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National and International News

<p>QUAD</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Quad members have committed to working tirelessly for a free, open, and stable Indo-Pacific. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QUAD, also known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or simply the Quad, is a strategic forum comprising four countries: the United States, Japan, India, and Australia. The Quad is aimed at promoting regional security and economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The four countries share a common interest in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and countering China's expanding influence in the region. The Quad has held several meetings at the ministerial and leaders' level to discuss issues such as maritime security, infrastructure development, and supply chain resilience. The Quad is seen as a mechanism for balancing China's influence in the region, although its members have stressed that it is not a military alliance and is open to other countries who share their values and interests. Quad Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QUAD fellowship: for pursuing a doctorate in STEM courses. Quad Vaccine Partnership: to boost vaccine partnership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid-19 Global Action Plan to enhance coordination in recovery efforts during the Covid pandemic. Quad Vaccine Experts Group: for cooperation in vaccine strategy. Quad Senior Cyber Group: for adoption and implementation of shared cyber standards. Cooperation in the space sector: Sharing satellite data. Quad Climate Working group: for adaptation to climate change and to build capacity in other Indo-Pacific. Critical and emerging technologies: cooperation in critical technologies essential for digital economies globally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Quad members in the 2022 summit decided to counter non-traditional security challenges, such as illegal fishing.
<p>Willow</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently, Google has announced a significant advancement in quantum computing as it unveiled its next-generation chip called 'Willow'. Willow is a compact chip for Google, yet a monumental advancement for computing. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google has developed a cutting-edge quantum computing chip. The chip's components include single and two-qubit gates, qubit reset, and readout, all meticulously engineered and integrated to eliminate



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		<p>any delay between components, as such lag could negatively affect system performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It solved a complex mathematical problem in just five minutes — a task that would take classical computers longer than the entire history of the universe. • It completed a standard benchmark computation in under five minutes, a task that would take one of today's fastest supercomputers 10 septillion (10^{25}) years. • The chip operates using superconducting transmon qubits — tiny electrical circuits that exhibit quantum behavior at extremely low temperatures. These circuits are designed to behave like artificial atoms in a quantum state. <p>What is a quantum chip?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quantum chip is a special type of computer chip designed to use the principles of quantum mechanics, the science of very tiny particles like atoms. • While regular chips use 'bits' (0 or 1) to process information, quantum chips use 'qubits', which can be 0 or 1 or both at the same time.
<p>Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana</p>		<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Union Cabinet has approved the extension of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and the Restructured Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme until 2025-26. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, PMFBY is an insurance service for farmers for their yields, launched in 2016. • The PMFBY replaced the previous two schemes: the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and the Modified NAIS. • Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crops as a result of natural calamities, pests and diseases. ○ To stabilise the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming. ○ To encourage farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices. ○ To ensure flow of credit to the agriculture sector. • Key features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There will be a uniform premium of only 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops (winter sown). ○ The Scheme will be implemented on an 'Area Approach basis,' i.e., Defined Areas for each notified crop for widespread calamities. ○ There is no upper limit on Government subsidy. This means, even if the balance premium is 90%, it will be borne by the Government. ○ Crop Insurance App: Provides for easy enrollment of farmers. It facilitates easier reporting of crop loss within 72 hours of occurrence of any event.



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<p>One Nation One Subscription (ONOS)</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government has launched ONOS to ensure seamless access to digital knowledge resources. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective: To obtain national licenses for e-journal and database subscriptions across STEM and social sciences fields. Key Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Access: Access to ONOS will be managed by INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network), a UGC center, offering a fully digital process for all institutions. Monitoring: The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) will review the usage and publications of Indian authors periodically. International Journals: It will host 13,000 journals from 30 leading publishers, including Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Elsevier Science Direct (including Lancet) etc. Financial Allocation: The government has allocated ₹6,000 crore for ONOS from 2025-2027 under a new Central Sector Scheme. Implementation Strategy: The Department of Higher Education (DHE) will provide a unified portal and conduct Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns to raise awareness.
<p>Core Sector Industries</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The growth of core sectors accelerated to a four-month high of 4.3% in November. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The core sector in India comprises eight key industries: coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement, and electricity. The growth rate of the core sector is a crucial indicator of the overall health of the Indian economy. Core sector growth refers to the growth rate or the increase in output/production from the core industries of an economy over a given period of time, typically measured on an annual or monthly basis. The core sector growth is calculated by combining the growth rates of these individual industries, using their respective weights in the overall Index of Core Industries (ICI) The Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) is prepared every month and released by the Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and Ministry of Commerce & Industry. These components include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coal: Coal production, excluding Coking coal. Electricity: Electricity generation from thermal, nuclear, hydro sources, and imports from Bhutan. Crude Oil: Total crude oil production. Cement: Production in both large plants and mini plants. Natural Gas: Total production of natural gas. Steel: Production of alloy and non-alloy steel only.

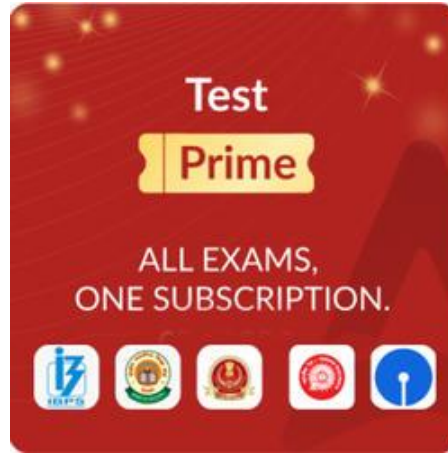


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- **Refinery Products:** Total refinery production.
- **Fertiliser:** Production of urea, ammonium sulphate, calcium ammonium nitrate, complex grade fertiliser, single superphosphate, among others.
- The current weightage, of eight core industries is **Petroleum Refinery Products (28.04%) > Electricity (19.85%) > Steel (17.92%) > Coal (10.33%) > Crude Oil (8.98%) > Natural Gas (6.88%) > Cement (5.37%) > Fertiliser (2.63%)**.
- The **choice of the base year of ICI is according to the choice of base year for the IIP.**
- The base year in the current series of ICI is **2011-12**.



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