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Declaration of SIMI as Unlawful Association extended

Context: The government has renewed the designation of 'Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI)' as an 'Unlawful Association' for five more years under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) 1967.

- The most recent ban on SIMI was enforced through Gazette Notification Number S.O. 564(E) on January 31, 2019.
- SIMI is persistently engaged in activities that promote terrorism and disrupt peace and communal harmony in the country.
- These actions are detrimental to the sovereignty, security, and integrity of India.
- Numerous criminal cases have been filed against SIMI and its members under various sections of the law, including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- **Process to Declare an Association Unlawful:**
 - **Notification to Tribunal:** Under Section 4 of the UAPA, the government is obligated to send a notification to the Unlawful Activities Prevention Tribunal within 30 days of issuing the gazette notification for the ban.
- **About the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA):**
 - **Enactment and Amendments:**
 - Enacted in 1967, the UAPA was later amended in 2004 and 2008 to be modelled as an anti-terror law.
 - In August 2019, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2019 was cleared by Parliament, allowing the designation of individuals as terrorists under specified grounds in the Act.
 - **Provisions:**
 - **Section 3:** Grants the government the power to declare an association as "unlawful," leading to criminalization of membership and forfeiture of the organization's properties.
 - **Section 4:** Mandates the government to notify the Unlawful Activities Prevention Tribunal within 30 days for ratification of the ban.
 - **Section 7:** Empowers the government to prohibit the use of funds of an unlawful association.
 - **Section 8:** Authorizes the notification and seizure of all places used by the unlawful association.
 - **UAPA Tribunal:**
 - **Constitution:** A tribunal is constituted by the government, consisting of a High Court judge.
 - **Powers:** The tribunal has the power to regulate its own procedure and possesses the same powers as a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
 - **Expenses:** All expenses incurred by the tribunal are borne out of the Consolidated Fund of India.
 - **Confirmation Process:**
 - Orders to declare an organization as "unlawful" are issued by the Centre under Section 3 of the UAPA.
 - The government order does not come into effect until the tribunal has confirmed it.

All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22

Context: The findings of the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22 were disclosed on January 25.

➤ Key Findings from AISHE 2021-22 Report:

- **Enrolment Growth:** The AISHE report, released on January 25, reveals a rise in student enrolment to 4.33 crores in 2021-22, compared to 4.14 crores in 2020-21 and 3.42 crores in 2014-15.
- **Survey Scope:** The survey encompasses 10,576 standalone institutions, 42,825 colleges, and 1,162 universities/university level institutions.
- **Female Enrolment Surge:**
 - Female enrolment has seen a consistent increase, reaching 2.07 crores in 2021-22, up by 32% from 1.5 crores in 2014-15.
 - Notably, the proportion of women in higher education has risen, with 55% of the additional 91 lakh students in 2021-22 being women.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI):**
 - The estimated GER for ages 18-23 is 28.4, with Chandigarh having the highest GER at 64.8%.
 - The GPI at the all-India level is 1.01, indicating gender parity, and state-wise GERs favours women in 26 states and Union Territories.
- **Discipline Preferences:**
 - Arts dominates undergraduate enrolment at 34.2%, followed by science (14.8%), commerce (13.3%), and engineering/technology (11.8%).
 - At the postgraduate level, the Master of Arts (MA) program leads with 40.7% of total enrolment.
- **Government Institution Preference:** 73.7% of students attend government universities, despite constituting only 58.6% of all universities.
- **Graduation Demographics:**
 - In the 2021-22 academic year, an estimated 1.07 crores students graduated, with 50.8% being women.
 - Around 35% of graduates belong to Other Backward Classes (OBC), 13% to Scheduled Caste (SC), and 5.7% to Scheduled Tribe (ST).
 - Arts and social sciences streams exhibit higher graduation rates at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
 - Notably, the highest number of PhD graduates is in the science stream.

➤ All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE)

- Initiated by the Ministry of Education since 2010-11, the Annual AISHE serves to portray the status of higher education in India.
- The web-based survey collects extensive data on parameters such as teachers, student enrolment, programs, examination results, and education finance.
- Calculations of crucial educational development indicators, including Institution Density, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Pupil-teacher ratio, Gender Parity Index, and Per Student Expenditure, are derived from AISHE data.
- Launched in 2011, AISHE covers all higher educational institutions within Indian Territory.

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- The primary objectives are to identify and catalogue higher learning institutions, gather comprehensive data on various aspects of higher education, and inform policy decisions and research for sector development.
- The survey includes institutions nationwide, providing detailed insights into student enrolment, teacher data, infrastructure, and financial aspects without redundancy.

Neural Network

Context: In a study published in the journal *Nature*, researchers have announced the identification of a novel category of antibiotics leveraging deep learning and neural networks, a technology garnering increased interest.

➤ What is a neural network?

- A neural network is a computational model inspired by the structure and function of the human brain, designed to process complex data and make decisions.
- It consists of interconnected nodes, or neurons, organized in layers, with each layer responsible for specific computations.
- Neural networks learn from data by adjusting the strengths of connections between neurons, enabling them to recognize patterns and make predictions.

➤ Why are neural networks important?

- Neural networks play a crucial role in artificial intelligence by enabling machines to perform tasks that were previously only possible for humans.
- They excel at handling unstructured data, extracting meaningful insights, and making accurate predictions, making them invaluable in various industries.
- Their ability to continuously learn and improve from experience makes them adaptable to changing environments and evolving datasets.

➤ What are neural networks used for?

- Neural networks have diverse applications across industries, including healthcare, finance, telecommunications, and entertainment.

- In healthcare, they aid in medical image analysis, disease diagnosis, and drug discovery.
- In finance, they are used for stock market prediction, fraud detection, and risk assessment.
- In telecommunications, they enhance speech recognition, language translation, and network optimization.
- In entertainment, they power recommendation systems, content creation, and gaming algorithms.

➤ How do neural networks work?

- Neural networks consist of an input layer, one or more hidden layers, and an output layer.
- Each neuron in a layer receives input from neurons in the previous layer, processes it using a mathematical function, and passes the result to neurons in the next layer.
- During training, the network adjusts the weights of connections between neurons based on the error between predicted and actual outputs, using optimization algorithms like gradient descent.
- This iterative process of forward and backward propagation allows the network to learn from data and improve its performance over time.

➤ What are the types of neural networks?

- Feedforward neural networks are the simplest type, with data flowing in one direction from input to output layers.
- Recurrent neural networks have connections that form cycles, allowing them to process sequential data and capture temporal dependencies.
- Convolutional neural networks are specialized for image processing tasks, leveraging convolutional layers to extract features from images and classify objects.
- Generative adversarial networks consist of two neural networks, the generator and the discriminator, competing against each other to generate realistic data samples.

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Students Islamic Movement of India



About Students Islamic Movement of India:

- The Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) is a **banned terrorist organization** that was **formed in 1977**.
- The organization's stated **mission is to "liberate" India by converting it to an Islamic land**.
- The organization aims to use students and young people to spread Islam and gain support for "Jehaad" (religious war).
- It's stated goal is to establish **Dar-ul-Islam** (Land of Islam) by either forcefully converting everyone to Islam or by violence.
- It was **formed at Aligarh Muslim University** in Uttar Pradesh.
- In **1993**, it declared itself to be independent.
- The jihadist group Indian Mujahideen was founded as an offshoot of SIMI by several radicalized members.
- It was declared an "unlawful association" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for the first time in **2001, after the 9/11 attacks**.

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Parliamentary Committee



Recently, a parliamentary committee examining a Bill seeking to raise the age of marriage of women from the present 18 to 21 has been given another extension to table its report.

About Parliamentary Committee:

- A parliamentary committee is a **group of Members of Parliament (MPs)** that is **appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the Speaker or Chairman**.
- The committee **works under the direction of the Speaker or Chairman** and presents its report to the House or to the Speaker or Chairman.
- There are two types of parliamentary committees including **Ad hoc Committees** and **Standing committees**.
- Ad hoc committees are **appointed for a specific purpose** and cease to exist when they finish their task and submit a report.
- Standing committees are **permanent and regular committees**.
- The Parliamentary Committee was originated in the British Parliament and derive their authority from **Article 105 and Article 118**.

Humboldt's Enigma



About Humboldt's Enigma:

- Humboldt's enigma is a **concept that describes the mystery** of why some mountain regions, particularly in the tropics, have extremely high biodiversity.
- Alexander von Humboldt** proposed the concept of Humboldt's enigma in the **19th century**.
- It is a puzzle because it seems to **contradict the common belief** that the highest diversity on Earth occurs in the rain forest ecosystems around the equator.
- Proponents of Humboldt's enigma **believe that the earth's tropical** areas by themselves don't contain all the bio-diverse regions.
- They believe that many areas outside the tropics are highly bio-diverse, such as mountains.
- The National Mission on Himalayan Studies** was **launched in 2015-16** to study biodiversity in India.

UNRWA



Recently, the UN officials urged countries to resume funding for UNRWA, promising strict action against any staff linked to Hamas attack on Israel.

About UNRWA:

- UNRWA stands for the **United Nations Relief and Works Agency** for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.
- It was **founded in 1949** to provide aid to Palestinian refugees who were displaced during the **1948 Arab-Israeli war**.
- It operates in **Gaza**, the **Israeli-occupied West Bank**, **Lebanon**, **Syria** and **Jordan**.
- It **provides education, health, relief, social services, microfinance** and emergency assistance programs to Palestinian refugees.

Personality in News

Mahatma Gandhi

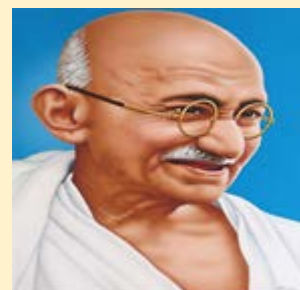
Today, the nation pays homage to the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 76th death anniversary.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (2nd October 1869- 30th January 1948)

Mahatma Gandhi, an **Indian lawyer, prominent freedom fighter** and political leader in India was born at **Porbandar** in **Gujarat**.

Contributions:

- Mahatma Gandhi led the first satyagraha movement in **1917**, the Champaran Satyagraha, to **fight for the rights of peasants**.
- He led several other movements, including the **Non-Cooperation movement in 1920**, the **Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930**, and the **Quit India Movement in 1942**.
- Gandhi also led a civil disobedience action against the British **government's salt tariff in 1930**.
- He led the Quit India Movement in **1942** with the slogan of **"Do or Die"** against the British rule and India's involvement in **World War II**.



Ethical Values:

Humility, Compassion, Forgiveness and Tolerance, None-Violence, etc.

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Place in News

Ukraine

Recently, the Ukraine's energy ministry announced plans to construct four new nuclear reactors at the Khmelnytskyi plant, aiming to make it Europe's largest.



Ukraine (Capital: Kyiv)

Location: Ukraine is located in **eastern Europe** and is the **second-largest country on the continent**, after **Russia**.

Boundaries: Ukraine shares its border with **Russia** (East and North), **Poland**, **Slovakia** and **Hungary** (West), **Belarus** (North), **The Black Sea** and the **Sea of Azov** (South), **Moldova** and **Romania** (Southwest)

Physical Features:

- Ukraine's highest point is **Hoverla Mountain**.
- Ukraine is the home to the **world's longest wind instrument** and the **second-deepest subway station**.
- Some important natural resources are also found in Ukraine including **lithium**, **natural gas**, **kaolin**, etc.
- The **Dnieper**, **Siverskyi Donets**, **Dniester** and the **Southern Bug rivers** flow south into the Black Sea and the smaller Sea of Azov.

POINTS TO PONDER

- **What environment do Emperor Penguins primarily inhabit, as highlighted by recent discoveries in Antarctica?** - Pack ice and surrounding marine areas in Antarctica
- **In which city was the '84th All India Presiding Officers' Conference' held, featuring key legislative discussions?** - Mumbai
- **What is the significance of 'Armado,' India's first Armoured Light Specialist Vehicle (ALSV), recently introduced?** - Armoured Light Specialist Vehicle (ALSV)
- **Who recently made history as the first woman to attain the rank of Subedar in the Indian Army?** - Preeti Rajak
- **What sector does the 'Market Access Initiative (MAI) scheme' primarily focus on, as seen in recent discussions?** - Export promotion scheme

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