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KOVIND PANEL SUBMITTED REPORT ON SIMULTANEOUS ELECTION

Context

- A committee led by former President Ram Nath Kovind submitted a report on the 'One Nation One Election' initiative to the President.

Background

- **Simultaneous Elections** (One Nation One Election) refer to the idea of holding Lok Sabha and State legislative assembly elections together, with the aim of reducing the frequency of elections and their associated costs.

- Simultaneous elections in India to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies were held in the years **1951-52, 1957, 1962 and 1967.**

- Thereafter, the schedule could not be maintained and the elections to the Lok Sabha and the State legislative assembly have still not been realigned.

Suggestions of the Panel

- **Opting Step wise Process:** According to the panel, simultaneous polls to Lok Sabha and state assembly elections can be held in the 1st step, followed by local body (municipal and panchayat) polls within 100 days in the second step.

HOW, WHAT & WHEN OF JOINT ELECTIONS

How will elections be synchronised?
In 2 stages, says panel report.
Step 1: Simultaneous polls to be held for Lok Sabha, state assemblies. **Constitutional amendment needed, but no ratification by states required.**
Step 2: Local body polls to be held within 100 days of LS & assembly elections. Amendment for this will require ratification by at least half the states.

How will a cutoff date be fixed and varying assembly tenures adjusted?
President will, through a

Former President Kovind gives report to President Murmu

notification, bring simultaneous polls into force on the date of first sitting of Lok Sabha after a general election. This becomes the 'appointed date'. Assemblies for which elections

are held after this date will have tenure only till next Lok Sabha elections (which will be simultaneous)

What happens if there is a hung House or governing party loses trust vote?
Elections will be held for the remaining period of the five-year term

When will simultaneous elections kick in?
After legislative changes are undertaken, President will notify the 'appointed date' on the first day the newly elected LS sits

- **In case of hung House:** No-confidence motion, fresh elections could be held only for the remaining term of the immediately preceding full term of the House.

- **Constitution Amendments Needed:** The panel has recommended amendments to **Article 83** (duration of Houses of Parliament) and **Article 172** (duration of State legislatures) of the Constitution.
    - This constitutional amendment **will not need ratification by the States.**

- **Ratification of states:** The panel also recommended amendments to Constitution which **requires ratification by the States;**
    - **Article 324A** of the Constitution to allow simultaneous elections in panchayats and municipalities; and
    - **Article 325** to allow the Election Commission of India (ECI), in consultation with State election authorities, to prepare a common electoral roll and voter ID cards.

Arguments In Favour of One Nation One Election

- It will **reduce the huge expenditure** incurred for conducting separate elections every year.

- The problem of frequent elections leads to **imposition of MCC** over prolonged periods of time which affects the normal governance. Simultaneous elections can overcome such issues.

- Simultaneous elections will **free the crucial manpower** which is often deployed for prolonged periods on election duties.

- The **focus on governance** will increase, instead of being constantly in election mode.

Arguments Against One Nation One Election

- All states and the central government face massive **logistical challenges** including coordinating the schedules, resources etc.

- It may **help the dominant national party** or the incumbent at the Centre at the cost of regional parties and regions issues can be overshadowed by the national issues.

Way Ahead

- Synchronized polls for all 3 tiers of government will improve governance architecture. It will enhance "transparency, inclusivity, ease and confidence of voters.

- The **22nd Law Commission,** examining the simultaneous polls issue, is expected to recommend simultaneous polls from the 2029 general election cycle.

Source: TH

INDIA TO BECOME UPPER MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRY BY 2031

Context

- The Indian economy is expected to **double to USD 7 trillion** with a growth trajectory that positions **India to attain upper middle-income status by 2031**, said ratings agency Crisil recently.

Major highlights of the Crisil India Outlook report

- After a better-than-expected **7.6 per cent this fiscal, India's real GDP growth will likely moderate to 6.8 per cent in fiscal 2025**.

- It said that the **next seven fiscal years (2025-2031) will see the Indian economy crossing the USD 5 trillion-mark** and inching closer to USD 7 trillion.

- A projected **average expansion of 6.7 per cent** in this period will make India the **third-largest economy** in the world and l**ift per capita income to the upper-middle income category by 2031.**

- Crisil expects the economy to expand to **USD USD 6.7 trillion by fiscal 2031.**

    - India, with a **GDP size of USD 3.6 trillion, is currently the fifth largest economy** in the world, after the US, China, Japan and Germany.

- Crisil report said near- and medium-term challenges to growth outlook would come from **geopolitics, slowing potential growth from an uneven global recovery, climate change and technological disruptions.**

What does upper middle class status mean?

- As per **World Bank** definition, **lower-middle income** countries are those with per-capita income of **USD 1,000-4,000,** and **upper-middle income** countries are those with per capita income between **USD 4,000-12,000.**

- Fiscal 2031 will mark the year when India enters the club of upper middle-income countries with **per-capita income rising to USD 4,500,** Crisil said.

DRIVERS FOR THE GROWTH

Traditional Growth Engines:

- **Young Population:** India boasts a large and young population, contributing to a growing workforce and a vibrant domestic market for consumer goods.

- **Rising Disposable Income:** As the economy expands, people have more money to spend, which stimulates businesses and drives economic activity.

- **Agriculture:** Though its share of GDP is decreasing, agriculture remains a significant employer and contributes to food security, enabling growth in other sectors.

Emerging Growth Drivers:

- **Digitalization:** India is experiencing a rapid digital transformation. This includes the growth of e-commerce, digital payments, and a booming startup scene.

- **Manufacturing Push:** India's manufacturing sector is at a sweet spot due to high capacity utilisation across key sectors and the initiatives like "Make in India" aim to boost domestic manufacturing, creating jobs and reducing dependence on imports.

- **Services Sector:** India has a strong services sector, particularly in IT and business process outsourcing (BPO). This sector is a major source of foreign investment and exports.

- **Infrastructure Development:** Investments in infrastructure like roads, bridges, and ports are crucial for connecting markets, improving logistics, and attracting businesses.

Additional Factors:

- **Private Consumption:** Recent reports highlight a surge in private consumption as a major driver of economic growth, with people spending more on goods and services.

- **Investment:** A gradual rise in private and government investment is another positive indicator.

CHALLENGES ON THE WAY

Macroeconomic Issues:

- **Unemployment and Underemployment:** Despite economic growth, a significant portion of the workforce remains unemployed or underemployed. This creates weak demand for goods and services.

- **Inflation:** Rising prices can erode purchasing power and discourage investment.

- **High Fiscal Deficit:** The government's spending may exceed its income, leading to higher debt and potentially impacting social programs.

- **Balance of Payments Concerns:** India's import bill can be high, putting pressure on the rupee's exchange rate.

Structural Issues:

- **Infrastructure Bottlenecks:** Inadequate infrastructure in areas like power, transportation, and irrigation limits business efficiency and discourages investment.

- **Skill Gaps:** The education system might not be producing enough graduates with the skills needed by the modern workforce.
- **Agricultural Distress:** Low farm incomes, coupled with unpredictable weather patterns, can hold back rural development.

Other Challenges:

- **Inequality:** The gap between rich and poor continues to widen, hindering inclusive growth.
- **Red Tape and Corruption:** Bureaucratic hurdles and corruption can impede business activity and investment.
- **Impact of Global Events:** External factors like global economic slowdowns or trade wars can affect India's export-oriented industries.

MEASURES NEEDED

Investment and Infrastructure:

- **Public & Private Investment:** Increase public and private investment in infrastructure development projects, like the National Infrastructure Pipeline, to improve connectivity and logistics.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Further streamline regulations and reduce red tape to make it easier for businesses to invest and operate in India.

Human Capital Development:

- **Education & Skill Development:** Focus on improving the quality of education and skilling the workforce to meet the demands of the job market, particularly in high-growth sectors.
- **Healthcare:** Invest in improving healthcare infrastructure and affordability to create a healthier and more productive workforce.

Boosting Manufacturing and Exports:

- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes:** Expand successful PLI schemes that incentivize companies to manufacture in India, boosting exports and creating jobs.
- **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs):** Negotiate strategic FTAs to increase access to foreign markets for Indian goods and services.

Rural & Agricultural Development:

- **Agricultural Reforms:** Implement reforms to improve farm productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, and integrate farmers into national and global supply chains.
- **Rural Infrastructure:** Develop rural infrastructure, including irrigation facilities, storage, and transportation networks, to improve agricultural outcomes.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation:

- **Startup Ecosystem:** Foster a vibrant startup ecosystem by providing easier access to funding, mentorship, and co-working spaces.
- **Innovation in Key Sectors:** Promote research and development in key sectors like clean energy, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology.

Fiscal Consolidation and Sustainability:

- **Government Spending:** Maintain fiscal discipline by prioritizing productive government spending and reducing wasteful expenditure.
- **Tax Reforms:** Consider tax reforms to broaden the tax base, simplify the tax structure, and incentivize investment.

Digital Economy:

- **Digital Infrastructure:** Invest in expanding digital infrastructure, including broadband internet access, to accelerate digital adoption across the economy.
- **Digital Literacy:** Enhance digital literacy programs to bridge the digital divide and empower people to participate in the digital economy.

Way Forward

- **Continuous reforms, enhanced global competitiveness and moving up the value chain** will be required to achieve the desirable goals set by India.

Source: ET

DIGITALISATION OF AGRICULTURE IN INDIA

Context

- The Union Government has inaugurated the **Agriculture Integrated Command and Control Center.**

About

- **Aim:** To empower the farmers by equipping them with information, services and facilities using digital technology.

- **Multifunctional Centre:** At the Command Centre, it will be possible to see all the digital innovations being made in the agriculture sector by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare on a big screen simultaneously at one place.

Digital Infrastructure in Agriculture

- The digitalisation of agriculture describes **integrating cutting-edge digital technology into the farm production system**, including artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, uncrewed aviation systems, sensors, and communication networks.

- These innovations will **increase returns, and enhance the efficacy of irrigation and other inputs.**

Role of Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture in India

- **Assess Soil Health:** Technological interventions based on soil sensors, remote sensing unmanned aerial surveying and market insights, etc., will permit farmers **to assess crop and soil health conditions at different levels of production.**

- **Improvement in Crop Yeild:** The role of technology in digital public infrastructure may take the help of Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML) algorithms.

  - It can help in **generating real-time actionable insights** for improving crop yield, controlling pests, assisting in soil screening, providing actionable data for farmers, and reducing their workload.

- **Use of Blockchain Technology:** It will be offering **tamper-proof and precise data** about farms, inventories, quick and secure transactions, and food tracking.

Benefits of Digital Agriculture

- Increasing agriculture productivity and lowering production cost,

- Inhibits soil degradation,

- Lessening of chemical application in crop production,

- Promoting effective and efficient use of water resources,

- Uplifting socio-economic statuses of farmers,

- Reducing environmental and ecological impacts,

- Augmenting worker safety.

Challanges in Implementation of Digital Agriculture in India

- **Limited Digital Infrastructure:** Rural areas often lack robust digital infrastructure such as internet connectivity and electricity, hindering the adoption of digital technologies by farmers.

- **Digital Divide:** There's a significant digital divide between urban and rural areas in India.

- **Cost of Technology:** Many digital agriculture solutions require huge investments which is unaffordable for smallholder farmers with limited resources.

- **Fragmented Agriculture Sector:** India's agriculture sector is fragmented, with a large number of smallholder farmers and diverse crops grown across different regions.

  - Developing digital solutions that cater to this diversity is challenging.

- **Capacity Building:** Training farmers to effectively use digital tools and interpret the data generated is a major challenge.

Suggestions

- **Portable Hardware:** Agricultural land leasing is broadly prevalent under several farming arrangements, thus a farmer farming on a specific plot of land may move to another farm plot next season.

- **Renting and sharing platforms for agriculture equipment and machinery:** Owing to both small farm plots and constrained financial resources, the opportunity exists for digital platforms that are offering equipment renting and sharing services rather than outright purchases.

- **Academic support:** Training facilities offered by various academic institutes and agricultural organizations will be improving digital adoption among farmers.

Government Initiatives

- **India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture (IDEA):** It is a framework designed to lay down the architecture for a federated farmers' database, facilitating innovative agri-focused solutions using emerging technologies to enhance the agricultural ecosystem.

- **National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A):** Funds are allocated to states/UTs for projects involving modern technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Robotics, Drones, Data Analytics, and Blockchain in agriculture.

- **National Agriculture Market (e-NAM):** A pan-India electronic trading portal connecting Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities, providing digital services to traders, farmers, and mandis.

- **PM KISAN Scheme:** Direct transfer of funds to eligible farmers' bank accounts under Direct Benefit Transfer mode, with self-registration available through the Farmers Corner in the portal and a dedicated mobile app for broader access.

- **Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (AGMARKNET):** Supports the creation of agricultural marketing infrastructure by providing backend subsidy support and offers services through the AGMARKNET portal for stakeholders including farmers, industry, and policymakers.

- **Mobile Apps by ICAR:** More than 100 mobile apps developed by ICAR, State Agricultural Universities, and Krishi Vigyan Kendras offering valuable information to farmers on crops, horticulture, veterinary, dairy, poultry, fisheries, and natural resources management.

Conclusion

- Modernising the agriculture sector by adding cutting-edge technologies can benefit farmers' incomes as well as the nation's food and nutrition security while also being environment- friendly.

- The agricultural sector is ready to be taken over by science and technology to boost output and efficiency so that more people can be fed while growing more food on less land, however, this transition has to be inclusive.

Source: PIB

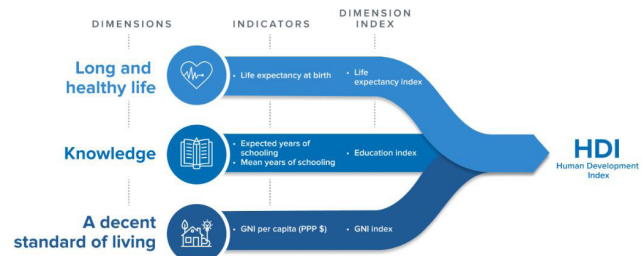# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2023- 24

Context

- The United Nations Development Programme has released the **Human Development Report 2023-24.**

About Human Development Index (HDI)

- The HDI is a composite index computed based on three parameters – **life expectancy, education, and gross national income (GNI) per capita.**

HDI Dimensions and Indicators

Major Findings

- **Rise in Global Inequalities:** After 20 years of convergence, the gap between the richest and poorest countries has started to widen from 2020.

  - Rich countries are experiencing record levels of human development, while half of the world's poorest countries remain below their pre-covid level.

- **SDG Goal:** Before the covid crisis, the world was on track to reach an average "very high" HDI by 2030, coinciding with the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

  - Now it is off track, with every region running below its pre-2019 projections.

- **India:** India has been ranked 134th out of 193 countries. India's ranking has improved by one position this year.

  - India has been placed in the **medium human development category.**

  - India saw **improvements across all HDI indicators** – life expectancy, education, and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita.

  - India demonstrated **progress in reducing gender inequality**, India's GII value is better than the global and South Asian averages.

  - India also has **one of the largest gender gaps** in the labour force participation rate—a 47.8 percentage point difference between women (28.3%) and men (76.1%).

India's Progress in HDI Since 1990

- India has shown remarkable progress in human development over the years.

- Since 1990, life expectancy at birth has risen by 9.1 years; expected years of schooling have increased by 4.6 years, and mean years of schooling have grown by 3.8 years.

- India's GNI per capita has grown by approximately 287 percent.

- **India's Neighbours:** Sri Lanka has been ranked at 78, while China is ranked 75, both categorized under the High Human Development category.

- ◆ Bhutan stands at 125 and Bangladesh is in the 129th position.
  - ◆ Nepal (146) and Pakistan (164) have been ranked lower than India.
- **Top Ranked:** Switzerland has been ranked number one followed by Norway and Iceland.
- **Bottom Ranked:** Central African Republic (191), South Sudan (192) and Somalia (193) were at the bottom of the Index.

Recommendation as per the Report for Improvement in HDI:

- **Planetary public goods for climate stability** as we confront the unprecedented challenges of the Anthropocene;
- **Digital global public goods for greater equity** in harnessing new technologies for equitable human development;
- **New and expanded financial mechanisms**, including a novel track in international cooperation that complements humanitarian assistance and traditional development aid to low-income countries; and
- **Dialing down political polarization** through new governance approaches focused on enhancing people's voices in deliberation and tackling misinformation.

Source: TH

BENGALURU'S WATER CRISIS

Context

- The worsening water crisis in Bengaluru is driving many of its residents to explore various alternative solutions.

Bengaluru's Water Crisis

- **Rainfall:** Bengaluru experienced a rainfall deficit in 2023 led to declining groundwater levels, particularly affecting the city's periphery.
- **Rising Demand:** Bengaluru's demand for freshwater exceeds its available supply from sources like the Cauvery River and groundwater.
- **Degradation of Water Bodies:** Historically, Bengaluru relied on a network of lakes and tanks for water supply. However, rapid urbanization has led to the encroachment and drying out of these water bodies.

- ◆ Lakes are also polluted due to sewage dumping, further diminishing their potential for rainwater harvesting.
- **Wastewater Management:** Only a fraction of the city's wastewater is treated and reused externally. Most of it flows into lakes or rivers downstream.
- **Arkavathi Reservoir Depletion:** The Arkavathi Reservoir, once a vital water source, is severely depleted and polluted due to uncontrolled development, encroachments, excessive borewell usage, and eucalyptus cultivation.

Water Crisis in India

- India has **18 percent** of the world's population, but only **4 percent** of its water resources, making it among the most water-stressed in the world.
- A NITI Aayog report, '**Composite Water Management Index' (2018)** has said that India is facing its 'worst' water crisis in history, with more than **600 million** people facing acute water shortages.

Solution to Water Crisis

- Provide incentives or subsidies to encourage individuals and businesses to adopt **rainwater harvesting** practices.
- **Enforce strict regulations** to prevent encroachment and pollution of lakes, tanks, and rivers.
- Invest in the **restoration of degraded water bodies**, including desilting, dredging, and water quality improvement measures.
- **Create buffer zones** and green spaces around water bodies to prevent further encroachment and protect their ecological integrity.
- Implementation of **decentralized wastewater treatment** systems and reuse of treated wastewater for non-potable purposes such as irrigation, industrial processes, and groundwater recharge.

Government Initiatives to tackle water Crisis in India

- Government of India launched **Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in 2019**, to improve water availability including groundwater conditions in the water stressed blocks of 256 districts in India.
- **Amrit Sarovar Mission** to develop and rejuvenate 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

- **National Aquifer Mapping Programme (NAQUIM)** to delineate and characterize the aquifer system in the country.

- The **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** was launched in 2019 with the aim to provide a functional tap connection within the premises of each rural household in India by 2024.

Way Ahead

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Educating people about water conservation and sanitation practices is crucial.

- **Technological Solutions:** Exploring desalination, wastewater treatment, and rainwater harvesting technologies can provide new water sources.

- **A circular water economy:** To maximize the utility of every liter of water and reduce the city's dependence on external sources.
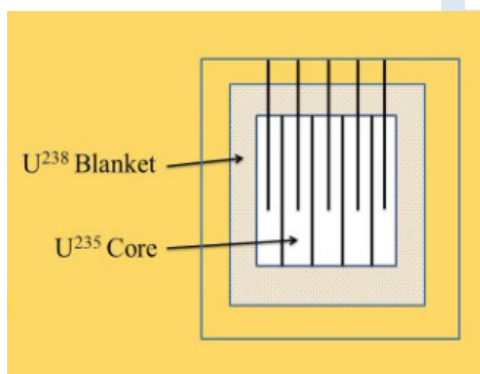
Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

FAST BREEDER REACTOR

Context:

Recently, India's first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu began 'core loading'.

About the Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR)

- It is a part of **India's three-stage** nuclear power program, which is **designed to produce more nuclear fuel than it consumes**.

- Its **Prototype (PFBR)** at Kalpakkam (500 MWe) is **India's first indigenous FBR**.

The Three-Stage Nuclear Program:

- It is designed by Homi J. Bhabha, which aims to allow India complete self-sufficiency in nuclear energy.

> **Core Loading:**
> - It is the **process in the FBR** that marks the **entry into the Second Stage** by loading nuclear fuel assemblies into the reactor core.
>   - It aims to use the **Uranium-Plutonium Mixed Oxide (MOX)** fuel initially.
>   - The **Uranium-238** and **Thorium-232** *(itself is not a fissile material)* 'blanket' surrounding the fuel core undergoes nuclear transmutation to produce more fuel.

- **First Stage:** India used pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs) and natural Uranium-238 (U-238), which contains minuscule amounts of U-235, as the fissile material.

- **Second Stage:** India aims to use Plutonium-239 (Pu-239) together with U-238 in the PFBR to produce energy, U-233, and more Pu-239.

- **Third Stage:** It aims to combine Pu-239 with Thorium-232 (Th-232) in reactors to produce energy and U-233.

Significance:

- It is an **advanced third-generation reactor** with inherent passive safety features ensuring a prompt and safe shutdown of the plant in the event of an emergency.

- Since **it uses the spent fuel from the first stage**, FBR offers a great advantage in terms of significant **reduction in nuclear waste** generated.

- It symbolises **India's entry into the crucial second stage** of the country's three-stage nuclear program.

- Once commissioned, **India will only be the second country after Russia** to have a commercial operating FBR.
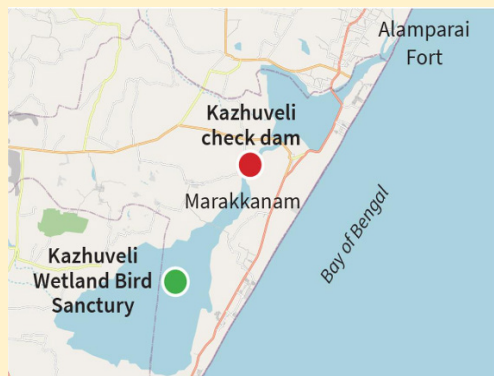
Source: IE

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND

Context:

- Recently, **Kazhuveli watershed region in Tamil Nadu** was proposed for nomination to **World Monuments Fund Watch for 2025.**

About the World Monuments Fund (WMF):

- It is a **New York-based non-profit organisation** dedicated to **preserving and protecting** endangered ancient and historic sites around the world.

    - It works with local partners around the globe to provide financial and technical support.

- It has raised over $300 million and leveraged more than $400 million from other agencies.

- Since its inception, the WMF has conserved over 700 sites and advocated for more than 800 treasured places.

World Monuments Watch:

- It is a **nomination-based program**, launched in 1996, that connects local heritage preservation to global awareness and action.

- To date, the WMF has contributed more than $110 million toward projects at more than 300 Watch sites, with the visibility provided by the Watch helping communities leverage an additional $300 million from other sources.

World Monuments Fund (WMF) in India:

The Kazhuveli Watershed Region:

- It is a significant ecological area known for its **ancient 'Eri' network**, an incredible network of tanks created thousands of years ago.

- It is located in **Villupuram district** and stretches from Gingee to Marakkanam all the way up to the **Auroville plateau in Tamil Nadu**.

- If the nomination comes through, pilot projects will be run in Munnur village to develop a heritage toolkit that could be replicated through the watershed and beyond.

Suranga Bawadi:

- It is an **ancient water system on the Deccan Plateau in Karnataka**, which was included in the **World Monument Watch list for 2020.**

Source: TH

PM SURAJ PORTAL

Context

- The Prime Minister of India recently launched the **'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' (PM-SURAJ)** national portal.

PM-SURAJ portal

- **Parent ministry**: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

- **Aim:** To economically empower people belonging to socially backward classes, scheduled castes, tribes and other disadvantaged sections of the society.

    - It will serve individuals from disadvantaged communities, including **Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, and Safai Karamcharis (sanitation workers).**

- **Objective:** The portal streamlines the process of applying for financial assistance schemes offered by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Significance:

- **Direct Benefit Transfer:** Cuts out middlemen and ensures funds reach beneficiaries directly through bank accounts.

- **Reduced Hassle:** Simplifies the application process by offering a centralized online platform.

- **Economic Upliftment:** Aims to empower marginalized communities by providing capital to start or expand businesses.

- **Social Upliftment:** Furthermore, it will also empower these classes not only economically but also socially.

Source: HT

ADOPT A HERITAGE 2.0

Context

- **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** unveiled the Revamped Website and Sign MoUs for Monuments Adoption **under Adopt a Heritage 2.0.**

About

- ASI launched the "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" programme in **2023.**

- The programme seeks to foster **collaboration with corporate stakeholders** through which they can contribute to **preservation of the monuments for the next generation.**

  - ASI has 3696 monuments under protection, which are spread, throughout the country.

- The selected stakeholders will **develop, provide and maintain amenities** in hygiene, accessibility, safety and knowledge categories.

- The term of the appointment will be for a **period of five years initially,** which may be further extended up to five years.

Source: PIB

SVALBARD GLOBAL SEED VAULT

Context

- **Svalbard Global Seed Vault** got seeds from more new contributors than ever before.

About

- The Svalbard Global Seed Vault is situated in permafrost caverns on an island located within the **European mainland and the North Pole.**

  - It is built to **preserve global crops from extinction**.

- The facility was established **16 years ago** through a partnership between the Nordic Genetic Resource Center, the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Crop Trust.

- It was designed to **store over 2 billion seeds** and guarantee their availability for future generations.

- It houses over **930,000 varieties of food crops**.

- Acting as a massive safety deposit box, it contains the **world's largest collection of agricultural biodiversity.**

- **Svalbard** is one of the **most remote places on Earth,** located far north where commercial airlines reach their limits.

Source: IE

RECENT AI PROJECTS

Context

- South Korean company Hyodol launched **AI dolls** to combat loneliness for senior citizens.

- US-based startup launched **Devin AI,** an artificial intelligence software, which alters the way code is debugged, written and deployed.

Devin AI

- Devin AI is a first of its kind and has the ability of taking a simple command and turning it into a functioning website or software program.

- It can also manage the whole process of creating and releasing whole software applications which **large language models (LLMs)** like Google's Gemini or OpenAI's ChatGPT are unable to do.

Hyodol robot

- To beat loneliness, the company has come up with a robot doll that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to interact with elderly suffering from dementia.

- The doll can hold full conversations and it comes with a companion app and web monitoring platform for caretakers to monitor remotely.

Source: IE/ IE

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