

May – 05

NATIONAL

‘Study in India’ programme

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs has approved ‘Study in India’ programme to attract foreign students to pursue higher education in India.
- ❖ The programme is similar to an initiative launched by Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and Canada.
- ❖ The programme will provide meritorious foreign students fee waiver and scholarship.
- ❖ It will target students from 30 countries, primarily in Asia and Africa, including Nepal, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Rwanda, among others.
- ❖ By launching Study in India programme, the government hopes to attract 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh international students by 2022.
- ❖ The government, at present, permits provision of 10% to 15% seats for foreign students in higher education.
- ❖ This provision remains largely underutilized across universities and colleges.
- ❖ Currently, India is home to about 45,000 international students, which accounts for just 1% of global student mobility abroad.
- ❖ It was one the reason for Indian institutes lower global rankings.

National Workshop on Data Requirements for Disaster Risk Reduction Database

- ❖ The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) conducted two-day National Workshop on Data Requirements for Disaster Risk Reduction Database in New Delhi.
- ❖ The workshop was held in collaboration with United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

- ❖ It will be a step forwards towards implementing Prime Minister’s 10-point agenda to address disaster risks, outlined during Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in November 2016.

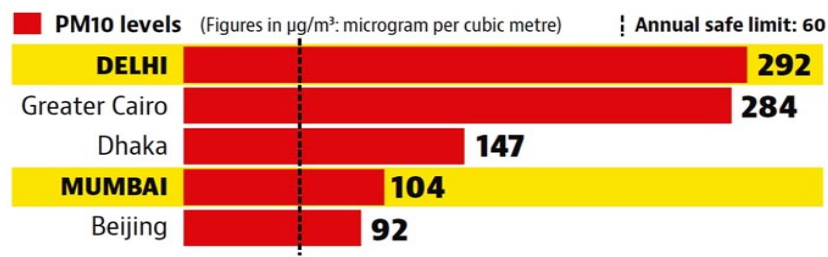
Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas

- ❖ The 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) from January 21 to January 23, 2019. Its theme will be “Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India”. The mega event will be organized by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in association with Uttar Pradesh government. It will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth
- ❖ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated every year in India on 9 January. The day is celebrated to commemorates the return of father of nation Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa on January 9, 1915. The day is celebrated to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the development of India. The day was formally established in 2003.
- ❖ Celebrations of the day are sponsored by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The 14th PravasiBharatiyaDiwas was held in 2017 at Bengaluru (Karnataka) with the theme “Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora”.

INTERNATIONAL

World Most Polluted Cities List

- ❖ According to Global Urban Air Pollution database released by World Health Organization (WHO), 14 Indian cities have figured in the list of worlds’ 20 most polluted cities in terms of particulate matter PM 2.5 levels in 2016.



- ❖ These 14 cities include Delhi, Varanasi, Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Patna, Agra, Muzaffarpur, Srinagar, Gurgaon, Jaipur, Patiala and Jodhpur.
- ❖ Delhi and Varanasi are in top among the 14 Indian cities.
- ❖ They were followed by Ali Subah Al-Salem (Kuwait) and few cities in China and Mongolia.
- ❖ In terms of PM 10 levels, 13 cities in India figured among the 20 most-polluted cities
- ❖ WHO compiled air quality data for mega-cities with a population of 14 million or more.
- ❖ The fresh data in the WHO report also shows that 9 out of 10 people breathe air containing high levels of pollutants.
- ❖ The fine particles in polluted air penetrate deep into the lungs and cardiovascular system, causing diseases including heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and respiratory infections, including pneumonia.
- ❖ WHO recognizes that air pollution is a critical risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), causing an estimated 24% of all adult deaths from heart disease, 43% from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and 29% from lung cancer.

Singapore and China agreement

- ❖ Singapore and China have inked Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote greater collaboration between companies from both countries in third-party markets along with China's ambitious Belt and Road routes.
- ❖ Belt and Road initiative is a China's ambitious development strategy and framework that aims to boost its connectivity and trade with Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe.
- ❖ It was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.
- ❖ It comprises two components viz. the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Baba kavach

- ❖ The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed Bhabha Kavach, a next-generation bulletproof jacket.

- ❖ This Bhabha Atomic Research Centre's development is cheaper, lightweight one. This bulletproof jacket has been named as Bhabha Kavach after Dr. Homi J. Bhabha, father of Indian nuclear programme.
- ❖ The jacket was developed at BARC's Trombay center in Mumbai in response to a request from Ministry of Home Affairs and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
- ❖ It is being tested by a joint team of the CRPF, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and the Central Industrial Security Force.
- ❖ Bhabha Kavach is made of boron carbide and carbon nanotube-polymer composite and weighs just 6.6 kg. BARC has transferred the technology of Bhabha Kavach to Mishra Dhatu Nigam, Hyderabad, for its large-scale production.
- ❖ The BARC is India's premier nuclear research facility based in Mumbai, Maharashtra. BARC's core mandate is to sustain peaceful applications of nuclear energy, primarily for power generation.
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- ❖ The BARC is India's premier nuclear research facility based in Mumbai, Maharashtra. BARC's core mandate is to sustain peaceful applications of nuclear energy, primarily for power generation.
- ❖ The Government of India created the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET) in 1954.
- ❖ It was established to consolidate all the research and development activity for nuclear reactors and technology under the Atomic Energy Commission.
- ❖ After Homi J. Bhabha's death in 1966, the center was renamed as the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre on 22 January 1967.

Removal of Sulphur from fossil fuels

- ❖ Scientists from CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT) have found four bacterial strains that remove sulfur from fossil fuels such as petroleum and coal.
- ❖ The four bacterial strains are *Rhodococcus rhodochrous*, *Arthrobacter sulfureus*, *Gordonia rubropertinita* and *Rhodococcus erythropolis*.
- ❖ Sulfur is one of the major pollutants emitted during the combustion of fossil fuels.



- ❖ They use dibenzothiophene, an organic sulfur compound which is a major contaminant of fossil fuel as energy source thereby getting rid of sulfur.
- ❖ The process of bio-desulfurization using these four bacterial strains is also eco-friendly and economical.
