- **Current status**: To date, Parliament has **passed a total of 14 private members' bills.**
  - The **first private member bill** to become a law was the **Muslim Wakfs Bill, 1952**. Aimed to provide better governance and administration of wakfs, it was introduced by Syed Mohammed Ahmed Kasmi in the Lok Sabha and was passed in 1954.
  - The **last private member bill** to become a law was way back in 1970.
  - Some other private member bills that have become laws include the **Proceedings of Legislature (Protection of Publication) Bill, 1956, brought by Feroze Gandhi in the Lok Sabha**; the Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1964, introduced by Raghunath Singh in the Lok Sabha and the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 1967 introduced by Diwan Chaman Lall in the Rajya Sabha.

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 1

OKHLA BIRD SANCTUARY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

All Quiet At Okhla Front As Winged Visitors Yet To Flock To Sanctuary

Warmer Weather, Dry Waterbody Could Be Reasons Behind Delayed Arrival

Kushagra.Dixit
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Okhla bird sanctuary, which used to echo with the honking and murmurs of flamingos, geese, spoonbills and other migratory birds at this time of the year, seems deserted so far this season. Delhi region's only bird sanctuary, located between Delhi and Noida, so far is host to only a handful of species when there were more than 30 species at this time last year.

While the warmer winter could be a reason why the sanctuary is yet to have birds flying in, the real reason could be the dry conditions at the locale at the peak arrival time of the migratory birds. The waterbody was dry till recently when water was finally released from the Hathnikund dam.

According to naturalist and author Ananda Banerjee, migration starts in September and the wading species arrive. Later in October, the ducks start to fly in from Eurasia. "Upon their arrival, the flocks don't settle right away but keep moving around like people do in a mall for the first month," said Banerjee. "Some flocks go further south. At November-end or early December, they settle down and later in December and January comes the peak birding season. By February-end and March, the birds start flying back." Banerjee added, "If Okhla fails to provide the ideal habitat, then the birds will settle down elsewhere for the winter."

There was some concern among birders and foresters about the water at Okhla. Birder Jaswinder Singh Waraich said, "The irrigation department had promised to release water by October, but it was only released by November 21 and reached Okhla by November 22-23. What the forest department and the irrigation department don't understand is that there is correlation between the water availability and the arrival of the migratory birds. Between October 20 and November 22, there was no water, so no birds landed in the sanctuary. This is an important bird area. Secondly, it's a bird sanctuary, which makes it the responsibility of the state to take care of all present species."

Some birders pointed out that in contrast to Okhla, impressive numbers of various species have been seen at other wetlands in the NCR, including Surajpur in Gautam Budh Nagar. "There are very few water birds at Okhla, and all I could spot were a few raptors, such as the Hobby and peregrine falcons. It seems there was a gap in the coordination between the forest department and irrigation department. At Surajpur, however, the sighting was good," said birder Nikhil Devasar.

According to the forest staff, Okhla currently has migratory species that include the common coot, pochard, lesser flamingos and greylag goose. During a visit to the sanctuary, only a handful of the resident species, among them the cormorant and spot billed ducks, could be seen.

"We hope that the birds will come to Okhla," said PK Srivastava, divisional forest officer, Gautam Budh Nagar. "The delay in water was caused by the UP irrigation department which said it was repairing and desilting the canals. We wrote to them several times, but the work was delayed and water was not released by Haryana from Hathnikund."

Okhla Bird Sanctuary on the Yamuna is one of the 467 'Important Bird Areas" in India, one of the eight IBAs in Delhi-NCR. It falls under the Central Asian Flyway of migratory birds.

MEET THE ANNUAL GUESTS

Photos: Tarun Rawat

Context: The **Okhla bird sanctuary,** which used to echo with the honking and murmurs of **flamingos, geese, spoonbills and other migratory birds** at this time of the year, seems deserted so far this season.

Okhla bird sanctuary

- **About:** Situated in **Noida Gautam Budh Nagar district** on Delhi-Uttar Pradesh state border.
- **Associated river**: Okhla barrage over **Yamuna River** at the point where the river enters Uttar Pradesh.
- **Bird sanctuary:** It was **designated a bird sanctuary in 1990** with an area of 3.5 square kilometres by the Uttar Pradesh Government of under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- **Key features**: Okhla Bird Sanctuary is known as a **haven for over 300 bird species**, especially waterbirds.

Migratory Bird Species in India

- **About:** India is a **winter home for most of the Siberian birds** such as the Siberian Cranes, Greater Flamingo, and Demoiselle Crane, also numerous species of birds from other regions of the world.
  - They **migrate to India every year** during the winter and summer season for food, breeding, and nesting.
- **Location**: Delhi-NCR accounts for almost **one-third of the total bird species found in India.**
  - The region has **about 1,800 species of fauna** out of which 446 are bird species.
  - There are **nine protected areas**, including one national park, six wildlife sanctuaries, one reserve forest and one conservation reserve.
- **Eight important bird areas**: Okhla Bird sanctuary (Gautam Budh Nagar), Sultanpur National Park (Gurgaon), Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary (Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Bijnor), Basai Wetlands (Gurgaon) etc. **None of them are in Delhi.**
- **Major migratory birds**: Northern shoveler, Gadwall, Greylag geese, Pallas's gulls, brown-headed and black-headed gulls, coots, etc.

PIB

Dec 10

MISSION DEFSPACE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Defence Sector)

SPACE DEFENCE MISSION

Posted On: 09 DEC 2022 2:49PM by PIB Delhi

Mission DefSpace was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister during DefExpo in October, 2022 with 75 Defence Space Challenges relevant to the end users. These challenges have been categorised into existing DDP initiatives of iDEX, Make-I and Make-2. Private Industries, including Start-ups, MSMEs and Individual Innovators, are eligible to apply. The challenges, classified into five buckets viz. Launch System, Satellite System, Communication & Payload System, Ground System and Software System, provide a holistic 360^0 overview of space.

Mission DefSpace

- **About**: It is an **ambitious effort to develop innovative solutions for the three Services**, Indian airforce, Navy and Army, in the space domain through Indian industry and start-ups.
  - Under Mission Def-Space, **75 challenges are being opened** to get innovative solutions, based on the defence requirements in the space domain.
  - The effort is not meant to develop offensive capabilities in space but to b**uild technology enablers for the Services.**
- **Origin**: Prime Minister (PM) launched Mission DefSpace in Gandhinagar in October **2022**..
- **Objectives**: **Develop a range of military applications** for space warfare and to enable the private industries to offer solutions to the armed forces for future offensive and defensive requirements.
- **Step Taken by the government:** The Government has taken several policy initiatives in the past few years and brought in reforms to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment, there by promoting self-reliance in defence manufacturing & technology in the country. These initiatives include:
  - **Procurement of capital items** from domestic sources under Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP)-2020.
  - **Announcement of 18 major defence platforms** for industry led design & development in March 2022.
  - **Notification of four 'Positive Indigenization Lists'** of total 411 items of Services and three 'Positive Indigenization Lists' of total 3738 items of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timelines indicated against them.
  - Simplification of **Industrial licensing process** with longer validity period.
  - **Liberalization of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** policy allowing 74% FDI under automatic route.
  - Simplification of **Make Procedure.**
  - **Launch of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme** involving start-ups & Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
  - **Implementation of Public Procurement** (Preference to Make in India) Order, 2017.
  - **Launch of an indigenization portal namely SRIJAN** to facilitate indigenization by Indian Industry including MSMEs.
  - **Reforms in Offset policy** with thrust on attracting investment and Transfer of Technology for Defence manufacturing by assigning higher multipliers.
  - **Establishment of two Defence Industrial Corridors,** one each in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
  - **Opening up of Defence Research & Development (R&D)** for industry, startups and academia with 25 percent of defence R&D budget.
  - **Progressive increase in allocation of Defence Budget** of military modernisation for procurement from domestic sources.

PIB

Dec 10

PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHIT MATRITVA ABHIYAN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Govt Policies & Interventions)

Progress under "Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan" (PMSMA)

Percentage of mothers who had at least 4 antenatal care visits increased from 51.2 % in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 58.1% in NFHS-5 (2019-21)

Context: As per the report of National Family Health Survey (NFHS), the percentage of mothers who had at least 4 antenatal care visits has increased from 51.2 % in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 58.1% in NFHS-5 (2019-21) and the percentage of pregnant women with institutional births in public facility has increased from 52.1 % in NFHS-4 (2015-16) to 61.9% in NFHS-5 (2019-21).

- Government of India launched "**Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan" (PMSMA)** with an aim to provide fixed-day, free of cost, assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care on the 9th day of every month universally to all pregnant women in their 2nd / 3rd trimesters of pregnancy.

Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan

- **About**: A fixed day strategy, every month across the country during which a range of quality maternal health services are envisaged to be provided as part of Antenatal Care.
- **Origin**: It was launched in **2016**.
  - Hon'ble Prime Minister highlighted the aim and purpose of introduction of the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan in the 31st July 2016 episode of **Mann Ki Baat.**
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of **Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW**), Government of India.
- **Objectives**: Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan envisages to improve the quality and coverage of Antenatal Care (ANC) including diagnostics and counselling services as part of the **Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) Strategy.**
- **Key features:** Under the campaign, a minimum package of antenatal care services is to be provided to the beneficiaries on the 9th day of every month at the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Clinics to ensure that every pregnant woman receives at least one checkup in the 2nd/ 3rd trimester of pregnancy.
  - If the **9th day of the month is a Sunday / a holiday**, then the Clinic should be organized on the next working day.
  - One of the critical components of the Abhiyan is identification and follow up of high risk pregnancies. A sticker indicating the condition and risk factor of the pregnant women would be added onto MCP card for each visit:
    - **Green Sticker**- for women with no risk factor detected
    - **Red Sticker** – for women with high risk pregnancy
  - A **National Portal for PMSMA and a Mobile application** have been developed to facilitate the engagement of private/ voluntary sector.
- **Beneficiaries**: The programme aims to reach out to all Pregnant Women who are in the 2nd & 3rd Trimesters of pregnancy.
- **Public Health Facilities to access services under PMSMA:**
  - **Rural Areas**: Primary Health Centers, Community Health Centers, Rural Hospitals, Sub - District Hospital - District Hospital - Medical College Hospital.
  - **Urban Areas**: Urban Dispensaries, Urban Health Posts, Maternity Homes.
- **Associated awards**: **'IPledgeFor9' Achievers Awards** have been devised to celebrate individual and team achievements and acknowledge voluntary contributions for PMSMA in states and districts across India.

DTE

Dec 10

OKAVANGO DELTA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Okavango, Murchison Falls: Big Oil closing in on two iconic African Edens, flags report

The Okavango delta and Murchison Falls are home to iconic African wildlife species and are the homeland of indigenous people like the San

By Rajat Ghai
Published: Friday 09 December 2022

Context: Oil companies are threatening two of **Africa's most iconic biodiversity hotspots, Okavango delta and Murchison Falls**, in an effort to drill for oil that will ultimately make its way to a global elite and won't benefit Africans.

Key Points

- ReconAfrica, a Canadian company, has been **drilling for oil** in the **Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Nature Conservation Area (KAZA)**.
- KAZA is the **second-largest nature and landscape conservation area** in the world.
- It is spread across the borders of A**ngola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.**
- The impact of the oil exploration projects being pursued in both locations could ring the **death-knell for wildlife and render communities** living there homeless.
- **More than 200,000 people live in the area** that falls under ReconAfrica's exploration licenses.
- The **Okavango and Murchison Falls are just two of the several oil exploration** and extraction projects going on in Africa at the moment.

Okavango delta

- The Okavango delta is **formed by the Okavango river**, which originates in the highlands of Angola.
- It **flows into the Kalahari desert** of southern Africa and spreads out, forming what is called a 'fan'.
- It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
- The delta is the **homeland of indigenous people like the San**.
- The delta is **home to Africa's Big Five wildlife species**: Savanna elephants, Cape buffaloes, rhinos, lions and leopards.
- There are also **giraffes, zebras, antelopes, pangolins**, 400 bird species and over 1,000 plant species.

Murchison Falls

- It is situated on the **northern shore of Lake Albert,** one of the Rift Valley Great Lakes that lies on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- The **Victoria Nile** flows through the park.
- **Elephants, white hippos, Nile crocodiles, buffaloes and marabou storks** can regularly be seen on its banks.
- All in all, this natural refuge harbours **556 bird species and 188 mammal species.**

DTE

Dec 10

INDIA'S RENEWABLE POWER CAPACITY

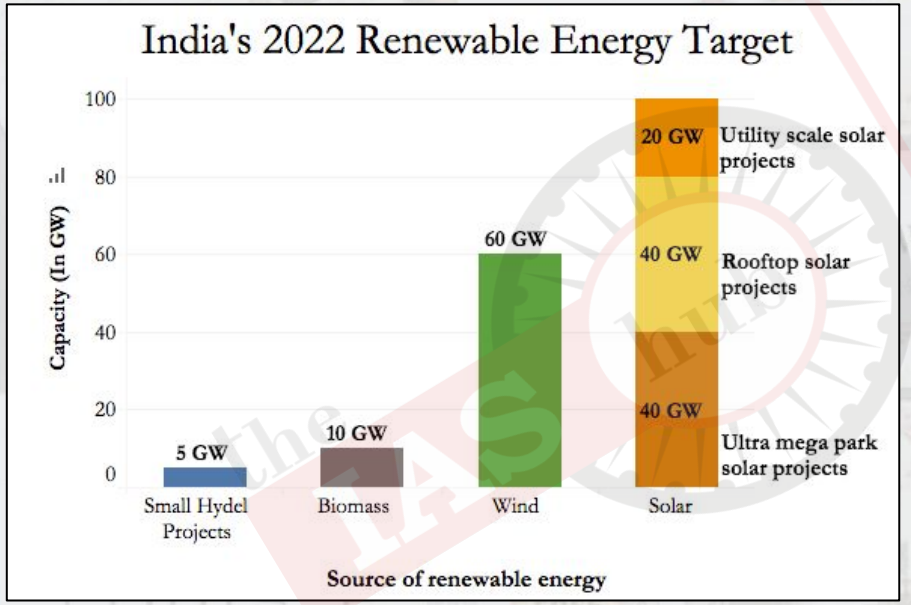
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy & Infrastructure)

India to almost double its renewable power capacity in next 5 years: IEA report

Solar PV accounts for three-quarters of renewable energy growth, followed by onshore wind with 15% and hydropower providing almost all the rest

NEXT NEWS >

By Seema Prasad
Published: Friday 09 December 2022



Context: Renewable energy will comprise **90 per cent of global electricity capacity expansion** in the next five years and **much of it will be in India**, according to a new study by the autonomous intergovernmental organisation, International Energy Agency (IEA).

Key findings of the study

- **India's status**: With the **addition of 145 gigawatt (GW)**, India is forecast to almost double its renewable power capacity over 2022-2027.
  - **Solar photovoltaic (PV)** accounts for three-quarters of this growth, followed by onshore wind with 15 per cent and hydropower providing almost all the rest.
  - **Consistent policy support from the Indian government** may enable this transition, particularly by promoting local manufacturing of solar modules. **Two such policies** came to effect in 2022:
    - The **duty on imports** was increased to 40 per cent for PV modules from 15 per cent and to 25 per cent for solar cells in April 2022.
      - This was done to reduce dependence on China and increase domestic manufacturing.
    - The **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme** sanctioned 9 GW of PV manufacturing capacity to provide an ecosystem of local manufacturing.
      - This programme aims to expand India's solar PV cell and module manufacturing capacity to over 70 GW in this decade, including 29 GW of manufacturing capacity fully integrated across the whole supply chain.
- **Global status**: **China, the European Union and the United States** will be three other geographies contributing majorly to this upward trend besides India.
  - This is primarily owing to the **favourable policies and market reforms in all four.**
  - Renewable energy's installed power capacity addition will **grow to 2,400 gigawatts (GW) between 2022 and 2027**.
  - This **expansion was 85 per cent faster** than the previous five years and will be equal to the entire installed power capacity of China today.

THANK YOU!

t.me/theiashub

/mkyadav

www.theiashub.com/daily-quiz

9560082909