

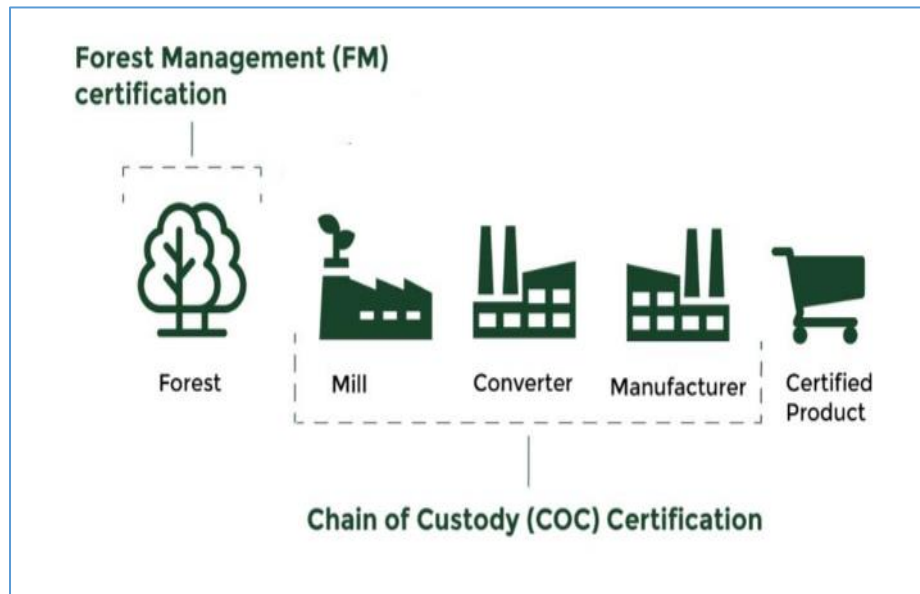
December - 16

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ FedEx Express, has collaborated with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras to set up a Centre of excellence for smart and sustainable supply chains.
- ❖ Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and three distinguished diplomats, was honored at the annual 'Diwali Power of One Awards.'
 - This prestigious ceremony is often hailed as the 'Oscars of Diplomacy,'

NATIONAL

Forest Certification Scheme



- ❖ This national forest certification scheme offers voluntary third-party certification designed to promote sustainable forest management and agroforestry in the country.
- ❖ The scheme includes forest management certification, tree outside forest management certification, and chain of custody certification.
- ❖ This provides market incentives to various entities that adhere to responsible forest management and agroforestry practices in their operations.
- ❖ The Forest Management certification is based on the Indian Forest Management Standard, consisting of 8 criteria, 69 indicators and 254 verifiers.
- ❖ It is an integral part of the National Working Plan Code 2023.

- ❖ A separate Trees Outside Forests Standard, is now introduced as a part of the newly launched Indian Forest & Wood Certification Scheme.

Pooja at Protected Monuments



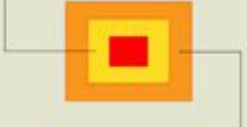
WHAT ARE PROTECTED MONUMENTS

Centrally Protected Monuments are **sites that are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (AMASR Act)**. The Act protects monuments and sites that are more than 100 years old.

The regulations under the AMASR Act are implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

Activities around such sites are strictly regulated

An area within **100 metres** of such monuments is considered a prohibited area. **All construction activities are banned within this area.**



The area within **200 metres** of the monument is a regulated area. **Any repair or modifications of structures within this area can be done only with prior permission from the ASI.**



- ❖ A parliamentary panel has recommended the government to explore the possibility of permitting puja and worship at monuments protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) that have religious significance.
- ❖ 3,693 centrally protected monuments and archaeological sites are maintained by the ASI.
- ❖ Of that, a little less than a fourth (820) have places of worship.
- ❖ The rest are considered non-living monuments where no new religious rituals can be started or conducted.
- ❖ The sites that have places of worship include temples, mosques, dargahs and churches.
- ❖ According to ASI rules, prayers are allowed at protected sites only if they were “functioning places of worship” at the time it took charge of them.
- ❖ The best-known example of a living ASI monument is the Taj Mahal where namaz is held every Friday.

- ❖ Other notable living monuments include three mosques in Kannauj, Roman Catholic Church in Meerut, Nila Mosque in Delhi's Hauz Khas Village and several Buddhist monasteries in Ladakh.

INTERNATIONAL

World's Leading Opium Source in 2023

- ❖ Myanmar has become the world's top producer of opium, overtaking Afghanistan in 2023.
- ❖ The 95 percent decline in opium cultivation in Afghanistan after a drug ban by the Taliban in 2022 has seen global supply shift to Myanmar.
- ❖ Opium poppy farming is now yielding about 75% higher profits.
- ❖ The average price of opium poppies has risen to approximately \$355 per kilogram.
- ❖ The cultivation area has expanded by 18% year-on-year, reaching 47,000 hectares.
- ❖ This marking is the highest potential yield since 2001.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

AMRIT technology

- ❖ The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Madras has developed a technology called 'AMRIT' for the removal of Arsenic and Metal ions from water.

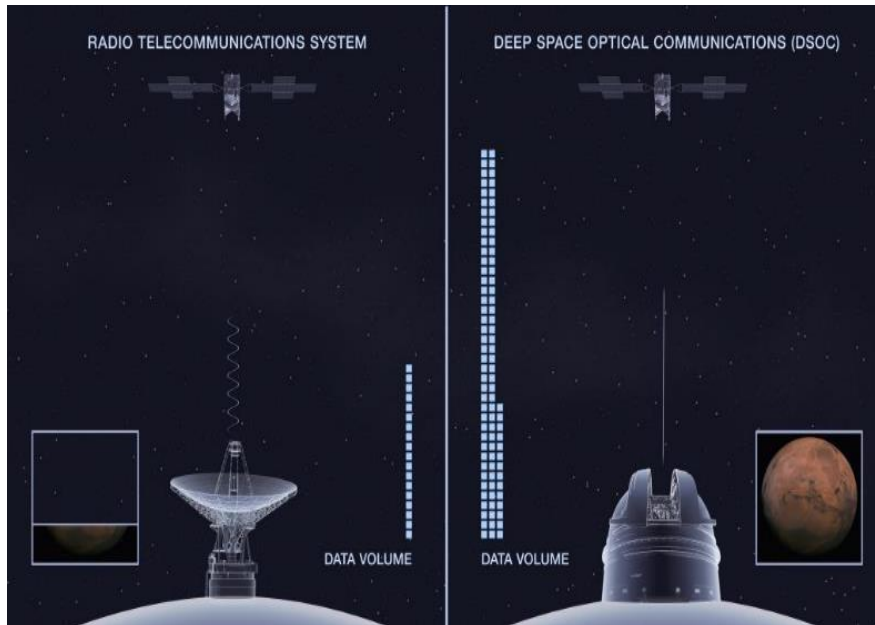
- ❖ AMRIT' stands for Arsenic and Metal Removal by Indian Technology.
- ❖ The technology uses nano-scale iron oxy-hydroxide, which selectively removes arsenic when water is passed through it.
- ❖ This water purifier has been developed for both domestic as well as community levels.
- ❖ Arsenic is a natural component of the earth's crust and is widely distributed throughout the environment in the air, water and land.
- ❖ It is highly toxic in its inorganic form.
- ❖ Long-term exposure to arsenic from drinking water and food can cause cancer and skin lesions.



NASA's DSOC First light

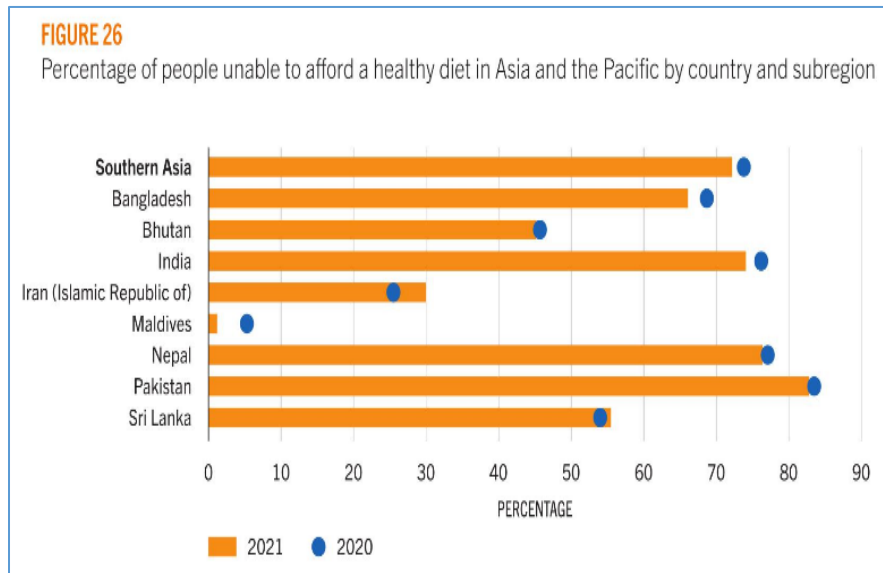
- ❖ Deep Space Optical Communications (DSOC) of the NASA has achieved "first light" transmitting data.
- ❖ This laser space communication system, successfully transmitted data through laser over a distance of 10 million miles.
- ❖ The distance was about 40 times farther than the Moon is from Earth.
- ❖ Thus, it became the farthest-ever demonstration of optical communications.

- ❖ DSOC is placed on the recently launched Psyche spacecraft.
- ❖ Psyche mission is travelling to the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.



REPORTS AND INDICES

Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023



- ❖ The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations launched the Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and Trends.
- ❖ 74.1% of Indians were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021.

- ❖ In 2020, the percentage was 76.2.
- ❖ In Pakistan, the figure is 82.2% and in Bangladesh, 66.1% of the population faced difficulties in finding healthy food.
- ❖ Rising food costs, if not matched by rising income, will lead to more people unable to afford a healthy diet.
- ❖ The report said 16.6% of the country's population is undernourished.
- ❖ 31.7% of children of the country under five years of age suffered with stunted growth.
- ❖ For wasting (low weight for height), India recorded the highest rate in the region with 18.7% children under five years of age facing this major health problem.
- ❖ The report noted that 2.8% of the children below five years were overweight.
- ❖ 53% of the country's women aged between 15 to 49 had anaemia, which was the largest prevalence rate in the region in 2019.
- ❖ On exclusive breastfeeding among infants 0–5 months of age, India has improved the prevalence with a percentage of 63.7%.
- ❖ This is higher than the world prevalence – 47.7%.
- ❖ India has the highest prevalence of low birthweight in the region (27.4%), followed by Bangladesh and Nepal.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

2023 REACH Game Changing Innovator award



- ❖ Dr. Atul Shah, a plastic surgeon, has been honored with the 2023 REACH Game Changing Innovator award for his groundbreaking contribution to leprosy care.



- ❖ He used a simple surgery without the use of special equipment could tackle deformities of leprosy-affected patients.
- ❖ He also designed a 'self-care kit' to empower leprosy patients in managing foot ulcers, a common issue.
- ❖ This innovative solution has been integrated into the country's National Leprosy Eradication Programme (since 2007) and benefited 80,000 people across India.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Universal Health Coverage Day 2023 - December 12



- ❖ The core idea of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is that everyone, regardless of their location or economic status, should have access to quality healthcare without facing financial burdens.
- ❖ On December 12, 2012, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution urging nations to accelerate their efforts towards achieving universal healthcare (UHC).
- ❖ In 2017, the United Nations officially declared this day.
- ❖ The theme for 2023 is Health for All: Time for action.

MISCELLANEOUS

Saint-Belec Slab

- ❖ In northern France, researchers are analysing mysterious markings on a Bronze Age rock as they hope to find some hidden ancient sites.
- ❖ The rock is now being hailed as a "treasure map" and has been unstudied for 4,000 years.
- ❖ Bronze Age rock is known as the Saint-Bélec slab.

- ❖ The ancient map marks an area roughly 30 by 21 kilometres.
- ❖ Researchers said that it's a "treasure map" and the job could take 15 years.

