

Bharat Parv

- The 'Bharat Parv' is an event organized annually at Red Fort, Delhi from 26th to 31st January to commemorate Republic day.
- The prime objective of organizing the event is to generate a patriotic mood, promote the rich cultural diversity of the country and to ensure wider participation of the general public.
- The Ministry of Tourism has been designated as the nodal ministry for this event.

PMKSY

- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana is the scheme under ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare.
 - The major objective of the scheme is to achieve convergence of investments in irrigation, expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, and improve on-farm water use efficiency to reduce wastage of water.
 - PMKSY has been conceived amalgamating ongoing schemes viz.
1. Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) of the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD&GR).
 2. Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) of Department of Land Resources (DoLR).
 3. On Farm Water Management (OFWM) of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC).

Funaria hygrometrica

- Scientists have identified a type of moss that can efficiently absorb a large amount of lead, providing a green alternative for decontaminating polluted water and soil.
- Funaria hygrometrica is the moss which uses phytoremediation, it is known to grow well in sites contaminated with metals like copper, zinc, and lead.
- Phytoremediation is a method that uses photosynthesising organisms to clean up soil or water contamination.
- The Moss cells can absorb lead up to 74 per cent of their dry weight.

Online auction for Scraps

- Indian Railways have been selling its internally generated scrap entirely through online e-auction.
- Majority of the scrap material comprises of worn-out rails and track fittings released from track renewal/gauge conversion, steel scrap generated in course of overhaul /repairs of rolling stocks, other non-ferrous and miscellaneous scrap.
- The e-auction module is part of the IREPS (Indian Railways E-Procurement System) which is a single portal of Indian Railways handling all procurements tenders and e-auctions digitally.

INSPIRE

- Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) is sponsored and managed by Ministry of Science & Technology.
- The basic objective of INSPIRE is to attract young talents to the study of science and build the required critical human resource pool for strengthening R & D base.
- The programme does not conduct any competitive exams for identification of talent at any level.
- It relies on the existing educational structure for identification of talent.
- The programme has three components:

1. Scheme for Early Attraction of Talent- (SEATS)
2. Scholarship for Higher Education- (SHE)
3. Assured Opportunity for Research Careers - (AORC)

Urban heat islands

- Rapid urbanisation combined with changes in land use pattern leads warming of urban spaces compared with surrounding non-urban areas this is called the urban heat island effect.
- Urban migration, concrete jungles, decrease in dense vegetation and cultivable land area, encroachments in water bodies will influence urban heat islands.
- For instance, Delhi is 4-12°C warmer due to the urban heat island effect.

PM Modi in Davos

Part of: GS Mains Paper II- International relations

Key pointers:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi used his keynote speech at **the Plenary Session of the World Economic Forum in Davos** to showcase the role that India is set to play in the global economy.
- Speaking in Hindi, Modi made a forceful impact on the global power elite as he addressed three major challenges that mankind faces: Climate Change, Terrorism and Protectionism.
- Highlighting India's growing influence in the global economy, Modi recalled that in 1997, when an Indian Prime Minister last attended the WEF, the country's GDP was a bit over \$400 billion. "Two decades later, the country's GDP has multiplied over six times," he said.
- He raised the issue of the protectionist approach of major economies, which, he said, hurts the essence of globalisation.
- On climate change, Modi said there is a dearth of countries willing to assist in helping fellow nations tackle climate change.
Everyone wants to cut carbon emissions, but very few countries are coming forward to share technologies with developing countries.
- PM Modi also expressed concern over the changing nature of terrorism.
More than terrorism, the bigger concern is the artificial divide created between good and bad terrorism.
The more pressing and immediate issue that calls for our attention is the radicalisation of well-to-do and educated youth.

About WEF:

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a Swiss nonprofit foundation, based in Switzerland. Its mission is cited as "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas".
- The Forum holds its annual meeting at the end of January in **Davos**, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.
- The meeting brings together some 2,500 top business leaders, international political leaders, economists, and journalists for up to four days to discuss the most pressing issues facing the world.

Jobless in India, to rise: ILO

Part of: GS Mains Paper III- Inclusive growth

Key pointers:

- The number of jobless persons in India is likely to increase over the next two years with no change in the unemployment rate, the ILO has estimated.
- The Asia-Pacific region will add 23 million jobs from 2017 to 2019, with employment generation taking place in many South Asian nations including India.
- The jobless in the entire region will continue to increase, the **ILO's World Employment Outlook report** pointed out.
- High incidence of informality continues to undermine the prospects of further reducing working poverty in South Asia. "Informality affects around 90 per cent of all workers in India, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Nepal," the report said.
- Globally, however, unemployment is likely to go down slightly to 192.3 million jobless people in 2018 compared to 192.7 million in 2017.

High 'informality':

- Partially driven by the high shares of employment in agriculture
- Informality also remains pervasive in the non-agriculture sectors such as construction, wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation and food service industries.

Vulnerable employment:

- Vulnerable employment, as per the ILO, is a measure of persons who are employed under relatively precarious circumstances and are less likely to have formal work arrangements, access to benefits or social protection programmes and are more "at risk" to economic cycles.
- The report also pointed out that a lot of jobs being created are of poor quality despite strong economic growth and some 72 per cent of workers in South Asia will have vulnerable employment by 2019.

TAPI pipeline

Part of: GS Mains Paper II- International relations

Key pointers:

- \$15-billion TAPI (Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India) Pipeline is also called Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline.
- The pipeline originates from Turkmenistan's Galkynysh field having gas reserves of 16 trillion cubic feet.
- The project is being funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- It is slated to connect central Asia with south Asia covering 1,814 km.
- Out of the total 1,814 km., the pipeline will run for 214 km in Turkmenistan, 774 km in Afghanistan along the Kandahar-Herat highway, 826 km in Pakistan through Quetta and Multan and finally reaching the settlement of Fazilka, in India located near the India-Pakistan border.

Renewed interest:

- India will be participating at a ground-breaking ceremony on 23rd Feb for TAPI at Afghanistan that will mark the beginning of formal round of talks amongst the participating countries on the pipeline
- The Turkmen President has also urged the business community of Uzbekistan to participate in the project.
- The Saudis are also now taking keen interest in TAPI. The Saudi government is investing heavily in the project from the Saudi Development Fund.

Source: PIB, the Hindu, Indian Express, Economic times