



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY, 2022

Week-3

15-21 May, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

15th MAY 2022

Thomas Cup

- **Context:** India won Thomas Cup, the top team event in men's badminton, for the first time.

Key Highlights

- India lifted the Thomas Cup for the first time, which is considered to be the most prestigious cup in men's badminton.
- The cup is similar to the World Cup in football and the Davis Cup in tennis.
- With the win India breaks into the elite club of winners- China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and Denmark.
- The Cup has been won by these five countries over the years.
- India has reached semifinals for three times.
- Since the event began in 1948, India has qualified for only 13 of its 32 editions.

About Thomas Cup

- The Thomas Cup is also sometimes called the Men's Team Championship.
- It is an international badminton championship in which teams from different countries participate.
- The championship is conducted every two years.
- An English player from the 1900s, George Alan Thomas was the mastermind behind the Thomas Cup.
- He proposed the idea of a championship tournament for badminton.
- The idea was borrowed from the World Cup in football and the Davis Cup in tennis.
- It was started in 1948 and was conducted every 3 years.
- After 1982 it was conducted every 2 years.

Ranil Wickremesinghe

- **Context:** Ranil Wickremesinghe has been appointed as the next Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.



About Ranil Wickremesinghe

- Wickremesinghe's name was recommended for the next Prime Minister of Sri Lanka after former PM Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned due to the economic crisis in the country.
- He has been the leader of the United National Party since 1994.
- He has served as Prime Minister of Sri Lanka four times: from 1993 to 1994, 2001 to 2004, 2015 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019.
- Wickremesinghe is widely regarded as a leader capable of managing the economy through far-sighted strategies and also as a politician capable of commanding international collaboration.

Fostering Effective Energy Transition Report, 2022

- **Context:** World Economic Forum's released the report titled Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2022 Edition.

Key Findings

- Achieving the goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 can be far-fetched without the contribution of industries.
- The energy transition is not keeping pace with the growing climate urgency, the energy transition is not keeping pace with the growing climate urgency.
- The lack of access to an affordable energy supply has emerged as a key threat to a just transition.
- Dual diversification (of supply source and supply mix) is key to strengthening countries' energy security.
- Supply-side interventions will need to be augmented with demand-side efficiencies.
- A holistic approach that delivers concurrently on the three transition imperatives – energy affordability, availability, and sustainability – at an accelerated pace is needed.

- Regulatory frameworks need to be strengthened to drive the necessary actions and investments.
- Industrial activity generates more than 30% of anthropogenic emissions, yet many industries face considerable challenges to decarbonize. Going forward, “clean demand” signals could be the necessary turning point to scale the projects and investments required for the development of low-emission industries.

Bharat Tap Initiative

- **Context:** The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs & Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Hardeep S Puri launched the BHARAT TAP initiative at the ‘Plumbex India’ exhibition.

Key Highlights

- The Initiative is said to give effect to AMRUT 2.0, which is designed to realise the aspirations of the ‘New Urban India’ by making all our cities ‘Water Secure’.
- AMRUT 2.0 will provide 100% coverage of water supply to all households in around 4,700 ULBs through 2.68 crore tap connections.
- 100% coverage of sewerage and septage in 500 cities through 2.64 crore sewer connections.
- This will benefit more than 10.5 crore people in urban areas.
- NAREDCO MAHI’s ‘Nirmal Jal Prayas’ initiative which will work for saving of 500 crore liters of water per year.
- **Objective:**
 - To provide low-flow, sanitary-ware at scale
 - Reduce water consumption at source

16th MAY 2022

Regional Anti-Terror Structure (SCO-RATS)

- **Context:** Officials of Russia, Pakistan, China and four central Asian countries meet in Delhi for SCO Regional Anti-Terror Structure talks.

Key Highlights

- India is the chairperson of RATS for this year.
- In October this year, all member countries will send security forces personnel for joint anti-terror exercises expected to be held at the National Security Guard facility in Manesar.
- A major focus of the discussions was on the situation in Afghanistan.
- India in the meeting opposed the Organization of Islamic Republic (OIC) criticizing the government’s proposed moves on delimitation of electoral constituencies in Jammu & Kashmir.

About SCO

- The SCO stands for Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
- It is a Eurasian political, economic and security grouping and has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organizations.
- It was formed in 2001 with 6 founding members forming Shanghai five- China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.
- India became a member in 2017.
- The 8 member-states of SCO are- Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- The main objectives of SCO are to promote cooperation among the member countries on issues of security, intelligence sharing, military cooperation, border disputes resolution and counter-terrorism.

About RATS

- The Agreement on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) as a permanent SCO body was signed in 2002, in St. Petersburg and it was formed in 2004.
- It has objective to help member states fight combat, extremism, terrorism and separatism.

Chief of Defense Staff

- **Context:** The Union government is reassessing the concept of the post of Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) and the Department of Military Affairs (DMA).

Key Issue

- The government is reassessing the post to fix overlaps in the system and streamline the process, leading to a delay in the appointment to the post.
- There are a lot of issues related to equivalence of status, responsibilities and so on.
- There is a dichotomy at various ends that needs to be streamlined.
- There are legacy issues of work distribution between the DMA and the Defense Department, headed by the Defense Secretary.
- Coordination mechanisms are not standardized and accepted by both sides.

About Chief of Defense Staff

- Chief of the Defense Staff is the head of the Chief of Staff Committee (CoSC).
- Chief of Staff is the highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian Military.
- He is the chief military officer to the Ministry of Defense and also heads the Department of Military affairs.
- The CDS post was recommended by the Kargil Committee after the Kargil war.

Functions:

- Act as the Principal Military Advisor to the Defense Minister on all Tri-Service matters.
- Administer the Tri-Service organizations/agencies/commands.
- Member of the Defense Acquisition Council chaired by Defense Minister.
- Military Advisor to the Nuclear Command Authority.
- Bring about jointness in operation, logistics, transport, training, support services, communications, repairs and maintenance, etc. of the three Services.

Pravaig Field Pack

- **Context:** Pravaig, a Bengaluru-based startup, has won an order to provide compact energy storages to European combat forces.

Key highlights

- Bengaluru-based startup Pravaig has won an order to supply compact energy storages to European combat forces.
- These batteries are designed, engineered, and made in India.
- Pravaig's Field Pack provides the modern soldier and their equipment enough energy to charge the equivalent of a MacBook 60 times.
- It will help to solve problems faced by soldiers in desert, snow, urban, and forest environments.
- This supply marks a major shift in the defense landscape of India.
- The lightweight, robust and waterproof batteries open immense opportunities for energizing personal equipment, deploying remote sensors and communication relays in the field, and remotely hibernating and activating significantly larger equipment.

17th MAY 2022

Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- **Context:** Member of Joint Parliamentary committee expressed concern over exemptions given under Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Key Issues

- Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 amends Biological Diversity Act that came into existence in 2002.
- Under the amendment the exemptions are given to AYUSH practitioners from the provisions of the law.
- Distinction has been drawn between a registered AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani,

Siddha and Homeopathy) practitioner and a company, exempting the former from the Act.

- This distinction is said to be an artificial distinction since the registered AYUSH practitioner may well be having informal links with a company.
- The government brought in the amended Bill because of the push from many AYUSH companies.
- The concerns are also related to distinction made in the law between cultivated biodiversity and forest-based biodiversity

About Biological Diversity Act, 2002

- Act provides for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources, knowledge and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) had been set up under the Ministry of Environments and Forest in 2003 to give effect to the provisions of the act.
- In the context of biological resources and biodiversity, the act aims the following:
 - Regulation
 - Conservation
 - Sustainability
 - Protection
 - Rehabilitation
 - Sharing of benefits

NASA's Endurance Mission

- **Context:** NASA recently launched Endurance mission.

Key Highlights

- The mission was launched from Ny-Alesund in Svalbard, Norway.
- The objective of the mission is to find out why earth can support life while other planets like Mars and Venus cannot.

About Endurance Mission

- The Endurance mission will attempt to measure Earth's global electric potential, or how much Earth's

electric field "tugs" at electrically charged particles in our air.

- It will be the first measurement of Earth's global electric potential
- This electric potential is expected to be very weak, making it difficult to measure and considered to be one reason Earth can support life.
- The Endurance team estimates a strength of about 0.3 volts, some 25 times weaker than on Venus and so weak it has foiled all previous attempts at measurement.

GatiShakti Sanchar Portal

- **Context:** Government launched GatiShakti Sanchar" portal.

Key highlights

- Government launched the "GatiShakti Sanchar" portal for Centralized Right of Way (RoW) approvals.
- National Broadband Mission (NBM) was set up by the Department of Telecommunication (DoT) in 2019 to facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services across the country, especially in rural and remote areas.
- To fulfill this vision of National Broadband mission, backbone of infrastructure "GatiShakti Sanchar" is created.

About GatiShakti Sanchar Portal

- The portal will enable applicants form various Telecom Service providers (TSPs) as well as Infrastructure providers (IPs) to apply at a common single portal for Right of Way permissions to lay down Optical Fibre Cable and for erecting mobile towers to State/UT Governments and local bodies.
- It will smoothen the process of RoW permissions as well as faster approvals.
- It will facilitate easy rollout of 5G services, in which a Base Transceiver Station (BTS) is installed at very short intervals.

Advantages:

- Fast laying of more Optical Fiber Cable and thus will accelerate fiberization
- Increased tower density which will enhance connectivity and improve the quality of various telecom services
- Increased fiberization of telecom towers, thus ensuring better Broadband speed, across the country.

18th MAY 2022**Seoul Forest Declaration**

- **Context:** In 15th World Forestry Congress held in Seoul, South Korea, countries adopted the Seoul Forest Declaration.

Key Highlights

- The Seoul Forest Declaration was concluded with five days of discussions at the 15th World Forestry Congress.
- The key focus was on how forests can help combat the multiple crises humanity faces, including climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, hunger and poverty.
- The gathering was co-organized by the Republic of Korea and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
- The congress also launched Assuring the Future of Forests with Integrated Risk Management (AFFIRM) Mechanism, and the Sustaining an Abundance of Forest Ecosystems (SAFE) initiative.

Priority Areas for action

- **Responsibility:** The Seoul Forest Declaration urges that responsibility for forests should be shared and integrated across institutions, sectors and stakeholders.
- **Investment:** Investment in forest and landscape restoration globally needs to triple by 2030 to meet internationally agreed commitments and targets

on restoring degraded land, according to the Declaration.

- **Circular bioeconomy:** The declaration emphasized on circular bioeconomy that relies on healthy, bio diverse and resilient ecosystems.
- **Green Finance Mechanism:** The Declaration called for innovative green financing mechanisms to upscale investment in forest conservation, restoration and sustainable use.
- **Emerging innovative technologies:** The Declaration urged the continued development and use of emerging innovative technologies and mechanisms to enable evidence-based forest and landscape decision-making.
- **Inclusive solutions:** Forest-based solutions must be inclusive of the perspectives of family farmers, smallholders, forest communities, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth.

Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary

- **Context:** The Ramgarh Vishdhari sanctuary in Rajasthan has been notified as the 52nd Tiger Reserve of India.

Key Highlights

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has notified Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary and adjoining areas as tiger reserves.
- It includes the tiger habitat between Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in the northeast and Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve on the southern side and facilitates dispersal of tigers from Ranthambore Tiger Reserve.
- The floristic diversity of this new tiger reserve makes it an important area for research and education.
- Wild animals like Indian wolf, leopard, striped hyena, sloth bear, golden jackal, chinkara, nilgai and fox can be seen in the Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve.

Notified Places

- **Wildlife sanctuary-** A wildlife sanctuary is a natural habitat, and is notified particularly to safeguard specific wild animals or birds species.

- Biosphere Reserve- It is a protected area where sustainable development of plants and animals happens and aims to protect the environment as a whole. It also protects and preserves tribal people who live around the reserve. There are three zones in the biosphere reserve-Core, Buffer, Manipulation.
- National Park- National Park is strictly regulated by the laws and is highly restricted. It covers a large area and may also cover multiple Sanctuaries, and reserves.

India Hypertension Control Initiative report

- **Context:** The India Hypertension Control Initiative report showed that one in four Indian adults in India have hypertension.

Key Findings

- According to a report, it is estimated that at least one in four adults in India has hypertension but only about 10% have it under control.
- The analysis found that over half the people – 55% – received treatment at primary health centers, 18% in community health centers, and 10% in district and sub-district hospitals.

About India Hypertension Control Initiative

- The IHCI was launched in 2017 to achieve the target of 25% relative reduction in prevalence of raised blood pressure.
- The project aims to accelerate implementation of quality hypertension treatment for over 15 crore people.
- Nearly 23% of the total estimated hypertension patients have been enrolled in the programme in the five Phase-I state.
- The interventions under the programme include:
 - Ensuring uninterrupted supply and availability of drugs
 - Use of standard drug algorithm for management of hypertension

- Training of staff at all levels, and opportunistic screening when patients come for treatment of other diseases.

19th MAY 2022

Pangong Lake

- **Context:** China is recently building a new bridge on Pangong Tso lake bordering India.

Key Highlights

- Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) is constructing a second bridge on their side at the Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh.
- The latest ground assessment has revealed increased infrastructure activity by China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.
- Each army has around 50,000 to 60,000 soldiers along the border in the sensitive area.

About Pangong Tso

- It is a boomerang-shaped endorheic (landlocked) lake, located in Eastern Ladakh across the Ladakh and Western Tibet border.
- It is located at an elevation of roughly more than 4,200 meters (13,800 ft) above sea level.
- It is around 5 km wide at its broadest point and about 134 km long.
- Around 40% of the lake lies in Indian territory while China controls about 50% of the lake.
- Around 10% of the lake is disputed and also acts as a buffer zone between two countries.
- China practically controls 2/3rd of the total length of the lake while 1/3rd is controlled by India.
- Chang Chenmo mountains are located on the northern bank of a river which extends into major spurs and are called fingers.
- China claims that LAC passes through finger 2 while India's claim is that it passes through finger 8.

New Development Bank

- **Context:** New development Bank to set up a regional office in Gujarat.

Key Highlights

- New development Bank is going to set up its regional bank in Gujarat to monitor and fund the infrastructure projects in India and Bangladesh.
- The Indian Regional Office will focus on project origination (including initial project preparation and technical assistance), pipeline development, project implementation and monitoring as well as regional portfolio management.

About New Development Bank

- The New Development Bank (NDB) was established in 2015 by BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- It is a multilateral development bank.
- The Bank's membership is open to members of the United Nations.
- NDB commenced the admission of its first new member countries in the second half of 2021.
- It has headquarters in Shanghai, China.
- It also has observer status in the United Nations general assembly.
- Aim: To mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies, as well as in developing countries

Incredible India International Cruise Conference (IIICC)

- **Context:** First Incredible India International Cruise Conference was jointly organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, the Government of India and FICCI.

Key Highlights

- The initiative is expected to give a boost to 'Comprehensive Indian National Tourism Policy'.

- Eight Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) were signed

Issues deliberated:

- Strategies for developing India as a cruise hub
- Policy initiatives and port infrastructure
- The potential of river cruise tourism
- The role of technology in the post-pandemic world

20th MAY 2022

Sela Tunnel

- **Context:** Sela tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh is to be completed soon.

Key Highlights

- It is located in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh
- It Will provide an alternate axis to the Sela pass (at 13,700 feet)
- It includes two tunnels and a link road including Tunnel 2 will be one of the longest tunnels to have been constructed above an altitude of over 13,000 feet.
- The total length of the project, including the tunnels, the approach and the link roads, will be around 12 km.

Importance of Tunnel

- Sela Tunnel above 13,000-ft will give a boost to all-weather connectivity to the Line of Actual Control.
- The Sela Tunnel project will provide all-weather connectivity to Tawang as well as other forward areas in the sector.
- The Sela Tunnel project will offer a new alignment on the axis towards the LAC, as well as allow the movement of military and civil vehicles throughout the year.

Devasahayam Pillai

- **Context:** Devasahayam Pillai became the first Indian layman to be declared a saint by Pope Francis.

Key Highlights

- Pope Francis canonized Devasahayam Pillai, or `Blessed Lazarus`, who became the first layman from India to be granted sainthood.
- A miracle attributed to him was recognised by Pope Francis in 2014 leading to his canonisation now.
- Devasahayam Pillai was a Hindu who converted to Christianity in the 18th century.

About Devasahayam Pillai

- Church records state that Devasahayam Pillai was born as Neelakanda Pillai in Nattalam in the Kanniyakumari district in 1712.
- After his conversion, he assumed the name of `Lazarus or `Devasahayam`, meaning `God is my Help`.
- Kanyakumari was then part of the Travancore kingdom.
- Him embracing of Christianity in 1745 made the Maharaja angry about his conversion and shot him dead at Aralvaimozhi forest on January 14, 1752.

21st MAY 2022

NATO

- **Context:** Finland and Sweden have submitted their application to join North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The reason of taking this decision is 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine which prompted them to join NATO and seek its safety net.

About NATO

- NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance consisting of 30 member states belonging to Europe and North America (28 European states, USA, and Canada).
- NATO aims to guarantee the security of its members through political and military means.
- According to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO's founding treaty), an armed attack against any NATO member in Europe or North America will be considered an attack against all NATO members.
- The last country to join NATO was North Macedonia in 2020.

- NATO headquarters are in Brussels, Belgium.

India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)

- **Context:** During his state visit to Jamaica, the President Ram Nath Kovind highlighted India's assistance to Jamaica in capacity building and skill development through various courses under the India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme.

About ITEC Programme

- ITEC Programme is India's bilateral assistance program that focuses on addressing the needs of developing countries.
- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) administers ITEC.
- Around USD 2 billion has been spent by the Indian government under the program till now. Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) played a crucial role in facilitating ITEC assistance.
- Although launched in 1964, the ITEC program has grown in scope since the 2000s as India witnessed rapid economic growth.
- Earlier, India was the world's largest recipient of aid, but since the 2000s India emerged as a net donor of foreign aid.

Navdoot dual-mode locomotive

- Navdoot is a battery-operated dual-mode locomotive developed by the West Central Railway (WCR) of the Indian Railways.
- It runs on both modes i.e. battery and electricity. It can pull 18 coaches at a speed of 30 kmph. It has 84 batteries and currently can pull 400 tonnes of weight.
- At present, it is used on a trial basis at Jabalpur, Mudwara, and other stations for shunting of trains.
- Navdoot locomotive received the Best Innovation Award from the Railway Board.
- By using Navdoot locomotive, Indian Railways can save 1000 liters of diesel per day. Thus, it helps in the efforts of Indian Railways to become sustainable and cost-efficient.