

January - 21

TAMIL NADU

Fatal road accidents in Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Tamil Nadu will observe the 31st Road Safety Week from January 20 to 27.
- ❖ The fatal road accidents reduced by 43 per cent in 2019 when compared to 2016 at Tamil Nadu.

NATIONAL

POLNET 2.0 platform

- ❖ The Union Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah launched the new and enhanced platform 'POLNET 2.0' during the national conference of 'Heads of public protection and Disaster relief organizations' in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless (DCPW) manages and operates POLNET or the police network services in the country, which was in operation in the country since 2006.
- ❖ It will be beneficial during disasters or law and order problems and will be providing video conferencing facilities and internet facility to the forces even through satellite communication in remote areas.





INTERNATIONAL

Maritime Research Coordination Centre

- ❖ India plans to set up Maritime Research Coordination Centre in Sri Lanka.
- ❖ There are two maritime agreements that were signed in 1974 and 1976.
- ❖ In 1974 agreement, India agreed to Sri Lanka's sovereignty over Katchchativu island but with some safeguards.
- ❖ The safeguards were included by India to protect its fishermen.

New BRI deals

- ❖ China and Myanmar signed 33 new deals under BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) to implement China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.
- ❖ Also, a concession agreement was signed by the countries to implement the deep seaport project called Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone.

BRI

- ❖ The project allows China to have easy of access to Indian Ocean.
- ❖ This is because this route bypasses Strait of Malacca through which China imports most of its oil requirements.
- ❖ This will aid in China's plans of String of Pearls.
- ❖ Strait of Malacca connects Andaman Sea and South China Sea.

ECONOMY

World Gold Outlook 2020

- ❖ The World Gold Council (WGC) recently released its report, "World Gold Outlook 2020".
- ❖ The report says that gold has performed the best since 2010 in 2019.
- ❖ According to the WGC, RBI (Reserve Bank of India) currently holds 625.2 tonnes of gold.
- ❖ This is 6.6% of the country's foreign exchange.
- ❖ With this, India ranks sixth in the world among other central banks.
- ❖ The other 5 countries that have bought more gold than India include China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Poland.
- ❖ In 2019, the largest gold sellers were Uzbekistan and Venezuela.

WGC



- ❖ The headquarters of WGC is located in London.
- ❖ The offices of WGC are located in China, India, US and Singapore.
- ❖ The WGC office in India is located in Mumbai.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Seismic Hazard Micro zonation project

- ❖ The Ministry of Earth Science has launched Seismic Hazard Microzonation project in major cities of India.
- ❖ The project aims to reduce hazards of seismic activities by putting in adequate measures.
- ❖ So far, the mapping has been done in the State of Sikkim and in other eight cities.
- ❖ The cities are Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Guwahati, Jabalpur, Dehra Dun, Ahmedabad and Gandhidham.
- ❖ Japan is the best example where microzonation techniques are well implemented.

Seismic Hazard Microzonation

- ❖ It is the process of dividing earth quake prone areas based on certain factors.
- ❖ The factors include geological and geophysical characteristics of sites.
- ❖ They are ground shaking, landslide, liquefaction susceptibility, rock fall hazard and flooding caused due to earth quakes.

Agricultural product testing laboratories

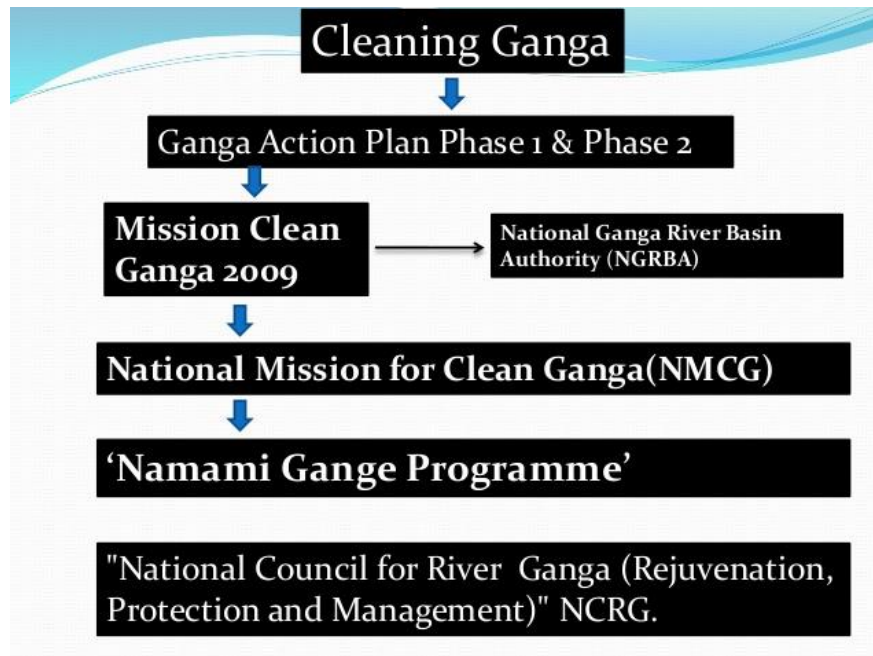
- ❖ The APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Development Authority) has added 135 laboratories to the existing 51 laboratories.
- ❖ The new laboratories are being installed in states with high agricultural potential such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Karnataka.

ENVIRONMENT

The National Mission of Clean Ganga (NMCG)

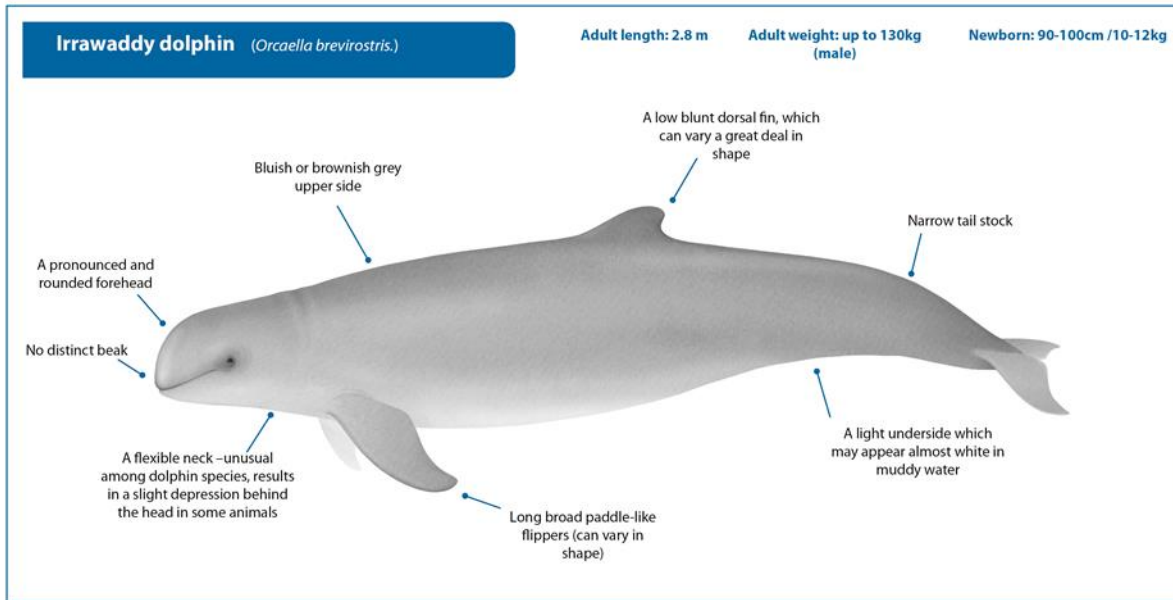
- ❖ It has taken up the initiative under Namami Gange Project to conserve wetlands of the Ganges basin.
- ❖ The wetlands provide nutrient recycling, flood and drought mitigation, surface and groundwater recharge.

- ❖ NMCG is the implementation wing of National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection and Management of River Ganga (referred as National Ganga Council).
- ❖ In October 2016, National Ganga Council has replaced National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) which was constituted under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act (EPA), 1986.
- ❖ The basin covers 11 states viz., Uttarakhand, U.P., M.P., Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Delhi.
- ❖ The current focus of world bank funded National Ganga River Basin Projects (NGRBP) of NMCG is on five major states on the main stem of river Ganga namely Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal.



Dolphin Census in Chilika Lake

- ❖ The dolphin census in Odisha coast was taken up by the Chilika Development Authority (CDA).
- ❖ 146 Irrawaddy dolphins were sighted here.
- ❖ At present, the total population of the Irrawaddy dolphins is estimated to be less than 7,500 globally out of which 6,000 as per report are in Bangladesh
- ❖ Chilika is considered as the highest single lagoon dolphin population in the world.



About Irrawaddy Dolphin

- ❖ Although the species gets its common name from the Irrawaddy River in Myanmar, where it also lives, it was first described in 1866 from a specimen found in the Vishakhapatnam harbour in present day Andhra Pradesh on India's east coast.
- ❖ Its range extends from the Bay of Bengal to New Guinea and the Philippines.
- ❖ Besides the Irrawaddy River, it is also found in India's Ganges, and Southeast Asia's Mekong River.
- ❖ However, it is not a true river dolphin and prefers to live in estuaries and brackish water near coasts.
- ❖ Irrawaddy dolphins are classified as 'Vulnerable' in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- ❖ Chilika Lake is the largest brackish water (mixture of saline and fresh water) lagoon of India, spread over the Puri, Khurda and Ganjam districts of Odisha State on the east coast of India.
- ❖ It is the largest coastal lagoon in India, located at the mouth of the Daya River, which is flowing into the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ It is designated as 'wetland of international importance under the Ramsar convention.

Exploratory Drilling License

- ❖ The Environment Ministry has exempted oil and gas firms, looking to conduct exploratory drilling, from seeking an environmental clearance.



- ❖ The clearance is for both on-shore and offshore drilling explorations.
- ❖ The process is an ecologically-intensive exercise that involves digging multiple wells and conducting seismic surveys offshore.
- ❖ Until today, even exploratory surveys have merited the highest level of environmental scrutiny — called category ‘A’.
- ❖ That required project proponents to prepare an environment impact assessment (EIA) plan and have scrutinized by a centrally constituted committee of experts.

Decarbonization target

- ❖ The United Nations had set the target of reducing carbon emissions from shipping industry by 50% by 2050 as compared to the levels in 2008.
- ❖ To achieve this target, the world has to spend 1 trillion USD.
- ❖ According to the United Nations, the emissions from shipping account to 2.2% of world carbon-dioxide emissions.
- ❖ The Decarbonisation target was initiated by the International Maritime Organization.
- ❖ The International Maritime Organization regulates international shipping and its greenhouse gas emissions.

