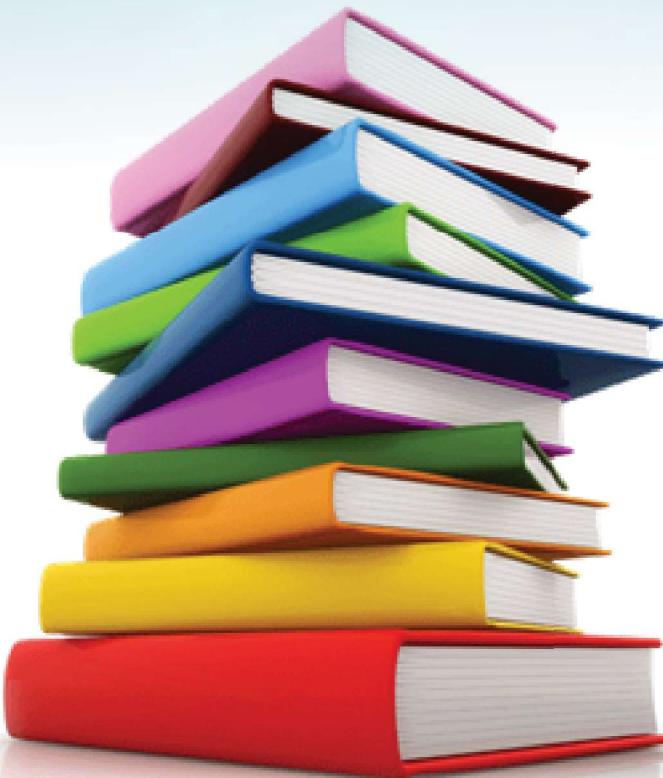




# PLUTUS IAS

## Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS



**PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 05-09-2022 to 11-09-2022**

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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## SEPTEMBER 2022

### Kurki



**Why is it news?:** A 65-year-old farmer, Balwinder Singh, died by suicide outside the office of the Muktsar DC on August 29, protesting against kukri.

**What is the “kurki”?**



- Kukri is the attachment of marginal/small farmers' land by banks or sahukar/traders (commission agents and private money lenders) in the event of nonpayment of loan or debt.
- It is a hoary practice for farmers to take debt from different agencies, including banks and money lenders. also, attach their land as collateral.

## **What happens when a farmer fails to pay the loan?**

- In the event of non-repayment of the loan, the land pledged by the farmers gets registered in the name of the bank or the individual through the court order
- In some cases, the land is auctioned as well. The process begins after the money lender moves court to get kurki orders in case the farmer cannot pay back his loan. In kurki, the attachment of the farmer's land and tractor can be done as per Section 60 of Civil Procedure Code, 1908.
- Akali Dal and Congress governments claimed to have banned kurki.
- Congress fought the 2017 Assembly polls on the slogan 'karza kurki khatam, fasal di poori rakam'.
- Accordingly, after the formation of Congress government, it declared the abolition of kukri by issuing a notification on July 21, 2017. The government abolished Section 67-A of the Punjab Cooperative Societies Act which enabled cooperatives to recover unpaid loans through auctioning of land mortgaged by farmers. However, Sections 63-B and 63-C of the Act were not dropped to prevent the attachment of land.

## **Kukri is still practiced in Punjab, the ground reality?**

- In 2017, the total agricultural debt in Punjab was pegged at Rs 85000 crore. Out of which total loan to farmers including marginal and small growers was Rs 72,700 crore.
- The main drawback of this notification was that it covered only cooperative banks and does not cover commercial banks and private money lenders
- Loans from cooperative banks form only 10-15% there are, therefore, obtaining decrees from the courts to attach the lands of defaulting farmers.
- In 2019, it was in the news that banks are also using dishonored post-dated cheques taken from farmers against their loans to initiate a criminal case against defaulters.
- A plea filed in the Punjab and Haryana High Court in 2018 sought a complete ban on kurki.
- In spite of that, the Punjab government in its affidavit stated that there was no need to ban kurki as relief was being given to farmers in terms of loan waiver, compensation, etc. Moreover, it stated that Section 60 of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908 – under which kurki takes place — was over 110 years old and needed complete revision.

## **Way forward:**

- There are numerous cases where farmers have repaid twice or thrice the amount taken on loan.

- Experts want the strict implementation of the **Sir Chhotu Ram formula** that is The loan taken by farmers who have paid as much interest as the principal amount borrowed to be waived completely; Debt conciliation boards to be set up in each district ; Centre to share the financial burden with the state
- Sir Chhotu Ram formula also bans the interest and repayment of loans to be more than twice the principal amount this will help in ending the majority of kukri cases.

**Farhin**

## Iraq political crisis

**Context:** Sadr's followers storm the Iraq govt. palace.

A power struggle in Iraq between the influential **Shi'ite cleric Moqtada Sadr** and Iran-backed Shi'ite rivals has escalated with his supporters breaking into parliament and beginning an open-ended sit-in protest.

### What is the tussle?

The tussle over who would form the next government has deepened a breach in the Shi'ite community that has dominated Iraqi politics since the U.S.-led invasion that toppled Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003.

### Who is Sadr and who is opposing him?

- Sadr was the son of Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, one of the most prominent religious figures in the Islamic world in the late 20th century. Sadr was greatly influenced by his father's conservative thoughts and ideas and by those of his father-in-law, Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, founder of the Islamic Da'wah Party, who in 1980 was executed for his opposition to Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein.
- He holds great power in the state, where his supporters hold many positions. He has emphasized his credentials as an Iraqi nationalist in recent years, opposing the influence of both the United States and Iran.
- His Shi'ite rivals form an alliance called the **Coordination Framework**, which includes Tehran-aligned politicians such as former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki and paramilitary groups armed and trained by Iran.
- Many of these groups' ties to Tehran date to the Iran-Iraq war, when Iran supported Shi'ite insurgents against Saddam. Each side accuses the other of corruption.

### Why has the standoff escalated?

- Even after getting most of the votes in the October -2021 polls, Al-Sadr's party was

short of a majority.

- Al- Sadr has also refused to work with rivals
- This party is opposed to Iranian influences on home politics.
- Shia parties supported by Iran, became popular after they helped. Defeated ISIS between 2014 and 2017.
- Recently, the Islamic Dawa party's Mohamad al Sudani was nominated for the PM's post of the coordination framework.
- Al Sadr and his supporters opposed the nomination.
- Islamic Dawa party backed the Iranian revolution and even supported Iraq -Iran was also majorly founded by Iran.
- Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani's nomination provoked protests.
- He would need 165 out of 329 votes in the parliament to form govt.

### **What does this mean for Iraq?**

- There is no government for the last nine months in Iraq-a record in the post-Saddam era.
- The standoff adds to political dysfunction in a country suffering dire public services, high poverty, and widespread unemployment despite huge oil wealth and no major conflict since Islamic State's defeat five years ago.
- Ordinary people in Iraq meanwhile suffer power and water cuts. The World Food Programme says 2.4 million of the population of 39 million are in acute need of food and livelihood assistance.

### **How can it trigger violence?**

- Disputes between Iraqi Shi'ites would be bad news for Iran, which has paved out major influence in Iraq through its Shi'ite allies since the United States toppled its rival Saddam.
- Iran, which has yet to comment on the latest developments, has previously intervened to quell internal unrest in Iraq.

**Farhin**

# 'Arya Samaj certificates not proof of marriage'



- Arya Samaj means "Society of Nobles" in Sanskrit, is a vigorous reform movement of modern Hinduism.
- It was founded by Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati in 1875, whose vision was to reestablish the Vedas, the earliest Hindu scriptures, as revealed truth.
- The Arya Samaj is against the worship of murtis (images), animal sacrifice, shraddha (rituals on behalf of ancestors), considering caste upon birth rather than upon merit, untouchability, child marriage, pilgrimages, priestly craft, and temple offerings.
- It upholds the infallibility of the Vedas, the doctrines of karma (the accumulated effect of past deeds) and samsara (the process of death and rebirth), the sanctity of the cow, the importance of the samskaras (individual sacraments), the efficacy of Vedic oblations to the fire, and programs of social reform.

## What is Arya Samaj Marriage Certificate And Why Does the Supreme Court Consider It Invalid?



- Arya Samaj marriage acquires its validity from the Arya Samaj Marriage Validation Act, 1937, and also under some of the provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.
- A certificate of marriage can be issued by any Arya samaj temple to a groom of age 21 or older and a bride of age 18 or older. Similar to the Hindu marriage (sacred fire) ceremony, the marriage ceremony is conducted according to the Vedic rituals.
- Significantly, Inter-Caste Marriages and Inter-Religious Marriages are allowed to perform in an Arya Samaj Marriage but the marrying persons should not be Muslims, Christians, Parsis, or Jews.

If any non-Hindu couple wants to perform the marriage according to the Arya Samajh, Samaj allows them to get converted by the process called Shuddhi.

## Is Arya Samaj's marriage certificate valid?

- A marriage certificate issued by Arya samaj is not equivalent to getting the marriage legally registered. The marriage is required to be registered under the applicable laws at the office of the sub-divisional magistrate after getting the certificate from Arya Samaj.
- Reports say that if both the groom and bride are Hindu, it falls under the Hindu Marriage Act while the Special Marriage Act may apply in the case of other religions. However, the validity of such marriages is still open before the apex court and recently the Supreme Court remarked on the invalid status of Arya Samaj marriage certificates.

## What was the verdict of the MP high court?

- In April, this year, the Supreme Court put up an order of the Madhya Pradesh high court directing the Arya Samaj to solemnize marriages in accordance with the provisions of the Special Marriage Act, 1954.
- The Madhya Bharat Arya Pratinidhi Sabha filed a plea seeking a reply from the Madhya Pradesh government on the issue. On December 17, 2021, the Madhya Bharat Arya Pratinidhi Sabha challenged the High court verdict in the Supreme court and directed the organization to amend its 2016 norms and incorporate provisions of the Special Marriage Act.
- Further, the court noted that marriage certificates could only be issued by a competent authority under the Special Marriage Act. In this regard, the Sabha argued that the Hindu Marriage Act and Arya Marriage Act of 1937 holds the field of Arya Samaj marriage, not the Special Marriage Act.

**Recent News:** The Allahabad High Court has recently dismissed a **habeas corpus** petition filed by a man to get back his wife. The petitioner had submitted a marriage certificate issued by an Arya Samaj temple as proof.

### What is habeas corpus?

'Habeas Corpus' means "to have a body of". This writ is used to release a person who has been unlawfully detained or imprisoned. On the strength of this writ, the Court directs the person so detained to be brought before it to examine the legality of his detention. If the Court comes to a conclusion that the detention was not according to the law i.e. unlawful, then it directs the person to be released immediately. Circumstances of unlawful detention are:

- The detention was not done in accordance with the procedure laid down. For instance, the person was not produced before a Magistrate within 24 hours of his arrest.
- The person was arrested when he did not violate any law.
- An arrest was made under a law that is unconstitutional.

Habeas Corpus ensures swift judicial review of the alleged unlawful detention of the prisoner and immediate determination of his right to freedom. However, Habeas corpus cannot be granted where a person has been arrested under an order from a competent court and when *prima facie* the order does not appear to be wholly illegal or without jurisdiction. This writ can be filed by the detained

person himself or his relatives or friends on his behalf. It can be issued against both public authorities and individuals

**Farhin**

## A golden memory of Rajamahendravaram by Raja raja Narendra



**PLUTUS**

**Rajaraja Narendra** (r. 1019 – 1061 AD) was the Eastern Chalukya king of the Vengi kingdom in Southern India. Rajaraja Narendra established the city Rajahmahendravaram (Rajahmundry).

His period was famous for its Social and Cultural heritage. During the time of Rajaraja Chola I, Rajahmundry was devastated by Western Chalukya. The region has seen a war between Western Chalukya and other neighboring dynasties and political support from the Chola dynasty.

### **History of the city Rajahmahaendravaram**

Rajahmundry was established by Ammaraja Vishnuvardhana the First (919–934 AD). The city as a prominent settlement can be traced back to the rule of the Eastern Chalukya king Rajaraja Narendra, who reigned around 1022 AD. Remains of 11th-century palaces and forts still exist

### **Rulers:**

- Eastern Chalukyas
  - Cholas
  - Kakatiyas
  - Eastern Ganga Dynasty
  - Reddies
  - Gajapati Empire
  - Vijayanagar Rulers

- Bahmani Sultanate
- Golconda Sultanate
- Nizam Rule
- European Rulers and Zamindars

Rajahmundry was run under Dutch rule for some time. the Dutch, 1602 constructed a fort there. In 1857, the British conquered the Dutch. They converted it into a jail in 1864 and elevated it into a central jail in 1870.

Rajahmundry is geographically located at the center of Godavari Districts. There is paddy, sugarcane, and various varieties of flower cultivation in the area. River Godavari flows through the west of Rajahmundry.

The Rajahmundry traps, part of the Deccan Traps, are located on the Godavari river and are particularly interesting to geologists.

**Seven gold coins dated to the Eastern Chalukya dynasty belong to the proud city Rajamahendravaram.**



The city of Rajamahendravaram still contains a memory of his king **Rajaraja Narendra**

This past August, Rajamahendravaram also celebrated the completion of one thousand years of the coronation of Raja Raja Narendra, who ruled the city in 1022. His regime came to an end in 1061.

Seven gold coins that date back to the Eastern Chalukya dynasty, including the regime of Raja Raja Narendra, are a proud possession of the city.

The seven gold coins are now preserved at the Rallabandi SubbaRao Archaeological Museum by the archaeological department.

Of the seven gold coins, only one is big in size compared to the others.

The big coin contains the image of 'Varaha' (boar), an official symbol of the Eastern Chalukyas.

The big coin also contains some text in early Telugu script.

It is believed to be minted marking 'some donation' by the Eastern Chalukya.

But there was no evidence of the location of the coins.

**Farhin**

# Ladakh to have India's first 'Dark Sky Reserve' to promote astronomy tourism

**News:** Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology stated that by the end of this year 2022, India will establish the country's first Dark Sky Reserve in the cold desert regions of Ladakh.

**GS Paper 3:** Science and Technology- Developments and their Applications and Effects in Everyday Life



## What is a Dark Sky Reserve?

- A Dark Sky Reserve is public or private land with a distinguished nocturnal environment and starry nights that have been developed responsibly to prevent light pollution.
- Dark sky reserves "consist of a core area meeting minimum criteria for sky quality and natural darkness, and a peripheral area that supports dark sky preservation in the core." as per the International Dark Sky Association (IDSA) website.
- These reserves are formed through a "partnership of multiple land managers who have recognized the value of the natural nighttime environment through regulations and long-term planning" as stated on the website.
- India is still in the process of filing its nomination to IDSA.



## Why was Ladakh chosen for the project?

- Ladakh is a unique cold desert of India located about 3,000 meters above sea level with high mountainous terrains.
- Long and harsh winters with minimum temperatures dropping to minus 40 degrees Celcius make

large parts of the Union Territory highly inhabitable.

- This barrenness, limited vegetation, high elevation, and large areas with sparse populations – all make it the perfect setting for long-term astronomical observatories and dark sky places.
- But the main objective of the proposed Dark Sky Reserve is to promote astronomy tourism in a sustainable and environment-friendly manner.
- Scientific methods will be used here to preserve the night sky from ever-increasing light pollution.
- With metros, cities, and peripheral areas experiencing light pollution and remaining constantly lit up, there are diminishing areas that offer a view of clear skies on cloudless nights, experts have noted.

## Who is responsible for developing India's first Dark Sky Reserve?

- The Ladakh Union Territory administration has taken the responsibility of establishing the country's first Dark Sky Reserve.
- To be situated at a height of 4,500 meters above sea level, the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve (HDSR) will come up within the Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The Department of Science and Technology and experts from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, are providing scientific and technological support in developing this first-of-its-kind facility. The IIA already manages the Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO) complex at Hanle, Ladakh.
- Now, here, scientists have been carrying out astronomical observations using the existing gamma ray, an infrared, and an optical telescope to study exoplanets, galaxies, and stars through the pristine skies of Hanle.
- The formal decision to set up this Dark Sky Reserve was made through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between officials from the IIA, Bengaluru, the Ladakh UT, and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council in June this year.

## How does it help Ladakh tourism?

- When Ladakh got its Union territory status, tourism in Ladakh has seen a boost during favorable months.
- Although, its insubstantial environment is vulnerable to rising carbon footprint and in-coming vehicles.
- The Ladakh Tourism Vision Document 2022 underlined the need for efforts to increase the use of green fuels and boost carbon-neutral activities.
- The locals in Ladakh are sensitive to the conservation of the ecosystem. They are keen to protect the environment from getting deteriorated. A number of initiatives are underway ahead of opening the **Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation** (environmental protection) HDSR to the public.

- In the first phase, the IIA has acquired ten small and easy-to-handle telescopes and light-reflecting shields.
- IIA's scientists and outreach experts will identify locals and train them to use these telescopes, which will include basic sky gazing, identification of constellations, and locating the pole star, among others.
- These telescopes will be installed at the homestays, which is a popular option for tourist accommodation in Ladakh.
- The 22-km radius around the Hanle observatory, where the core Dark Sky Reserve will stand, will have restrictions imposed on outdoor lighting. All vehicles will be barred from using high-beam headlights. Houses here will be encouraged to use curtains of darker shades, install light reflecting shields and switch off all unwanted illumination.

**Farhin**

## CAPF eAWAS

### “CAPF eAWAS” web portal

**Why in News:** Union Home & Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah launched the “CAPF eAWAS” web portal. Central Armed Police Forces have always been a strong pillar in every aspect for the country’s internal security.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a new era of development has begun and India is becoming a global production hub, CAPF personnel who ensure internal security have a big role in this. The Government led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi believes that it is its job to care for the families of Jawans, so that Jawans who guard our borders in difficult circumstances, can do their work without worries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is concerned about Jawans and especially their families and has taken many unprecedented decisions in the last 8 years. Housing Satisfaction Ratio (HSR) was around 33 per cent in 2014, which is 48 percent today.

The launch of the CAPF e-Awas portal will increase HSR by 13 per cent without construction of new buildings. Government is confident that with these meaningful efforts by MHA, the HSR will be 73 percent by November 2024, which will be a great achievement. There Was system in the CAPFs that only the Forces for which houses had been constructed would be allotted to their personnel, this created several thousand vacant houses, now this will be changed by the e-accommodation portal and vacant houses will be available for personnel of other CAPFs. e-Transfer Software has been created to bring transparency in transfer of CAPF personnel, now ITBP and CISF have started using this software on an experimental basis.

So far, about three crore saplings have been planted in the MHA’s plantation drive, however it is the responsibility of senior officers to inculcate an attachment in the Jawan’s for saplings they have planted, this attachment will be life changing for them. Union Home and Cooperation Minister, Shri Amit Shah launched the “CAPF e-AWAS” web portal in New Delhi.

In his address, Shri Amit Shah said that the Central Armed Police Forces have always been a strong pillar of the country’s internal security and this day is a very important day for their personnel. A new era of development has begun

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is becoming the global production hub and CAPF personnel who ensure internal security have a big role in this. He said since Independence till date, more than 35,000 police personnel have lost their lives while ensuring internal security and due to their sacrifices citizens sleep in peace with a sense of security. Shri Shah said that the government led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi believes that it is its responsibility to care for the families of Jawans who protect the nation's borders in difficult circumstances, so that they can serve the country without worry. He said that the CAPF e-Awas portal launched today is another step in the same direction.

The Union Home Minister said a system had been created in the CAPFs under which only personnel of the Force for which houses had been constructed could be allotted these houses. This had left many thousands of houses vacant. This has now been changed through the e-Awas portal and houses lying vacant will also be available for personnel of other CAPFs.

This will increase the Housing Satisfaction Ratio by 13 percent without even constructing a building. Shri Amit Shah said since Shri Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister in 2014, the Ministry of Home Affairs has developed various schemes to increase the Housing Satisfaction Ratio. These include building offices, strengthening hospitals and increasing the number of residences. He said that in the last eight years more than 31,000 houses have been constructed, more than 17,000 houses are under construction and about 15,000 additional houses are proposed to be constructed.

The Housing Satisfaction Ratio was around 33 per cent in 2014, which is 48 percent today, with the launch of the CAPF e-Awas portal, the Housing Satisfaction Ratio will increase by 13 per cent without construction of new buildings. Shri Amit Shah expressed confidence that with these meaningful efforts of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Housing Satisfaction Ratio will reach 73 percent by November 2024, which will be a great achievement.

The Union Home Minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is concerned about Jawans and especially their families and many unprecedented steps have been taken in this direction in the last 8 years. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the Government of India has started the 'Ayushman CAPF' scheme to provide better medical facilities to families of Jawans, under which more than 35 lakh Ayushman Cards have been distributed to 10 lakh personnel. Under this scheme, about 56,000 bills worth more than Rs. 31 crore have been paid so far.

Shri Amit Shah said that an e-Transfer software has been developed to bring transparency in the transfer of CAPF personnel. At present, ITBP and CISF have started using this software on an experimental basis. With the e-Transfer software, the posting can be linked with the age and health status of Jawans. Shri Shah said earlier there were 42 courses in the Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme and now more than 80 new courses have been added. Central ex-gratia has also been increased by making it more scientific. Air courier services have also been implemented and several steps have been taken to strengthen the Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandar.

The Union Home Minister said the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is ready to consider any positive suggestion for the welfare of Jawans. But we also have to do our part to keep our work environment in proper condition.

So far about three crore saplings have been planted in the plantation drive of the Ministry of Home Affairs, but it is the responsibility of senior officers to inculcate the spirit of attachment in the Jawans to the saplings they have planted, the attachment with a sapling which will become a tree would change the Jawan's life.

**While starting the tree plantation drive, the thinking was to create a good environment at the workplace, but at the same time there is a need to promote creative and positive thinking, which brings change and a feeling of satisfaction in human nature. Shri Amit Shah said the**

Prime Minister has always taken efforts for the welfare of soldiers and especially their families and the Ministry of Home Affairs is always ready to implement his thoughts.

Puneet Bhatia

## Bustard adapted to produce 2 -eggs clutch

**GS Paper 3**

**Mains:** Project Great Indian Bustard

**Prelims:** the great Indian bustard, The desert national park.



**Why is it in the news?:** The perceived belief and recorded observation of egg-laying habits of the Great Indian bustard have been changed due to recent excessive rain in western Rajasthan.

### About Great Indian Bustard

- **Great Indian Bustard**, scientifically known as *Ardeotis nigriceps*, locally known as *Godovan*, is a large bird of the bustard family (Otididae), one of the heaviest flying birds in the world.
- It is the **State bird of Rajasthan** and is considered **India's most critically endangered bird**.
- The great Indian bustard is an inhabitant of dry grasslands and scrublands on the Indian subcontinent; its largest population is found in the Indian state of **Rajasthan in the Desert National Park**.
- Also, it is found in small populations in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

### Their reproduction behavior

- Some of the reproductive behaviors of great Indian bustards are known, and the finer details of nesting and mating, as well as migratory activities related to mating and nesting, are thought to vary greatly among populations and individuals.
- They are usually capable of year-round breeding, and for most populations, the breeding season lasts from March through September, which largely sums up the monsoon season.
- They do not return to the same nests year after year, and prefer to create a new one instead, and sometimes prefer to use the nests made in previous years by other great Indian bustards.

- This year it has been observed that 4 female **Great Indian Bustards** laid two eggs at a time during the current rainy season in the **Desert National Park** after heavy rainfall in western Rajasthan.
- It is a result of having a diet with additional proteins during the monsoon season.
- The main threats to the Great Indian bustard are bird hunting, intensification of agriculture, and power lines.

### **Protection status of the Bird and measures are taken.**

- **International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List:** Critically Endangered.
- As per the research done by the **Wildlife Institute of India**, there are around 150 Great Indian Bustards left across the country which includes about 128 birds in Rajasthan and less than 10 birds each in the rest of the States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.
- The **Great Indian Bustard** comes under **both in situ and ex-situ conversations.**
- In 2019, the **WII, in collaboration with the government of Rajasthan and the International Fund for Houbara Conservation**, Abu Dhabi, is implementing the **ex-situ conservation** initiative.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Wildlife have taken up an initiative on conservation breeding of the Great Indian Bustard in collaboration with Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra Forest Departments and technical support from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun implementing the in-situ conservation.
- **Species Recovery Programme:** It is kept under the **species recovery program** under the **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats** of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

### **About The Desert National Park**

- This National Park is situated in Rajasthan, India, near the towns of Jaisalmer and Barmer.
- The Park is an exceptional example of the ecosystem of the Thar Desert. Sand dunes form around 44% of the Park.
- It covers an area of 3162 km<sup>2</sup>, considered one of the largest national parks.
- The park was gazetted in 1980.
- Common Fauna found in this park are
  1. The Chinkara or Indian Gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*) is a common antelope of this region.
  2. Rare inhabitants are the desert fox, wolf, and desert cat.
  3. Birds like sandgrouse, partridges, bee-eaters, larks, and shrikes are commonly seen.
  4. In the winter, the birdlife is augmented by species such as the demoiselle crane and MacQueen's bustard.
    - Common Flora found in this park are
      1. The park includes open grassland, thorny bushes, and dunes.

2. 168 plant species have been recorded in the park. Some species of trees that inhabit the park include *Tecomella undulata*, *Moringa concanensis*, *Heliotropium rariflorum*, and *Ammannia desertorum*.

#### About project Basturd

- On World Environment Day 2019, the Rajasthan forest department announced its Project Great Indian Bustard.
- In order to, protect the remaining bustard population, the state government of Rajasthan initiated Project Great India Bustard on World Environment Day in 2013, this effort attempted to locate the Indian bustard's exclusive habitat, fence it off to prevent human intrusion, and provide enclosed breeding habitat.

Farhin

## INS VIKRANT : "A step towards India's Atmanirbharta in Defence"

#### INS VIKRANT

##### Why in News?

Recently PM Modi commissioned India's first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC), INS Vikrant (IAC-1), which is a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat

#### About the INS Vikrant

- INS Vikrant (IAC-I) is the first aircraft carrier to be built in India and the first Vikrant-class aircraft carrier built for the Indian Navy.
- The motto of the ship is "**Jayema Sam Yudhi Spradhah**" which is taken from Rig Veda and can be translated as "I defeat those who fight against me".
- Specifications:**
  - There are 14 decks in all, including five in the superstructure. The carrier is 262 m long, 62 m at the widest part and with a depth of 30 m minus the superstructure.
  - The deck is designed to enable aircraft such as the MiG-29K to operate from the carrier.
  - It can carry an air group of up to thirty aircraft, which will include up to 24–26 fixed-wing combat aircraft, primarily the MiG-29K .
  - Vikrant is powered by four General Electric LM2500+gas turbines on two

- shafts, generating over 80 megawatts (110,000 hp) of power.
- Once Vikrant is having sport a gender-sensitive living environment and infrastructure, with provision to accommodate eight women officers. The ship will then accommodate 1,645 personnel in all, including 196 officers.
- It will join INS Vikramaditya , contracted from Russia under a \$2.3-billion deal and inducted into service in November 2013..
- The first Vikrant displaced 20,000 tonnes and operated a mix of Westland Sea Kings, HAL Chetak and Sea Harrier jets. Viraat displaced 28,500 tonnes and- Vikramaditya displaces 45,400 tonnes. The new Vikrant will displace 40,000 tonnes.

### **Significance:**

#### **GEOSTRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE**

- It would offer an incomparable military instrument with its ability to project air power over long distances, offensive and defensive counter-air, including air interdiction, anti-surface warfare, airborne anti-submarine warfare and airborne early warning.
- The combat capability, reach and versatility of the aircraft carrier will add formidable capabilities in the defence in the country and help secure India's interests in the maritime domain.

#### **GEO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

- It would ensure India's application of SAGAR Doctrine in India's neighborhood i.e. SECURITY AND GROWTH FOR ALL IN THE REGION.
- It would also ensure India's transformation from the Brown Water Navy to Blue Water Navy.
- It would also showcase India's seriousness for Neighborhood First Policy.
- It would enhance India's presence in the Indo Pacific region.

#### **GEO ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE:**

- It would ensure India's Atma Nirbharta in Defence.
- It would also be step forward in reducing Current Account Deficit which is caused due to India's enhanced imports of Defense Equipment's.

India's road to the "self reliance in defence " is long , but the projects such as INS

VIKRANT, Tejas can be a step forward in this direction.

samarth singh

## Teesta Dispute

### Why in the news?

Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh Prime Minister, recently came to Delhi for a 4-day visit. Solving the long-standing, unresolved dispute over the sharing of the waters of the Teesta is back in the news.

### About Teesta river:



- Water sharing of the **Teesta river**, which originates in the Himalayas and flows through Sikkim and West Bengal to merge with the Brahmaputra in Assam and (known as Jamuna in Bangladesh), was one the **most contentious issue** between two friendly neighbors, India and Bangladesh.
- The river covers nearly the entire floodplains of Sikkim while **draining 2,800 sq km of Bangladesh**, governing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

### Location

Country	India, Bangladesh
State	Sikkim, West Bengal, Rangpur Division

Districts	Kurigram District, Nilphamari District, Gangtok District, Pakyong District, Mangan District, Kalimpong district, Darjeeling district, Cooch Behar district, and Jalpaiguri district
City	Singtam, Rangpo, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, Mekhliganj

### Physical characteristics

<b>Source</b>	Pauhunri, Zemu Glacier, Gurudongmar Lake, Tso Lhamo Lake
• location	Sikkim, India
<b>Mouth</b>	Brahmaputra river
• location	Phulchhari Upazila, Gaibandha, Bangladesh
<b>Length</b>	414 km (257 mi)[1]
<b>Basin size</b>	12,540 km <sup>2</sup> (4,840 sq mi)[2]

### What is the history of the Teesta dispute?

- In West Bengal, Teesta is considered the **lifeline** of half-a-dozen districts in North Bengal. Teesta is very important for those districts.
- Bangladesh has sought an “**equitable**” **distribution** of Teesta waters from India, on the lines of the **Ganga Water Treaty of 1996** (an agreement to share surface waters at the Farakka Barrage near their mutual border), but to no avail.
- In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Dhaka generated some expectations to take forward to resolve the previous issues on fair and equitable

water sharing agreement.

- But Teesta **remains an unfinished project**, as in India individual states have significant influence over **transboundary agreements**. This arrangement sometimes holds back the policymaking process.

### **What is the recent status of the Teesta dispute between India and Bangladesh?**

In 2015 when PM, Modi visited Dhaka accompanied by the Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamta Banerji. There PM Modi gave Prime Minister Hasina the confidence of resolving the issue in a “fair solution” to the dispute through cooperation between the central and the state governments. But, Seven years later, the Teesta issue remains unresolved.

**Farhin**

## **The zombie Ice**

### **Why is it in the News?**

- Recently, Scientists predicted that the melting of Zombie Ice will raise the global sea level by 10 inches.



### **What is Zombie Ice?**

- It is also referred to as dead or doomed ice.
- Zombie ice is one that does not accumulate fresh snow even while continuing to be part of the parent ice sheet.
- This type of ice is prone to melting and rising sea levels.

### **What has led to this?**

- This is a result of global warming that has affected the climate already.

- The study focuses on an equipoise condition where snowfall from the north-erly extremes of the Greenland ice cap melts down to the recharge edges of the snow glaciers and hardens them.
- The study states that over the past several decades there has been less replenishment and more melting.

## What will happen next?

- By calculating the minimum committed ice loss based on the ratio of recharge to loss, scientists have projected that 3.3% of Greenland's total ice volume will melt, and this will happen even if the global temperature is stabilized at the current level.
- Considering that global warming is anticipated to worsen, the melting and its direct impact on the rising sea level could get worse as well. It could climb up to 30 inches if Greenland's melting record year (2012) works as a regular phenomenon.

## What could a 10-inch rise in sea level mean?

- The inescapable rise in the sea level, as predicted by the researchers, is precisely a piece of unpleasant news for millions, who are residing in coastal zones.
- The **UN Atlas of Oceans** says that 8 out of the 10 world's largest cities are close to the coast. Increasing sea levels will cause high tides, floods, and storms to occur more frequently.
- It will lead to threats to local economies and infrastructure.
- The low-lying coastal regions will have to bear a harder hit.
- According to the World Economic Forum's 2019 Global Risks Report, approximately 800 million people in 570 coastal cities are already endangered by a rise in the sea level by 0.5 meters by 2050.

**Farhin**

# Leaving behind the symbols of slavery: Kartavya Path

## Why it is in the News?

Recently the Kingsway, or Rajpath, was renamed Kartavya Path, by the honorary Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi. Stating that the symbol of slavery has become a matter of history from today and has been erased forever.

## How did Delhi become the capital?



- In 1911 the British Imperial Government and the Viceregal administration intended that the capital of the British Indian Empire should be shifted to Delhi, from Calcutta.
- The British government believed that ruling India from Delhi believed India from Delhi was easier and more convenient than from Calcutta
- As a consequence, New Delhi was constructed according to a New capital that year, so that it would serve as the purpose-built administrative capital of the Indian Empire.
- The British Raj duly gave responsibility to Sir Edwin Lutyens to construct the new city.
- New Delhi was inaugurated by Lord Irwin as the capital of India, on February 13, 1931, 86 years ago.

## The story behind Rajpath:



- Rajpath runs in an east-west direction. Roads from Connaught Place, the financial center of Delhi, run into Rajpath from the north.
- When the road was built, it was named King's Way, or Kingsway, in honor of the Emperor of India George V, who had visited Delhi during the Delhi Durbar of 1911.
- After Independence, the name was changed to Rajpath, the Hindi translation of the world Kingsway.
- Edwin Lutyens the architect of that time, came up with a modern imperial city centered around a “ceremonial axis”, such axis being the large boulevard now named Kartavya Path.
- Lutyens wanted a panoramic view of the city of Delhi from the viceregal palace.
- Most of the buildings surrounding the Kartavya Path were designed by Lutyens and the second architect of the project, Sir Herbert Baker. The importance of such buildings in the government of India ensures the road's importance.

## The Kartavya Path



- PM Modi renamed it Kartavya path on the 7th of Sept 2022 which means the duty to serve
- It was redeveloped under The Central Vista Redevelopment Project, which started construction on 4 February 2021 and is planned to be finished in 2026 in phases.
- A statue of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose was installed, 28 feet tall, that is, a little taller than a two-story building.
- The jet black granite statue was placed under the Grand Canopy to the east of the India gate, halfway on the east-west axis to the National War Memorial.

- The statue has been carved out of a monolithic block of granite weighing 280 tonnes.

**Farhin**

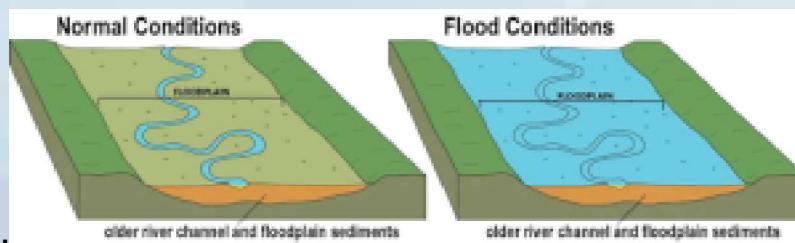
## Flash flood and its risk in coming years (9th Sept 2022)

### Why in the news?

Death toll in Himachal downpour rises to 21, railway bridge collapses

### What are they, and how are they different?

- Flash Floods:-** Flash Floods refer to such environmental situations where outrageous or continuous rainfall over a period of days, or during particular seasons can lead to stagnation of water and cause flooding in a much shorter span of time.
- A study by the US's meteorological agency, the National Weather Service, says flash floods are caused when rainfall creates flooding in less than 6 hours.
- It adds that flash floods can also be caused by factors apart from rainfall, like when water goes beyond the levels of a dam.
- In the Indian climate, flash floods are often associated with cloudbursts – sudden, intense rainfall in a short period of time.
- Himalayan states further face the challenge of overflowing glacial lakes, formed due to the melting of glaciers, and their numbers have been increasing in the last few years.
- Flash flooding generally occurs more where rivers are narrow and steep, so they flow more quickly,
- They can also occur in urban areas located near small rivers since hard surfaces such as roads and concrete do not allow the water to absorb into the ground



## **How common are these floods and normal floods?**

- Flash floods have been frequently witnessed in cities like Chennai and Mumbai.
- India is the worst flood-affected country in the world after Bangladesh and accounts for one-fifth of the global death count due to floods, as per government data issued from a project by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority.
- Depression and cyclonic storms in the coastal areas of Orissa, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and others also cause flash floods.
- Also, the data from the National Disaster Management Authority, stated that one of the primary reasons for flood situations occurring so commonly is that nearly 75 percent of the total Indian rainfall is concentrated over a short monsoon season of four months (June to September).which results, the rivers witness a heavy discharge during these months.

### **Consequences of Flash Flood**



- Loss of the natural environment (including vegetation, agriculture, geomorphology, and pollution)
- Loss of the human population (entrapments, injuries, fatalities).
- Loss of infrastructure in the particular area.

### **Way forward.**

As stated by the Indian geologist there is one way of dealing with the current situation is a comprehensive strategy of monitoring the ground in hilly areas, planning development works in a way that is sensitive to the region's ecology, and mitigation to reduce the extent of damages.

**Farhin**

# COVID VACCINATION : TRACING TARGETS

**CONTEXT:** Its now relieving time for the world as we have now passed the crucial waves of the COVID-19 virus which rattled the world for long. The vaccine is the most effective tool to deal with the unprecedented threat of the virus. WHO (World Health Organisation) has set the target to vaccinate 70% of the humanity by mid-2022 i.e., June/July 2022. The timeline has lapsed and we are ahead now to check the status and India's contribution and possible solution for it.

## WHAT IS THE STATUS OF TARGET?

In October 2021, WHO has decided **to vaccinate 70% of the world population** with COVID-19 protection dose to spread its further spread and to make it a dwarf disease. This target was set with the view to promote vaccine equity and justice specially keeping poor and underdeveloped countries in mind.

By the month of September 2022, we are having only 3% of global vaccination in underdeveloped countries with one dose and if overall this figure stands below 10% of all. Thus, it is clear that WHO missed it's target by a considerable margin and there are many possible reasons as-

1. The time taken for research and approval of the vaccine
2. **Vaccine hesitancy and reservation** is still major factor in the African and Asiatic societies.
3. The adaptability of the COVID-19 virus which modified in different strains, India was impacted huge by Omicron strain.
4. The **Poor funding** commitments and its non- followance which made WHOs target a distant dream.
5. **The geopolitics** involved makes the process further complicated and thus, delayed.

Hence it is clear that world agency has failed its target but attributed to many socio-economic reasons making the humanity deprived of 'Herd immunity' and to remain under constant threat of micro virus.

## INDIAS HELPING HANDS

India, being the **Pharmacy of the world** is the producer of **60 % of world** vaccine and is said to be 60-80% supplier of UNO vaccine procurement. There is hardly any doubt that India can solve the problem we as a humanity is facing, even now.

On her part, India contributed **594.35 lakhs** of COVID doses by 2021 to almost 72 countries in need. Most of them are poor and underdeveloped countries. It's also interesting to know, of this supply 82 lakh were as gifts and 175 lakh were under GAVI's COVAX programme – which shows the classic example of global vaccine responsibility. Even in severe rattling strain of 2<sup>nd</sup> wave the supply was continued considering the India's role to save the Humanity. India also moved proposal to keep IPR –patents out for vaccine related to COVID-19.

## INDIA'S GAIN

- India, the follower of '**Vasudhaiv kutumbakam**' (the whole world is our family) benefitted by saving thousands of life as moral duty.
- Apart from it also benefitted by **vaccine diplomacy and gaining diplomatic advantage** as acted as friend in need is friend indeed.
- It also provide more **market access** to Indian vaccine, even in developed countries.
- The production created **employment and taxation** to the government.
- There are many tangible and intangible benefits with this timely help.

## WHAT FURTHER NEEDS TO DONE?

- The production need to promote and accelerated so that supply can be consistent.
- There is need to strengthened global vaccine supply chain to fast forward the process.
- There is need to keep patent and rights away from the global danger and to promote its free use.
- Geopolitics has to keep aside and free responsible funding has to ensure so that the drive to save could never be halted.
- For future, there is need for a treaty including all cooperation, sharing of data,

genome sequencing to avoid any regional disease to become mammothic like COVID.

Though, target deadline passed but still the threat is active and it's better to late than never. The world has to unite, to accelerate the vaccination drive. The global co-operation and responsible contribution can shield the world from current and future emerging dangers

**Akshay gurubhaiye**

