

Jashn-e-Gurez Festival

Why in news?

- Recently, 'Jashn-e-Gurez festival' was launched at the Green Park stadium.

What is Jashn-e-Gurez?

- It is the annual Gurez festival conducted every year to promote tourism and the unique culture of Gurez Valley.
- A 20-day-festival is being organised by the Indian Army in collaboration with the District Administration Bandipora and Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department.

Cricket tournament:

- The inter-village cricket tournament is the first of many events being planned during the Jashn-e-Gurez festival, having participation of 18 teams across the valley, including a team from the Indian Army and JKP.
- The aim is to promote Gurez as an offbeat Adventure tourism destination, further increasing the tourist footfall in this pristine valley there by contributing to the socio-economic development of the locals of Gurez.

Adventure, cultural activities:

- Jashn-e-Gurez will showcase a plethora of adventure, sports and cultural activities such as inter-village and inter-school sports competitions, bike and cycle rallies, marathon, treks, village games and a grand star-studded musical evening.
- In addition, the J&K tourism department and District Administration is expected to launch various adventure activities in Gurez, such as water sports, Zorbing and ATVs during the festival.

Har Ghar Tirang: National flag can now be machine-made

Why in news?

- The Indian national flag or Tricolour can now be **made of polyester** and with the help of machines, according to revised Flag Code of India.

New Amendment:

- The Union government in December 2021 amended the flag code stating the national flag made of polyester or machine-made flags have been allowed.
- As per the amendment, now, the National Flag shall be made of hand-spun and hand-woven or machine-made, cotton/polyester/wool/silk khadi bunting.
- **Before this, only hand-woven and hand-spun flags** made of cotton, silk, wool or Khadi **were allowed.**
- The hoisting, use and display of the flag is governed by the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 and the Flag Code of India, 2002.**

Why this amendment has been made?

- The development has been made so that enough flags are available for government's Har Ghar Tiranga (tricolour at every door) programme that proposes to cover government buildings, private offices and residences.
- Union Home Minister had announced the tricolour plan as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav campaign launched by the government in the run-up to the 75 years of Independence.
- The programme was launched on April 12 to encourage Indians to hoist the national flag at their homes.
- The idea behind this initiative is to invoke the feeling of patriotism in the hearts of citizens and promote awareness about our national flag.

Greece passes first climate law

Why in news?

- Recently, the Government of Greece passed the country's first climate law to end the use of lignite/coal in the country's electricity generation by 2028.

- The deadline for National Climate Law, Transition to climate neutrality and adaptation to climate change will be reviewed in 2023.

Key Highlights:

- The law contains the establishment of a **process for developing sectoral carbon budgets for seven sectors of the economy**, an element that exists only in the most progressive climate laws in Europe.
- It establishes measures and policies to optimise the country's adaptation to climate change and ensure Greece's carbonation path by 2050.
- The country's climate targets include **cutting greenhouse emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030** and by 80 per cent by 2040 and by 2050 zero-net emissions.

The law established measures and policies for the following:

- a) Strengthening adaptation to climate change at the lowest possible cost
- b) Intermediate targets for mitigating anthropogenic emissions for 2030 and 2040
- c) Carbon budgeting mechanism for key sectors of the economy
- d) Progress indicators for achieving relevant targets, progress assessment and target adjustment procedures
- e) The creation of a system of governance and participation for climate action was also envisaged. Measures were also introduced to mitigate emissions from electricity generation.

Road ahead:

- The REPower EU Plan by the European Commission plans for saving energy; producing clean energy and diversifying the energy supplies and to make Europe "independent from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030, in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine."
- Fit for 55 package of the European Green Deal has set itself a binding target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. As an intermediate step towards climate neutrality, the EU had raised its 2030 climate ambition, committing to cutting emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030.

Orders of constitutional courts would prevail over statutory tribunals: Supreme Court

Why in news?

- The Supreme Court **set aside a National Green Tribunal order** prohibiting construction work at Rushikonda hills in Visakhapatnam, saying **orders of constitutional courts would prevail over statutory tribunals**.
- A vacation bench of Justices said it was not appropriate for the NGT to proceed when the HC was seized of the matter.



Key Highlights:

- It held that the NGT is subordinate to the high court in so far as territorial jurisdiction is concerned.
- The conflicting orders passed by the NGT and the High Court would lead to an anomalous situation.

- The authorities would be faced with difficulty which orders to follow. In such a case orders from the Constitutional court would prevail over statutory tribunals.
- The apex court, however, said though development is necessary for economic development of a nation, its equally necessary to safeguard the environment to preserve pollution free environment for future generations.
- The Bench also clarified that construction will be carried out on the flat area and where the earlier resort was existing and later demolished.

Background:

- The observation came while hearing the Andhra Pradesh Government's appeal against an NGT order halting construction work at Rushikonda Hills.
- The NGT had passed the order on a petition filed by MP K. Raghuram Raju, alleging violation of CRZ norms by the project.
- The Andhra Pradesh High Court had also issued notices to the A.P. Tourism Corporation, Visakhapatnam Collector and Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) Commissioner on the issues pertaining to the Rushikonda Hill.

About NGT:

- The Tribunal was established under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection.

India cautions over 'heightened' threat of misuse of biological agents as weapons

Why in news?

- At the recent open consultations of the UN Security Council 1540 Committee on the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, India cautioned over 'heightened' threat of misuse of biological agents as weapons.



Key Highlights:

- India has cautioned over the “heightened” threat of misuse of biological agents and chemicals as weapons against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- It called on the international community to address the rapid evolution of proliferation risks.
- It said new and emerging technologies may increase the risk of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) access by terrorist groups and other non-state actors.
- The growing capabilities of terrorists and other non-state groups to access delivery systems such as missiles and unmanned/uncrewed aerial systems have compounded the risks of terrorism using WMDs.

UNSC Resolution 1540:

- UNSC Resolution 1540 identifies terrorists and terrorist groups as key non-state actors, who may acquire, develop, traffic in or use weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.
- The full implementation of resolution 1540, though a long-term task, will require continuous and constant efforts from member states, especially for prohibiting access or activities by any non-state actor, in particular for terrorist purposes, related to nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery.

Elephant Centre in Valmiki Tiger Reserve

Why in news?

- The forest department of Bihar has established **an elephant rescue centre** at Bihar's Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) to **rehabilitate stray, abandoned and injured elephants**.

Why this move has been made?

- In the last few years, several elephants stray into VTR from neighboring Chitwan National Park in Nepal.
- At present, there are four elephants at the rescue centre in VTR. All of them were brought from Karnataka in 2018 by the forest department.

Challenges:

- The risk of human-animal conflicts, though not new, will remain high.
- Herds of elephants stray into Bihar either from Chitwan and Parsa wildlife sanctuary of Nepal or from forest of Jharkhand.
- In the recent months, stray elephants from Nepal damaged thatched houses, standing maize crops in Seemanchal region and attacked people, according to reports.
- But it is not new as man-animal conflict is common along the Indo-Nepal border and stray elephants enter populated areas, mostly rural, in search of food and favorable habitat.

About Valmiki Tiger Reserve:

- VTR is spread over 899 square kilometres in West Champaran district, with Nepal to its north and Uttar Pradesh to its west.
- It is the only National Park in Bihar.
- The number of tigers at VTR is nearly 40