

February - 13

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ World Day of the Sick is the feast day of Roman Catholic church which was celebrated on February 11.
  - This day was instituted by Pope John Paul II in 1992.
- ❖ The World Health Organisation (WHO) has named the new coronavirus disease as 'Covid-19'.
  - The new name is taken from the words "corona", "virus" and "disease", with 2019 representing the year when it emerged.
- ❖ G. Narayanan, a senior ISRO hand from Kerala, has taken over as chairman and managing director (CMD) of NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL).
  - NSIL is the newly formed commercial arm of the Indian Space agency.

## NATIONAL

### 13<sup>th</sup> COP of UN's Conservation of Migratory Species

- ❖ The 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is going to be hosted by India during 17th to 22nd February 2020 at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- ❖ The Conference is to be hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on behalf of India.
- ❖ The theme of CMS COP13 in India is, "Migratory species connect the planet and we welcome them home".
- ❖ The mascot for CMS COP13 is "Gibi - The Great Indian Bustard".
- ❖ The Conservation status of Indian Bustard is Critically Endangered in International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list.

### BONN Convention on India

- ❖ Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals is also called as the BONN Convention.
- ❖ It is an environmental treaty under the aegis of United Nations Environment Programme.
- ❖ As the host, India shall be designated the President for the next three years.
- ❖ The Government of India is Signatory to the Convention on Conservation of Migratory wild Animals (CMS) since 1983.

- ❖ The Government of India has been taking necessary actions to protect and conserve migratory marine species.
- ❖ Seven species that include Dugong, Whale Shark, Marine Turtle (two species), have been identified for preparation of Conservation and Recovery Action Plan.

### **World's Cheapest Gun Shot Locator – Parth**

- ❖ This bullet-proof helmet has equipped with modern technology which is called the 'Gunshot Locator Helmet'.
- ❖ The name of the device is 'Parth'.
- ❖ The Indian Army's College of Military Engineering with a private firm developed this device.
- ❖ These are much cheaper than the ones imported.
- ❖ The device was showcased at DefExpo 2020.
- ❖ Gunshot Locator is the system that locates gunfire and other weapons such as sensors.



### **SC Verdict on changes in SC/ST Atrocities Law**


- ❖ The Supreme Court has upheld the constitutional validity of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2018.
- ❖ The Amendment Act nullified the Court's 20th March, 2018 judgment of diluting the stringent provisions of the original SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
- ❖ Petitions were filed challenging the 2018 Amendment Act on the grounds of
  - Violation of the fundamental right to equality (Article 14) and
  - Personal liberty (Article 21).

### **Salient Features of the Amendment Act, 2018**

- ❖ It added Section 18A to the original Act.
  - It states that the preliminary enquiry shall not be required for registration of a First Information Report against any person.
- ❖ The police can arrest the offender without a warrant and start an investigation into the case without taking any orders from the court.
- ❖ It creates provisions for states to declare areas with high levels of caste violence to be “atrocities-prone”.
- ❖ It provides for the punishment for wilful neglect of duties by non-SC/ST public servants.

### **Strengthening the law**

- The SC, in *Dr. Subhash Kashinath Mahajan vs State of Maharashtra*, held on March 20, 2018: No absolute bar against grant of anticipatory bail under the anti-atrocities law if no prima facie case is made out or if judicial scrutiny reveals the complaint to be prima facie mala fide
- Prathvi Raj Chouhan and other petitioners challenge the amendments as arbitrary
- February 10, 2020 judgment in Prathvi Raj Chouhan case: Justices Arun Mishra and Vineet Saran uphold Section 18A. However, the judges add that the High Courts will have an “inherent power” to grant anticipatory bail in cases in which prima facie an offence under the 1989 law is not made out
- Parliament introduces an amendment in 2018. Inserts Section 18A in the original Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989. Section 18A re-affirms the original legislative intention that Section 438 CrPC (pre-arrest bail) is not applicable to accused booked under the atrocities law
- Justice S. Ravindra Bhat adds a caveat about the use of this “inherent power” by courts. He says it should be used “only sparingly and in very exceptional cases”. Otherwise, miscarriage of justice may result. The intention of Parliament to protect SCs and STs will be defeated
- “It is important to keep oneself reminded that while sometimes (perhaps mostly in urban areas) false accusations are made, those are not necessarily reflective of the prevailing and wide spread social prejudices against members of these oppressed classes”; Justice Bhat



### **BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020**

- ❖ Second BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020 has been started in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- ❖ The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is organizing the BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise 2020 on behalf of the Government of India.
- ❖ The exercise will also stress upon restoring heritage sites damaged due to disasters.
- ❖ The exercise is held under the Theme: “A Cultural Heritage Site that suffers severe damage in the Earthquake and Flooding or Storm”.

- ❖ The representatives of BIMSTEC member countries from India, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are participating in the exercise.
- ❖ Thailand and Bhutan are not participating this year.



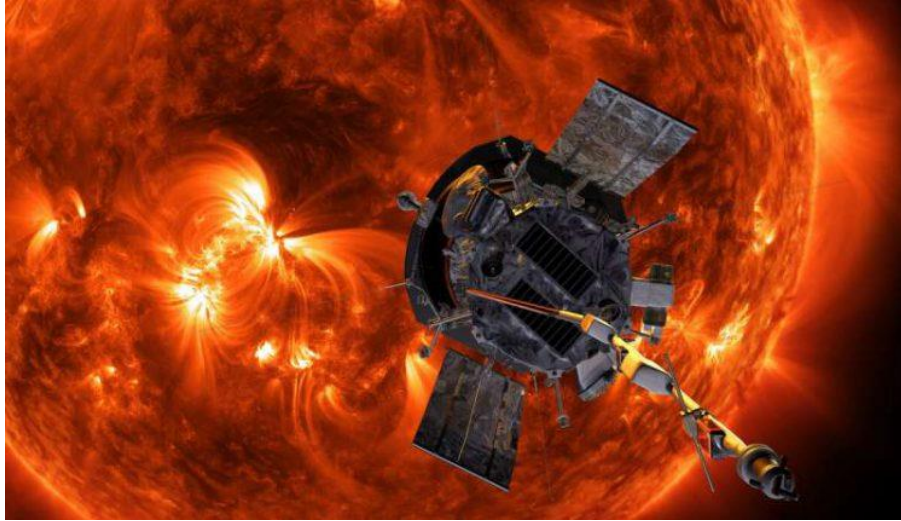
### **BIMSTEC**

- ❖ The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional multilateral organisation.
- ❖ This sub-regional organization came into being in 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- ❖ Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan are its member countries.
- ❖ BIMSTEC's Permanent Secretariat established in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **NASA's probes to the sun's pole**

- ❖ NASA of the United States and the ESA (European Space Agency) sent space probes to the sun to map its poles.
- ❖ The solar orbiter was launched on February 9, 2020.
- ❖ The probe will use gravitational influence of the Earth and Venus to position itself at 26 million miles from the sun.
- ❖ The probe will map the poles for the first time.
- ❖ This will help scientists to observe the solar winds.
- ❖ The solar winds are released from the upper atmosphere of the sun.



## STATES

### **Muktoshri rice variety**

- ❖ Researchers in West Bengal have developed and commercialised a rice variety that is resistant to arsenic.
- ❖ The new rice variety is called Muktoshri, also known as IET 21845.
- ❖ It has been jointly developed by the Rice Research Station at Chinsurah, under West Bengal's Agriculture Department and the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow.
- ❖ The variety yields 5.5 metric tons per hectare in the Boro (Winter) season and 4.5 to 5 metric tons per hectare in the Kharif season, respectively.
- ❖ The rice was long and thin, and aromatic.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### **Safer internet day – February 11**

- ❖ Safer Internet Day (SID) promotes a safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones.
- ❖ This year's theme is 'Together for a better internet'.
- ❖ This day was created in 2004 by the Insafe Network of European Union.
- ❖ To expand the initiative's reach, Safer Internet Day Committees were introduced in 2009.

- ❖ In India, the New Delhi-based NGO DISC (Developing Internet Safe Community) Foundation is the SID Committee.



### **International Day of Women and Girls in Science - February 11**

- ❖ This day is being observed by the United Nations on February 11 every year since 2015.
- ❖ This day's aim is to promote equal access to and participation in science for women and girls.
- ❖ This year the day is celebrated under the theme – “Investment in Women and Girls in Science for Inclusive Green Growth”.
- ❖ It is important to observe the day because there are only 30% of women researchers all over the world.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Corona Virus Ranking**

- ❖ The researchers of Robert Koch institute in Germany and Humboldt University have founded mathematical model to predict global spread of novel corona virus cases.
- ❖ India was ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in the ranking system.
- ❖ So far three cases have been reported in Kerala.
- ❖ They are all from Kerala.
- ❖ The study says that the spread of the virus is predominantly due to air travel.
- ❖ The highest risk of importing the virus was with Thailand. It was 2.1%.

