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Time: 45 Min

Date: 08-01-2025

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RAT-HOLE MINING: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Context

- Recently, a tragic incident occurred in the **3 Kilo area of Umrangso in Dima Hasao district of Assam**, where several workers became trapped in a coal mine due to flooding, which has brought the dangerous practice of 'rat-hole' mining back into the spotlight.

What is Rat Hole Mining?

Different ways, all illegal!



- About:** It is a method of **coal extraction** that involves **digging narrow, horizontal tunnels** into the ground.
 - These tunnels are typically just wide enough for one person to crawl through and extract coal.
- Prevalent & Causes:** It is prevalent in the **northeastern states of India**, particularly in Meghalaya and Assam because of poverty, lack of alternative livelihood, and economic viability etc.
 - The region's **hilly terrain and the nature of its coal deposits** make conventional mining methods challenging, leading to the adoption of this rudimentary technique.
 - Poor enforcement of mining laws left workers more susceptible to rat hole mining.
- Types:**
 - Side-Cutting:** Narrow tunnels are dug horizontally into the hill slopes until the coal seam is found.
 - Box-Cutting:** A rectangular opening is made, and a vertical pit is dug until the coal seam is reached. Horizontal tunnels are then created to extract the coal.

Current Laws and Regulations Related to Mining in India

- Mines and Minerals Act, 1957:** It governs the mining of minerals in India, including their exploration, extraction, and management.
 - Illegal mining, such as rat-hole mining, violates provisions of this Act, leading to penalties and legal action.

- Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973:** Restricts mining activities to government and authorized entities.
 - Rat-hole mining is often unregulated and conducted outside this framework, making it illegal.
- Environmental Protection Act, 1986 (EPA):** Requires environmental clearances for mining activities. Rat-hole mining bypasses these regulations, causing severe environmental damage.
- Meghalaya Mines and Minerals Policy, 2012:** It was introduced to regulate mining practices in the state. However, enforcement has been weak, and rat-hole mining continues illegally.

Issues with Rat-Hole Mining

- Environmental Impact:** The unregulated nature of rat-hole mining leads to severe land degradation, deforestation, and water pollution.
 - Rivers such as Lukha and Myntdu** have become too acidic to sustain aquatic life due to the high concentrations of sulphates, iron, and toxic heavy metals.
- Health Risks:** The mines lack proper ventilation, structural support, and safety measures, making them prone to collapses and flooding. Miners face diseases like lung infections from coal dust.
- Social Problems:** It causes exploitation of child labor and poorly paid workers. Also, leads to displacement of local communities.
- Legal Violations:** The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** banned rat-hole mining in **2014** due to its hazardous nature and for being unscientific, although the practice remains widespread.
 - Despite the ban, illegal mining continues, driven by the demand for coal and the economic benefits it provides to local communities.

Ways to Regulate Rat-Hole Mining

- Strengthen Legal Enforcement:** Enforce the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and related laws strictly. Penalize illegal mining activities and confiscate equipment used in rat-hole mining.
 - Conduct regular inspections to monitor compliance.
- Child Labor Eradication:** Strictly enforce the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.
 - Promote education by providing schools and scholarships in mining-affected areas.

- **Adopt Sustainable Mining Practices:** Replace rat-hole mining with scientific and mechanized methods to minimize environmental damage and ensure safety.
- **Promote Alternative Livelihoods:** Create employment opportunities in agriculture, handicrafts, eco-tourism, and other industries.

Source: IE

INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE TO ENFORCE AI RULES TO DEVELOP AI GUIDELINES

Context

- A Union Government panel has recommended that an inter-ministerial committee be set up to **enforce AI rules to develop AI guidelines.**

About

- IndiaAI Mission headed by the Principal Scientific Advisor is seeking public feedback on a report released by its **AI guidelines sub-committee.**
- The report proposes a **“coordinated, whole-of-government approach** to enforce compliance and ensure effective governance as India’s AI ecosystem evolves”.

Major Highlights of the Report

- The report outlines the following principles for AI governance:
 - ♦ transparency of AI systems with “meaningful information on their development” and capabilities;
 - ♦ accountability from developers and deployers of AI systems;
 - ♦ safety, reliability and robustness of AI systems by design;
 - ♦ privacy and security of AI systems;
 - ♦ fairness and non-discrimination;
 - ♦ human-centred values and ‘do no harm’;
 - ♦ inclusive and sustainable innovation to “distribute the benefits of innovation equitably”;
 - ♦ and “digital by design” governance to “leverage digital technologies” to operationalise these principles.
- **Life Cycle Approach:** In order to operationalise these principles, policymakers must use a life cycle approach.
 - ♦ They must look at AI systems at different stages of their development, deployment, and diffusion, during which distinct risks can occur.

- ♦ There should be an “ecosystem view” of AI actors.
- The report proposes a **tech-enabled digital governance system.**

Artificial Intelligence

- 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 is investing in.

Why do we need rules on AI?

- **Ethical Concerns:** AI systems can make decisions and take actions that impact individuals and society. Establishing rules helps address ethical concerns related to the use of AI, ensuring that it aligns with human values and respects fundamental rights.
- **Privacy:** AI often involves the processing of large amounts of data. Rules can help protect individual privacy by specifying how data should be collected, stored, and used.
- **Security:** This includes safeguarding against potential vulnerabilities and protecting against malicious uses of AI technology.
- **Transparency:** Rules can mandate transparency in AI systems, requiring developers to disclose how their algorithms work.
- **Competition and Innovation:** Establishing a regulatory framework provides a level playing field for businesses, preventing the abuse of market dominance and encouraging responsible innovation.
- **Public Safety:** In cases where AI is used in critical domains such as healthcare, transportation, or public infrastructure, rules are essential to ensure the safety of individuals and the general public.

Regulation of AI in India

- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act in 2023:** The government enacted the Digital Personal Data Protection Act in 2023, it can address some of the privacy concerns concerning AI platforms.
- **Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence:** India is a member of the GPAI. The 2023 GPAI Summit was held in New Delhi, where GPAI

experts presented their work on responsible AI, data governance, and the future of work, innovation, and commercialization.

- **The National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence #AIForAll strategy, by NITI Aayog:** It featured AI research and development guidelines focused on healthcare, agriculture, education, “smart” cities and infrastructure, and smart mobility and transformation.
- **Principles for Responsible AI:** In February 2021, the NITI Aayog released Principles for Responsible AI, an approach paper that explores the various ethical considerations of deploying AI solutions in India.

Challenges of Regulation

- **Rapid Evolution of AI:** The field is constantly evolving, making it difficult to write future-proof regulations.
- **Balancing Innovation and Safety:** Striking a balance between fostering innovation and ensuring safety is a challenge.
- **International Cooperation:** Effective AI regulation requires international cooperation to avoid a fragmented landscape.
- **Defining AI:** There’s no universally agreed-upon definition of AI, making it difficult to regulate effectively.

Way Ahead

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) is here to stay and possesses the capability to fundamentally change the way in which we work. It is a far greater force of either good or evil or both, AI needs to be regulated.
- By acknowledging the potential dangers of AI and proactively taking steps to mitigate them, we can ensure that this transformative technology serves humanity and contributes to a safer, more equitable future.

Source: TH

INDIA, U.S. TO JOINTLY MANUFACTURE INTEROPERABLE SONOBUOYS FOR NAVY

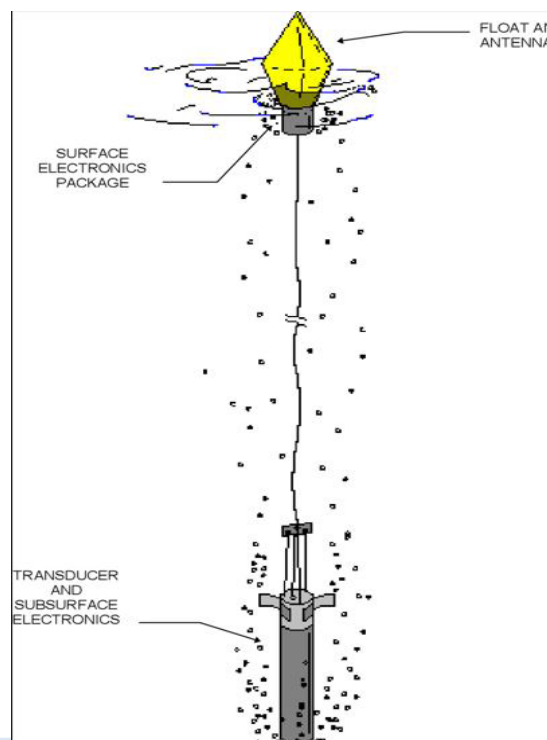
Context

- India and the U.S. announced cooperation on **co-production of U.S. sonobuoys for Undersea Domain Awareness (UDA)** for the Indian Navy.

About Sonobuoys

- The sonobuoys are small and expendable devices used in underwater acoustics and sonar systems to detect submarines and other hostile

objects and to **carry out precision attacks to eliminate threats.**



- Sonobuoys are deployed from aircraft or ships and activate upon water impact.
- They have an inflatable float with a radio transmitter, which stays at the surface to maintain communication.
- Underwater hydrophones are deployed to a selected depth to capture acoustic signals. These signals are then transmitted via Very High Frequency (VHF) or Ultra High Frequency (UHF) radios to operators for real-time analysis.
- It is expected to become operational by **2027**.
 - The production is split across the U.S. and India, in accordance with **‘Make in India’ principles**.
 - The sonobuoys co-produced in India are interchangeable and interoperable between U.S. Navy and Indian Navy.

Significance

- After Maritime Domain Awareness, UDA has emerged as a **key focus area for India and among the Quad**.
- India moved to procure US sonobuoys with the **transfer of technology to augment underwater threat detection capabilities** in view of the increasing **Chinese presence in the region**.
- It’s going to be crucial to ensure that this part of the region will remain safe and secure for trade, commerce and prosperity.

Overview of India and US Bilateral Relations

- Since India's independence, ties with the United States have weathered the **Cold War**-era distrust and **estrangement over India's nuclear program**.
 - ♦ Relations have **warmed in recent years** and cooperation has strengthened across a range of economic and political areas.
- **Bilateral Trade:** The bilateral trade between the two countries has **risen by 72%** between 2017-18 and 2022-23.
 - ♦ The US accounted for **18% of the gross FDI inflows into India** during 2021-22, ranking second behind Singapore.
- **Defense and Security:** India and the US have signed a **troika of "foundational pacts"** for deep military cooperation, beginning with the **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)** in 2016, followed by the **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** after the first 2+2 dialogue in 2018, and then the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** in 2020.
 - ♦ In 2016, the United States elevated India to a **major defense partner**, a status no other country holds.
- **Space: Artemis Accords** signed by India established a common vision for the future of space exploration for the benefit of all humankind.
 - ♦ The United States and India cooperate through the bilateral Civil Space Joint Working Group.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** India and the United States cooperate closely in multilateral organizations and fora, including the United Nations, G20, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-related fora, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.
 - ♦ Together with Australia and Japan, the United States and India convene as the Quad, a diplomatic network, to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.
- **Nuclear Cooperation: Civil Nuclear Deal was signed in 2005**, under the agreement, India agrees to separate its civil and military nuclear facilities and place all its civil resources under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.
 - ♦ In exchange, the United States agrees to work toward full civil nuclear cooperation with India.

Source: TH

FIRST ADVANCE ESTIMATES OF ANNUAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

In News

- The National Statistics Office (NSO) has released the First Advance Estimates of Gross domestic product (GDP) for FY 2024-25.

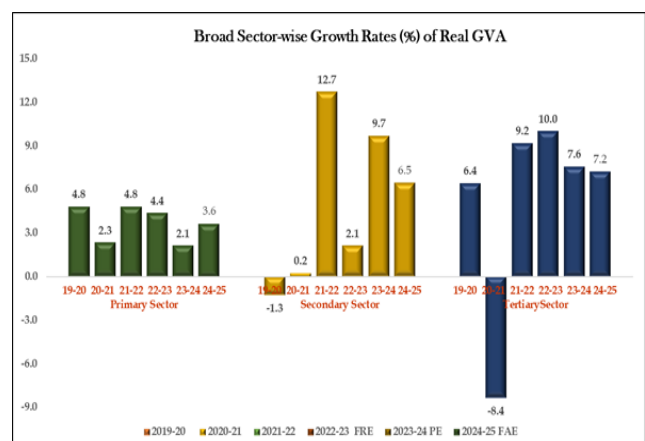
Gross domestic product (GDP)

- It is the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.
- As a broad measure of overall domestic production, it functions as a comprehensive scorecard of a given country's economic health.

About First Advance Estimates of Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

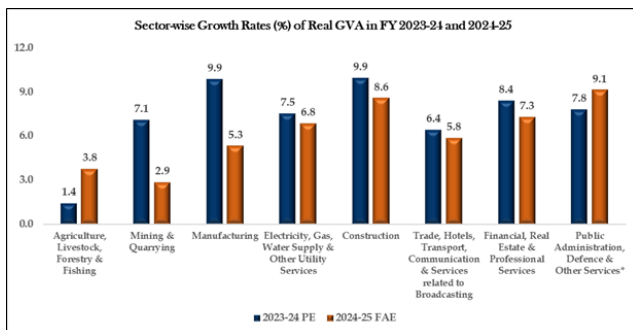
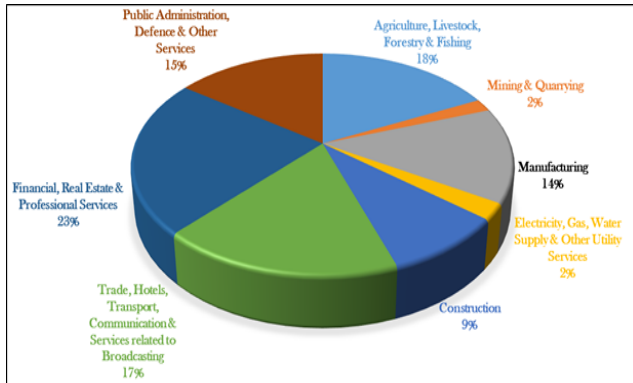
- The Advance Estimates of GDP are indicator-based and compiled using the benchmark-indicator method.
- ♦ Data is sourced from various Ministries, Departments, and Private Agencies.
- **Sector-wise estimates** are compiled using indicators like Index of Industrial Production (IIP), financial performance of listed companies, agricultural and horticultural crop estimates, production targets of livestock, fish production, and several other production and consumption indicators.

Key Highlights:



- **Real GDP** is estimated to grow by 6.4% in FY 2024-25, compared to 8.2% in FY 2023-24.
- **Nominal GDP** growth rate is 9.7% in FY 2024-25, compared to 9.6% in FY 2023-24.
- **Real Gross Value Added (GVA)** has grown by 6.4% in FY 2024-25, compared to 7.2% in FY 2023-24.

- **Nominal GVA** growth rate is 9.3% in FY 2024-25, compared to 8.5% in FY 2023-24.
- **Sectoral Composition of Nominal GVA in FY 2024-25**



- **Components of GDP Growth:** Private Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) Accounts for around 60% of GDP.
 - ♦ **Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) Growth rate** is 7.3% in FY 2024-25, compared to 4.0% in FY 2023-24.
 - ♦ **Government Spending (GFCE):** Accounts for 10% of GDP, but growth has been slow
 - **Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE) Growth rate** is 4.1% in FY 2024-25, compared to 2.5% in FY 2023-24.
 - ♦ **Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF):** This investment engine accounts for about 30% of GDP.
 - It has seen a growth of 6.3% this year but a slower 5.3% annual growth since 2014.
 - ♦ **Net Exports:** India has a trade deficit (more imports than exports), but the gap has reduced recently.

GDP Growth Limitations

- Sluggish private consumption growth is holding back GDP growth.
- Investment in the economy has been tapering off, with businesses hesitant to expand due to low consumption.

- Government spending is not growing rapidly enough to stimulate the economy significantly.
- India has experienced high growth rates post-Covid, but this is partly due to a low base effect from 2020-21 when GDP contracted.
- India's real GDP growth is below 5% annually, far lower than the ideal growth needed to become a developed economy by 2047.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- The First Advance Estimates of GDP for FY 2024-25 indicate a moderate but steady economic growth amidst various global and domestic challenges.
- These estimates provide crucial insights for policymakers and stakeholders to navigate the economic landscape and make informed decisions to foster sustainable growth and development.

Do you know?

- **Primary Sector:** Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishing and Mining & Quarrying
- **Secondary Sector:** Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, Water supply & Other Utility Services and Construction
- **Tertiary Sector:** Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication and Services related to Broadcasting, Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services and Public Administration, Defence & Other Services

Source :IE

NEW METHOD OF INCREASING NITROGEN USE EFFICIENCY

Context

- Recent research has identified a novel method to enhance Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) in crops like rice and Arabidopsis by lowering nitric oxide (NO) levels in plants.

Key Findings of the Study

- **Role of Nitric Oxide (NO):** Nitric oxide influences nitrate uptake by regulating nitrate transporters.
 - ♦ Lowering NO levels activates **high-affinity nitrate transporters (HATs)**, especially under limited nitrogen conditions.
- **Overexpressing phytoalbumin**, a natural NO scavenger, increases the expression of high-affinity nitrate transporters (HATs) like NRT2.1 and NRT2.4, leading to more efficient nitrogen uptake under low NO conditions.

- **Protein Nitrosylation**, a biochemical modification of proteins by NO, plays a crucial role in nitrogen regulation.
 - ♦ Targeting this process has shown improved NUE outcomes.
- The study also explores the development of **NO scavenging formulations** adaptable to various agroecosystems, further aiding the reduction of nitrogen fertilizer use.
- **Improving NUE is critical for;**
 - ♦ Reducing excessive use of nitrogen fertilizers,
 - ♦ Mitigating environmental pollution, such as nitrate leaching and greenhouse gas emissions,
 - ♦ Enhancing crop yields.

Methods Used

- **Genetic Manipulation:** Genetic manipulation involves altering plant genes to control nitric oxide levels in the cells.
- **Pharmacological Manipulation:** Pharmacological manipulation involves using chemical compounds called NO scavengers to reduce nitric oxide concentration in plants.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT

SECTION 479 OF BNSS

In News

- The MHA has urged all states and Union Territories to implement **Section 479 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS)** to provide relief to undertrial prisoners.
 - ♦ Provisions include releasing those who have served a substantial portion of their sentence on bail or bond, aiming to mitigate long detentions.

Key Provisions of Section 479 of BNSS

- **One-half Detention:** Undertrial prisoners (UTPs) who have completed half of the maximum sentence for their offence (excluding offences punishable with death or life imprisonment) must be released on bail by the court.
- **One-third Detention (First-Time Offenders):** First-time offenders who have served one-third of the maximum sentence should be released on bond by the court.
- **Responsibilities of Prison Authorities:** Section 479(3) mandates prison superintendents to file

applications in the concerned courts for eligible prisoners to secure their release on bail or bond.

Source: ET

10 YEARS OF UJALA SCHEME

Context

- The UJALA scheme, launched on 5th January 2015 marked its 10th anniversary as a groundbreaking initiative in energy efficiency.

About UJALA scheme

- It was launched as the **Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP)** and later rebranded, UJALA to revolutionise household lighting by providing affordable energy-efficient LED bulbs, tube lights, and fans to millions of Indian homes.
- It is a joint effort by **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)** and DISCOMs under the **Ministry of Power**.
- **Implementation Model:** EESL handled initial costs, with repayments made through monthly or quarterly annuities by municipalities.
 - ♦ Ensured over 95% uptime for LED streetlights, enhancing public safety and reliable municipal services.

Significance

- It is the world's largest **zero-subsidy** domestic lighting programme.
- It contributed to energy savings, environmental awareness, and economic efficiency.
- It empowered households with reduced electricity bills and fostered sustainable living.

Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP)

- It was launched alongside UJALA on 5th January **2015**.
- It replaced outdated streetlights with energy-efficient LED streetlights in urban and rural areas.
- It is aimed at reducing energy consumption and operational costs for public lighting.

Source: PIB

PLI SCHEME 1.1

Context

- Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries, launched the **second round of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme** for specialty steel, termed PLI Scheme 1.1.

About PLI 1.1

- **Aim:** To boost domestic production and reduce dependence on imports.
- **The five product categories covered under PLI Scheme 1.1 include** Coated/Plated Steel Products, High Strength/Wear Resistant Steel, Specialty Rails, Alloy Steel Products & Steel Wires, and Electrical Steel.
 - ♦ These products have applications across diverse sectors such as **white goods, automobiles, infrastructure, and power transformers.**

PLI Scheme

- Initially launched for **three sectors** to address the need to boost domestic manufacturing during COVID-19 lockdown, the PLI scheme was **later extended to include steel.**
- **The first round of the PLI Scheme for Specialty Steel** was notified in 2021.
- The objective of the PLI scheme for specialty steel is to promote **manufacturing of value-added steel grades** within the country and help the Indian steel industry mature in terms of technology as well as move up the value chain.

Steel Production in India

- India is the **world's second-largest producer of crude steel**, with an output of 125.32 MT of crude steel and finished steel production of 121.29 MT in FY23.
- **The past five years** have witnessed a global increase in steel capacity by nearly 62 million tonnes, with **India accounting for 6% of this growth.**

Source: TH

ANJI KHAD BRIDGE**In News**

- Indian Railways has successfully conducted a trial run of a tower wagon on the Anji Khad Bridge, the country's first cable-stayed rail bridge, located in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district.

About Anji Khad Bridge

- **Length:** 725.5 meters
- **Cable-Stayed Span:** 473.25 meters supported by 96 cables (ranging from 82 to 295 meters).
- **Built By:** Indian Railways
- **Project:** Part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project
- **Connectivity:** Links Katra and Reasi, addressing challenging terrain in the Anji River Valley.

- It stands at an impressive height of 331 meters from the riverbed.

Significance

- The Anji Khad Bridge will play a vital role in enhancing connectivity, boosting tourism, and facilitating economic growth in the region.

Source: DD News

SELECTIVE SILENCING**Context**

- New research uncovers why certain individuals with disease-causing genes remain symptom-free.

About

- **Selective silencing:** It refers to the inactivation of one parent's copy of a gene in certain cells. This process blocks the expression of a specific gene's message.
- **Mechanism:** Every cell (except sperm and egg cells) has two copies of each gene—one from each parent.
 - ♦ In selective silencing, one of these copies is turned off, leading to a bias in gene activity.
- **Disease Implications:** Selective silencing could explain why individuals with genes linked to diseases may not show symptoms.
 - ♦ By inactivating the disease-prone copy, the body may mitigate the harmful effects of the gene.

Potential Applications

- Understanding selective silencing may help in developing targeted therapies for genetic disorders.
- Could lead to advancements in personalized medicine, focusing on individuals' unique genetic profiles.

KANDLA PORT**In News**

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways announced proposed investments worth 57,000 crore to enhance Kandla Port's capacity in Gujarat.
 - ♦ The announced initiatives include a mega shipbuilding project and a new cargo terminal project to boost the port's infrastructure and capacity.

Kandla port

- **Location:** It is also known as the **Deendayal Port** is a seaport in Kutch District of Gujarat state in the western India, near the city of Gandhidham.

- ♦ It is located on the Gulf of Kutch and It is a major port on India's western coast, about 256 nautical miles southeast of Karachi, Pakistan, and 430 nautical miles north-northwest of Mumbai.
- **Development:** It was constructed in the 1950s as the chief seaport serving western India, after the independence of India.
- **Milestone:** On March 31, 2016, Deendayal Port made history by handling 100 MMT (Million Metric Tons) of cargo in a year, becoming the first major Indian port to achieve this feat.
 - ♦ It is currently the largest port in India by cargo volume.

Source :TH

COUNTRY'S FIRST ORGANIC FISH CLUSTER

Context

- Union Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Minister launched **the country's first organic fisheries cluster in Sikkim**.

About

- **Aim:** To sell antibiotic, chemical, and pesticide free organic fish in eco-conscious markets across the globe.
- **The organic fisheries cluster** focuses on an ecologically healthy fish farming system avoiding chemicals, antibiotics, and pesticides.
 - ♦ This also ensures **minimal environmental pollution** and **prevents damage to aquatic ecosystems**, contributing to sustainable fish production practices.
- The minister has also laid the foundations for 50 key projects under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**, covering all northeastern states except Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

- It is the flagship scheme of the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, and **was launched in 2020**.
- **Aim:** To give momentum to the 'sunrise' fisheries sector through **consolidated efforts from various schemes and initiatives**.
- The PMMSY is an umbrella scheme with **two separate components** namely **Central Sector Scheme (CS)** and **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)**.

- The Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) Component is further segregated into **Non-beneficiary oriented and beneficiary orientated subcomponents/activities**:

- ♦ Enhancement of Production and Productivity
- ♦ Infrastructure and Post-harvest Management
- ♦ Fisheries Management and Regulatory Framework.

Source: TH

TIDAL TAIL

In News

- A new ultra-diffuse galaxy has been discovered at the end of the tidal tail of **galaxy NGC 3785**, located 430 million light years from Earth in the Leo constellation.

About Tidal Tail

- The tidal tail contains star-forming clumps along its length, providing valuable information about galaxy evolution and the creation of low surface brightness structures.
- **NGC 3785** is known to have the longest tidal tail discovered so far, extending for 1.27 million light years.
 - ♦ The tail is formed due to gravitational forces when two galaxies interact closely.

Importance

- The recent discovery offers insights into how ultra-diffuse galaxies (UDGs) form.
 - ♦ The formation of the ultra-diffuse galaxy is likely driven by the gravitational interaction between NGC 3785 and a neighboring galaxy.
- The tidal tail is thought to be a key feature in the creation of such faint and diffuse galaxies.
- The discovery is significant for understanding faint tidal features, which are often missed by traditional surveys.

Source :PIB

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS (PBD)

In News

- Over 3,000 delegates from across 70 countries have arrived in Odisha ahead of 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)
 - ♦ The PBD-2025 based on the theme **'Diaspora's contribution to a Viksit Bharat**.

About Pravasi Bharatiya Divas(PBD)

- PBD is celebrated on January 9 every year to honor the contribution of the Overseas Indian community to India's development.
- The date was chosen because on January 9, 1915, **Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa**, marking the beginning of his leadership in India's freedom struggle.
- **Objective:** The main goal of PBD is to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community

with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.

- **Initiatives: PBD Conventions:** The first PBD Convention was organized on January 9, 2003.
 - ♦ **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award:** During the PBD Convention, select overseas Indians are honored with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award for their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad.

Source :TH

