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## Purana Qila Excavations push the History of Delhi to Mauryan Era

**Context:** Mauryan age artifacts have been found in the recent excavation of Purana Qila

### Salient points about the excavation

- Excavations at **Delhi's Purana Qila (Old Fort)** have revealed a continuous history of the city since the pre-Mauryan era.
- Shards of **Painted Gray Ware pottery**, dating from **1200 BC to 600 BC**, have been found at the site.
- Purana Qila is **believed to be the site of Indraprastha** mentioned in the Mahabharata.
- Various artifacts from different historical periods have been uncovered, including a **900-year-old Vaikuntha Vishnu**, a **terracotta plaque of Goddess Gaja Lakshmi**, a **2,500-year-old terracotta ring well**, and a **four-room complex from the Sunga-Kushan period**.
- The site has yielded **coins, seals, sealings, copper coins, and a bone needle**, indicating its role as a trade center.
- Ongoing excavations, **initiated in January 2023**, aim to establish a complete chronology of the site, with structures from the early Kushan level being exposed at a depth of 5.50 meters.
- **Previous excavations** were carried out in **2013-14, 2017-18, 1954, and 1969-73**.
- The findings from the current excavation **will provide further insights into the ancient city of Indraprastha**.
- An **Open-Air Site Museum will be established** at Purana Qila to showcase the recovered artifacts, including idols of Hindu deities, coins, and seals.
- The site's historical significance and artifacts are expected to **attract visitors, including delegates of the G-20 Summit**.



### Purana Qila:

- Purana Qila, also known as the Old Fort, was built by the Afghan ruler Sher Shah Suri in the 16th century.
- Construction of Purana Qila began in 1538 AD during the reign of Sher Shah Suri and was completed by the Mughal emperor Humayun.
- The fort holds significant historical importance as it is believed to be located at the site of Indraprastha, the legendary capital of the Pandavas mentioned in the Indian epic Mahabharata.
- Purana Qila, or the Old Fort, is predominantly made of red sandstone. The fort's walls, gateways, and bastions are constructed using this durable and visually striking material.
- Today, Purana Qila stands as a prominent historical monument, attracting visitors with its impressive architecture, serene surroundings, and the fascinating glimpses it offers into Delhi's ancient past.

## Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO)

**Context:** The reeling matter of Wrestlers protest has brought POCSO Act in News.

### Features of the Act:

- The **POSCO Act of 2012**, officially known as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, was passed by the Indian Parliament on May 22, 2012, and came into effect on November 14, 2012.
- The act was enacted to provide a comprehensive legal framework to protect children from sexual offenses, define various forms of sexual abuse, and establish stringent punishments for offenders.
- It categorizes different offenses against children, including but not limited to, penetrative sexual assault, non-penetrative assault, sexual harassment, and the use of children for pornographic purposes.
- The POSCO Act sets up special courts exclusively for the trial of cases related to child sexual abuse in order to ensure swift justice and reduce the trauma experienced by child victims during legal proceedings.

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- Offenders found guilty under the POSCO Act can face punishments ranging from imprisonment, including rigorous imprisonment, to fines. In cases of aggravated offenses resulting in the death of the child, the act provides for the death penalty.
- To support the implementation of the act, it mandates the establishment of Special Juvenile Police Units in each district, the appointment of child welfare committees, and the promotion of child-friendly procedures throughout the investigation and trial process.
- The POSCO Act also emphasizes the importance of prevention and awareness by requiring the government to conduct public awareness campaigns, provide education and sensitization programs on child rights and protection, and ensure the effective implementation of child-friendly mechanisms.
- The act has been instrumental in raising awareness about child sexual abuse and providing a legal framework to address the issue. It signifies a significant step towards safeguarding the rights and well-being of children in India.

When it comes to rights of a child, another body that comes to mind is the **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)**

### NCPCR:

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is a **statutory body** established under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- **It is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
- Under the act, **a Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.**
- It aims to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in harmony with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- **Composition:** This commission has a **chairperson and six members of which at least two should be women.**
  - All of them are **appointed by the Central Government for 3 years.**
  - **The maximum age to serve in the commission is 65 years for Chairman and 60 years for members.**

The salary and allowances payable to, and other terms and conditions of service of, the Chairperson and Members, shall be such as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

## City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) Project 2.0

**Context:** The Union Government has approved the second phase of CITIIS Project.

### Salient features:

- The Union government has approved the second phase of the CITIIS (City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain) **project under the Smart Cities Mission.**
- The project aims to promote **integrated waste management and climate-oriented** reform actions.
- CITIIS 2.0 will be **implemented in 18 cities** selected through a competition.
- It is a **four-year project (2023-2027)** implemented in partnership with the **French Development Agency (AFD), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), the European Union (EU), and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).**
- The funding includes a **loan of ₹1,760 crore from AFD and KfW**, split equally, and a technical assistance grant of ₹106 crore from the European Union.
- The project focuses on developing climate-resilient projects in smart cities, implementing **climate governance interventions** at the centre, state, and city levels, and promoting **climate adaptation and mitigation measures.**

### CITIIS Project (Phase 1 or 1.0)

- An all-India Challenge named CITIIS (Cities Investments to Innovate Integrate and Sustain) was launched in **July 2018** in partnership with

### KEY VALUES

Excellence in sustainable urban development

Innovation and integration

Participatory approaches

Relevance and feasibility

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Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and European Union.

- A loan of **EUR 100 million** will be extended by Agence Française de Développement (AFD), which shall be given as a grant to Smart Cities for implementation of **15 innovative projects selected through the All-India Challenge**.

The projects were in **four sectors – sustainable mobility, public open spaces, urban governance & ICT and social and organizational innovation in low-income settlements**.

## NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

### National Statistical Office (NSO)

**Context:** The NSO has published the GDP trends for Q4 of Financial Year 2022-23

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) is a government agency in India responsible for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of statistical data.
- It functions under the ambit of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
- It was formed in 2019 by merging the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) to create a unified entity for statistical activities.
- The NSO plays a crucial role in providing accurate and reliable statistical information for various sectors of the economy, including agriculture, industry, services, and social indicators.
- Its functions include conducting large-scale surveys and censuses, compiling national income accounts, estimating consumer price indices, and monitoring key economic indicators.
- The NSO's data and reports are used by policymakers, researchers, businesses, and the general public to make informed decisions, monitor economic trends, and formulate evidence-based policies.

### Savitribai Phule: Modern India's first female teacher

**Context:** A probe is set in place over a website named Indic Tales for derogatory remarks on Savitribai Phule

- Savitribai Phule was born on January 3, 1831, in Naigaon, Maharashtra, India.
- She co-founded the first girls' school in Pune, Maharashtra, in 1848, along with her husband Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. The school was named "Bhide Wada."
- Savitribai Phule also established a care center for pregnant rape victims and a home for widows called "Mahila Seva Mandal."
- Savitribai Phule's efforts and contributions have had a lasting impact on women's education and the fight against social inequalities in Indian society.
- Savitribai Phule actively fought against social injustices such as caste discrimination, untouchability, and child marriage, working towards the upliftment of oppressed and marginalized communities.

### Chollima 1

**Context:** North Korea's attempt to launch its first spy satellite into space has failed.

- The failure is seen as a setback to leader Kim Jong-Un's efforts to enhance military capabilities amid rising tensions with the U.S. and South Korea.
- The Rocket was named Chollima-1 and the spy satellite that was to be deployed was called Maligyong-1.
- North Korea quickly admitted the failure and pledged to conduct a second launch after investigating the cause of the failure.

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|                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ South Korea and Japan briefly issued shelter advisories to residents following the launch.</li> <li>➤ Launching a satellite violates UN Security Council resolutions that prohibit North Korea from conducting any launch based on ballistic technology.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Graphene</b>                                          | <p><b>Features of Graphene:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Graphene is a <b>two-dimensional allotrope of carbon</b>, consisting of a <b>single layer of carbon atoms</b> arranged in a <b>hexagonal lattice</b>. It is the thinnest material known, with a thickness of just one atom.</li> <li>➤ Graphene is the <b>world's thinnest, strongest, and most conductive</b> material for both electricity and heat.</li> <li>➤ It conducts electricity better than copper and is <b>200 times stronger than steel</b> while being six times lighter.</li> <li>➤ Graphene is <b>nearly transparent, absorbing only 2% of light</b>, and impermeable to gases, including hydrogen and helium.</li> </ul> <p><b>Applications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It has the potential to <b>revolutionize various industries</b>, including <b>electricity, conductivity, energy generation, batteries, sensors, aerospace, automotive, sports equipment, construction</b>, and more.</li> <li>➤ Graphene-based materials have been used in <b>high-performance batteries, supercapacitors, touchscreens, conductive inks, sensors, water purification, desalination</b>, and even in graphene-based masks during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>➤ In <b>defense and aerospace</b>, graphene's exceptional strength makes it a promising material for <b>armor, ballistic protection, stealth coatings, and materials that reduce radar signatures</b> and electromagnetic interference.</li> <li>➤ Graphene's sensitivity to environmental changes makes it <b>suitable for sensing chemical and biological agents, explosives, radiation</b>, and other hazardous substances.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>global graphene market size was valued at \$175.9 million in 2022</b> and is expected to grow at a <b>CAGR of 46.6%</b> between 2023 and 2030.</p> <p><b>China, the U.S., the U.K., Japan, South Korea, Russia, and Singapore</b> are leading countries in <b>graphene research</b>, with China being a dominant player in graphene-related patent filings.</p> <p><b>Commercial production</b> of graphene is led by <b>China and Brazil</b>, while <b>India produces 1/20 of China</b>, a very smaller quantity compared to them.</p> |
| <b>Offer for Sale (OFS)<br/>Route for selling shares</b> | <p><b>Context:</b> Government has decided to sell up to 3% stake in Coal India via OFS route.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Offer for Sale (OFS) is a method introduced by India's securities regulator SEBI in 2012 for selling shares of listed companies through the exchange platform.</li> <li>➤ It aims to facilitate the promotion of publicly traded companies to reduce their holdings and meet the minimum public shareholding requirements.</li> <li>➤ OFS became popular among both private and state-owned listed companies as a means to comply with SEBI's regulations.</li> <li>➤ The government also utilized the OFS route to sell its shares in public sector companies.</li> <li>➤ OFS provides an easier and transparent way to sell shares, benefiting both companies and investors in the Indian stock market.</li> <li>➤ As per SEBI, in an OFS:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 5% must be reserved by institutional investors such as mutual funds, insurance companies, etc.</li> <li>➤ Retail investors must have 10%.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

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## Places in News

### Lebanon

**Context:** A blast in Syria-controlled region of Lebanon killed 5 Palestinian militants.

**Capital:** Beirut

#### Neighbouring Countries and Water bodies:

- Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south.
- Mediterranean Sea to the west.

**Conflict in region:** The eastern region of Lebanon is occupied by the Palestine-supporting Syrians and the Southern Lebanon comes under the Israel Security Zone. The conflict between the two regions has kept the nation disturbed.

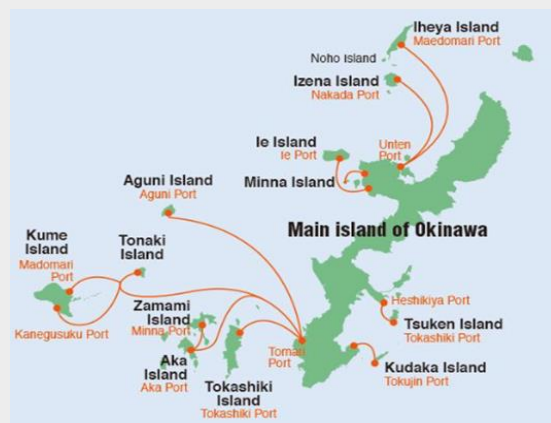


### Okinawa Islands

**Context:** Typhoon Mawar is now weakening as it moves towards the island.

**Country:** Japan (Okinawa Prefecture)

**Significance:** The United States has a military presence on the group of Islands. US Army Garrison here provides support to nine installations and five remote sites, with Torii Station as the hub for services and programs and the official headquarters for the Garrison.



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