



# STATE PCS CA

(CONSOLIDATION)

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## Supreme Court Upholds Rajasthan's 2-Child Norm for Government Jobs

### Why in News?

The Supreme Court has upheld the **two-child eligibility criterion of the Rajasthan government for seeking public employment**, ruling that it is not discriminatory and does not violate the Constitution.

### Key Points

- The **Rajasthan Various Service (Amendment) Rules, 2001** bar candidates who have **more than two children** from **seeking government jobs**.
  - While upholding the two-child norm, the top court dismissed the appeal filed by ex-serviceman Ramji Lal Jat, who had applied for a constable's job in the Rajasthan Police on May 25, 2018 after his retirement from military in 2017.
  - The bench held that **Rule 24(4) of the Rajasthan Police Subordinate Service Rules, 1989**, which says **"no candidate shall be eligible for appointment to the service who has more than two children on or after June 1, 2002"** is non-discriminatory and does not violate the Constitution.
- The court held that the classification, which disqualifies candidates for having more than two living children, was **non-discriminatory and intra-vires the Constitution**, since the objective behind the provision was to promote **family planning**.

## Rajasthan to Get its Share of Yamuna Water

### Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan Chief Minister asserted that the state will get its share of **Yamuna water** as per the allocations specified in the 1994 agreement with Haryana.

### Key Points

- Haryana and Rajasthan recently signed an agreement to jointly prepare a detailed project report for the transfer of **Rajasthan's share of Yamuna water from Hathnikund in Haryana** through **underground pipelines** and its subsequent utilisation in areas such as **Jhunjhunu and Churu**.

- The **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** was signed after a meeting between Haryana and Rajasthan CM on 17 February 2024.
  - The issue of water sharing has been a point of contention for over two decades since the signing of the MOU on May 12, 1994, allocating water shares among co-basin states.

### Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal

- The Issue stems from a controversial **1981 water-sharing agreement drawn up when Haryana was carved out of Punjab in 1966**.
- **Punjab:**
  - Punjab vehemently **opposes sharing any additional water** with neighboring states. They stress that Punjab lacks surplus water and highlights the reduction in their water allocation over the years.
  - Many areas in Punjab may **go dry after 2029** and the state has already **over-exploited its groundwater** for irrigation purposes as it fills granaries of the Centre by growing wheat and paddy worth Rs 70,000 crore every year.
  - Water in about **79% of the state's area is over-exploited** and in such a situation, the government says sharing water with any other state is impossible.
- **Haryana:**
  - Haryana strongly advocates for the canal's completion, **citing a looming water crisis and asserting that Punjab** has been utilizing Haryana's share of water.
  - It says that providing irrigation is tough for the state and there was a problem of drinking water in **southern parts of Haryana**, where groundwater has depleted up to 1,700 feet.
  - Haryana has been **citing its contribution to the central food pool** and arguing that it is being **denied its rightful share in the water as assessed by a tribunal**.

### Yamuna River

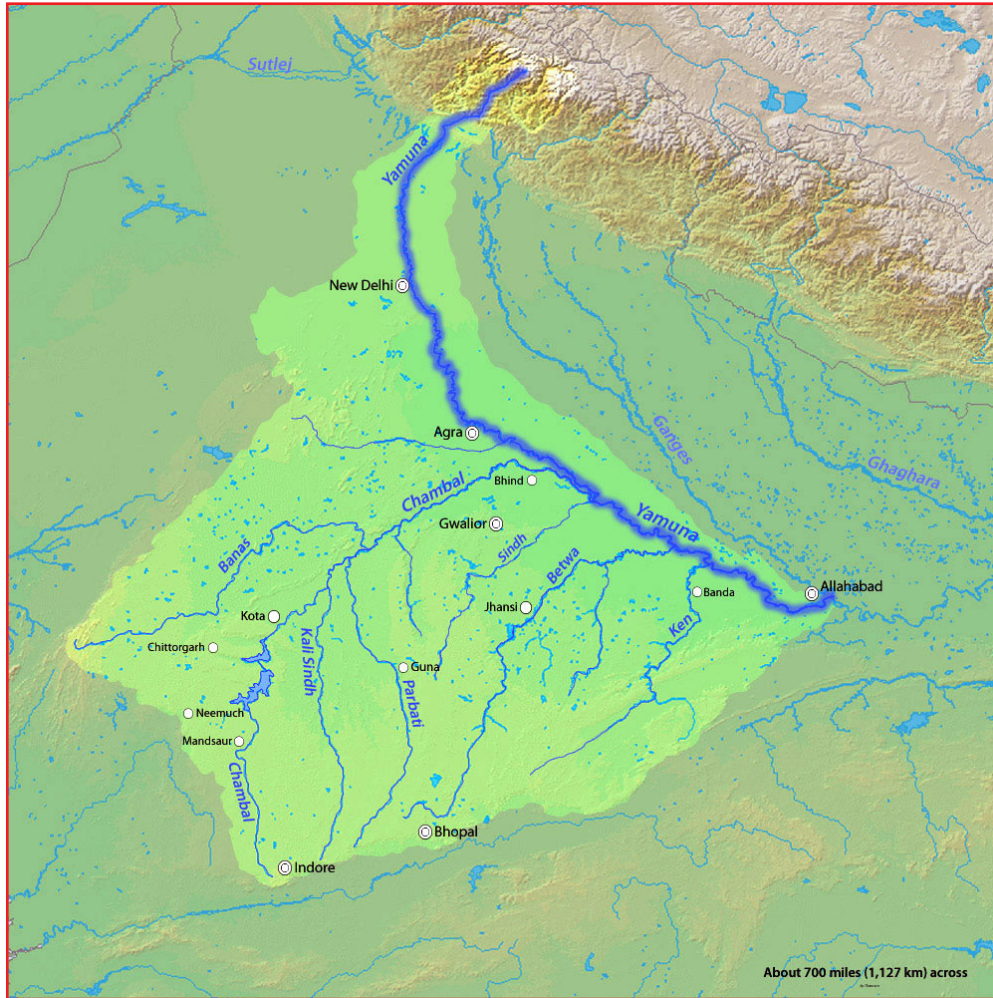
- The Yamuna River is one of the major tributaries of the Ganges in Northern India.
  - It forms an integral part of the **Yamuna-Ganga Plain**, one of the world's most extensive alluvial plains.

Note:



- **Source:** It has its source in the **Yamunotri Glacier at an elevation of 6,387 meters** on the southwestern sides of **Banderpooch** crests in the **lower Himalayan ranges**.
- **Basin:** It meets the **Ganges at the Sangam (where Kumbh mela is held)** in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh after flowing through **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi**.

- **Important Dam:** Lakhwar-Vyasi Dam (Uttarakhand), Tajewala Barrage Dam (Haryana) etc.
- **Important Tributaries:** Chambal, Sindh, Betwa and Ken.
- **Government Initiatives Related to Yamuna River:**
  - Yamuna Action Plan
  - Delhi Government's Six-Point Action Plan to Clean Yamuna by February 2025.



## Rajasthan Expands Urban Jobs Scheme to New Municipal Bodies

### Why in News?

Recently, In a major victory for the villagers who lost employment opportunities after the conversion of village panchayats into urban local bodies, the **Government of**

Rajasthan has agreed to launch the **Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme** in **42** newly created **Municipal Councils**.

### Key Points

- **Guaranteed Employment Works in Municipal Councils:** The Local Self Government Department has initiated guaranteed employment works in newly constituted Municipal Councils across **27 districts**. Urban bodies

Note:

nearest to the councils are designated as in-charge until regular posts of officials are created.

- **Concerns of Villagers:** Works under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme** were halted in village panchayats converted into urban local bodies in July last year, affecting villagers who relied on the **scheme for livelihood**.
- **Indefinite Dharna:** Villagers initiated an indefinite dharna at Bhim in January-end to demand the restart of employment works.
- **Role of Rajasthan Unorganised Labour Union:** The agitation was led by the Rajasthan Unorganised Labour Union, associated with the **Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)**, known for its role in the **right to information** movement.
- **Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme:** Introduced by the Rajasthan government in September 2022, the scheme aimed to provide economic support to urban poor by offering **100 days** of work annually.
- **Memorandum Submission:** Participants submitted a memorandum to the Block Development Officer, urging prompt issuance of job cards and work allocation in the Bhim Municipal Council.
- **Types of Works:** Works under the scheme include tree plantation, pond cleaning, garbage collection, segregation, and catching stray animals, among others.

#### Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme

- The urban employment guarantee scheme, named after former **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi**, was rolled out in the State of Rajasthan in September 2022 to provide economic support to the poor and needy families living in the cities.
- The scheme stipulates the allocation of work on demand to the laborers for 100 days in a year.
- The Rajasthan Government had touted it as the country's biggest scheme to give guaranteed jobs to the people residing in cities, on the lines of **MGNREGA** for villagers started at the Centre in **2006**.
- Those in the age group of **18 to 60 years** residing within the limits of **urban local bodies** are eligible to demand and get employment in the identified segments.

## Rajasthan Government: Innovative Tourism Policy for Economic Boost

### Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan government is **planning to announce a new policy to boost tourism** in the state, which could include the regularization of hotels in residential areas and tweaking the rules for granting bar licenses to heritage restaurants.

### Key Points

- **Regularization of Hotels in Residential Areas:** The policy aims to regularise hotels operating in residential areas, addressing a long-standing demand of the hotel industry in the state.
- **Changes in Bar Licensing for Heritage Restaurants:** There will be adjustments in the rules for granting bar licenses to heritage restaurants.
- **Inclusion of Service Apartments in the Tourism Sector:** The policy will likely link service apartments with the tourism sector, expanding the accommodation options for tourists.
- **Opening of Resorts in Eco-Sensitive Zones:** Changes in the master plan are proposed to allow the opening of resorts in **eco-sensitive zones**, potentially promoting sustainable tourism development.
- **Collaboration with Other Departments:** The state government plans to collaborate with other departments to effectively implement the policy.
- **Rural Tourism, Guest House, and Heritage Restaurants:** The new policy may include provisions for rural tourism, guest house regulation, and support for heritage restaurants.
- **Involvement of Tour Operators and Travel Agents:** This time, the policy aims to involve tour operators and travel agents in its formulation, ensuring broader stakeholder participation.
- **Development of Important Sites, Fairs, and Festivals:** The policy may outline strategies for the development of important tourist sites, as well as support for fairs and festivals to enhance tourism experiences.

Note:

## 500 Electric Buses to be Introduced in Seven Rajasthan Cities

### Why in News?

According to the sources, **500 electric buses** will be introduced shortly for public transport in **seven cities of Rajasthan**, with an emphasis on reducing **air pollution**, creating convenience for commuters, and reducing fuel consumption.

### Key Points

- The buses will be operated and maintained by the **Local Self Government Department** through **Convergence Energy Services Limited**.
- The buses would ply in **Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Ajmer, Bikaner, Bharatpur, and Udaipur**.
  - The maximum number of 300 buses will be operated in Jaipur, followed by 70 in Jodhpur.
- The promotion of public transport through electric buses would strengthen the network in the cities and improve the standard of urban life.
- The budgetary announcement would be implemented through the initiative for the benefit of the public at large.

#### Convergence Energy Services Limited

- Convergence is a green energy focused **venture of the Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) Group owned by central public sector undertakings** under the **Ministry of Power, New and Renewable Energy**.
- It offers interventions that **solve multiple gap** areas in the energy ecosystem by amalgamating seemingly independent sectors such as electricity, transport, home appliances and introducing models for adaptation at scale through government partnerships and innovative financing such as carbon markets.

#### Energy Efficiency Services Ltd

- It is a joint venture of **National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) Limited**, Power Finance Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and POWERGRID, It was set up under the **Ministry of Power** to facilitate implementation of energy efficiency projects.

- EESL is a **Super Energy Service Company (ESCO)** that seeks to unlock the energy efficiency market in India, estimated at Rs. 74,000 crore that can potentially result in energy savings of up to **20%** of current consumption, by way of innovative business and implementation models.
- It also acts as the resource centre for capacity building of State **DISCOMs**, financial institutions, etc.

## ESIC to Establish Sub-Regional Office in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

Recently in the **231st Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)**, a decision was taken to establish a **Sub-Regional Office at Alwar, Rajasthan**.

### Key Points

- Around **12 Lakh Insured Workers and beneficiaries of ESI Scheme** residing in the districts of Alwar, Khairthal-Tijara, Kothputilli-Behror, Bharatpur and Deeg **will be benefited** with establishment of a new ESIC Sub-Regional Office at Alwar.
- At total estimated cost of Rs.1128.21 crore is approved for the construction of 7 new ESI Hospitals at Harohalli, Narsapura, Bommasandra (Karnataka), Meerut, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Pithampur (Madhya Pradesh) and Duburi (Odisha) was also accorded during the meeting.

#### Employees' State Insurance Corporation

- Employees' state Insurance Corporation of India is a **multidimensional social system** which provides **socio-economic protection to the worker population and immediate dependent or family** covered under the **Employees' State Insurance Scheme (ESI)** scheme.
- The ESI is an integrated measure of social Insurance embodied in the **Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948**.
- ESI is designed to accomplish the task of protecting employees against the impact of incidences of sickness, maternity, disablement and death due to employment injury and to provide medical care to insured persons and their families.
- **Coverage of the Scheme:**
  - The ESI Scheme applies to **factories and other establishment's viz. Road Transport, Hotels,**

Note:



Restaurants, Cinemas, Newspaper, Shops, and Educational/Medical Institutions wherein 10 or more persons are employed.

- However, in some States the threshold limit for coverage of establishments is still 20.
- Employees of the aforesaid categories of factories and establishments, drawing **wages upto Rs. 15,000/- a month**, are entitled to social security cover under the ESI Act.
  - However, ESI Corporation has also decided to enhance the wage ceiling for coverage of employees under the ESI Act from **Rs. 15,000/- to Rs. 21,000/-**.
- ESI Corporation has extended the benefits of the ESI Scheme to the **workers deployed on the construction sites** located in the implemented areas under ESI Scheme from 1st August, 2015.
  - The ESI Scheme is implemented district wise.
  - It is now notified in 526 Districts in 34 States and Union Territories.

## Rajasthan Signs MoUs To Boost Energy Sector

### Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan government signed **5 Memorandum Of Understandings (MOUs) worth Rs 1.60 lakh crore to boost energy production, strengthen the energy transmission system and establish new projects** for the production of **thermal** and **renewable energy** in the state.

### Key Points

- According to the official sources, 6 MOUs have been signed between the top officials of **3 power corporations and 6 central undertakings of the state** for the investment of Rs 1.60 lakh crore for the development of the energy sector, which includes various projects of power generation.
- **Under these agreements:**
  - An MoU will be signed between **Rajasthan Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (RVUN)** along with **Coal India Limited, the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) India** for thermal based projects of 3325 MW capacity.

- To strengthen the power transmission system in the state, there will be an agreement for investment of Rs 10 thousand crore between **Rajasthan Electricity Transmission Corporation and Power Grid Corporation.**
- A **Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)** will also be signed between **Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam and SJVN Green Energy** for the supply of power through 600 MW solar power projects.
- There will be an MoU between the **Rural Electrification Corporation** and the state government for the development of the infrastructure sector.

## Tejas Crashes Near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

Recently, a light combat aircraft **Tejas** crashed near **Jaisalmer in Rajasthan** during an operational training sortie. It is the first such incident involving the indigenously-built jet.

- The **pilot was ejected safely and no casualties** were reported.

### Key Points

- The **crash took place around 100 km from the Pokhran desert** where a mega war game 'Bharat Shakti' witnessed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top military brass was underway.
  - Military sources indicated that the Tejas jet was to be part of the exercise.
- The Tejas aircraft is a **potent platform for air combat and offensive air support missions** while reconnaissance and anti-ship operations are its secondary roles.
- It is manufactured by state-run aerospace behemoth **Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL).**
- In February 2021, the defence ministry sealed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd for the procurement of 83 **Tejas MK-1A jets** for the **Indian Air Force (IAF).**

### Bharat Shakti

- It is a significant **tri-Service exercise showcasing firepower** by the Army, Air Force, and Navy.
- In the exercise named **Bharat-Shakti at Pokhran Field Firing Range.**

Note:

- Only **indigenously developed weapon platforms and systems** are included in this exercise.
- Top officers of the three forces including **CDS General Anil Chauhan** participated in the exercise.
- The concept of **self-reliant India** was seen during this exercise.

#### Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)

- It is an Indian public sector aerospace and defence company, **headquartered in Bangalore**.
- Established on **23 December 1940**, HAL is one of the oldest and largest aerospace and defence manufacturers in the world.
- It is governed under the management of the **Ministry of Defence**.

## Rajasthan Government to Give Free Seed Kits to Boost Millets Production

### Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan government has decided to distribute **free seeds of millets** and coarse grains to the state's farmers in a bid to **boost millet production**.

### Key Points

- The State government will provide free mini kits of **maize seeds** to 1.2 million farmers, **pearl millet (bajra) seeds** to 800,000 farmers, **mustard seeds** to 700,000 farmers, **moong seeds** to 400,000 farmers, and **sorghum (jowar) and moth seeds** to 100,000 farmers.
  - Rajasthan has a share of **26%** in total millet production of the country.
  - **Pearl millet and sorghum are the main millet crops produced in the state**, with Rajasthan accounting for the country's 41% bajra production.
- The state government had started the **Rajasthan Millet Promotion Mission** in 2022-23 and made a provision of Rs 40 crore to set up 100 primary processing units by farmers, entrepreneurs and voluntary organisations.
- The **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi** has been increased from Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000 per year per farmer while the **minimum support price** on wheat has been increased to Rs 2,400 per quintal by giving an additional bonus of Rs 125 per quintal.

#### Rajasthan Millets Promotion Mission

- It was **announced in 2022** by the Rajasthan government.
- Under the mission, provisions have been made to establish the **Millets Centre of Excellence under Jodhpur Agricultural University**, with a view to provide free seeds of **advanced varieties, distribution of micronutrients and bio-insecticide kits** at a subsidized rate, grant on establishment of the first **100 processing units of millets**, promotion for the modification of Bajra and other millets, encouragement and latest technical information to small and marginal farmers.
- It is known that **Ragi, Kangni, Sawan, Cheena, Kodo, and Kutki crops** are included under Millets. Public awareness programs have been proposed regarding their nutritional quality.

#### Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- The PM-KISAN was **launched on February 24 in 2019**.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding** from the Government of India.
- It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- Under the scheme, the **Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal installments, directly into the bank accounts of the all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings**.

## Centre Sanctions Rs 972 Crore for Roads Development in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

Recently, **Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari** has sanctioned 972.80 crore rupees for widening roads in Rajasthan.

### Key Points

- The amount has been sanctioned for widening and strengthening work of **31 major district roads and State Highways**.
- Rs 384.56 crore have been sanctioned for construction work of 7 Road Over Bridge/Road Under Bridge/Flyovers in various districts under **Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) Setu Bandhan Yojana**.

Note:



### Setu Bandhan Yojana

- The “Setu Bandhan Scheme” is a program initiated by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, aimed at facilitating the construction of **Rail Over Bridges (ROBs), Rail Under Bridges (RUBs), and Bridges on State Roads.**
- This program is designed to enhance **road safety by replacing existing level crossings with bridges,** ultimately reducing accidents at these locations.

### Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF)

- The Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (**earlier known as Central Road Fund**) was established in 2000 under **Central Road Fund Act, 2000.**
- The fund comprises a **cess imposed along with excise duty** on petrol and diesel.
- The administrative control of the CRIF falls under the Ministry of Finance.
- Earlier it was under the domain of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

## Rajasthan Recognizes Ramgarh Crater as India's 1st Geo-Heritage Site

### Why in News?

Recently, the Rajasthan government officially recognised the 3-km diameter **Ramgarh Crater at Baran district** formed **165 million years ago** due to a **meteor impact,** as the **country's first Geo-Heritage Site.**

### Key Points

- Ramgarh Crater is significant for its ecosystem services, biodiversity, cultural, and heritage value for the local communities and society.
  - This significance is reflected by its status as a declared Conservation Reserve, namely **Ramgarh Conservation Reserve,** under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
- According to the **State Wetland Authority, Pushkar Talab** located inside the crater is a source of both saline and alkaline water, adding to the beauty and diversity of the area.
  - These lakes have been notified as wetlands under the **Wetland (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017.**

- Ramgarh Crater exhibits an important interchange of human values within a cultural area, reflected in developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning, or landscape design.
  - **Bhand Deva Temple,** influenced by **Chandela dynasty** and their temples at Khajuraho, is an example of such interchange.
  - Its construction on a meteor impact crater adds to its uniqueness and significance.

### Ramgarh Crater



- It is a meteor impact crater of **3.5 kilometres diameter in Kota plateau of Vindhya range** located adjacent to **Ramgarh village in Baran district** in Rajasthan.
- It is **formally accepted as the third crater in India,** its diameter size would be between the **two already confirmed craters in India - Dhala in Madhya Pradesh** with 14 km diameter and **Lonar in Buldhana district of Maharashtra** with 1.8 km diameter.

### Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- It provides a **legal framework for the protection of various species of wild animals and plants,** management of their habitats, regulation, and control of trade in wild animals, plants, and products made from them.
- The act also lists schedules of plants and animals that are afforded varying degrees of protection and monitoring by the government.
- India's entry to the **CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)** was made easier by the Wildlife Act.
- Earlier, **Jammu and Kashmir was not covered by the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.** The Indian Wildlife Protection Act now applies to J&K as a result of the reorganisation act.

Note:

## Rajasthan CM Announces Multiple Cultural Heritage Projects

### Why in News?

Recently, Rajasthan Chief Minister announced the construction of various **panoramas and museums in 12 places to preserve the historical and cultural heritage** of the state.

### Key Points

- In a bid to educate the youth about the historical roots and values of Rajasthan, the government is determined to showcase the lives of **deities, great warriors and saints**.
- Under this project, Shri Mahavir panorama at Mahavir Temple of Karauli district, Braj Chaurasi Kos Parikrama Marg in Bharatpur district, Jain Muni Vidyasagar Maharaj Panorama in Ajmer, Bhakta Shiromani Karma Bai panorama in Kalwa of Didwana-Kuchaman, Jasnath Ji panorama in Katriyasar of Bikaner, Khema Baba panorama in Baytu of Balotra, Bhamashah panorama in Chittorgarh, Rao Chandrasen panorama in Jodhpur, Gokula Jat panorama in Bharatpur and Jaisalmer Panorama in Jaisalmer will be **constructed by Rajasthan Heritage Authority**.
- A **memorial** will also be constructed in **Jaipur** to commemorate the **contribution of villages in the first freedom movement of 1857** along with a **museum to honour the brave women of Rajasthan**.

#### Shri Mahaveer Ji Temple

- There are five temples in Shri Mahavirji. **Atishaya Kshetra Shri Mahavirji** is considered one of the **miraculous pilgrimages of Jains**.
- This pilgrimage is situated at **banks of Gambhir river in Hindaun Block of Karauli district, Rajasthan**.
- It was constructed by a **Jain merchant, Shri Amar Chand Bilala**, in the **17th century** upon the discovery of the idol of Mahavira.

#### Khema Baba Temple

- Khema Baba Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to folk deity, **Lord "Sidh Shree Khema Baba"** located near a sand dune, in **Baytu, Barmer District of Rajasthan**.
- He was a **social reformer** born in village Baytu Bhopji.

#### Bhamashah of Chittorgarh

- Bhamashah was a noted general, minister and close aide of **Maharana Pratap Singh**. The financial support provided by him allowed Maharana Pratap to restore his army and reclaim much of his lost territory.
- Bhamashah's birth anniversary or **Bhamashah Jayanti is celebrated on 29 June** every year.
- There is a **memorial in Udaipur** dedicated to him. The Government of India issued a **postage stamp in his honor in 2000**.

## Trade Bodies Urge Rajasthan Government to Make Changes in Investment Policies

### Why in News?

Recently, trade bodies in Rajasthan requested the state to change policies like the **Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme (RIPS)** and **Mukhyamantri Laghu Udyog Protsahan Yojana (MLUPY)** to make the state investor-friendly.

### Key Points

- In the RIPS policy, investors get subsidies on **state goods and services tax (SGST)**, electricity fee, land tax, stamp duty, etc.
- The MLUPY scheme provides concessional bank loans to facilitate establishment of enterprises in the state and create employment opportunities.
- A delegation of **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham)** met Rajasthan's principal secretary, industries & commerce.
  - In this it is pointed out that interest benefits under RIPS were **available on term loans but not on working capital loans**.
  - The delegation requested for **industry-wide awareness programs** about the schemes.
  - It also requested that the **warehousing sector be covered under the preview** of industries.

Note:

### Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme (RIPS)

- To promote rapid, sustainable and balanced industrial development in the state, 'Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme-2019' was implemented from **17th December, 2019**.
- In this, **75% recharge of 7 years SGST**, electricity tax stamp duty is also being recharged for new investment in manufacturing and service sector industries.
  - Along with this, concessions like 100% in market fee are being given.

### Mukhyamantri Laghu Udyog Protsahan Yojana (MLUPY)

- This scheme has been launched with the objective of **providing subsidized loans through Financial institutions** to facilitate the establishment of enterprises in the state and to **provide new employment opportunities to all sections of society**.
- Under the scheme, loans will be provided for manufacturing, service and business enterprises through financial institutions like (**Nationalized Commercial Bank, Private Sector Scheduled Commercial Bank, Scheduled Small Finance Bank, Regional Rural Bank, Rajasthan Financial Corporation, SIDBI and Urban Cooperative Banks**).

## Rajasthan Communities at Risk of Losing Land

### Why in News?

Recently, a Rajasthan state government notification has sparked fear among **community dwellers in western Rajasthan**, who are concerned about potential **loss of access to forest produce and livelihood**.

### Key Points

- The community is apprehensive about the state's proposal to recognise **orans (sacred groves)** as deemed forests.
- The government notification declares that, in compliance with directives from the Supreme Court (SC), **orans, dev vans (sacred forests) and runds (traditionally conserved open forests)** will be categorised as **deemed forests**.
  - The community through representation of the organisation "**Gochar Oran Sanrakshak Sangh Rajasthan**" has raised objection to the decision.

- The village residents also depend on the forest for **gum, timber, forest produce and wild vegetables**, crucial for their livelihoods and daily needs.
- If orans are declared as deemed forests, the people fear they will **lose access to forest produce and grazing land** for their herds and sheep.

- According to the officials, to prevent further degradation of such lands, the SC, in the **TN Godavarman case, 1996**, directed state governments to identify them and stipulated that all forests, including deemed forests, would be covered under **section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980**.

- The provisions in this section **prohibit non-forestry activities** such as mining, deforestation, quarrying, or infrastructure projects on such forest land without permissions from the central government.
  - However, **this does not restrict individuals or communities from accessing the forest for grazing or worship**.

### Deemed Forests

- Deemed forests, **comprising about 1% of India's forest land**, are a controversial subject as they refer to **land tracts that appear to be a "forest", but have not been notified so by the government or in historical records**.
- The concept of deemed forests **has not even been clearly defined in any law** including the **Forest Conservation Act 1980**.
- In the **T N Godavarman Thirumalpad case 1996**, SC accepted a **wide definition of forests** under the Act and held that the word 'forest' must be understood according to its dictionary meaning.
  - This description **covers all statutorily recognised forests**, whether designated as reserved, protected or otherwise for the purpose of **Section 2 (1) of the Act** and also includes any **areas recorded as forest in the government record irrespective of the ownership**.
- The **provisions for the conservation of forest and the matters connected therewith applies clearly to all forests** irrespective of the ownership or classification.
- The **freedom to define which tracts of forest qualify as forest** has been the **prerogative of States since 1996**.

Note:

- However, this **only applies to forest land** that has not already been historically classified as “forest” in revenue records, or categorised so by the government as “protected” or “reserve forest”.

#### Forest Conservation Act, 1980

- The Forest Conservation Act, 1980 stipulated that the **central permission is necessary to practice sustainable agro-forestry in forest areas**. Violation or lack of permit was treated as a criminal offence.
- It is targeted to limit deforestation, conserve biodiversity and save wildlife. Though this Act provides greater hope towards forest conservation it was not successful in its target.

## SC Considers Lifting the Ban on Transmission Lines through GIB Habitats

### Why in News?

Recently, the Supreme Court agreed to **release over 67,000 sq km area** for setting up lines for **transmission of solar power generated in Rajasthan and Gujarat** but said **13,000 sq km area must remain undisturbed** as it's the core habitat of the **endangered bird, Great Indian Bustard**.

### Key Points

- The Union government order banning overhead power cables for transmission of solar energy plants in 80,000 square km area is **unimplementable**.
- Further suggested a **balance between encouraging solar energy generation** to reduce emissions from coal-fired thermal power plants and all-out steps to do everything possible **to save the GIB from getting extinct**.

#### The Great Indian Bustard

- Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*), the **State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered **India's most critically endangered bird**.
- It is considered the **flagship grassland species**, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- Its population is confined mostly to **Rajasthan and Gujarat**. Small populations occur in **Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**.



#### ➤ Threat:

- The bird is under constant **threats due to collision/ electrocution with power transmission lines, hunting** (still prevalent in Pakistan), habitat loss and alteration as a result of widespread agricultural expansion, etc.

#### ➤ Protection Status:

- **International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List (IUCN):** Critically Endangered
- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix 1
- **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):** Appendix I
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I

## Singapore President Arrives in Jodhpur

### Why in News?

Recently, **Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam arrived in Rajasthan's Jodhpur**. His visit to India comes at a time when **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is on a visit to Singapore**.

- Indian-origin economist, **Tharman Shanmugaratnam was sworn in as the 9th Singapore President in September 2023**.

### Key Points

- According to the sources, the External Affairs Minister started his Singapore visit by paying homage to **Subhash Chandra Bose** and the brave **Indian National Army soldiers**.

Note:



- He also engaged in discussions with prominent corporate figures from the country who offered positive feedback on India's growth story derived from their investment experiences.
- According to the High Commission of India in Singapore, the **ties between India and Singapore** have a history rooted in **strong commercial, cultural and people-to-people links**. India was one of the **first countries to recognise Singapore in 1965**.
- The relations between India and Singapore are based on shared values and approaches, economic opportunities and convergence of interests on key issues.
- There are more than **20 regular bilateral mechanisms, dialogues and exercises**.
- The two nations have great convergence on a broad range of international issues and both are members of a number of forums, including the **East Asia Summit, G20, the Commonwealth, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**.

#### Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- It is an intergovernmental organisation established to promote economic cooperation and regional integration among countries bordering the **Indian Ocean**.
- IORA member states **work on various initiatives related to trade, investment, and sustainable development** in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).

#### Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

- The IONS is a **voluntary and inclusive initiative that brings together navies of IOR littoral states** to increase maritime co-operation and enhance regional security.
- It also serves to develop an effective response mechanism and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) against **natural disasters**.

## World's First Om Shaped Temple in Rajasthan

### Why in News?

In **Pali district** of Rajasthan, a beautiful temple shaped like the sacred symbol 'Om' is currently under construction. This temple is **poised to become the world's first temple designed in this iconic form**.

### Key Points

- Known as the '**Om Aakar**' temple, this monumental structure spans across a vast expanse of 250 acres in **Nagara Style** in Jadan village of Pali district.
- According to the sources, the monumental task commenced with the laying of the **temple's foundation stone in 1995**, with expectations set for its completion by the years 2023-24.
  - It will be able to accommodate **1,008 idols of Lord Mahadev** and **12 Jyotirlingas within its sacred precincts**.
  - Towering at a height of 135 ft, the temple stands supported by **2,000 pillars**, with provisions made for **108 rooms** on its premises.
  - The central feature of the temple complex is the **tomb of Guru Madhavanand ji**.
  - The uppermost segment of the temple houses a sanctum adorned with a shivling crafted from a rhinestone sourced from the Bansi hill of Dholpur.
- The visionary behind this grand project is **Vishwa Guru Maha Mandleshwar Paramahansa Swami Maheswara Nanda Puriji Maharaj**, the founder of the Om Ashram.
- In Hinduism, the Om mantra holds profound significance as the Mahamantra, recited daily by adherents upon awakening.



#### Nagara Style Temple

- In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a **stone platform with steps leading up to it**.
- Further, unlike in South India it **does not usually have elaborate boundary walls** or gateways.
- While the earliest temples had just one tower, or shikhara, later temples had several.

Note:

- The garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower.
- There are many subdivisions of nagara temples depending on the shape of the shikhara.
- There are different names for the various parts of the temple in different parts of India; however, the most common name for the simple shikhara which is square at the base and whose walls curve or slope inward to a point on top is called the 'latina' or the rekha-prasada type of shikara.
- The second major type of architectural form in the nagara order is the **phamsana**, which tends to be broader and shorter than latina ones.
- Their roofs are composed of several slabs that gently rise to a single point over the centre of the building, unlike the latina ones which look like sharply rising tall towers.
- The third main sub-type of the nagara building is generally called the **valabhi type**.
- These are rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber.

## Adani Green Commissions 180 MW Solar Plant In Rajasthan

### Why in News?

Adani Green Energy has recently operationalized a 180-MW solar power plant at Devikot in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

### Key Points

- The plant has a 25-year **Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)** with the **Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)**, **Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL)**, India's largest **renewable energy** company.
- It will produce approximately 540 million electricity units annually, powering over 1.1 lakh homes and reducing around 0.39 million tonnes of **CO2 emissions**.
  - **Next-generation bifacial solar Photovoltaic modules** and **horizontal single-axis solar trackers (HSAT)** have been deployed to maximise generation through better efficiency of modules and tracking the sun throughout the day.

- HSAT used to increase the generation potential of the sunlight by tracking systems

- The plant is equipped with **waterless robotic module cleaning systems**, enabling **water conservation** in the barren region of Jaisalmer.

### Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)

- It is a **long-term contract** between an electricity generator and a customer, usually a utility, government or company.
- PPAs usually last anywhere between 5 to 20 years, during which time the power **purchaser buys energy at a pre-negotiated price**.
- Such agreements play a key role in the **financing of independently owned** (i.e., not owned by a utility) electricity generators, especially producers of renewable energy like solar farms or wind farms.

## Gulaal Gota

### Why in News?

Recently, **Gulaal Gota**, a unique tradition **dating back around 400 years**, was celebrated in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**.

### Key Points

- Gulaal Gota is a **small ball made of lac**, filled with **dry gulaal**, and weighs around 20 grams when filled.
- Lac, the primary raw material for Gulaal Gota, is sourced from **Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand**.
  - The process of making Gulaal Gotas involves **boiling lac in water** to make it flexible, shaping it, adding colour, heating it, and then blowing it into a spherical shape with the help of a blower called "**phunkni**".
- Gulaal Gotas are made by **Muslim lac makers, known as Manihaars**, in Jaipur, who learned lac-making from Hindu lac makers in Bagru, a town near Jaipur.
- The government of India has given "**artisan cards**" to the lac bangle and Gulaal Gota makers, allowing them to avail benefits from government schemes.
- In a bid to save the tradition, some Gulaal Gota makers have demanded a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.

### Lac

- It is a resinous substance that is **secreted by certain insects**. The **female scale insect** is one of the sources of lac.

Note:

- To produce 1 kg of lac resin, around 300,000 insects are killed. The lac insects also yield resin, lac dye and lac wax.
- It is used in various applications, including the production of lac bangles.

#### Geographical Indication (GI) tag

- A GI tag is a name or sign used on certain products that correspond to a specific geographical location or origin.
- The GI tag ensures that only the authorised users or those residing in the geographical territory are allowed to use the popular product name.
  - It also protects the product from being copied or imitated by others.
- A registered GI is valid for 10 years.
- GI registration is overseen by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

## Rajasthan Leads India's Transition to Green Energy

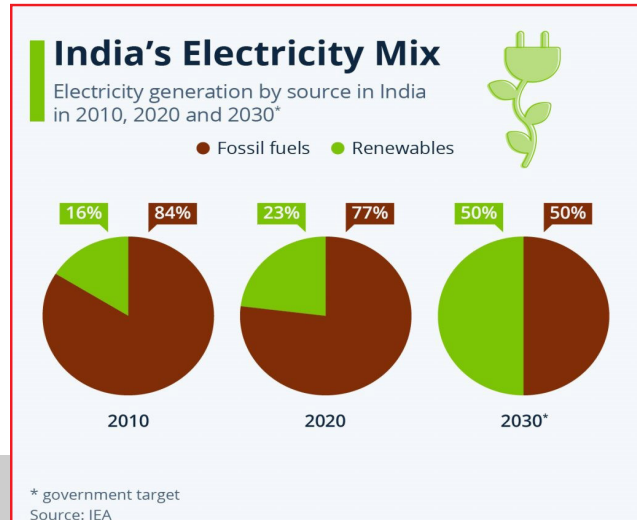
### Why in News?

In recent times, Rajasthan has led India's transition to green energy with over 26,800 MW of installed renewable energy capacity.

### Key Points

- Rajasthan produced 39,300 million units of green energy in the first 10 months of 2023-24: a three-fold rise compared to the same period in 2019-20.

- In Rajasthan, renewable energy sources account for 64.5% of its power generation capacity, significantly surpassing Gujarat's 47% renewable energy mix in its energy portfolio.
- Rajasthan has already overtaken Tamil Nadu as the number one state in generating wind power.



### Five Panchamrit Targets

- At UNFCCC COP 26, Prime Minister unveiled five Panchamrit targets, which include:
  - Achieving a non-fossil energy capacity of 500 GW by 2030.
  - Sourcing 50% of India's energy from renewable sources by 2030.
  - Decreasing total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030.
  - Lowering the carbon intensity of India's economy by less than 45% by 2030.
  - Attaining Net Zero emissions by 2070.

Note:



**Key Points**

**Details**

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**Summary**

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**Key Points**

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