

03 September, 2022

Aspirational District

❖ Context

- The NITI Aayog has declared the holy city of Haridwar in Uttarakhand as the best aspirational district.

❖ About Aspirational District Programme

- It was Launched in 2018 by NITI Aayog.
- Aspirational Districts are those districts in India, that are affected by poor socio-economic indicators.

Aspirational Districts Program

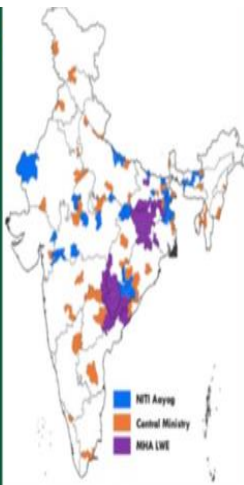
Launched in January, 2018 by Hon'ble PM

117★ Districts identified in Transparent manner

27 NITI Districts

55 Central Ministries Districts

35 LWE Districts by MHA



- It focuses on the strength of each district, identifying low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement and measuring progress by ranking districts on a monthly basis.
- There were total 117 districts identified as Aspirational districts.

- The Aspirational District Programme evaluates the performance of districts on the basis of five key parameters.



1. Health & Nutrition (30%).
2. Education (30%).
3. Agriculture & Water Resources (20%).
4. Financial Inclusion & Skill Development (10%).
5. Infrastructure (10%).

SPARSH

❖ Context

- Defence Ministry recently said that **System for Pensions Administration - Raksha** or SPARSH has disbursed more than three thousand ninety crore rupees to Defense Pensioners digitally in the month of August this year i.e 2022.

SPARSH

System for Pension Administration (Raksha)

❖ About SPARSH

- It is a web-based system processing pension claims and crediting the pension directly into the bank accounts of defence pensioners without any external intermediary.
- It has grown exponentially with more than 11 thousand 600 crore rupees disbursed in 2021-22, from just about 57 crore rupees in 2020-21.

- The SPARSH Portal provides the following facilities to the Pensioner:-
 - Identification & furnishing of Life certificate through Manual Certificate based process or Aadhaar Based Digital process.
 - Management of Pensioner's Profile
 - Disbursement related services
 - Service Requests
 - Interactive Grievance Management

INS Vikrant

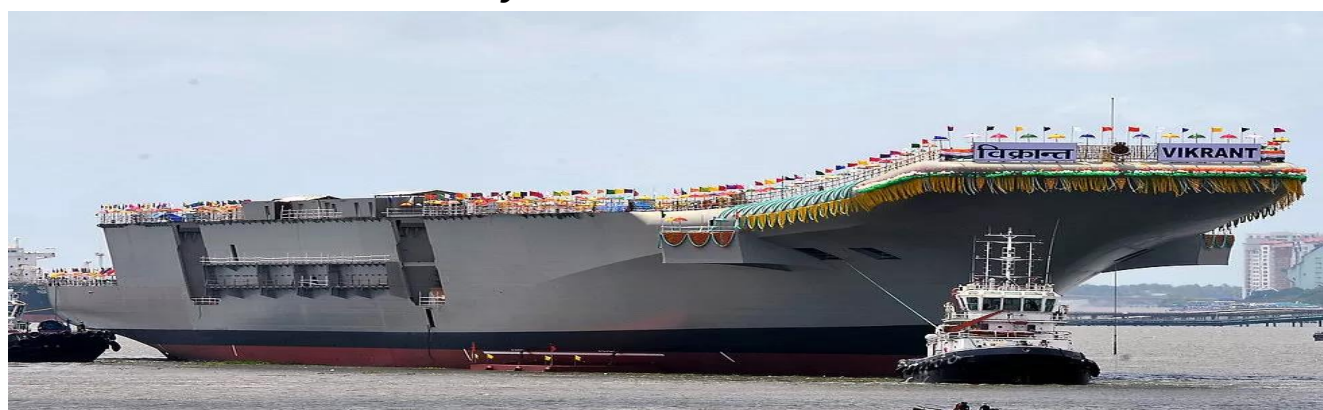
❖ Context

- India's first indigenously designed and manufactured aircraft carrier was commissioned.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is named after India's first aircraft carrier purchased by India from the UK in 1957 and commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1961. The carrier played a vital role in the 1971 war.
- Built at an estimated cost of **Rs. 20,000 crore**, it has a **indigenous content of 76%**.
- It is designed by the Indian Navy's in-house **Warship Design Bureau (WDB)** and built by **Cochin Shipyard Limited**, a Public Sector Shipyard under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.
- It is the **largest ship** (displacement of 43,000 tonnes) ever built in maritime history of India.

- With its commissioning of Vikrant, India will have two operational Aircraft Carriers - **INS Vikramaditya**.



Face to Face Centres

DELHI MUKHERJEE NAGAR: 9205274741, 42 | **LAXMI NAGAR** : 9205212500, 9205962002 | **RAJENDRA NAGAR**: 9205274743 | **UTTAR PRADESH** PRAYAGRAJ: 0532-2260189, 8853467068 | **LUCKNOW** (ALIGANJ): 0522-4025825, 9506256789 | **LUCKNOW** (GOMTI NAGAR): 7234000501, 7234000502 | **GREATER NOIDA**: 9205336037, 38 | **KANPUR**: 7887003962, 7897003962 | **GORAKHPUR** : 7080847474, 9161947474 | **ODISHA** BHUBANESWAR: 9818244644/7656949029



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Cervavac

❖ Context

- It is India's first indigenously developed quadrivalent human papillomavirus (qHPV) vaccine for the prevention of cervical cancer.



❖ Key Highlights

- Despite being largely preventable, cervical cancer is the **fourth** most common cancer among women globally, according to the WHO.
- In 2018, an estimated 570,00 women were diagnosed with the disease and it accounted for 311,000 deaths across the world.

❖ India's Scenario:

- India accounts for about a fifth of the global burden of cervical cancer, with 1.23 lakh cases and around 67,000 deaths per year.
- Almost all cervical cancer cases are linked to certain strains of human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that is transmitted through sexual contact.
- While the body's immune system usually gets rid of the HPV infection naturally within two years, in a small percentage of people the virus can linger over time and turn some normal cells into abnormal cells and then cancer.
- cervical cancer is preventable if detected early and managed effectively, it kills one woman every 8 minutes in the country.

❖ Challenges

- The biggest task will be in allocating adequate resources and manpower for vaccinating the massive demographic of adolescent girls aged between 9 and 15, to ensure that they are protected from HPV early on.
- Overall awareness and screening is very low in the community and that is a concern.

Fight against disease

THE DISEASE

India accounts for a fifth of global cervical cancer cases with 1.23 lakh cases and around 67,000 deaths every year, according to WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer.

Cervical cancer kills one woman in every eight minutes in India

THE VACCINE

■ Serum Institute of India's (SII) Cervavac is based on VLP (virus-like particles), similar to the Hepatitis B vaccine

■ It protects by generating antibodies against the HPV virus L1 protein.

■ Cervavac is expected to cost much less than two vaccines licensed globally which are currently available in India - Gardasil from Merck and Cervarix from GlaxoSmithKline.

■ SII received approval for market authorisation on July 12



THE NEXT STEP

Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus vaccine (qHPV) will be included in the national immunisation programme by the end of this year.

TRIAL RESULTS

■ It began in 2019, with thousands of participants in the age-group of 9-26 taking part in the trials across India.

■ Phase III results showed a robust immune response in 100 per cent of the vaccine recipients with excellent safety records.

New Naval Ensign

❖ Context

- Prime Minister unveiled the new Naval Ensign (flag) at Kochi recently which bears the seal of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who laid the foundations of a modern navy.



❖ Shivaji and the Seas

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj put great emphasis on sea-faring prowess, and laid the foundations of a modern naval force in the 17th century.
- The use of the octagonal design of the seal of Shivaji on the new Naval Ensign is a formal stamp on the umbilical ties of the Indian Navy with the navy of the Maratha empire.
- Shivaji's strategic thought ensured that a strong naval presence was established along the Konkan coast to protect the sea trade of the Maratha empire.
- The navy under Shivaji was so strong that the Marathas could hold their against the British, Portuguese and Dutch.
- Shivaji built ships in towns such as **Kalyan, Bhivandi, and Goa**, both for trade and to establish a fighting navy.

- He also built a number of sea forts and bases for repair, storage and shelter. Shivaji fought many lengthy battles with **Siddis of Janjira on coastline.**

- He started trading with foreigners on his own after possession of eight or nine ports in the Deccan.

❖ Kanhoji Angre

- Kanohji Angre was the commander of Maratha navy, and is credited with laying a strong naval foundation which ensured that the Marathas were a sea-faring power to reckon with.
- He ensured that the merchants plying their trade for the Maratha empire were protected on the seas.
- He set up a base in Colaba with more bases at Suvarndurg and Vijaydurg near Ratnagiri.
- **Note:** Before the Marathas, the Cholas had a formidable sea-faring fleet of ships which, though not being strictly warships, were able to lead expeditions all around the Bay of Bengal.

Tur Dal

❖ Context

- Agricultural scientists have now uncovered hitherto unknown strength of tur and found a coat on this seed is rich in calcium outbeating milk six times.



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❖ Key Highlights

- A sample of 100-gram tur seed coat has 652 mg of calcium against 120 mg found in 100 ml of milk. Scientist suggest that it has huge potential as a key input in baby food and mineral supplements.
- It can be used in other food supplements and by pharmaceutical companies to make products addressing osteoporosis and rickets.

❖ Where it Grows?

- Tur is largely grown in the **semi-arid tropics** of South Asia, Central America, and Africa.
- Incidentally, India is its biggest producer and consumer globally, accounting for 82% of the cultivation and 77% of production.
- India grows tur in about 17 lakh hectares annually and produces about 37.50 lakh tonnes.
- This is followed by **Myanmar** (6.76 lakh tonnes) and **Malawi** (4.30 lakh tonnes).



The WTO Agreement on Safeguards

❖ Agreement on Safeguards

❖ Context

- India has warned the UK that it may suspend trade concessions or other obligations equivalent to the adverse effects of the safeguard measures imposed by the UK on certain Indian steel products.

❖ Background

- In June, the UK announced continuation of **safeguard duties of 25%** on five steel categories till 2024, in addition to the initial list of 10. India has requested the UK to reach an agreement on compensation.

❖ About WTO's Agreement on Safeguard

- The Agreement on Safeguards ("SG Agreement") sets forth the rules for application of safeguard measures pursuant to **Article XIX of GATT 1994**.
- Safeguard measures are defined as "**emergency**" actions with respect to increased imports of particular products, where such imports have caused or threaten to **cause serious injury** to the importing Member's domestic industry.

- Such measures, which in broad terms take the **form of suspension of concessions or obligations**, can consist of **quantitative import restrictions or of duty** increases to higher than bound rates.

❖ Major Guiding Principles

- Such measures must be **temporary**; that they may be imposed only when imports are found to cause or threaten serious injury to a competing domestic industry.
- They are applied on a **non-selective** (i.e., most-favoured-nation, or "MFN", basis).
- They are **progressively liberalised** while in effect.
- The Member imposing them must pay **compensation** to the Members whose trade is affected.

News in Between the Lines

Conversion Therapy



❖ Context

- The **National Medical Commission (NMC)**, the apex regulatory body of medical professionals in India, has said that "conversion therapy" will be counted as **professional misconduct** under the **Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct Etiquettes and Ethics) Regulations, 2003**.

❖ Key Highlights

- According to experts "**Reparative**" or "**conversion**" therapy is a dangerous practice that targets LGBTQ+ youth and seeks to change their sexual or gender identities or expressions. The practices have been rejected by every mainstream medical and mental health organisation for decades.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Tag



❖ Context

- West Bengal Chief Minister recently took part in a colourful rally to celebrate the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage tag accorded to Durga Puja.

❖ About UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List

- It aims to draw attention to the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage.
- This list has been classified into five broad domains in which intangible cultural heritage is manifested: **1.** Oral traditions & expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage. **2.** Performing arts. **3.** Social practices, rituals and festive events. **4.** Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe. **5.** Traditional craftsmanship.


 United Nations
 Educational, Scientific and
 Cultural Organization

 World
 Heritage
 Convention

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Cri-MAC



❖ Context

- Seven States and one Union Territory have given the cold shoulder to the Centre's online platform, Cri-MAC.

❖ Key Highlights

- It was launched in **2020** by the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- The platform is meant to share information and coordinate action among law enforcement agencies, 24X7, on serious criminal incidents, including human trafficking.

Smart Solutions Challenge & Inclusive Cities Awards, 2022



❖ Context

- The Housing and Urban Affairs Minister gave away awards to the winners of the Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards, 2022.

❖ Key Highlights

- The **Belagavi** Smart City's system for those with disabilities to access education & healthcare was awarded the top prize in the category of implemented solutions.
- The awards were an initiative of the **National Institute of Urban Affairs** and the **United Nations** in India for addressing the city-level challenges of accessibility and the inclusion for persons with disabilities, women, girls and senior citizens.

SPARK



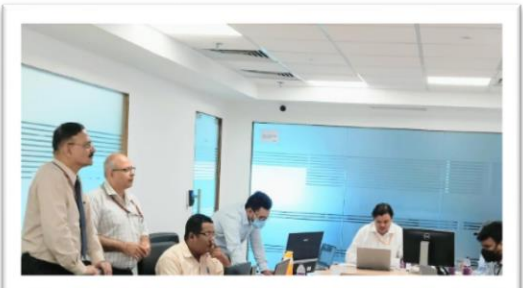
❖ Context

- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), has taken a unique initiative by developing the **Studentship Program for Ayurveda Research Ken (SPARK)** scheme.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is a **fellowship scheme** launched for **young undergraduate students** enrolled in Ayurveda colleges across India.

SYNERGY



❖ Context

- Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (**CERT-In**) in collaboration with Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA), recently conducted the Cyber Security Exercise "Synergy" for 13 Countries.

❖ Key Highlights

- The exercise was conducted as part of the **International Counter Ransomware Initiative - Resilience Working Group** which is being led by India under the leadership of **National Security Council Secretariat(NSCS)**.

Puli Thevar



❖ Context

- The PM paid homage to Puli Thevar on his birth anniversary.

❖ Key highlights

- Puli Thevar was a **Marava chieftain**, a **Tamil Palayakkarar** who ruled **Nerkattumseval**, situated in the Tenkasi district (formerly Tirunelveli), Tamil Nadu.
- He was the **first chieftain in Tamil Nadu to resist the British**.
- He was involved in a vendetta with the **Nawab of Arcot**, Muhammad Ali, who was supported by the British. He was the principal architect of the coalition of the palayakkars organised against the Nawab. The Nawab acknowledged his victory by presenting him with a gold plate and sword.

Wild Coast



❖ Context

- The South African court prohibits MNCs from oil & gas exploration in the Wild Coast over environmental concerns.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Wild Coast, known also as the **Transkei**, is a 250 kilometre long stretch of rugged and unspoiled coastline in **South Africa**.

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