




01 August 2024

National and International News

<p>Places in News: Golan Heights</p> 	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deadly strike on a playing field in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights has escalated fears of a new war in the region. <p>About Golan Heights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rocky plateau in southwestern Syria, 60 km southwest of Damascus. ○ Occupied territory under international law and UN Security Council resolutions. • Boundaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ West: Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee. ○ North: Mount Hermon. ○ East: Seasonal Wadi Al-Ruqqad River. ○ South: Yarmuk River. • History: Seized by Israel from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day War. • Strategic Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overlooks Damascus and northern Israel's Galilee region and Sea of Galilee. ○ Dominates the route to Damascus on the Syrian-controlled side. ○ Shares borders with Jordan and Lebanon. ○ Key water source: Rainwater feeds into the Jordan River.
<p>Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recent report submitted to the Education Ministry by PARAKH recommends incorporating student performance from Classes 9, 10, and 11 into the final Class 12 marks. <p>About PARAKH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) is a unit established within NCERT in 2023 to standardize school board assessments nationwide. • PARAKH team will consist of leading assessment experts with a deep understanding of the education system in India and internationally.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective: To fulfill the basic objectives of setting norms, standards, guidelines and implement activities related to student assessment along with other tasks as mandated by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. ● The mandate of PARAKH is to work on bringing the school boards across the States and the Union Territories to a common platform. ● Major areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity Development in Competency Based Assessment ○ Large-Scale Achievement Survey ○ Equivalence of School Boards ○ Holistic Progress Cards for the Foundational, Preparational, Middle and Secondary Stages.
<p>Advanced Land Navigation System</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) was recently accorded for the procurement of Advanced Land Navigation System (ALNS) Mk-II for Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs) of the Indian Army. <p>About Advanced Land Navigation System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● System: Ring Laser Gyro (RLG) based navigation system. ● Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Used for traversing paths defined by military map coordinates in ESM format. ○ Provides Inertial, GPS, and Hybrid Navigation data. ○ Security: Spoof-proof with high levels of encryption. ● Modes of Operation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inertial Mode: Operates completely on inertial sensor inputs. ○ Hybrid Mode: Uses inputs from both inertial sensor and GPS receiver, selecting the most accurate data. ○ GPS Mode: Operates independently of inertial sensor inputs. ● Compatibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compatible with Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) and NAVigation using Indian Constellation (NavIC). ○ Also compatible with Global Positioning System (GPS) and Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS). ● Applications: Offers high accuracy in navigational applications for AFVs (Armored Fighting Vehicles) with Defence Series Maps compatibility.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procurement: To be procured from Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Chennai under Buy [Indian-Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)] category.
<p>Vattezhuthu script</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Archaeologists recently discovered a Vattezhuthu script and eight Tamil inscriptions in the 1,000-year-old Thalikiswarar Temple in Tirupur district, Tamil Nadu. <p>About Vattezhuthu script:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Origin and Name: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vatteluttu, also known as Vattezhuthu, was a syllabic alphabet used in South India (Tamil Nadu and Kerala) and Sri Lanka. ○ The name Vatteluttu means 'rounded script', 'northern script', or 'chiseled script'. ● Historical Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First appeared in stone inscriptions in southern India around the 4th century AD. ○ Likely developed from the Tamil-Brahmi script, a variant of the Brahmi script used for Old Tamil from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD. ● Usage Timeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Used for writing Tamil and Malayalam in Tamil Nadu until the 9th century. ○ Continued to be used in Kerala until the 15th century. ○ Evolved into the Malayalam script over time, incorporating some letters from the Grantha script. ● Variants and Legacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vatteluttu developed into the Koleluttu script. ○ Koleluttu was particularly used by Christians and Muslims in Kerala until the 19th century.
<p>National Culture Fund</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recently, the Union Minister for Culture and Tourism informed Lok Sabha about the National Culture Fund. <p>About National Culture Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890 ○ Purpose: Mobilize extra resources through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to promote, protect, and preserve India's cultural heritage ● Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conservation and Preservation: Administer and apply the Fund for the conservation, maintenance, promotion, protection, preservation, and



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	<p>upgradation of monuments (protected or otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Training and Development: Impart training and facilitate the development of a cadre of specialists and cultural administrators○ Museum Space:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Facilitate the provision of additional space in existing museums■ Construct new museums to accommodate or create new and special galleries○ Documentation: Document cultural expressions and forms that have lost relevance in contemporary scenarios and are either fading out or facing extinction.
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