

e-Sanjeevani Tele-Consultation Services

❖ Context

- Recently, In a significant achievement, eSanjeevani, Govt. of India's free telemedicine service, has crossed another astounding milestone by clocking 8 crore teleconsultations.

Key Highlights

- In less than 3 years, this initiative has garnered the distinction of being the world's largest government owned telemedicine platform.
- Now the **common citizens will also be able to take advice from the big doctors of the country.**
- Government is strengthening the primary healthcare network with **Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre.**
- More than **one lakh 17 thousand Health and Wellness Centers** have been operationalized in the country so far.
- eSanjeevani is a cohesive part of Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission (ABDM), and more than 45,000 ABHA IDs have been generated via eSanjeevani application.

Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness

- In February 2018, the Government of India **announced the creation of 1,50,000 Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs).**
- It was created by **transforming existing Sub Centers and Primary Health Centers** as the base pillar of Ayushman Bharat.
- These centers would deliver **Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC).**
- It would bring **healthcare closer to the homes** of people covering both maternal and child health services and non-communicable diseases, including free essential drugs and diagnostic services.
- Primary healthcare plays a vital role in preventing many disease conditions.
- Providing **CPHC decreases morbidity and mortality at a lower cost** and greatly reduces the requirement for secondary and tertiary care.

About e-Sanjeevani Tele-Consultation Services

- eSanjeevani **developed by** the Mohali branch of the Center for **Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).**
- The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has launched two variants of eSanjeevani namely –
 - Doctor to doctor (eSanjeevani AB-HWC) in the hub and spoke model.
 - Patient to doctor (eSanjeevaniOPD).
- **eSanjeevani AB-HWC**
 - It is being implemented **under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Center (AB-HWC).**
 - It aims to implement **tele-consultation in all the 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centers** in conjunction with identified medical college hospitals in a 'Hub and Spoke' model.
 - States have identified and set up dedicated 'Hubs' in medical colleges and district hospitals to provide tele-consultation service
- **eSanjeevaniOPD**
 - It was launched to **enable patient-to-doctor telemedicine** owing to the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020.
 - It enables **virtual meetings between the patients and doctors** & specialists from geographically dispersed locations, through video conferencing that occurs in real-time.
- Leading states for usage of this platform are: Andhra Pradesh > West Bengal > Karnataka > Tamil Nadu > Maharashtra.

Sponge Bleaching Event

❖ Context

- **New Zealand** recorded the largest-ever sponge bleaching event off its southern coastline earlier this year.

Key highlights

- The species, cup sponge ***Cymbastella lamellata***, was affected by a prolonged marine heatwave that turned millions of the normally dark brown sponges bright white.
- **Tissue loss, decay and death** of other sponge species across the northern coastline of New Zealand had also been reported.

Sponges bleaching

- Like corals, sponges contain **symbiotic organisms** critical to their survival.
- ***Cymbastella lamellata*** is unusual in that it hosts dense populations of **diatoms**, small **single-celled photosynthetic plants** that give the sponge its brown colour.
- These diatoms live within the sponge tissue, **exchanging food for protection.**
- When the sponge bleaches, it expels the diatoms, leaving the sponge skeleton exposed.





About the sponges

- Sponges are among the most ancient and abundant animals on rocky reefs across the world.
- In New Zealand, they occupy up to 70% of the available seafloor, particularly in so-called **mesophotic ecosystems** at depths of 30-150m.
- They serve a number of important ecological functions
 - Filter large quantities of water.
 - Capture small food particles.
 - Move carbon from the water column to the seafloor where it can be eaten by bottom-dwelling invertebrates.
 - Add three-dimensional complexity to the sea floor, which provides habitat for a range of other species such as crabs, shrimps and starfish.

- **Tissue loss** occurs when sponges are stressed and either has to invest more energy into cell repair or when their food source is depleted and they reabsorb their own tissue to reduce body volume and reallocate resources.
- **Tissue decay or necrosis** on the other hand is generally associated with changes in the microbial communities living within sponges and growth of pathogenic bacteria.

Marine Heat Wave

- Marine heatwaves are defined as **unusual periods of warming that last for five consecutive days or longer**.
- Some can last from weeks to several months and extend over hundreds or thousands of kilometres of coastline.
- The sponge bleaching and tissue loss or decay in New Zealand matched the duration and intensity of marine heatwaves to the north and south of New Zealand during the summer of 2021/2022.
- The **Hauraki Gulf**, where sponge necrosis and decay was reported, was in a continuous marine heatwave for 29 weeks from November 2021 to the end of May 2022, with a maximum intensity of 3.77°C above normal.
- These extreme heat events can result from a **combination of changes in the heat exchange** between the air and the sea, wind patterns and ocean currents.
- Their likelihood is also influenced by large-scale climate patterns such as the **El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**.

News in Between the Lines

Monetary Policy Committee



❖ Context

- Recently, RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Wednesday hiked the repo rate by 35 basis points (bps) to 6.25 per cent with immediate effect.

❖ Key Highlights

- The RBI policy rate is now at its **highest level since August 2018**.
- The RBI's GDP growth forecast for the current financial year (FY23) is seen at **6.8 per cent**.
- RBI sees the FY23 CPI estimate at 6.7 per cent.

❖ About Monetary Policy Committee

- Under **Section 45ZB** of the amended **RBI Act, 1934**, the central government is empowered to constitute a **six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)**.
- The **first such MPC** was constituted on **September 29, 2016**.
- **Functions**
 - It **determines the policy interest rate** required to achieve the inflation target.
 - **Decisions are taken by majority** with the **Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie**.
- The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee shall be **binding on the Bank**.



➤ Composition

- Six members (including the Chairman)-
 - RBI Governor as its ex-officio chairperson
 - The Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy
 - An officer of the Bank to be nominated by the Central Board
 - **Three persons to be appointed by the central government.**

❖ Context

- Recently, Oil prices surged higher, after a **Group of Seven (G7)**, European Union and Australian proposal imposing a price cap on Russian seaborne oil came into effect on Monday.

❖ About G7

- The G7 (Group of Seven) is an **organization of the world's seven largest so-called "advanced" economies.**
- They dominate global trade and the international financial system.
- Together the member countries represent **40% of global GDP and 10% of the world's population.**
- They are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the United States.
- **Russia joined in 1998**, creating the G8, but **was excluded in 2014** for its takeover of Crimea.
- The **EU is not a member of the G7** but attends the annual summit.
- The G7 has **no legal existence, permanent secretariat or official members.**
- It also has no binding impact on policy and all decisions and commitments made at G7 meetings need to be ratified independently by governing bodies of member states.

G7



❖ Context

- At 9.4 out of a maximum possible score of 10, **India's Social Hostilities Index (SHI) in 2020** was worse than neighbouring Pakistan and Afghanistan, and a further increase in its own index value for 2019, the Pew data showed.

❖ Key Highlights

- India was among a handful of countries that **saw religious hostilities in the early stages of the covid-19** pandemic in 2020.
- Among the most populous countries, **India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Egypt and Bangladesh** had "very high" social hostilities involving religion.
- India fared much better on a second index: **The Government Restrictions Index (GRI).**
 - This index looks at laws, policies and state actions restricting religious beliefs and practices.
 - **China ranked the worst in GRI**, with a score of 9.3. India's 34th rank was enough to categorize it among countries with "high" levels of such government restrictions.

❖ About SHI

- It is being released by US think-tank Pew Research Center.
- The report covered 198 countries.
- The SHI measures acts of religious hostility by private individuals, organizations or groups.
- The index comprises 13 metrics, including **religion-related armed conflict or terrorism and mob or sectarian violence.**

Social Hostilities Index (SHI)



Square Kilometre Array



❖ Context

- The construction begins on the **world's largest radio telescope** after 30 years of preparations.

❖ Background

- Unlike optical telescopes, **radio telescopes** can detect invisible gas and, therefore, they can reveal areas of space that may be obscured by cosmic dust.
- The first radio signals were detected by physicist **Karl Jansky** in the 1930s.
- The **Arecibo telescope in Puerto Rico**, which was the second-largest single-dish radio telescope in the world built in 1963, had collapsed in December 2020.

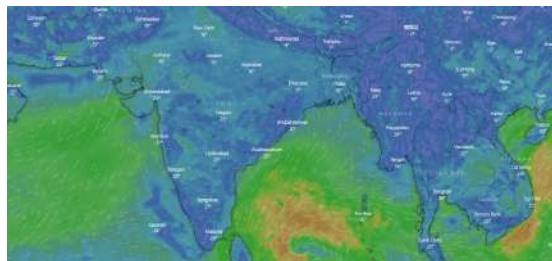
❖ About SKAO

- It will be located at remote sites namely in South Africa's Northern Cape **dry Karoo region** and **Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara**, Western Australia - called SKA-Mid and SKA-Low respectively.
- The SKA-Mid will pick up frequencies between **350 megahertz and 15.4 gigahertz**. South Africa's 64-dish **MeerKAT telescope** already exists on the site, and will be incorporated into SKA-Mid.
- The SKA-Low will detect frequencies between **50 megahertz and 350 megahertz**. The 'Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara', name is selected by the traditional owners of the land, the **Wajarri Yamaji**, means 'Sharing sky and stars'.
- Both are **interferometers**, in which many dish-shaped antennas together act as a single telescope.
- Its establishment was approved by SKAO (Square Kilometre Array Observatory) Council in 2021.
- Their operation, maintenance and construction will be overseen by SKAO.

❖ About SKAO

- SKAO is a new intergovernmental organisation dedicated to radio astronomy and is headquartered in the UK.
- At the moment, organisations from ten countries are a part of the SKAO. These include **Australia, Canada, China, India, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK**.

Cyclone Mandous



❖ Context

- According to the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) latest cyclone update, a low pressure area formed over the south Andaman Sea.

❖ Key highlights

- The **sluggish moving storm system** may subsequently strengthen further into a cyclone over southwest Bay of Bengal and move towards the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts.
- It is a slow moving cyclone. **Slow-moving cyclones** often absorb a lot of moisture, carry a humongous amount of rainfall and gain strength in the form of wind speeds.
- The reason for its sluggish movement can be a **high pressure system** over Thailand and the south Andaman Sea which has created a change in the steering environment of the cyclonic system.
- **Steering environment** is constituted by the winds around the cyclone that help in its movement and aid in its intensification or de-intensification.
- The name 'Mandous' has been suggested by the **United Arab Emirates**.



ChatGPT



❖ Context

- A new AI chatbot has gone viral because of the kind of responses it gives, being seen as a replacement for much of the daily mundane writing.

❖ Key highlights

- ChatGPT is a '**conversational**' AI introduced by OpenAI.
- It is trained to predict the next word on a large dataset of text and can write poems, articles, books, tweets and code.
- It can also answer follow-up questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests.
- It is based on the **company's GPT 3.5 series of language learning models (LLM)**.
- GPT stands for **Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3**. It is a kind of computer language model that relies on deep learning techniques to produce human-like text based on inputs.
- It was also trained using "**Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF)**".
- OpenAI is a non-profit AI research company whose DALL-E AI can generate images from text description.

Uniform Banking Code for Foreign Exchange Transaction



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❖ Context

- The Delhi High Court has sought the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) response to a plea seeking direction to the Centre to implement a Uniform Banking Code for Foreign Exchange Transaction

❖ Key highlights

- According to the plea, Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) and Instant Money Payment System (IMPS) should not be used for depositing foreign money in Indian banks.
- Instead, a **Foreign Inward Remittance Certificate (FIRC)** must be issued.
- All International and Indian banks must send the link through SMS to get FIRC automatically in case foreign exchange is being deposited in the account as converted INR (rupees).
- Just as Immigration Rules for VISA are the same for all foreigners, similarly **deposit details** in Indian banks, including foreign bank branches for Foreign Exchange Transaction, **must be in the same format for all**.
- These include export payment in current account or salary in savings account or donation in charity's current account or service charges payment in youtuber's accounts.
- Every foreign exchange transaction includes the name and number of depositors, names of the currency and the exact amount of foreign currency and conversion rate.
- The plea claims that the Uniform Banking Code will control bribery, black money, benami transaction, tax evasion, money laundering, profiteering, grain hoarding, food adulteration, human trafficking, drug trafficking, black marketing, fraud.

