Gender Inequality In Judiciary

❖ Context

➢ Outgoing Supreme Court judge mentioned **that gender inequality exists** in the judiciary while acknowledging the "very low" representation of women.

Key Highlights:

- **Speaking at a farewell** function organised in his honour by the Supreme Court Bar Association, Justice Nazeer said "there is always room for improvements and changes. For instance, if I were to say that Indian judiciary is immune from gender inequality that exists within our society**, I can't be further away from the reality".**
- The representation of women in judiciary is still very low.

What is the Status of Women in the Indian judicial System?

- The Supreme Court had four women justices out of the sitting 33 that makes it just **12% in 2022.**
- **In High Courts**, women judges constitute 11.5%.
- Of the 1.7 million advocates, only **15% are women**.
- **Only 2%** of the elected representatives in the State Bar Councils are women.
- **There is no woman** member in the Bar Council of India.

What causes the low representation of women in the Indian judicial system?

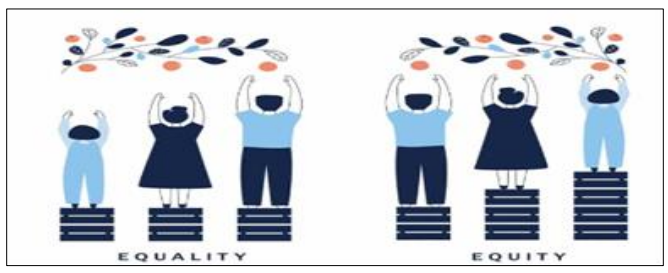
- **Client's preference** for male advocates.
- **Uncomfortabl**e environment within courtrooms.
- **Lack of infrastructure**, crowded courtrooms, lack of washrooms for women etc.
- The survey found out that out of 6,000 trial courts, **nearly 22% have no toilets for women.**

Why do we need women judges?

- Women judges contribute far more to justice than just improving its appearance, they also have an impact on the decision-making & thus to the quality of the justice.
- They bring those lived experiences to the judicial actions that tend towards a **more empathetic and comprehensive perspective.**
- By elucidating how the laws can be based on **gender stereotypes** and how they have a different impact on men and women, **a gender perspective uplifts the fairness of the adjudication**.

What is the difference between gender equality and gender parity?

- **Gender equality** means that an individual's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not be determined by the sex they are assigned at birth.
- **While gender equity** is the equal treatment or treatment that might be considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities.



Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) Scheme

❖ Context

➢ Recently, officials said that **a total of 165,382 schools** spread across 29 states and Union territories have so far applied with the ministry of education for an upgrade under the **Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) scheme.**

Key Highlights:

- The **maximum number of schools** that have applied for the selection are from-
  - Uttar Pradesh (37,065), Rajasthan (21,317), Madhya Pradesh (19,508), Maharashtra (16,614), and Andhra Pradesh (13, 455).

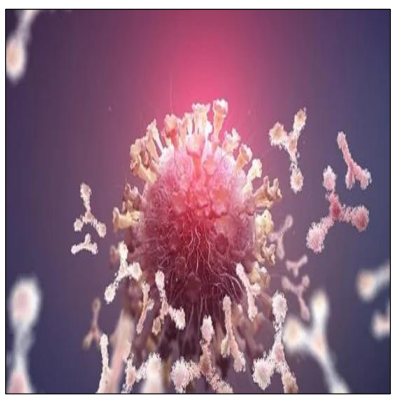
PM SHRI

- **About**
  - The Cabinet approved a new C**entrally Sponsored Scheme** named **PM SHRI** on 7th September 2022.
  - Under the scheme, **14,597 existing schools will be selected** from amongst those managed by the Central government, States, Union Territories and local bodies.
  - The Centre expects **18 lakh students to directly benefit from the scheme.**
- **Key Features of the Scheme**
  - Schools will be **redeveloped as model institutions,** or PM Shri Schools, to **fulfil the objectives of the NEP 2020.**
  - These schools will **deliver quality teaching** for the cognitive development of students & strive to create individuals equipped with key 21st-century skills.
  - These schools will be **equipped with modern infrastructure** including labs, smart classrooms, libraries, sports equipment, art room etc.
  - These shall also be **developed as green schools** with water conservation, waste recycling, energy-efficient infrastructure and integration of organic lifestyle in curriculum.
- **Funding and Implementation**
  - It will be implemented with a total project cost of ₹27,360 crore, with ₹18,128 crore being the Centre's share, for five years from 2022-23 to 2026-27.
  - States or UT will sign a memorandum of understanding agreeing to **"implement the NEP in entirety.**
- **Eligibility**
  - All elementary schools (Classes 1-5 or 1-8).
  - Secondary (Classes 1-10 or 6-10).
  - Senior secondary schools (Classes 1-12 or 6-12).
  - They should be **managed either by the Centre, State, UT, or local bodies** and have a **UDISE+** (Unified District Information for Education Pus) code can apply.

- **School Selection Process**
  - Schools that fulfil the minimum benchmark (by analysis of UDISE+ data) will be shortlisted.
  - The last stage will be challenge-based.
  - Teams from States, Kendriya Vidyalaya or Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya schools will visit the applicant institution to inspect and verify claims.
  - They will then recommend the selected schools to the Ministry of Education.
  - The Ministry will **select a maximum of two schools** — one elementary and the second either secondary or senior secondary — **from a block or urban local body.**
  - **UDISE**
    - It is a platform which **collects information** on a school's profile, physical infrastructure, teachers, enrolments, results, etc. through an online Data Collection Form that contains information on multiple performance indicators.

News in Between the Lines

Virovore



❖ **Context**

- Recently, researchers claimed that the **first known "virovore"- an organism that eats viruses- has been found.**

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- Scientists found that **a species of Halteria** - who are microscopic ciliates that populate freshwater throughout the world - can eat huge numbers of infectious chloroviruses.
- Both **share an aquatic habitat.**

❖ **About Virovore**

- A virovore is an organism which **obtains energy and nutrients from the consumption of viruses.**
- The term technically refers to organisms which primarily or solely consume viruses but currently only includes organisms which derive primary nutritional benefit from the consumption of viruses when no other food sources are available, akin to a form of microbiological omnivory.
- Virovory is the **most recently discovered form of sustenance** that a living organism can rely upon for its energy needs.
- It has been identified as an **actual species of protist** that feasts on viruses.
- These virus-eating species of protists which are their kingdom on the tree of life and are not an animal, plants, or fungi are now classified as Virovores.
- They're **made up of nucleic acids, nitrogen, and phosphorus.**

Gangasagar Mela

❖ **Context**

- Recently, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee demanded a 'national status' for the 'Gangasagar mela'.

❖ **Key highlights:**

- Gangasagar Mela **takes place every year on the island of Gangasagar** in the state's 24 South Parganas.
- Every year during Gangasagar mela, devotees from all over the country gather at the **confluence of the Ganga and the Bay of Bengal** to take a sacred dip during Makar Sankranti (mid-January).
- Gangasagar island is in the Ganges delta located on the continental shelf of the Bay of Bengal roughly 100 kilometres (54 nautical miles) south of Kolkata.
- The mela is said to be India's second largest pilgrimage gathering after the Kumbh Mela.

Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project in Himachal Pradesh

❖ **Context**

- Recently, The government approved Rs 2,614.51 crore investment for the **Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project in Himachal Pradesh.**

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- **Capacit**- 382 MW.
- **Set up by**- Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited.
- **Location**- The project will come up **over the river Sutlej** covering both Shimla and Mandi districts. It is expected to be completed in five years.
- **Type**- It is a run of river type scheme designed to harness hydropower potential of Satluj river.
- **Significance**

- It will **meet the growing need for power** for industry, agriculture and rural electrification keeping the sustainability aspect as a focus area.
- It will **encourage entrepreneurship opportunities** within the country besides promoting employment and socio-economic development of the region.

National Single Window System Portal

❖ **Context**

- Recently, Over **75 thousand approvals granted on National Single Window System Portal** for various Central and State/UTs clearances.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- NSWS portal was **launched in 2021.**
- It is a **one-stop digital platform** that aims at allowing investors **to apply for various pre-operations approvals** required for commencing a business in the country.
- Currently, Investors can apply for approvals from **27 Central Ministries/Departments and 19 States/UTs** on the portal.
- This portal will help in bringing **Transparency, Accountability & Responsiveness** in the ecosystem.
- All information will be **available on a single dashboard.**
- It will also provide strength to other schemes like Make in India, Startup India, PLI scheme etc.

Village Defence Committees

❖ **Context**

- Recently, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor assured the people that they would get a **Village Defence Committee (VDC)** on the lines of those in Doda district.

❖ **Village Defence Committee (VDC)**

- The VDCs were **first formed in the erstwhile Doda district** (now Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban districts) **in mid 1990s** as a force multiplier against militant attacks.
- The then Jammu and Kashmir administration decided to **provide residents of remote hilly villages with weapons** and **give them arms training** to defend themselves.
- The **VDCs have now been renamed as Village Defence Guards (VDG).**
- The new scheme to set up VDGs in vulnerable areas of J&K was approved by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs in March last year.
- Like a VDC member, each VDG will be provided a gun and 100 rounds of ammunition.
- The VDGs, will **function under the direction of the SP/SSP** of the district concerned.

Eat Right Station By FSSAI

❖ **Context**

- Indian Railways' Varanasi Cantt Railway Station has been awarded **a 5- star 'Eat Right Station' certification** for providing high-quality, nutritious food to passengers.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- The 'Eat Right Station' certification is awarded by FSSAI to railway stations that set benchmarks in **providing safe and wholesome food to passengers**.
- **The 5-star rating indicates** full compliance by the station to ensure safe and hygienic food is available to passenger.
- The station is awarded a certificate upon a conclusion of an FSSAI-empaneled third-party audit agency with ratings from 1 to 5.
- The certification is part of the **'Eat Right India' movement-** a large-scale effort by FSSAI to transform the country's food system to ensure safe, & sustainable food for all Indians.
- Eat Right India adopts a judicious mix of regulatory, capacity building, collaborative, & empowerment approaches to ensure that our food is suitable both for the people & the planet.

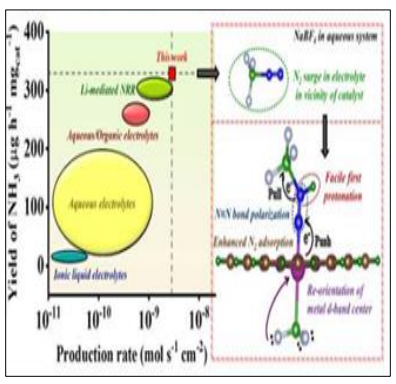
New Electrolyte Found Can Help Better Ammonia Synthesis

❖ **Context**

- **A new aqueous electrolyte** that can help make electrochemical ammonia synthesis more efficient will be useful for industries producing green energy or hydrogen.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- Scientists from Institute of Nano Science and Technology **(INST) Mohali,** an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology (DST), have introduced a **new electrolyte called (NaBF4**).



- It not only **acts as an N2-carrier** in the medium but also works as a full-fledged "co-**catalyst"** along with active material transition metal-doped non carbon (MnN4) to **deliver high yield of ammonia (NH3)** at absolutely ambient experimental conditions.
- The high production rate of NH3 approached industrial scale and **exceeded almost all the standard catalysts** in any other electrolyte medium.
- The source of NH3 was thoroughly studied and confirmed to be chiefly from the electrochemical reduction of the purged N2 gas (make it N2 saturated electrolyte to **convert N2 to NH3**).
- This research published in the journal PNAS is a novel approach to get through the **long-standing issues about the solubility of N2 in aqueous medium** and achieve industrial scale production rate of ammonia by NRR at ambient condition.
- **A patent has been filed** for this work and the scientists are now working towards making electrolyzer for rapid rate of ammonia production at an industrial scale.

Arudra Darshan Festival

❖ **Context**

- Thousands of devotees from Cuddalore and neighbouring districts witnessed the procession of Sri Sabanayagar temple, popularly known as Sri Natarajar temple in Chidambaram, during the **Arudra Darshan festival, one of the major events.**

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- It is essentially a **Shaivite festival** and celebrates the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva, which is represented by the Nataraja form.
- Arudra Darshan is one of the most auspicious days associated with Lord Shiva. It is **dedicated to the cosmic dance of Shiva**.
- **Arudhra signifies the golden red flame** and Shiva performs the dance in the form of this red-flamed light.
- The cosmic dance of Lord Shiva represents five activities – **Creation, Protection, Destruction, Embodiment and Release.**
- In essence, it represents the **continuous cycle of creation and destruction**. This cosmic dance takes place in every particle and is the source of all energy. Arudra Darshan celebrates this ecstatic dance of Lord Shiva.
- Arudra Darshan is of **great importance at the Chidambaram Nataraja Temple** and marks the conclusion of Margazhi Brahmotsavam.

National Commission Of Child Rights

❖ **Context**

- NCPCR issues notice over alleged **use of minors in Haldwani protest.**
- It mentioned that **children of tender age have been brought to the protest site in these adverse weather conditions** which can prove to be dangerous for their health and wellbeing.

❖ **About NCPCR:**

- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights was established in March 2007 **under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.**
- **The commission's mandate** is to ensure that all laws, policies, programs and administrative systems conform to the vision of the rights of the child as enunciated in the Constitution of India as well as the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.**
- A child is defined as a person falling in the age group of **0 to 18 years**.
- **The Commission envisages a rights-based perspective**, which flows into national policies and programmes, including defined responses at the state, district and block levels, taking into account the specifics and strengths of each region.
- The Commission envisages an **indispensable role for the state** to ensure children and their well-being.