

**Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED)**

❖ **Context**

- The Centre and state governments are in conflict over implementation of a new model for the electricity market.



❖ **About the New Mechanism**

- The proposal envisages **centralised scheduling for dispatching** the entire annual electricity consumption of around 1,400 billion units, **both inter-state and intra-state**.
- According to the Centre, the current model will deepen power markets in line with the Centre's 'One Nation, One Grid, One Frequency, One Price' formula.
- The **mandatory pool** based model will ensure that the **cheapest electricity generating resources** across the country are supplied to meet the overall system demand.
- As part of this, an algorithm called the **Security Constrained Economic Dispatch (SCED)** has been developed by the **National Load Dispatch Centre**.
- It is aimed at assisting regulators in making informed calls on scheduling decisions on a nationwide basis.
- It will result in at least 5% savings for customers.
- **NLDC was established by the Ministry of Power in 2005 in terms of provisions under Electricity Act 2003.**

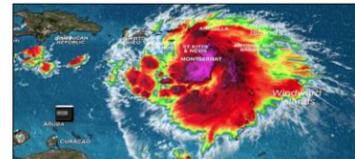
❖ **Electricity Market**

- **Power** is in the **Concurrent List** of the Constitution.
- Currently, the Indian electricity market is a **decentralised, voluntary pool-based and diversified** ranging from long-term power purchase agreements (PPAs), cross border PPAs, short and medium term bilaterals, day-ahead power exchange, and a real-time online market.
- **Over 87% of the installed power capacity** is tied up under **long term PPAs** of around 25 years. The remaining 13 % is transacted in the power exchanges and through short-term and medium-term bilateral deals.
- ❖ **Current Management of Electricity Grid**
  - The electricity grid is divided into state-wise autonomous control areas managed by the **State Load Dispatch Centres (SLDCs)**, which in turn are supervised by **Regional Load Dispatch Centres (RLDCs)** and the **National Load Dispatch Centre (NLDC)**.
  - Each control area is responsible in real time for balancing its demand with generation resources.
  - At present, each control area or state follows **merit-order dispatch (cheapest power dispatched first)** from the basket of intra-state and inter-state resources and buys or sells on the day-ahead power exchange.
  - The un-tied generators in the private sector sell electricity, on a voluntary basis, in the bilateral market as well as on the power exchanges.

**Fiona**

❖ **Context**

- **Category 1 Hurricane Fiona** hit Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic.



❖ **Key Highlights**

- **Tropical Cyclones** in North America are called Hurricanes.



- Hurricanes are **large, swirling storms** which produce winds of 119 kms per hour or higher.
- When a hurricane reaches land, it pushes a wall of ocean water ashore. This wall of water is called a **storm surge**.

- There are five types, or categories, of hurricanes. The scale of categories is called the **Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale**. The categories are based on wind speed.

Categories	Wind speed
Category 1	119-153 km/hr
Category 2	154-177 km/hr
Category 3	178-208 km/hr
Category 4	209-251 km/hr
Category 5	>252 km/hr

❖ **How Does a Storm Become a Hurricane?**

- A hurricane starts out as a **tropical disturbance**. This is an area over warm ocean waters where rain clouds are building.
- A tropical disturbance sometimes grows into a **tropical depression**. This is an area of rotating thunderstorms with winds of 62 km/hr or less.
- A tropical depression becomes a **tropical storm** if its winds reach 63 km/hr.
- A tropical storm becomes a **hurricane** if its winds reach 119 km/hr.

❖ **About Puerto Rico**

- It is an **island territory of the USA** located in the **Caribbean Sea**.

**Face to Face Centres**

## Ponniyin Selvan

### ❖ Context

- The enduring popularity of Tamil novel Ponniyin Selvan, now adapted for big screen by Mani Ratnam.



### ❖ Key Highlights

- Ponniyan Selvan means the son of **Ponni (the Cauvery River)**.
- The novel was penned by author and freedom fighter **Kalki Krishnamurthy**, and serialized from 1950-54 on a weekly basis in Tamil magazine 'Kalki'.
- It tells the story of early days of Rajaraja I, born **Arunmozhi Varman** and considered the greatest of all Chola rulers.
- In world history, the Cholas are among the longest recorded dynasties with their reign peaking in the ninth and tenth centuries.
- During this period, the entire area south of the Tungabhadra River was brought together as a single unit under the Cholas.

### ❖ About Rajaraja 1 (985-1014 A.D)

- **Rajaraja I** (947 CE – 1014 CE), often described as **Raja Raja the Great**, was a Chola emperor who reigned from 985 CE to 1014 CE.
- His extensive empire included vast regions of the **Pandya country**, the Chera country and northern **Sri Lanka**.
- Rajaraja I, being an able administrator, also built the great **Brihadisvara Temple** at the Chola capital **Thanjavur**.

## China Blocks Listing of Lashkar 'Commander'

### ❖ Context

- For the third time in three months, China blocked a joint India-U.S. attempt to put a Pakistan-based terrorist on the UN Security Council's (UNSC) 1267 list.



### ❖ Key Highlights

- It will Place a hold on the proposal to add Lashkar-e-Taiba '**commander**' Sajid Mir, who is wanted for the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, as well as attacks in the U.S. and Denmark.
- **UNSC 1267 committee**
- It is one of the most important and active UN subsidiary bodies working on efforts to combat terrorism, particularly in relation to Al Qaeda and the Islamic State group.
- It comprises all permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC

Who is Lashkar-e-Taiba 'commander' Sajid Mir?

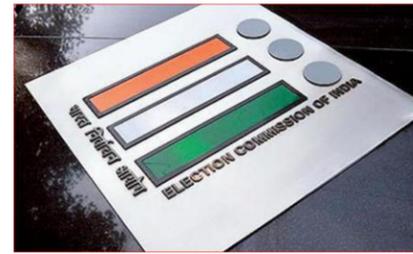
- Mir is one of India's most wanted terrorists and has a bounty of \$5 million placed on his head by the U.S. for his role in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks
- He is wanted for the attack on a Danish newspaper over blasphemous cartoons
- He was involved in attacks on Australian military installations
- He is wanted in the 'Virginia Paintball Jihad' case that involved training LeT operatives at a paintball facility in the U.S.
- Mir recruited and trained the attackers, including Ajmal Kasab, and directed the killings

- The 1267 list of terrorists is a global list, with a UNSC stamp.
- The listing mandates countries to ensure that the named terrorist is prosecuted, & does not have access to funds, weapons or travel out of their jurisdiction.
- Any member state can submit a proposal for listing an individual, group, or entity.

## Reducing Anonymous Political Donations

### ❖ Context

- The Election Commission has proposed reducing anonymous political donations to ₹2,000 from ₹20,000 and cap cash donations at 20% or at a maximum of ₹20 crore to cleanse election funding of black money.



### ❖ Key Highlights

- The proposals are aimed at ushering in reforms and transparency in donations received by political parties, and also the expenditure incurred by candidates.
- As per rules in force **currently**, political parties have to disclose all donations above **₹20,000** through their contribution report that is submitted to the EC.
- If the EC's proposal is approved by the **Law Ministry**, all donations above ₹2,000 shall be reported, thereby enhancing transparency in funding.

### ❖ Other Recommendations

- The EC has sought to make digital transactions or account payee cheque transfers mandatory for all expenses above ₹2,000 to a single entity/person.
- As of now, maintaining a separate bank account for poll expenditure is part of instructions but EC wants it to become part of Conduct of Election Rules.
- The EC also wants every candidate to open a separate bank account for election purposes, route all expenses and receipts through this account, and furnish these details in their account of election expenditure.

## Caracal

### ❖ Context

- A team of researchers have recently mapped out the most suitable areas for the species to survive in India.

### Face to Face Centres



## ❖ Key Highlights



The Asiatic caracal (*Caracal caracal schmitzi*) is an elusive medium-sized and locally threatened felid (cat) species, which has been widely reported to be on the brink of extinction in India.

The reasons are large-scale hunting, illegal trading and loss of natural habitats are considered significant threats to the species.

**Caracal**

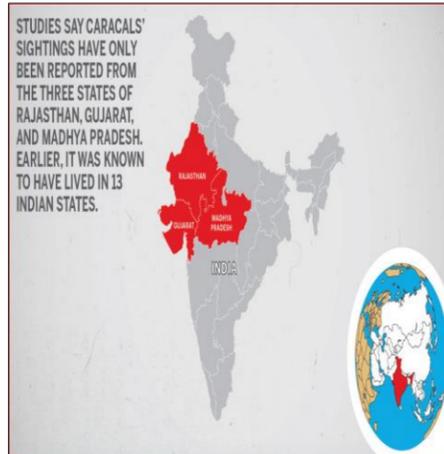
the caracal is a  
**carnivorous** (meat-eating)  
**nocturnal** (active at night)  
**terrestrial** (lives on ground)  
**digitigrade** (walks on toes)  
**feline** (member of cat family)  
**mammal** (animal with mammary glands and hair follicles)

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• Scientific Classification  
 Class - Mammalia  
 Order - Carnivora  
 Family - Felidae  
 Genus - Caracal

The caracal is currently included in **Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972** and the **Near Threatened category** by the Conservation Assessment and Management Plan and International Union for Conservation of Nature Red list assessment in India.

The researchers found the most significant potential habitat for caracals in Rajasthan, with an area of 25,221.38 square kilometres, followed by **Gujarat** (16,652.1 sq km), **Madhya Pradesh** (6416.01 sq km), **Haryana** (191.36 sq km), **Uttar Pradesh** (131.11 sq km), and **Maharashtra** (34.17 sq km).



They also noted that large amounts of caracal suitable habitats in India fell within protected areas, thus providing an excellent opportunity for its conservation in the already existing management & conservation setup.

**Note:** The caracal was the only other feline which was used for hunting in India. **Firoz Shah Tughlaq** had many of them in his hunting establishment.



## PM-PRANAM

### ❖ Context

➤ The Union government intends to launch a scheme - named **PM PRANAM (PM Promotion of Alternate Nutrients for Agriculture Management Yojana)**.

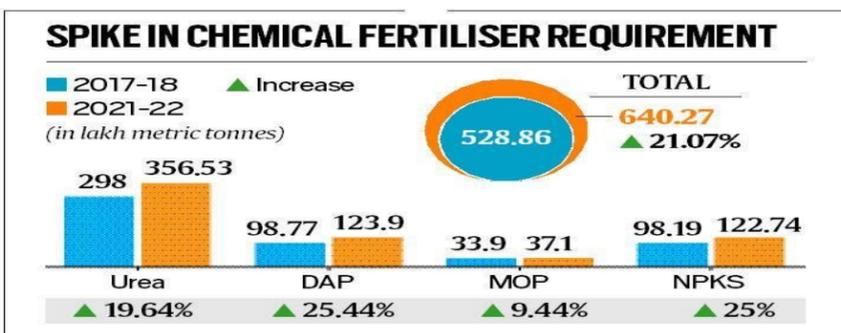
### ❖ Key Highlights

The **Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers** has initiated inter-ministerial discussions and consultations with states.

#### Objectives :

- To reduce the use of chemical fertilisers by incentivising states.
- To bring down the subsidy burden on chemical fertilisers.

The subsidy burden is estimated to reach **Rs 2.25 lakh crore in 2022-23** - 39% higher than last year's figure of Rs 1.62 lakh crore.



### ❖ Implementation

The scheme will have no separate budget and will be financed through the **“savings of existing fertiliser subsidy”** under schemes run by the Department of Fertilisers.

- **50% of subsidy savings** will be passed on as a **grant** to the state that saves the money.
- **70% of the grant** provided under the scheme can be used for **asset creation** related to technological adoption of alternate fertilisers. The remaining **30 % grant money** can be used for **rewarding and encouraging** farmers, panchayats, farmer producer organisations and self-help groups that are involved in the reduction of fertiliser use and awareness generation.
- A state's increase or reduction in urea in a year will be compared to its average consumption of urea during the last three years.
- For this purpose, data available on a Fertiliser Ministry dashboard, **iFMS (Integrated Fertilisers Management System)**, will be used.

## News in Between the Lines

### Decision of a Bench of Larger Strength will Prevail

#### ❖ Context

➤ A Constitution Bench recently decided that majority decision of a Bench of larger strength will prevail over the decision of a Bench of lesser strength, irrespective of the number of judges constituting the majority.

#### ❖ Key Highlights

• Under **Article 145(5)** of the Constitution, concurrence of a majority of the judges at the hearing would be considered as a judgment or opinion of the court.

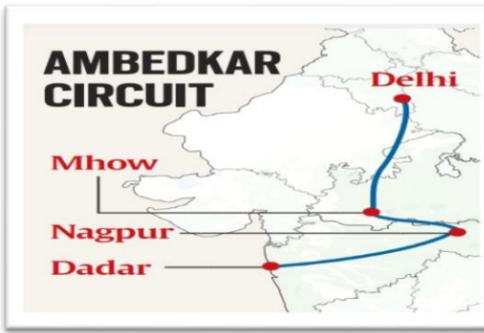
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- A decision delivered by a Bench of largest strength is binding on any subsequent Bench of lesser or coequal strength.
- It is the strength of the Bench and not number of judges who have taken a particular view which is said to be relevant.
- Hence it is absolutely clear that a Bench of lesser quorum cannot disagree or dissent from the view of law taken by a Bench of larger quorum.
- **Note:** Quorum means the Bench strength which was hearing the matter.

## Ambedkar Circuit



### ❖ Context

- The **Union Tourism and Culture Minister** announced a **special tourist train** to cover the “Ambedkar Circuit” under **Swadesh Darshan Scheme**.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- Proposed in 2016, the tourism circuit will connect ‘**Panch Teerth**’, five key sites associated with Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar.
  - Madhya Pradesh’s Mhow - Ambedkar’s birthplace;
  - London - where he stayed and studied;
  - Nagpur - where he converted to Buddhism;
  - Delhi - where he lived during his last years; and
  - Dadar in Maharashtra - where his body was cremated.

## International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



### ❖ Context

- According to the Asia Pacific Regional Director, IFAD - **only 1.7% of climate finance is going to small farmers who produce 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the food in the world.**

### ❖ Key Highlights

- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** is an international financial institution and specialised **United Nations agency** based in **Rome**.
- It was established in **1977** through the United Nations General Assembly Resolution as one of the major outcomes of the **1974 World Food Conference** in the wake of the **first oil shock and food crisis in 1973**.
- It is a member of the **United Nations Development Group**.
- Its aim is to empower rural people, to increase their food security, improve the nutrition of their families and increase their incomes.
- 100% of its funding goes to small-holder farmers with an aim to ensure 40% goes to climate action.

## First Cloned Arctic Wolf



### ❖ Context

- For the first time ever, a wild arctic wolf was successfully cloned by a China-based gene firm.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- Maya's donor cell came from the skin sample of a wild female arctic wolf.
- Its oocyte was from a female dog and its surrogate mother was a beagle.
- The selection of a dog as the wolf's surrogate was made because dogs share genetic ancestry with ancient wolves and it is more likely to succeed through cloning technology.

## Poland opens new canal across the Vistula Spit



### ❖ Context

- Poland opens new canal for ships to sail from Baltic Sea to Vistula Lagoon ports.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- Poland's new sea waterway shortens the Baltic-to-Elblag route by some 100 kilometers.
- The canal cuts across the Vistula Spit, east of Gdansk, to allow ships to sail from the Baltic Sea and the Bay of Gdansk to Elblag and smaller ports of the lagoon.
- Ships no longer must secure Russia's permission to sail from the Baltic Sea to the ports of the Vistula Lagoon.
- The waterway gives Poland full sovereignty in the northeastern region, which needs investment and economic development.

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