



13 Mar 2025

## National and International News

<p><b>Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A National Review Meeting chaired by Secretary Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar was held by the Ministry of Minority Affairs to assess the implementation and progress of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) across States, Union Territories, and Central Government Organisations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) has been restructured and renamed as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram for effective implementation since 2018.</li> <li>MsDP is a special area development scheme designed to address the 'development deficits' seen in Minority Concentration Districts.</li> <li>It seeks to provide better socio-economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities.</li> <li><b>Beneficiaries of PMJVK:</b></li> <li>As far as PMJVK is concerned, the communities notified as minority communities under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 would be taken as Minority Communities.</li> <li>At present 6 (six) communities namely Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains have been notified as Minority Communities.</li> <li><b>States/Districts covered:</b></li> <li>The PMJVK is being implemented in Minority Concentration District Hqrs (MCD Hrs), Minority Concentration Block (MCBs), Minority Concentration Towns (MCTs) falling in 308 districts of 32 States/UTs. The scheme is implemented in 1300 identified Minority Concentration Areas (MCAs)</li> <li>Minority Concentration Areas of 61 districts out of 115 Aspirational districts have been covered under PMJVK.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mission Sarovar Amrit</b></p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian Railways will excavate ponds as part of the government's Mission Amrit Sarovar initiative.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission Amrit Sarovar is a water conservation initiative that seeks to construct and rejuvenate ponds (Amrit Sarovar) in rural areas to ensure water availability for future generations.</li> <li>The mission was designed to address the water crisis in rural areas while promoting community participation in water conservation efforts.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched on 24th April 2022 developed and rejuvenated 75 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) in each district of India. This results in the creation of around 50,000 water bodies across India.</li> <li>The primary goal of this mission is to conserve water for the future while also supporting livelihood activities like fisheries, irrigation, and eco-tourism. The project follows a “Whole of Government” approach, integrating various ministries and government departments to achieve its objectives.</li> <li><b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Conservation: Ensuring a sustainable water supply and enhancing groundwater recharge.</li> <li>Livelihood Generation: Using the water bodies for agriculture, fisheries, and tourism to support local economies.</li> <li>Community Participation: Engaging local citizens, freedom fighters, and martyrs’ families in the initiative.</li> <li>Environmental Enhancement: Planting trees such as Neem, Peepal, and Banyan around the water bodies.</li> <li>Infrastructure Development: Utilizing excavated soil for construction and other infrastructure projects.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking</b>	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the 15th edition of the World University Rankings by Subject, released by London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT-Delhi) was ranked 26th globally in the Engineering and Technology category, making it the top-performing institute in India.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QS World University Rankings are released annually by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).</li> <li>The rankings evaluate the performance and quality of universities worldwide.</li> <li>The methodology considers indicators such as academic reputation, faculty-student ratio, employer reputation, sustainability, employment outcomes, international research network, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio.</li> <li>They provide rankings by subject, region, student city, business school, and sustainability.</li> <li><b>Revised Ranking Parameters in QS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QS introduced three new indicators: sustainability, employment outcomes, and international research network, each with a weightage of 5%.</li> <li>Adjustments were made to existing parameters: academic reputation, faculty-student ratio, and employer reputation.</li> <li>Decreased weightage for faculty-student ratio.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Inflation</b>	<b>Why in news?</b>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail inflation falls to a 7-month low as food prices decrease.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inflation refers to the <b>rise in the prices of most goods and services of daily or common use</b>, such as food, clothing, housing, recreation, transport, consumer staples, etc.</li> <li><b>There are two types of inflation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Demand Pull Inflation:</b> Demand pull inflation arises when aggregate demand in the economy becomes more than aggregate supply.</li> <li><b>Cost push inflation:</b> when there is a decrease in aggregate supply of goods and services results into increase in cost of production.</li> </ul> </li> <li>In India, inflation is primarily measured by two main indices — <b>WPI (Wholesale Price Index) and CPI (Consumer Price Index)</b>, which measure wholesale and retail-level price changes, respectively.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SPHEREx and PUNCH missions</b> and space</p>	<p><b>Why in news?</b> Recently, NASA has launched the SPHEREx and PUNCH space missions.</p> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPHEREx stands for <b>Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer</b>.</li> <li><b>Launched By:</b> NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration).</li> <li><b>Aim of SPHEREx:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Study Cosmic Inflation:</b> Investigate the rapid expansion of the universe after the Big Bang.</li> <li><b>Map Galaxies:</b> Survey over 450 million galaxies to understand their distribution and evolution.</li> <li><b>Search for Water and Organic Molecules:</b> Identify reservoirs of water and life-essential molecules in the Milky Way.</li> <li><b>Create a 3D Cosmic Map:</b> Develop a detailed map of the universe in 102 color bands.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>About PUNCH Mission:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will be a constellation of four, suitcase-sized satellites each weighing about 64 kg sent to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO).</li> <li>It will have three Wide Field Imagers (WFI) and one Narrow Field Imager onboard. Once every four minutes, each of the four cameras will capture three raw images using different polarising filters.</li> <li><b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the first time that a solar mission has been specifically designed to make use of the polarisation of light to measure the corona and solar wind, that too, in 3D.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It will provide scientists with new information which could lead to more accurate predictions about the arrival of space weather events on Earth and impact on humanity's robotic explorers in space.</li> <li>○ It will measure polarised light using polarising filters, enabling scientists to look into the inner solar system.</li> <li>○ PUNCH's four-camera setup will operate as a single, virtual instrument to generate large-scale imagery data, making it a unique information-loaded 3D image of the solar corona.</li> </ul>
APAAR ID system	<p><b>Why in news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The APAAR ID system is voluntary, but activists and parents are raising concerns over the increasing mandates.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● APAAR, an acronym for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry, is a specialised identification system designed for all students in India, beginning from an early age.</li> <li>● It is introduced in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 and the National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCrF).</li> <li>● It is introduced in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 and the National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCrF).</li> <li>● Registration for an APAAR ID is voluntary, not mandatory.</li> <li>● <b>Objective:</b> It aims to streamline and enhance the academic experience for students throughout India by assigning a unique and permanent 12-digit ID to each student, consolidating their academic records into a single accessible platform.</li> <li>● <b>Benefits:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ APAAR ensures accountability and transparency in education by tracking student progress and streamlining academic records.</li> <li>○ It enhances efficiency, combats fraud, and includes co-curricular achievements for holistic student development.</li> <li>○ With multiple use cases, APAAR facilitates a smooth transfer process and supports data-driven decision-making in educational institutions.</li> <li>○ It also enables students to easily share their academic records for enhanced access to employment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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