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INTERNAL DEMOCRACY IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Context

- India's multi-party democracy frequently centers around individual charisma, raising the question of whether the Election Commission can ensure internal democracy within political parties.

Background

- Internal democracy** in political parties refers to the practice of democratic principles and procedures within the organizational structure and functioning of political parties.
- It involves the inclusion of all party members in **decision-making processes, leadership selection, policy formulation, and ensuring accountability** of party leadership to its members.

Reasons for lack of internal democracy

- Weak Organizational Structures:** Many parties lack transparent processes for selecting leaders, allowing centralization of control.
- Dynastic politics:** Leadership is controlled by a few individuals or families, limiting opportunities for new talent.
- Limited Participation of Members:** Intra-party elections are merely symbolic, leading to disillusionment and disengagement among the grassroots members.

Need for the internal democracy

- Nurturing a culture of democracy:** Parties with strong internal democratic mechanisms are more likely to uphold democratic values when in power, ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.
- Leadership Development:** Democratically structured parties encourage competition and meritocracy, allowing younger and more capable leaders to rise through the ranks.
- Empowering Grassroots Members:** Internal democracy ensures that the voices of party workers and ordinary members are heard in decision-making processes.

Election commission's guidelines

- Representation of the People Act:** ECI has periodically used guidelines issued for registration of parties under **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** to remind parties to conduct elections and to ensure that their leadership is renewed, changed or re-elected every five years.

- No Permanent President for a Party:** ECI has opposed the concept of a 'permanent president' within political parties, as it undermines the principle of leadership change and fair representation within parties.
- Party constitution:** The EC's guidelines for parties applying for registration under the Act state that the applicant should submit a copy of the party constitution.

Concerns

- De-Registration Only in Cases of Fraud:** The Supreme court in 2002 ruled that While the Election Commission has the authority to register political parties, it can only deregister a party under limited circumstances.
- Power of de-registration of political parties:** ECI has asked the Law Ministry for the power to deregister political parties in the past, but the proposal has not been implemented so far.

Way Ahead

- Ensuring internal democracy within political parties is critical to enhancing the overall democratic fabric of the country.
- While the Election Commission has taken steps in this direction, its powers are limited. There is a need for comprehensive reform, perhaps through legislation, to empower the Election Commission to enforce internal democracy more effectively.

Election Commission India

- It was established** in accordance with the Constitution on **25th January 1950**.
- Its powers, appointment and duties** are mentioned in **Part XV of the Constitution (Article 324 to Article 329)**.
 - Additionally, its role is further elaborated under the **Representation of the People Act, 1950** and **Representation of the People Act, 1951**.
- Responsibility:** The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, State Legislative Councils and the offices of the President and Vice President of the country.

Source: TH

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA UPHOLDS PRESS FREEDOM

Context

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India ruled that criminal cases cannot be lodged against journalists merely for criticising the government.

About the Press Freedom

- It is a cornerstone of democratic societies, enabling the free flow of information and ideas, and holding those in power accountable. It plays a vital role in a democratic society, and serves as an agency of the people to gather news for them.
- In India, freedom of the press has been treated as part of the **freedom of speech and expression** guaranteed by **Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution**.
- It has been **upheld in various landmark judgments** of the Supreme Court of India.

Restrictions on Press Freedom

- **Reasonable restrictions** can be placed on this right, in the interest of the *sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the state, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence*, as mentioned in **Article 19 (2) of Constitution**.
 - ♦ Hence, freedom of the media is not an absolute freedom.
 - ♦ While the Constitution provides for press freedom, it also mandates that the press must be responsible.

Current State of Press Freedom

- India's ranking in the **World Press Freedom Index, released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**, has seen a significant drop, falling to **161 out of 180 countries in 2023**. This decline is part of a broader regional trend, with many countries in the Asia-Pacific region experiencing similar setbacks.
- The Reporters Without Borders (RSF) report attributes this decline to several factors, including increased political interference, economic pressures, and threats to journalists' safety.

Challenges Faced by Journalists

- **Political Pressure:** Media outlets often face pressure from political entities, which can lead to biased reporting and self-censorship.
- **Economic Constraints:** The acquisition of media outlets by business conglomerates with political ties further restricts editorial independence.
- **Safety Concerns:** Threats and attacks on journalists have become alarmingly common, creating a climate of fear and intimidation.
- **Focus on Non-Issues:** There is criticism that the media often diverts attention from critical issues such as poverty, unemployment, and healthcare to less significant topics, thereby not addressing the real concerns of the majority of the population.

Voices of Concern

- Media associations and civil society groups have voiced their concerns over the deteriorating state of press freedom in India. The Indian Women's Press Corps, the Press Club of India, and the Press Association have all issued statements highlighting the urgent need to address these issues.
- They emphasise that insecure working conditions and hostile environments are detrimental to a free press.
- **Impact on Democracy:** The decline in press freedom has serious implications for Indian democracy. A free and independent press is essential for informed citizenry and accountable governance.
 - ♦ When journalists are unable to report without fear or favour, the very fabric of democracy is at risk.
- **Digital Media Regulation:** The government has proposed measures to regulate digital media, including **fact-checking units** to monitor social media. While intended to curb fake news, these measures are feared to widen the scope of censorship and control over the media.

Conclusion and Road Ahead

- As India navigates its path forward, it is crucial to prioritise the protection of press freedom.
- Ensuring the safety and independence of journalists is not just about safeguarding a profession; it is about upholding the democratic values that form the bedrock of the nation.
- The road ahead may be challenging, but a commitment to press freedom is essential for a vibrant and resilient democracy.

Source: TH

NATIONAL MISSION ON EDIBLE OILS-OILSEEDS (NMEO-OILSEEDS)

Context

- The Union Cabinet approved the **National Mission on Edible Oils-Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds)** to increase domestic oilseed production and achieve self-sufficiency in edible oils.

National Mission on Edible Oils-Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds)

- The initiative will span from **2024-25 to 2030-31** and will focus on **enhancing the production** of key primary oilseed crops such as Rapeseed-Mustard, Groundnut, Soybean, Sunflower, and Sesamum.

- ♦ It will also focus on increasing collection and extraction efficiency from **secondary sources** like Cottonseed, Rice Bran, and Tree Borne Oils.
 - **Aim:** To increase primary oilseed production from 39 million tonnes (2022-23) to 69.7 million tonnes by 2030-31, meeting around **72% of our projected domestic requirement**.
 - **Implementation:** By promoting adoption of high-yielding high oil content seed varieties, extending cultivation into rice fallow areas, and promoting intercropping.
 - ♦ The Mission will harness ongoing development of high-quality seeds by using cutting-edge global technologies such as genome editing.
 - ♦ 65 new seed hubs and 50 seed storage units will be set up in public sector to improve the seed production infrastructure.
 - ♦ Support will be extended to FPOs, cooperatives, and industry players to establish or upgrade post-harvest units, enhancing recovery from sources such as cottonseed, rice bran, corn oil, and Tree-Borne Oils (TBOs).
 - **Value Chain Clusters:** Over 600 Value Chain Clusters will be developed across 347 unique districts, covering more than 10 lakh hectares annually.
 - ♦ These clusters will be managed by value chain partners such as FPOs, cooperatives, and public or private entities.
 - ♦ Farmers in these clusters will have access to high-quality seeds, training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and advisory services on weather and pest management.
 - **Crop Diversification:** The Mission also seeks to expand oilseed cultivation by an additional 40 lakh hectares by targeting rice and potato fallow lands, promoting intercropping, and promoting crop diversification.
 - **Dietary Awareness:** The Mission will promote awareness of recommended dietary guidelines for edible oils through an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign.
- **Demand:** Over the past decades, per capita consumption of edible oil in the country has seen rise.
 - ♦ This surge in demand has significantly outpaced domestic production, leading to a heavy reliance on imports to meet both domestic and industrial needs.
 - **Import:** In 2022-23, India imported 16.5 million tonnes (MT) of edible oils, with domestic production fulfilling only 40-45% of the country's requirements.
 - ♦ This situation presents a substantial challenge to the country's goal of achieving self-sufficiency in edible oils.

Way Ahead

- **To address this dependency and promote self-sufficiency**, the Government of India has undertaken a series of measures to enhance domestic production of edible oils, including the **launch of National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)**.
- In addition, the **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** for mandated edible oilseeds has been significantly increased to ensure remunerative prices to the oilseed farmers.
- The continuation of the **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** ensures that oilseed farmers receive MSP through price support scheme and price deficiency payment scheme.
- **20% import duty on edible oils** has been imposed to protect domestic producers from cheap imports and encourage local cultivation.

Source: PIB

INDIA'S BRAP 2024 AND ITS INTEGRATION WITH THE WORLD BANK'S B-READY INDEX

In News

- India is aligning its state business readiness rankings with the **World Bank's B-READY index** as part of the government's efforts to improve the **country's ease of doing business**.

About

- **Alignment with B-READY Index:** The BRAP rankings prepared by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade will integrate select indicators from the World Bank's B-READY index in their 2024 version.
- **Enterprise Survey Launch:** The enterprise survey for the B-READY index is set to commence in October. The World Bank will collaborate

Oil Seed Production in India

- India is the **fourth largest oilseeds producer** in the world, behind the USA, China, and Brazil.
 - ♦ It has **20.8%** of the total area under cultivation globally, accounting for **10% of global production**.
- **The largest oilseed-producing states in India** include Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana.

with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation to determine a sample of industries for this enterprise study.

- **Participation Timeline:** While the B-READY rankings will begin in 2024, India's participation in this exercise will not occur until 2026.
 - ♦ The Union government has encouraged states to identify and rectify gaps identified in the B-READY evaluation to enhance their standings in the international index.

Rationale Behind B-READY Index

- The B-READY index is intended to replace the previously used Ease of Doing Business rankings, which were halted in 2021 due to reported irregularities. This new framework aims to consider a broader array of factors when assessing a country's business environment.
- Global financial institutions and multinational corporations are expected to use the B-READY framework to gauge regulatory and policy conditions within nations.
- The B-READY index will provide an important tool for countries to understand and improve their business regulatory environments, helping attract investments and foster economic growth.

About Business-Ready (B-Ready) Index

- The B-READY Index is an upcoming **global ease of doing business ranking system** developed by the **World Bank**.
- It is designed to **replace the discontinued Doing Business Report (discontinued in 2021)** and will assess and compare the business environment and regulatory framework across different countries.
- **Key Features of the B-READY Index:**
 - ♦ **Assessment of Business Environment:** The index will evaluate countries based on the ease of starting, operating, and scaling businesses.
 - ♦ **Enterprise Surveys:** The ranking will rely heavily on enterprise surveys, which involve collecting data from businesses in different sectors to understand the regulatory challenges they face.
 - ♦ **Comprehensive Indicators:** It will track various indicators, including the ease of obtaining permits, taxation systems, access to credit, and other factors that influence the business environment.
 - ♦ **Focus on Inclusivity:** The index aims to ensure that diverse business environments, especially those in emerging economies, are fairly evaluated.

Important Points:

- **India's Previous Performance:** India saw an improvement in its Ease of Doing Business Index ranking, moving from 142nd place in 2014 to 63rd in 2020.
- **Recent BRAP Rankings:** The government recently released the BRAP 2022 rankings, with Andhra Pradesh and Kerala emerging as the top performers.

Source: MoneyControl

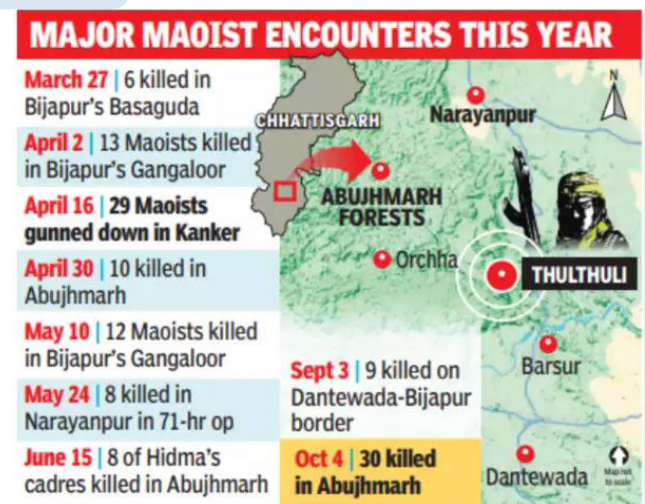
FIGHTING NAXALISM

Context

- At least 28 Maoists were killed by security forces in a gunfight in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

About Naxalism

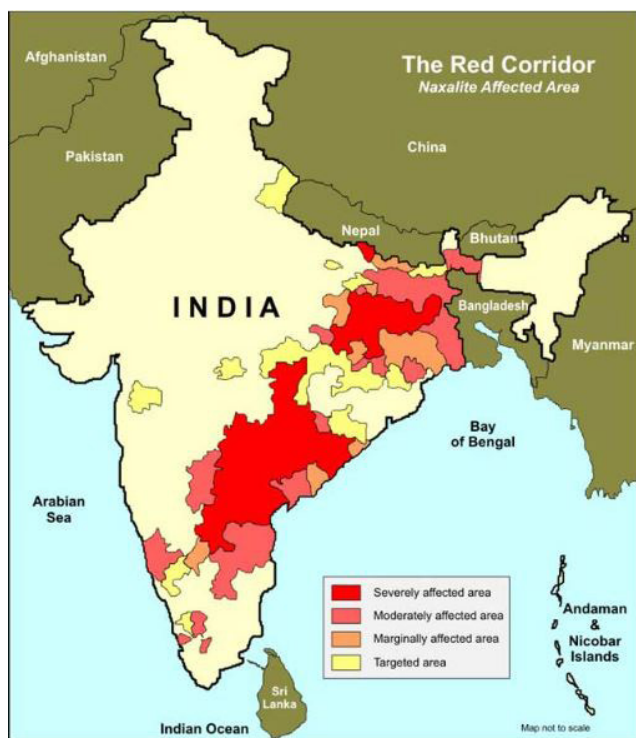
- **Naxalism or Left Wing Extremism (LWE)** is one of the major challenges to India's internal security.
- Naxal affected areas in India are known as the '**Red Corridor**'.
- **Reason for Naxalism:** Naxalites seek to overthrow the State through violent means.
 - ♦ They openly proclaim lack of faith in the democratic means of ballot and adhere to the violence as a means of achieving their ends.
- **Initial Stage:** The Naxal movement started with the **tribal-peasant uprising against landlords in Naxalbari village** of Darjiling district, West Bengal in **1967**.



- ♦ The uprising was led by leaders such as **Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal**.
- **Communist Party of India (Maoist):** In **2004**, two main naxal groups, namely the **Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI)** and **People's War** merged to form the **CPI (Maoist) party**.

- ◆ Eventually, by **2008** most of the other Naxal groups were merged into CPI (Maoist) which emerged as the **umbrella of Naxalite outfits**.
- ◆ The CPI (Maoist) and all its front organization formations have been included in the list of **banned terrorist organizations** under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967**.

Presence of Maoists in India



- The States of **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and Bihar** are considered **severely affected**.
- The States of **West Bengal, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh** are considered **partially affected**. The States of UP and MP are considered slightly affected.
- The CPI(Maoist) are making forays into Southern States of **Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu** and planning to link up the Western Ghats to the Eastern Ghats through these states.
- They are attempting incursions into **Assam and Arunachal Pradesh**, which has serious long-term strategic implications.

Causes of Naxalism

- **Marginalisation:** Naxalites do not belong to any particular religion, or community, but largely are Dalits, Adivasis and other marginalised sections of society.
 - ◆ The basic issues are land reforms and economic development. The ideological dimension is provided by Maoism.
- **Support Base of Naxalites:** Naxalite movement has its support among the landless, share-

croppers, agricultural labour, Harijans and tribals.

- ◆ As long as these people are exploited and social justice continues to be thwarted, this support base of the Naxalites will continue.
- **Forest Management and Livelihood of Tribals:** For tribals, forest, land, and water mean their livelihood. They have been deprived of these under various acts and orders which increased the resentment against the authorities.
- **Lack of Development:** Absence of developmental activities and virtual absence of health care, drinking water, roads, electricity and educational facilities in areas where Naxalism has taken roots.

How Naxalites Possess a Challenge for Country?

- **Vulnerability to External Threats:** The Maoist movement highlights India's interior weaknesses, which makes India also vulnerable to external threats.
 - ◆ The CPI (Maoist) have close fraternal ties with many North-East insurgent groups.
 - ◆ Most of these outfits have linkages with external forces hostile to India.
 - ◆ The CPI (Maoist) have also frequently expressed their solidarity with the J&K terrorist groups.
- **Impediments to Economic Development:** The Maoists concentrate on the poor and marginalized regions of India, internal order and stability are necessary for a nation's economic development.
- **Additional Expenses on Internal Security:** The Naxalite activities are using up scarce resources on defence and internal security when it should be spent on areas such as social development.
- **Adverse Impact on Governance:** In the areas under Maoist domination, the absence of governance, which is created by their violent methods in the first place.
 - ◆ The service delivery systems are extinguished through killing, kidnap, intimidation and extortion.

Government of India's Approach

- **Deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs):** Battalions of the CAPFs/Naga Battalions (BNs) are deployed for assisting the State Police in the LWE affected States.
- **Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme:** Funds are provided for meeting the recurring expenditure relating to insurance, training and operational needs of the security forces, rehabilitation of Left Wing Extremist cadres who surrender, and publicity material to create awareness against violence.

- **Review and Monitoring Mechanisms:** A number of review and monitoring mechanisms have been put in place by the Government and the Ministry of Home Affairs monitors the situation on a regular basis at various levels.
- **Strengthening the Intelligence Gathering Mechanism:** Several steps have been taken to strengthen and upgrade the capabilities of intelligence agencies at the Central and State levels.
 - ◆ These include intelligence sharing through Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) at the Central and State levels, and Multi Agency Centre (SMAC) at the subsidiary level on a 24x7 basis.
- **Better Inter-state Coordination:** To improve inter-state coordination the government conducts frequent meetings and interactions between the official machinery of the bordering districts of Left Wing Extremism affected States across the country.
- **Tackling the challenge of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs):** IED is the most potent weapon in the hands of Maoists.
 - ◆ The Union Home Ministry has formulated a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on 'Issues related to Explosives/IEDs/Landmines in naxal affected areas' and the same has been circulated to the stakeholders for compliance.
- **Strengthening of air support:** State Governments and the CAPFs have been provided with enhanced air support in terms of UAVs and helicopters for anti-naxal operations, including evacuation of casualties/injured persons.

Way Ahead

- There is a widely accepted view that the Naxal problem can be tackled successfully through a **combination of development and security related interventions.**
- The problem is not to be viewed entirely as a law and order issue. Often, innocent tribals who live in the interior forest regions fall prey to Naxal intimidation.
- Re-establishing control over Naxalite affected areas, their development, and enabling the marginalized people living there to lead a secure, dignified and better quality of life is vital.
- It is note-worthy that due to the measures initiated by the Government, LWE violence has significantly declined in the last few years.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

SHYAMJI KRISHNA VARMA

Context

- Prime Minister Modi paid homage to revolutionary freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma on his 95th birth anniversary.

About

- Shyamji Krishna Varma was born on **4 October, 1857 in Gujarat.**
- He was an Indian revolutionary fighter, lawyer and journalist.
- To promote the cause of Indian nationalism and freedom, **in London he founded** the;
 - ◆ Indian Home Rule Society
 - ◆ The India House and
 - ◆ The Indian Sociologist (a journal for advocating nationalist ideas).

Legacy

- Shyamji Krishna Varma was the **first President of Bombay Arya Samaj** and was deeply influenced by **Dayanand Saraswati.**
- He played a role in inspiring Indian revolutionaries like **Veer Savarkar**, who was also associated with India House in London.
- He also served as the Divan (Prime Minister) for several princely states in India.

Source: AIR

ASSAM'S 'CO-DISTRICT' INITIATIVE

In News

- Assam has introduced a unique **administrative reform** with the launch of **"co-districts"**, effectively replacing the existing system of civil sub-divisions.

About

- **Co-districts** are smaller administrative units below districts, headed by an officer of the rank of Assistant District Commissioner, and are tasked with carrying out powers and responsibilities similar to those of District Commissioners.
- The move is aimed at addressing administrative challenges and improving the efficiency of governance, with a focus on the vision of minimum government, maximum governance.
- **Co-district commissioners** will handle matters related to land, MLA funds, implementation of government schemes, and more, making these

services accessible locally without visiting the district headquarters.

- This would be expected to **decentralize governance, enhance citizen-centric services,** and streamline development efforts across the state

Source: IE

EMERGENCY USE LISTING (EUL) PROCEDURE

In News

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has approved the first Mpox (monkeypox) diagnostic test under its Emergency Use Listing (EUL) procedure.

About EUL Procedure

- **Rapid Evaluation:** The EUL procedure allows for a rapid evaluation of medical products to ensure that they meet the necessary quality, safety, and efficacy standards in emergency situations.
- **Temporary Authorization:** Products listed under the EUL are granted temporary authorization for use while further data and studies are collected.
- **Support for Global Access:** EUL approval facilitates global access to critical medical products, particularly in countries or regions facing limited healthcare resources or underserved populations.
- The EUL procedure has been widely used during recent global health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, to expedite the availability of vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments that meet WHO standards.

Source: IE

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL DEVICE REGULATORS FORUM

Context

- India has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF).

International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF)

- **IMDRF is a voluntary group** of medical device regulators from around the world.
- **It was established in 2011** to accelerate international medical device regulatory harmonization and convergence, building on the foundational work of its predecessor, the **Global Harmonization Task Force (GHTF)**.

- **IMDRF members:** It includes national regulatory authorities from the United States, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Russia, China, South Korea, Singapore, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Source: PIB

RBI'S REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MIBOR BENCHMARK

Context

- The Reserve Bank of India released a report recommending changes in methodology of the Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR).

About

- The report proposes a change to a new benchmark referred to as the **Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR)**.
- This new rate is based on secured transactions in the money market, rather than unsecured interbank lending, providing more stability and reducing risks associated with it.

What is Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR)?

- It was introduced by the **National Stock Exchange (NSE) in 1998** as a part of efforts to develop **India's interbank money market**.
- MIBOR is meant to **capture the overnight borrowing rate** between banks and helps in determining the cost of borrowing for financial institutions
- It serves as a benchmark for various financial instruments, such as **floating rate bonds, interest rate swaps,** and other debt instruments.
 - ♦ MIBOR plays a crucial role in determining the cost of capital for businesses and banks.

Source: BS

THE ANNUAL SURVEY OF INDUSTRIES (ASI) FOR 2022-23

Context

- The Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) for 2022-23 has been released by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.

About

- Annual Survey of Industries is conducted to provide insight into the change in composition, growth and structure of various **manufacturing industries** in terms of **output, value added, employment, and capital formation**.

- It provides valuable input to the **National Accounts Statistics** at national and state level.

Major Highlights

- **Gross Value Added (GVA)** grew by **7.3%** in current prices in the year 2022-23 over 2021-22.
 - ♦ Among the major states, in terms of GVA, **Maharashtra** ranked first followed by Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh.
- The total number of employees in manufacturing industries **increased by 7.5 per cent.**
 - ♦ The **highest employment** was recorded in factories producing food products, followed by textiles, basic metals, wearing apparel and motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers
- **The main drivers of the manufacturing growth** were industries related to basic metal, coke & refined petroleum products, food products, chemical and chemical products and motor vehicles.

Source: PIB

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE CODE (NAC)

Context

- **The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has begun the process of formulating a **National Agriculture Code (NAC)**, on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.

About

- **BIS:** It is the national body which **sets standards for different products across various economic sectors.**
 - ♦ In agriculture, it has already set standards for machinery (tractors, harvesters, etc.) and various inputs (fertilisers, pesticides, etc.)
 - ♦ However, there are still many areas not covered by the BIS standards.
- **The NAC** will cover the entire agriculture cycle, and will also contain a guidance note for future standardisation.
 - ♦ The code will have two parts. The first will contain general principles for all crops, and the second will deal with crop-specific standards for the likes of paddy, wheat, oilseeds, and pulses.
 - ♦ The NAC will serve as a guide for farmers, agriculture universities, and officials involved in the field.
 - ♦ In addition to standards for agriculture machinery, the NAC will cover all agriculture processes and post-harvest operations.

Source: IE

CHARON

In News

- The James Webb Space Telescope has detected carbon dioxide and hydrogen peroxide on Charon, Pluto's largest moon.

About

- Pluto, previously the ninth planet, was reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006 after the discovery of similar objects beyond Neptune in the **Kuiper Belt.**
 - ♦ The Kuiper Belt is a region of space located **beyond the planet Neptune**, extending from approximately 30 to 55 astronomical units (AU) from the Sun. It is home to a vast collection of icy bodies and dwarf planets, including Pluto, and is considered part of the outer Solar System.
- **Charon, discovered in 1978**, is Pluto's largest moon, with a diameter of approximately 1,200 kilometers, making it about half the size of Pluto. Charon and Pluto engage in a distinctive orbital dance, rotating around a central point.

James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)

- The James Webb Space Telescope is the largest and most powerful space telescope, designed to study the early universe by detecting infrared light.
- Webb differs from the Hubble Telescope, which primarily observes visible and ultraviolet light. Webb can detect galaxies obscured by dust or too distant for Hubble to observe, allowing a deeper look into star formation and cosmic evolution.

Source: TOI

CYBER COMMANDOS TRAINING FOR POLICE

Context

- The IIT- Madras Pravartak has launched a **cyber commandos training for police.**

About

- The **six-month residential programme** is an initiative of the **Union Home Ministry** and will focus on specialised cyber training.
- The programme is for the **law enforcement force across the nation.**
- While the existing cybercrime cells focus on reactive measures such as investigation and prosecution of cybercrimes, the commandos will be a **proactive force.**
 - ♦ The participants will learn **how to proactively detect cyberattacks and use forensic technologies to develop defences.**

- **IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation** is a Section 8 company housing a technology innovation hub on sensors, networking, actuators and control systems.
 - ♦ It is funded by the **department of science and technology** under its National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems and hosted by IIT Madras.

Source: TH

NAVIKA SAGAR PARIKRAMA II EXPEDITION

Context

- Chief of the Naval Staff flagged off the **Navika Sagar Parikrama II expedition** from Ocean Sailing Node, INS Mandovi, Goa.

About

- Navika Sagar Parikrama II will be covering **four continents**, through three Oceans and three challenging Capes in 240 days and travelling 23,400 nautical miles.
 - ♦ The expedition would be from Goa to Fremantle, Australia and then Fremantle to Lyttleton, New Zealand.
 - ♦ It is the first-ever global circumnavigation onboard by **two women Naval Officers, marking a significant event.**
- It will contribute towards **progressing national scientific research** in collaboration with the National Institute of Oceanography for study on marine microplastics and ferrous content across the seas.

Source: TH

