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सत्यमेव जयते



MK Yadav Sir

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BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

ADANI HINDENBURG ISSUE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

SC no to govt's sealed cover names for panel

Apex court says will form expert committee itself to ensure 'full transparency'

BHAVINI MISHRA
New Delhi, 17 February

The Supreme Court on Friday rejected the Centre's suggestion of giving it in a sealed cover the names of people who would form an expert committee to examine the adverse report by American short-seller Hindenburg Research on the Adani group of companies and its impact on the markets.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud said: "We will select the experts and maintain full transparency. If we take names from the government, it would amount to a government-constituted committee. There has to be full (public) confidence in the committee."

Meanwhile, the Centre, represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, submitted a report in a sealed cover before the top court, suggesting names for the expert committee.

The Centre told the court there should be no delay in setting up the committee.

However, the apex court refused to accept suggestions by the Centre in the interests of "full transparency". "If we accept suggestions, we should disclose them to the other side so that there is transparency," the court said.

The court has reserved its order on the matter.

While reading the government's submission, the court remarked: "You (the Centre) have said the impact on the market is zero. But stats say investors faced lakhs of crores worth losses."

The court said it could not start with the "presumption of a regulatory failure" and told the petitioners a sitting judge would not be on the committee. Turn to Page 6

WHAT SC SAID

- **If we accept (govt's) suggestions,** we should disclose it to the other side
- **We will select experts and maintain full transparency;** won't take suggestions from govt or petitioners
- **There has to be full (public) confidence** in the committee
- **We cannot start with the 'presumption** of a regulatory failure'





'Attack on India': BJP slams Soros' remarks

American financier George Soros said he believes the turmoil at Adani's empire may weaken Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hold on the government. Senior BJP leader Smriti Irani hit back, saying a war is being mounted against India. "He (Soros) wants a government that is pliable to his needs," she added. 7

Context: The Supreme Court rejected the Centre´s suggestion of giving it in a sealed cover the names of people who would form an expert committee to examine the adverse report by American short seller **Hindenburg Research on the Adani group** of companies and its impact on the markets.

- Hindenburg, a US-based investment research firm, specialises in activist short-selling.

Hidenberg's allegation against the Adani group

- Hindenburg Research has alleged that the **Adani Group was "engaged in a stock manipulation** and accounting fraud".
- The Adani Group has **interests in varied sectors** such as ports and logistics, power generation, agribusiness, real estate, defence, solar energy, financial services, natural resources and media.
- The research firm alleges that the Adani group has engaged in ₹17.8 trillion (US$ 218 billion) brazen **stock manipulation and accounting fraud schemes** over the course of decades.
- The Hindenburg's report says that the **Adani family controlled offshore shell entities** in tax havens spanning the Caribbean and Mauritius to the United Arab Emirates, which it claims were used to facilitate corruption, money laundering and taxpayer theft, while syphoning off money from the group's listed companies.

Concern with the report

- Adani group has taken a **lot of debt from Indian banks.**
  - So there is a looming threat around whether the business tycoon would be **able to return the debt on time or not.**
- There is risk involved in banks **lending huge sums of money against shares** since when a company is unable to fulfil its debt obligations its share price also often drops.
- **LIC has also invested** its money in the Adani group business.
  - The investment fell sharply due to the report and there is a fear among the investors regarding the loss of money.

LIVE MINT

GAS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

GAIL looks to buy 26% stake in American LNG project

PTI
feedback@livemint.com
NEW DELHI

India's biggest gas firm GAIL is looking to buy up to 26% stake in an LNG project in the United States in an attempt to shore up supply sources to meet rising demand.

GAIL (India) Ltd. had run into supply disruptions last year after Russia-owned Gazprom Marketing and Trading (GMTS) failed to deliver contracted LNG due to western sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

The company has issued a tender seeking expression of interest (EoI) from operators of existing liquefied natural gas (LNG) liquefaction plants or proposed projects in the US that will be commissioned by 2027. Liquefaction plants convert natural gas into the liquid form, enabling its seaborne transportation.

The company is also looking to buy 1 million tonnes a year of LNG from the facility for 15 years, starting the last quarter of calendar year 2026, according to the tender document.

Context: India's biggest gas firm **GAIL** is looking to buy up to 26% stake in a LNG project in the United States in an attempt to shore up supply sources to meet rising demand.

- The company has issued a tender seeking **expression of interest (EoI)** from operators of existing liquefied natural gas (LNG) liquefaction plants or proposed projects in the U.S. that will be commissioned by 2027.
- An expression of interest is an informal declaration that a buyer, whether strategic or financial, would like to purchase a business.

Gas Authority of India Ltd.

- **About**: It is s a central public sector undertaking under the ownership of **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**, Government of India. It is headquartered in GAIL Bhawan, New Delhi.
  - Its operations are overseen by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- **Origin**: GAIL (India) Limited was incorporated in August 1984 as a **Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)**.
- **Business segments**: Natural gas, liquid hydrocarbon, liquefied petroleum gas transmission, petrochemical, city gas distribution, renewable Energy including Solar & Wind, exploration and production, Petrochemicals, GAILTEL and electricity generation.
- **Maharatna status**: GAIL given the **Maharatna status on 1 Feb 2013** by the Government of India.
  - "Maharatna" status is granted to a company which:
    - Has recorded more than **Rs. 5,000 crores of net profit** for three consecutive years,
    - An average annual **turnover of Rs. 25,000 crore** for three years or
    - should have an **average annual net worth of Rs. 15,000 crore** for three years.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 1

PARENT PARTY'S SYMBOL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

EC recognises Shinde faction as real Sena, allots name & symbol

Uddhav slams poll panel, says will move apex court; Shinde hails order

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

RULING ON a dispute that began in June last year, the Election Commission decided Friday that the Shiv Sena faction led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was the real Shiv Sena as opposed to the group led by former CM Uddhav Thackeray.

It said the party name and symbol of 'Bow and Arrow' would be retained by the Shinde group.

Dealt a blow, Thackeray, speaking to reporters in Mumbai, said "They (Shinde faction) have stolen our Bow and Arrow symbol, but people will avenge this theft." Calling the EC decision "very dangerous for democracy", he said it would be challenged in the Supreme Court.

Shinde hailed the EC decision, calling it "the victory of ideologies of Balasaheb and Anand

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





Stolen our symbol: Uddhav; democracy victory : Shinde

EXPLAINED

A matter pending in top court

THE EC ruling comes at a time when the Supreme Court is still to decide on the dispute over the powers of the Deputy Speaker to disqualify rebel Shiv Sena MLAs when a notice for his own removal has been given.

MORE REPORTS
PAGES 8, 13

Context: Ruling on a dispute that began in June 2022, the Election Commission decided that the Shiv Sena faction led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was the **real Shiv Sena** as opposed to the group led by former CM Uddhav Thackeray.

- It said the party name and symbol of 'Bow and Arrow' would be retained by the Shinde group.

Background

- The political crisis in Maharashtra erupted when some of the **MLAs of Shiv Sena aligned themselves with the party's rebel leader.**
- Starting in June, the two sides have **claimed they represent the real Shiv Sena** and have staked claim to the exclusive use of the name and the 'bow and arrow' symbol.

Decision on symbol

- **Law & Regulations**: It is decided as per the provisions of the **Symbols Order (Reservation and Allotment), 1968.**
  - Para 15 of the Symbols Order, 1968 **empowers EC** to decide on the claim of rival factions in case of split.
- **EC's role:** EC decides on the issue after taking into account all the **available facts and circumstances** of the case and hearing their representatives.
  - The decision of the Commission shall be **binding** on all such rival sections or groups.
  - This applies to disputes in **recognised national and state parties.**
  - For splits in registered but unrecognised parties, the ECI usually **advises the warring factions** to resolve their differences internally or to approach the court.

Parent party's symbol

- **Criteria**: Before 1997, EC used to recognise the party, not getting the symbol, based on the criteria fixed for recognition of parties under **Paras 6 and 7 of the Symbols Order.**
  - If the breakaway party had support of sufficient MPs/MLAs as per the criteria, it was recognised by EC as National/State Party.
- **New rule**: The EC in 1997 felt that merely having **MPs and MLAs is not enough,** as the elected representatives had fought and won polls on tickets of their parent (undivided) parties.
  - The EC introduced a new rule under which the splinter group of the party - other than the group that got the party symbol - had to **register itself as a separate party.**
  - These parties could lay claim to national or state party status only on the basis of its **performance in state or central elections after registration.**

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 1

SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

No more 'special category' status for states, says FM

Blow To Odisha, Bihar Bid To Avail Of 90% Share In Central Schemes

Ashok.Pradhan
@timesgroup.com

Bhubaneswar: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman made it clear on Friday that the Centre will not consider demands for "special category status" for any state, dealing a major blow to states like Odisha and Bihar who have been pushing for it for some years now.

Asked whether the Centre will consider Odisha's push for special category status, the FM, who was interacting with the media here on the Union Budget, said, "(The 14th) Finance commission has clearly said no special status can be given."

Taking examples of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, which were given special category status in the initial years after bifurcation, she said, "But the finance commission's clear opinion is no more special status category."

PTI



The finance commission has clearly said no special status can be given, Nirmala Sitharaman said while citing examples of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, which were given the tag in the initial years after bifurcation

Odisha and Bihar have been pressing for special category status to avail 90% funds in centrally sponsored schemes, instead of the present arrangement of 60%, besides other benefits. Odisha has been seeking change in criteria to accommodate it keeping in mind its vulnerability to natural disasters.

Earlier this month, in the parliamentary debate on the Motion of Thanks to President Droupadi Mumru's address, BJD MP Sasmit Patra had raised the issue in Rajya Sabha. "Whenever a cyclone hits Odisha, houses are damaged. Crops get destroyed. Whenever there is such a disaster, the Centre should consider making Odisha a special focus state for three years and give funds in the 90:10 ratio," Patra had said. CM Naveen Patnaik had also raised the issue in August last year during the Niti Aayog governing council meeting.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has also been pressing for special category status for his state. In November last year, Nitish had slammed the Centre for not according special category status to Bihar and other backward states.

Sitharaman, meanwhile, described CM Naveen Patnaik's remarks on a cut in funds for MGNREGS and drop in paddy procurement as baseless. She said the fund allocation for MGNREGS has not gone down. "Budget allocation is one thing, but since this scheme is a demand-driven scheme, as and when demand increases we keep making provisions," she said.

On paddy procurement, she said, "We have not at all brought down the procurement of paddy and wheat. Quantum of procurement has gone up. With MSP up and a check on pilferage, farmers are getting more money," she said.

Context: Union finance minister made it clear that the Centre will not consider demands for **"special category status"** for any state, dealing a major blow to states like Odisha and Bihar who have been pushing for it for some years now.

Special Category Status

- **About**: It is a **classification given by the Centre** to assist in the development of those states that face geographical and socio-economic disadvantages.
- **Not mentioned in the constitution**: The **Constitution does not have any provision** for categorisation of any state as a Special Category Status (SCS) State.
- **Origin**: The concept of a special category status was first **introduced in 1969** when the fifth Finance Commission sought to provide certain disadvantaged states with preferential treatment in the form of central assistance.
    - This formula **(Gadgil formula)** was named after the then Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr Gadgil Mukherjee and is related to the transfer of assistance to the states by centre under various schemes.
- **Criteria for special category status:**
    - Hilly and difficult terrain
    - Low population density or sizeable share of tribal population
    - Strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries
    - Economic and infrastructural backwardness
    - Non-viable nature of state finances
- **Nodal Authority**: The decision to grant special category status was with the **National Development Council**, composed of the prime minister, union ministers, chief ministers and members of the planning commission, who guide and review the work of the commission.
- **Current Status:** After the dissolution of the planning commission and the formation of NITI Aayog, the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission were implemented which meant the **discontinuation of the Gadgil formula-based grants.**
    - The 14th Finance Commission effectively **removed the concept of special category status** after its recommendations were accepted in 2015.
    - It suggested that the resource gap of each state be filled through **'tax devolution'**, urging the Centre to increase the states' share of tax revenues **from 32% to 42%**, which has been implemented since 2015.

THE HINDU Page 8

EXERCISE DHARMA GUARDIAN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - International Relations)

India-Japan Army exercise gets under way in Shiga

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The fourth edition of India-Japan bilateral Army exercise 'Dharma Guardian' began at Camp Imazu in Shiga province, Japan on Friday and will go on till March 2. Separately, two Japanese Navy ships Uraga and Awaji made port call in Kochi from February 14 to 16. Last month, the two Air Forces had held the maiden air exercise 'Veer Guardian'.

"Notably, in the series of military training exercises undertaken by India with various countries, 'Exercise Dharma Guardian', an annual training event with Japan, is crucial and significant in terms of security challenges faced by both nations in the backdrop of current global situation," the Army said in a statement. "The scope of this exercise covers platoon-level joint training on operations in jungle and semi-urban/urban terrain."

Context: The fourth edition of **India-Japan bilateral Army exercise 'Dharma Guardian'** began at Camp Imazu in Shiga province, Japan and will go on till March 2.

- Separately, two Japanese Navy ships Uraga and Awaji made port call at Kochi from February 14 to 16.
  - A port of call is a place where a ship stops during a journey.
- The Year 2022 also marks 70 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Exercise Dharma Guardian 2023

- **About**: Ex Dharma Guardian 2023 is an **annual training event** conducted between India and Japan.
- **Participation**: **Troops of the Garhwal Rifles Regiment** of the Indian Army and an Infantry Regiment from the Middle Army of the Japan Ground Self Defence Force (JGSDF) are participating in the Dharma Guardian exercise 2023.
- **Mandate**: Joint military Ex Dharma Guardian 2023 aims to share experiences gained during operations in order to enhance **interoperability in planning & execution**.
- **Venue and Timing:** Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN is being conducted at **Camp Imazu in Shiga province**, Japan from 17 February to 02 March 2023.

Other Joint Exercises with Japan

- **SHINYUU Maitri:** This is a bilateral exercise conducted between the Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) and the Indian Air Force.
- **JIMEX**: It is a bilateral **maritime exercise** held between Japan and India.
- **Sahayog-Kaijin**: A joint bilateral exercise between the Japan Coast Guard and the Indian Coast Guard.
- **Veer Guardian:** Bilateral combat **air exercise** between India and Japan.

DTE

FEB 18

PANGOLIN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

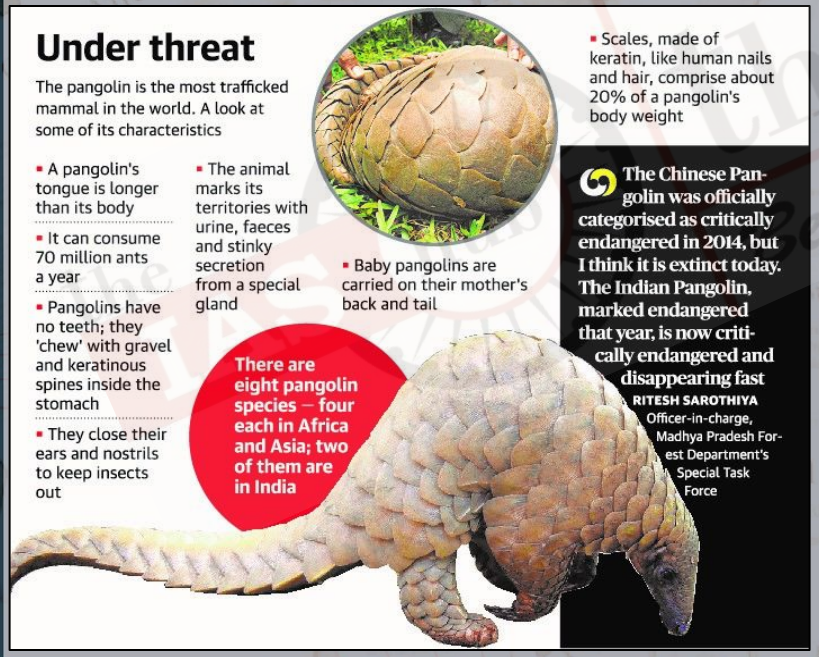


Over 1,200 pangolins trafficked in India in 5 years: Report

Odisha recorded the highest number of trafficking incidents & pangolins seized

NEXT NEWS >

By DTE Staff
Published: Friday 17 February 2023



Context: As many as 1,203 **pangolins, the most trafficked wild mammal in the world,** were poached for illegal wildlife trade in India from 2018-2022, according to the analysis by TRAFFIC, a global wildlife conservation non-profit, and World Wide Fund for Nature-India.

Key Points

- Half of the seizure incidents involved live pangolins and 40 per cent included scales of the animal, which is also called the '**scaly anteater'.**
- Pangolins are nocturnal, toothless mammals that dig burrows and feed on ants and termites.
- Of the two species found in India, the **Indian Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata) is recognised as 'Endangered'** and the **Chinese Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) as 'Critically Endangered'** in the International Union for Conservation of Nature List of Threatened Species.
- In India, they are **protected by the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 under schedule 1** that prohibits its hunting, trade or any other form of utilisation.
- The **commercial trade of pangolins was also banned** by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora in 2017.
- They play a **vital role in the ecosystem management**, mostly in **aerating and adding moisture** to the soil as well as succession of plant communities through burrowing.
- They also keep in **check the population** of certain insects they prey on.
- The **burrows** made by pangolins also get utilised as shelters by other species within their ecosystem.

THE HINDU Page 10

TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS UNDER UAPA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Internal Security)

MHA designates two outfits as terrorist organisations

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Punjab resident with links to terror groups has also been designated as an 'individual terrorist'

The Ministry of Home Affairs on Friday designated the Khalistan Tiger Force and the Jammu and Kashmir Ghaznavi Force as terrorist organisations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

A Punjab resident, Harwinder Singh Sandhu alias Rinda, who is presently based in Pakistan's Lahore, was also designated as an "individual terrorist" under the anti-terror law.

The Ministry's notification said that the Jammu and Kashmir Ghaznavi Force (JKGF) surfaced in the year 2020 as a terrorist outfit.

It draws its cadre from various proscribed terrorist organisations, such as the Lashker-E-Taiba, Jaish-E-Mohammed, Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen and Harkat-ul-Jehad-E-Islami, and is involved in infiltration bids, narcotics and weapon smuggling, and carrying out terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) came into existence in 2011 as an offshoot of the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), a banned terrorist organisation, the notification said. It added that the KTF was a militant outfit that aimed to revive terrorism in Punjab with a view to achieving its agenda of forming a separate State – Khalistan – and thus challenged the territorial integrity, unity, national security and sovereignty of India.

The Ministry said that Harwinder Singh Sandhu, a resident of Sarhali village in Punjab's Tarn Taran district, is associated with the BKI and is presently based in Lahore, Pakistan under the patronage of cross border agencies.

Context: The Ministry of Home Affairs designated the **Khalistan Tiger Force and the Jammu and Kashmir Ghaznavi Force as terrorist organisations** under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

- A Punjab resident, Harwinder Singh Sandhu alias Rinda, who is presently based in Pakistan's Lahore, was also designated as an **"individual terrorist" under the anti-terror law.**
- With declaration of these two organisations as terrorist organization, there are now total 44 designated terrorist organizations under the Ist Schedule of the Act.

Declaration of an Association as Unlawful under UAPA

- **About**: As per UAPA, if the **Central Government believes** that a certain association is or has become an unlawful association, it may proclaim the association to be unlawful by publishing a notice in the Official Gazette.
  - Each of these notifications must **state the grounds** for their issuance.
- **Limitations**: No such notification shall take effect until the **Tribunal has approved the declaration** contained therein except:
  - The Central Government may, for **reasons to be stated in writing**, declare an association to be unlawful with immediate effect if it believes that circumstances exist that make such a declaration necessary.

Terrorist Organisations under UAPA

- **Notifications**: The Central Government may, by order, in the Official Gazette:
  - **add an organization** to the Schedule;
  - add also an organization to the Schedule, which is **identified as a terrorist organization** in a resolution adopted by the Security Council to **combat international terrorism;**
  - **remove an organization** from the Schedule;
  - **amend the Schedule** in some other way.
- **Involved in terrorism:** An organization called to be involved in terrorism if it:
  - commits or participates in **acts of terrorism,** or
  - prepares for **terrorism**, or
  - **promotes** or encourages terrorism, or
  - is otherwise **involved in terrorism.**

Individual as terrorist

- **2019 Amendment:** In 2019, amendment was made to the act (The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019) which now **empowers the Union Government to designate an individual as a terrorist** after following the proper legal procedures.

DTE

FEB 18

FOOD FORTIFICATION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)



Context: The public **food fortification programme** under India's food safety regulator, FSSAI, has come under scanner after a report alleged flagrant conflicts of interest behind it.

- Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture (ASHA), an umbrella organisation of scientists, intellectuals and non-governmental organisations, has alleged that **Food Fortification Resource Centre (FFRC)** members are benefiting financially from the programme.

Key Points

- FFRC is an industry-led organisation under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), India's food safety regulator.
- FFRC members, directly and indirectly, benefit financially from the expansion of food fortification programmes in India, the report said.
- It **questioned the organisation's position under FSSAI,** given the profit motive, as the FSSAI is a statutory regulatory body aimed at protecting citizen health and is expected to act independently.
- The mandates of FSSAI and FFRC are **polar opposite**s - FSSAI is supposed to be guided by principles of food safety, which include risk assessment in an independent manner, transparent public consultation, protection of consumer choice and interest among others.
- FFRC, on the other hand, has a **sponsored promotional role**.
- Fortified foods are now being i**ncluded in public food schemes** like Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Services, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana and Mid-Day Meal Scheme/Poshan.
- A large part of the country's **population depend on these food programmes.**
- So far, **no independent risk analysis** has been done within the country, while evaluation studies are still not publicly available for a three-year pilot on fortified rice in the PDS.
- Even though FSSAI statutory regulations caution against consuming iron-fortified food by patients with thalassemia and sickle cell anaemia, this is **without any medical intervention** for such patients to fulfil their entitlements under the Right to Food Act.

Food fortification

- **About**: It is defined as the **practice of adding vitamins and minerals** to commonly consumed foods during processing to **increase their nutritional value**.
  - It is a proven, safe and cost-effective strategy for improving diets and for the prevention and control of micronutrient deficiencies.
- **FSSAI definition**: Deli**berately increasing the content of essential micronutrients** in a food so as to improve the nutritional quality of food and to provide public health benefit with minimal risk to health.

Recent Developments

- The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution had launched a centrally sponsored pilot scheme on **"Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS)"** for a period of three years beginning 2019-20.
- The pilot scheme **focuses on 15 districts in 15 states.** Under the scheme, the blending of rice is done at the milling stage.
- **Maharashtra and Gujarat** have started distribution of fortified rice under PDS in the Pilot Scheme.
- The Scheme is funded by the Government of India in the ratio of **90:10 in respect of North Eastern, hilly and island states and 75:25 in respect of the rest.**
- India is considering compulsory **fortification of rice from 2024** as a significant percentage of the population continues to suffer from malnutrition and anemia.

PIB FEB 18

USTAD BISMILLAH KHAN YUVA PURASKAR

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Art & Culture)

PM congratulates Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar awardees

Context: The Prime Minister has congratulated the talented youngsters who have been conferred the **Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar.**

Key Points

- The Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER presented the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar (UBKYP) **2019, 2020 and 2021**, at Meghdoot Theatre Complex, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi on 15th February.
- **19 artists from North East India** won the award.
- 102 awardees were selected.
- The lists were finalised in 2022. However, are being presented now.
- Categories include **Sitar, Flute, Mridangam, etc**.

Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar

- **About**: The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, given to artists **up to the age of 40 years**, was introduced in the year 2006.
  - It is presented **annually**.
- **Objective**: Identifying and encouraging outstanding y**oung talents in diverse fields of the performing arts** and giving them national recognition early in their life, so that they may work with greater commitment and dedication in their chosen fields.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Minister of **Culture and Tourism.**
  - The award is presented by **Sangeet Natak Akademi,** established by the Education ministry of India in 1952, to artists in the field of dance, music, and drama.
- **Price**: The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar carries a purse money of Rs 25,000/- (Rupees twenty-five thousand only), an Angavastram and a plaque.

Ustad Bismillah Khan

- **About**: He was a famous **Shehnai musician**.
  - It was Ustad 'Bismillah" Khan Who also **played the Shehnai at the first Republic Day celebration in 1950.**
  - Bismillah Khan was the first Indian to be invited to perform at the prestigious Lincoln Centre Hall in the United States of America.
- **National awards**: He was conferred upon national awards like the Padmashri, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan for his immense contribution to the field of music. In 2001, Ustad Bismillah Khan was awarded India's highest civilian award **Bharat Ratna.**
  - Before him, musicians **M S Subbalakshmi and Ravi Shankar** were honoured with the award before him and he was the third to receive the honour.

PIB FEB 18

BALIPA NARAYANA BHAGAWATHA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Art & Culture)

PM condoles demise of noted Yakshagana playback singer, Shri Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha

Context: The Prime Minister has expressed deep grief over the demise of noted Yakshagana playback singer, **Shri Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha.**

Shri Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha

- **Bhagavatha**: Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha is a **bhagavatha** (story teller, lead singer and producer) in the yakshagana theatre form.
  - The **Bhagavatha, part of the himmela,** is the lead singer and narrates the story through songs, while the dancers/actors (mummela) enact the stories drawn from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas.
  - Bhagavatha is the **chief narrator of the story.**
  - Bhagavata sings in his magical high-pitched voice, invoking the Gods for the successful completion of the evening's performance.
- **Born and Brought up**: Bhagawatha was born on 13 March 1938 near **Moodabidri, Dakshina Kannada.**
  - He is grandson of "Ajja" Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha, and son of Balipa Madhava Bhatta.
- **Contributions**: As a renowned artist he served various melas (Performing Groups or Troupes) like **Mulki Mela, Padre Mela, Kudlu, Ira and kateelu Mela.**
  - He spent major tenure of his career in **Kateelu mela** which is associated with Sri Kateel Durga Parmeshwari Temple, Kateel, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka.
  - He figures in the renowned **Yakshagana artists of recent times.**
- **Achievements**: In memory of Yakshagana late malpe Shankarnarayana Samaga, 'Samaga Award' was conferred to Balipa Narayana Bhagawatha in 2012 Coveted Parthisubba Award from Karnataka Yakshgana Bayalata academy Yakshagana Kalanidhi Award from Delhi Based Academy of Tenku Tittu Yakshagana.
  - He is also honored with **'Sheni' , 'Agari', 'Muddanna' , 'Patla' and 'Nudisiri' Awards** along with **'Rajyostava Award'** from the government of Karnataka.

Yakshagana

- **About**: is a **traditional folk dance f**orm popular in coastal **Karnataka** districts and some parts of Kerala.
  - The name yakshagana suggests the **music of celestial beings.**
- **Origin**: It is considered that Yakshagana has **originated as a product of the Vaishnava bhakti movement.**
  - Yakshagana is believed to have **evolved from the ancient Bhutha-worship** prevalent in South Canara and Kasaragod.
  - Theyyam is also a **manifestation of this Bhutha worship**.
- **Elements**: It combines **dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage** techniques with a unique style and form.
  - Most of the stories in yakshagana are drawn from the epics like **Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavatha and other mythological episodes.**

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