



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas

Syllabus: GS1/History and Culture

News

- The Prime Minister, Modi has paid tributes to Bhagwan Birsa Munda on his birth anniversary.

Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas

- It is observed to honor the **birth anniversary** of the revered tribal freedom fighter, **Birsa Munda**.
- He was an Indian freedom fighter, religious leader and folk hero from the Munda Tribe of the **Chhota Nagpur Plateau area**.

Early Life of Birsa Munda

- He was born on **15th November 1875 in Ulihatu** of the erstwhile Bengal Presidency.
- He learned about Hindu religious teachings from a Vaishnav monk and studied ancient scriptures along with the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Birsait religion

- He founded a new religion called “Birsait“ and declared himself as God’s messenger. He believed in **One God**.
- People of **Munda and Oraon community** joined the sect and challenged British conversion activities of tribals.
- He was referred to as ‘**Dharti Abba or Father of Earth**’ by his followers.

Munda Rebellion

- It was the tribal movement led by Munda against the oppressions of the British Raj. It is also referred to as ‘**Ulgulan**’ or the ‘**Great Tumult**’.
- Munda used traditional symbols and language to rouse people and urged them to destroy the dikus.
 - **Dikus** was the name given to the outsiders like the British, moneylenders and traders.
- In **1900** he was arrested in **Jamkopai forest** and passed away in custody (due to cholera).
- **Outcomes:** The British government introduced the **Chotanagpur Tenancy Act** in **1908**, to prohibit the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals (Dikus).

Source: [PIB](#)

Myanmar Refugees Cross Over to Mizoram

Syllabus: **GS2/ International Relations**

Context

- Amid intense clashes between the Chin Defence Force guerrillas and the Myanmar military near the **Indo-Myanmar international border**, approximately 5,000 refugees have reportedly sought **refuge in northeast Indian state Mizoram’s Champhai area**.

Who is a Refugee?

- According to the **UNHCR**, A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence.
- A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.
- Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

How India Deals with Refugees?

- **No International Commitment: India is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol** and does not have a national refugee protection framework.
 - However, it continues to grant asylum to a large number of refugees from neighboring States and respects UNHCR’s mandate for other nationals, mainly from Afghanistan and Myanmar.
- **Legislations:** There is no distinction made between ‘**foreigners**’ and ‘**refugees**’ under Indian law. The Foreigners Act of 1946, Passport Act of 1967, Extradition Act of 1962, Citizenship Act of 1955 (amended in 2019) and the Illegal

Migrant (Determination by Tribunals) Act of 1983 are some of the laws applicable to both.

- Under these laws, foreigners can be detained and forcibly deported, even if they are refugees escaping their countries of origin in fear of death.
- **Administrative decision-making:** The regulation of refugees and asylum seekers in India is conducted on an ad-hoc basis through administrative decision-making.
- **The judicial response:** The Indian judiciary has been stepping up from time to time to safeguard refugees from deportation, expulsion and forced repatriation.
 - **The Constitution of India** safeguards the rights of all persons within its territorial jurisdiction, citizen or non-citizen, Indian courts have extended the scope of constitutional rights.
 - These rights include protection from discrimination and arbitrary action under Article 14 and the right to life and liberty under **Article 21.**

Why Hasn't India Framed a Law on Refugees Yet?

- **Refugees vs Immigrants:** In recent times, a notable trend has emerged where individuals from neighboring countries engage in illegal immigration to India.
 - Unlike seeking refuge from state persecution, many migrants are driven by the pursuit of enhanced economic opportunities within India. Despite the distinction between refugees and immigrants, the prevalent debate often amalgamates these two categories.
- **Potential for Misuse of Legislation:** There is a concern that any legislation addressing this issue could be misused by anti-national elements, terrorists, and criminals. Also, implementation of such laws might pose a financial burden on the country.
- **Flexibility in decision making :** The absence of dedicated legislation in India provides flexibility in dealing with refugee-related issues. The government can categorize any group of refugees as illegal immigrants, as exemplified in the handling of Rohingya despite UNHCR verification

Why is there a Need for a law on Refugees?

- **Long-term Solution:** In response to the recurring influx of refugees, India must transition from a charitable approach to a rights-based one. The enactment of a national refugee law is imperative for a sustainable and comprehensive solution.
- **Balancing Security and Human Rights:** The implementation of a national refugee law has the potential to address India's security concerns. Simultaneously, it can prevent any unwarranted detention or deportation under the pretext of national security, striking a balance between security imperatives and human rights.
- **Consistent Treatment of Refugees:** Despite a significant refugee population from Sri Lanka, Tibet, Myanmar, and Afghanistan, there exists inconsistency in the government's recognition. Notably, only Tibetan and Sri Lankan refugees receive official recognition, benefiting from specific government policies and rules designed for their protection and assistance.

Way Forward

- **Preventing Persecution Through Legislation:** The absence of domestic legislation on refugees in India leaves room for oppressive governments in the region to persecute their populations without consequence.
 - Enacting such legislation could serve as a deterrent, discouraging neighboring governments from engaging in actions that force people to flee to India.
- **Protection of Vulnerable Groups:** Emphasizing the need for protection, especially for women and child refugees, against violence and harassment by authorities or local residents.

Source: [TH](#)

Electric Battery

Syllabus:GS3/Science and Technology

Context

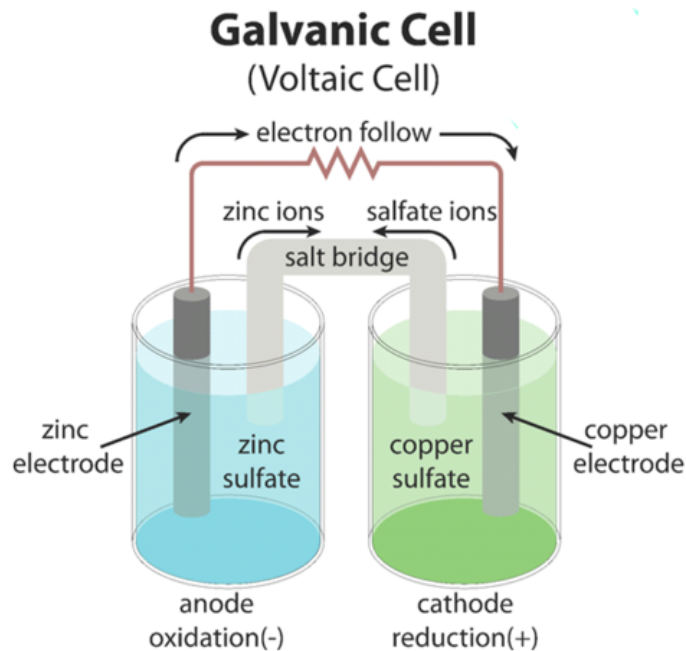
- The significance of electric batteries has increased with the penetration of motorisation and wirelessness in our lives.

What is an electric battery?

- A battery is a device that converts chemical energy contained within its active materials directly into electric energy by means of an electrochemical **oxidation-reduction (redox) reaction**.
- In a battery the cell is the actual electrochemical unit used to generate or store electric energy. These cells are connected in series, or parallel, or both, depending on the desired output voltage and capacity.

How does a Cell produce electricity?

- A voltaic, or galvanic, cell uses redox reactions to produce an electric current. The cell consists of two half-cells. Each half-cell is made of a metal electrode immersed in an electrolyte of that metal – a **zinc electrode** (anode) in zinc sulphate and a **copper electrode** (cathode) in copper sulphate.
- The two metal electrodes are connected by a wire. The two tubs of electrolyte are connected by a **salt bridge** (a material that conducts ions while remaining electrically neutral).
- **The cathode** is the positively charged electrode, the one to which electrons arrive. **The anode** is the negatively charged electrode, which ‘supplies’ electrons.
- The energy imparted to the electrons by the half-cells is called the source voltage. The higher the source voltage, the greater the cell’s electrochemical potential.



Lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery

- The battery consists of a **voltaic as well as an electrolytic cell**. A voltaic cell converts chemical energy to electrical energy. An electrolytic cell converts electrical energy to chemical energy. A battery that can do both is thus rechargeable.
- These batteries can be used in electric vehicles and smartphones. In smartphones a lithium metal oxide is the cathode and graphite is the anode. The electrolyte is a semisolid polymer gel. Microporous polyethylene is used to separate the two half-cells.

Hydrogen Fuel cells

- Hydrogen fuel cells produce electricity by combining **hydrogen and oxygen** atoms.
- At the anode, a catalyst separates hydrogen into protons and electrons. The electrons flow through an external circuit and the protons through the electrolyte – both to the cathode. At the cathode, the particles react with oxygen from the air to create heat and water.

Source: [TH](#)

India exempted from CITES RST on Red Sanders

Syllabus: GS3/ Conservation

In News

- India has been removed from the CITES's Review of Significant Trade (RST) for Red Sanders.

CITES RST

- The Review of Significant Trade (RST) Management System works on those cases within CITES where there is concern that trade could be affecting the viability of a specific species from a specific country.
- The CITES RST process enables disciplinary action in the form of trade suspensions directed at countries that do not meet their obligations.

Why was India exempted from CITES RST?

- India has been under the Review of Significant Trade (RST) process for **Red Sanders since 2004**.
- The exemption is attributed to the 2022 amendment to the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, aligning** with CITES provisions under the CITES National Legislation Programme (NLP).
- India has now been exempted, allowing farmers in India to participate in the legitimate trade of Red Sanders.

Red Sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*)

- Red Sanders is a **flora-species** that is endemic to the tropical dry deciduous forest in **Eastern Ghats** region of Andhra Pradesh.
- It is locally known as **Yerra Chandanam, Rakta Chandanam**.
- It is a **very slow-growing tree species** that attains **maturity after 25 – 40 years**.
- It is **fire-hardy and resistant to droughts**.
- It is under '**endangered list**' in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
- Listed under **Schedule IV of The Wildlife Protection Act**.

CITES

- **About:**
 - CITES is an international agreement to which States and regional economic integration organisations adhere voluntarily.
 - States that have agreed to be bound by the Convention ('joined' CITES) are known as Parties.
 - Although CITES is **legally binding** on the Parties – in other words they have to implement the Convention – it does not take the place of national laws.
- **Permit System:**
 - All import, export and re-export of species covered under CITES must be authorised through a permit system.
- **Appendix:**
 - CITES **Appendix I** lists species threatened with extinction – import or export permits for these are issued rarely and only if the purpose is not primarily commercial.

- CITES **Appendix II** includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction but in which trade must be strictly regulated.
- Every two years, the Conference of the Parties (CoP), the supreme decision-making body of CITES, applies a set of biological and trade criteria to evaluate proposals from parties to decide if a species should be in Appendix I or II.

Source: [BS](#)

Facts In News

AAINA Dashboard for Cities' Portal

Syllabus: GS2/ Government policies & interventions

In News

- The '**AAINA Dashboard for Cities' portal** has been made live by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

About

- Through this portal, **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** across the country can participate in this pioneering initiative to voluntarily submit their key data on a regular basis, through a simple, easy-to-fill, data entry form on the portal.
- The primary objectives of the AAINA Dashboard are to help cities to (i) see how they are faring vis-à-vis other cities, (ii) inspire them by pointing to possibilities and areas of improvement and (iii) providing opportunity to learn and engage with frontrunners.
 - The dashboard for cities **does not rank Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)**.
- The ULBs will submit their data, including audited accounts, and self-reported performance metrics by logging in to the dashboard's portal.

Information Collection on Five Thematic Areas



Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

- In India, local governments in cities are established in accordance with the **74th Amendment Act**, which creates the ground for **democratic decentralisation in urban areas**.
- The Amendment gives state legislatures the authority to enact levies that support local government budgets.
- This institutional framework comprises **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** that administer cities or towns with a specified population.
- **Types:** Municipal corporations, municipalities, notified area committees, and town area committees are some types of urban local bodies.
- **Functions:** These local bodies are entrusted with functions related to welfare, public health and safety, infrastructural works, and other activities related to city development.

Source: [PIB](#)

Sustainable Urban Development and Service Delivery Programme

Syllabus: GS 3/Economy

In News

- The Government of India signed a 400 million dollar policy-based loan with **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** to support its urban reform agenda under **sub-programme 2** of the **Sustainable Urban Development and Service Delivery Programme**.

About the programme

- **Sub-programme 1** approved in **2021** with a financing of USD 350 million established national-level policies and guidelines to improve urban services.
- **Sub-programme 2** supports investment planning and reform actions at the **state and urban local body (ULB) levels**.
 - It is aimed at making cities livable and centres of economic growth through the provisioning of inclusive, resilient and sustainable infrastructure.

Features

- Sub-programme 2 supports the reforms initiated by states and ULBs in operationalising the national flagship programme of **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0** targeted for universal access to water supply and sanitation.
- It also **supports other mission objectives** for ensuring urban water security through reducing water losses, recycling treated sewage for non-domestic use, rejuvenation of water bodies, and maintaining sustainable groundwater levels
- It also envisages **integrated urban planning reforms** to control urban sprawls and foster systemic and planned urbanisation through enhancing the

entire ecosystem of legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms, along with capacity building of ULBs and community awareness, it said.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- **About:**
 - It is a regional development bank established on 19th December 1966. The ADB was modelled closely on the World Bank.
- **Aim:**
 - To promote social and economic development in Asia. It is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.
 - ADB assists its members, and partners, by providing loans, technical assistance, grants, and equity investments to promote social and economic development.
- **Headquarter:** Manila, Philippines.
- **Members:** 68 members, 49 from within Asia.
 - Japan holds the largest proportion of shares in ADB followed by the USA, because Japan is one of the largest shareholders of the bank, the president has always been Japanese.
 - ADB is an official United Nations Observer.

Source: [News on air](#)

India-OPEC Energy Dialogue

Syllabus :GS 2/IR/GS3/Economy

In News

- The 6th High-Level Meeting of the **India-OPEC Energy Dialogue** took place at the OPEC Secretariat in Vienna, Austria

About Dialogue

- It focussed on key issues related to oil and energy markets, with a specific emphasis on **ensuring availability, affordability and sustainability**, which are necessary in ensuring the stability of energy markets.
- It aims to address the evolving dynamics of the energy landscape and promote shared interests between India and OPEC.
- It concluded with a mutual commitment to fostering enhanced cooperation, with plans for the next meeting scheduled for 2024 in India.

About OPEC

- The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, intergovernmental Organization, created at the **Baghdad Conference** on September 10–14, 1960, by **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela**.
- **OPEC had its headquarters in Geneva**, Switzerland, in the first five years of its existence.

- This was moved to Vienna, Austria, on September 1, 1965.
- **Members :** The five Founding Members were later joined by: Qatar (1961) – terminated its membership in January 2019; Indonesia (1962) – suspended its membership in January 2009, reactivated it in January 2016, but decided to suspend it again in November 2016; Libya (1962); United Arab Emirates (1967); Algeria (1969); Nigeria (1971); Ecuador (1973) – suspended its membership in December 1992, reactivated it in October 2007, but decided to withdraw its membership effective 1 January 2020; Angola (2007); Gabon (1975) - terminated its membership in January 1995 but rejoined in July 2016; Equatorial Guinea (2017); and Congo (2018).
- **Objectives:** OPEC's objective is to co-ordinate and unify petroleum policies among Member Countries, in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers; an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consuming nations; and a fair return on capital to those investing in the industry.
- **Importance :** It has 79.5% of the world's proven oil reserves, producing 39.7% of global oil production.
 - India is the world's 3rd largest importer of crude oil behind only the United States and China.
 - India's imports from OPEC countries constitute 60% of total crude imports.
 - The relationship between India and OPEC will be pivotal in the years to come, as the world seeks to foster global energy security, deliver energy affordability and reduce emissions,

Source:[TH](#)

Picocystis Salinarum

Syllabus:GS3/Species in News

News

- Recently the molecular mechanism of the species surviving in extreme conditions have been decoded.

About

- Picocystis salinarum is a globally widespread **picoplanktonic green alga** of saline lakes.
- It is a unique organism which survives the hypersaline alkaline environments by enhancing photosynthesis and ATP synthesis along with chaperone proteins.
- **Significance:** P. salinarum can be used for biotechnological applications and as a model organism for deciphering the molecular mechanisms of osmotic adaptation.

Source:[PIB](#)