



January - 19

## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ The Women will be inducted as pilots in the Army Aviation Corps from 2022.
  - Till now, they have only been a part of ground duties in the Aviation Corps.
- ❖ The Indian Army signed a contract with the firm ideaForge to procure high-altitude variant of SWITCH drones or UAV, Unmanned Air Vehicles.
- ❖ In a historic first since Independence, the Union Budget 2021-22 will go paperless due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Usually, the Budget gets printed every year by over 100 employees who need to stay together for around 15 days.
- ❖ The Prime Minister flagged off a weekly train service from Chennai to Kevadiya in Gujarat.
  - Kevadiya Station in Gujarat is also the first railway station of India with a Green Build Certification.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Food Corporation of India**

- ❖ On January 14, 2021, the 75th foundation day of the Food Corporation of India was celebrated.
- ❖ It is a statutory body that operates under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- ❖ It was founded on January 14, 1965 having its first District Office at Thanjavur – rice bowl of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Its initial headquarters was located in Chennai and was later moved to New Delhi.

### **SKOCH Challenger Award**

- ❖ The Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda was honoured with the SKOCH Challenger Award.

- ❖ It has been conferred to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for e-Governance, for its IT-led initiatives and other transformational initiatives.

### **Prarambh - Startup India International Summit 2021**

- ❖ The Startup India International Summit marks five years of the launch of the Startup India initiative.
- ❖ It has played a key role in encouraging the spirit of entrepreneurship across India.
- ❖ It is being organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- ❖ The first day of the Summit has been dedicated to host BIMSTEC Startup Conclave.



## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **Henley Passport Index**

- ❖ It was launched by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- ❖ The index is released based on the number of destinations the holders can access without visa.
- ❖ Nepal and Pakistan continue to be the “Worst passports to hold” category.
- ❖ Japan was the top performer.
- ❖ The Japanese citizens can travel to 191 countries.

- ❖ Singapore was in second position.
- ❖ India ranked 85<sup>th</sup> in this index.

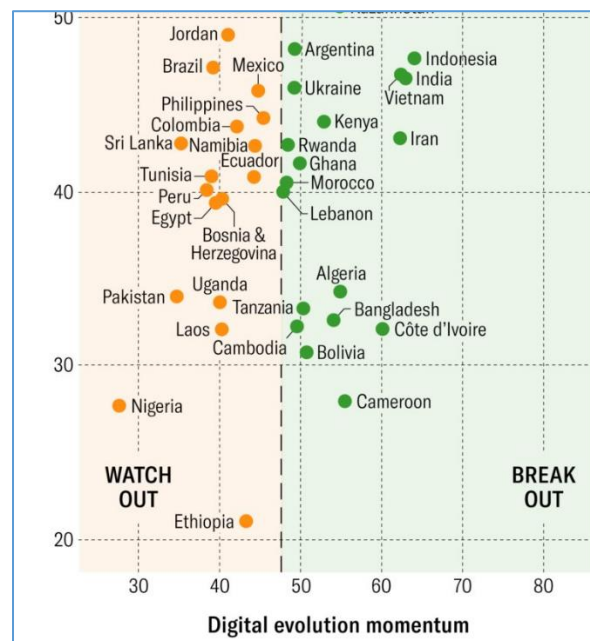


### State sponsor of terrorism

- ❖ The US government designates Cuba as state sponsor of terrorism.
- ❖ The step by the Trump administration has reversed an Obama era decision.
- ❖ Sudan was recently removed to sign Israel-Sudan Normalisation Agreement.
- ❖ Iran, Syria and North Korea are currently in the list of state sponsors of terrorism.
- ❖ The list was first released in 1979 with Iraq, Libya, Syria and South Yemen in it.



### 3rd Edition Digital Evolution Scorecard 2020



- ❖ It was developed by Tufts University's Fletcher School in partnership with Mastercard.
- ❖ India was ranked 4th among "Break Out Economies" in the third edition.
- ❖ China tops the scorecard.
- ❖ "Break Out Economies" are those that are digitalising very quickly and yet have a lot of room to grow.
- ❖ India doubled its internet connectivity in the last four years.
- ❖ The country is on track to add 350 million smartphones by 2023.

## ECONOMY

### Revamped Women Entrepreneurship Platform



- ❖ NITI Aayog and Flipkart launched a revamped Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP).
- ❖ It aims to uplift and empower women-led businesses in the country.
- ❖ The theme is 'Women First, Prosperity for All.'
- ❖ The idea of the platform was first mooted by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant who
- ❖ It was setup at 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit held in Hyderabad during 2017.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Heliophysics Missions

- ❖ NASA has approved two heliophysics missions to explore the Sun and the system that drives space weather near Earth.
- ❖ Together, NASA's contribution to the following will help in understanding the Sun and Earth as an interconnected system,
  - Extreme Ultraviolet High-Throughput Spectroscopic Telescope Epsilon Mission (EUVST) and
  - Electrojet Zeeman Imaging Explorer (EZIE).

#### EUVST

- ❖ The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) leads the EUVST Epsilon Mission (Solar-C EUVST Mission), along with other partners.
- ❖ It is targeted for launch in 2026.
- ❖ It is a solar telescope.

#### EZIE

- ❖ It is to be launched in 2024.
- ❖ It will study electric currents in Earth's atmosphere linking aurora to Earth's magnetosphere.
- ❖ The magnetosphere responds to solar activity and other factors.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Management effectiveness evaluation

- ❖ The minister of environment Prakash Javadekar released management effectiveness evaluation of 146 national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the country.
- ❖ The report is first of its kind in the country.
- ❖ Currently India has a network of 903 protected areas covering 5% of the total Geographic area of the country.





- ❖ The top five national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in India are Jaldapara National Park and Raiganj wildlife sanctuary of West Bengal, Tirthan wildlife sanctuary and Sainj wildlife sanctuary and the Great Himalayan National Park of Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The Turtle Wildlife Sanctuary of Uttar Pradesh, Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary of Uttar Pradesh were ranked at the bottom most.

### Management Effectiveness Evaluation

- Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of 146 national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the country.
- According to the survey, Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary and Great Himalayan National Park in Himachal Pradesh have performed the best among the surveyed protected areas.
- The Turtle Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh was the worst performer.
- Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 India had 903 formally designated Protected Areas with a total coverage of 1,65,012.6 square km.
- National Parks-101. Wildlife sanctuaries-553
- Conservation Reserves-86. Community reserves-163

### Insect Apocalypse

- ❖ The entomologists from all over the world attended the proceedings of National Academies of Sciences recently.
- ❖ According to the entomologists, the insect population is declining at rapid rate.
- ❖ The Earth is losing 2% of its insects every year.
- ❖ The scientists have named this as Insect Apocalypse.
- ❖ The main reasons of Insect Apocalypse are as follows:
  - Insecticides



- Climate Change
  - Light Pollution
  - Herbicides
  - Invasive Species
  - Changes in land use
  - Intensive agriculture
- ❖ Insect decline is the worst in North America and in parts of Europe.
- ❖ The rate of extinction of insects is eight times faster than that of birds, mammals and reptiles.

