DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Time: 45 min   **Date: 01-11-2023**

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Inaction of Governor Over the Bills

Syllabus: GS2/Indian Polity

In News

- **The Tamil Nadu Government** has filed a petition in the Supreme Court against Governor R N Ravi over the alleged **delay in clearing bills.**
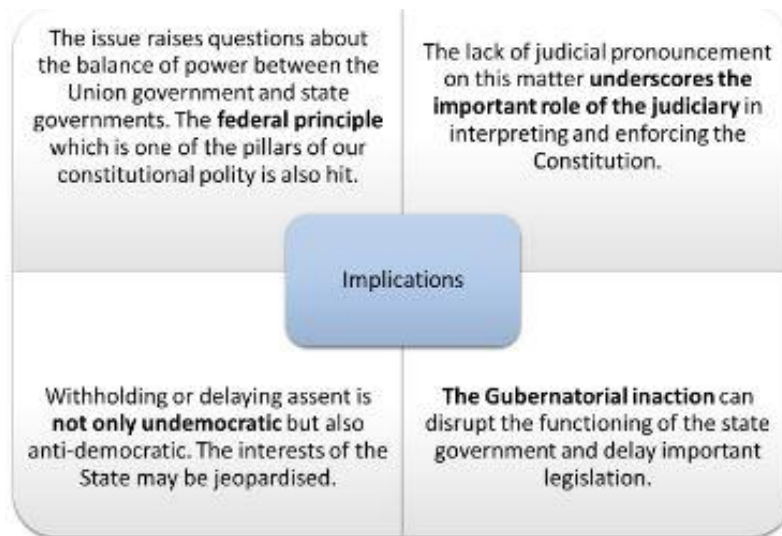
About

- The present Writ Petition is being filed under **Article 32 of the Constitution** of India, to declare that the inaction, omission, delay and failure to comply with the constitutional mandate by the Governor.
- The petition seeks a **direction to the Governor** to clear Bills and files and Government orders within a specified timeframe.

Related Constitutional Provisions

- Under **Article 200,** the Governor may grant assent, withhold assent, return for reconsideration by the Legislature or reserve for the consideration of the President any Bill passed by the State legislature.
- There is **no time frame fixed** in the Constitution for any of these functions.
- Governor may, as soon as possible return the Bill if it is not a Money Bill and, when a Bill is so returned, the House shall reconsider the Bill accordingly, and if the Bill is passed again by the House with or without amendment the Governor **shall not withhold assent therefrom.**
- The Constitution makes it mandatory that the Governor should **reserve for the President's consideration** any Bill that seems to clip the wings of the High Court or undermine its functioning.
  - Such a bill will not become a law **without the President's assent.**

Critical Analysis

- **Omission from the Constitution:** Section 75 of the Government of India Act, 1935, contained the words **'in his discretion'** while referring to the Governor's grant of assent to Bills. The phrase was **consciously omitted** when the Constitution was enacted.
- **Views of Framers of the Constitution:** The Constituent Assembly was of the opinion that the states were indeed sovereign within their own domain, that the discretionary power, beyond the specific situations mentioned in the constitution, **does not enable a governor to override the state government.**
- **Against Public Interest:** A Bill is brought by the government when there is an **urgent need** for a law on a particular matter. So, if the governor does not take any action on it as per the constitution, **he is actually harming the public interest.**
- **Against the Spirit of Constitution:** Since not taking any decision indefinitely is **not an option provided by the constitution,** governors who do this are clearly acting in a manner that is not constitutionally sanctioned.
- **SC Verdict:** In **Shamsher Singh v State of Punjab (1974)** Supreme Court held that the **governor does not enjoy any executive powers** and that he can act only on the aid and advice of the council of ministers. In reality, executive powers are vested in the **elected government,** which is responsible to the legislature.
- **Act in accordance with Council of Ministers:** During the debate in the constituent assembly on the post of governor, Dr B.R. Ambedkar had clearly stated that the governor has no powers in our constitutional setup and needs to **act only in accordance with the advice given by the council of ministers in the state.**

The issue raises questions about the balance of power between the Union government and state governments. The **federal principle** which is one of the pillars of our constitutional polity is also hit.

The lack of judicial pronouncement on this matter **underscores the important role of the judiciary** in interpreting and enforcing the Constitution.

Implications

Withholding or delaying assent is **not only undemocratic** but also anti-democratic. The interests of the State may be jeopardised.

The Gubernatorial inaction can disrupt the functioning of the state government and delay important legislation.

Conclusion
- The constitution empowers the governor to reserve a bill for the President's consideration. This is an **important 'discretionary power'** which is necessary for the governor to make sure that state's laws fall within the framework of the constitution.
- There cannot be a **parallel administration within the state** by allowing the governor to go against the advice of the council of ministers.
- There is no doubt that these ought to be changed, either by amending the Constitution or through an appropriate Supreme Court verdict, so that misuse of gubernatorial discretion can be kept in check.

Source: TH

Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link

Syllabus: GS2/International Relations; GS3/Infrastructure
Context:
- The Prime Minister of India and Bangladesh virtually inaugurated the *'Akhaura-Agartala rail link'* and *'Khulna–Mongla Port rail line'*.

Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link:
- It is a significant cross-border project between India and Bangladesh, that connects Agartala in Tripura and Akhaura in Bangladesh.
- The project was **revived in 2010** and **sanctioned in 2012-13**, and scheduled to be completed by December 2020 but was **delayed due to land acquisition issues and the Covid-19 pandemic**.

- The rail link is 12.24 km long, with a 6.78 km dual gauge rail line in Bangladesh and 5.46 km in Tripura.

> **Akhaura:**
> - It is located in Brahmanbaria district, a part of the **Chittagong division of Bangladesh**.
> - It has a rich history of commercial and cultural ties with India's northeastern region, **dating from the colonial era**.
> - One of the main drivers behind the initial construction of the Akhaura junction in the late 19th century was the demand from **Assam's tea industry**, which **wanted a connection to the Chittagong port.**
> - It is connected by rail, river, and road links with multiple industrial areas in Bangladesh, including Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet.

- **Funding:** The Project is implemented with **complete financial and technical assistance from the Government of India** based on the **Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model**.
- It is expected to enhance business ties between the two nations and provide direct access between the landlocked northeastern part of India with the Chittagong port of Bangladesh.

Khulna−Mongla Port Rail Line:

- It is a broad-gauge railway line, aimed to connect the country with Mongla Port.
- The project was part of the **first Line of Credit from India** with a total project cost of $388.92 million **to Bangladesh in 2010.**
- **Mongla** is the **second largest port of Bangladesh** and the new line will increase the port's connectivity by linking it to the existing rail network of Khulna.

Significance:
- It **reduces the travel time** between Agartala and Kolkata via Dhaka from 38 hours to roughly 10 hours, and also enables goods trains to reach the northeastern region via Bangladesh at a much **lesser transportation cost**.
- It connects Tripura, Mizoram and southern Assam to Kolkata through Bangladesh, **to replace the longer route via Guwahati.**
- The project will facilitate **smooth cargo movement** between the Chattogram and Mongla ports in Bangladesh and various states in India.
- **Trade gains:** It aims to boost **India-Bangladesh trade** in *agriculture products, tea, sugar, construction items, iron and steel, and consumer items*, as well as ***people-to-people relationships***.

India - Bangladesh Relations
- India and Bangladesh share bonds of history, language, culture, and a multitude of other commonalities.
- The bilateral ties reflect an all-encompassing partnership based on sovereignty, equality, trust, and understanding that goes far beyond a strategic partnership.
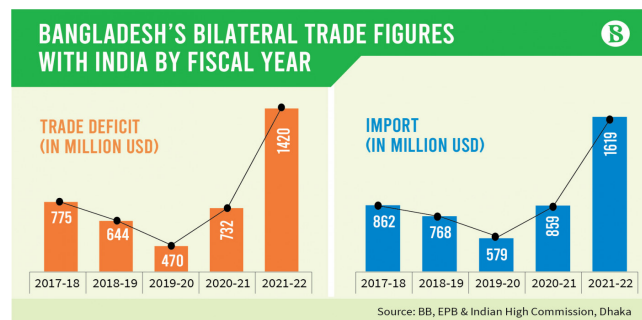
Political:
- India was one of the first countries to recognize Bangladesh and establish diplomatic relations immediately after its independence in December 1971.
- **Common Platforms:** Internationally both the nations share the following platforms: *SAARC, BIMSTEC, Indian Ocean Coastal Regional Cooperation Association, and Commonwealth.*

Trade and Investment:
- **Bangladesh is India's biggest trading partner** in the subcontinent and India is the second biggest export partner accounting for 12% of the total exports to Bangladesh.
  - The total trade turnover in FY23 touched US$ 14.22 billion.

BANGLADESH'S BILATERAL TRADE FIGURES WITH INDIA BY FISCAL YEAR

TRADE DEFICIT (IN MILLION USD): 775 (2017-18), 644 (2018-19), 470 (2019-20), 732 (2020-21), 1420 (2021-22)

IMPORT (IN MILLION USD): 862 (2017-18), 768 (2018-19), 579 (2019-20), 859 (2020-21), 1619 (2021-22)

Source: BB, EPB & Indian High Commission, Dhaka

Defence Cooperation:
- **High level exchanges** at the level of services chief of Indian Navy, Bangladesh Navy and Indian Air Force, and service specific talks of Navy and Air Force.
- **Various Joint exercises** take place between the two countries, like **Exercise Sampriti (Army) and Exercise Milan (Navy)**.

Multimodal Connectivity:
- The passenger trains between India and Bangladesh are **Bandhan Express** starting from Kolkata for Khulna, **Maitree Express** from Dhaka for Kolkata, **Mitali Express** from New Jalpaiguri in North Bengal to Dhaka.

Capacity Building and Human Resource Development:
- India has been training several **Bangladesh Civil Service officials** from 2019 at **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG), Mussoorie**.
- The **Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) in Dhaka** plays an important role in the celebration of **common cultural links** between the two countries, and promotes people-to-people contacts.

Conclusion:

- The multi-dimensional cooperation between the two countries ranges from traditional tourism, health, and education sectors to frontier technologies of nuclear science, space, and information technology.
- The two countries are looking forward to collaborating in new areas of cooperation, such as the environment, climate change, cyber security, ICT, space technology, green energy, and the blue economy.

The Stance of the Maldives President-elect on India

Syllabus: GS2/International Relations
Context:
- The President-elect of Maldives has emphasised his desire to send Indian troops out of the country.

About:
- **Mohamed Muizzu, the President-elect of Maldives**, desires an imminent shift in the nation's geo-political stance, especially concerning the island's **relationships with China and India**, and he has openly committed to removing foreign troops from the Maldives, primarily from India.
- His stance stems from the **main opposition bloc's 'India Out' campaign**, mounted against **outgoing President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, for his foreign policy of 'India first'**.

Reasons for ousting Indian military presence:
- **Pledge of President-elect and 'India Out' Campaign:** The President elect pledged to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of Maldives and **'India Out' campaign**, mounted against outgoing President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, for his foreign policy of 'India first'.
- **Public Sentiment:** The growing hegemonic practices of India combined with the **Indian imperialism** and subsequent military in the Indian ocean has created **public resentment against India**.
- **Pro-China Stance:** While Mr. Muizzu maintains that he is **'Pro-Maldives'** first, and that he will not allow Indian, Chinese, or any other country's military presence in the Indian Ocean archipelago, he has on many occasions sought to highlight the benefits of Chinese assistance to the Maldives, without commenting on **Male's debt obligations, including to China**.
- **Geopolitical rivalry:** Most of the international media framed the Maldives elections as a referendum on India and China. It is more of a geopolitical rivalry **than on any other domestic issue.**

Is there Indian military presence?

- According to the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF), 75 Indian military personnel stay in the Maldives to maintain and operate the Dornier aircraft and two helicopters gifted to the Maldives by the Government of India.
  - The Dornier aircraft was presented to the Maldives in 2020, following a request from Male.
  - The choppers and the aircraft are used for a range of functions such as medical evacuation, search and rescue operations, training, surveillance, and patrol.

Can Maldives handle the military question?
- The Maldives is facing a major economic challenge, as it prepares to pay about $570 million annually in 2024 and 2025 to service external debt.
- According to the **World Bank**, Maldives have to service **a record $1.07 billion in external debt in 2026.**
- It is **challenging** to mitigate the looming debt crisis **without the cooperation of India and China**, the Maldives's main lenders and development partners.
  - Both India and China have given the Maldives hundreds of millions of dollars in the form of loans and grants for infrastructure and development projects.

India – Maldives Relations
Historical:
- India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links, and India was among the first to recognize the Maldives after its independence in 1965 and later established its mission at Male in 1972.

Political Relations:
- Both nations are **founding members** of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the South Asian Economic Union and signatories to the South Asia Free Trade Agreement.
- They have consistently supported each other in multilateral areas such as the UN, the Commonwealth, the NAM, and the SAARC.

Strategic Importance:
- The Maldives holds strategic importance for India under **India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy** due to its location in the Indian Ocean.
- The Maldives is vital and critical for **Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs)** for maritime trade flow between the Gulf of Aden and Gulf of Hormuz in West Asia and the Strait of Malacca in Southeast Asia.

Trade and Economy:
- India and Maldives signed **a trade agreement in 1981**, which provides for the export of essential commodities.

- Under the bilateral agreement, India provides essential food items like rice, wheat flour, sugar, dal, onion, potato and eggs and construction material such as sand and stone aggregates to the Maldives on favourable terms.
- **India has a positive Balance of Trade with the Maldives.**

Development Assistance Programme:
- The **Memorandums of Understanding (MoU)** signed between both the countries covers areas such as *hydrography, health, passenger and cargo services by sea, capacity building in customs and civil service training* etc.

India's crucial help to the Maldives:
- **Operation Cactus:** It was an attempt to overthrow the government in the island republic of Maldives on 3rd November 1988.
    - The coup failed due to the intervention of the Indian Army, whose military operations efforts were code-named Operation Cactus.
- **Operation Neer:** It was initiated by the Indian government to help the Maldives after a major fire broke out at the Male Water and Sewerage Company.

Diaspora:
- There are 25,000 Indian nationals living in the Maldives (the second largest expatriate community).
    - Maldives is a preferred destination for Indians for **tourism and business**.
    - India is a preferred destination for Maldivians for **education, medical treatment, recreation, and business**.

Defence:
- **White Shipping Information** between the Indian Navy and the Maldives National Defence Force enables the exchange of prior information on the movement of commercial, non-military vessels.
- **Ekuverin** is a joint military exercise between India and Maldives.
- Maldives is a member of the **'Colombo Security Conclave',** which began as a trilateral initiative with **India and Sri Lanka**, and later **included Mauritius,** for maritime cooperation in the region.

Pivot role in the SAGAR Initiative of India:
- The Maldives is key to India's ambition to become a regional maritime security provider.
- Anti-Piracy and Anti-Terror operations can also be carried out with Maldives' help.

Way Forward:

- While India-Maldives relations have always been close, cordial and multi-dimensional, recent regime instability in the Maldives has posed some limitations.
- China, with its rapidly expanding naval forces, would want access to such a strategically important location - something India wants to prevent. Beijing is also keen to protect its energy supplies from the Gulf which pass through that route.
- In accordance with the 'Neighbourhood First' policy of the government, India remains a committed development partner for a stable, prosperous and peaceful Maldives.

Source: TH

Parliamentary Committees

Syllabus: GS2/Indian Polity
In News
- **The Lok Sabha Ethics Committee** is probing the complaint against the All India Trinamool Congress Member of Parliament (MP) Mahua Moitra in **'Cash-for-Query' case.**

About Lok Sabha Ethics Committee
- **Establishment:** The Speaker constituted an **ad hoc Ethics Committee in 2000,** which became a permanent part of the House only in **2015.**
- **Members:** It consists of **15 members** appointed by the **speaker** for a period of **one year.**
- **Functioning:** Any individual can file a complaint against a Member of Parliament (MP) by going through another Lok Sabha MP.
  - This complaint should include supporting evidence of the alleged misconduct and an affidavit confirming that the complaint is not "false, frivolous, or vexatious."
  - The Committee submits its report to the Speaker, who then seeks the House's opinion on whether the report should be deliberated.

Parliamentary Committee
- A Parliamentary Committee is a **panel of MPs** that is appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the Speaker, and which works under the **direction of the Speaker**.
- Parliamentary Committees have their **origins in the British Parliament.** They draw their authority from **Article 105,** which deals with the privileges of MPs, and **Article 118,** which gives Parliament authority to make rules to regulate its procedure and conduct of business.
- They present their report to the House or to the Speaker.

- Bills that are referred to committees are returned to the House with significant value addition.
- Parliament is not bound by the recommendations of committees.

Types of Parliamentary Committees

- Broadly, Parliamentary Committees can be classified into **Financial Committees, Departmentally Related Standing Committees, Other Parliamentary Standing Committees, and Ad hoc Committees.**
- **The Financial Committees** include the Estimates Committee, Public Accounts Committee, and the Committee on Public Undertakings. These committees were constituted in **1950.**
- **Seventeen Departmentally Related Standing Committees** came into being in **1993**, to examine budgetary proposals and crucial government policies. The number of Committees was subsequently increased.
- **Ad hoc Committees:** They are appointed for a **specific purpose** and they cease to exist when they finish the task assigned to them and submit a report.
- Parliament can also constitute a **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** with a special purpose, with members from both Houses, for detailed scrutiny of a subject or Bill.
- There are **other Standing Committees** for each House, such as the Business Advisory Committee and the Privileges Committee.

Significance

- Parliamentary Committees act as a mechanism that helps in improving the **effectiveness of Parliament.**
- They also examine petitions from the public, check whether rules framed by the government are in consonance with Acts of Parliament, and **help manage the administration of Parliament.**
- Their ability to devote more time on each item allows them to **examine matters in greater detail.**
- They also help parties **reach consensus on various issues.**

Source: TH

Deep Ocean Mission

Syllabus:GS3/Science and Technology

News

- For the first time, India will embark on a journey to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean using an indigenously developed submersible under the **Deep Ocean Mission (DOM).**

Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)

- DOM is implemented by the **Ministry Of Earth Sciences (MoES)** and was approved in 2021 at a cost of nearly **Rs 4,077 crore** over a five-year period in a phased manner. The mission has six pillars:
    - Development of technologies for deep-sea mining and a manned submersible to carry three people to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean;
    - Development of ocean climate change advisory services, involving an array of ocean observations and models to understand and provide future climate projections;
    - Technological innovations for the exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity;
    - Deep-ocean survey and exploration aimed at identifying potential sites of multi-metal hydrothermal sulphides mineralisation along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges;
    - Harnessing energy and freshwater from the ocean; and
    - Establishing an advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology, as a hub for nurturing talent and driving new opportunities in ocean biology and blue biotechnology.

Samudrayaan Mission

- As a part of DOM, India's flagship deep ocean mission, 'Samudrayaan', was initiated in 2021 by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences.**
- With 'Samudrayaan', India is embarking on a crewed expedition to reach a depth of 6,000 m to the ocean bed in the central Indian Ocean. This journey will be accomplished by Matsya6000, a deep-ocean submersible.

Matsya6000

- The Matsya6000 is India's flagship deep-ocean human submersible that aims to reach the ocean bed at a depth of 6,000 m.
- Accompanied by three crew members, called "aquanauts", the submersible carries a suite of scientific tools and equipment designed to facilitate observations, sample collection, basic video and audio recording, and experimentation.

Features of Matsya6000

- Matsya6000 combines the best and most feasible features of **remote operated vehicles (ROVs)** and **autonomous remote vehicles (AUVs).**
- The interior of Matsya6000 is designed to accommodate three humans travelling within a specialised sphere with a diameter of 2.1 m.
- Constructed from a **titanium alloy**, the sphere is engineered to withstand pressures of up to **6,000 bar**.
- It can move at a speed of about **5.5 km/hr** using underwater thrusters.

Significance

- The '**New India 2030**' document outlines the blue economy as the sixth core objective for India's growth. The years 2021-2030 have been designated by the United Nations as the '**Decade of Ocean Science'.**
- DOM is one of nine missions under the **Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PMSTIAC).**
- The mission is significant for the **sustainable extraction of valuable resources, including polymetallic nodules and polymetallic sulphides**.

Challenges
- **High pressure in the deep oceans:** Operating under such high-pressure conditions requires the use of meticulously designed equipment crafted from durable metals or materials.
- Landing on the ocean bed also presents challenges due to its incredibly **soft and muddy surface.**
- **A large amount of power and energy** is required to extract minerals to the surface.
- **Poor Visibility** poses a significant hurdle as natural light can penetrate only a few tens of meters beneath the surface,
- All these intricate challenges are further compounded by factors like variations in temperature, corrosion, salinity, etc.

Source:[TH](TH)

Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) 2023

Syllabus:GS2/Governance
News
- The Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, a non-profit institution has published a report, Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) 2023.

About
- The report presents the data regarding **Urban development in India**, Systemic nature of **India's urban challenges** and the **instruments of change** needed.
- These instruments include constitutional amendments to empower cities, metropolitan governance, empowered mayor-in-council, participatory governance, digital public finance management, municipal reforms, spatial development plans etc.

India's urban transitions
- According to **Census 2011**, **31%** of the population of India lives in urban areas. This includes **318 million people** in 4,041 statutory towns and 54 million in 3,892 census towns.

- **Statutory towns** are settlements defined by municipal legislations of respective states as urban such as municipal corporations, municipalities and town panchayats. **Census towns** are settlements identified as urban by the Census of India.

Financial Constraints
- The survey shows that a majority of local governments are **financially dependent on their State governments.** They also have limited control over who to hire and how to distribute work.
- The report found that only Assam empowers its city governments to collect all key taxes. Except five States — Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Meghalaya, and Rajasthan — all the others have to get approval from the State before borrowing money.

Asymmetry of power across cities
- The report shows that megacities have more of a say over their finances, but their mayors do not have a five-year tenure and are not directly elected.
- On the other hand, more mayors in smaller cities have a five-year tenure and are directly elected, but lack a say on the city's finances.

Limited power over staff appointment
- The report also shows that mayors and councils have limited power in staff appointments and promotions. Only a handful of States have empowered their city governments to appoint municipal commissioners. In fact, no city has complete power over its staff.
- Cities especially lack control over their senior management teams who are deputed directly by State governments, which makes it tough to initiate disciplinary proceedings against them if needed.

Lack of transparency
- There is a lack of transparency in publishing cities' civic information which citizens can access easily. **Only 11 of the 35 States/Union Territories** have enacted the Public Disclosure Law that mandates publishing of key civic data.
- Only **28%** of cities disseminate their annual audited financial statements and no city publishes a quarterly financial audited statement.

Staff Shortage
- The local governments suffer from high levels of unfilled posts. Data show that **35% of posts** in India's municipal corporations are vacant.
- The vacancy progressively worsens with **41% posts** being vacant among municipalities and **58% being** vacant in town panchayats.

Comparison to Global Cities
- There are 5,906 city workers in New York and 2,936 in London for every one lakh population compared to just 317 in Bengaluru, 586 in Hyderabad, and 938 in Mumbai.

- Cities such as New York have also been empowered to impose taxes, approve their own budget, invest and borrow without approval.

Source:TH

Facts in News

Rajyotsava Award

Syllabus :Miscellaneous

In News
- ISRO Chairman S. Somanath, golfer Aditi Ashok, and retired Supreme Court judge V. Gopala Gowda are among the 68 people and 10 organisations selected for the **Rajyotsava Award - 2023** by the Karnataka government for their contributions in different fields.

About Rajyotsava Award
- The Rajyotsava Award is the **state's second-highest civilian award** given by the Karnataka government annually TO including prominent writers, social workers and others.
- The 68th Karnataka Rajyotsava Awards will be conferred on the occasion of the **state's formation day on November 1 .**
  - This year is the golden jubilee of renaming Mysore state as Karnataka.
- The Chief Minister is the head of the Award committee, who has selected the winners.
- The Rajyotsava Awardee will get cash rewards of Rs 5 lakh, a 25-gram gold medal and a plaque.

> **Do you know ?**
> - All Kannada-speaking regions outside the **Mysore Princely State** were unified into one **State on November 1, 1956.**
> - It was propelled by the Karnataka Ekikarana movement and decades of protests.
>   - This newly-banded State was named **Mysore**.
> - It was only 17 years later — after impassioned campaigning from legislators, writers and activists — that a resolution was enacted by the Parliament on August 21, 1973, to rename the State through the Mysore State (Alteration of Name) Act, 1973.
> - Thus, November 1, 1973, the Mysore State became Karnataka.

Rohini Nayyar Prize 2023

Syllabus: Awards
In News
- Deenanath Rajput from Bastar has won the **Rohini Nayyar Prize** for his outstanding work in improving the lives of tribal women in Chhattisgarh.

Rohini Nayyar Prize
- Given Annually to recognise an individual's outstanding contribution to rural development in civil society, government, enterprise or academia.
- **Award**: Cash prize of ₹10 lakh, a trophy, and a citation.
- Established in 2021 in the memory of an economist and administrator named Rohini Nayyar.
- 2023 award is the second edition of the award.

Deenanath Rajput Work
- Improved the lives of over 6,000 tribal women in Chhattisgarh by establishing a **Farmers Producers Organization (FPO).**
- Started the FPO with 337 women members from Bastar, over the time FPO has grown to more than 6,000 members in four different districts.
- It supports women farmers by offering agricultural guidance, creating cold storage facilities, connecting them to national and international markets for their products, and helping them expand into higher-value products and services.

Source: TH

Light Combat Helicopter Prachand

Syllabus: GS3/ Defence
In News
- Army's Light Combat Helicopter Prachand successfully carries out inaugural firing.

LCH Prachand
- LCH is the first **indigenous Multi-Role Combat Helicopter** designed and manufactured by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited(HAL).**
- The helicopter has modern stealth features, strong armor protection, and powerful night attack capabilities.
- It comes equipped with an advanced navigation system, guns designed for close combat, and effective air-to-air missiles, which make it well-suited for today's battlefield.
- It can operate in high-altitude areas and perform accurate strikes on targets located at high altitudes.
- It is the **only attack helicopter in the World to land and take off at high altitudes of 5,000 meters** while carrying a significant load of weapons and fuel.
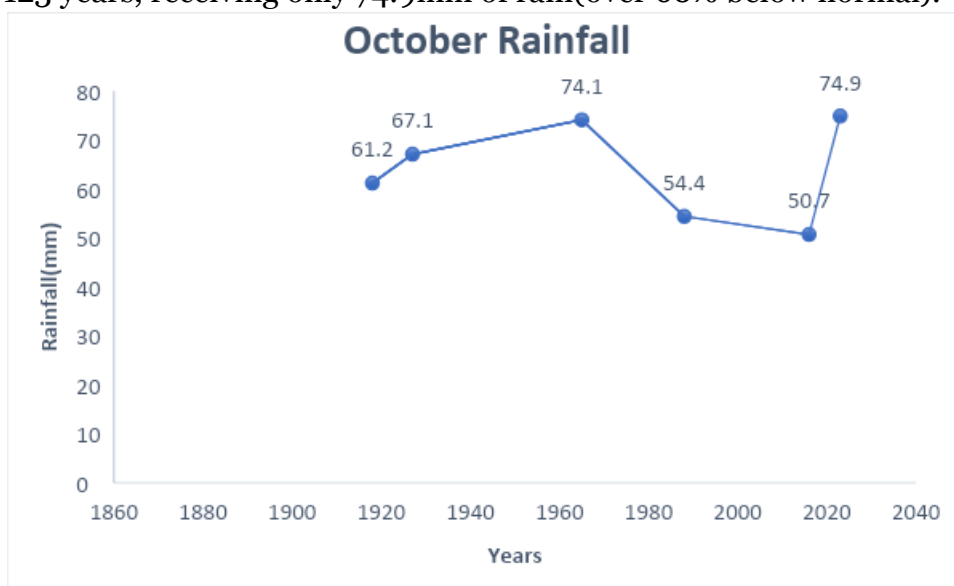
Driest October in Southern Peninsula

Syllabus: GS1/ Geography
In News
- The southern peninsular region of India experienced its sixth driest October in 123 years, receiving only 74.9mm of rain(over 60% below normal).

Reasons of low rainfall
- **Cyclone Hamoon:** It coincided with the onset of the northeast monsoon and led to most of the moisture being drawn away from the region, altering the wind flow pattern.
- **El Nino and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) combination:** El Nino years are associated with less rainfall in northern Tamil Nadu and adjoining areas but better rainfall in the southernmost parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

One nation, One registration Platform

Syllabus :GS 2/Health

In News

- The National Medical Commission (NMC) will launch its "**one nation, one registration platform**" for doctors across the country .

About one nation, one registration platform

- The NMC will unveil a patch pilot of the **National Medical Register (NMR)** in the next six months where doctors will be **allotted a unique identification number** and then can also **apply for their licence to work** in any **State depending** on where they are.
    - The commission had earlier this year issued a gazette notification titled **"Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practice Medicine Regulations, 2023**" announcing the move.
- The data of nearly 14 lakh doctors presently registered in the system will be transferred to the NMR.
- **Objectives :** The idea is to provide a masked ID to undergraduate students on the NMR and depending on when they complete their course the ID is unmasked and allotted.
    - It will eliminate duplication, red tape and allow the public to access information on any physician working in India.

The National Medical Commission (NMC)

- It has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019 which came into force on 25.9.2020 by gazette notification dated 24.9.2020.
- The Board of Governors in supersession of Medical Council of India constituted under section 3A of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 stands dissolved thereafter.
- **The Aim are to**
    - improve access to quality and affordable medical education,
    - ensure availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country;
    - promote equitable and universal healthcare that encourages community health perspective and makes services of medical professionals accessible to all the citizens;
    - encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research;
    - objectively assess medical institutions periodically in a transparent manner;
    - maintain a medical register for India;
    - enforce high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services.

Do you know ?

- The commission has signed an **MoU with the Quality Council of India (QCI)** for rating medical institutions in India.
  - Both government and private medical colleges will be rated based on the quality of medical education they provide, from the 2024-25 academic session.

Source:TH