

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 05-09-2024

Table of Content

CVC Report on Corruption Complaints

Latest ILO Study has Linked AI to dip in Labour Income

India and Singapore Elevated Ties

Black Coat Syndrome

Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO)

NEWS IN SHORT

National Test House

Centralized Pension Payment System (CPPS)

Center Suggests Measures to Enhance Security at Hospitals

Peace Pact with Tripura Insurgent Groups

Smart Cities Mission

MNRE Exemption for Green Hydrogen Projects

OpenAI's Project Strawberry

CVC REPORT ON CORRUPTION COMPLAINTS

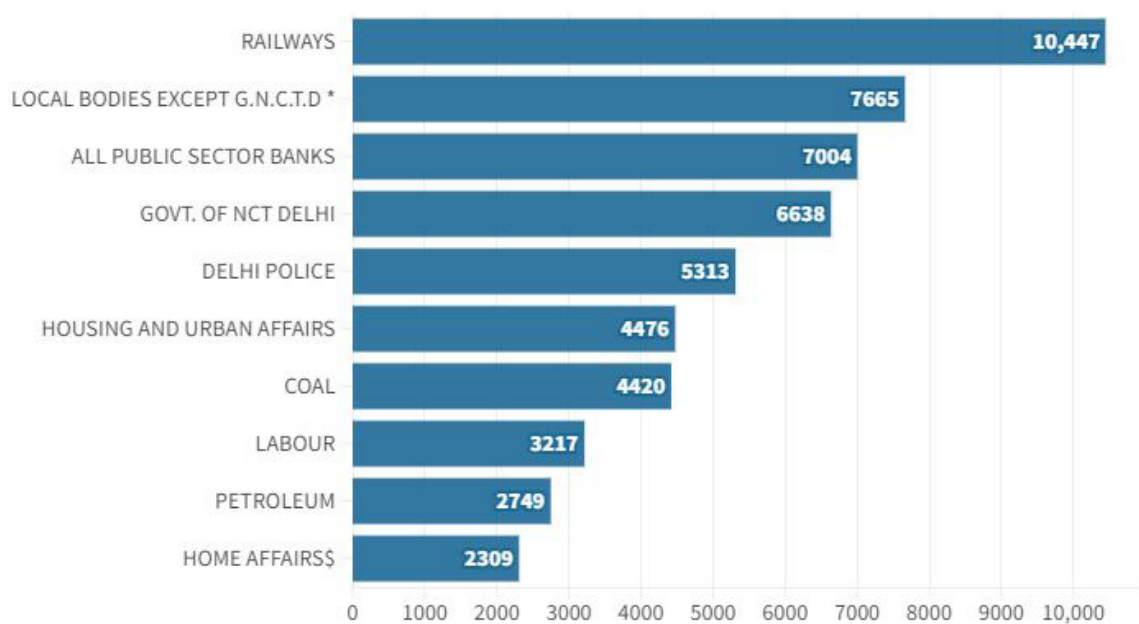
Context

- **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** has released the report revealing the corruption complaints against various government officials in 2023.

Major Highlights

- Of the total corruption complaints received, the highest number of complaints was against **railway employees, followed by those in Delhi's local bodies and public sector banks.**
- ♦ Of the total complaints received against railway employees, 9,881 were disposed of and 566 were pending.

Graft complaints received



- As many as 74,203 graft complaints were received against all categories of officers/employees in 2023, of which 66,373 were disposed of and 7,830 were pending.

Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)

- It was set up by the Government of India (Ministry of Home Affairs) vide Resolution in **1964** on the recommendation of the **Santhanam Committee**.
- It aims to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability in the public sector.
- **Mandate:** The CVC is tasked with overseeing and ensuring the proper functioning of various government departments and public sector enterprises.
 - ♦ It investigates allegations of corruption and malpractices against public servants.
- **Appointment of Members:** The Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners are appointed by The President of India on the basis of the recommendation of a committee consisting of:
 - ♦ Prime Minister as Chairmen of the Committee.
 - ♦ The Minister of Home Affairs as a member of the committee.
 - ♦ Leader of the Opposition in the House of the People as member of the committee.
- **Autonomy:** The CVC operates independently of the government to ensure impartiality in its investigations and recommendations.
- **Term of Office:** The Central Vigilance Commissioner shall hold office for a term of **four years** from the date on which he enters upon his office or till he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier.
- **Removal of Members:** Only the President has the power to remove the Central Vigilance Commissioner or any vigilance commissioner from the office under the following circumstances:
 - ♦ If proved an insolvent.
 - ♦ If he has been convicted of an offence which, in the opinion of the Central Government, involves moral turpitude.

- ♦ If holds any Office of Profit.
- ♦ If he is unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body.

Corruption

- Corruption may be defined as an **act of bribery or misuse of public position** or power for the fulfillment of selfish motives or to gain personal gratifications.
- India **ranked 93 out of 180 countries** on the **corruption perceptions index for 2023** according to a Transparency International report.
 - ♦ The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

Government of India Initiatives for Combating Corruption

- **Prevention of Corruption Act (1988):** This act aims to prevent corruption in public life by criminalizing the act of accepting or giving bribes.
 - ♦ It has undergone amendments to address emerging challenges in corruption.
- **Right to Information Act (RTI) (2005):** This act empowers citizens to seek information from public authorities, thereby promoting transparency and accountability in government functioning.
- **Digital India Program:** Launched to improve governance and transparency through technology, this program aims to digitize public services and reduce opportunities for corruption.
- **e-Governance:** The implementation of online platforms for government services (e.g., passport applications, income tax returns) reduces bureaucratic red tape and minimizes the chances of corruption.
- **Whistleblower Protection:** The Whistleblowers Protection Act (2014) safeguards individuals who expose corruption and wrongdoing in government and public sector enterprises.
- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** This online platform aims to make public procurement more transparent and efficient by enabling direct procurement by government departments and public sector enterprises.
- **Anti-Corruption Units:** Various state governments have established their own anti-corruption bureaus and vigilance commissions to handle corruption cases at the state level.

Source: TH

LATEST ILO STUDY HAS LINKED AI TO DIP IN LABOUR INCOME

Context

- The International Labour Organisation's (ILO) has released the **World Employment and Social Outlook: September 2024 Update**.

Major Findings

- The ILO analysed the **impact of technological innovations** over the last two decades across 36 countries
- It noted that these innovations have produced persistent increases in labour productivity and output but **they can also reduce the labour income share**.
- **The global labour income share**, which represents the portion of total income earned by workers, **fell by 0.6 percentage points** from 2019 to 2022 and has since remained flat.
 - ♦ **COVID-19 pandemic was a key driver of this decline**, with nearly 40% of the reduction in the labour income share occurring during the pandemic years of 2020 to 2022.
- **The crisis exacerbated existing inequalities**, particularly as capital income continues to concentrate among the wealthiest, **undermining progress towards SDG 10**, which aims to reduce inequality within and among countries

What is AI?

- Artificial intelligence (AI) is a **wide-ranging branch of computer science** concerned with **building smart machines** capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.
- Artificial intelligence allows machines to model, or even improve upon, the **capabilities of the human mind**.
- And from the development of self-driving cars to the proliferation of generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Google's Bard, AI is increasingly becoming part of everyday life — and an area every industry are investing in.

Advantages of AI

- **Good at detail-oriented jobs:** AI has proven to be good at diagnosing certain cancers, including breast cancer and melanoma.
- **Reduced time for data-heavy tasks:** AI is widely used in data-heavy industries, including banking and securities, pharma and insurance, to reduce the time it takes to analyze big data sets.

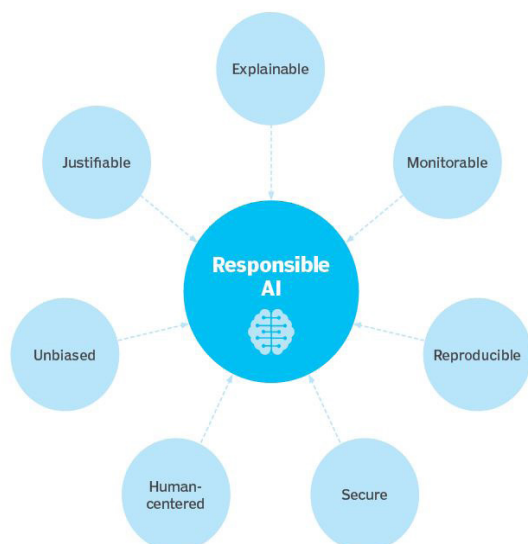
- **Delivers consistent results:** The best AI translation tools deliver high levels of consistency, offering even small businesses the ability to reach customers in their native language.
- **Can improve customer satisfaction:** AI can personalize content, messaging, ads, recommendations and websites to individual customers.
 - ♦ AI programs do not need to sleep or take breaks, providing 24/7 service.

Disadvantages of AI

- Expensive.
- Requires deep technical expertise.
- Limited supply of qualified workers to build AI tools.
- Reflects the biases of its training data, at scale.
- Lack of ability to generalize from one task to another.
- Eliminates human jobs, increasing unemployment rates.
- Unethical use of artificial intelligence.

Ethical Use of AI

- While AI tools present a range of new functionality for businesses, the use of AI also raises ethical questions because, for better or worse, an AI system will reinforce what it has already learned.
- This can be problematic because **machine learning algorithms**, which underpin many of the most advanced AI tools, are only as smart as the data they are given in training.
 - ♦ Because a **human being selects what data is used** to train an AI program, the potential for **machine learning bias** is inherent and must be monitored closely.



- **AI's ethical challenges include the following:** bias due to improperly trained algorithms and human bias; misuse due to deep fakes and phishing; legal concerns including AI libel and copyright issues; elimination of jobs; and data privacy concerns, particularly in the banking, healthcare and legal fields.

Way Ahead

- Countries must take action to counter the risk of declining labour income share.
- Policies that promote an equitable distribution of economic benefits, including freedom of association, collective bargaining and effective labour administration, to achieve inclusive growth, and build a path to sustainable development for all.

Source: TH

INDIA AND SINGAPORE ELEVATED TIES

In News

- India and Singapore enhanced their relationship with the signing of four Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Singapore.

Key Agreements

- **Digital Technologies:** It covers digital technologies, including cybersecurity, 5G, super-computing, quantum computing, and AI, and focuses on upskilling and reskilling workers.
- **Semiconductor Ecosystem:** It involves cooperation in semiconductor cluster development and talent cultivation.
 - ♦ It aims to facilitate investment by Singaporean companies in India's semiconductor sector.
- **Health Cooperation:** It focuses on joint research, innovation, and human resource development in healthcare and pharmaceuticals.
 - ♦ It also aims to promote Indian healthcare professionals in Singapore.
- **Skill Development:** It targets educational cooperation and technical/vocational training, enhancing ongoing skill development initiatives.

India - Singapore Relations

- **Historical :** Strong commercial, cultural, and people-to-people links dating back over a millennium.
 - ♦ Modern ties linked to Sir Stamford Raffles establishing a trading station in 1819.

- ◆ India recognized Singapore soon after its independence in 1965.
- **Strategic** : India-Singapore relations were elevated to Strategic Partnership during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Singapore in 2015.
- **High-Level Exchanges:** PM Modi's visits in 2018 and 2022 marked significant milestones, including keynote addresses at major events.
 - ◆ Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong's visits to India included Republic Day celebrations and the G20 Leaders' Summit.
- **India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR):** Inaugural ISMR in 2022 focused on digital connectivity, Fintech, green economy, and other areas.
 - ◆ 2nd ISMR in 2024 added new pillars like Advanced Manufacturing and Connectivity.
- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:** Singapore is India's largest trade partner in ASEAN. It is the leading source of FDI, among the largest sources of External Commercial Borrowings and Foreign Portfolio Investment.
 - ◆ Bilateral trade between the two countries grew significantly from USD 6.7 billion in FY 2004-05 to USD 35.6 billion in FY 2023-24.
 - ◆ **Singapore ranks as India's 6th largest trade partner**, accounting for 3.2% of India's total trade. In FY 2023-24, India's imports from Singapore were USD 21.2 billion (a 10.2% decrease from the previous year), while exports to Singapore reached USD 14.4 billion (a 20.2% increase from the previous year).
- **Fintech:** Initiatives include the UPI-PayNow linkage, RuPay card acceptance, and other cross-border Fintech developments.
- **Science & Technology Cooperation:** ISRO has launched several Singaporean satellites.
 - ◆ Collaborative efforts in digital health and medical technologies.
- **Cultural Cooperation:** Regular exchanges in performing arts, theatre, and other cultural spheres.
 - ◆ Active promotion of Indian art forms in Singapore.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** Singapore has joined international initiatives like the International Solar Alliance and Global Biofuel Alliance.
 - ◆ Both countries are part of multilateral groups such as IORA, NAM, and the Commonwealth.
- **Indian Community:** Indians make up about 9.1% of Singapore's resident population and 21% of foreign residents.

- ◆ Significant Indian diaspora with high concentrations of IIT and IIM alumni.

Importance

- India's relationship with ASEAN has grown significantly, with a special emphasis on Singapore, one of the most dynamic countries in the region.
- The India-Singapore relationship is grounded in mutual respect and trust, with a diverse and mature cooperation that provides a solid base for further development.
- Singapore has a central role in India's "Look East" and "Act East" policies, particularly in security, connectivity, technology, and sustainability.
- The India-Singapore partnership will enable us to enhance economic cooperation, foster mutual growth and tackle future challenges together.

Future Outlook

- The time is right for India and Singapore to elevate their bilateral relationship, reflecting current global and national realities.
- The India-Singapore partnership is set to enhance economic cooperation, mutual growth, and address future challenges together.
- There is the need to focus on future technologies such as semiconductors, green technologies, and electric mobility, and to collaboratively address connectivity and energy challenges.
- Rapid technological changes necessitate new skills. India and Singapore can collaborate on designing and implementing joint skill development programs.

Source:IE

BLACK COAT SYNDROME

Context

- The President of India Droupadi Murmu, in her address at the National Conference of District Judiciary coined the phrase '**black coat syndrome**' to draw attention to the perennial problem of pendency in courts.
 - ◆ She compared it to the '**white coat syndrome**' patients feel in hospitals.

About

- Flagging the "**culture of adjournment**" in deciding cases, the President said that the poor from the villages are still anxious to approach courts as they feel that fighting for justice will make their lives even more difficult.

- The President highlighted that **justice should not be delayed**, especially in cases involving women and children.

Challenges in the Judicial System of India

- **Pendency of cases:** As of October 2023, the 'State of the Judiciary' report points out that there are over **five crore pending cases** across all higher and subordinate courts in India.
 - ♦ To handle them, however, there are only **20,580 judges** working in the Supreme Court, the high courts and district courts.
- **Infrastructure:** Many courts lack basic infrastructure and technology, which can hinder their efficiency.
 - ♦ As per the **National Judicial Data Grid**, **19.7%** of district courts did not have separate toilets for women as of September 2023.
- **Judicial vacancies:** As of October 2023, against the sanctioned strength of **1,114 judges** in the high courts across the country, as many as **347 positions are vacant**.
 - ♦ Similarly, in the district judiciary, out of the total sanctioned strength of 25,081 judges, as many as **5,300 district judges' positions are vacant**.
- **Inclusivity:** India's highest court presently has **only three female judges (9.3%)**.
 - ♦ In high courts, there are only **103 female judges (13.42%)**.
 - ♦ The district judiciary, however, shows considerable improvement with the strength of **36.33% female judges**.

Initiatives taken address the issue

- **Leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT);**
 - ♦ **The Electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project** is an initiative to provide the digital version of the apex court's judgments.
 - ♦ **Virtual court system:** The regular court proceedings are being carried out virtually via videoconferencing.
 - ♦ **eCourts portal:** It is a one-stop solution for all stakeholders like the litigants, advocates, government agencies, police, and common citizens.
 - ♦ **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG):** The statistics of cases pending at the national, state, district and individual court level are now made accessible to the general public, researchers, academicians and the society at large.

- **National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms (2011):** It was launched with the objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system.
- **Alternative Dispute Resolution(ADR):** Lok Adalats, Gram Nyayalayas, Online Dispute Resolution, etc., are used to ensure timely justice.
- **Commercial Courts Act 2015** stipulates mandatory pre-institution mediation and settlement of commercial disputes.
- **Fast Track courts:** Fast track courts are being set up to expedite the justice delivery and reduce the pendency of cases involving heinous crimes, senior citizens, women, children, etc.

Way Ahead

- **Workload and Capacity:** The Chief Justice of India, said that the courts must operate beyond their current **capacity of 71%** to match case disposal rates with the inflow of new cases.
- **Judicial Vacancies:** Judicial vacancies in district courts stand at **28%**.
 - ♦ Standardizing the judicial recruitment calendar is suggested as a solution to fill vacancies and maintain a consistent flow of recruits.
- **National Integration of Judicial Recruitment:** The Chief Justice emphasized the need for national integration of judicial recruitment.
 - ♦ Judicial recruitment to district courts should no longer be restricted by regionalism or State-centered selection processes.
- **District-level Case Management Committees:** These committees should be established to, Identify target cases, reconstruct records and manage cases efficiently at the district level.
- **Pre-litigation dispute resolution** can help reduce the backlog of cases.
 - ♦ In a recent Lok Adalat conducted by the apex court, around **1,000 cases were resolved amicably within 5 working days**.
- **The Malimath Committee, 2003** in its report recommended that the period of vacation should be reduced by 21 days, keeping in mind the long pendency of cases.
- The perceived **gap between the district judiciary and the High Courts** needs to be addressed. This gap is seen as a **remnant of colonial subordination** and should be resolved to create a more unified judicial system.

Source: TH

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (ANIIDCO)

Context

- The qualifications of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO) has come into question after it got permission to do a mega infrastructure project in Great Nicobar.

Background

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO) is the project proponent for the **NITI Aayog-promoted ₹72,000 crore mega infrastructure project** in Great Nicobar,
 - It is the southernmost island in the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago.
- The 910 sq km island is not just a **biodiversity hotspot** but also **home to indigenous communities** with special rights and is also located in one of the most tectonically active zones.
- The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)** under the Union environment ministry found that ANIIDCO **lacked internal environmental governance systems**.
 - Despite this, the EAC granted environmental clearance to ANIIDCO in 2022.
 - Also it did **not even have the human resources** needed to oversee the project.

The Great Nicobar project

- The Project involves developing an **International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT)**, an international airport, township development, and a **450 MVA gas and solar-based power plant** on the island.
- The ICTT is expected to allow Great Nicobar to **participate in the regional and global maritime economy** by becoming a major player in cargo transshipment.
- A proposed **"greenfield city"** will tap into both the maritime and tourism potential of the island.
- The site for the proposed ICTT and power plant is **Galathea Bay** on the southeastern corner of Great Nicobar Island, where there is no human habitation.

What is ANIIDCO?

- ANIIDCO is a quasi-government agency**, incorporated in **1988** under the Companies Act.
- Its objective** is to develop and commercially

exploit natural resources for the balanced and environment friendly development of the territory.

- Its main activities** include trading of petroleum products, Indian made foreign liquor and milk, managing tourism resorts and infrastructure development for tourism and fisheries.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- Location:** The islands are located 1,300 km southeast of the Indian mainland in the Bay of Bengal.
 - It extends from 6° 45' N to 13° 41' N and from 92° 12' E to 93° 57' E.
- This archipelago is composed of more than 500 big and small islands, which are divided into two distinct groups of islands – **The Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands**.
 - '**Ten Degree Channel**' separates the Andaman Islands in the north from the Nicobar Islands in the south.

The Andaman Islands

- These islands are divided into three major sub-groups – **North Andaman, Middle Andaman, and South Andaman**.
- The capital city of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands **Port Blair** is located in **South Andaman**.

The Nicobar Islands

- These islands are divided into three major sub-groups – **Northern Group, Central Group, and Southern Group**.
 - The Great Nicobar is the largest and the southernmost island in the group located in the Southern Group.
 - India's southernmost point '**Indira Point**' is located at the southern tip of the Great Nicobar.

Other Features

- Most of these islands have a volcanic base and are made of tertiary sandstone, limestone, and shale.
 - The Barren and Narcondam islands**, north of Port Blair, are volcanic islands.
 - Some of the islands are fringed with coral reefs.
- Saddle Peak (737 m)** in North Andaman is

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

NATIONAL TEST HOUSE

In News

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the National Test House (NTH) and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) to strengthen the Standards & Labelling (S&L) Program to promote energy efficiency in India.

National Test House

- It was established in 1912.
- It is under the aegis of the **Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India**.
- It is a leading scientific organization involved in testing and quality assurance for national projects, including Jal Jeevan Mission, Bullet Train, Metro projects, and others.
- It is also the only Government Agency providing Drone certification in India.
- It has state of the art testing laboratories at Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Ghaziabad, Guwahati, Jaipur and Varanasi.

Do you know ?

- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) was established in 2002 .
- It works to reduce the energy intensity of the Indian economy and promotes sustainable development through energy conservation policies and strategies

Source: PIB

CENTRALIZED PENSION PAYMENT SYSTEM (CPPS)

In News

- The Union Labour Ministry has cleared a proposal for the Centralised **Pension Payment System (CPPS)** for about 78 lakh pensioners under the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995.

About Centralized Pension Payment System (CPPS)

- The CPPS will be launched on 1st January 2025 as part of the EPFO's IT modernization project, Centralized IT Enabled System (CITES 2.01).
 - ♦ In the next phase, the CPPS will facilitate a transition to an Aadhaar-based payment system (ABPS).

- The CPPS aims to modernize the EPFO by establishing a national-level centralized pension disbursement system.
- It allows pension disbursement through any bank, at any branch, across India.
 - ♦ Now Pensioners can receive their pensions from any location without needing to transfer Pension Payment Orders (PPO) when changing location or bank.
- **Benefits:** Expected to benefit over 78 lakh EPS pensioners.
 - ♦ It will streamline the pension disbursement process, making it more efficient and user-friendly.
 - ♦ Pensioners will not need to visit a branch for verification; pensions will be credited immediately upon release.

Source: TH

CENTER SUGGESTS MEASURES TO ENHANCE SECURITY AT HOSPITALS

Context

- The Health Ministry has sought action taken reports from the states and union territories, on the **suggested measures for safety** of doctors and healthcare workers in medical institutions.
 - ♦ This comes after directions by the Supreme Court following the **Kolkata doctor rape and murder case**.

Suggested measures

- Every district/territory should **identify hospitals with high footfalls** and consider them as high-priority establishments for security improvements.
- Hospitals should **focus on high-risk areas and pay special attention to areas with a high incidence of security breaches**, such as emergency rooms, triage areas, and intensive care units (ICUs) and labor rooms.
- The Central government has suggested **timely security audits** for improvement, **CCTV surveillance, integration with local police, and employing ex-servicemen as security personnel** in high risk hospital areas.
- **Proper training and establishment of bereavement protocols** for all doctors and healthcare workers to handle intense and emotional situations,"
- Healthcare establishments should have an **internal security committee** with active involvement of residents and students and have clear protocol for incident response.

- **Deployment of patient facilitators, volunteers/ social workers/coordinators,** is also recommended.

Source: TH

PEACE PACT WITH TRIPURA INSURGENT GROUPS

Context

- A **Memorandum of Settlement** was signed between the Government of India, Government of Tripura and the **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)**.

About

- Under the Agreement more than 328 armed cadres will give up violence and join the mainstream of society.
- Centre has approved a special package of 250 crore for the overall development of the tribal population of Tripura.
- The peace pact is the **12th agreement for the Northeast** and the third agreement related to Tripura in the past ten years.
 - ♦ Through these agreements, about 10,000 insurgents have joined the mainstream by giving up arms.

NLFT and ATTF

- **NLFT** is a banned organisation that has been active since **1989**.
 - ♦ It was formed under the leadership of **Biswamohan Debbarma** with the objective to liberate Tripura from the Union of India, to deport all foreigners who entered Tripura after 1956.
- The **ATTF** was formed in **1990** with similar objectives and demanded removal of names of illegal migrants from the electoral roll who entered

Tripura after 1956 and the implementation of the 'Tripura Merger Agreement' which came into force in 1949.

Source: TH

SMART CITIES MISSION

Context

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has said that **90% of the total projects** under the Smart Cities Mission have been completed.

Status of the mission

- The remaining **10%** of the projects which are at the implementation stage have been delayed due to legal issues, delays in obtaining clearances from different departments, land acquisition challenges, construction in hilly areas, and challenges in vendor and resource availability in small and medium cities.
- Out of the total **100** smart cities, **17 cities** have completed 100% of their projects.
- While **75%** of projects have been completed in 75 smart cities, 34 cities have completed more than 90% of the projects.

Smart Cities Mission

- It is an initiative of the **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry**, launched in **2015**. The Mission is operated as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.
- **Objective:** To promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment and give a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions'.
- **100 cities** have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities through a two-stage competition for five years.
- The **six fundamental principles** on which the concept of Smart Cities is based are:



Key Features

- **The SCM had two main aspects:** area-based development consisting of three components — redevelopment (city renewal), retrofitting (city improvement), and green field projects (city extension); and pan-city solutions based on ICT.
- These further comprised some **six categories** that would include **e-governance, waste management, water management, energy management, urban mobility, and skill development.**
- **Four pillars:** Social Infrastructure, Physical Infrastructure, Institutional Infrastructure, Economic Infrastructure.
- **Integrated Command and Control Centre:** These ICCCs are designed to enable authorities to monitor the status of various amenities in real time.
 - ♦ The ICCC acts as a smart city and acts as a “nerve center” for operations management.
- **Other steps** taken under the SCM for digital infrastructure are;
 - ♦ Adaptive Traffic Control System (ATCS), Red Light Violation Detection (RLVD), and Automatic Number Plate Recognition System (ANPR),
 - ♦ Digital assets for solid waste and wastewater management and water distribution management,
 - ♦ CCTV surveillance systems, smart education and smart health systems.

Source: TH

MNRE EXEMPTION FOR GREEN HYDROGEN PROJECTS

Context

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has exempted **export-oriented green hydrogen projects** from its solar module shortlist of domestic manufacturers.

About

- The exemption for green hydrogen projects set up in **special economic zones (SEZs) or export oriented units (EOUs) by 2030** from MNRE’s Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) was granted this year.
 - ♦ The ALMM mandate requires solar project developers to purchase modules from an approved list, **servicing as a non-tariff measure to promote domestic manufacturing.**

- **Significance:** These exemptions are intended to facilitate the **swift deployment of renewable energy infrastructure**, which is essential for the production of green hydrogen and its derivatives within SEZ/EOU.
 - ♦ With the ability to use imported modules, which are cheaper than domestic modules, **such projects can substantially reduce production costs.**

What is Green Hydrogen?

- **Green hydrogen** refers to hydrogen that is produced **using renewable energy sources**, such as wind, solar, or hydropower, through a process called **electrolysis**.
 - ♦ Electrolysis involves splitting water (H₂O) into hydrogen (H₂) and oxygen (O₂) using an electric current.
 - ♦ When this electricity comes from renewable sources, the hydrogen produced is considered “green” because the overall process has a **minimal environmental impact.**
- **Benefit:** It is a clean burning element that can decarbonise a range of sectors including iron and steel, chemicals, and transportation.
 - ♦ Hydrogen can be stored for long periods of time which can be used to produce electricity using fuel cells.

Source: IE

OPENAI’S PROJECT STRAWBERRY

Context

- OpenAI is reportedly planning to release its most powerful AI model (codenamed Project Strawberry), and could integrate it into **ChatGPT-5**.

About

- Earlier known as **Project Q*** (Q-star), it has been billed as OpenAI’s push to create **Artificial General Intelligence** with capabilities similar to that of the human brain.
- It will be able to solve math problems **even if it has never been trained on them**, perform high-level tasks like designing market strategies and solving complex word puzzles and do “deep research.”
- It will also help the AI firm develop their next large language model (LLM) called **Orion**.

Source: IE