

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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WORLD HERITAGE DAY

Context

- World Heritage Day, also known as the International Monuments and Sites Day, is observed on 18 April every year.
 - The theme of World Heritage Day is 'Discover and Experience Diversity'.

Background

- World Heritage** is the designation for places on Earth that are of outstanding universal value to humanity and as such, have been inscribed on the World Heritage List to be protected for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
- In **1982**, The **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** proposed that April 18 should be observed as the World Heritage Day.
 - Later, the date was approved by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at the 22nd General Conference in **1983**.

Significance

- On this day, several organizations, societies, governments, and individuals come together to advocate the preservation of these marvels and increase public awareness about their significance.
 - Several historic monuments and sites present in India are in dire need of preservation, to keep the cultural heritage intact.

Monuments of National Importance (MNI) of India

- The MNIs are officially conserved by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, which functions in accordance with The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 2010 (**AMASR Act 2010**).
- There are **3697** ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains declared as of national importance in the country.

Architecturally significant caves in India

- Ellora Caves:** They are situated in Maharashtra and are a remarkable fusion of Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain monuments.
 - The site includes 34 caves, carved out of solid rock between the 6th and 10th centuries CE.

- The Kailash Temple**, carved from a single rock and dedicated to Lord Shiva, attracts visitors from all over the world.
- Ajanta caves:** the caves are located in **Maharashtra** and are renowned for their exquisite Buddhist rock-cut cave monuments.
 - These caves date back to the 2nd century BCE.
- Krishna Mandapam:** It is located on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal, in the Kancheepuram district, **Tamil Nadu**.
 - The rock-cut cave temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna and depicts scenes from Hindu mythology, including Lord Krishna lifting the Govardhan Hill.
- Varaha Cave Temple:** In the coastal town of Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu stands the Varaha Cave Temple, a UNESCO-listed monument carved out of a single rock in the **7th century CE**.
 - It was made by the **Pallava rulers**, depicting various forms of Lord Vishnu, including his avatar or incarnation as Varaha (boar) to save Goddess Earth.
- Elephanta Caves:** The site is located in **Elephanta Island**, Maharashtra. It features a collection of rock-cut temples dedicated to **Lord Shiva**.
 - These caves, dating back to the **5th century CE**.
 - The most notable among the network of caves is the **Trimurti**, a massive three-headed statue representing the aspects of Shiva.

Source: IE

SWEDEN JOINS ARTEMIS ACCORDS

Context

- Sweden and Slovenia became the **38th** and **39th** country respectively to sign the **Artemis Accords**.

About

- The **Artemis Accords** are a **set of principles and guidelines** for international cooperation in space exploration.
 - They are **not a legally binding** instrument.
- They were announced by NASA in **2020** and named after NASA's Artemis program which is aimed at returning humans to the Moon by the mid-2020s.

- The Accords mirror principles set out in **1967**, as part of the **Outer Space Treaty** to help govern international cooperation space.
- **Members:** Artemis Accords has 39 members including Australia, France, Germany, India, Japan, United Kingdom, United States of America etc.
 - ♦ **India** joined the **Artemis Accords in 2023**.
 - ♦ **Russia and China** are not part of the Artemis Accords.

key Principles of the Artemis Accords

- **Peaceful Exploration of space:** All activities conducted under the Artemis program must be carried out for peaceful purposes in accordance with international law.
- **Transparency:** Signatory nations should conduct their activities in a transparent way. The accords state: "Artemis Accords signatories commit to the public release of scientific information, allowing the whole world to join us on the Artemis journey."
- **Interoperability:** Nations participating in the Artemis program should aim to develop and provide support for systems that can work in conjunction with existing infrastructure.
- **Emergency Assistance:** Nations signing the Artemis Accords are committed to assisting astronauts and personnel in outer space who are in distress.
- **Registration of Space Objects:** Nations participating in Artemis should determine which of them should register any relevant space object.
- **Preserving Heritage:** Artemis Accords signatories have committed to preserving humanity's outer space heritage such as human or robotic landing sites, artifacts, spacecraft, and other evidence of activity on other celestial bodies.
- **Space Resources:** The accord signatories affirm that extracting and utilizing space resources from the celestial bodies listed, is vital to supporting safe and sustainable space exploration.
- **Deconfliction of Activities:** Nations are committed to preventing harmful interference and exercising the principle of due regard. This also covers the establishment of "**safety zones**" with areas that can be established between countries and which can be ended when relevant operations cease.

- **Orbital Debris:** Countries are committed to planning for the safe, timely and efficient disposal of debris as part of the mission planning process.

Activities under Artemis programme

- The initial three missions of the programme are Artemis-I, II and III.
- **Under Artemis-I,** NASA launched its spacecraft 'Orion' on its indigenously built super heavy-lift launch vehicle (SLS) directly to the moon on a single mission.
 - ♦ In 2022, the SLS carrying Orion commenced its first uncrewed integrated flight test.
- **Artemis-2 programme** will commence, with a crew of four astronauts onboard the SLS performing multiple manoeuvres on an expanding orbit around the Earth.
- **Artemis-III,** mission will witness the four-member crew land on the moon, conduct a week-long lunar exploration, perform a lunar flyby, and return to earth.

Significance of Artemis Accords for India

- **Collaboration between ISRO and NASA:** NASA will provide advanced training to Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) astronauts with the goal of launching a joint effort to the International Space Station.
- **Vision of Global Space Power:** This agreement holds significant importance for India to establish itself as a global space power.
 - ♦ It will benefit space exploration ambitions under the new space policy mainly through international collaboration as all signatories to the accords commit to the open sharing of scientific data and assist each other in the efforts.
- **Technology Transfer:** Artemis Accords could possibly liberalize some of those technology transfer hurdles that are there between the US and India.
- India's being the part of Artemis Accords highlights its **dedication to global space cooperation** and a keen interest in participating in lunar exploration missions.
 - ♦ This collaboration enables the sharing of knowledge and expertise, contributing to the advancement of scientific research, technological development, and the expansion of humanity's presence in space.

- **International Cooperation:** Now India is much more open to international collaborations and open to exploring uncharted territories.
 - ♦ It also opens up markets for Indian companies with all the other signatories of the Artemis Accord.

Source: IE

FORESTS AS NATIONAL ASSET: SUPREME COURT

Context

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India has asserted in a judgement that forests in India are a national asset and a major contributor to the nation's financial wealth.

Forest as Financial Wealth and National Asset

- The **Supreme Court of India** has asserted that forests in India are a national asset and a major contributor to the nation's financial wealth.
 - ♦ The judgement was based on an appeal filed by the **State of Telangana** against a **High Court decision 'graciously gifting' forest land** to a private person.

Do You Know?

- The **Forest Conservation (Amendment) Act (2023)** is accused of giving a **free hand to States** to regularise encroachments in protected forests and determine diversions of forestlands.
- It has been criticised for paving the way for the commercial exploitation of forests, besides exempting infrastructural projects from environmental clearance.
- The Supreme Court observed that **India's forests serve as a major sink of carbon dioxide (CO₂)**. The value of mitigation has put a conservative value of **US\$ 5 per tonne of CO₂ locked in our forests** (about 24,000 mt of CO₂ is worth \$120 billion, or **₹6 lakh crores**).
- According to the **'India's Forest and Tree Cover: Contribution as a Carbon Sink (2009)**', from '1995 to 2005, the carbon stocks stored in our forests and trees have increased from 6,245 million tonnes (mt) to 6,662 mt, registering an **annual increment of 38 mt of carbon** or 138 mt of CO₂ equivalent'.

Forest Resources in India

- India, with its diverse ecosystems, is rich in forest resources.
- The **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**, an organisation under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is responsible for the survey and assessment of forest resources in the country.

Forest Survey of India (FSI)

- Established in 1981, the FSI succeeded the **'Pre-investment Survey of Forest Resources (PISFR)'**, a project initiated in 1965 by India with the help of the **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- The FSI's **principal mandate** is to conduct a survey and assessment of forest resources in the country.
- The FSI's activities include nationwide forest cover mapping in a **biennial cycle** using **remote sensing techniques, national forest inventory, forest fire monitoring**, and many projects based on geospatial techniques and inventory.
- It assesses **forest carbon** to be reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Forest Cover in India

- The FSI's reports identify **63 million hectares of potential areas for restoration** across different categories, namely, **open forest**, recently impaired forests, cultural wastelands, agro-forestry plantations, and potential for plantations along roads and railway tracks.
- The **National Forest Policy of India (1988)** envisaged a **goal of achieving 33%** of the geographical area of the country under forest & tree cover.
 - ♦ The remote sensing-based nationwide Forest Cover mapping at a biennial interval serves as a monitoring mechanism towards the achievement of this goal.
- Forests in India cover about **24.62% of the country's land area** (including tree cover) and are some of the most biodiverse forests in the world.
- They provide a range of important ecosystem services, such as protecting against soil erosion, regulating the water cycle, and serving as a home for a wide variety of plant and animal species.

Community Forest Resources

- These play a crucial role in supporting rural livelihoods.
- An **estimated 200 million forest-dependent people** collect several valuable products from India's forests.
- These are used as **raw materials in diverse industries**, such as processed foods and confectionery, pharmaceuticals, alternative medicine, cosmetics and perfumery, and paper and pulp.

Ecological Importance

- Forests are often referred to as the 'green lungs' of the nation by providing various ecological services like clean air, water, maintenance of soil-moisture regime by checking soil erosion, preserving biodiversity, checking global warming and climate change by sequestering carbon dioxide.

Social Importance

- Forests provide habitats to diverse animal species and form the source of livelihood for many different human settlements.
- They offer watershed protection, timber, and non-timber products.
 - ♦ Over 1.6 billion people depend on forests for food or fuel.

Conservation Efforts

- India has developed a strong legal and policy framework for the forestry sector for sustainable forest governance through the **National Forest Policy, 1988, Indian Forest Act, 1927, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
- The **National Forest Policy** sets a strategy of forest conservation with the principal aim of ensuring environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance by bringing a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover.

Conclusion

- India's forest resources are a vital part of the country's ecological and economic wealth.
- The Supreme Court's judgement underscores the importance of forests as a national asset and a significant contributor to the nation's financial wealth.

- It highlights the need for effective forest conservation policies and strict enforcement to protect and preserve these valuable resources.

Source: TH

PREVENTIVE DETENTION

Context

- The **Jammu and Kashmir High Court** ordered the **release of Jaffar Ahmad Parray**, who was detained under the **state's Public Safety Act, 1978 (PSA).**

What is Preventive Detention?

- **Preventive detention** means to detain a person so that to **prevent that person** from committing any possible crime.
- It is an action taken by the administration **on the grounds of the suspicion** that some wrong actions may be done by the person concerned which will be prejudicial to the state.
- The grounds for Preventive detention are:
 - ♦ Security of state, maintenance of public order,
 - ♦ Maintenance of supplies and essential services and defense,
 - ♦ Foreign affairs or security of India.

Punitive Detention

- It is to punish a person for an offence committed by him/her after trial and conviction in a court.

Safeguards Provided By The Constitution

- To prevent reckless use of Preventive Detention, certain safeguards are provided in the constitution **under Article 22:**
 - ♦ A person can be taken to preventive custody **only for 3 months at the first instance.** If the period of detention is extended beyond 3 months, the case must be **referred to an Advisory Board.**
 - ♦ The detainee is **entitled to know the grounds of his detention.** The state, however, may refuse to divulge the grounds of detention if it is in the **public interest to do so.**
 - ♦ The detaining authorities must give the **detainee earliest opportunities** for making representation against the detention.

Arguments in Favour of Preventive Detention

- **National Security:** India faces various internal and external security threats, including terrorism, insurgency, and organized crime.

- ◆ Preventive detention is a necessary tool to address these threats by allowing law enforcement agencies to detain individuals suspected of involvement in activities that pose a risk to national security.
- **Maintaining Public Order:** In situations of civil unrest, communal tensions, or public disturbances, preventive detention is used to prevent further escalation of violence and maintain public order.
- **Preserving Integrity and Sovereignty:** Individuals involved in activities such as sedition, espionage, or conspiracy against the state are detained to prevent their actions from causing harm to the integrity and sovereignty of the nation.
- **Deterrence:** The existence of preventive detention laws and their occasional use serve as a deterrent to individuals or groups considering engaging in unlawful activities.
 - ◆ The knowledge that authorities have the power to detain individuals suspected of posing a threat to public safety dissuade potential offenders from carrying out their plans.

Arguments Against Preventive Detention

- **Colonial Law:** Preventive detention was introduced to India during the colonial period and was largely used to target freedom fighters. It would therefore seem surprising that the Constitution allows both the union and state to enact preventive detention laws.
- **Misuse of the Law:** The state may refuse to divulge the grounds of detention if it is in the public interest to do so. This power conferred on the state leaves scope for arbitrary action on the part of the authorities.
- **Against the Fundamental Rights:** Part III of the Constitution, which deals with fundamental rights, also gives the the power to suspend these rights for preventive detention.
 - ◆ Article 22 which provides Protection Against Arrest and Detention in Certain Cases expressly excludes preventive detention cases from **direct judicial scrutiny and instead creates an administrative review framework.**
- **Detention on the Basis of Suspicion:** The law authorizes the executive to arrest any person from whom reasonable suspicion arises that he can commit any cognizable offense and the police can arrest that person without warrant which is arbitrary in nature.
- **Nature of Application of Law:** In countries such as Britain, United States and Canada, preventive detention is a **wartime measure**. India is one of the

few countries in the world whose Constitution allows for **preventive detention during peacetime**.

Way Ahead

- For preventive detention, there are very narrow grounds of judicial review because the Constitution emphasises the state's "subjective satisfaction" when ordering a detention.
 - ◆ More safeguards can be provided to the detainee so that **there is a narrow scope of misuse.**
- Judges can ensure that the government has followed every procedure of law while using the preventive detention powers against individuals.

Source: IE

FSSAI TO INITIATE ACTION AGAINST NESTLE

Context

- The Union Consumer Affairs Ministry asked the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** to initiate "**appropriate action**" against the **Nestle group** for allegedly **selling baby products with high sugar content in India.**

About

- The Department has initiated this action following a report that the **Nestle Company has allegedly added 2.7 grams of sugar** per serving to their Cerelac baby cereals sold in India.
- The same company **refrain from this practice in countries** such as Germany, Switzerland, France, and the United Kingdom.
- **Concerns:** High sugar content in baby products raises serious concerns about the **potential implications for the health and safety of children in the country.**
 - ◆ Eliminating added sugars from food products for young children would be an important **way to implement early prevention of obesity.**
 - ◆ The WHO has warned that obesity is dramatically on the rise, **particularly in low and middle income countries**, where it has now reached "**epidemic proportions**", and is fuelling an increase of noncommunicable diseases such as **cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes.**
 - ◆ Increased consumption of highly processed foods, often dense in sugar content, is singled out as one of the **main causes of this epidemic.**

Ethical Duty of Food Companies Towards Consumers

- **Safety and Health:** Food companies have an ethical obligation to prioritize the safety and health of consumers by producing and distributing food products that meet high standards of safety and hygiene.
- **Transparency and Truthfulness:** Food companies should provide accurate and reliable information about their products and ingredients.
 - ◆ Honest labeling and marketing help consumers make informed choices and build trust in the brand.
- **Nutritional Responsibility:** Food companies should prioritize the nutritional quality of their products and encourage healthy eating habits among consumers.
- **Consumer Engagement and Feedback:** Food companies should actively engage with consumers, listen to their feedback and concerns, and take appropriate actions to address them.
- **Ethical Marketing and Advertising:** Food companies should adhere to ethical standards in their marketing and advertising practices, avoiding misleading or deceptive tactics that may manipulate consumer behavior or misrepresent the qualities of their products.
- **Corporate Accountability and Governance:** Ethical food companies uphold principles of corporate accountability and governance, maintaining transparency in their business operations, financial practices, and decision-making processes.

Food Safety Laws in India

- The primary legislation concerning food safety in India is the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act)**, which was enacted to consolidate various food laws in the country.
- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):** FSSAI is the apex body responsible for formulating and enforcing food safety standards in India.
 - ◆ It regulates and monitors the manufacture, processing, distribution, sale, and import of food products to ensure they meet safety standards.
- **Food Safety and Standards Regulations (FSSR):** The regulations provide detailed guidelines and standards for various aspects of food safety, including manufacturing practices,

labeling, packaging, hygiene, contaminants, additives, and residues.

- **Licensing and Registration:** The FSS Act mandates that food businesses obtain licenses or registrations from FSSAI, depending on their scale and nature of operations.
- **Food Labeling and Packaging:** FSSAI regulations prescribe requirements for labeling and packaging of food products to provide accurate information to consumers regarding ingredients, nutritional content, shelf life, and other essential details.
- **Food Import Regulations:** Imported food products must comply with Indian food safety standards and regulations.
- **Food Testing and Certification:** FSSAI accredits laboratories for testing food products to ensure compliance with safety standards.
 - ◆ Food products require certification from authorized laboratories before they can be marketed or sold.
- **Food Recall and Traceability:** FSSAI has provisions for food recall in case of safety concerns or contamination incidents.
 - ◆ It also emphasizes traceability measures to track the flow of food products throughout the supply chain.

Conclusion

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has for several years now warned against the presence of high sugar content in baby food products.
- Businesses operate for profit but the government must ensure the safety of its citizens.
- Any laxity in the laws will ensure that the health of the citizens and in this case vulnerable infants gets compromised.

Source: TH

NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION 2024

Context

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has released the **National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024** titled '**Aadharshila**,' on the lines of the **National Education Policy 2020** and the **National Curriculum Framework**.

About

- For the first time ever, **the Union Government** has **released a curriculum advisable** to be taught to **children aged three to six-years-old**.
- It has given an impetus to **pre-school learning in 14 lakh anganwadis** across the country.
- The early childhood education curriculum is expected to **bridge foundational literacy and numeracy gaps** which may arise in later school years.
- **As 85% of brain development** occurs before the age of six years, the Ministry recognizes the pivotal role of early years in development and **seeks to strengthen India's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) landscape**.

National Curriculum for ECCE 2024

- **It covers all domains of development** including physical/motor, cognitive, language and literacy, socioemotional, cultural/aesthetic as well as positive habits.
- The Curriculum is structured to provide a **weekly calendar** comprising 36 weeks of active learning, 8 weeks of reinforcement and 4 weeks of initiation, together with 5+1 days of play-based learning in one week, and three blocks of activities in one day.
- It provides for a **combination of activities**, including in-centre and at-home, indoor and outdoor, child-led and educator-led etc.
- **Robust assessment tools** are provided for tracking progress, tailoring learning, and celebrating each child's unique journey.
- **Special focus** has been given for the screening, inclusion and referrals of **Divyang children** in every activity.

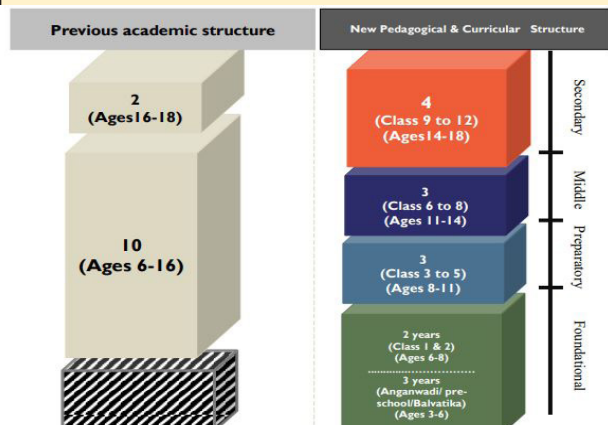
National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation 2024

- **It is for the children from birth to three years** and is designed to provide the Anganwadi Worker with a **basic understanding of how children grow and develop**, the importance of brain development and the need for nurturing care.
- It fills **conceptual and practical gaps in the understanding of care and stimulation**, based on the Nurturing Care Framework.
- **36 month-wise age-based activities** are provided that can be conducted both within the household as well as at the Anganwadi Centre or Creche, through all.

- The documents have been prepared by the **National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)**.
- **NIPCCD** will lead the training of Anganwadi functionaries on the new Curriculum and Framework.

National Education Policy 2020

- The NEP 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four year old **National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986**.
- The NEP 2020 is founded on the five guiding pillars of **Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability**.
- This policy envisages that the **extant 10+2 structure** in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of **5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18**.



- **It seeks to:**
 - ♦ Increase public investment in education,
 - ♦ Strengthen the use of technology and
 - ♦ Increase focus on vocational and adult education, among others.
- **Curricular Reforms:** The NEP emphasizes reducing the curriculum content to essential core concepts, skills, and competencies, allowing for a more holistic and integrated approach to learning. It encourages the integration of vocational education, arts, and sports into the mainstream curriculum.
- **Multilingualism and Mother Tongue-based Education:** The policy promotes multilingualism and encourages the use of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction up to at least Grade 5, while also ensuring proficiency in the official languages of India and English.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

WORLD CRAFT CITY PROGRAMME

Context

- Recently, it was expected that the **Srinagar** of Indian UT of Jammu and Kashmir, known for its unique and high-quality craftwork, to be on the list of World Craft Cities.

About the World Craft City (WCC) Programme

- It establishes a dynamic network of craft cities across the globe, launched in 2014 by **World Crafts Council International (WCCI)**, aligning with the principles of the **creative economy**.
- It aims to highlight craft expertise, encourage government support, foster innovation and tourism, and facilitate knowledge exchange among the selected cities featured on its platform.

World Crafts Council International (WCCI)

- It is a **Kuwait-based organisation** working on the recognition and preservation of traditional crafts across the globe, has initiated a groundbreaking program known as the **World Craft City (WCC) Programme**.
- It recognises the pivotal role local authorities, craftspeople, and communities play in cultural, economic, and social development worldwide.

Do You Know?

- Sonargaon**, one of the old capitals of the historic region of Bengal, has been recognised as the '**World Craft City**' earlier for being the **birthplace of Jamdani**.
- Jamdani** is a **fine muslin textile of Bengal**, produced for centuries and whether figured or flowered, it is a woven fabric in cotton which is also a symbol of aristocracy.

Source: TH

LONGEVITY INDIA INITIATIVE

Context

- Recently, the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)** has launched the '**Longevity India Initiative**' aiming at extending human healthspan and tackling ageing-related challenges.

About the Longevity India Initiative

- It brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts from academia, industry, and healthcare to address complex challenges related to ageing.

- It primarily focuses on identifying early disease indicators, investigating ageing biomarkers, and developing new therapeutics and technologies to aid healthy ageing.
- It seeks to enhance the understanding of aging through both fundamental and applied research, and to develop solutions that can improve quality of life.

Funding and Support

- The initiative has received initial grant funding support from Prashanth Prakash, Founding Partner, Accel India.

Significance

- It is an attempt to bring together multiple stakeholders working in the space, and explore the subject, factoring in India's specific and diverse needs.
 - India's elderly population is projected to surge to 347 million by 2050.
- It is imperative to leverage technology to provide accessible geriatric healthcare, nurture the silver economy, and invest in digital systems that support ageing populations.

Source: BS

VASUKI INDICUS

Context

- Researchers at the IIT Roorkee have reported the discovery of fossils of one of the largest snakes that ever existed on Earth.

About

- The fossils were found in **Kutch, Gujarat**, and the reptile, named Vasuki Indicus, could have been anywhere between 10 meters and 15 meters long.
 - Vasuki refers to the mythical snake often depicted around the neck of the Hindu god Shiva.
- The reptile existed **47 million years ago** during a period called the **Middle Eocene**, when Africa, India and South America were one, conjoined landmass.
- It likely had a broad and **cylindrical body**, hinting at a robust and powerful build and was as big as **Titanoboa**, a massive snake that once roamed the earth and is reportedly the longest ever known.
- Much like present-day pythons and anaconda, Vasuki Indicus killed its prey by suffocation.

Source: TH

EXOSKELETON

Context

- Phoenix, a robotic exoskeleton will get paraplegics up and walking at a relatively budget price.

About

- The Phoenix is a 27-pound mechanical frame with spartan design, which focuses entirely on helping the wearer walk.
- Exoskeletons are loaded with powerful motors that allow wearers to replicate a wide range of movements, like running or jumping.
- The Phoenix's only motors are at the hip joints, which swing forward in succession while "the onboard computer signals the knee to become loose, flex, and clear the ground."
- Wearing the Phoenix, someone normally bound to a wheelchair can sit, stand, and walk on a level grade at 1.1 miles per hour.

Source: [The Week](#)

HAINAN FREE TRADE PORT

- The Governor of Hainan province of China said that the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port (FTP) has taken shape and gained momentum.

Hainan Free Trade Port

- It is China's ambitious project to establish about **35,000 sq km** island as China's most open economic region by **2025**.
- Hainan province is the southernmost and the only tropical island province of China in the South China Sea.
- The ultimate goal is to build a tropical Dubai in the middle of the South China Sea by **2035**.

Source: [TH](#)

NATIONAL SECURITY GUARD (NSG)

Context

- Senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Nalin Prabhat has been appointed as the **Director-General of National Security Guard (NSG)**.

About

- The NSG was formed in **1986** to save the country from terror activities.

- It comes under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
- The NSG was established in the wake of **Operation Blue Star of 1984**.
 - During this operation the Union Government felt the need to have a special force to tackle terror activities.
- The NSG is served by the officers/personnel from the **Central Armed Police Forces, Indian Army and State Police Forces**.
- The NSG personnel are often referred as **Black Cats** because of the black outfit and black cat insignia on their uniform. The motto of the NSG is "**Sarvatra Sarvottam Suraksha**".
- Main operations conducted:**
 - Black Thunder
 - Ashwamedh
 - Combat missions in Jammu and Kashmir
 - Vajra Shakti
 - Black Tornado

Source: [TH](#)

NATIONAL CADET CORPS (NCC)

Context

- The Ministry of Defence is planning a **phase-wise augmentation** of the **National Cadet Corps (NCC)** from the current 17 lakh cadets to 27 lakh in the next 10 years.
 - This is aimed at **enhancing the reach of the tri-service** organisation to a **greater number of educational institutions**, with a focus on border areas.

About

- The NCC in India was formed under the **National Cadet Corps Act of 1948**.
- It can be traced back to the "**University Corps**", which was created under the **Indian Defense Act 1917**, with the objective to **make up for the shortage in the Army**.
- It is the **youth wing of the Armed Forces** with its Headquarters at New Delhi.
- It is **open to school and college students on a voluntary basis**. NCC is the largest uniformed youth organization.
- It is a Tri-Services Organization, comprising the **Army, Navy and Air Wing**, engaged in grooming the youth of the country into disciplined and patriotic citizens.
- Its motto is '**Unity and Discipline**'.

Source: [IE](#)

