

March - 05

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Students at the Centre for Innovation, IIT- Madras, have showcased some of the innovative technology they developed to the public at the 16th edition of the annual Open House organised recently.
- ❖ Reliance Foundation launched 'Vantara' (Star of the Forest) programme at Jamnagar in Gujarat to the rescue, treatment, care and rehabilitation of injured, abused and threatened animals, both in India and abroad.

NATIONAL

Economic transformation plan



- ❖ The NITI Aayog has prepared a plan for economic transformation of Mumbai, Surat, Varanasi and Vizag.
- ❖ The plan aims to leverage economic activities in these cities, aligning with the broader goal of transforming India into a developed economy.
- ❖ The Aayog also plans to prepare economic planning of 20-25 more cities, as they are the centre of economic activities.

- ❖ In 2023, NITI Aayog was entrusted with the task of consolidating the 10 sectoral thematic visions into a combined one for Viksit Bharat @2047.

Dakshin Bharat Sanskritik Kendra



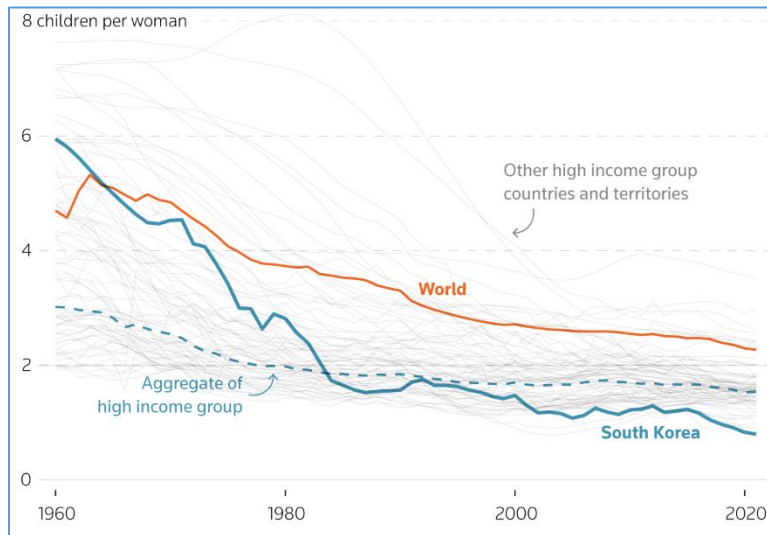
- ❖ The Ministry of Culture now intends to set up a Regional Centre of Sangeet Natak Academy in Hyderabad.
- ❖ It will be known as Dakshin Bharat Sanskritik kendra.
- ❖ The academy has no presence in South India so far.
- ❖ An auditorium named as “Bharat Kala Mandapam” will be constructed within the “Dakshin Bharat Sanskritik kendra”.
- ❖ The Sangeet Natak Academy is the national academy for music, dance, and drama.
- ❖ It was established in 1953 and aims to preserve and promote India's diverse cultural heritage.

INTERNATIONAL

South Korea's Fertility Rate

- ❖ South Korea's fertility rate, already the world's lowest, continued its dramatic decline in 2023.
- ❖ The average number of expected babies for a South Korean woman during her reproductive life fell to a record low of 0.72 from 0.78 in 2022.
- ❖ The previous projections estimate that this will fall even further, to 0.68 in 2024.

- ❖ That is far below the rate of 2.1 per woman needed for a steady population and well behind the rate of 1.24 in 2015.
- ❖ South Korea also has the worst gender pay gap in the OECD.
- ❖ The Korean women bring home about two-thirds of the income than men.
- ❖ Also, in neighbouring China and Japan, fertility rates hit record lows of 1.09 and 1.26 respectively in 2022.



Services sector agreement of WTO

What is the GATS

- The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was negotiated under the Uruguay Round in the Context of single undertaking.
- It lays down rules and disciplines covering multilateral international trade in services.
- The Agreement came into effect in 1995 and is part and parcel of the WTO agreements.
- Provides for Most favoured nation and national treatment clause.

- ❖ India would benefit from a move of over 70 nations like the U.K., U.A.E. and Australia that have agreed to take on additional obligations in the services sector under an agreement of the World Trade Organisation.

- ❖ These WTO members are taking the additional obligations under the General Agreement on Goods in Services (GATS).
- ❖ It aims to ease the non-goods trade among themselves and extend similar concessions to all other members of the WTO.
- ❖ These obligations under their schedules in GATS seek to
 - Mitigate unintended trade restrictive effects or
 - Measures relating to licensing requirements and procedures,
 - Qualification requirements and procedures, and
 - Technical standards among themselves
- ❖ The move will help reduce services trade costs by 10% for lower-middle-income economies and 14% for upper-middle-income economies, with overall savings of \$127 billion.

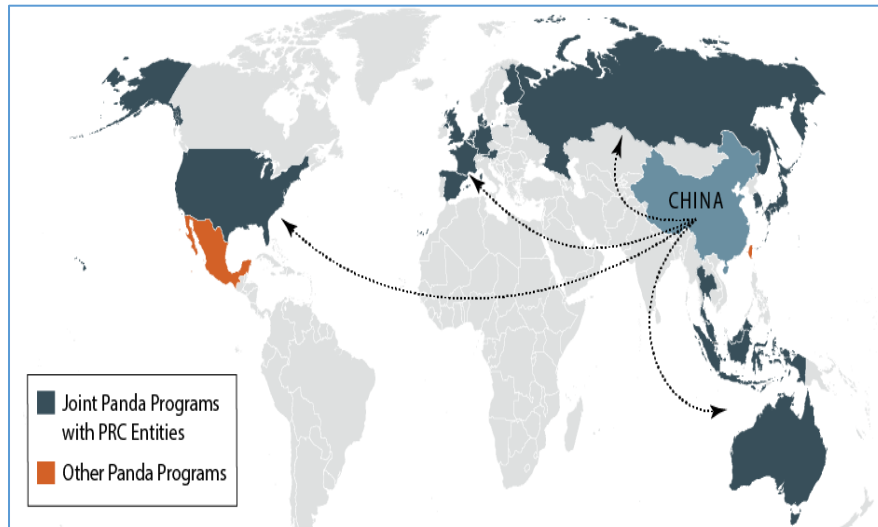
Project PANGEA



- ❖ Scientists across the globe convened in Cameroon to initiate a knowledge-sharing initiative to guide Project PANGEA.
- ❖ PANGEA stands for PAN tropical investigation of bio-Geo-chemistry and Ecological Adaptation.
- ❖ It aims to understand the combined effects of climate and land-use change in tropical forests within and between continents.

- ❖ It will examine similarities and differences in forest composition, structure and biogeochemical cycling across tropical regions.
- ❖ It also, guide decision making to support societal responses to climate change mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity conservation.

Panda Diplomacy review



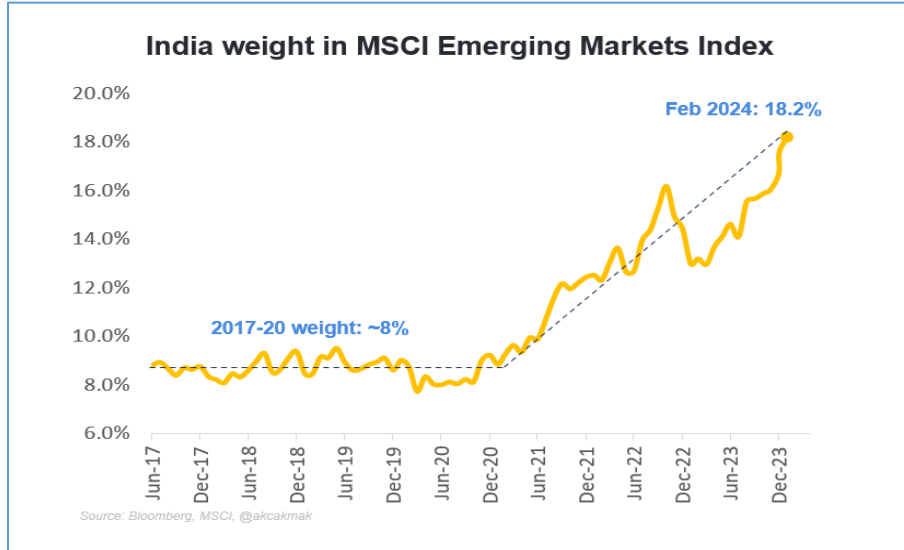
- ❖ China has signed agreements with two zoos in the United States and Spain on panda conservation.
- ❖ A pair of pandas may soon be sent to the American zoo.
- ❖ The development was also seen as a return to so-called 'Panda diplomacy'.
- ❖ Pandas are native to China and are only found there in the wild at present.
- ❖ From 1957 to 1982, China donated a total of 23 giant pandas to nine countries: the Soviet Union, North Korea, the US, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Spain and Mexico.”
- ❖ In 2016, the IUCN Red List degraded the threat level for pandas from “endangered” to “vulnerable”.

ECONOMY

MSCI Global Standard Index

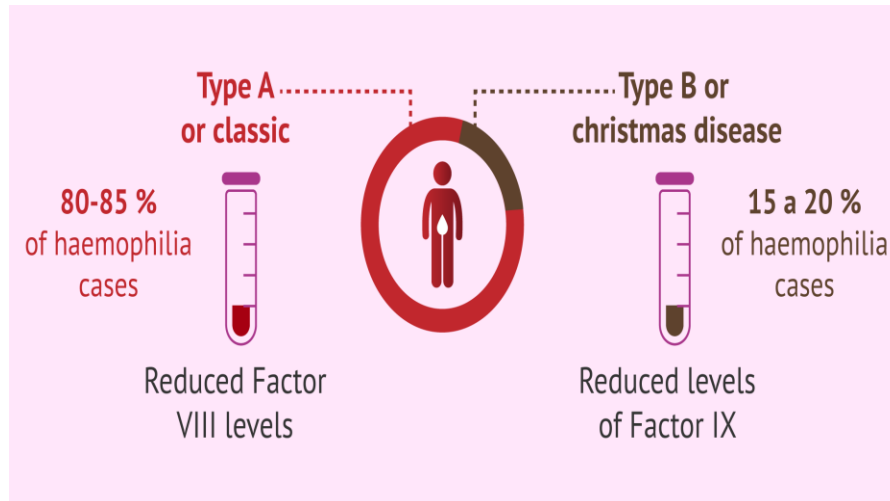
- ❖ Index provider MSCI raised India's weightage in its Global Standard (Emerging Markets) index to a historic high of 18.2%.
- ❖ India's weightage in the index has nearly doubled since November 2020.

- ❖ The climb can be attributed to India's standardized foreign ownership limit (FOL) in 2020.
- ❖ India has the second-highest weightage in the MSCI Global Standard index, after China.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Haemophilia A gene therapy



- ❖ India has conducted the first human clinical trial of gene therapy for 'haemophilia A' at Christian Medical College – Vellore.
- ❖ Hemophilia is a group of conditions that impact the blood's ability to coagulate, or clot.

- ❖ Hemophilia occurs when an individual has low levels of certain proteins in the blood, known as clotting factors.
- ❖ Hemophilia A and hemophilia B are the two main types of hemophilia.
- ❖ Both conditions have similarities but are distinguishable by the genetic variation that causes the blood clotting problem.
- ❖ People living with hemophilia A have a genetic variation in the F8 gene, which is responsible for producing blood clotting factor VIII.
- ❖ Hemophilia B have a genetic alteration in the F9 gene, which results in the underproduction of blood clotting factor IX.

STATES

New GI tags – March 2024



- ❖ The famous Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi (Silver Filigree) from Odisha has been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- ❖ Filigree has been traditionally associated with fine craftsmanship and luxurious design in classical jewellery.
- ❖ Archaeological evidence suggest that filigree was incorporated into jewellery as early as 3500 BCE in Mesopotamia.
- ❖ The other products to join the GI league are Banglar muslin, one of the popular traditional handloom craft of Bengal, Narasapur crochet lace products of Andhra Pradesh and Kutch rogan craft of Gujarat.
- ❖ The Banglar muslin is one of the popular traditional handloom craft of Bengal.
- ❖ This finest sort of muslin is made of cotton.



- ❖ Narsapur in West Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh is known for crochet skills, has received global acclaim for its intricate craftsmanship.
- ❖ Ratlam Riyawan Lahsun (Garlic), a variety named after Riyawan village in Ratlam district of Madhya Pradesh, also bagged the GI tag along with the Ambaji White Marble from Gujarat.
- ❖ This Marble is formed when limestone is re-crystallised under the earth's crust due to intense pressure and heat.
- ❖ Tripura Risa Textile, Hyderabad Lac Bangles, Majuli Mask of Assam and the Assam Majuli Manuscript Painting are the other products that got GI tag.

