

December - 30

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the National Quantum Mission (NQM) have jointly launched India's first undergraduate minor programme in quantum technologies.
- ❖ Punjab had become the fifth state in the country to provide 100% piped water supply to rural households under the union government's 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme.
- ❖ Brigadier Amitabh Jha, acting UN peacekeeping force commander, passes away at Golan Heights in Syria.
- ❖ Sachin Tendulkar has accepted the Honorary Cricket Membership of Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) of Australia.
- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has constituted an eight-member committee under Dr. Pushpak Bhattacharyya to develop a framework for the ethical and responsible adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the financial sector.
- ❖ India's first bio-bitumen-based National Highway stretch inaugurated on NH-44 in Mansar, Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- ❖ To address the issue of overpriced food and beverages at airports, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has taken an initiative to start the 'Udaan Yatri Cafe' for the passengers.
- ❖ The Advanced Facility for Pashmina Certification and Next Generation DNA Sequencing Facility was inaugurated at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- ❖ India rolled out a 100-days Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination Campaign in December 2024 to intensify progress towards ending the disease.
- ❖ Every year on December 21, the World Basketball Day is observed to honour the development and significance of a sport.

TAMIL NADU

Lake areas outside Pulicat sanctuary

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority (TNSWA) has said the lake areas outside of the Pulicat bird sanctuary limits should be brought under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017.
- ❖ This will aid to prevent the conversion of wetlands for non-wetland uses.
- ❖ Currently, the Pulicat bird sanctuary has a default 10-kilometre eco-sensitive zone.

- ❖ All the wetlands listed in the National Wetland Inventory Assessment of 2011, including Pulicat lake, must be protected under Rule 4(2).
- ❖ This protection is a mandatory, regardless of whether the wetland has been formally notified.
- ❖ This rule prohibits the conversion of wetlands for non-wetland uses, such as encroachment and the establishment or expansion of industries.
- ❖ It also bans the dumping of solid waste, construction debris, hazardous materials, and untreated waste into wetlands.



NATIONAL

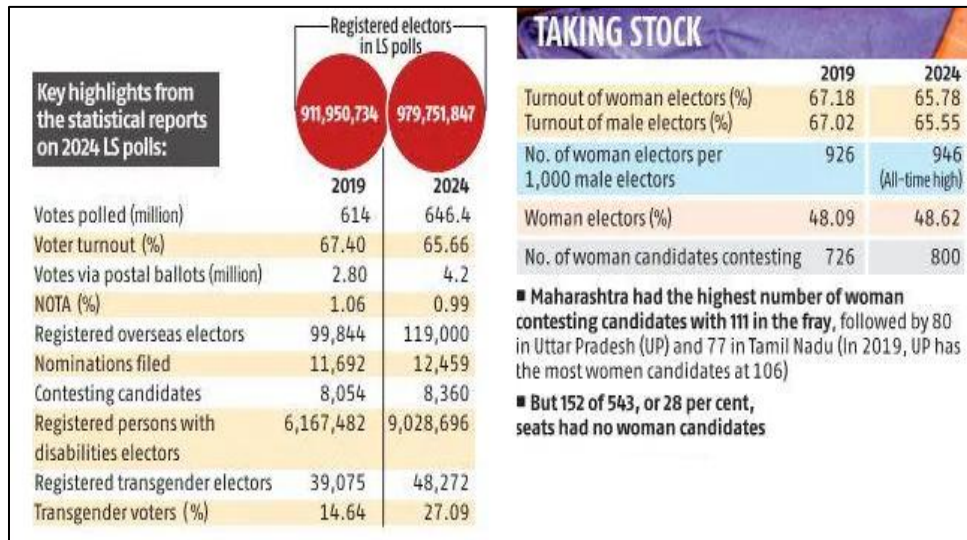
Post Office Rules and Regulations, 2024

- ❖ The new set of subordinate legislations under the Post Office Act, 2023 - the Post Office Rules, 2024 and the Post Office Regulations, 2024 has been framed.
- ❖ The Post Office Rules, 2024 are framed as an enabler for the services to be provided by the post offices.
- ❖ The Post Office Regulations, 2024 entail the details and operational aspects of products and services offered by the post office across the country.
- ❖ The limit of amount of remittance through money order has been raised from Rs 5,000/- to Rs. 10,000/- to cater the disbursement of various social welfare schemes.

- ❖ The existing postal registration was granted in accordance with the provisions of erstwhile India Post Office Act, 1898 and Indian Post Office Rules, 1933.



Report on the 2024 Lok Sabha elections



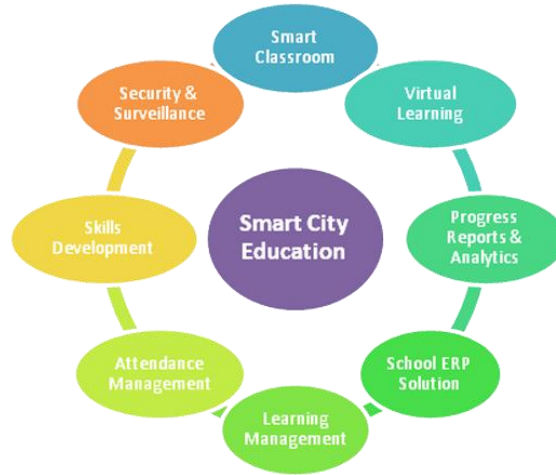
- ❖ The Election Commission of India has released a comprehensive statistical report for the Lok Sabha elections 2024.
- ❖ Registered Electors for Lok Sabha were 97,97,51,847 Electors in 2024 as compared to 91,19,50,734 in 2019.
- ❖ Total electors were increased in 2024 over 2019 was 7.43%.
- ❖ Of the 97.97 crore registered electors, 47.63 crore were women, up from 43.85 crore in 2019, comprising 48.62% of the total electors compared to 48.09% in 2019.

- ❖ Puducherry led with the highest percentage of female electors (53.03%), followed by Kerala (51.56%).
- ❖ The female-to-male elector ratio reached a record high of 946 per 1,000 males, up from 926 in 2019.
- ❖ 64.64 crore votes polled in 2024, compared to 61.4 crore in 2019.
- ❖ Of these, 64.21 crore were EVM votes (32.93 crore male, 31.27 crore female, and 13,058 third gender) and 42.81 lakh were postal ballots.
- ❖ Dhubri in Assam recorded the highest turnout at 92.3%, while Srinagar in J&K had the lowest at 38.7%.
- ❖ The 2024 Lok Sabha elections featured 10,52,664 polling stations, an increase from 10,37,848 in 2019.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of polling stations at 1,62,069, while Lakshadweep had the fewest with 55.
- ❖ Bihar saw the largest increase in polling stations with 4,739 additional stations compared to 2019, followed by West Bengal with 1,731.
- ❖ The Highest enrolment of overseas electors in 2024 was recorded in five southern states – Kerala (89,839), Andhra Pradesh (7,927), Telangana (3,470), Tamil Nadu (3,432) and Karnataka (3,148).
- ❖ In 2019, as many as 99,844 had registered as overseas electors.
- ❖ Several large states such as Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu saw zero turnout of overseas electors.
- ❖ Maharashtra had the highest number of female candidates (111), followed by Uttar Pradesh (80) and Tamil Nadu (77).
- ❖ However, 152 constituencies had no female candidates.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu registered the highest number of third-gender electors (8,467).
- ❖ The Independent candidates made up 3,921 of the contestants, with only seven winning seats.

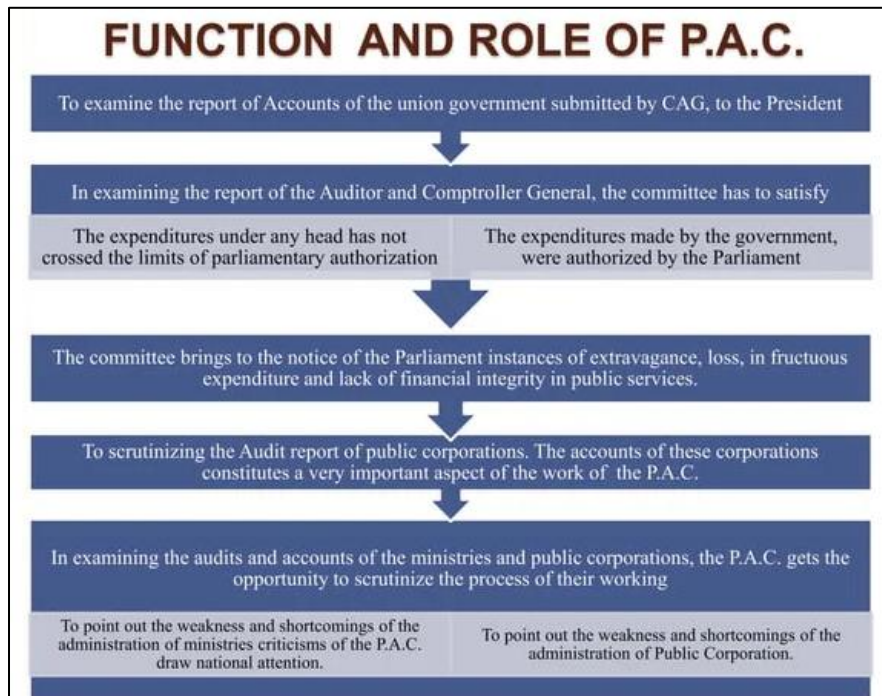
Impact of smart classroom initiative

- ❖ The introduction of smart classrooms under the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) has led to a 22% increase in overall enrolment in 19 cities between 2015-16 to 2023-24.
- ❖ 71 cities have developed 9,433 smart classrooms in 2,398 government schools.
- ❖ The highest number of Smart Classroom projects are in Karnataka (80).
- ❖ It is followed by Rajasthan (53) and Tamil Nadu has 23 and Delhi 12.
- ❖ West Bengal, with just two, is among the States at the bottom of the table.

- ❖ As on November 2024, 91% of the projects under SCM have been completed.
- ❖ The SCM launched a platform in 2022, named ‘SAAR’ (Smart Cities and Academia towards Action and Research).



Public Accounts Committee report 2024



- ❖ The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), headed by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, tabled its report during the recently-concluded Winter session.
- ❖ The report is titled ‘Excesses over voted grants and charged appropriations (2021-22)’.



- ❖ It revealed that the Ministries of Finance, Defence, Railways, and Chemical & Fertilizers spent ₹1,291.14 crore in excess of the 2021-22 Budget sanctioned by Parliament.
- ❖ For the financial year 2021-22, a total of ₹1,291.14 crore was incurred by the Ministry of Finance (₹742.56 crore).
- ❖ It was followed by Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (₹493.38 crore), Ministry of Railways (₹55.16 crore), and Ministry of Defence (₹3.17 crore).
- ❖ The Ministries and departments involved had already obtained the substantial Supplementary Grants.
- ❖ Excess expenditures still occurred, with the percentage of overspending ranging from 0.67% to 10.41%.

Supreme Court on tree census

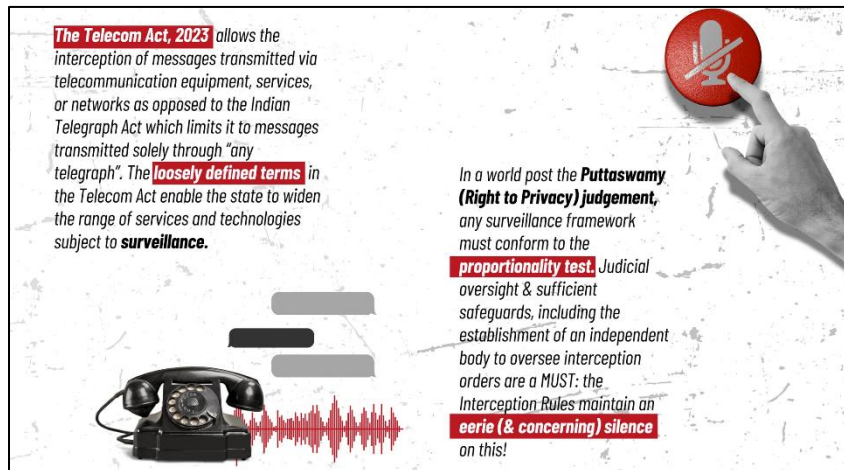


- ❖ The Supreme Court proposed a tree census to be conducted by the Tree Authority in the national capital by employing the Forest Survey of India (FSI).
- ❖ It also said that the tree Officers should not be allowed to give indiscriminate permissions to fell trees.
- ❖ Every permission granted by an official to cut 50 or more trees in the national capital under the trees act-1994, would be first vetted and cleared by the Central Empowered Committee (CEC).
- ❖ No trees would be cut until the CEC gave the final go-ahead.
- ❖ The CEC is empowered to reject permission or modify the order to cut trees.

- ❖ If an officer delays the decision beyond the 60 days' period, the applicant concerned was free to deem to have been permitted to cut the trees.

New interception rules 2024

- ❖ The Union Government has notified the Telecommunications (Procedures and Safeguards for Lawful Interception of Messages) Rules, 2024.
- ❖ It empowers some enforcement and security agencies to intercept the phone messages under certain conditions.
- ❖ These rules supersede Rule 419A of the Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951.
- ❖ An officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary to the Union Government, may also issue such order of interception in 'unavoidable circumstances' (without defining such circumstances).
- ❖ The Central Government may also authorise any law enforcement or security agency to intercept messages for reasons specified under Section 20(2) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.
- ❖ Now, the condition of interception by the authorised agencies only in 'emergent cases', has been relaxed.



Gas and chemical leakage accidents in India

- ❖ The number of gas and chemical leakage accidents in India more than doubled to 30 in the last decade.
- ❖ Gujarat reported 24 of the 30 incidents in 2023.
- ❖ It is followed by Uttar Pradesh with three cases, Assam (2), and Goa (1), resulting in 25 fatalities and 32 injuries.

- ❖ This marks a significant increase from 2013, when 13 incidents were reported nationwide, resulting in 11 deaths and one injury.
- ❖ The cases were spread across Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh, with Telangana recording six incidents.



INTERNATIONAL

AUSSOM mission – Somalia

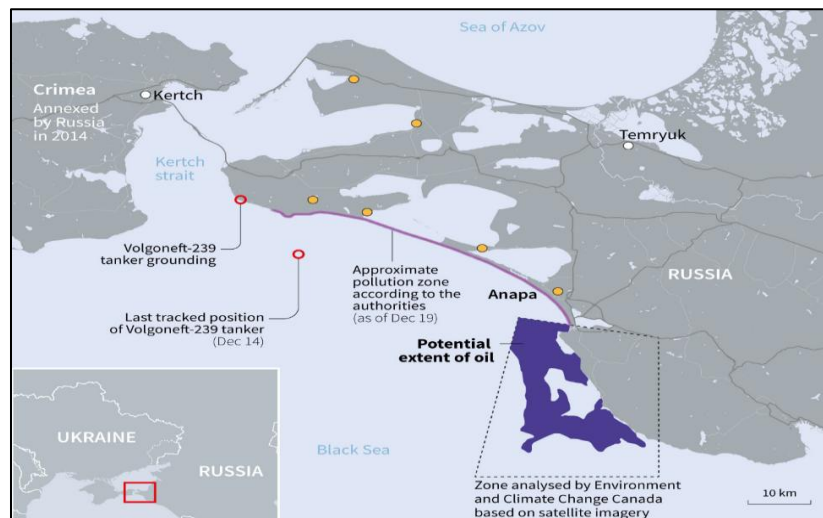


- ❖ The UN Security Council adopted a draft resolution to establish the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM).

- ❖ The AUSSOM will replace the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).
- ❖ It authorizes the African Union (AU) members to deploy up to 12,626 uniformed personnel, including 1,040 police personnel, to AUSSOM until 30 June 2025.
- ❖ The AUSSOM will support Somalia in its fight against Al-Shabaab, strengthen Somalia's stabilization efforts, and enable the delivery of the humanitarian assistance.
- ❖ The recent Ankara Declaration between the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia reaffirming each country's sovereignty, unity, independence, and territorial integrity.

Black sea oil spill 2024

- ❖ Russia declared a federal state of emergency after an oil spill in the Black Sea.
- ❖ A Russian oil tanker named Volgoneft 212, carrying more than 4,000 tons of fuel, broke apart off the coast of Crimea.
- ❖ At least 3,700 tons of heavy oil were spilled.
- ❖ The incident has polluted approximately 55 kilometers (34 miles) of coastline.



ECONOMY

Track and Trace Mechanism

- ❖ Cigarettes are expected to be among the first products included in a track-and-trace mechanism approved by the GST Council, with pan masala also under the consideration.

- ❖ It is already in use in regions such as the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom, and Turkey.
- ❖ It requires manufacturers, importers, and supply chain entities to register and obtain unique IDs.
- ❖ Goods are scanned and tracked electronically at every stage, from production or importation to retail.
- ❖ In India, the mechanism will use Unique Identification Marking (UIM).
- ❖ This UIM is affixed to products or packaging, to trace the commodities throughout the supply chain.

TO CHECK EVASION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Amendments to Central GST Act will empower govt to enforce “track and trace mechanism” for specified evasion prone commodities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Seizure of over nine crore units of illicit cigarettes was estimated at around ₹180 crore last year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Tobacco industry is seen to be prone to leakages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ According to Tobacco Institute of India, govt loses ₹21,000 crore per year due to illegal cigarette trade

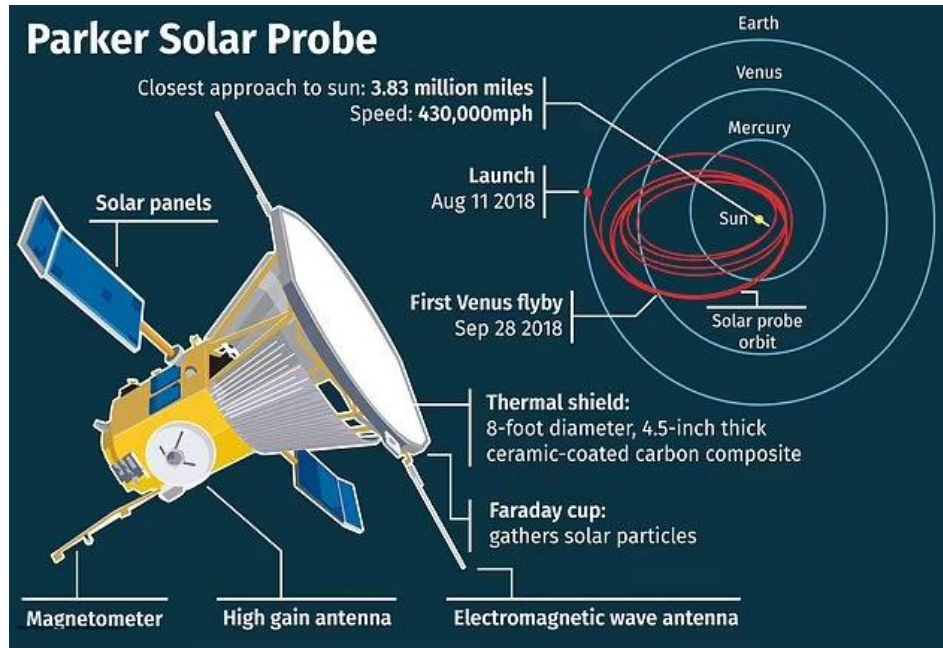


SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

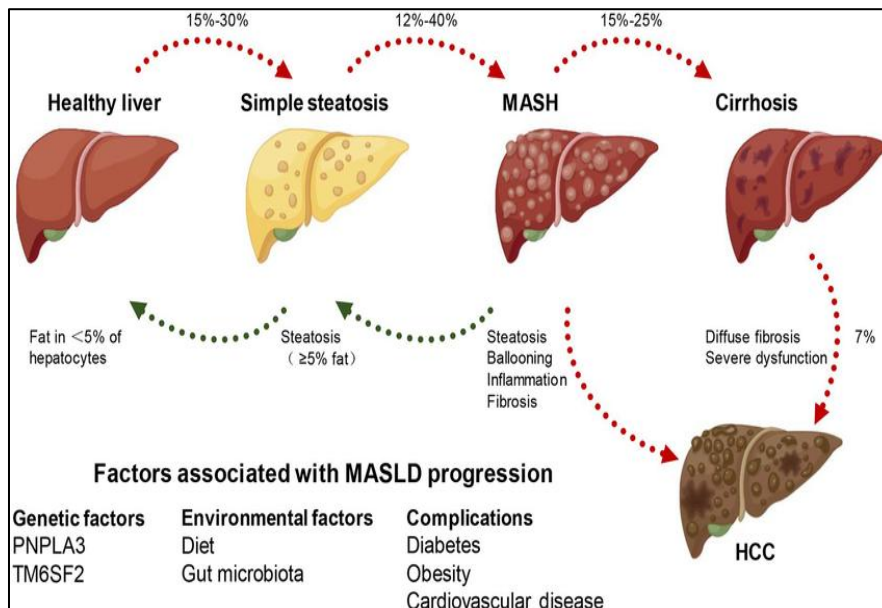
Parker probe 2024

- ❖ NASA’s Parker Solar Probe is making the very closest approach to the Sun ever recorded by a human-made object.
- ❖ The probe has passed just 6.1 million kilometres (3.8 million miles) above the Sun’s surface.
- ❖ The Parker Solar Probe was launched in 2018 to get a close-up look at the sun.

- ❖ Parker got more than seven times closer to the sun than previous spacecraft, traveling at a maximum speed of about 430,000 mph.



MASLD Disease

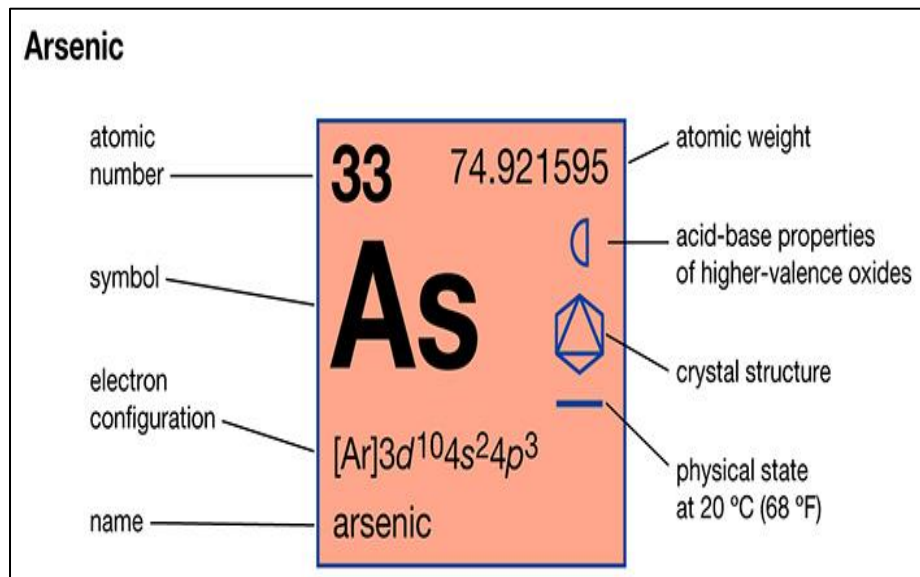


- ❖ Earlier, the term NAFLD (Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease) was renamed MASLD (Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease).

- ❖ The new name highlights the connection between the fatty liver disease and the metabolic problems, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and abnormal cholesterol levels.
- ❖ MASLD affects about 25 per cent of people globally, with rates rising to 50–70 per cent in those with type 2 diabetes or obesity.

ENVIRONMENT

Arsenic contamination in Indian states



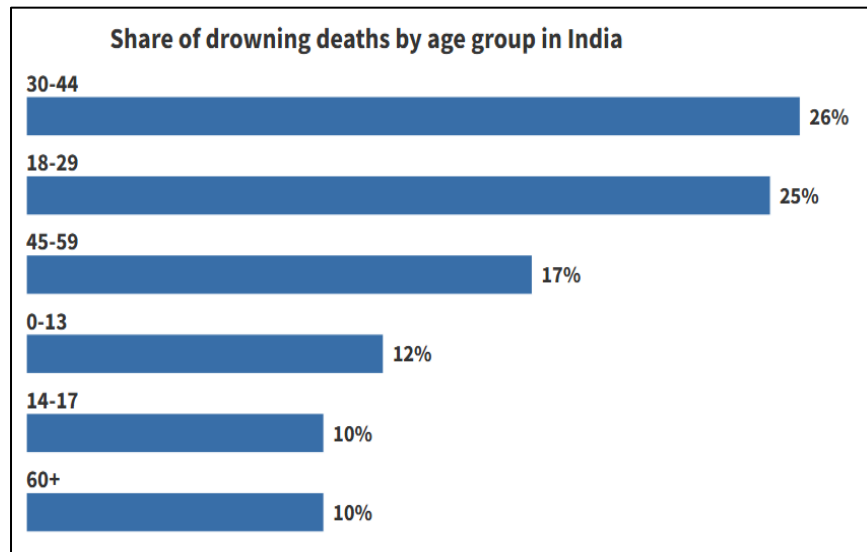
- ❖ Arsenic has been detected in groundwater in parts of 230 districts in 25 states and fluoride in 469 districts in 27 states.
- ❖ The West Bengal and Bihar are impacted the most by arsenic contamination of groundwater.
- ❖ Arsenic is a naturally occurring substance that can be found in air, water, and soil.
- ❖ It is an odourless and tasteless metalloid widely distributed in the earth's crust.
- ❖ WHO's current recommended limit of arsenic in drinking-water is 10 µg/L.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Global status report on drowning prevention 2024

- ❖ WHO published its first-ever global status report on drowning prevention.

- ❖ Three lakh people died by drowning in 2021 around the world (an estimated 30 every hour).
- ❖ Close to 92% of such deaths took place in low- and middle-income countries,
- ❖ The WHO's South-East Asia Region (includes India) saw 83,000 deaths, or 28% of the global burden.
- ❖ But the drowning deaths declined 38% since 2000.
- ❖ The WHO's European Region, for instance, saw a 68% drop, while the South-East Asia Region saw a decline of 48%.
- ❖ The Children aged under five accounted for the single largest share of drowning deaths (24%), with a further 19% of deaths among children aged five to 14, and 14% among young people aged 15 to 29.
- ❖ More than 7.2 million people, mainly the children, could die due to this by the year 2050 if current trends continue.

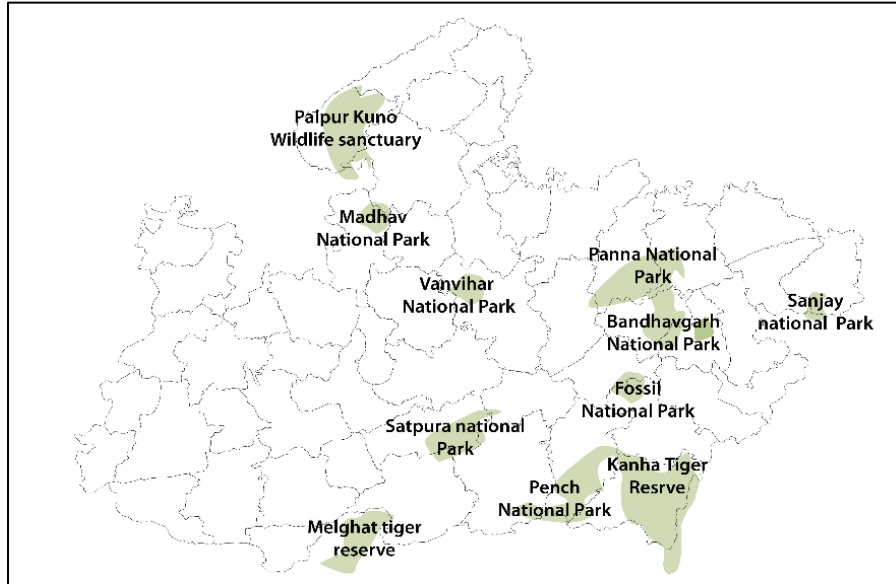


STATES

Tiger Translocation by Madhya Pradesh

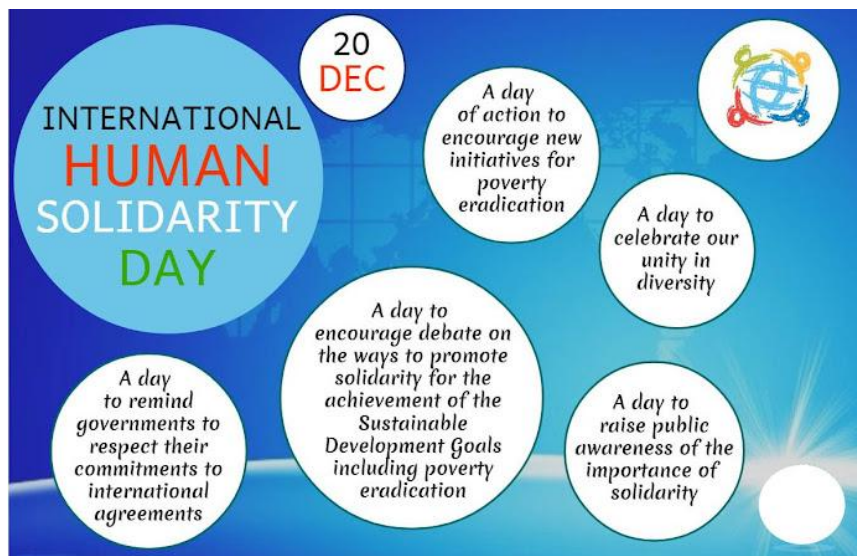
- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh government will translocate 14 tigers to Rajasthan, Odisha and Chhattisgarh under the animal exchange program.
- ❖ Four tigers will be relocated to Rajasthan, while two to Odisha, and eight to Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ The big cats will be transferred from the tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh, Panna, Kanha, and Pench.

- ❖ Earlier, Madhya Pradesh has provided two Bengal tigers (one male and one female) from Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) to Gujarat.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh is housing more than 785, out of 3,800 big cats across the country.



IMPORTANT DAYS

International Human Solidarity Day 2024 – December 20



- ❖ This day recognises our shared humanity and the idea that we are all part of a global community.

- ❖ In order to address the global issues including poverty, inequality, and social injustice, the day aims to promote solidarity, collaboration, and the shared accountability.
- ❖ It reminds the government of their duty under international agreements while uniting people to celebrate diversity and harmony.
- ❖ This day was formally recognized by the UN General Assembly on December 22, 2005.

SSB Raising Day 2024 - December 20

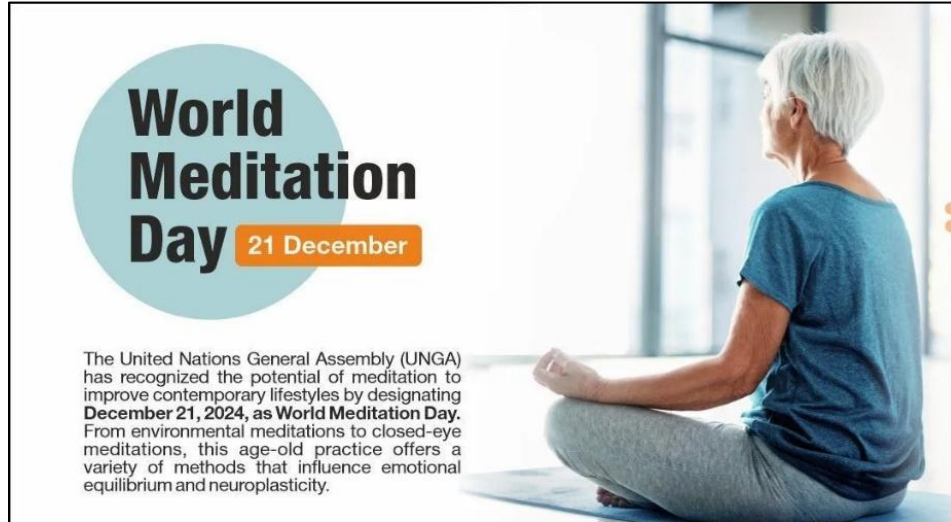


- ❖ It was established as the Special Service Bureau in 1963, in the aftermath of the Chinese aggression in 1962.
- ❖ It was declared a lead intelligence agency for Indo Nepal in June 2001 and assigned the Indo Nepal border.
- ❖ In 2004, it was also assigned Indo Bhutan border.
- ❖ It works under the aegis of the Ministry of Home Affairs and a part of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

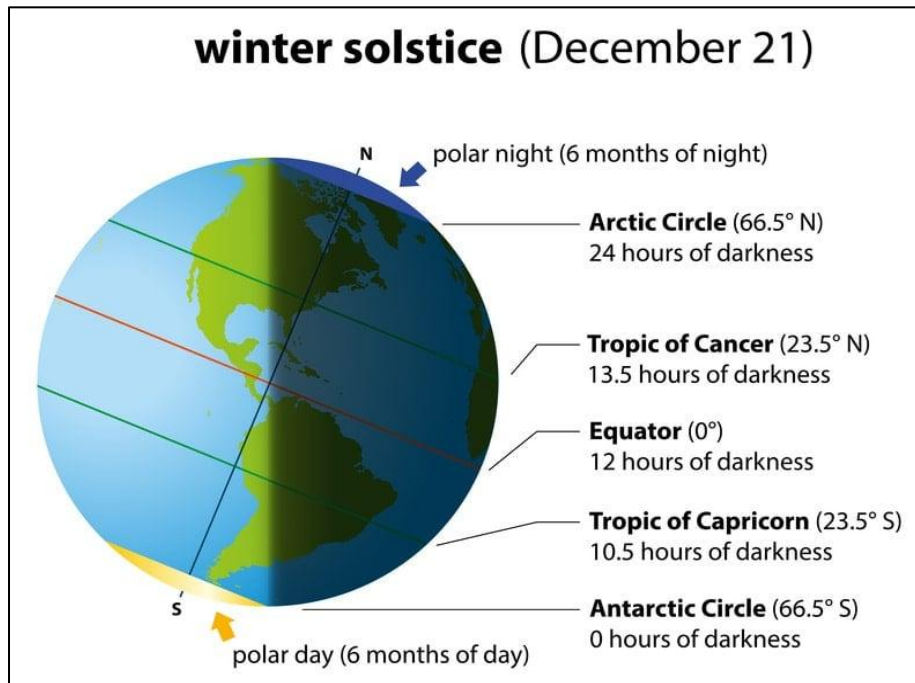
First-Ever World Meditation Day 2024 - December 21

- ❖ This year, the United Nations General Assembly observed the inaugural World Meditation Day.
- ❖ To mark the occasion, the Permanent Mission of India organised an event at the UN headquarters in New York.

- ❖ This date was chosen for its cultural and astronomical significance of the winter solstice.
- ❖ Nagpur-based wellness startup Habuild was setting a world record for the largest virtual meditation session with 2,87,711 participants.
- ❖ This year's theme is "Inner Peace, Global Harmony!".



Winter Solstice 2024 - December 21

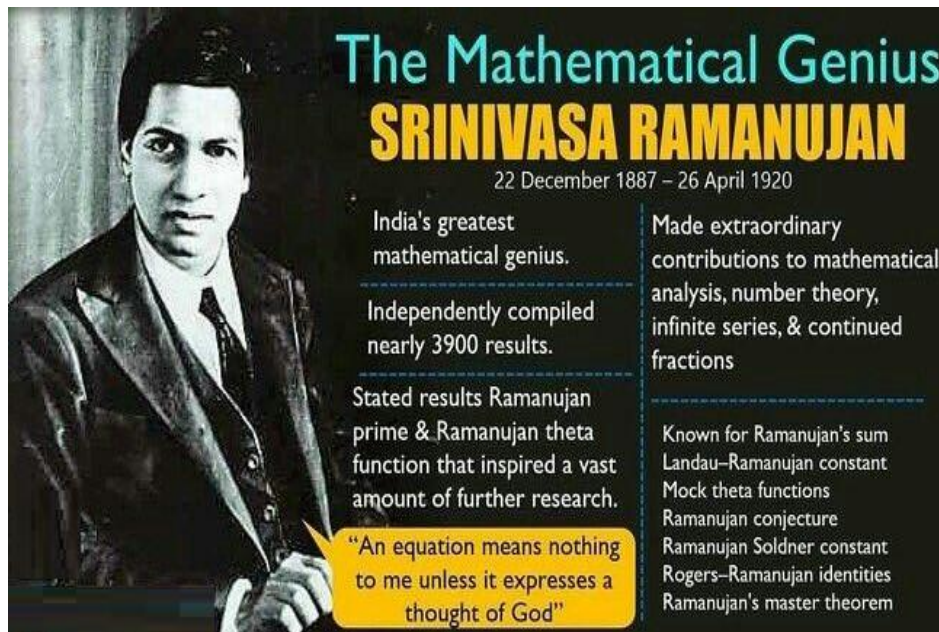


- ❖ This day is marking the official start of winter in the Northern Hemisphere.

- ❖ This is the shortest day and longest night of the year, as the North Pole is tilted farthest away from the Sun.
- ❖ The winter solstice occurs on specific dates in each hemisphere.
- ❖ In the Northern Hemisphere, it falls on either December 21 or December 22 every year.
- ❖ In the Southern Hemisphere, the winter solstice takes place on either June 20 or June 21 annually.

National Mathematics Day 2024 - December 22

- ❖ It marks the birth anniversary of Indian mathematician, Srinivasa Ramanujan.
- ❖ This day is dedicated to recognising his profound contributions to mathematics and highlighting the pivotal role the subject plays in shaping modern society.
- ❖ It was officially launched by then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2012, on the 125th birth anniversary of Ramanujan.



National Farmers Day 2024 - December 23

- ❖ It is marking the birth anniversary of India's fifth Prime Minister, Chaudhary Charan Singh.
- ❖ He served as the India's fifth Prime Minister from 1979 to 1980.
- ❖ He is often referred to as the "Champion of Farmers," played a pivotal role in empowering farmers during his tenure.

- ❖ He introduced landmark reforms such as the Debt Redemption Bill of 1939.
- ❖ The theme for 2024 is "Empowering 'Anna datas' for a Prosperous Nation."

Choudhary Charan Singh was born on Dec 23, 1902

FARMERS' LEADER

Became 5th prime minister of India in 1979


His birthday is celebrated as **KISAN DIWAS** across the country

In 1938, introduced the **Agriculture Produce Market Bill** to protect the interest of farmers from the greed of traders

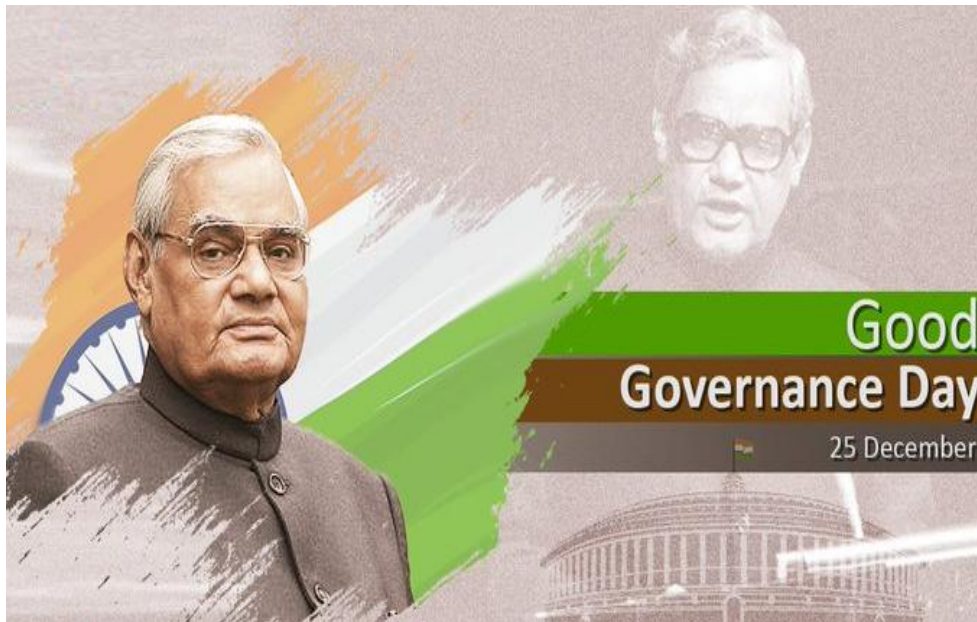
Abolished **Zamindari from UP** through the Zamindari Abolition Act, 1950 & brought about the Land holding Act, 1960

Authored several books including *Abolition of Zamindari, Co-operative Farming X-rayed & India's Poverty & its Solution*

Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport in Lucknow & Chaudhary Charan Singh University in Meerut have been named after him



Good Governance Day 2024 - December 25



- ❖ It marks the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ❖ Three times, Atal Bihari Vajpayee led India as prime minister.
- ❖ In 1996, his first term lasted just 13 days.

- ❖ His second term lasted thirteen months from March 1998 to April 1999.
- ❖ He completed his third full term from 1999 to 2004.
- ❖ He received the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honor in India, in 2015.

MISCELLANEOUS

5,000-year-old Water Management

- ❖ The ongoing archaeological excavation at Rakhigarhi of Haryana, has uncovered the evidence of sophisticated water management systems and cultural practices dating back nearly 5,000 years.
- ❖ The water storage area between mounds one and two, with an estimated depth of 3.5 to 4 feet.
- ❖ The discovery of a dried-up riverbed, identified as the Chautang river (also known as the Drishavati river), was about 300 meters from the site.
- ❖ These people relied on this river for their water supply, storing water in reservoirs and canals for sustainable use.
- ❖ Rakhigarhi is the largest known Harappan-era site, encompassing a sprawling area of 865 acres.
- ❖ Its history spans multiple occupational phases, from the Early Harappan period to the Mature Harappan period, covering the 5th to 3rd millennia BCE.

