

CARICOM

❖ Context

- In his speech, the President of India made, during his visit to Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, he appreciated the active participation of the nation in India's engagement with CARICOM.

❖ About CARICOM

- It is a **grouping of twenty countries**: fifteen member States and five associate members.

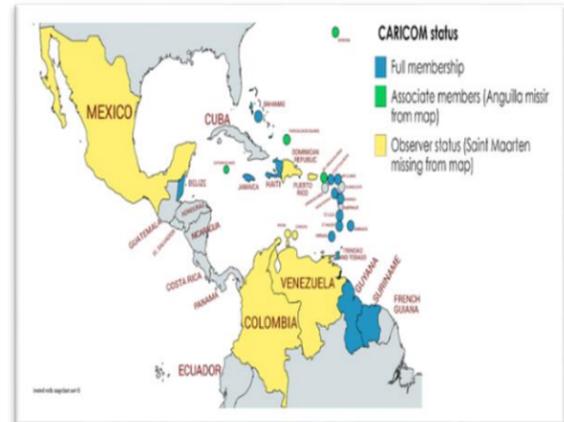
- The **five associate members** are : Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks & Caicos Islands.
- The secretariat headquarters is in **Georgetown, Guyana**.



- It came into being on **4 July 1973** with the signing of the **Treaty of Chaguaramas** by **Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago**.
- The Treaty was later revised in 2002 to allow for the eventual establishment of a **single market and a single economy**.

- The region is home to approximately **16 million citizens**, 60% of whom are under the age of 30, and from the main ethnic groups of Indigenous Peoples, Africans, Indians, Europeans, Chinese, Portuguese and Javanese.

- **Except for Belize, in Central America and Guyana and Suriname in South America, all members and associate Members are island states.**
- CARICOM has **1 million Indian diaspora**.



❖ India and Saint Vincent & the Grenadines

- The 1st June was declared as Indian Arrival Day in Saint Vincent and 7th October was declared as Indian Heritage Day as respect for Indian diaspora in the nation.
- Both the countries are part of the **L.69 group** which is actively pushing for reforms of the UN Security Council through an expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

Bamboo Charcoal

❖ Context

- The **Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** has lifted the export restriction on bamboo charcoal. **Khadi Village and Industries Commission (KVIC)** had been urging for the lift for a long time.



❖ Key Highlights

- As per notification released by DGFT - All the bamboo charcoal made from **bamboo obtained from legal sources are permitted for export** subject to proper documentation/**certificate of origin** proving that the bamboo used for making charcoal has been obtained from legal sources.
- KVIC is supporting thousands of bamboo-based industries in the country.

❖ Significance Of The Decision

- The Indian bamboo industry, at present, is grappling with **extremely high input cost** owing to inadequate utilisation of bamboo.
- In India, bamboo is mostly used in manufacturing of **Agarbatti** wherein, a maximum of **16% is used for manufacturing of bamboo sticks** while the remaining 84% of bamboo is a complete waste.

- As a result, the bamboo input cost for round bamboo sticks is in the range of Rs 25,000 to Rs 40,000 per MT as against the average Bamboo cost of Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000 per MT.

- The export of bamboo charcoal would ensure **complete utilisation of the bamboo waste** and thus make the bamboo business more profitable.

❖ What Is Bamboo Charcoal

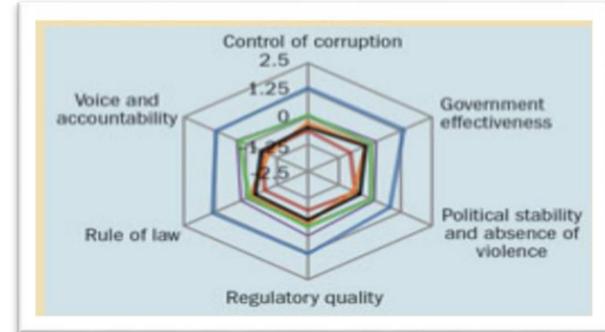
- Bamboo charcoal is typically made from the culms or refuse of mature bamboo plants by means of **pyrolysis** process.
- It is burned in ovens at temperatures ranging from **600 to 1200 °C**.
- Bombay charcoal is an especially porous charcoal having great **adsorbent properties**.
- It can be used for **barbeque, soil nutrition and as a raw material for manufacturing activated charcoal**. Activated charcoal is used in treatment of water and air pollution. When used in soil, it increases the soil's ability to hold nutrients and water and reduce leaching.
- It has great potential in international markets like the **USA, Japan, Korea, Belgium, Germany, Italy, France and the UK**.



Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)

❖ Context

- Recently, **World Bank's World Governance Indicators (WGI)** downgraded India's ranking.
- WGI plays a key role in deciding the **sovereign credit rating** of any country.
- India is losing its sovereign credit rating due to low scores in WGI parameters.



❖ About World Governance Indicators

- WGI is a collection of responses from a wide range of people acquired through a variety of surveys as well as other cross country governance evaluation.
- **The WGI project** reports aggregate and individual governance indicators for over **200 countries and territories** based on **six dimensions** of governance:
 - Voice and Accountability.**
 - Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism.**
 - Government Effectiveness.**
 - Regulatory Quality.**
 - Rule of Law.**
 - Control of Corruption.**
- WGI were updated every two years between 1996 and 2002. After 2002, they are updated on a yearly basis.

- A complementary vision of the **macro-level Worldwide Governance Indicators** are the **World Bank Governance Surveys**, which are country level governance assessment tools developed by the World Bank Institute.

❖ India's Report:

- While **BBB** is an investment-grade rating issued by **global rating agencies** such as **S&P and Fitch**, a WGI score below BBB Median would suggest that **India falls below the middle** when the scores of countries are arranged in a descending order.
- The **issue of Kashmir** affected India's score, it noted that Kashmir went from **"partly free"** since 2017 till 2019 to **"not free"** in **2020 scoring 8 (out of 40) in Political Rights, 20 (out of 60) in Civil Liberties.**
- Around 15 data sources ratings have the maximum impact on India's overall WGI scores including the **Economist Intelligence Unit, Varieties of Democracy Project, Freedom House and Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom** among others.

P-8I Aircraft

❖ Context

- The **Union defence minister** flew a sortie in the **P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft** of the **Indian Navy** at the **Mazagon Docks Limited (MDL)** in Mumbai.



❖ About P-8I Warfare Aircraft

- The aircraft is **manufactured by Boeing.**
- The aircraft is designed for **long-range anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions.**
- It is also used for **low altitude, humanitarian, and search and rescue missions.**
- The aircraft has two variants:
 - The **P-8I**, which is developed for the Indian Navy, and
 - The **P-8A Poseidon** (use by US Navy).
- Which is deployed by the **US Navy, the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force, and the Royal Norwegian Air Force.**
- The P-8I can fly as high as **41,000 feet**, and has a **short transit time, which reduces the size of the Area of Probability** when searching for submarines or search and rescue survivors.

- The **P-8I aircraft** is powered by **twin jet engines** and can be equipped with **air-to-ship missiles and torpedoes**, and is about **40 metres long**, with a wingspan of **37.64 metres.**
- The aircraft weighs about **85,000 kg** and has a **top speed of 789 km/hour.**
- It requires a crew of nine, and has a **range of 1,200+ nautical miles, with 4 hours on station**, which means about **2,222 km.**
- The induction of **P8I aircraft commencing 2013**, significantly enhanced the Indian Navy's "persistent surveillance operations in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR).**"
- The **P-8I's advanced sensors** such as **multi-mode radars, electronic intelligence system, sonobuoys, electro-optic, infrared camera and advanced weapons** provide the Indian Navy with a very potent platform with **significant capability to deter and destroy.**
- The aircraft has been **deployed along the International Border, the Line of Control and the Line of Actual Control.**

Face to Face Centres



News in Between the Lines

India's Own Hyperloop



❖ Context

- **IIT Madras and Indian Railways** have agreed to start a joint mission to develop India's own Hyperloop.

❖ Key Highlights

- A team of 70 students of **IIT-Madras**, called '**Avishkar Hyperloop**', had been working on the technology since 2017.
- It approached Railways to collaborate for a **Rs. 8.34 crore project** to develop a contactless **pod prototype** and the first of its kind hyperloop **test facility**.
- It is the **low energy requirement** of the system which has attracted the Railways. The Railways will also be helping the institute set up a **Centre of Excellence for Hyperloop technologies**.

❖ About Hyperloop

- A hyperloop is a **super speed ground-level transportation system** in which people could travel in a **hovering pod inside a vacuum tube** at speeds as high as 760 mph (1220 km/h). A hyperloop system removes the two things that slow down regular vehicles: **friction and air resistance**.
- It uses the **magnetic levitation technology** to remove the friction which is also used in advanced high-speed rail projects in Japan and Germany. Air resistance is made absent with the use of vacuum in the tube.
- **Maglev trains use two sets of magnets**: one set to repel and push the train up off the track, and another set to move the floating train ahead, taking advantage of the lack of friction. Once two sets of magnetic waves are established, they work in tandem to push the vehicle forward.

World Bee Day



❖ Context

- **Recently, World Bee Day** was celebrated on 20 May 2022.

❖ Key Highlights

- From an exhibition in Gujarat, the Union Agriculture Minister inaugurated **Honey Testing Laboratories and Processing Units** at **Pulwama, Bandipur and Jammu** in Jammu and Kashmir, **Tumkur** in Karnataka, **Saharanpur** in Uttar Pradesh, **Pune** in Maharashtra in a virtual mode.
- The centrally funded scheme, '**National Beekeeping and Honey Mission**' aims to bring "**Sweet Revolution**" by establishing 5 big regional and 100 small honey and other bee products testing laboratories, out of which 3 world class state-of-the-art laboratories have been set up.
- More than **1.25 lakh metric tonnes** of honey is being **produced** in the country, out of which more than **60 thousand metric tonnes (48%)** of natural honey is **exported**.

Article 142



❖ Context

- The Supreme Court of India, recently, released one of the seven convicts, after 24 years, in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, exercising its special powers under Article 142 of the constitution .

❖ According To The Article

- The Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary **for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it**.
- Any decree so passed or orders so made shall be **enforceable throughout the territory of India** in such manner as may be prescribed by Parliament by law or until such provision is made, by President on its behalf.
- Subject to the provisions of any law made in this behalf by Parliament, the Supreme Court shall, as respects the whole of the territory of India, **have all and every power** to make any order for the purpose of :
 - Securing the attendance of any person,
 - Discovery or production of any documents,
 - Investigation and Punishment of any contempt of itself.

Face to Face Centres

Artificial Breeding of Barbs



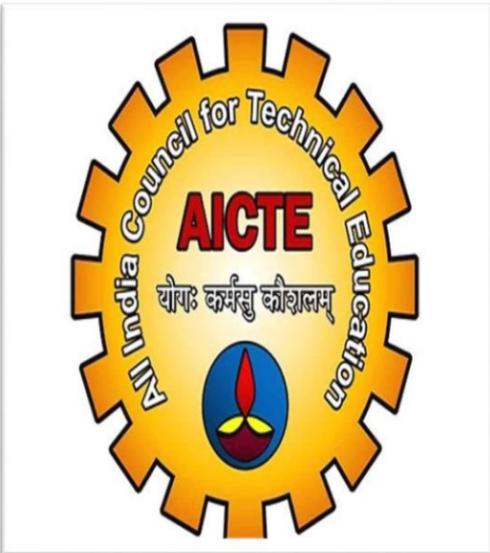
❖ Context

- A team of scientists at the **Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (Kufos)** has standardised the techniques for **artificial breeding of Olive barbs (Kuruva Paral)** and **Filament barb (Kalakkodiyan)**, and have developed brood stocks for **Highfin barb (Kooral)** and **Carnatic carp (Pachilavetti)**.

❖ Key Highlights

- These freshwater **species of barbs and carp** used to be found widely in the **Idamalayar Dam, Bhoothathankettu, and the Kol fields of Thrissur district**.
- However, indiscriminate fishing and changes in habitat conditions have brought these species, especially **Kuruva Paral, to the brink of extinction**.
- The conservation measures being taken up by Kufos are supported under:
 - The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**,
 - **India High Range Landscape project** that also aims to help **trained aquaculturists among Adivasis** to take up farming of these freshwater species.
- The project, even though **launched in January 2020**, was delayed by a year due to the pandemic. The **brood stocks for Kooral and Pachilavetti** have been stored at the **freshwater aquaculture facility at Kufos**.
- The process of **artificial breeding of Pachilavetti** is expected to be completed during the **upcoming rainy season**, while that of **Kooral is expected to be completed during this winter**.

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)



❖ Context

- Recently, the **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** has announced **two supernumerary seats per institute for gifted and talented students**.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is time for the **innovative minds** to take pride in their **achievements and pursue mainstream education**. Without the barriers of high scores in board and competitive exams,

❖ Who Is A Gifted Child?

- According to the AICTE's definition, a **"gifted child"** is one who is **"curious in studies and discusses answers in detail beyond the scope of the question"**, **"(makes) careless mistakes in repetitive tasks"**, **"enjoys non-structured and non-routine problems"**, and **"speaks his/her own mind"**.
- There is a **difference between a "bright child" and a "gifted child"** - a **"bright child"** being someone who is more sincere in the classroom and well-versed with the syllabus, **"scores high on well-practiced tasks"**, and is **"compliant to the classroom"**.

❖ Criteria For Gifted Seats?

- A **prizewinner of at least one national/international level** competition organised by a government or a recognised private body.
- Has received **funding from a government agency** for pursuing innovative projects. Is a candidate **having high-quality original research** article publications in peer-reviewed journals as the first author. Is **primary holder of a patent** granted by Indian or international patent office. Is the **owner of an app on Google/Apple/Windows stores** or has launched or is in process of launching a technology based innovative product in the market (with more than 10,000 downloads).
- Following the document scrutiny, the candidate may have to **appear for the interview in front of a panel of experts** appointed by the institutions to gauge their eligibility for admission.
- **Facilities/Benefits:** Institutions admitting students under this scheme are committed to give a **complete tuition waiver to the admitted students**. However, **institutions may charge students fees for examination, hostel, library, transportation, laboratory and other activities as per the prevailing norms**.

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