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1. India Pledges \$5 Billion for Trans-African Green Energy Corridor at India-Africa Forum, Source: The Hindu

Context: At the fourth India-Africa Forum Summit, India today announced a new Line of Credit (LoC) of \$5 billion to help finance the development of a Trans-African Green Energy Corridor. The announcement was made by the Prime Minister in his address to the leaders of 54 African nations gathered in the Ethiopian capital.



Significance

- The proposed corridor aims to connect the continent's vast renewable energy resources—from solar power in the Sahel to hydropower in Central Africa—through a network of high-voltage transmission lines.
- This initiative aligns with India's role in the International Solar Alliance and its "Global South" leadership agenda.
- The project will be executed in collaboration with the African Development Bank and the African Union. Indian public and private sector companies will provide technical expertise, equipment, and project management support.

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Analysis

- In his speech, the Prime Minister emphasized a partnership model based on "Africa's priorities." He stated, "India's development partnership is not transactional; it is based on solidarity and shared experience."
- The Green Energy Corridor will be a testament to our joint commitment to climate justice, sustainable development, and energy security for our peoples."
- The pledge was welcomed by African leaders as a significant boost to the continent's efforts to achieve universal energy access and transition away from fossil fuels.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: International Relations: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

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2. Government Report Reveals Alarming Rise in Human-Wildlife Conflict in Western Ghats, Source: Indian Express

Context: A comprehensive report released by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has highlighted an alarming 40% increase in incidents of human-wildlife conflict in the Western Ghats region over the past five years. The report, titled "Coexistence or Conflict: The Future of the Western Ghats," was compiled by a panel of experts from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).



Significance

- The study attributes the surge to three primary factors: habitat fragmentation due to linear infrastructure projects (highways, railways), encroachment on forest land for agriculture and settlement, and climate change-induced shifts in animal behaviour and resource availability.
- States like Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu have seen the sharpest rise in conflicts, primarily involving elephants, leopards, and wild boar, leading to significant crop damage, livestock predation, and tragic loss of human and animal lives.

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Analysis

- The report recommends a multi-pronged strategy, including the creation of scientifically-demarcated eco-sensitive zones, mandatory wildlife passages in all new infrastructure projects, and the strengthening of community-based early warning systems.
- It also calls for a revamped and faster compensation mechanism for affected farmers. Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav acknowledged the severity of the issue, stating, "We are committed to a landscape-based conservation approach that protects both wildlife and the livelihoods of people living on the forest fringes."

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Environment: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment; Man-wildlife conflict.

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3. PM-GatiShakti: NITI Aayog Review Shows 30% Reduction in Project Overruns **Source: Economic Times**

Context: A mid-year review of the PM-GatiShakti National Master Plan by NITI Aayog has revealed significant improvements in infrastructure project implementation, showing an average reduction of 30% in time and cost overruns for projects sanctioned under the platform. The report, submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, analyzed over 200 central government projects across ministries like Roads, Railways, and Ports.



Significance

- The GatiShakti platform, a digital portal that integrates 16 ministries for coordinated planning and execution, has been credited with breaking down departmental silos.
- By using geospatial mapping and real-time data, the platform has enabled better alignment of projects, preventing a common issue where, for example, a newly built road is dug up for laying optical fibres.
- The Network Planning Group (NPG), a key institutional mechanism under GatiShakti, has streamlined the approval process, identifying and resolving potential bottlenecks at the planning stage itself.

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Analysis

- According to the CEO of NITI Aayog, B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, "GatiShakti represents a paradigm shift from planning in isolation to planning in an integrated, synchronized manner.
- The efficiency gains we are seeing are just the beginning.
- The platform is now being extended to states to facilitate holistic planning at the district level."
- The success of the platform is considered crucial for India's goal of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by providing world-class, multi-modal connectivity infrastructure.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Governance: Important aspects of governance, transparency, and accountability.

GS Paper 3: Indian Economy/Infrastructure: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways, etc.

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4. National Medical Commission Approves First-Ever 'Virtual Dissection' Curriculum, Source: Hindustan Times

Context: The National Medical Commission (NMC) has approved the integration of 'virtual dissection' modules into the undergraduate medical curriculum, starting from the 2026 academic year. This landmark decision will allow medical colleges to supplement traditional cadaver-based anatomy training with high-fidelity 3D anatomical models and haptic feedback technology.



Significance

- The move comes after a successful pilot program in 10 leading medical institutions, including AIIMS Delhi.
- The new curriculum aims to address the chronic shortage of cadavers for dissection, which affects many medical colleges in the country.
- It also offers ethical and environmental benefits.
- Virtual dissection allows students to repeatedly practice complex procedures, explore anatomical variations, and visualize physiological processes in a dynamic way that is not possible with cadavers.

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Analysis

- While the NMC has clarified that virtual tools will supplement, not entirely replace, traditional dissection, the decision marks a major step towards modernizing medical education in India.
- Dr. B.N. Gangadhar, Chairman of the NMC, said, "This is about enhancing the learning experience.
- By blending the invaluable tactile experience of cadaveric dissection with the interactive and repeatable nature of virtual technology, we are preparing our future doctors for the 21st century."
- The commission will issue detailed guidelines on the required hardware and software specifications for colleges.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Social Justice: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

GS Paper 3: Science and Technology: Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers, robotics.

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5. SEBI Unveils Framework for Social Stock Exchange; Mandates Impact Reporting **Source: Economic Times**

Context: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) today issued a detailed operational framework for the Social Stock Exchange (SSE), paving the way for Social Enterprises (SEs) to raise funds from the public. The framework, which will come into effect from October 1, 2025, specifies the eligibility criteria for non-profit organizations (NPOs) and for-profit social enterprises (FPSEs) to list on the exchange.



Significance

- A key feature of the new rules is the mandatory annual 'Social Impact Assessment'.
- Every listed entity will be required to submit a detailed report, audited by a new category of professionals called "Social Auditors," quantifying the social impact generated by its activities. This report will be crucial for investors to make informed decisions.
- The framework allows NPOs to raise money through Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) instruments, while FPSEs can issue equity shares on the SSE's main board.

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Analysis

- SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch stated, "The Social Stock Exchange aims to channel greater capital to the social sector.
- By introducing transparency and mandatory impact reporting, we are creating a credible and efficient ecosystem for social investing, moving beyond traditional philanthropy."
- The move is expected to unlock new avenues of financing for thousands of organizations working on issues like poverty, malnutrition, and education, creating a formal market for impact investing in India.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Indian Economy: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment; Inclusive growth.

GS Paper 2: Governance: Role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders.

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6. Centre Launches 'Mission Antriksh' to Promote Space Sector Start-ups **Source: PIB (Department of Space)**

Context: In a major push to democratize the space sector, the government today launched 'Mission Antriksh' (Aatmanirbhar Network for Technology, Research, Innovation & Knowledge in Space Hub). The mission, spearheaded by IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Center), is a comprehensive program designed to nurture and fund start-ups in the space domain.



Significance

- The mission has three core components: a Venture Capital fund of ₹2,000 crore to provide seed funding; a 'Plug-and-Play' facility at a new 'Space Park' near Sriharikota, offering ready-to-use infrastructure for satellite and rocket manufacturing; and a mentorship program connecting start-ups with retired ISRO scientists.
- The mission aims to create at least 100 space-tech start-ups by 2030, focusing on downstream applications like satellite-based services, earth observation analytics, and upstream technologies like small satellite launch vehicles and propulsion systems.

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Analysis

- Dr. Pawan Goenka, Chairman of IN-SPACe, said, "Mission Antriksh is the government's definitive answer to unlocking the immense potential of private enterprise in space.
- By de-risking initial investment and providing access to ISRO's world-class facilities and expertise, we are creating an ecosystem where Indian companies can compete globally."
- This initiative is aligned with the Indian Space Policy 2023, which envisions a greater role for non-governmental entities to boost India's share in the global space economy from 2% to 10%.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Science & Technology/Economy: Achievements of Indians in science & technology; Indigenization of technology; Effects of liberalization on the economy; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors.

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7. Cultural Ministry Announces Digital Twin Project for Ajanta & Ellora Caves

Source: The Hindu

Context: The Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and IIT Bombay, has announced an ambitious project to create a 'Digital Twin' of the Ajanta and Ellora Caves, both UNESCO World Heritage sites. The project will use a combination of terrestrial laser scanning, photogrammetry, and drone-based imaging to create a centimetre-accurate 3D replica of the cave complexes.



Significance

- This high-fidelity digital model will serve multiple purposes. Primarily, it will act as a permanent, high-resolution digital archive for conservation and restoration work, allowing experts to monitor the gradual decay of the ancient paintings and rock-cut sculptures with unprecedented precision.
- Secondly, it will be used to create immersive virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) experiences for tourists and researchers.
- This will allow virtual access to fragile or restricted parts of the caves, reducing the physical footfall and associated environmental stress on the delicate sites.

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Analysis

- Minister of Culture, G. Kishan Reddy, stated, "This project is a fusion of our glorious heritage and cutting-edge technology.
- It is a vital step in preserving our civilizational legacy for posterity while making it accessible to a global audience in new and exciting ways."
- The project is part of a larger government initiative to digitally map all of India's key heritage sites.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 1: Indian Heritage and Culture: Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, literature, and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

GS Paper 3: Science and Technology: Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers, robotics.

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8. J&K Delimitation: First-ever District Development Council Elections Held in PoK-reserved Seats, Source: Indian Express

Context: For the first time, elections were peacefully conducted for the 24 seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly that are reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). However, as these constituencies are not under Indian administration, the voting was carried out by registered PoK refugees living in various parts of Jammu and Kashmir to elect representatives to their respective District Development Councils (DDCs).



Significance

- This symbolic yet significant democratic exercise is a direct consequence of the J&K Delimitation Commission's report, which was implemented in 2022.
- The Commission had recommended providing representation to PoK refugees at the local body level.
- Refugees who are registered with the government were eligible to vote for DDC candidates in the districts where they currently reside, with their votes being counted towards the constituencies notionally mapped to their ancestral homes across the Line of Control.

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Analysis

- J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha hailed the election as a "historic day for justice and democracy."
- He said, "For 75 years, the displaced persons from PoK were denied their political rights. Today, we have fulfilled our promise of giving them a voice in local governance."
- While the move does not alter the status of the PoK-reserved Assembly seats, which remain vacant, it is seen as a major political and emotional step to integrate the refugee community into the democratic fabric of the Union Territory.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Polity and Governance: Parliament and State Legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business; Issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure. Role of local governance.

GS Paper 3: Security: Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

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9. National Skill Development Corporation Launches 'AI-for-All' Skilling Program **Source: PIB (Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship)**

Context: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, today launched a massive 'AI-for-All' skilling initiative. The program aims to provide foundational Artificial Intelligence literacy to one crore citizens over the next two years, with a focus on youth in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.



Significance

- The program will be delivered through a hybrid model, combining an online portal with content in multiple Indian languages and physical 'Skill Hubs' at the district level.
- The curriculum, developed in partnership with leading tech firms and academic institutions, will cover basic concepts of AI, machine learning, data analytics, and ethical considerations.
- It is designed for individuals with no prior technical background.
- A special module will also focus on how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can leverage AI tools to improve their business operations.

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Analysis

- Launching the program, Minister of Education and Skill Development, Dharmendra Pradhan, said, "In the 21st century, AI literacy is as fundamental as digital literacy.
- 'AI-for-All' is not about creating a few elite experts; it is about democratizing the knowledge of AI, empowering our citizens to become creators and not just consumers of technology, and preparing our workforce for the jobs of tomorrow."
- This initiative is a key part of the government's broader strategy to position India as a global talent hub for AI.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 2: Social Justice/Governance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education, Human Resources, Government policies and interventions.

GS Paper 3: Science and Technology/Economy: Awareness in the fields of AI; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.

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10. Indian Navy Commissions INS Vikrant's Second Carrier Battle Group in Visakhapatnam, Source: Hindustan Times

Context: In a major boost to its maritime power projection capabilities, the Indian Navy today formally operationalized the second Carrier Battle Group (CBG) centered around the indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. The commissioning ceremony, held at the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, was presided over by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.



Significance

- This marks a crucial milestone, allowing the Navy to deploy one CBG on each seaboard—the Western and Eastern—simultaneously.
- The INS Vikrant's battle group comprises a fleet of newly inducted MH-60R 'Romeo' multi-role helicopters, MiG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31 airborne early warning helicopters, and a protective screen of destroyers, frigates, and a nuclear-powered submarine.
- The establishment of this CBG significantly enhances the Navy's ability to safeguard India's maritime interests, ensure sea lane security, and act as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

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Analysis

- Addressing the naval personnel, Rajnath Singh stated, "The operationalization of the Vikrant's Carrier Battle Group is a powerful testament to our Aatmanirbhar Bharat resolve.
- It sends a clear message of India's capability and intent to protect its sovereignty and strategic interests in the IOR and beyond."
- The Navy is now pushing its case for a third aircraft carrier to ensure that it has at least two CBGs available for deployment at all times, accounting for refit and maintenance cycles.

UPSC Syllabus Correlation:

GS Paper 3: Security: Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate; Security challenges and their management in border areas; Indigenization of technology (in defence).