

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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TWO BILLION WOMEN LACK SOCIAL PROTECTION: UN WOMEN

Context

- The World Survey on the Role of Women in Development report released by **UN Women** highlighting the widening gender gap in social protection.

About

- The report reveals that an alarming **two billion** women and girls are **without access to any form of social protection**. This is putting at risk progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5).
- **Gendered poverty:** Women aged 25 to 34 are **25 percent** more likely than men in the same age group to live in extreme poverty.
- **Conflict and climate change** continue to exacerbate this inequality, with women in fragile environments being **7.7 times** more likely to live in extreme poverty compared to those in stable regions.
- **Maternity protection:** Globally, over **63 percent** of women still give birth without access to maternity benefits, with the figure reaching 94 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.

Indian Scenario

- **Health and Nutrition:** The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) reveals that **23.3% of women (15-49 years)** are undernourished, and **57%** of women are anemic.
 - ♦ **The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)** in India was **97** per 100,000 live births in 2023, down from 130 in 2014.
- **Gendered Poverty:** According to Oxfam, **63%** of women in India face unpaid caregiving responsibilities, which limits their economic participation.
- **Labor Force Participation:** In India, only around **37%** of women aged 15 years and above participate in the workforce (compared to about 73% of men).
- **Gender Gap in Education:** As per NFHS-5, **70.3% of females are literate**, compared to 84.7% of males.

Reasons of Vulnerability of Women

- **Cultural Expectations and patriarchal norms** restrict women's opportunities to participate in formal employment and hinders their access to economic independence.

- **Educational Disparities:** Cultural practices like early marriage, gender-based violence in schools, and lack of sanitation facilities disproportionately affect girls' attendance and retention rates in education.
- **Informal Sector Employment:** A large percentage of women are employed in informal sectors, which are characterized by low wages, irregular hours, and lack of job security.

Government Initiatives

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):** Launched to address the declining child sex ratio and promote education and survival of the girl child.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY):** A maternity benefit scheme providing financial assistance to pregnant and lactating mothers to ensure safe delivery and proper nutrition.
- **Ujjwala Scheme:** Provides free LPG connections to women from below poverty line (BPL) households to reduce health issues caused by smoke from traditional chulhas.
- **Poshan Abhiyaan:** This mission aims to improve nutrition outcomes for children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- **Digital Literacy Programme for Women:** It is part of Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) and **empowers women to access e-governance services and financial platforms**, helping them participate in the digital economy.
- **One Stop Centre Scheme (Sakhi Centres),** aims to facilitate women affected by violence with a range of integrated services under one roof such as Police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and legal counseling, psycho-social counseling, temporary shelter, etc.

Way Ahead

- The poor condition of women is a product of deeply rooted patriarchal norms, discriminatory practices, economic inequalities, and lack of targeted policies that address the specific needs of women.
- Addressing these systemic issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes **improving access to education, healthcare, and legal protections**, while promoting gender-responsive social protection policies.
- **Gender budgeting** is a critical tool for advancing gender equality, promoting women's empowerment, and achieving inclusive and sustainable development in India.

Source: DTE

THREAT TO THE 'ZERO HUNGER' GOAL BY 2030

Context

- The United Nations' goal to eradicate world hunger by 2030 seems increasingly challenging to achieve due to the impacts of wars, climate change, and economic crises.

About

- Goal 2** of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is all about creating a **world free of hunger by 2030**.
- The 2024 Global Hunger Index** score for the world is **18.3**, with 42 countries still experiencing alarming or serious hunger.
 - Hunger is most severe in **sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia** where the crisis has soared to humanitarian levels.
- Little progress has been made on reducing hunger since 2016, and the prospects for achieving Zero Hunger by the target date of 2030 are grim.

Food Insecurity in India

- India** has been ranked **105th out of 127 countries** in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2024, placing it in the **"serious"** category for hunger levels.
- The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023 report states that around **224 million people in India** faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2021-22.

What are the challenges?

- Wars and Conflicts:** Ongoing conflicts like in the Red Sea, disrupt supply chains, and access to food, leading to severe hunger, especially in vulnerable regions like sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- Climate Change:** Extreme weather events, droughts, floods, and shifting agricultural patterns caused by climate change severely affect food production and availability.
- Regional Disparities:** Hunger remains most severe in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where conditions have escalated to humanitarian crises, making it harder to address hunger effectively in these regions.
- The COVID-19 pandemic** exacerbated food insecurity, pushing many households into poverty and making it harder for them to access sufficient food.

India's Efforts to achieve zero hunger by 2030

- Mid Day Meal Programme:** The Programme aims to boost enrolment, retention, and attendance while improving the nutritional status of children in

government, local body, and government-aided schools.

- Food Fortification:** The government promotes fortified rice, wheat flour, and edible oils as part of the public distribution system.
- The National Food Security Act, 2013:** The Act provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).
- Poshan Tracker:** The Ministry of Women and Child Development developed the Poshan Tracker ICT application as a key governance tool.
 - It uses WHO's expanded tables with **day-based z-scores** to dynamically assess stunting, wasting, underweight, and obesity in children based on height, weight, gender, and age.
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana** was launched to alleviate hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0** includes key schemes such as the POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anganwadi Services and Scheme for Adolescent Girls as direct targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country.

Way Ahead

- Humanitarian Assistance:** Provide more financial resources for humanitarian aid to conflict-affected regions to ensure food distribution and nutritional support.
- Sustainable Agriculture:** Promote agricultural practices that can withstand shocks from climate change.
- Targeted Assistance Programs:** Develop targeted food assistance programs for vulnerable populations affected by conflicts, including cash transfers and food vouchers.

Source: DTE

NORTH-EAST: VITAL FOR INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT

In News

- The Vice-President of India stated that the North-East is vital for national unity, economic progress, and cultural essence.

About North-East Region

- It consists of eight hilly states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, and Nagaland.

- It shares a 5,812 km international border with China, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar.
- It is connected to mainland India via the narrow Siliguri corridor, also known as the 'chicken's neck,' which is just 22 km long.
- It has a diverse socio-ethnic landscape, home to numerous tribal groups that speak around 220 languages, each with unique societal and cultural traits
- Government Incentives offer various incentives, including tax holidays and subsidies, to encourage business growth.
- The **Union Budget 2024** outlines a roadmap for India to achieve "Viksit Bharat" by prioritizing economic, industrial, and agricultural growth, particularly benefiting youth, women, and tribal communities in the Northeast.
 - ♦ The budget supports traditional artisans, Self Help Groups (SHGs), and women entrepreneurs through various schemes, including **PM Vishwakarma and Stand up India**.

Importance

- **Strategic Location:** It serves as a gateway to ASEAN markets, facilitating easy access to Southeast Asia.
- **Abundant Natural Resources:** It is rich in oil, gas, coal, minerals, timber, medicinal plants, and water resources, providing opportunities for industrial exploitation.
- **India's Green Hub:** It boasts lush forests and biodiversity, making it ideal for ecotourism and agro-based industries.
- **Diverse Cultural Heritage:** It is home to unique ethnic communities and traditions, presenting investment opportunities in tourism and handicrafts.
- **Low-Cost Manufacturing Hub:** Competitive labor costs compared to other regions in India and globally.
- **Skilled Workforce:** Features a young, educated workforce proficient in English.
- **Emerging Consumer Market:** A growing consumer base with rising incomes and urbanization, creating significant business potential.
- The newly announced **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram** scheme aims to improve the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities, directly benefiting 5 crore people in 63,000 villages.
- Key projects like the **Kaladan Multimodal project, India-Myanmar rail links, and the Trilateral Highway project** are crucial for enhancing connectivity through the NER.

Conclusion

- The NER is strategically important as it serves as a vital link between South Asia and Southeast Asia, with extensive international borders and unique socio-political dynamics.
- Despite various initiatives, significant challenges remain in improving connectivity in the NER, which need to be addressed to unlock the region's full potential.
- There is a need to strengthen connections within the NER to address underdevelopment and marginalization and expand interactions between the NER and mainland India.
- Development of human resources and capacity building in the NER should parallel infrastructure development
- Skill development is essential for optimizing talent and enhancing human resources.

Source: PIB

INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET TO EXCEED 100 BILLION DOLLARS BY 2030

Context

- India's semiconductor market is set to exceed **100 billion dollars by 2030**.

About

- According to a report by the India Electronics and Semiconductor Association and Counterpoint

Issues and Challenges

- The British colonial policies created boundaries to protect tribal interests, which have persisted in independent India, impacting economic development while preserving cultural identity.
- The region faces isolation, political violence, ethnic conflict, and inadequate infrastructure, complicating its integration into national development frameworks..
- Connectivity projects in the Northeast face delays, necessitating timely completion and a detailed assessment of ongoing initiatives and challenges.
- Concerns are raised about the spread of unfounded information on public platforms

Initiatives

- **The Look East and Act East policies** enhanced communication, connectivity, and airport development in the region.

Research, **mobile handsets and IT sectors** are leading the market by contributing over **75 percent of revenues**.

- The market was valued at **45 billion dollars in 2023** and is expected to grow at **13 percent annually**.
- This growth is driven by **strong demand and government initiatives** like the production-linked incentive scheme.
- Semiconductors are vital for **electronics, defence, healthcare, and automotive industries**.

What are Semiconductors?

- Semiconductors are **materials with electrical properties** that fall between those of conductors (like metals) and insulators (like rubber).
 - ♦ They have a unique ability to **conduct electricity** under certain conditions while acting as insulators under others.
- They are sometimes referred to as **integrated circuits (ICs) or microchips** made from pure elements, typically **silicon or germanium**.
- In a process called **doping**, small amounts of impurities are added to these pure elements, causing large changes in the **conductivity** of the material.
- **Applications:** Semiconductors are used in a vast range of **electronic devices**.
 - ♦ **Transistors**, which are fundamental components of modern electronic circuits, rely on semiconductor materials.
 - ♦ They act as **switches or amplifiers** in everything from computers to cell phones.
 - ♦ Semiconductors are also used in **solar cells, LEDs, and integrated circuits**.

Why is there an Increased focus on Semiconductors?

- Given their importance to the economy, **semiconductors have become a key strategic industry sector** for many countries, with governments and companies alike investing heavily in **research and development** to maintain competitiveness and innovate.
- A **serious shortage of those chips in 2021**, underlined how dependent global industry is on a few key suppliers.
 - ♦ **Taiwan** is currently the world's largest chipmaker, holding approximately **44%** of global market share, followed by China (28%), South Korea (12%), the U.S. (6%) and Japan (2%)
- In an **effort to cut that dependency** governments are spending huge sums to **create stronger domestic chip industries**.

- **India** is looking to be a big player in the space, and with intensifying competition with China.
 - ♦ This has prompted the US and other allied countries to strengthen tech cooperation with India.

Factors favouring India

- **Skilled Workforce:** India leads the world with record number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduates, offering the much-needed skilled workforce required in semiconductor manufacturing, design, research, and development.
- **Cost Advantage:** India offers a substantial cost advantage for semiconductor manufacturing due to the lower labour cost, supply chain efficiency and emerging ecosystem.
- **Global Supply Chain Diversification:** India has become a preferred destination for back-end assembly and testing operations amidst this industry relocation, with potential for future front-end manufacturing.
- **Policy support:** The Indian government has promptly seized the opportunity following the global semiconductor supply chain glut after the pandemic and showed great intent through policy support to present India as an alternative to China in the global semi supply chain.

Government Support

- **Semicon India:** The initiative is for the development of semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in the country.
 - ♦ The programme aims to provide financial support to companies investing in semiconductors, display manufacturing and design ecosystem.
- **India Semiconductor Mission:** It functions as a dedicated division within the Digital India Corporation.
 - ♦ Its main goal is to nurture a strong semiconductor and display ecosystem to position India as a prominent global player in electronics manufacturing and design.
- **The government offers incentives for manufacturing setup in India:**
 - ♦ Under the Semiconductor Fab Scheme, fiscal support of 50% of the project cost on an equal footing for all technology nodes.
 - ♦ Under the Display Fab Scheme, fiscal support of 50% of the project cost on an equal footing basis.
 - ♦ Under the Compound Semiconductor Scheme, fiscal support of 50% of the capital expenditure on an equal footing basis, including support for discrete semiconductor fabs.

- **Under the Chips to Startup (C2S) Programme** being implemented at 113 academic institutions/ R&D organizations/ Start-ups/ MSMEs, 85,000 number of high-quality and qualified engineers are being trained in several areas.
- In February 2024, the government approved the **establishment of three semiconductor plants, two in Gujarat and one in Assam.**

Way Ahead

- With the **rise of digital technologies**, AI, IoT, and 5G, the demand for semiconductors is skyrocketing. India, with its burgeoning tech industry, is well-positioned to capitalize on this trend.
- **Foreign Investment:** Major global players like Intel, TSMC, and others are exploring opportunities in India. This influx of foreign investment will help develop local expertise and infrastructure.
- **Startup Ecosystem:** India has a vibrant startup ecosystem focused on semiconductor design and related technologies, fostering innovation and contributing to the overall growth of the sector.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Improved infrastructure, including special economic zones (SEZs) for electronics manufacturing, is being established to facilitate the growth of the semiconductor industry.
- **Talent Pool:** India boasts a large pool of engineering graduates and skilled professionals, which can support the workforce needs of the semiconductor sector.

Source: AIR

ISSUE OF STUBBLE BURNING

In News

- The Supreme Court criticized Haryana and Punjab for not taking strict action against stubble burning, which worsens air pollution in northern India.

What is Stubble Burning?

- Stubble burning is a practice where farmers burn the leftover straw from harvested paddy fields to prepare the land for sowing wheat. It is common due to the limited time between paddy harvest and wheat planting.

Why Farmers opted for Stubble Burning?

- **Quick and cost-efficient:** It clears the field rapidly and is the least expensive option for farmers.
- **Weed and pest control:** Burning helps in eliminating weeds, slugs, and pests that could damage the next crop.

- **Reduces nitrogen tie-up:** Burning can help control nitrogen immobilization, improving soil nitrogen availability.

Negative Effects of Stubble Burning

- **Air pollution:** Stubble burning emits harmful gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), contributing to poor air quality and smog formation, particularly in northern India.
- **Soil degradation:** The intense heat from burning depletes soil nutrients, reduces soil fertility, and kills beneficial microbes, compromising long-term soil health.
- **Climate change:** The release of large quantities of greenhouse gases worsens air quality and contributes to global warming.

Alternatives to Stubble Burning

- **Paddy straw-based power plants:** Utilizes crop waste for energy and creates jobs.
- **Incorporating crop residues:** Incorporating them into the soil enhances soil fertility, boosts productivity, and replenishes essential nutrients.
- **Composting:** Turns residues into organic manure.

Initiatives to Prevent Stubble Burning

- **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP):** The GRAP is an emergency response mechanism developed to combat rising air pollution in the Delhi-NCR region. It is implemented in a phased manner based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) levels.
- **Financial Incentives and Penalties:** The Supreme Court has suggested providing incentives to farmers who refrain from stubble burning and imposing fines or reducing Minimum Support Price (MSP) benefits for those who continue the practice.
- **Chhattisgarh's Gauthan Model:** In Chhattisgarh, unused stubble is collected and converted into organic fertilizer in community plots called gauthans. This method not only reduces pollution but also generates employment.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

INTERNATIONAL 6G SYMPOSIUM

Context

- The Union Minister of Communications, inaugurated the International 6G Symposium during the **World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24).**

About

- **The symposium aims** to explore and understand local and global developments, cutting-edge research, key architectural principles, and emerging technologies that will shape the 6G landscape.
- The event is organized by the **Bharat 6G Alliance**, and marks a milestone in India's journey towards global leadership in **6G technology**.

Bharat 6G Alliance

- The Bharat 6G Alliance is a **collaborative initiative of Indian industry, academia, national research institutions** and standards organizations.
- It brings together various stakeholders to foster innovation, and to contribute to global 6G standards through bodies like the **ITU and 3GPP (Third Generation Partnership Project)**.

Source: PIB

AMRIT PHARMACIES**Context**

- South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), subsidiary of Coal India, inaugurated the country's **216th AMRIT Pharmacy**.

About

- AMRIT Pharmacies (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment) is a government initiative launched by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2015**.
- It provides a wide range of **generic and life-saving branded drugs**, implants, and surgical consumables at highly subsidized rates.
- The pharmacies established under this initiative complement the government's universal healthcare goals, alongside schemes like **Ayushman Bharat**.

Source: PIB

FIVE EYE ALLIANCE**In News**

- The Five Eye Alliance has backed Canada, urging India to cooperate with the Canadian legal process.

About Five Eye Alliance

- It is a multilateral intelligence-sharing network shared by over 20 different agencies of five English-speaking countries — Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- **Formed in the aftermath of World War II**, the alliance was rooted in the UK-USA Agreement of 1946.
- The alliance is known for its comprehensive global surveillance capabilities, through various methods such as intercepting data from satellites, telephone networks, and fibre optic cables.

Source: TH

HAND-IN-HAND INITIATIVE**In News**

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has inaugurated the 2024 Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum.

About Hand-in-Hand Initiative

- It is a flagship program of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched in 2019.
- The initiative focuses on fostering partnerships and targeted investments to address food security, reduce poverty, and promote inclusive economic growth in low- and middle-income countries.
- The initiative focuses on achieving three key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
 - ◆ Eradicating poverty (SDG 1)
 - ◆ Ending hunger and malnutrition (SDG 2)
 - ◆ Reducing inequalities (SDG 10)
- India has **not joined** the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Source: TH

'ZERO DEFECT, ZERO EFFECT' INITIATIVE**Context**

- The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, during the Indian Foundation for Quality Management (IFQM) Symposium, emphasized the importance of the 'Zero Defect and Zero Effect' initiative.

'Zero Defect and Zero Effect' initiative

- It is an integrated and comprehensive certification system, launched in **2016** by the **Ministry of MSME**.
- **The objective** of the Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED) scheme is to;
 - ◆ Encourage and enable MSMEs for manufacturing of quality products using latest technology
 - ◆ Encourage MSMEs to achieve higher **ZED Certification** levels through graded incentives
 - ◆ To support the **"Make in India"** campaign.

Source: PIB

MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE FOR RABI CROPS

Context

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Prime Minister, has approved the **increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP)** for all mandated Rabi Crops for Marketing Season 2025-26.

MSP

- It is a form of **market intervention** by the Government to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.
- The prices are announced by the Government at the **beginning of the sowing season for certain crops** on the basis of the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.
- The major objectives are to **support the farmers** from distress sales and to procure food grains for public distribution.

Crops Covered under MSP

- Kharif Crops (total 14)** like paddy, jowar, bajra, maize, ragi, tur/arhar, moong, urad, groundnut, soyabean, sunflower, sesamum, niger seed, cotton;
- Rabi Crops (total 06)** like wheat, barley, gram, masur/lentil, rapeseed and mustard, and safflower;
- Commercial Crops (total 02)** like jute and copra.
 - MSP for Toria and de-husked coconut is also fixed on the basis of MSPs of rapeseed & mustard and copra respectively.

Source: PIB

MECHAZILLA

In News

- SpaceX successfully landed its Starship rocket using a new structure called "Mechazilla."

About Mechazilla

- It is a 400-ft rocket-catching structure at SpaceX's Starbase in South Texas.
- It is equipped with two large mechanical arms, nicknamed "chopsticks," designed to catch the Super Heavy booster midair.
- It is custom-built to catch the heaviest flying object ever made, weighing about 250 tons.

Importance of Mechazilla:

- This innovative landing technique reduces wear and tear on the booster and minimizes the time required to prepare it for subsequent launches.

- By enabling quick refurbishment and reuse, Mechazilla significantly lowers launch costs and enhances the sustainability of space missions.

Source :BT

OSSIFICATION TEST

In News

- An accused in the murder case of NCP leader Baba Siddique, underwent an **ossification test** to determine if he was a minor.

About Ossification Test

- An ossification test involves X-rays of certain bones, such as the clavicle, sternum, and pelvis, to assess growth and developmental changes that occur with age.
- This test is significant in criminal justice as individuals under 18 are treated as minors, with different legal processes focused on rehabilitation rather than punishment.
- Issues** : While useful in age determination, these tests are not considered highly accurate.
- The Supreme Court** has noted that while radiological examinations can provide guidance, they do not offer conclusive evidence.
 - Courts emphasize that age determination should prioritize documentary evidence, such as birth certificates, over ossification tests. The Supreme Court stated that such tests should only be a last resort.

Do you know ?

- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 mandates that minors cannot be imprisoned with adults and instead face consequences determined by a Juvenile Justice Board. Following a 2021 amendment, those above 16 accused of serious offenses may undergo a preliminary assessment to decide if they should be tried as adults.

Source :IE

INS SAMARTHAK

In News

- The Indian Navy celebrated a significant milestone with the launch of Samarthak

About INS Samarthak

- It is designed for various roles, including towing, launching and recovering targets, operating unmanned vehicles, and testing indigenous weapons.

- It is the first vessel under the Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) project at L&T Shipyard in Kattupalli.
- **Importance** : The launch, aligned with the government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.
 - ♦ This launch underscores the Indian Navy's commitment to enhancing indigenous shipbuilding capabilities and self-reliance in maritime defense.

Source :ET

NATIONAL SECURITY GUARD (NSG)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated the National Security Guard (NSG) on their 40th raising day (16 Oct 1984).

About

- Commonly known as the **Black Cats**, NSG is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and works under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- It is a task-oriented Force and has **two** complementary elements in the form of the **Special Action Group (SAG)** comprising Army personnel and the **Special Ranger Groups (SRG)**, comprising personnel drawn from the CAPFs/State Police Forces.
- **Key Responsibilities**: counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, bomb disposal.
- **Key Operations**: Operation Black Thunder (1986, 1988), Operation Vajra Shakti (2002), Operation Black Tornado (Mumbai, 2008), Operation Dhangu Suraksha (Pathankot, 2016).
- **Regional Hubs**: NSG currently operates from five regional hubs located in Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Gandhinagar.
- **NSG's Global Influence**: The NSG is modelled after elite forces such as Germany's GSG-9 and the United Kingdom's SAS.
- **Motto**: Sarvatra Sarvottam Suraksha (Excellence in Security Everywhere).

Source: AIR

BLACKBUCK (ANTILOPE CERVICAPRA)

Context

- **Blackbuck (Antelope cervicapra)** is an antelope native to India, which were once abundant in many parts of undivided India.

About

- **Appearance**: Males have striking spiral horns that can reach up to 75 cm (30 inches) in length, and their coat is a dark brown to black color.
 - ♦ Females are smaller and have a reddish-brown coat without horns.



- **Habitat**: They are typically found in grasslands, savannas, and open forests. They prefer areas with short grass for grazing.
- **Threats**: Earlier extensively hunted in the princely states of India, Habitat destruction, Illegal Hunting for economic consumption
- **Conservation Status**: **IUCN Status**: Least Concern
 - ♦ **CITES**: Appendix III
 - ♦ **Schedule I** of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.
 - ♦ Declared as state animal of **Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Cultural Importance**: In Hinduism, the Blackbuck is considered a symbol of purity, with its skin and horns revered as sacred objects. In Buddhism, it represents good luck.

Source: DTE

