MONTHLY

FACTLY

EXCLUSIVE CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR

PRELIMS

NOVEMBER 2018

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POLITICAL AND NATIONAL ISSUES	**Questions/Notes**

1. Enemy Property:

News: Union Cabinet approved the mechanism and procedure for the sale of enemy properties in India.

Facts:

- As per the Enemy Property Act, 1968 enemy property refers to the property belonging to, held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject or an enemy firm.
- Under the Act, enemy property is under the custody of the Home Ministry/Custodian of the Enemy Property of India (CEPI).
- The Department of Investment and Public Asset management (DIPAM), Finance Ministry is authorized to sell the Enemy Property, under the Act, 1968.
- The proceeds from the sale of the enemy property will be deposited in the government account maintained by the Finance Ministry.

Other Facts:

- A recent amendment to the Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2017, ensures that the heirs of those who migrated to Pakistan and China during partition and afterwards will have no claim over the properties left behind in India.

2. Freedom on the Net Report 2018:

News: India's performance along with 25 other countries, on the Freedom on the Net Report 2018 has declined.

Facts:

- The report is published by a US based NGO, Freedom House which conducts research on democracy, political freedom and human rights.
- The organization's annual Freedom in the World report, assesses each country's degree of political freedoms and civil liberties.
- The NGO also publishes Freedom of the Press Report and Freedom of the Net Report, which monitors censorship, intimidation and violence against journalists, and public access to information, respectively.

3. Governor's Assembly Dissolution Powers:

News: The Governor of Jammu and Kashmir kept the state assembly in suspended animation, when two parties separately wanted to form the government.

Facts:	Questions/Notes
• Under Article 172(2)(b) of the Constitution, the Governor may from time to time dissolve the state legislative assembly • Under Article 356 (failure of the constitutional machinery) the president either assumes the functions of the State government himself or brings the powers of the state legislature under the authority of the Indian parliament. • With respect to the J&K constitution, powers under section 92 (failure of the constitutional machinery) and section 52 (provides for dissolution of the assembly) were invoked in the recent case. **Supreme court judgments:** • In SR Bommai case 1994, SC held that primacy should be given to floor test to check the majority. • The court also said that Article 356 should be used sparingly. • In Rameshwar Prasad case 2006, the court ruled that post-poll alliances couldn't be written off altogether as one of the ways to form government. • It also said that unsubstantiated claims of horse-trading and corruption cannot be cited as reasons for assembly dissolution. **Other facts:** • Suspended Animation: Suspended animation of the assembly means that the elected MLAs remain in office and legislative assembly continues to exist without the power of legislation. • Horse-Trading: When political parties resort to unscrupulous ways to lure members from another party to put together the majority required to form a government. **4. Parliamentary Privileges** **News:** A breach of privilege motion was raised against the PM and Defense Minister for misleading the parliament on the Rafale fighter jet deal. **Facts:** • The concept of parliamentary privileges developed in the British House of Commons, in their effort to protect Parliamentary sovereignty from the British Monarch. • The Indian Constitution under Article 105 (for the parliament) and Article 194 (for state legislatures) confers parliamentary privileges to the house as well as to individual members. **Collective privileges:** • Exclude strangers from legislative proceedings. • Curtails the Freedom of Press by prohibiting publishing parliamentary	

	Questions/Notes
proceedings of secret sittings. • Only parliament can make rules to regulate its own proceedings. • The court is barred from making inquiry into house proceedings. **Individual privileges:** • No arrest during the session and 40 days before and after the session, in matters of civil cases. • The MP or MLA is not liable in any court for any speech made in the parliament or state assembly. • He/She is exempted from jury service when the house is in session. **Other facts:** • The parliamentary privileges are not codified. • These are drawn from 5 sources: constitutional provisions, laws of the parliament, rules of the houses, parliamentary conventions and judicial interpretations. • Breach of privilege: The disregard for any of the above mentioned collective and individual immunities is referred to as the Breach of Privilege. **Committee on Privileges:** • There is a standing committee in each house of the parliament/state legislatures, which investigates the cases of the breach of privilege and recommends appropriate action to the Speaker/Chairperson. • Consists of 15 members in Lok Sabha (nominated by the Speaker) and 10 members in the Rajya Sabha (nominated by the chairperson of Rajya Sabha). **5. NOTA** **News:** Maharashtra State Election Commission passed an order stating that fresh elections will be held for local bodies, if the majority of votes go to NOTA. **Facts:** • SC in the PUCL v/s Union of India case introduced the provision of NOTA in 2013. • It is an option on the EVMs which allows voters to disapprove all the candidates. • It is a part of their Right to Vote. • However, the candidate with maximum number of votes wins the elections irrespective of the NOTA votes polled. • Election Commission of India does not have the power to call fresh elections, even if NOTA votes are higher than the votes polled by any of	

	Questions/Notes
the candidates. • Rule 64 of the Conduct of Election Rules needs to be amended to enable the ECI to order fresh elections in case of higher NOTA votes. **Other facts:** • Rule 64 refers to the 'declaration of result and return of election'. The rule at present does not allow the ECI to call for fresh elections in case of higher NOTA votes polled. **6. State v/s CBI:** News: Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal withdrew the General Consent granted to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). **Facts:** • CBI will now have to approach the state for permission for investigation on a case-by-case basis. • It is not the first time that states have withdrawn the General Consent granted to the CBI, earlier also states such as Nagaland and Karnataka had ripped CBI of the powers to conduct investigation in their respective states. • However, the SC and the High Court can order the CBI to investigate the case anywhere in the country, even without the consent of the state. **Other facts:** • CBI is the investigation agency of central government to probe corruption cases and criminal cases. • CBI has jurisdiction only over Central government departments and employees, it can investigate a case of state government employees only if the concerned state government gives its consent. This avoids taking permission each time. • The general consent is normally given for a period of six months to one year. • It draws its powers from the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act 1946. • It is under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions. • Under the Lokpal Act 2013 CBI Director is appointed on the recommendation of a committee comprising of the PM, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a SC judge nominated by him.	

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INTERNATIONAL ISSUES	**Questions/Notes**

1. US Waiver for India:

News: US announced waivers to 8 countries including India, Japan and South Korea allowing them to keep buying oil from Iran even after imposition of sanctions on Iran.

Facts:

- US sanctions are legally backed by a US federal law, Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) which enables sanctions against Russia, North Korea and Iran.
- These sanctions on Iran are targeted at the oil sales, energy and shipping industry of Iran, damaging the base of Iranian economy.
- CAATSA provides for secondary sanctions on the countries engaging with these three countries, as they intend to apply pressure on the other countries to cease their trade relations with Tehran.
- The US waiver is in this context of the secondary sanctions likely to be imposed on India, in case it engages in trade with Iran.
- Under this new arrangement India will make oil payments in Rupees as opposed to the earlier system of paying 45% in Rupees and 55% in Euro.
- India is also allowed to export farm commodities, food, medicines and medical devices to Iran.
- India may opt for the Cost Insurance and Freight mode (CIF) as against Free-On-Board mode (FOB).

Other facts:

- CIF and FOB are shipping agreements between two trading countries, regarding the transportation of goods between the buyer and the seller.
- In CIF, the seller (exporter) takes the responsibility of cost, insurance and pays freight.
- In FOB, the buyer (importer) takes the responsibility of transportation of goods.

2. G20 Summit:

News: The 13th G20 Summit was hosted by Argentina.

Facts:

- India presented a 9-point Agenda at the 13th G20 summit.
- In the agenda India demanded strengthening of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- India will host the annual summit of G20 for the first time in 2022.

Other Facts:

- G20 is an international forum of governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the EU.
- Its first summit was held in December 1999 at Berlin and was hosted by the Finance Minister of Germany and Canada.
- It was formed to discuss the problems of financial stability.
- Post the global financial crisis 2008, G20 has expanded its agenda and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers and foreign ministers, have periodically conferred at summits ever since.
- FATF is an intergovernmental body established in 1989 to combat money laundering and terror financing.
- FATF secretariat is at OECD headquarters, Paris.
- FATF has 36 member countries including India and 2 regional organizations-EU and Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

3. Broad Based Trade and Investment Agreement (BITA):

News: European Union has proposed a Strategy Paper for accelerating cooperation with India in key sectors.

Facts:

- One of the main sectors between India and EU is trade. They have not been able to sign a Free Trade Agreement (BITA) since 2007 due to mismatched interests.
- Post BREXIT, EU is planning to propose a new Broad based BITA with India.
- The strategy paper does not mention BTIA, but aims to negotiate a balanced and ambitious and mutually beneficial FTA.

4. India-Australia:

News: Australian PM announced the implementation of 'An Indian Economic Strategy to 2035', a vision document to shape India –Australia ties.

Facts:

- This vision document has three main pillars: Economic, Geostrategic and Cultural ties.

5. Generalised System of Preferences:

News: US has withdrawn the benefit of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) from 94 products for all countries.

Facts:

- GSP is a non-reciprocal preferential tariff system of US trade program designed to promote economic growth in the developing world by

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providing preferential duty-free entry of products from designated beneficiary countries and territories.

Other Facts:

*   MFN: The term means the country, which is the recipient of this treatment, must nominally receive equal trade advantages as the "most favored nation" by the country granting such treatment.
*   It ensures non-discriminatory trade policy among all members of the WTO.

6. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation:

News: APEC summit in Papua New Guinea failed to develop consensus.

Facts:

*   The deadlock was blamed on the tensions between US and China on wide ranging issues such as China's Belt and Road Initiative as an instrument of entrapment for vulnerable countries in Asia and Africa, America's protectionist policies and issues of regional security in the Indo-Pacific.

Other facts:

*   APEC was established in 1989 as an intergovernmental forum for 21 Pacific Rim member economies.
*   In 1997 APEC membership was restricted by a moratorium for 10 years, which was extended further till 2010. However, currently there is no moratorium on membership.
*   India is not a member of APEC but was added as an observer state during the APEC summit 2011.

7. East Asia Summit:

News: India participated in 13th East Asia Summit (EAS) held in Singapore.

Facts:

*   EAS is an annual meeting of regional countries, which was established in 2005.
*   Its members include 10 AEASN countries plus 8 other nations: India, Australia, China, US, Russia, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand.
*   However, only an ASEAN member can chair the summit.
*   The priority areas of cooperation at EAS are:
    *   Environment and Energy
    *   Education and Finance
    *   Global health issues
    *   Natural Disaster Management

	Questions/Notes
o ASEAN Connectivity	

Other Facts:

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) Summit: It was held in Singapore on the sidelines of 13th EAS.

- The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad) is an informal strategic dialogue between the United States, Japan, Australia and India to counter China's influence in Indo-Pacific region.

- The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, with the support of Vice President of the US, Prime Minister of Australia and Prime Minister of India. But it ceased operation in 2008.

- However, during the 2017 ASEAN Summit all four former members rejoined in negotiations to revive the quadrilateral alliance.

8. BREXIT:

News: Finally, UK and EU have agreed to a deal, which enables Britain's exit from EU.

Facts:

- This deal was cracked at the Brussels Summit, Belgium.

- It is a legally binding text that sets out terms for UK's departure.

Terms of agreement:

- o People will be able to work and study where they currently live and to be joined by family members.

- o A 21-month transition period will be allotted after UK's departure to allow time for trade talks.

- o UK would continue to follow all rules of EU during this period to give the government and businesses more time to prepare for long term changes.

- o UK will have to pay 69 billion pounds to EU, also known as the 69-billion-pound Divorce Bill.

- o A backstop arrangement, to keep the Irish borders unmanned, if in case UK leaves EU without securing an all-encompassing deal.

- Backstop Agreement: The backstop is an insurance policy that there will never be a hard border on the island of Ireland.

- Both the British and Irish governments have committed to avoid the creation of "physical infrastructure" on the Irish border, neither government wants a situation in which a delay in the Brexit talks means the emergence of border infrastructure on the island of Ireland.

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Other facts: • Lisbon Treaty: Also known as the reform treaty, as it amends two other important treaties of EU, Maastricht treaty and Rome treaty. • Article 50 of the Lisbon treaty gives the EU member the right to exit EU unilaterally and outlines the procedure to do so. It gives the leaving country a period of two years to negotiate an exit deal. **9. Afghan Peace Conference:** **News:** India is participating in the Moscow sponsored Afghan Peace talks with Taliban. **Facts:** • Many argue that this is a departure from India's policy of Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, Afghan-controlled talks. • However, others argue that since India had already participated in Moscow Format, it was in alignment with India's policy. **Other facts:** • Moscow format/Moscow talks was an effort towards peace in Afghanistan which involved high level delegation from Taliban, delegation of Afghanistan's High Peace Council, and representatives of 12 other countries. • For the first time, an Indian delegation, in unofficial capacity, participated in meetings in which the Taliban were present. **10. Kartarpur Corridor:** **News:** To commemorate the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji in November 2019, Government of India and Pakistan have decided to build the Kartarpur Corridor. **Facts:** • The project will connect Dera Baba Nanak Sahib Gurudwara in the Indian state of Punjab to Gurudwara Darbar Singh Kartarpur shrine in Narowal district of Punjab province of Pakistan. • It will be a 4-km long corridor, with 2 km on each side of the border. • It will be built over the Ravi River. **Other facts:** • 1974 Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines has a list of shrines in India and Pakistan, which are open to visitors from other countries but only with prior visa approval. • Guru Nanak Dev was the founder of Sikhism and a Nirguni Bhakti Saint in the 15th century.	

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• He was born in Nankana Sahib, Punjab, Pakistan and died at Kartarpur, Pakistan.	

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES	Questions/Notes

1. YUVA Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme:

News: National Cooperative Development Corporation's new scheme Yuva Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme has been launched.

Facts:

- It is a youth friendly scheme launched to encourage the youth to take up cooperative business ventures.
- A Cooperative Startup and Innovation Fund (CSIF) has been created by NCDC with an annual outlay of 100 crore with special incentives for the cooperatives of the northeast region, aspirational states and cooperatives with women/STs/SCs/PwD members.
- The funding will be up to 80% of the project cost for special categories and up to 70% for general categories.
- The scheme will provide 2% less than the applicable interest rate on term loans up to 3 crore, and a 2 year moratorium on the payment of the principal amount.
- All cooperatives currently functioning for at least a year and whose net worth is positive are eligible under the scheme.

Other facts:

- NCDC is a statutory organization, and is an apex financial and developmental institution for the cooperatives.
- It is under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare.

2. Data City Programme:

News: Karnataka government launched the Data City Programme to solve Bengaluru's problems.

Facts:

- It is the first Data City Programme launched in Asia.
- It is a 7 month long programme.
- Corporates, startups, government agencies and citizens will together work to find solutions to city's challenges like mobility, water, waste management.
- There is no funding provision from government's side, it will only support the other stakeholders.

3. PAISA portal:

News: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched Portal for Affordable Credit and Interest Subvention Access (PAISA), a web portal.

Facts:

- It is a centralized platform for interest subvention for beneficiaries under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Urban Livelihood Mission (DAY-NULM).
- The portal is designed and developed by Allahabad bank.
- It will involve all state Commercial Banks, RRBs and Cooperative Banks.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS	Questions/Notes

1. Credit Rating Agencies:

News: SEBI has tightened disclosure norms for Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs) in the backdrop of IL&FS crisis.

Facts:

- CRAs will now have to disclose the liquidity position of the company being rated.
- It has to disclose information about the source and rationale, if the company is expecting additional funds to deal with debt.
- CRAs should also publish the historical average rating transition rates of a company across sectors, for better knowledge of the investors.

Other facts:

- All CRAs should be registered with SEBI in order to operate in India.
- SEBI is empowered under the SEBI (credit rating agencies) Regulation Act 1999 to regulate CRAs operating in India.
- At present there are seven CRAs registered with SEBI: CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, SMERA, India Ratings and Research, Infomerics and Brickworks.

2. National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA):

News: Government of India has notified the rules outlining the powers, functions and jurisdiction of the National Financial Reporting Authority.

Facts:

- The failure of Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) to identify corporate frauds has necessitated the notification of an independent regulator, NFRA.
- It was introduced under the Companies Act 2013, but its provisions were not notified for 5 years.

NFRA Rules 2018:

- It will oversee the auditors of banks, Insurers and Electricity firms, and other agencies referred to it by the government.
- NRFA can debar erring auditors and audit firms.
- It can also refer the service of an auditor to the Quality Review Board under the Chartered Accountants Act.
- NFRA can investigate:
  - Listed entities, unlisted entities with paid up capital not less than Rs.500 crore or annual turnover over Rs.1, 000 crore.
  - And those entities, having an aggregate loan, debenture or

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deposits of not less than Rs.500 crore. **Other facts:** • NFRA is an independent regulator to oversee auditing profession and accounting standards. • It consists of a Chairperson, 3 full time members and 9 part time members. • Chairperson and full time members are selected through a search cum selection committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary. **3. Ease of Doing Business Index 2018:** **News:** India was ranked 77 out of 190 countries in the Ease of Doing Business Index 2018. **Facts:** • This Index is released by the World Bank as a part of Ease of Doing Business Report 2018. • The Report ranks countries based on Distance from the Frontier (DTF), a score that shows the gap of an economy from the global best practice. • India features in the top 10 improvers for the year 2018 (India's rank in 2017 was 100th). This is an achievement second time in a row. • India is the only BRICS nation to feature in the top 10 improvers list. • India seeks to reach the 30th position by 2020. • The report uses 10 parameters to rank countries • Dealing with construction permits • Starting a new Business • Enforcing contracts • Trading across borders • Getting credit • Getting electricity connection • Registering property • Paying taxes • Resolving insolvency • Protecting minority investors **4. World Development Report:** **News:** The World Bank recently released the World Development Report. **Facts:** • The theme of the report: The Changing Nature of Work. • This report throws light on the new areas and kinds of jobs created through the technological intervention.	

5. Human Capital Index:

News: World Bank released the first Human Capital Index (HCI).

Facts:

- HCI measures the amount of human capital that a new-born child can expect to attain at the age of 18 i.e. it measures the expected productivity of the next generation.
- HCI is a part of the World Development Report, under the Human Capital Project.

Other facts:

- Singapore topped the Index.
- India was placed at 115th out of 157 countries considered.
- India's is ranked below Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

6. Sustainable Blue Economy Conference:

News: Sustainable Blue Economy Conference was organized at Nairobi, Kenya.

Facts:

- It is the first global conference on Sustainable Blue Economy.
- It was co-hosted by Kenya and Japan.

Other facts:

- Blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, livelihood for communities along with preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

7. Guidelines on Operation Greens:

News: The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has approved an operationalization strategy for Operation Greens.

Facts:

- Operation Greens was announced in the budget 2018-19 with an outlay of Rs.500 crore to stabilize the supply of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops, and to ensure the availability of TOP crops throughout the year, in every corner of the country and without any price volatility.
- It aims to promote farmer producer organisations (FPOs), agricultural logistics, food processing facilities and professional management to ensure the availability of essential TOP crops.
- It is a Central Sector Scheme(CSS).
- The center has identified 17 TOP producing states for the first phase of the scheme.
- The government also intends to use 28 centers of excellence under Indo-

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Israel Cooperation for enhancing farm technology and farmer capability with regard to TOP crops.
 	
8. SEZ policy Report:
News: The Baba Kalyani Committee submitted the SEZ policy report to the government.
 	
Facts:
 	
• The committee was formed under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
• Committee recommendations:
    ○ The focus SEZ should be shifted from being export focused to economic and employment growth focus, making SEZ Economic and Employment Enclaves (3Es).
    ○ Provide continuous electricity, fast-track approvals through online modes and infrastructure status to 3E projects to make finance cheaper for them.
    ○ Retain the tax benefits of the SEZs.
    ○ Providing SEZs with last mile connectivity infrastructure.
    ○ Easy entry and exit norms with robust dispute resolution through arbitration and commercial courts.
    ○ Preparation of a sunrise list for focused diversification.
    ○ Rationalization of schemes to avoid duplication and wastage of resources.
 	
Other facts:
 	
• SEZ: A special economic zone is an area in which the business and trade laws are different from the rest of the country. SEZs are located within a country's national borders, and their aims include increased trade balance, employment, increased investment, job creation.
• SEZ policy was implemented in the year 2000, subsequently Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 was enacted supported by SEZ rules 2006.
 	
9. Capital Conservation Buffer:
News: RBI extended the deadline for setting aside a complete Capital Conservation Buffer by the banks, by a year.
Facts:
 	
• Capital Conservation Buffer is a mandatory capital that financial institutions are required to hold over and above the minimum requirements, as per the Basel III norms.
• According to the CCB norms, banks are required to hold 2.5% Risk Weighted Assets in the form of common equity, over and above the Capital Adequacy Ratio of 9%.	

	Questions/Notes
Other facts: • Basel norms III: Basel III is an international regulatory accord that introduced a set of reforms designed to improve the regulation, supervision and risk management within the banking sector. • Capital Adequacy Ratio: Capital Adequacy Ratio, also known as Capital to Risk Assets Ratio, is the ratio of a bank's capital to its risk. • Risk Weighted Assets: Risk-weighted asset is a bank's assets or off-balance-sheet exposures, weighted according to risk. This sort of asset calculation is used in determining the capital requirement or Capital Adequacy Ratio for a financial institution. **10. ECB norms:** **News:** RBI eased the minimum average maturity requirement for External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) in the infrastructure sector. **Facts:** • ECBs are commercial loans raised by eligible Indian residents from non-resident lenders with a minimum average maturity of 3 years. • ECBs are governed under the FEMA guidelines. **Other facts:** • FEMA: The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 is an Act of the Parliament of India "to consolidate and change the law relating to foreign exchange". **11. Legal Entity Identifier (LEI):** **News:** RBI has made Legal Entity Identifier code mandatory for all market participants, except individuals. **Facts:** • LEI is a 20-character global reference number conceived by G20. • It identifies every legal entity part of a transaction, in any jurisdiction. • LEI's international operation and implementation is by the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation, through the local operation units in each country. • LEI information is available publically and free of cost. • It is annually reviewed, updated and validated by the Local Operators Unit. • In India, LEI can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd. (only LOU of India). • It is a subsidiary of Clearing Corporation of India Ltd., recognized by the RBI under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.	

Other facts:

- The Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation is a not for profit organization established by the Financial Stability Board 2014
- The LEI regulatory Oversight Committee oversees it.
- It publishes the Global LEI Index.

12. Credit enhancement of bonds by NBFCs and HFCs:

News: RBI allowed partial credit enhancement of the bonds issued by systemically important NBFCs registered with the RBI and HFCs registered with the National Housing Bank.

Facts:

- Credit enhancement means improving the credit rating of a corporate bond.
- NBFCs: A Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 of India, engaged in the business of loans and advances, acquisition of shares, stock, bonds, hire-purchase insurance business or chit-fund business.
- It does not include any institution whose principal business includes agriculture, industrial activity or the sale, purchase or construction of immovable property.
- Systemically important NBFCs are those whose asset is of Rs.500 crore or more.
- Difference between banks and NBFCs:

Banks	*NBFCs*
- Banks accept both demand and time deposits.	- NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits but some can accept time deposits.
- Banks can issue cheques drawn on itself.	- NBFCs cannot issue cheques drawn on itself.
- Banks get license under the Banking Regulation Act.	- NBFCs get license under the Companies Act 1956.
- Deposit insurance facility is available in banks.	- Deposit insurance facility is not available to NBFCs.
- CRR (cash reserve ratio) do apply to banks.	- CRR does not apply to NBFCs.

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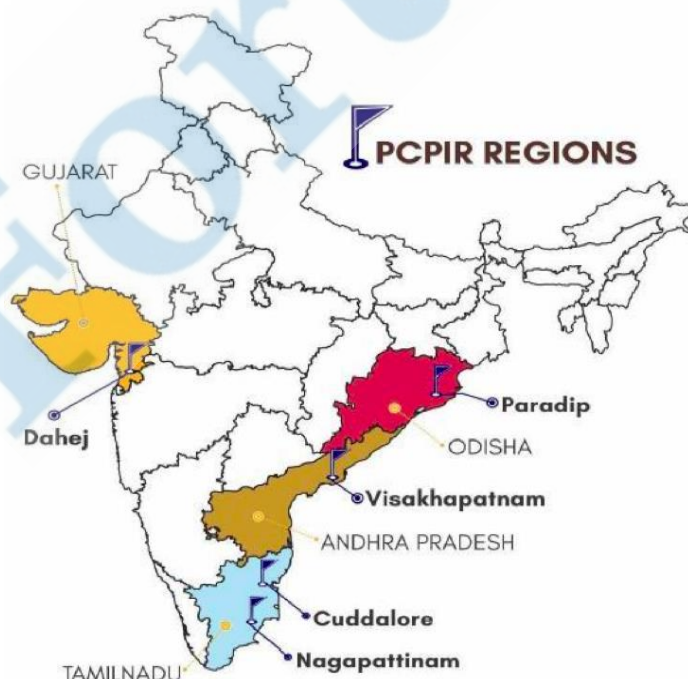|	Questions/Notes
13. Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme (AMF-TCP): **News:** India recently joined the Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme (AMF-TCP) as its 16th member. **Facts:** • It is programme under the International Energy Agency (IEA). • Its vision is to establish a sustainable transportation system using advanced, renewable and alternative fuels. • It will help India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to get scientific information and technological assessment to make informed decisions. • Other member countries in this programme: US, China, Japan, Canada, Chile, Israel, Thailand, Republic of Korea etc. **Other facts:** • IEA is an autonomous body established under the OECD in the wake of 1973 oil crisis. • IEA works to provide reliable, affordable and clean energy to its members. • An IEA member country must be an OECD member, but not all OECD members, are members of IEA. • IEA has 30 members and 8 associate members including India. **14. Petroleum, Chemicals and petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR):** **News:** According to The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, PCPIR has registered good progress in India, in terms of investment for development and employment generation.	

PCPIR REGIONS

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Facts: • PCPIR is cluster based development approach for manufacturing facilities in petroleum, chemicals and petrochemicals for both domestic consumption and exports. **15. First Multi Modal Terminal on Inland Waterways:** **News:** India's first Multi Modal Terminal on Ganga was inaugurated by the PM. **Facts:** • It is constructed on the National Waterways 1 as part of the Jal Marg Vikas Project of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI). • It will enable commercial movement of the goods weighing 1500 to 2000 tons on NW-1. • PepsiCo India became the first company to use the Inland waterways container movement by transporting products from its plant at Kolkata to Varanasi in IAWI vessel-MV RABINDRANATH TAGORE. • The other three terminals are under construction at Sahibganj, Haldia and Gazipur. • It consists of a modern River Information System (RIS), strong river navigation system, Digital Global Positioning System (DGPS), night navigation facilities, construction of navigational locks at Farakka. • It is the first of four Multimodal Terminals being constructed on National Waterways-I (NW1) on River Ganga as part of World Bank-aided Jal Marg Vikas Marg Project of IWAI. **Other facts:** • Multi modal transport is the one where many modes of transportation such as roadways, railways, waterways and airways are used. • India has total 111 waterways under the National Waterways Act 2016. • IWAI is the statutory authority in charge of the waterways in India. Its headquarters is located in Noida, UP. • Its parent agency is the Ministry of Shipping. **16. Maharashtra ends the APMC Monopoly:** **News:** Maharashtra ends the monopoly of the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) to allow trade in farm commodities including the livestock, outside the wholesale mandis. **Facts:** • Maharashtra becomes the second state to do it after Bihar. • The APMC Act of the respective States govern the market of Agricultural commodities.	

- The notified agricultural products as well as livestock come under APMC.
- The first harvest of a farmer can only be sold in authorized mandis.

Other facts:

- To remove discrepancies, the Central government introduced the Model APMC Act 2003 and Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation) Act 2007.
- National Agriculture Market or eNAM is an online trading platform for agricultural commodities in India. It is an effort of the central government towards ending the APMC monopoly and lead to a better price discovery of the farm commodities.
- Under the GrAM scheme 22,000 rural Haats to be developed and upgraded into Gramin agricultural markets (grams) for farmers to directly sell to consumers and bulk purchasers, these markets will also be outside the purview of the APMC Act.

17. MSMEs Outreach Programme:

News: The GoI launched an Outreach Programme to develop greater synergy with the MSMEs.

Facts:

- The MSMEs Outreach Programme will run for 100 days in 100 districts for the country.
- During this programme, ministers will travel to these districts in order to update the entrepreneurs about the ongoing policies for the MSMEs by the government and the banks.
- It includes the 12-point Action Plan for the MSMEs including:
    - Access to easy credit
    - Access to market
    - Technology upgradation
    - Ease of doing business
    - Relaxation in environmental clearances
    - No more inspector raj
    - One annual return filing
    - Ordinance in the Companies Act

Other facts:

- MSMEs are defined under the MSME Development Act 2006.
- The classification is based on investments made in plant and machineries if they are operating in the manufacturing sector and investment in equipment for service sector companies.
- For manufacturing sector:

Questions/Notes

	Questions/Notes

o A micro enterprise is an enterprise where investment in plant and machinery does not exceed Rs. 25 lakh.
 	
o A small enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in plant and machinery is more than Rs. 25 lakh but does not exceed Rs. 5 crore.
 	
o A medium enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in plant and machinery is more than Rs.5 crore but does not exceed Rs.10 crore.
 	
• For services sector:
   o A micro enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in equipment does not exceed Rs. 10 lakh;
 	
   o A small enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in equipment is more than Rs.10 lakh but does not exceed Rs. 2 crore;
 	
   o A medium enterprise is an enterprise where the investment in equipment is more than Rs. 2 crore but does not exceed Rs. 5 crore.
 	
• The government under the MSME Development (amendment) Act 2018 aims to give a new turnover based classification of MSMEs:
   o A micro enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover does not exceed Rs.5 crore;
 	
   o A small enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than Rs.5 crore but does not exceed Rs.75 crore;
 	
   o A medium enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than Rs.75 crore rupees but does not exceed Rs.250 crore.
 	
18. City Gas Distribution programme:
News: The 9th round of City Gas Distribution was conducted.
 	
Facts:
• The programme is under the National Gas Grid. It will cover 129 districts.
• The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has initiated the process.
 	
Other facts:
• National Gas Grid is a 16000 km long gas pipeline network, connecting the western, northern, south-eastern gas markets of the country.
• In the eastern part, the government initiated the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga Project. This gas pipeline will pass through 50 districts covering U.P, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.	

- The PNGRB was constituted under the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act 2006 to protect the interest of consumers and entities engaged in the activities related to petroleum, petroleum products and Natural Gas.
- City Gas Distribution Network: It is an interconnected network of gas pipelines which will make the supply of natural gas to domestic, industrial and commercial premises.

19. Application Programme Interface Exchange (APIX):

News: Indian PM and the Deputy PM of Singapore together launched Application Programme Interface Exchange (APIX).

Facts:

- APIX is a banking technology platform intended to reach out to 2 billion people without bank accounts.
- It will help people in 23 countries, including 10 ASEAN nations and countries like India and Fiji.

Questions/Notes

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS	Questions/Notes

1. Safe City Project:

News: Ministry of Home Affairs has approved the Safe City Project for 8 cities in India.

Facts:

- The 8 cities are: Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Lucknow.

- The Project was proposed under the Nirbhaya Fund Scheme and aimed at improving the security of women in public places.

- It includes augmenting the Asha Jyoti Kendra, implementing safety measures in buses, and integration of women helpline with the Emergency number 112.

- It is in collaboration with Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Urban Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Municipal and police commissioners of the respective city and civil society organizations.

2. Emergency Response Support System:

News: Union Home Minister launched the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for the states of Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland.

Facts:

- ERSS is a pan-state single emergency number 112 which will connect to the police, fire, health and others through the emergency response Centre in the state.

- Himachal Pradesh is the first state to launch ERSS.

- The central government allocated fund for ERSS from the Nirbhaya Fund.

- A SHOUT feature has also been introduced in 112 India mobile app, especially for women.

3. Location Tracking and Emergency Buttons:

News: All new public transport vehicles should have the Vehicle Location Tracking and Emergency Buttons.

Facts:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has made location tracking and emergency buttons mandatory.

- The rule is applicable to all the vehicles registered on or after 1st January 2019.

- Auto- rickshaws and e-rickshaws are exempted from the rule.
- There will be Command and Control Centers for regular monitoring.
- Details of each Vehicle Location Tracking device will be uploaded on the VAHAAN database by the device manufacturer.

4. South Asian Regional Conference on Urban Infrastructure:

News: NITI Aayog organized The South Asian Regional Conference on Urban Infrastructure in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNESCAP.

Facts:

- It dwells on urban challenges, problems of finance and sustainability of PPPs in developing urban infrastructure for South Asian cities, especially Indian cities.

Other facts:

- UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) is a regional development arm of the UN in Asia and Pacific.
- Its Headquarters is at Bangkok, Thailand.
- ADB is a Japan led regional development bank established on 19 December 1966.
- Its headquarters is in Manila, Philippines.

5. Dubai Declaration:

News: The Dubai Declaration was adopted at the 2nd UN World Data forum, 2018.

Facts:

- The 2nd UN World Data forum was held at Dubai, U.A.E
- It is aimed at mobilizing domestic and international funding for data and statistical analysis for monitoring and speeding up the process of achieving SDGs 2030.
- It reinforces the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data.

Other facts:

- UN world Data forum was created on the basis of a report titled: 'A World that counts' by the UN Statistical Commission.
- It aims to increase the cooperation between the professionals in the field of data and the civil society organizations.
- Its first forum was hosted at Cape Town, South Africa 2017.
- UN Statistical Commission in the 1st forum 2017 adopted Cape Town

Questions/Notes

Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data.

- This plan is an effort towards planning and implementing of the statistical capacity building necessary to achieve SDGs 2030.
- In India, the NITI Aayog, Research and Information System for developing countries is a think tank attached to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation conduct the review process to prepare the Voluntary National Review Report.

6. Global Wage Report:

News: The International Labour Organization (ILO) released the Global Wage Report for the year 2018-19.

Facts:

- It is an annual publication of the ILO which assess the different aspects of labour wages and its impact on equality and social justice.
- The real global wage rate growth in 2017 fell to its lowest growth rate since 2008.
- Wage inequality is lower in high income countries as compared to the low and mid income countries.
- India and Pakistan had the highest gender wage gap.

Other facts:

- Gender wage gap in the difference in the hourly wages of men and women.
- ILO founded in 1919 and as an agency of the League of Nations, is now an agency of the UN.
- ILO also publishes the World Employment and Social Outlook Report.
- India is a founder member and has signed 45 conventions of the ILO including the Minimum wages Convention (No.138) and Worst form of Child Labor Convention (No.182).

7. Global Nutrition Report:

News: The latest edition of the Global Nutrition Report 2018 has been released in Bangkok.

Facts:

- The report is one of the publications of World Health Organization (WHO).
- The report notes that the burden of malnutrition remains unacceptably high and progress on it is unacceptably low.
- The report came into existence after the first Nutrition for Growth Initiative Summit (N4G) in 2013.

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• Indian situation: According to the report, world's largest population of stunted and wasted children are in India, followed by Nigeria.
 	
Other Facts:
• N4G accountability mechanism was launched for tracking the efforts made by 100 stakeholders including governments, civil society and UN etc. for improving nutrition levels.
• It acts as a report card on the world nutrition level and the efforts to improve it.
 	
8. PVTGs in Andaman and Nicobars:
News: Central Government is planning to re-impose Restricted Area Permit (RAP) in the North Sentinel Island.
 	
Facts:
• Restricted areas are those where no foreigner is allowed without permission of a competent authority.
• Under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1958, parts of Sikkim and entire Andaman and Nicobar Island were declared as a Restricted Area.
• The North Sentinel Island was lately relaxed from government's restricted area norm to promote tourism and employment opportunities.
• Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) is a category of tribes within the Scheduled Tribes, as recommended by the Dhebar Committee (1960-1961).
• The classification was created for improving the conditions of certain communities with particularly low development indices.
• Presently there are 75 PVTGs recognized by the Home Ministry.
• PVTGs are present in 18 states and in the Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar.
 	
Other facts:
• There are 6 aboriginal tribes in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where they are planning to reimpose RAP, belonging to the Negrito and Mongoloid groups.
    o Nicobarese (Mongoloid)
    o Shom Pens (Mongoloid)
    o Sentinelese (Negrito)
    o Great Andamanese (Negrito)
    o Ongs (Negrito)
    o Jarawas (Negrito)
• Except Nicobarese all the 5 tribal groups are categorized as PVTGs.	

	Questions/Notes
9. Intensified Mission Indradhanush: **News:** The Intensified Mission Indradhanush was featured in a British Medical Journal as one of the 12 best practices from around the world. **Facts:** • Intensified Mission Indradhanush is the successor of Mission Indradhanush. • It was launched to immunize each and every child less than 2 years of age and all pregnant women left out of the routine immunization programme. • It aims for an immunization coverage of more than 90% by December 2018. • It immunizes children against 7 vaccine preventable diseases namely Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Childhood Tuberculosis, Polio, Hepatitis B and Measles. In addition, it also vaccinates against Japanese Encephalitis, Haemophilus influenzae type B, Inactivated Polio vaccine, Rotavirus Vaccine and Measles Rubella vaccine in selected sites. **Other facts:** • Mission Indradhanush was implemented in 2015 to increase the full immunization coverage to 90%. • It included the initial 7 vaccines and hence was named Mission Indradhanush (Rainbow).	

SECURITY AND DEFENCE

1. Military exercises:

Name of the exercise	*Related facts*
Exercise INDRA 2018	- Joint military exercise between India and Russia. - It was conducted in Jhansi, UP. - The exercise aims to increase operability in peacekeeping missions under the aegis of UN.
Samudra Shakti	- Bilateral naval exercise between India and Indonesia. - It was an inaugural exercise, conducted at the port of Surabaya, Indonesia.
SIMBEX	- It is the 25th edition of the Singapore-India marine bilateral exercise (Silver Jubilee). - It was conducted at Port Blair, Andaman Sea, Bay of Bengal and Visakhapatnam.

2. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS):

News: The 10th anniversary of IONS was recently held at Kochi, Kerala.

Facts:

- The theme was "IONS as a catalyst for SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the region)".
- The latest symposium was held at Iran on April 2018.

Other facts:

- The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, commonly known as IONS, is a series of biennial meetings among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region.
- It provides a forum for the countries to increase maritime security cooperation, to discuss regional maritime issues and to promote friendly relationships among them.
- It was initiated and launched by India in February 2008.
- The littoral states of the Indian Ocean are represented by their Navy chiefs in the forum.
- The 24 member nations of the IONS are grouped into four sub-regions, namely South Asian, West Asian, East African, South East Asian and Australian.

	Questions/Notes
• There are eight states with observer status: China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Netherlands, Russia and Spain. **3. Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti:** **News:** The Department of Defense Production has instituted a new framework titled mission Raksha Gyan Shakti as an initiative to enhance self-reliance in defence. **Facts:** • The Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) is the coordinating and implementing agency for the mission. • The aim is to inculcate intellectual property right culture in Indian defence manufacturing ecosystem. • It aims to train 10,000 personnel in the year 2018-19 in the IP Facilitation Cell. **4. India's Nuclear Triad Completed:** **News:** The successful deterrence patrol of the INS Arihant completed India's Nuclear Triad. **Facts:** • A nuclear triad refers to the three components of Atomic weapon delivery: strategic bombers, Intercontinental ballistic missiles and Submarine launched ballistic missiles. • Land vector includes Prithvi II and Agni I-VI. • Air vector includes Sukhoi-30MKI, Mirage 2000 and Jaguar fighters modified to deliver nuclear bombs. • Sea vector includes INS Arihant codenamed as S-2. **Other facts:** • The then PM Indira Gandhi sanctioned the submarine Arihant after the first nuclear test in 1974. It took 11 years to complete its construction. • It is part of Indian Navy's Secretive Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project. • INS Arihant was built at the Ship building Center, Visakhapatnam.	

SPECIFICATIONS — TEXT: SHAURYA KARANBIR GURUNG

INS Arihant, weighing about **6000 tonnes**, has been under development for over **three decades** under a classified programme

It is the **longest in the Navy's fleet of submarines**

This also allows it to **sneak near an enemy's shores** and fire ballistic missiles deep into their territory

Able to stay underwater, undetected, for longer periods than conventional submarines due to **nuclear-powered 83 mw pressurised** water nuclear reactor

Arihant-type submarines give **India a second-strike capability** – a capability to strike back after being hit by nuclear weapons first

It also has the **K-4 ballistic missile** with a range of **3,500 km**

The **submarine is equipped with K-15** short-range missiles, having a range of **700 km**

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY	Questions/Notes

1. Global Cooling Innovation Summit:

News: The Union Minister of Science and Technology inaugurated the Global Cooling Innovation Summit.

Facts:

- It was a maiden, solutions focused event, which focused on addressing the growing demand of room air conditioners that pose a threat to the climate.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change are its partner organizations.
- 'The Mission Innovation' supports the initiative.
- A Global Cooling Prize was announced under this initiative to incentivize development of a residential cooling technology, which will have at least five times less climate impact than standard Room Air Conditioning (RAC).

Other facts:

- BEE: The Bureau of Energy Efficiency is an agency of the Government of India, under the Ministry of Power created in March 2002 under the provisions of the nation's 2001 Energy Conservation Act.
- The agency's function is to develop programs which will increase the conservation and efficient use of energy in India.
- Mission Innovation: Mission Innovation (MI) is a global initiative of 23 countries and the European Commission (on behalf of the European Union) working to reinvigorate and accelerate global clean energy innovation with the objective to make clean energy widely affordable.
- Mission Innovation was announced at COP21 on November 30, 2015, in Paris.

2. Sri Lankan Frogmouth:

News: Sri Lankan Frogmouth, a rare bird was sighted in the Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary of Western Ghats.

Facts:

- This is the first time the bird was sighted on the eastern side of the Western Ghats, as it is usually confined to the western side of the Western Ghats.
- Sri Lanka is its unique habitat, however the bird is also found in Thattekad Bird Sanctuary in Kerala and in states like Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra.

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• This bird eats insects and preys during the night like the Nightjar (a bird). **Other facts:** • Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala is contiguous to the Eravikulam National Park, Kurinjimala Sanctuary and Anamudi Shola National Park. • The Pambar and Chinnar rivers are perennial and a major source of water for the sanctuary. • Among the many tribal settlements in the sanctuary, Muthuvas and Pulayars are the main inhabitants. • The vegetation of the sanctuary varies from high altitude shola grasslands to dry thorny scrub jungle. • Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, covering an area of barely 25 km², was the first bird sanctuary in Kerala. **3. Nitrogen Emission Hotspot:** **News:** Greenpeace, an NGO, analysed data from satellites to identify Nitrogen Emission Hotspots around the world. **Facts:** • The findings show that China is the country with highest number of Nitrogen emitting hotspots in the world. • Mpumalanga province, South Africa is the hotspot that emits the highest amount of Nitrogen Dioxide. • There are three areas identified in India: Delhi-NCR, Area between Sonbhadra, U.P and Singrauli in MP and Talcher-Angul in Odisha. **4. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):** **News:** Asia's Environment Enforcement Award 2018 was awarded to Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, by UNEP. **Facts:** • Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is a statutory body established under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. • It comes under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. • Its primary responsibility is to combat organized crime dealing in wildlife products and trophies in the country. **Other facts:** • UNEP is an agency of the UN, which leads the international efforts towards environmental conservation and sustainable development.	

- Its headquarters is at Nairobi, Kenya.

5. National Environmental Health Profile Project:

News: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is undertaking the National Environmental Health Profile Project to measure the quantum of health effect due to environmental exposure.

Facts:

- The study will be conducted across 20 cities, from four different zones.
- For the purpose of the study, each zone will have a referral city, which does not have high pollution levels and a test city- a city with higher pollution level.

6. Greater Flamingos:

News: Greater Flamingos were spotted on the coast of Hope Island, Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary after 25 years.

Facts:

- Greater Flamingos are indicator species that indicate the status of coastal health.
- They are in the 'least concerned' category of the IUCN Red list for Threatened species.
- Their preferable habitats are brackish waters, mudflats and saltpans.
- They are filter feeders i.e. they swallow the prey and the water together and then filter out the excess water.
- Their characteristic pink color is due to their diet of brine shrimps and algae in the coastal wetlands.

Other facts:

- Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary is at the confluence of Godavari River and the Bay of Bengal, Andhra Pradesh.
- It has the second largest mangroves forest of the country after Sunderbans, West Bengal.
- Coringa has served as a major port from where the British used to export manpower to Malaysia. The successors of those migrants are today known as Korangis in Malaysia.

7. Inclusive Wealth Report:

News: The Inclusive Wealth Report 2018 has been released by the UNEP

Facts:

- The report 2018 highlights that the inclusive wealth of one-third of the countries have declined world over, while their GDP has continuously

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increased.	

- The report gives an Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI), which assesses a nation's ability to look after its wealth, sustainably.
- It considered 140 countries of the world, and assessed the changes in the inclusive wealth of those countries by calculating an annual average growth rate over the past 25 years with 1990 as the base year.

Other Facts:

- Inclusive wealth includes manufactured capital, human capital as well as natural capital.
- UNEP is a UN agency that promotes environmental conservation and sustainable usage agenda at the international level.
- Its headquarters is at Nairobi, Kenya.

8. Envistats India 2018:

News: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released Envistat Report 2018, to reveal the toll that India's economic growth has taken on its natural assets like forest, wetlands, lakes etc.

Facts:

- Natural Capital of a country refers to the elements of nature that provide it with a wide range of services and resources to the humans, which enables economic growth, employment and ultimately prosperity.

9. Convention of Biological Diversity:

News: The CoP14 of the Convention of Biological Diversity adopted the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration on investing in Biodiversity for Planet and People.

Facts:

- It agreed on a New Deal for Nature, which is an agreement on a comprehensive and participatory process to develop post 2020 global biodiversity framework to achieve the 2050 vision for Biodiversity.
- It launched the International Alliance on Nature and Culture to work in collaboration with the UNESCO and indigenous people to advance work on biological and cultural diversity.
- It demanded that UNGA announce 2021-2030 as the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.

Other facts:

- Convention of Biological Diversity aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its elements and sharing the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.
- There are two important protocols under the convention:

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o Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: It seeks to protect the biodiversity from the potential risk posed by the genetically modified organisms.
 	
    o Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing: It aims at sharing the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources in a fair and an equitable way.
 	
10. Definition of Droughts in India:
 	
News: The states, despite persistent drought did not declare drought officially because the new manual of 2016 has limited the Center's scope to offer financial assistance to states.
 	
Facts:
 	
    • The Manual for Drought Management released in December 2016 prescribes new indices and parameters for more accurate assessment of drought in the country.
 	
    • The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare released the Manual.
 	
    • The manual lists 5 categories of Indices namely rainfall, agriculture, soil moisture, hydrology and remote sensing.
 	
    • The Center will now provide funds from the National Disaster Management Fund (NDMF) only if the drought is of 'severe' category, however with the new conditions of IMD it is more difficult for the state to prove the severity of the droughts.	

UPDATED NOMENCLATURE

New terminology	Old terminology	
Normal	Normal	Percentage departure of realized rainfall is within ± 10% of the Long Period Average
Below Normal	Below Normal	Percentage departure of realized rainfall is < 10% of the Long Period Average
Above Normal	Above Normal	Percentage departure of realized rainfall is > 10% of the Long Period Average
Deficient Year	All India Drought Year	When the rainfall deficiency is more than 10% and 20-40% area of the country is under drought conditions
Large Deficient Year	All India Severe Drought Year	When the rainfall deficiency is more than 10% and when the spatial coverage of drought is more than 40%

- Rainfall is a mandatory indicator and the rest 4 are Impact indicators, out of which states can choose any 3 for the assessment of drought.
- Assessment of the intensity of drought:
  - Severe drought- if 2 out of the 3 impact indicators are in severe category and one is in Moderate category.

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o Moderate drought- if at least 2 of the 3 impact indicators are in the moderate category. **Other facts:** • Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) in 2016 replaced the word 'drought' to describe poor rainfall with 'deficient year' and 'large deficient year' for an all India severe drought. • IMD also referred to as the Met Department, is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India. • It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology. **11. Water Use in India's Power Generation:** **News:** IRENA released a study called 'Water Use in India's Power Generation: Impact of Renewables and Improved Cooling Technologies to 2030.' **Facts:** • It examines the impact of changes in cooling technologies mandated for the thermal power plants and an increased share of renewable energy, on freshwater use and on carbon emissions to year 2030. **Other facts:** • International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is an intergovernmental organization to promote adoption and sustainable use of renewable energy. • The agency is headquartered in Abu Dhabi, UAE. **12. Reviewing the Montreal Protocol:** **News:** A four yearly review of the Montreal Protocol reveals healing of the Ozone layer and increase in the global warming reduction potential. **Facts:** • According to the Scientific Assessment of Ozone Depletion 2018 Montreal Protocol has succeeded in decreasing Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs) and started the recovery of the layer. • The Antarctic ozone hole is also showing recovering trends. • Outside the Polar Regions, ozone layer is recovering at the rate of 1-3% per decade since 2000. **Other facts:** • Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer 1985, aims at ceasing the Ozone layer depletion. • Montreal Protocol 1987 is a legally binding protocol under the Vienna	

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convention, aimed at reducing the production and consumption of the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs) • Kigali agreement, 2016 amends the Montreal protocol to phase out Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), a potent GHG. • It will be binding on countries from 2019 onwards. **13. Dudhwa National Park:** **News:** Dudhwa National Park and the SashastraSeema Bal (SSB) have joined hands to provide security to the Dudhwa forest and its rich biodiversity. **Facts:** • It is a protected area in Uttar Pradesh which is spread across the districts of Lakhimpur Kheri and Bahraich. • It comprises of the Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary. **Other facts:** • SashastraSeema Bal, one of India's Central Armed Police Forces is stationed at the India-Nepal border. • It is currently under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. **14. Talanoa Dialogue Synthesis Report and Yearbook of Global Climate Action 2018:** **News:** The UNFCCC released two key publications- Talanoa Dialogue Synthesis Report and Yearbook Climate Action 2018. **Facts:** • The Talanoa Dialogue Synthesis Report is based on studies by IPCC, Emission Gap report, WMO Greenhouse Gas Bulletin etc. • It highlights that the success in tackling global climate crisis is in stepping up public and private sector efforts. **Other facts:** • The Talanoa Dialogue is a process designed to help countries implement and enhance their Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020. • Talanoa is a traditional word used in Fiji and across the Pacific to reflect a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue. **15. Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS):** **News:** CCEA approved the continuation of the scheme ACROSS during 2017-2020 and establishment of a National Facility Airborne Research (NFAR) during	

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2020-21 and beyond.
 	
Facts:
 	
• The scheme will be implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences through its institutes- namely India Meteorological Department (IMD), Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Service (INCOIS).
 	
• ACROSS scheme pertains to the atmospheric science programs of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and addresses different aspects of weather and climate services, which includes warnings for cyclone, storm surges, heat waves, thunderstorms etc.
 	
• It has 9 sub-schemes:
    o Atmospheric, Climate Science and Services
    o Numerical Modelling of Weather and Climate
    o Physics and Dynamics of tropical Clouds
    o Agro Meteorology
    o Aviation Services
    o Center for Atmospheric technology
    o High impact severe Weather Warning System
    o Metropolitan air quality and Weather service
    o Monsoon Mission of India
 	
• NFAR comes under the Indian Institute of Tropical Management, Pune.
 	
• Under this, a state of the art aircraft will be prepared with all the equipments needed to carry out atmospheric research.
 	
• It will conduct measurements of aerosols, trace gases, cloud studies etc. at different altitudes in different seasons over the entire Indian subcontinent.
 	
16. Virtual Climate Summit:
News: Virtual Climate Summit (CVF Summit 2018), is the first virtual summit of the global political leaders for eliminating emissions and for promoting an inclusive dialogue was held recently.
 	
Facts:
 	
• It was organized as a part of Talanoa dialogue and was hosted by Marshall Islands, leaders of the Climate Vulnerable Forum
 	
• The Climate Action Network (CAN) and Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) organized this summit entirely online.
 	
• It was launched to provide a unique social media platform to raise awareness on the risks of climate change and the opportunities related to the tackling of the same.	

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17. HOG Deer: **News:** Indian scientists have discovered the eastern sub-species of HOG Deer in the KeibulLamjao National Park, Manipur which is generally found in Thailand. **Facts:** • The Eastern subspecies of the Hog deer or Pada is an endangered species according to the IUCN Red list of Threatened Species. • It is protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. **Other facts:** • KeibulLamjao National Park is famous for its floating land masses locally known as the Phumdis. • It is the natural and the only habitat of the brow antlered deer famously known as the Sangai or the dancing deer. • It is the state animal of Manipur state. • It is under the Endangered category in the IUCN Red List of Threatened species.	

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	Questions/Notes

1. Shakti Microprocessor:

News: IIT Madras developed India's first microprocessor called Shakti.

Facts:

- Shakti is a 64 bit, open-source processor developed by the Reconfigurable Intelligent Systems Engineering (RISE) laboratory, IIT Madras.
- The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology funded the project.
- It is a completely indigenously developed microprocessor.
- The IIT Madras Team is now ready to develop Parashakti, which is an advanced microprocessor for supercomputers.

2. SpiNNaker:

News: The world's largest brain like supercomputer called the Spiking Neural Network Architecture (SpiNNaker) was turned on for the first time.

Facts:

- It mimics the function and working of human brain.
- It has a computational capability of more than 200 million actions per second, which is only 1% of the capability of the Human Brain.

3. Insight Probe:

News: NASA's Mars lander InSight (Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport) recently, reached the Red Planet.

Facts:

- It is the first spacecraft designed to explore the interior of Mars.
- The lander has landed at a site is called Elysium Planitia, near the equator of the Planet.

Other Facts:

- It is NASA's 9th attempt to land on Mars since the 1976 Viking Probe.
- NASA's last lander on Mars was Curiosity Rover in 2012.

4. Tiangong:

News: Recently, China presented a replica of its first permanently crewed space station.

	Questions/Notes
Facts:	
• Tiangong (Heavenly palace) is a Chinese attempt to place a permanent space station in low earth orbit (LEO) by 2022.	
Other Facts:	
• The International Space Station (ISS) is a habitable artificial satellite in low earth orbit, operational since 1988.	
• It was a collaborative effort between the Space agencies of US, Russia, Canada, Europe and Japan.	
• It will be decommissioned in the year 2024.	
5. OSIRIS-Rex Mission:	
News: OSIRIS-Rex captured the first clear images of the asteroid, Bennu.	
Facts:	
• NASA's space probe OSIRIS-Rex (Origins, Spectral Interpretation, and Resource Identification-Regolith Explorer) was launched for a near earth asteroid Bennu in 2016.	
• 101955 Bennu is a carbonaceous asteroid in the Apollo group discovered by the LINEAR Project in September 1999.	
• Unlike most other asteroids that circle the Sun in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, Bennu's orbit is close in proximity to Earth's, even crossing it.	
Other facts:	
• The pictures of Bennu have a remarkable similarity with another asteroid Ryugu.	
• The pictures of asteroid, Ryugu was obtained by the JAXA Hayabusa Mission.	
6. Kordylewski Dust Clouds:	
News: Recently, a group of Hungarian scientist confirmed the speculation that earth has three natural satellite/moons.	
Facts:	
• Kazimierz Kordylewski, a Polish scientist, first discovered these moons for the first time in 1961.	
• These are found at Lagrange point L5 of the Earth-Moon gravitational system.	
• They are located at the same distance as the moon, from the earth but they reflect light faintly due to the extremely tiny dust particles that make up these moons.	

Other Facts:

- Lagrange point is a location in space where the combined gravitational forces of two large bodies, such as Earth and the sun or Earth and the moon, equal the centrifugal force felt by a much smaller third body.

7. India Based Neutrino Observatory:

News: National Green Tribunal (NGT) upheld the environmental clearance granted to India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO).

Facts:

- It is a major experimental particle physics projects undertaken in India.
- The proposed site for the INO is in Theni district of Tamil Nadu.
- The project includes:
  - Construction of an Underground laboratory
  - Construction of an Iron Calorimeter Detector for studying neutrinos
  - National Centre for high Energy Physics at Madurai for the maintenance and operation of the underground laboratory.

Other facts:

- Other Neutrino study projects are- LAGUNA in Europe, Hyper Kamiokande Detector at Kamiko Observatory in Hida, Japan and DUNE in South Dakota in US.
- Neutrinos interact very less with anything and hence it's hard to detect them.
- They have no electrical charge and negligible mass.
- They occur in 3 different flavors based on the mass: electron-neutrino, muon-neutrino, tau-neutrino.

8. GSLV Mk III D2:

News: ISRO launched satellite GSAT-29 through the launcher GSLV Mk III D2.

Facts:

- GSLV Mk III D2 is India's heaviest launch vehicle, which can place satellites up to 4,000 kg into the Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) or satellites of up to 10,000 kg to the Low Earth Orbit.
- It is the second launch by the GSLV Mk III D2, which earlier launched the GSAT-19 in 2017.
- It is a three-stage heavy lift rocket with a two solid fuel strap on engines in the first stage, liquid propellant as the second stage and cryogenic engine for the third stage.
- The cryogenic propellant system is called the C25 engine; it is an indigenous engine, which keeps fuel loads on the engine relatively low.

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Other facts:

- India is among six nations to possess the cryogenic engine technology, others are US, China, Japan, France, Russia.
- GSAT-29 is a multi-beam, multiband communication satellite of India and is the heaviest satellite launched from India till date.

9. Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite (HysIS):

News: PSLV C34 launched India's first Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite (HysIS) from Satish Dhawan Space Station.

Facts:

- HysIS is ISRO's Earth observation satellite built around ISRO's Mini satellite-2 bus.
- It combines the power of the digital camera and spectroscopy to attain both spatial and spectral information from an object.
- The resultant images can be used to identify, measure and locate different materials and their chemical as well as physical properties.
- It will provide hyperspectral-imaging services to India for a range of applications in agriculture, forestry and in the assessment of geography such as coastal zones and inland waterways, environmental studies, detection of pollution from industries and for military surveillance and anti-terror operations.
- The data will also be accessible to India's defense forces.

Other facts:

- Spectral Imaging was first tried by ISRO in an experimental satellite in 2008 and later on Chandrayaan-1 mission, however it is the first time that a full-fledged hyperspectral imaging satellite has been launched.
- Spectral imaging uses multiple bands across the electromagnetic spectrum like infrared, visible spectrum, UV, x-rays or a combination of these spectrum.
- Hyperspectral camera provides much more detailed information by dividing the spectrum into many more bands than a normal camera.

10. Integrated Health Information Programme (IHIP):

News: An Integrated Health Information Programme was launched in 7 states, as the part of the Integrated Disease surveillance Programme (IDSP).

Facts:

- IHIP aims at creating an interoperable Electronic Health Record, which can be made available and accessible throughout the country.
- It will also include the information from the tuberculosis control programme, maternal and child health programme, non-communicable

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diseases programme.

Other facts:

- IDSP is a disease surveillance scheme under the National Health Mission, under the Health Ministry, assisted by the World Bank.
- The aim is to set up Central and State Disease Surveillance Unit to collect and analyze data on diseases.

11. Earth Biogenome Project:

News: The International community of scientist has launched an ambitious Earth Biogenome Project.

Facts:

- It aims to sequence, catalogue and characterize the genomes of all the earth's eukaryotic biodiversity, over a period of 10 years.
- It involves projects of various countries like the US, China, Global Ant genome Project of UK etc.
- The Project will generate at least 1 Exabyte of data, which is to be shared online for free.
- The initiative will produce database for biological information that will help in scientific research, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection.
- The participating institutions would raise their own funding as far as possible, however the World Economic Forum (WEF) will back their funding.

Other facts:

- All human genes together are called Genome.
- Human Genome Projects: The Human Genome Project is an international scientific research project with the goal of determining the sequence of nucleotide base pairs that make up human DNA, and of identifying and mapping all of the genes of the human.
- This project was only concerned with genes of one species called the Homo sapiens, between 1990-2003.
- The Celera Genomics, a Technology Company conducted this project.
- Eukaryotes are organisms whose cells have a nucleus enclosed within a membrane, unlike prokaryotes.

12. Human Microbiome:

News: The Human Microbiome initiative has been put up for approval.

Facts:

- This initiative is led by the National Center for Microbial Research

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(NCMR) and National Center for Cell Sciences (NCCS) in India.

- The Human Microbiome Project is a research initiative of US's National Institute of Health to identify and study the human microbial fauna and studies their impact on human health and diseases.
- The project uses two methods:
  - Metagenomics
  - Whole Genome Sequencing

Other facts:

- The collective genome of all the microorganisms inside a human body is called Human Microbiome. It includes bacteria, fungi, viruses and protists.

13. Change in the SI units:

News: The 26th General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM) redefined the international standard definitions of Kilogram, Ampere, Kelvin and Mole.

Facts:

- The SI system was adopted in 1960.
- The International Bureau of Weights and Measures, the executive wing of CGPM, has the responsibility of defining the International Systems of Units.
- There are 7 fundamental units (Meter, Kilogram, Second, Ampere, Kelvin, Mole, Candela) and every other unit of measurement can be derived from those seven.

Seven fundamental units of measurement	Quantity measured
• Meter	• Distance
• Kilogram	• Mass
• Second	• Time
• Ampere	• Current
• Kelvin	• Temperature
• Mole	• Amount of substance
• Candela	• Luminous intensity

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Other facts:	**Questions/Notes**
• The General Conference on Weights and Measures is the highest body in the world for accurate and precise measurements. • The body meets once every four years. • India became a signatory in the year 1957.	

MISCELLANEOUS	Questions/Notes

1. Cherry Blossom Festival:

News: The third India International Cherry Blossom Festival 2018 was held at Meghalaya.

Facts:

- The festival celebrates the unique autumn flowering of the Himalayan Cherry Blossoms.

Other facts:

- The tradition of planting cherry blossoms started in Japan.
- It is called the Sakura festival that started in the 3rd Century and is still a big tourist attraction.

2. Indira Gandhi Peace Prize:

News: Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has bagged the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2018.

Facts:

- This prize is awarded annually to organizations and individuals for creative efforts towards peace, development, and use of science for the greater good of Humanity.
- It was established in 1986 and is presented by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.

Some renowned recipients:

- Dr. Manmohan Singh (2017)
- UN High Commission for Refugees (2015)
- ISRO (2014)

3. Global Cities Initiative:

News: UN has selected Noida and Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh) to participate in the Global Sustainable Cities 2025 Initiative.

Facts:

- The objective of the initiative is to create 25 model cities across the world, which will be fully compliant with the SDG goals by the year 2025.
- UN will collaborate with the city administrative and provide multi million dollar funding to achieve the objective.

	Questions/Notes
4. Kimberley process: **News:** EU handed over the Chairmanship of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) to India. **Facts:** - It is an International Certification Scheme that regulates trade in rough diamonds. - The process was established in 2003 by the UNGA resolution. - The objective is to keep conflict diamonds from entering into the market of rough diamonds. **Other facts:** - Conflict diamonds: Blood diamonds (also called conflict diamonds, war diamonds, hot diamonds, or red diamonds) is a term used for a diamond mined in a war zone and sold to finance an insurgency, a coup etc. **5. Project Aipan:** **News:** The members of Enactus, IPCW launched Project Aipn to revive the Aipan art form and bring it to its former glory. **Facts:** - The effort will resuscitate the art form and empower a community of Kumaoni housewives through entrepreneurial action. - Under Project Aipan, beautiful Aipan motifs have been adapted on canvases, bookmarks, greeting cards, diaries, folders, and other items of stationery. **Other facts:** - Aipan is derived from a Sanskrit word 'Arpan,' which means 'to pigment.' - The art form hails from the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, India. - The background of the art form is prepared by red clay called geru and white rice paste is used to create designs. **6. Nongkrem dance Festival:** **News:** Nongkrem festival was recently celebrated in the Smit village in Khasi hills of Meghalaya. **Facts:** - It is an annual dance festival, celebrated as harvest thanksgiving festival for the peace and prosperity of the community. - The word nongkrem means goat killing ceremony, thus the celebration begins with goat sacrifice. - It is the most important festival of the Khasi tribe-HimaKhyrim.	

- All men women and children dance to the tune of pipes and drums.
- A special dance is performed by men- Ka Shad Mastieh, where men hold sword in their right hands and whisks in their left.

7. My Son Temple Complex:

News: President of India paid visit to the Vietnamese My Son Temple Complex, Kiangnan province.

Facts:

- It is a group of Hindu temples in Vietnam built by the Champa Kings in 4th-14th century.
- It is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- The temples in this complex are mostly dedicated to Lord Shiva, though Vishnu and Krishna are also revered here.
- They are constructed with fired brick, stone pillars and decorated with sandstone reliefs depicting stories from Hindu mythology.
- The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) has undertaken restoration project of three temples in this complex.

Other facts:

- ASI is an Indian government agency attached to the Ministry of Culture that is responsible for archaeological research and the conservation and preservation of cultural monuments in the country.
- It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham who also became its first Director-General.

Other conservation efforts by ASI:

- o Angkor Wat Temple, Cambodia
- o Ta Prohm, Cambodia
- o Vat Phou Temple, Laos
- o Bamiyan Buddhas, Afghanistan
- o Ananda Temple, Myanmar

8. World peace Monument:

News: The Vice President inaugurated the world's largest dome on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Facts:

- It is located at the Maharashtra Institute of Technology's World Peace University Campus at Loni Kalbhor, Pune.
- The dome is built on the World Peace Library and World Peace Prayer Hall.
- At the periphery of the dome and underneath, stand 54 bronze statues

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of towering world personalities irrespective of nationality and religion.

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Other facts:

- The World Peace Prayer Hall is named after the 13th century Bhakti poet-saint and philosopher of Maharashtra named Dnyaneshwar.

NOVEMBER POINTLY	Questions/Notes
1. Beyond Fake News Project: It is a project launched by the BBC broadcasting channel, UK on why and how misinformation is shared in India. **2. #POWEROF18INITIATIVE:** It is an initiative launched by Twitter with an aim to encourage Indian youth to participate in public affairs in the upcoming general elections. **3. World Energy Outlook 2018:** It is the flagship publication of International Energy Agency. The theme 2018 is Electricity. **4. Owl Festival:** Ela Foundation, an NGO organized country's first owl festival to create awareness about owl and to debunk the superstitions associated with an owl. **5. Centre for Research and Planning:** It is SC's in house think-tank to conduct research on fundamental jurisprudence and doctrines of law. **6. Palau:** It is the first country to ban sunscreen to protect coral reefs. **7. Ease of Moving Index:** It is an index launched by the Ola Mobility Institute, which depicts mobility preferences and aspirations of Indian commuters across 20 cities. **8. UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2018:** UNESCO has released the Global Education Monitoring Report 2018 with the title Migration, Displacement and Education, which discusses the impact of migration on education. **9. UNPA issues Diwali Stamps:** UN Postal Administration launched the special stamps with pictures of diyas and clay oil lamps to commemorate the Indian festival of lights-Diwali. **10. e-Drishti Portal:** A portal launched by the Ministry of Railways to keep track of punctuality of trains, see how their meals are being cooked and packed and can also get information on the earnings of the railways. **11. Bhuseva and Bhudaar Web Portal:** The government of Andhra Pradesh has launched this portal to enable people to see land records online. **12. Ro-Ro Service:** Roll-on/roll-off ships are vessels designed to carry wheeled cargo, such as cars, trucks, semi-trailer trucks, trailers, and railroad cars that are driven on and off the ship on their own wheels.	

	Questions/Notes
13. PRAAPTI: The Union Ministry of Power has launched a web portal and app- PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification and Analysis in Power procurement fo for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators). The web portal and app aim to bring transparency in power purchase transactions between Generators and Discoms.	