

March - 20

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Social housing architects Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal have been named the 2021 winners of the Pritzker Architecture Prize.
 - They are the founders of French studio Lacaton & Vassal.
- ❖ The central government will soon establish a women helpline centres in foreign countries which will look after the distressed overseas residents.
 - These Women Helpline Centres are being set up with the help of Ministry of external affairs in other countries.
- ❖ Veteran Kathakali exponent Guru Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair died recently at the age of 105.
 - He was conferred with Padmashri in the year 2017.
- ❖ A team of Scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research have found a method that mimic the Photosynthesis.
 - This method harnesses the solar energy and converts the captured carbon dioxide into carbon monoxide (CO).

NATIONAL

Sahi Disha campaign

- ❖ The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has launched a campaign named 'Sahi Disha'.
- ❖ The campaign highlights issues and the hurdles that impact the opportunities of women living in rural India to access livelihoods and jobs.
- ❖ The Disha initiative is a five years collaboration between the IKEA Foundation and the United Nations Development Program.
- ❖ It benefited around 1 million women through counselling and skilling services.
- ❖ The initiative benefitted women living across five states of India-
 - Haryana,
 - Delhi NCR,
 - Maharashtra,
 - Karnataka and
 - Telangana.

Indian Naval Landing Craft Utility L58

- ❖ Indian Naval Landing Craft Utility (LCU) L58 was commissioned into the Indian Navy at Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ It is the eighth and last ship of the Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mark IV Class.
- ❖ It is Indigenously designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE), Kolkata.

Vehicle Scrapping Policy

- ❖ The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, has introduced the Vehicle Scrapping Policy on March 18, 2021 in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ This will come into effect from April 1, 2021.
- ❖ It was first announced by Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Union Budget Speech 2021-2022 on February 1, 2021.



The infographic features the PIR logo at the top left and the title 'VEHICLE SCRAPPING POLICY' in large, bold letters. Below the title is an illustration of several cars being scrapped. To the right, under the heading 'Policy proposes the following', there are five bullet points, each with a corresponding icon: a checklist for setting up facilities, a car with a wrench for de-registration timelines, a car with a '101' sign for government vehicle de-registration, a car with a document for incentives, and a recycling symbol for environmental compliance.

Policy proposes the following

- Setting up of Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility across India & encourage public & private participation
- Commercial vehicles be de-registered after 15 years and private vehicles after 20 years in case of failure to get the fitness certificate
- All vehicles of Central Govt, State Govt, Municipal Corporation, Panchayats, State Transport Undertakings, PSUs & autonomous bodies may be de-registered & scrapped after 15 years from the date of registration.
- Strong incentives to owners through registered scrapping centers, which can also provide owners with a scrapping certificate
- Scrapping facility to comply with environmental & pollution norms

Note:

- ❖ 51 lakhs of the light motor vehicles which are 20 years old and more will be scrapped under this policy.
- ❖ 34 lakhs of light motor vehicles are older than 15 years while around 51 lakhs of light motor vehicles are older than 20 years.
- ❖ 17 lakh medium & heavy commercial vehicles are older than 15 years.

Hightlights:

- ❖ The scrapping policy will bring the transformational changes in automobile sector by reducing the vehicular emission of pollutants.



- ❖ The policy was introduced with the aim of creating an ecosystem to phase out the unfit, old and polluting vehicles.
- ❖ Under the policy, personal vehicles will have to undergo the fitness tests at the automated centres after 20 years.
- ❖ On the other hand, the commercial vehicles will have to undergo the fitness test after 15 years.
- ❖ If the vehicles failed to pass the fitness test for three times, the owner would not be able to drive it on the road.

Poshan Pakhwada 2021

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development is celebrating the Poshan Pakhwada from March 16 to March 31, 2021.
- ❖ The Department of Women & Child Development or the Social Welfare Department will be the nodal department to look after the Poshan Pakhwada.
- ❖ It is celebrated across the states and Union Territories.
- ❖ The key focus areas of the Pakhwada are to address the nutritional challenges using the Food Forestry and to organize the Poshan Panchayats.
- ❖ Under this the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) working under the Ministry of AYUSH, will distribute 4 samplings of the nutritional rich plants to each of the Anganwadi Centres.

INTERNATIONAL

PASSEX with Bahrain's Navy

- ❖ Indian Navy undertook Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Royal Bahrain Naval Force Corvette Al Muharraq in the Persian Gulf.
- ❖ This was done under Operation Sankalp.
- ❖ PASSEXs are conducted regularly by the Indian Navy with units of friendly foreign navies.

Italy joins International Solar Alliance

- ❖ The Ministry of External Affairs of India has informed that Italy has signed a framework agreement with India to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- ❖ The Italian Republic signed the framework agreement of ISA following the amendment made to the framework agreement of ISA.



- ❖ This amendment had opened the membership in the Solar Alliance to all the members of the United Nations.

ISA:

- ❖ ISA is a treaty-based intergovernmental alliance comprising of 121 countries.
- ❖ The establishment of the alliance was initiated by India.
- ❖ Most of the member countries are the sunshine countries.
- ❖ Sunshine countries are the countries that are located either completely or partly in between Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn.

Sinatra Doctrine

- ❖ The Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) member countries have accepted the “Sinatra Doctrine” as a counter to the increasing China’s aggressiveness to undermine the unity of the European Union through the divide and rule policy.
- ❖ The Sinatra Doctrine will be based on two pillars,
 - Continuing cooperation with China with respect to address the global challenges like covid-19, climate change & regional conflicts and
 - Strengthening the strategic sovereignty of European Union by protecting the technological sectors of its economy.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Russia deploys Giant Space Telescope

- ❖ Russian scientists have deployed a giant telescope in Lake Baikal in southern Siberia.
- ❖ It is to search for the tiniest known particles in the universe.
- ❖ The telescope, Baikal-Gigaton Volume Detector, is designed to search for neutrinos.
- ❖ Neutrinos are nearly massless subatomic particles with no electrical charge.
- ❖ Lake Baikal is the deepest and the largest freshwater lake on Earth.

IMPORTANT DAYS

The Spring Equinox - March 20

- ❖ The Spring Equinox is also known as “Vernal Equinox”.
- ❖ In the year 2021, it will fall on March 20, 2021.

- ❖ March 20 is the most common date for the Spring Equinox.
- ❖ However, it can occur on any date between 19 to 21 March.
- ❖ March 20 is considered as the first day of the spring as per the astronomical calculation of the seasons.
- ❖ The date is based on the two equinoxes and solstices.
- ❖ The astronomical spring will end on June 21, 2021 which is called as the summer solstice.

