

September - 24

TNPSC BITS


- ❖ The National Disaster Management Authority and the Army Southern Command organized the two-day national symposium - Exercise AIKYA in Chennai.
- ❖ The Department of Fisheries has designated the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute as a Centre of Excellence for seaweed cultivation.
- ❖ India's first CO₂ to Methanol Pilot Plant was inaugurated in Pune, Maharashtra, with a capacity of 1.4 tons per day.
 - This conversion captures carbon emissions from industrial sources like power plants or directly from the air.
- ❖ The Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 Campaign was held from 17th September to 02nd October to celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Swachh Bharat Mission.
 - This year's theme is "Swabhav Swachhata - Sanskaar Swachhata".

NATIONAL

Simultaneous Elections in India

WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE IDEA

<p>NITI AAYOG A 2016 paper, co-authored by Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai, noted....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate elections lead to massive recurring expenditures as well as prolonged deployment of forces • It suggested holding elections in two cycles with an interregnum of 30 months • It pegged cost of simultaneous polls at ₹4,500 crore, while the cost of 2014 Lok Sabha polls alone was ₹3,870 crore 	<p>STANDING COMMITTEE In 2015, the House panel on personnel, public grievances, law and justice said...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections could be held in two phases • Polls to some assemblies can be held in Lok Sabha midterm and remaining assemblies could be held at the end of Lok Sabha term 	<p>LAW COMMISSION In 1999, the Law Commission in its 170th report on Reform of Electoral Laws said...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding simultaneous polls would be ideal, but a workable formula is required to be in the Constitution • The holding of a separate election to assemblies should be an exception and not the rule • Another law panel report, in 2018, said simultaneous polls don't alter balance of power between Union and the states
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- ❖ The Union Cabinet has 'unanimously' approved the Kovind panel's report on simultaneous polls.
- ❖ The Committee recommended a series of constitutional amendments to facilitate simultaneous elections at the central, state, and local levels.
- ❖ The One Nation, One Election project hinges on two Constitution Amendment Bills being passed by Parliament.
- ❖ The first Constitution Amendment Bill to transition to a simultaneous election system will require a 'special majority' of both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.



- ❖ The second Constitution Amendment Bill will ensure that all local body elections (for municipalities and panchayats) are held within 100 days of the simultaneous elections.
- ❖ For this, the amendment shall also require to be ratified (agreed to) by the Legislatures of not less than one-half of the States in the country.
- ❖ This is because “local government” is a subject under the State List in the Seventh Schedule, which means only states have the power to pass laws on this subject.
- ❖ The scheme proposed by the Kovind Committee, if a state Assembly or Lok Sabha is dissolved before the end of its ‘full’ five-year term, a ‘mid-term’ election will take place.
- ❖ But, the newly elected state Assembly or Lok Sabha will only serve for the remaining period before the next simultaneous elections are scheduled to take place.
- ❖ This period between a mid-term election and a scheduled simultaneous election will be known as the “unexpired term”.
- ❖ During India's first four general elections (1951-52, 1957, 1962, 1967), the electorate voted for their respective state assemblies as well.
- ❖ Later, the process was ended due to formation of new states and reorganisation of others.
- ❖ In 1968-89, some legislative (state) assemblies were dissolved and led to ONOE being discontinued completely.

Revamping of PM-AASHA scheme

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA).
- ❖ It aims to ensure the fair prices for farmers and to regulate price fluctuations in essential commodities for consumers.
- ❖ This extension will incur a financial outlay of Rs 35,000 crore during the 15th Finance Commission cycle, up to 2025-26.
- ❖ The government has converged the Price Support Scheme (PSS) and Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) schemes under PM-AASHA to serve the farmers and consumers more effectively.
- ❖ This integration aims to provide farmers with remunerative prices for their crops, stabilising the market prices of essential commodities, thus making them affordable for consumers.
- ❖ The revamped PM-AASHA now includes components like:
 - Price Support Scheme (PSS)

- Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF)
- Price Deficit Payment Scheme (PDPS)
- Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)

**PRADHAN MANTRI ANNADATA
AAY SANRAKSHAN ABHIYAN
(PM-AASHA)**

- Continuation of **PM-AASHA** schemes
- Convergence of **Price Support Scheme & Price Stabilization Fund** schemes
- Total outlay of **₹35,000** crore up to 2025-26*

NPS Vatsalya

Flexibility in NPS Vatsalya

Before Turning 18	After Turning 18
<p>Partial withdrawals before subscriber turns 18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 3 years of joining NPS • Up to 25% of contributed amount • Available 3 times till subscriber turns 18 • Partial withdrawals from NPS-Vatsalya are allowed for education, treatment of specified illnesses, or disability over 75%, as per PFRDA guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subscribers can continue their NPS account after turning 18. • The account is automatically converted into a regular All Citizen NPS Account. • A fresh KYC process must be completed within 3 months of the subscriber turning 18. • Subscribers have the option to exit NPS at any time, guidelines. <p>Withdrawal & Annuity Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of the accumulated corpus must be reinvested into an annuity plan. • 20% can be withdrawn as a lump sum.

Source: SBI

- ❖ NPS Vatsalya is a pension scheme focused on minors.



- ❖ It enables parents and guardians to contribute a minimum of rs 1,000 per year towards securing a child's financial future.
- ❖ When the minor reaches the age of 18, parents have the option to convert the account to a standard NPS account.

INTERNATIONAL

Elephant culling in Zimbabwe

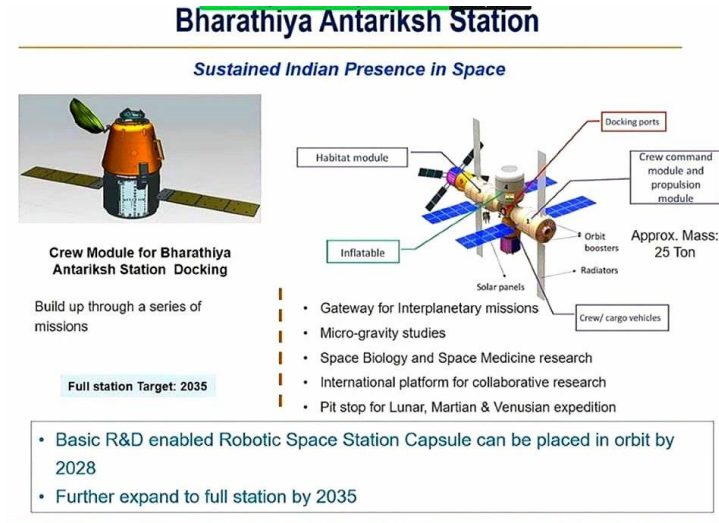


- ❖ Zimbabwe plans to cull 200 elephants to feed communities facing acute hunger after the worst drought in four decades.
- ❖ The El Niño-induced drought wiped out crops in southern Africa, impacting 68 million people and causing food shortages across the region.
- ❖ The cull, the first in the country since 1988, will take place in Hwange, Mbire, Tsholotsho and Chiredzi districts.
- ❖ It follows neighbouring Namibia's decision last month to cull 83 elephants and distribute meat to people impacted by the drought.
- ❖ More than 200,000 elephants are estimated to live in a conservation area spread over five southern African countries - Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Angola and Namibia.
- ❖ Zimbabwe is home to over 84,000 elephants.

- ❖ Zimbabwe has about \$600 million worth of ivory stockpiles that it cannot sell.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Bharatiya Anthariksh Station



- ❖ The union cabinet has approved the building of first unit of the Bharatiya Anatriksh Station by extending the scope of Gaganyaan program.
- ❖ India planned to create an operational Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035 and Indian Crewed Lunar Mission by 2040.
- ❖ The first module of the country's space station is to be called Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS-1).
- ❖ This is set to debut with its inaugural module in 2028.
- ❖ The ISS is operational since 2000 and was a collaborative effort between NASA, Roscosmos, ESA, JAXA, and CSA.
- ❖ China's Tiangong, meaning "Heavenly Palace," began its operations in June 2022.
- ❖ Russia plans to build its own station, the Russian Orbital Station (ROS).

REPORTS AND INDICES

Unlocking the power of healthy Longevity

- ❖ The World Bank released a new report titled "Unlocking the Power of Healthy Longevity: Demographic Change, Non-communicable Diseases and Human Capital".

- ❖ It highlights the potential for bold action in promoting healthy longevity to save 150 million lives and extend millions more by 2050.
- ❖ It addresses the rapid demographic changes, as one in three people will be over 60 by mid-century, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries.
- ❖ Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) already account for over 70% of deaths in these regions.
- ❖ The World Bank has set a target to provide better health services to 1.5 billion people by 2030.

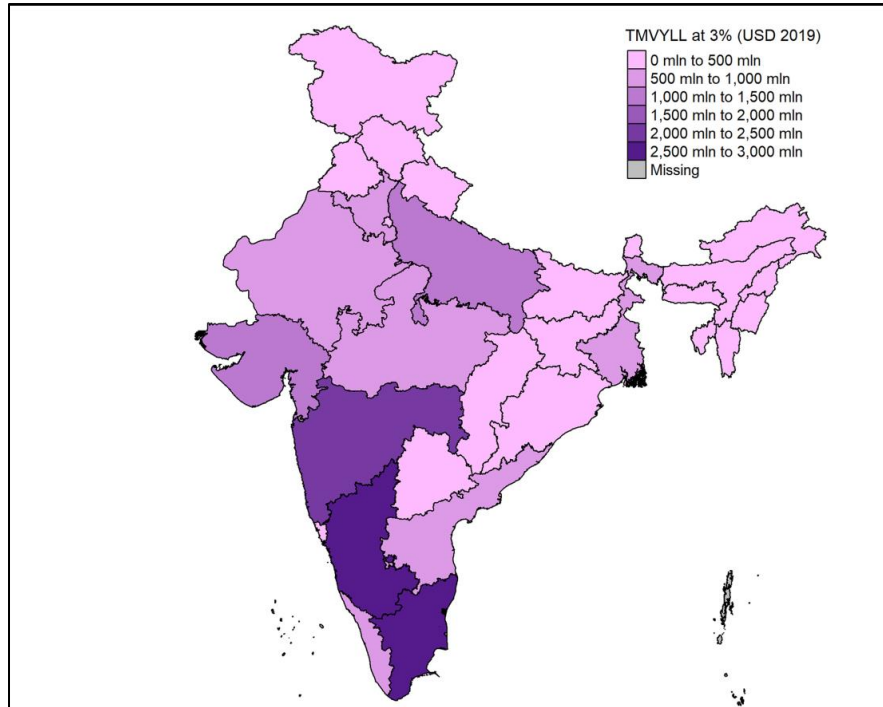


STATES

Suicide-related economic burden

- ❖ India loses some Rs 13.4 lakh crore (\$16 billion) due to suicides every year.
- ❖ Karnataka, with only 5 per cent of the country's population, has the heaviest economic burden from suicides, contributing over ₹2.33 lakh crore.
- ❖ The combined financial impact from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu (₹2.13 lakh crore) and Maharashtra (₹1.81 lakh crore) makes up nearly 45 per cent of the country's total suicide-related losses.
- ❖ Globally, nine out of every 100,000 people die by suicide each year.

- ❖ In India, the rate is alarmingly higher at 14 per 100,000.
- ❖ India has earned the unfortunate distinction of being known as the "suicide capital of the world".



Karma Festival or Karma Naach



- ❖ Tribal populations in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, and Odisha have celebrated the harvest festival of Karma or Karam Parv.

- ❖ The Karam tree has traditionally seen as a symbol of Karam Devta or Karamsani, the god of strength, youth, and vitality.
- ❖ The festival is popular especially among the Munda, Ho, Oraon, Baiga, Kharia, and Santhal peoples.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Equal Pay Day 2024 - September 18

- ❖ This day is dedicated to address the persistent pay disparity between the men and women.
- ❖ According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the women earn approximately 23% less than men globally.
- ❖ Globally, over 2.7 billion women are legally restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men.'
- ❖ The Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) is led by the ILO, UN Women, and OECD.
- ❖ The Coalition's goal is to achieve equal pay for women and men everywhere.

