

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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KERALA'S JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Context

- Queenie Hallegua the last woman of Kerala's Paradesi Jewish community died in Kochi at the age of 89.

Background

- India's Jewish population is estimated to comprise 4,000-5,000 members from 20,000-50,000 in the mid-1940s.
- They belong to the Marathi-speaking Bene Israel community, settled on the Konkan coast for hundreds of years.
- However they are not the oldest Jewish community of India.

The Jews of Kerala

- **Malabar Jews**, also known as the Cochin Jews, trace their history to the days of **King Solomon** (10th century BCE, almost 3,000 years ago).
- Initially, they settled in **Cranganore** (present-day Kodungallur in Thrissur district), which the community itself referred to as **Shingly**.
 - ♦ The Jews in the region enjoyed several economic and ceremonial privileges.
- After the arrival of the Portuguese in the 16th century, Malabar Jews moved further south from Cranganore to Cochin (Kochi).

Paradesi Jewish

- Paradesi Jewish or "foreign" Jews, migrated to the Indian subcontinent in the 15th and 16th centuries from the **Iberian Peninsula**.
- They fled to India due to **persecution by the Catholic rulers of Spain and Portugal**, and settled on the Malabar coast alongside pre-settled Jewish communities, as well as in Madras (now Chennai).
- The Paradesi Jews of Cochin were active in Kerala's spice trade, and those settled in Madras were involved in the trade of Golconda diamonds and other precious stones.

Dwindling population of Jews in India

- Unlike Jewish communities in Europe or West Asia, in India they seldom faced persecution. Instead they rose to high positions as agents of foreign trade, and advisers to Dutch and Hindu rulers.
- Later, during British rule, **Jews in Kerala prospered as merchants** and were employed

as teachers, clerks, and lawyers in the ever-expanding British bureaucracy.

- However, since the 1950s, there has been a steady migration of **Kerala Jews to Israel**.

Source: TH

PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJANA-URBAN (PMAY-U) 2.0

Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0**.

PMAY-U

- In pursuance of Government's vision of facilitating Housing for All, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), is implementing Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U) – 'Housing for All' Mission **since 2015**.
- The original mission period was up to **2022** which has been extended till 2024 for completion of houses sanctioned up to 2022.

About PMAY-U 2.0

- It aims to construct **1 crore houses**, while also focusing on equity among different segments of the populations.
 - ♦ The scheme will **provide financial support** to the middle class as well as impoverished urban families for building, buying, or renting reasonably priced urban homes.
- **Beneficiary:** Special attention will be given to marginalized groups, including slum dwellers, SC/STs, minorities, widows, persons with disabilities, and other underprivileged sections of society.
 - ♦ Additionally, groups like Safai Karmi, street vendors, artisans, anganwadi workers, and residents of slums/chawls will receive focused support under this scheme.
- **Eligibility:** It can be availed by families who belong to the **Economically Weaker Section (EWS), Low Income Group (LIG), and Middle Income Group (MIG)** segments and **do not currently own a pucca house** anywhere throughout the country.
- **The eligible income criteria are as follows:**
 - ♦ EWS households with an annual income up to **₹3 lakh**.
 - ♦ LIG households with an annual income between **₹3-6 lakh**.
 - ♦ MIG households with an annual income between **₹6-9 lakh**.

- **Verticals Under the Scheme:**

- ♦ **Beneficiary-Led Construction (BLC):** Under this vertical, financial assistance will be provided to individual eligible families belonging to EWS categories to construct new houses on their own available vacant land. In case of landless beneficiaries, land rights (pattas) may be provided by States/UTs.
- ♦ **Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP):** Under AHP, financial assistance will be provided to EWS beneficiaries for owning houses being built with different partnerships by States/UTs/ Cities/Public/Private agencies.
 - Redeemable Housing Vouchers will be given to beneficiaries who purchase house from private projects.
 - An additional Grant in the form of Technology Innovation Grant (TIG) @ ₹1000 per sqm/unit shall be provided to AHP Projects using innovative construction technologies
- ♦ **Affordable Rental Housing (ARH):** This vertical will create adequate rental housing for working women/industrial workers/ urban migrants/homeless/destitute /students and other eligible beneficiaries.
 - ARH shall ensure affordable and hygienic living spaces for urban dwellers who do not want to own a house but require housing for short term basis or those who do not have the financial capability to construct/buy a house.
- **Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS):** Up to a 4% interest subsidy on the first 8 lakh loan for a maximum duration of 12 years can be availed by recipients who can take loans up to 25 lakh, with a property worth up to 35 lakh.
 - ♦ The eligible beneficiaries will receive a maximum subsidy of 1.80 lakh, paid in five-year installments.

Source: ET

'MODEL SOLAR VILLAGE' UNDER 'PM-SURYA GHAR: MUFT BIJLI YOJANA'

Context

- Recently, the Scheme Guidelines for implementation of 'Model Solar Village' under **PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana** have been notified by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

About Model Solar Village

- A **Model Solar Village**, a scheme component, aims to be developed in each district of the country to act as a role model for adoption of rooftop solar in rural areas, with the goal of promoting solar energy adoption and enabling village communities to become self-reliant in meeting their energy needs.
 - ♦ A total **financial outlay of ₹800 crore** has been allocated for this component, providing ₹1 crore per selected Model Solar Village.
 - ♦ A **Model Solar Village** must be a **revenue village** with a population size above 5,000 (or 2,000 for special category states).
- In these model villages, households will install solar panels on their rooftops. These panels convert sunlight into electricity, which can be used for lighting, appliances, and other energy needs.

Benefits

- **Energy Independence:** By generating their own electricity, households reduce dependence on conventional power sources. This not only saves money but also contributes to national energy security.
- **Environmental Impact:** Solar energy is clean and green. By adopting it, villages reduce their carbon footprint and combat climate change.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Lower electricity bills mean more disposable income for families. Additionally, surplus energy sales can provide an additional revenue stream.
- It is estimated that the scheme will create around 17 lakh direct jobs in manufacturing, logistics, supply chain, sales, installation and other services.

About the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

- It aims to light up **1 crore households** by providing **up to 300 units of free electricity** every month, marking a significant step towards sustainable development and people's wellbeing.
- It aims to increase the share of **solar rooftop capacity** and empower residential households to generate their own electricity.
- The subsidy will cover up to 40% of the cost of the solar panels. The remaining costs have to be borne by the aspirant consumer.
- The Centre will fund 60% of the cost for installing 2 kW (kilowatt) systems and 40% of the cost for systems from 2-3 kW capacity.

Source: PIB

20 AFGHAN SIKHS GET CITIZENSHIP UNDER CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

Context

- Twenty Sikhs from Afghanistan, have been accorded citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019.

Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019

- It amended the **Citizenship Amendment Act, 1955**, making two key changes to facilitate citizenship to undocumented migrants belonging to six non-Muslim communities — **Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian** from **Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan**, who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.
- It reduced the period to qualify for citizenship from the existing requirement of continuous stay of 11 years to continuous stay of **five years**.
- However, Pakistani Hindus were anyway eligible for citizenship under **Section 5 and Section 6 (1)** of the Citizenship Act, 1955. The CAA only helped fast track the application process.
- The Rules grant the final authority to accord citizenship to an empowered committee headed by the Director, Census Operations, while the scrutiny of applications filed online on the portal was done by a **district level committee (DLC)** headed by Department of Post officials.
 - ♦ On successful verification of documents, the DLCs administered the oath of allegiance to the applicants.

Challenges with the Act

- **The right to equality:** The challenge to the CAA rests on the ground that it violates Article 14 of the Constitution, which says that “the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India”.
- **Secularism:** There is also the larger issue of whether making religion a ground for eligibility for citizenship violates secularism, which is a basic feature of the Constitution.

Section 6A of The Citizenship Act, 1955 and Assam: Section 6A was introduced in the Citizenship Act after the signing of the **Assam Accord in 1985** which determines who is a foreigner in the state of Assam and sets **March 24, 1971** as a cut off date which contradicts the cut off date given in the CAA 2019.

Citizenship

- Citizenship is listed in the **Union List under the Constitution** and thus is **under the exclusive jurisdiction of Parliament**.
- The Constitution **does not define the term ‘citizen’** but **details of various categories** of persons who are entitled to citizenship are given in **Part II (Articles 5 to 11)**.

Acquisition of Indian Citizenship

- The **Citizenship Act of 1955** prescribes five ways of acquiring citizenship:
 - ♦ Citizenship conferred by birth
 - ♦ Citizenship through descent
 - ♦ Citizenship through registration
 - ♦ Naturalization leads to citizenship.
 - ♦ Territorial incorporation (by the Government of India)
- Under The **Indian Citizenship Act, 1955**, **Persons of Indian Origin are not allowed dual citizenship**. If a person has ever held an Indian passport and has obtained the passport of another country, they are required to immediately surrender their Indian passport.

Termination of Indian Citizenship

- **Renunciation:** Any Indian citizen who is also a national of another country who renounces his Indian citizenship in the prescribed manner through a declaration ceases to be an Indian citizen.
- **Termination:** An Indian citizen's citizenship can be revoked if he or she knowingly or voluntarily adopts the citizenship of another country.
- **Deprivation:** In some cases, the Indian government may deprive a person of his citizenship. However, this does not apply to all citizens. Conditions for deprivation are:
 - ♦ Obtained the citizenship by fraud.
 - ♦ Citizens have shown disloyalty to the Constitution of India.
 - ♦ Citizens have unlawfully traded or communicated during the times of war.
 - ♦ Within 5 years of naturalization, the said citizen is imprisoned for a term of two years.
 - ♦ Citizen has been ordinarily resident out of India for a period of 7 years.

Source: TH

UN CONVENTION AGAINST CYBERCRIME

Context

- The member states of the United Nations has finalized a **new international convention against cybercrime**.

About

- The draft convention is expected to be adopted by the General Assembly later this year, thus becoming the **first global legally binding instrument on cybercrime**.
- Background:** The road to this convention began more than five years ago when the United Nations recognized the new challenges to international security and criminal law.
 - The Ad Hoc Committee was established in 2019 and the draft convention was finally finalized in August 2024.

About the Convention

- Aim:** To strengthen **international cooperation** in the fight against cybercrime, coordinate law enforcement efforts, and promote technical assistance and capacity building in member states.
- Tools:** It provides states with a range of tools to effectively combat crimes such as terrorism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms smuggling, and other criminal activities facilitated by modern information technologies.
 - It is supporting developing countries through **technical assistance and capacity building**.
- The key objective is to **improve the capabilities** of national authorities in the **prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of cybercrime**.
- Convention includes the **definition of criminal offenses** such as illegal access to information systems, illegal interception, data manipulation, and system interference.
- It **deals with the criminal liability of legal persons**, the seizure and confiscation of the proceeds of crime, and international cooperation in criminal prosecution and the preservation of evidence.

What is Cybercrime?

- Cybercrime refers to criminal activities that involve the **use of computers, networks, and digital technologies**.
- It encompasses a **wide range of illicit activities** conducted in the virtual space, often with the intent to compromise, damage, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems, networks, and data.

- Cybercriminals employ **various techniques and tools** to exploit vulnerabilities in networks, and they may target individuals, organizations, or even governments.

Common types of Cybercrime include:

- Hacking:** Unauthorized access to computer systems or networks to steal, alter, or destroy data.
- Phishing:** Deceptive attempts to acquire sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, and financial details, by posing as a trustworthy entity.
- Malware:** Malicious software designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems. This includes viruses, worms, trojans, ransomware, and spyware.
- Identity Theft:** Stealing and using someone's personal information, such as social security numbers or credit card details, for fraudulent purposes.
- Cyber Espionage:** Covert activities aimed at gaining unauthorized access to sensitive information for political, economic, or military purposes.
- Cyberbullying:** Using digital platforms to harass, threaten, or intimidate individuals.
- Online Fraud:** Engaging in fraudulent activities, such as online scams and financial fraud, to deceive and exploit victims for monetary gain.

Cybercrime in India

- Chief executive officer of Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), mentioned that on average **5,000 cyber complaints** are registered in the country every day and around **40-50% originate outside the country**.
- Most cyber crimes were reported from **Haryana, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Goa**. Among Union Territories, most complaints came from **Delhi**, followed by Chandigarh and Puducherry.

Impact of Cyber Crimes

- National Security Threats:** Cyber crimes pose a threat to national security when state-sponsored actors or criminal organizations target critical infrastructure, government institutions, or military systems.
- Financial Loss:** This includes theft of personal information, online banking fraud, credit card fraud, and ransomware attacks.
- Data Breaches:** Data breaches can lead to the exposure of personal information, trade secrets, intellectual property, and other confidential data, causing severe damage to the affected entities.

- **Disruption of Services:** Cyber attacks can disrupt essential services such as power grids, communication networks, and transportation systems.

Initiatives by Government of India to Prevent Cybercrimes

- **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In):** CERT-In is the **national nodal agency** for responding to cybersecurity incidents.
 - ♦ It provides proactive and reactive cybersecurity support and plays a crucial role in ensuring the security and resilience of the country's cyber infrastructure.
- **National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIIPC):** It is responsible for protecting critical information infrastructure from cyber threats.
 - ♦ It identifies and designates critical sectors and advises organizations in these sectors on enhancing their cybersecurity measures.
- **Cyber Crime Prevention against Women & Children (CCPWC) scheme:** The Ministry of Home Affairs has provided financial assistance to all the States & UTs under the scheme to support their efforts for setting up of cyber forensic-cum-training laboratories, training, and hiring of junior cyber consultants.
- **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C):** The Government has established I4C to provide a framework and ecosystem for Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.
- **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal:** The Government has launched the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal to enable the public to report incidents pertaining to all types of cyber crimes.

Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre): This initiative is aimed at creating awareness about **botnet and malware infections** and providing **tools for detection and cleaning**.

International Conventions on Cyber Crimes

- **Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime):** Also known as the **Budapest Convention**, it is the **first** international treaty specifically addressing crimes committed via the internet and other computer networks.
 - ♦ It includes provisions on offenses such as illegal access, data interference, system interference, and content-related crimes.

- **Internet Governance Forum:** The United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF) serves to bring people together from various stakeholder groups, as equals, in discussions on digital public policy.
- **African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection (Malabo Convention):** This convention focuses on cybersecurity and personal data protection on the African continent.
- **Organization of American States (OAS) Cybercrime Convention:** This convention, also known as the "OAS Model Law on Cybercrime," provides a model legal framework for member states to address cybercrime.

Conclusion

- The UN Convention against Cybercrime is more than just a legal instrument.
- It is a symbol of the need for global cooperation in a world in which digital technologies are becoming increasingly important and at the same time pose new risks and threats.
- The global community now faces the task of putting this Convention into practice and ensuring that it not only helps to combat cybercrime but also protects human rights and freedom in the digital age.

Source: UN

LATEST REVELATION BY HINDENBURG ON THE SEBI CHIEF

In News

Hindenburg Research has accused the SEBI Chairman, Madhabi Puri Buch, of a **conflict of interest** and alleged bias in the ongoing investigation into the Adani Group.

Allegations

- Allegations claim the SEBI Chairman and her husband Dhaval Buch had hidden stakes in offshore funds in Bermuda and Mauritius, tax havens.
- In 2013, **Ms. Buch** founded a consulting firm, **Agora Partners**, in India and Singapore.
 - ♦ It is alleged that she did not transfer her 100% stake in the Singapore unit of Agora Partners until March 16, 2022, just after her appointment as SEBI Chairperson, **violating SEBI's Code which prohibits holding other profitable positions or activities**.

- **Despite lacking experience** in real estate or fund management, Dhaval Buch was appointed senior advisor at Blackstone in 2019.

Developments

- The Supreme Court has instructed SEBI to complete investigations into certain allegations and issue a show cause notice to Hindenburg.
- SEBI has completed one of two investigations and is near completion on the second, while rejecting the need for an external probe like an SIT or CBI.
- SEBI has criticised Hindenburg's attempts to undermine its credibility instead of responding to the show cause notice, and has outlined its ongoing and planned actions regarding the investigations.

Ethics Codes in the United States

- **Standards of Ethical Conduct** prohibit participation in matters where the employee or their close relations have a financial interest.
- **Supplemental Standards** prohibits trading in securities of companies under investigation, short selling, and other specific transactions.
- **Personal Trading Compliance System (PTCS)** requires pre-approval for securities transactions and annual reporting of holdings.
- Employees must report all securities holdings and obtain pre-approval for transactions.

Ethics Codes in the United Kingdom:

- **Disclosure Requirements:** Employees must regularly update and formally attest to their conflict of interest disclosures.
- **Reporting:** Employees must disclose holdings in listed companies, securities, and other financial relationships that could be considered conflicts of interest.

SEBI's 'Code on Conflict of Interests for Members of Board'

- **Definition of Conflict of Interest:** Refers to any personal interest or association that could influence a board member's decisions, as perceived by an independent third party.
- **Holdings Disclosure:** Members must disclose their and their family's holdings within 15 days of assuming office and annually update this disclosure.
- **Substantial Transactions:** Transactions over 5,000 shares or worth more than Rs 1 lakh must be disclosed within 15 days.

- **Unpublished Price Sensitive Information:** Members cannot trade based on non-public, price-sensitive information.
- **Members cannot hold other profitable** positions or engage in activities that bring financial gain or professional fees.
- **Members cannot accept gifts** from regulated entities exceeding Rs 1,000; such gifts must be handed over to SEBI's General Services Department.
- **Members must disclose any past** or current posts, employment, fiduciary positions, significant relationships with regulated entities, and honorary positions.

Ways to Managing Conflicts of Interest:

- As a general principle, SEBI board members are to "take all steps necessary to ensure that any conflict of interest does not affect any decision of the Board" and not to "exploit to his personal advantage, any personal or professional relationship with regulated entities or any employee of such entities".
- This is to be done by a system of **disclosures and recusals**.
 - ♦ disclosures must be made at the earliest opportunity.
 - ♦ Members with conflicts must recuse themselves from dealing with the matter.
 - ♦ If uncertain, they should seek a determination from the Chairman or, if the Chairman is conflicted, from the Board.
 - ♦ If a conflict is confirmed, the member must refrain from participating in related matters.
- **Disclosure information is confidential.** However, the public can submit evidence of conflicts to the board secretary, who must then present it to the Board.

Source:TH

NEWS IN SHORT

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL RANKING FRAMEWORK (NIRF) 2024

Context

- The Ministry of Education Monday announced the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024.

Key Highlights of India Rankings 2024

- **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras** retains its 1st position in Overall Category for the sixth

consecutive year, and in Engineering for 9th consecutive year.

- **Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru** tops the Universities Category for ninth consecutive year. It stood first in the Research Institutions Category for the fourth consecutive year.
- **IIM Ahmedabad** tops in Management subject retaining its first position for fifth consecutive year.
- **All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)**, New Delhi occupies the top slot in Medical for the seventh consecutive year.
- **Hindu College** secured the 1st position amongst Colleges for the first time replacing Miranda House which retained its 1st position for seven consecutive years.

National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)

- NIRF was launched in **2015** by the **Ministry of Education**, to rank institutions of higher education in India.
- **Five broad categories** of parameters identified in the NIRF;
 - ◆ Teaching, Learning & Resources
 - ◆ Research and Professional Practice
 - ◆ Graduation Outcome
 - ◆ Outreach and Inclusivity
 - ◆ Perception
- Each of these five parameters have 2 to 5 sub-parameters and a total number of 18 parameters are used for ranking of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
 - ◆ The overall score is computed based on the weightage allotted to each parameter and sub-parameter.

Source: PIB

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

Context

- Government has launched the second phase of the Bi-annual Nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign for **Lymphatic Filariasis elimination**.

About

- The campaign targets **63 endemic districts** across Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Odisha, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh and will provide

door-to-door administration of preventive medications.

- Alongside this, the 'Revised Guideline on Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis' was unveiled to provide a clear roadmap for elimination efforts.

Lymphatic Filariasis

- It is commonly known as **elephantiasis** (Haatipaon), is a serious debilitating disease caused by parasitic worms known as filarial worms.
- It is transmitted through the **bite of a Culex mosquito** that breeds in dirty/polluted water.
- Infection is usually **acquired in childhood** causing hidden damage to the lymphatic system with visible manifestations (lymphoedema, elephantiasis, and scrotal swelling/hydrocele) which occur later in life and can lead to **permanent disability**.
- It is a priority disease that is targeted for elimination by **2027**.
- In India, **90% of LF burden is contributed by 8 states** - Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.
- Currently there is **no vaccination** available for it.

Source: PIB

UNESCO KALINGA PRIZE FOR POPULARISATION OF SCIENCE

In News

The Ministry of Science and Technology (DST) has withdrawn its annual contribution to the UNESCO Kalinga Prize.

- Former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has protested the withdrawal and requested the restoration of support.

About the UNESCO Kalinga Prize for Popularisation of Science

- It was established in **1951** following a donation from Mr. Bijoyanand Patnaik, Founder and President of the Kalinga Foundation Trust.
- It is UNESCO's oldest prize.
- The prize winner is selected by UNESCO's Director-General on the recommendation of a five-member jury.
- The award is presented during the World Science Day celebrations in Budapest, alternating with India.

- **Eligibility:** Individuals, institutions, NGOs, or entities making significant contributions to science and technology communication.
- **Donors:** Kalinga Foundation Trust, Government of the State of Orissa, Government of India (Department of Science and Technology).
- **Award:** Cash prize of US\$40,000 and a Kalinga Chair with an additional US\$5,000, UNESCO-Albert Einstein silver medal.
- **Objectives :** It rewards contributions to the popularization of science and technology.
 - ♦ It aims to bridge the gap between science and society.
 - ♦ Includes various forms of media communication in science popularization.

Source:IE

AYUSH PACKAGE INCLUSION IN AB PM-JAY

In News

The Union Government is working on integrating an AYUSH package into the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

About AYUSH

- The word "AYUSH" is derived from the **Sanskrit** phrase "**ayusmanbhava**," which means "long life."
 - ♦ This phrase was used since the **Mahabharata** period to bless individuals with a healthy, long life.
- AYUSH refers to **traditional and non-conventional systems** of healthcare, including Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Naturopathy, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homeopathy.
 - ♦ It provides an integrative healthcare approach focusing on physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

Government Initiatives in India:

- **In 2014** The Ministry of AYUSH was formed with the goal of reviving and promoting traditional Indian systems of medicine and ensuring their optimal development.
- Government is implementing the **National Ayush Mission (NAM)** through State/UT governments to develop and promote AYUSH systems.

- **Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS):** Central government employees and pensioners enrolled in CGHS can access both allopathic and AYUSH healthcare services.

AB PM-JAY Overview:

- It was launched in 2018, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- It provides health cover of 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.
- It covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days of post-hospitalization expenses (diagnostics, medicines, etc.).
- **Eligibility and Target Beneficiaries:** Based on deprivation and occupational criteria from the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for both rural and urban areas.
 - ♦ No restrictions on family size, age, or gender; covers all pre-existing conditions from day one.
 - ♦ Approximately 55 crore beneficiaries, or 12.34 crore families, representing the bottom 40% of the population.
- **Significance :** It provides cashless access to healthcare services at the point of service.
 - ♦ It aims to mitigate medical expenses that push people into poverty.

Source:TH

NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL DATA REPOSITORY PROPOSED

Context

- The Science and Technology Minister has proposed a **National Geospatial Data Repository and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model**.

About

- It aims to create a **unified Geospatial interface** for utilisation of industry and StartUp ecosystem in order to create innovative and indigenous products for the welfare of farmers, rural artisans and others.
- He emphasized the need for **seamless Geo-ICT infrastructure integration** and a sustainable ecosystem built on pooling knowledge and resources through PPP collaborations.

Source: PIB

COLLISION AVOIDANCE SYSTEM (CAS)

Context

- The recent series of train accidents in India has highlighted the urgent need for a more robust and reliable collision avoidance system.

What is a collision avoidance system?

- It is a collection of technologies to **help a vehicle steer clear of another vehicle** or obstacles.
 - For example, a CAS device fit on a train will be designed to help that train avoid colliding with another train.
- Most CAS devices **require two types of information**, preferably in real-time: the locations of all the other vehicles and the location of this vehicle relative to those vehicles.

What is 'Kavach'?

- Kavach is an indigenously developed **Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system**.
- It is a set of **electronic devices and Radio Frequency Identification devices** installed in locomotives, in the signaling system as well the tracks, that talk to each other using **ultra high radio frequencies** to control the brakes of trains and also alert drivers, all based on the logic programmed into them.
- It is meant to provide protection by preventing trains from passing the signal at Danger and avoiding collision.
 - It **activates the train braking system automatically** if the driver fails to control the train as per the speed restrictions.

Source: TH

CHANGES IN PRADHAN MANTRI JI-VAN YOJANA

Context

- Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the extended **Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana** to boost advanced biofuel projects.

About

- Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana** aims to provide financial support to **Integrated**

Bioethanol Projects using lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable feedstock.

- Centre for High Technology (CHT)**, a technical body under the aegis of **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG)**, will be the implementation Agency for the scheme.
- Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana** envisages setting up of **12 Commercial scale Second Generation (2G) Bioethanol projects** and **10 demonstration scale 2G Bioethanol projects** based on non-food biomass feedstocks and other renewable feedstocks.
- Other key objectives** include *Remunerative Income for Farmers, Environmental Pollution Mitigation, Local Employment Opportunities, Energy Security and Self-Reliance, Net-Zero GHG Emissions by 2070, and Ethanol Blending Program (EBP) by establishing commercially viable projects for 2G Ethanol production etc*
- A **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** support in two phases:
 - Phase-I (2018-19 to 2022-23)**: wherein six commercial projects and five demonstration projects will be supported.
 - Phase-II (2020-21 to 2023-24)**: wherein remaining six commercial projects and five demonstration projects will be supported.

Recent Changes

- Implementation Extension**: The modified scheme now **extends its implementation period by five years**, running through **2028-29**.
- Scope Expansion**: The revamped JI-VAN Yojana broadens its scope to include advanced biofuels produced from **lignocellulosic feedstocks**, encompassing a variety of materials, such as agricultural and forestry residues, industrial waste, synthesis gas (syngas), and even algae.
- Eligibility for Existing Plants**: Under the modified scheme, both **'bolt-on' plants (which enhance existing facilities)** and **'brownfield projects' (revamping existing facilities)** are **now eligible** to participate.
 - It encourages existing players to leverage their experience and improve the viability of their operations.

Source: DD News

CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION

Context

- In India, CPI recently made headlines as it eased to a nearly five-year low of 3.54% in July.

Understanding Consumer Price Inflation (CPI)

- It is a critical economic indicator that measures the rate at which prices of goods and services increase over time.
- It affects whether we're buying groceries, paying rent, or planning our budgets.
- When CPI rises, it erodes our purchasing power, making everyday essentials more expensive.

Consumer Price Indices (CPI)

- It measures changes over time in the **general level of prices of goods and services** that households acquire for the **purpose of consumption**.
- CPI is widely used as a **macroeconomic indicator of inflation**, as a tool by governments and central banks **for inflation targeting and for monitoring price stability**, and as **deflators in the national accounts**.
- CPI is used for indexing dearness allowance to employees for increase in prices.
- The **Central Statistics Office (CSO)**, MoSPI has revised the **Base Year of the CPI from 2010 to 2012** with effect from the release of indices for the month of January, 2015.

Source: PIB

WORLD'S OLDEST CALENDAR DISCOVERED IN TURKEY

Context

- Archaeologists at Göbekli Tepe, an ancient site in Turkey, have possibly discovered the world's oldest calendar, dating back nearly 13,000 years.

About

- Göbekli Tepe, often referred to as the world's first temple, features a series of large stone pillars adorned with ornate carvings.
- These carvings have long puzzled researchers, but recent studies suggest they represent an ancient timekeeping system.
- The carvings on the pillars include a series of V-shaped symbols, each representing a single day. By counting these symbols, researchers identified a calendar of 365 days, divided into 12 lunar months with an additional 11 days.
- This system aligns closely with the modern solar calendar, indicating a sophisticated understanding of astronomy by the ancient people who created it long before the development of written language.

Source: TOI

