

Reservation in local bodies

❖ Context

- The SC in its Dec 17, 2021 ordered MP State Election Commission to stay the election process for seats reserved for Other Backward Classes in the local bodies and renotify those seats for the general category.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Supreme Court had referred to the **Constitution Bench verdict of 2010** which had mentioned the “triple test” condition.
- The Centre seeking recall of its December 17 order has asked the Supreme Court to suspend the election process as an interim measure.
- The Supreme Court struck down the political reservation of 27% for OBCs in Maharashtra’s local body polls too a month ago

❖ Constitutional provisions regarding reservation in local bodies

- **Article 243D** provides for reservation of seats of Panchayats along with that of Chairpersons for SC, STs in proportion to their population.
- It also provides for reservation of 1/3rd seats along with that of Chairpersons for women
- It empowers State Legislatures to make provisions regarding reservation of seats for backward classes (Art.243D(6))
- **Article 243T** provides for similar provisions in respect of Municipality

❖ Triple Test condition

- In **K. Krishnamurthy & others vs. Union of India 2010 case**, SC examined constitutional validity of provisions providing for reservation in local bodies that were challenged for violating equality and democracy
- The SC opined that **Articles 243D(6) and 243T(6)** of the Constitution were merely enabling provisions and it would be improper to strike them down as violative of the equality clause.
- Also these provisions did not provide guidance on how to identify the backward classes and neither did they specify any principle for the quantum of such reservations. Instead, discretion had been conferred on the State legislatures to design and confer reservation benefits in favor of backward classes.
- The bench laid down three conditions for State Legislatures before reserving seats in local bodies
 - To set up a **dedicated Commission to conduct contemporaneous rigorous empirical inquiry** into the nature and implications of the backwardness qua local bodies, within the State;
 - To **specify the proportion of reservation** required to be provisioned local body wise in light of **recommendations** of the Commission, so as not to fall foul of over breadth;
 - In any case **such reservation shall not exceed an aggregate of 50%** of the total seats reserved in favor of SCs/STs/OBCs taken together.

Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021

❖ Context

- Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred under the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** has notified the Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules 2021.

❖ Key Highlights

- These Rules shall apply to all goods and services bought or sold through
 - direct selling
 - all models of direct selling
 - all direct selling entities offering goods and services
 - all forms of unfair trade practices across all models of direct selling
 - also to a direct selling entity which is **not established in India**, but offers goods or services to consumers in India.
- The direct sellers as well as the direct selling entities **using e-commerce platforms** for sale shall **comply with** the requirements of the **Consumer Protection (e-Commerce) Rules, 2020**.
- Direct selling entity and direct sellers are **prohibited from**
 - Promoting a **Pyramid Scheme** or enroll any person to such scheme or participate in such arrangement in any manner whatsoever in the garb of doing direct selling business. Participate in **money circulation scheme** in the garb of doing direct selling business

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- For ensuring compliance of these rules by direct selling entity and direct sellers, every **State Government** to set up a mechanism to **monitor or supervise** the activities of direct sellers and direct selling entity
- A **pyramid scheme** is a business model that recruits members via a promise of payments or services for enrolling others into the scheme, rather than supplying investments or sale of products.
- In **money circulation schemes**, some individuals/firms/unincorporated association of individuals (unincorporated bodies)/ marketing companies and companies collect monies from the public by making **tall promises of high returns**, either through issue of advertisements or by sale of products. Money circulation schemes are banned under the **Prize Chit and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act 1978** and the respective **State Governments** have the power to take action against the persons involved in such schemes._____

Indian achieves 40% non-fossil based energy capacity NDC target

❖ Context

- India has already achieved its NDC target, to be achieved by 2030, as pledged in INDC, with total non-fossil based installed energy capacity of 157.32 GW which is 40.1% of the total installed electricity capacity
- Of it, 150.54 GW is in renewable energy category and 6.8 GW in nuclear energy

❖ Key Highlights:

India's RE energy capacity mix

Solar Energy	48.5
Large Hydropower projects	46.5
Wind Energy	40
Small Hydropower	4.8
Bio power	10.6

❖ INDCs

- In CoP 21 Paris, nations legally binded themselves, to set upon themselves voluntary targets to limit the global warming well below 2, preferably, 1.5 degree celsius
- INDC was **conceptualized** during **CoP 19 Warsaw** when it was agreed that all countries would prepare and present them before CoP 21
- Other important INDC targets of India are
 - **33-35%** reduction in **emissions intensity of its GDP by 2030 from 2005 level**
 - Create additional sink of **2.5-3 BN tonnes of carbon dioxide** through additional forest and treecover

❖ Key initiatives by Government to promote Renewable Energy

- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)** for farmers:
 - To add **30.8 GW** of solar capacity with central financial support of over Rs. 34,000 Crore.
 - To provide energy and water security, de-dieselise the farm sector and also generate additional income for farmers by producing solar power
- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:**
 - On 28.04.2021, the Government introduced, "**National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules**" with an outlay of Rs. 4500 crores to support and promote manufacturing of high efficiency solar PV modules
- **Rooftop Solar programme Phase-II:**
 - For accelerated deployment of solar rooftop systems with a target of **40 GW** installed capacity by the year 2021-22
 - The scheme provides for financial assistance of upto **4 GW** of solar roof top capacity to the **residential sector** as well.
 - For the residential sector use of domestically manufactured solar cells and modules have been mandated.
 - As on **30.11.2021**, a cumulative **5.7 GW** solar roof top projects have been set up in the country. Against the target of 4GW for the Residential
 - **sector** under Rooftop Solar programme Phase-II, allocation of 3.4 GW already made to various states/ UTs and **1.07 GW** already installed.

Emission by countries (2012)

Of total carbon dioxide emission of 34.5 BN tonnes in world

China	28.6%
USA	15.1%
EU	10.9%
India	5.7%
Russia	5.1%
Japan	3.8%

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5G Services in India

❖ Context

➤ Recently, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) said that **Fifth generation wireless technology (5G)** will be rolled out in the **four metros and other big cities next year.**

❖ Key Highlights

- Like other global players, **India had, in 2018, planned to start 5G services** as soon as possible, with an aim to capitalise on the better network speeds and strength that the technology promised.
- **Reliance Jio plans to launch an indigenously built 5G network** for the country as early as the second half of this year.
- Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have established 5G trials sites in **Gurugram, Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, Gandhinagar** cities.
- **These metros and big cities would be the first places** for the launch of 5G services in the country next year.

❖ About 5G Technology

- 5G or fifth generation is the **latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks**
- It **enables a new kind of network** that is designed to **connect virtually everyone and everything together including machines, objects, and devices.**
- **Internet speeds** in the high-band spectrum of 5G has been tested to be as high as **20 Gbps** (gigabits per second), while, in most cases, the **maximum internet data speed in 4G has been recorded at 1 Gbps.**

❖ Different Bands of 5G

- **Low Band:**
 - It cover **any spectrum that is lower than 1 GHz.**
 - It has shown great promise in terms of coverage and speed of Internet and data exchange.
 - However, the **maximum will speed is limited to 100 Mbps.**
- **Mid-band spectrum:**
 - It **falls between the 1GHz & 6GHz range.**
 - It offers **higher speeds compared to the low band**, but has limitations in terms of coverage area and penetration of signals.
- **High-band spectrum:**
 - It **falls very high on the spectrum chart in the 24 GHz band** and higher.
 - The high-band spectrum **offers the highest speed of all the three bands**, but has extremely limited coverage and signal penetration strength.
 - Internet speeds in the high-band spectrum of 5G have been tested to be as high as **20 Gbps.**

News in Between the Lines

e-RUPI



❖ Context

➤ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), State Bank of India (SBI), and **Government of Karnataka** have partnered for enabling and implementing e-RUPI for **students** under the State's **scholarship** programme.

❖ Key Highlights

- Karnataka government will get **e-vouchers delivered to the mobiles** of eligible students. The voucher code can be received on the feature phone also
- Students will be able to redeem e-RUPI at the identified colleges/institutes for the intended purpose of fees payment.
- The **identified institutes will scan the QR code or SMS string displayed by the students using an application or POS machine.**
- This process will remove the requirement of any physical token delivery for students to avail the scholarship.
- A **person-specific and purpose-specific payments system was launched by the Centre in Aug 21 to allow cashless payment for COVID-19 vaccination**
- It was developed with the support of **NPCI, Department of Financial services & National Health Authority**

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Green Fixed Deposits



❖ Context

➤ **IndusInd Bank** has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits'

❖ Key Highlights

- The Bank will use the **proceeds** from these deposits to **finance** a wide array of sectors falling under the **SDG category** including, energy efficiency, renewable energy, green transport, sustainable food, agriculture, forestry, waste management and greenhouse gas reduction.
- These deposits will be **offered to both retail and corporate customers**
- In all ways, it is similar to a regular bank deposit, but in addition, depositors will be issued a '**Green**' **certificate** as well as an '**Assurance**' **certificate** confirming the end-use of deposit proceeds at the end of the financial year

Black Rock Art Depictions



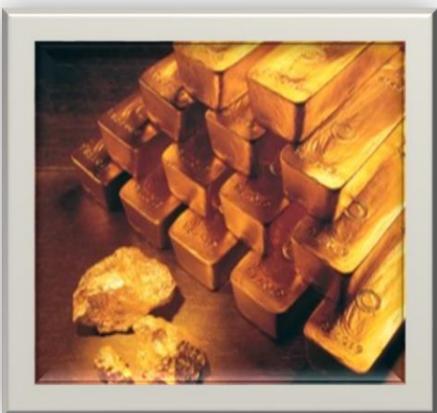
❖ Context

➤ **Rare black stick-like drawings of human beings** have been found in two caves at Paibogula village in Kurnool district of AP close to the Kundu River.

❖ Key Highlights

- These drawings date back to the **Megalithic Period (1500 to 500 BC)** and **early Historical period (500 BC to 600 AD)**.
- These caves are locally known as **Yedoorlagayi, Siddhulagayi, and Gurralapadah**.
- These sites have rock art in black, red, and white pigments, along with cupules or cup marks of varying sizes.
- These cupules were **made on gneissic granite, a very hard and erosion-resistant rock type**.
- The majority of the depictions were of **human figures or stick figures (representation of humans by stick-like drawings)**.
- In the second shelter, **red ochre and white pigment paintings on the rock shelter ceilings depict a herd of horses in association with humans, deer (red ochre) and a bull (white pigment) with a high hump**.

Electronic Gold Receipts



❖ Context

➤ The Finance Ministry has specified '**Electronic Gold Receipt**' (**EGR**) as 'securities' under the **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act 1956**

❖ Key Highlights

- **An EGR is an electronic receipt issued on the basis of deposit of underlying physical gold** in accordance with the **regulations made by SEBI**
- Like shares, **EGRs will be held in demat form and can be converted into physical gold when needed**.
- **EGR will have trading, clearing and settlement features** akin to any other securities.
- To lower the costs associated with withdrawal of gold from the vaults, **EGRs will be made "fungible" and "interoperability between vault managers"** will be allowed.

❖ Context

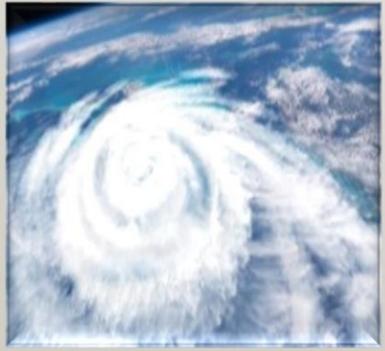
➤ Super **Typhoon Rai** which destroyed the central Philippines last week, claimed the lives of at least 388 people

❖ Key Highlights

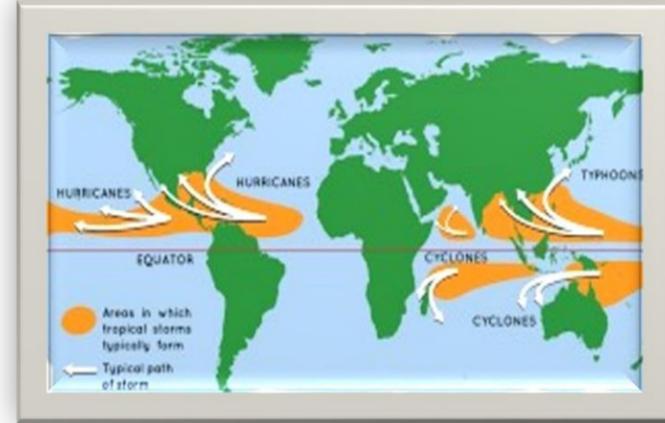
- Rai is the **strongest storm to hit the disaster-prone archipelago** this year (2021).
- Depending on their origin, they may be named differently-

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Typhoon Rai

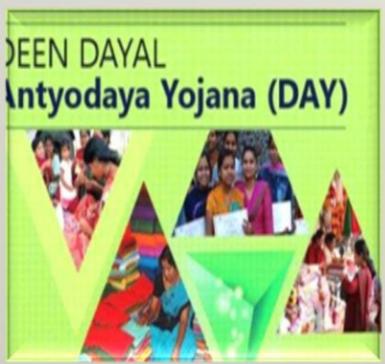


- **Typhoons:** In the China Sea and Pacific Ocean.
- **Hurricanes:** In the West Indian islands in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.
- **Tornados:** In the Guinea lands of West Africa and southern USA.
- **Willy-willies:** In north-western Australia and
- **Tropical Cyclones:** In the Indian Ocean Region.



- The **scientific name for all these kinds of storms is tropical cyclones.**
- Tropical cyclones are intense circular storms that originate over the warm tropical oceans with **speed more than 119 kilometres per hour** and **heavy rains** and they **rotate counterclockwise in the northern hemisphere.**

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-(NRLM)



- ❖ **Context**
 - In an event, the facility for **overdraft of Rs. 5,000/- to verified SHG members under DAY – NRLM** having accounts under the prime Minister Jan Dhan Yojana with Banks was launched.
- ❖ **Key Highlights**
 - This facility has been initiated in pursuance of the announcement made by the Finance Minister in her budget speech of 2019-20.
 - Six Women SHG members from three States i.e., Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh (Two from each State) were provided with a cheque of Rs. 5,000 to mark the start of the scheme
 - It is **estimated that about 5 crore women SHG members under DAY-NRLM would be benefitted** from this facility eventually.

Apatani Textile Products: Demand for GI Tag



- ❖ **Context**
 - Recently, an application was filed for the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the **Arunachal Pradesh Apatani textile product** by a firm named Zeet Zeero Producer Company Limited.
- ❖ **About:**
 - The Apatani weave comes from the **Apatani tribe** of Arunachal Pradesh living at Ziro, the headquarters of lower Subansiri district.
 - The woven fabric is known for its geometric and **zigzag patterns** and also for its angular designs.
 - The community weaves its own textiles for various occasions, including rituals and cultural festivals.
- ❖ **What is a GI tag?**
 - A GI is primarily an **agricultural, natural or a manufactured product** (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.
 - Any association of persons, producers, organisation or authority established by or under the law can be a registered proprietor.
 - The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of **10 years**.
 - It can be renewed from time to time for a further period of 10 years each.
- ❖ **Benefits of GI tag**
 - Getting a GI tag for a product indicates that it originates from a **particular territory** in India and has unique characteristics or quality.
 - Having a GI tag for a product **prevents unauthorized use** of a registered Geographical Indication by others, boosts exports of Indian Geographical indications by providing legal protection and also enables seeking legal protection in other WTO member countries.
 - Typically, such a name conveys an assurance of **quality and distinctiveness**, which is essentially attributable to the place of its origin.

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