

March – 17

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan has involved in a joint exercise with India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
 - National Security Guard (NSG) was raised on September 1986. Sudeep Lakhatia is the current Director General of NSG.
- ❖ China put on hold a request by Britain, France and the United States to add the leader of JeM, Masood Azhar.
 - This UN sanctions blacklist would subject him to a global travel ban, an asset freeze and an arms embargo.
- ❖ Consumer companies in India are phasing out the controversial anti-bacterial 'triclosan' from soap and toothpaste products.
 - The use of triclosan is linked to Abnormal endocrine system/thyroid hormone signalling and Weakening of immune system.
- ❖ China's Long March-3B rocket, regarded as the main stay of the country's space programme since 1970, successfully completed its 300th launch by putting a new communication satellite into orbit.
- ❖ Chennai based 13 years old Child musical prodigy Lydian Nadhaswaram has won \$1 Million prize in an International Music Talent show – "The World's Best" held at California of USA.
- ❖ Indian Grandmasters B Adhiban and Surya Shekhar Ganguly – win Gold medals at the World Chess Championships at Astana in Kazakhstan.

TAMIL NADU

Information Commission recommendations

- ❖ The Tamilnadu State Information Commission (TNSIC) has recommended that TN government should implement a system where RTI petitions can be filed online, similar to the process adopted by Central government and few other states.
- ❖ TNSIC is the second appellate authority, a quasi-judicial body,
- ❖ It adjudicates RTI related disputes between applicants and the government departments.

- ❖ Under the RTI Act, it has the power to make recommendations to the government. However, it may not be binding.
- ❖ Key recommendations include appointing a nodal officer in every department to update information on its website under section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act.
- ❖ It also recommended that students have a fundamental right to access their answer books under the RTI noting.

ECONOMY

India aligns with Global Trademark system

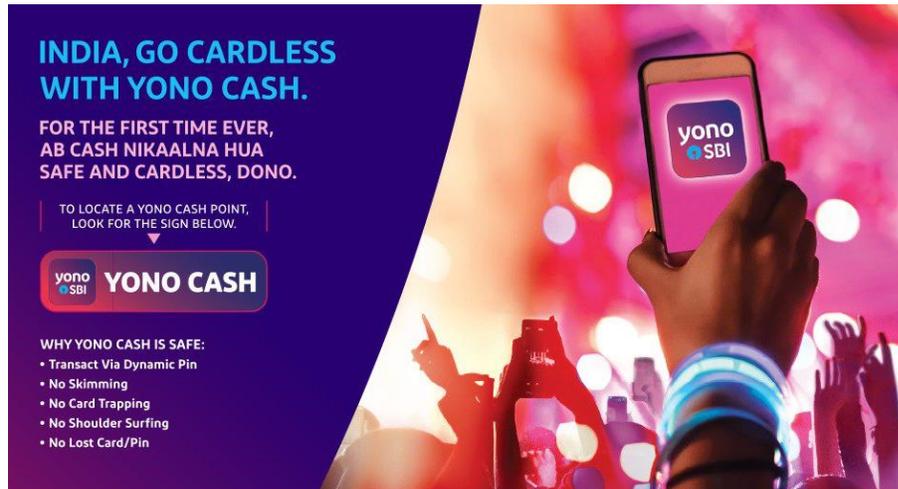
- ❖ Cabinet has agreed to sign 3 International agreements to follow global standards during classification system for examining the trademark and design applications from companies and business.

Nice Agreement	International classification of trademarks and service marks.
Vienna Agreement	International classification for marks that consist of contain figurative elements
Locarno Agreement	International classification for industrial designs

- ❖ The accession to these three agreements would give an opportunity to include Indian designs, figurative elements and goods in the international classification systems.
- ❖ It is also expected to instil confidence in Foreign Investors in relation to the protection of IPs in India

Cardless ATM withdrawals

- ❖ To avoid the usage of plastic cards in payments and withdrawals, SBI has enabled card less ATM withdrawals through its mobile App, YONO.
- ❖ This service enables the user to generate dynamic code using the Yono app to withdraw money from any SBI ATM within 30 minutes of the code generation.



ENVIRONMENT

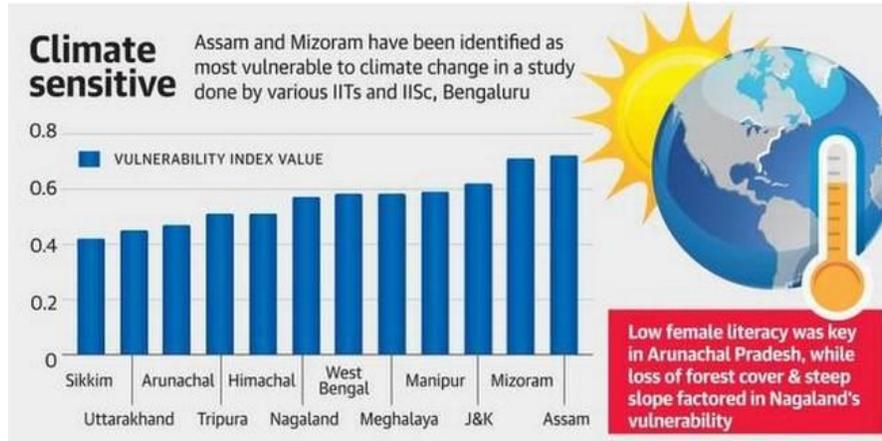
Climate Vulnerability Index

- ❖ Indian scientists and researchers in collaboration with state authorities prepared a ‘vulnerability index’ of the 12 Himalayan states based on district-level data.
- ❖ The target was to evolve a common methodology, and determine how districts there are equipped to deal with the vagaries of climate change.
- ❖ Vulnerability would be a measure of the inherent risks a district faces, primarily by virtue of its geography and socio-economic situation.
- ❖ Eight key parameters on the basis of which a vulnerability score could be generated are

Percentage of Forest Cover	Yield variability of food grain
Area under slope >30%	Average-man days under MGNREGA scheme
Population density	IMR Rate
Female literacy	Percentage of BPL Families

- ❖ On a scale ranging 0-1, 1 indicating the highest possible level of vulnerability, at the top of the scale were Assam with a score of 0.72 and Mizoram at 0.71.

- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology eventually plans to have a climate portal for all the states, whereby users can zoom it on any district in the country and get a sense of what kind of risks in Climate and Socio-economic are present.



Global Environment Outlook 2019

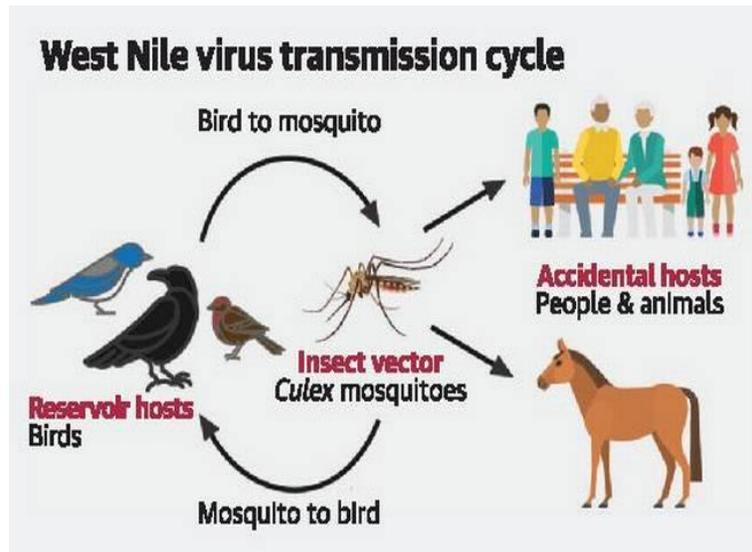
- ❖ The United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has released the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook, 2019 (GEO) titled 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People'.
- ❖ It was first published in 1997. This is 6th edition of GEO and GEOs are the most important and comprehensive report from UNEP.
- ❖ This report states that Human activities are degrading the global environment at a pace that could endanger the "ecological foundations of society" and human health.
- ❖ In addition to climate change, pollution and loss of biodiversity are the major crises.

STATES

West Nile fever

- ❖ A seven-year-old boy from Malappuram district, Kerala has been diagnosed with West Nile fever, a relatively unknown viral infection in the Malabar region in recent times.
- ❖ West Nile fever is spread by Culex mosquitoes.

- ❖ Its symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body, and swollen lymph glands.



- ❖ The World Health Organisation (WHO) says West Nile virus transmits to humans through bites from infected mosquitoes.
- ❖ Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds.

GI Tag for Coffee

- ❖ The Geographical Indications (GI) Registry has approved the GI tag for the following coffee varieties:

Variety of Coffee	Location and Characteristics
Coorg Arabica	Kodagu Region – Unique biotic and abiotic conditions of the region give unique aroma and flavour to the coffee when roasted
Chikmagalur	Karnataka – It is the region where coffee cultivation first began
Bababudangiri	Karnataka - Selectively hand-picked and processed by natural fermentation, the cup exhibits full body, acidity, mild flavour and striking aroma with a note of chocolate which makes it unique.

Araku Valley Arabica	Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh and Koraput district in Odisha - pleasant acidity with a citrus note of grapefruit and a mild jaggery-like sweetness with light to medium strength.
Wayanad Robusta	Kerala – This is raised both as a pure crop and as mixed crop along with pepper in the Wayanad region of Kerala.

SPORTS

Special Olympics 2019

- ❖ The Special Olympics World Games kicked off in Abu Dhabi at Zayed Sports City Stadium.
- ❖ Special Olympics are conducted for athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- ❖ The Olympic torch is named 'The Flame of Hope' and the games' anthem is 'Right where I am supposed to be.'



MISCELLANEOUS

Gurkha Battalion

- ❖ British Government has announced plans to raise an additional Gurkha Battalion.

- ❖ 3rd Battalion of Royal Gurkha Rifles will be established as a Specialised Infantry Battalion with approximately 300 personnel.
- ❖ The Anglo-Nepalese War (1814-16) was fought between British and Gorkha Dynasty.
- ❖ The British were impressed by the discipline and ferocity of Gurkha soldiers.
- ❖ Gorkhas were later integrated into British Army.
