



## News Analysis (18 Feb, 2020)

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### Portuguese President's Visit to India

#### Why in News

The **Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa** visited India from 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.

The last visit by a Portuguese President to India was in 2007.

#### Highlights of the Visit

- **14 agreements and understandings** were signed between India and Portugal in the fields of maritime heritage, maritime transport and port development, migration and mobility, start-ups, Intellectual Property Rights, aerospace, nano-biotechnology, audio visual co-production, yoga, diplomatic training, scientific research and public-policy. One of the agreements included cooperation in setting up a **national maritime museum heritage complex in Lothal, Gujarat**.
- **Permanent Seat at UNSC:** Portugal provided its support to India to become a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations.
- **India-Portugal Joint Economic Committee:** It has been decided to hold the next session of the India-Portugal Joint Economic Committee in India soon to review the gamut of the bilateral trade and economic relations.
- Portugal also extended its support for the **commemoration of Mahatma Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary**.

- **Visit to Goa**

- Portuguese president visited churches in Old Goa, including the Basilica of Bom Jesus where relics of St. Francis Xavier are preserved. He also paid a visit to Institute Mater Dei Santa Monica, a church in the Old Goa heritage complex, and the Christian Art Museum located on the premises.
- All these structures at Old Goa, located about nine km from Panaji, are part of the complex certified as **world heritage monuments by UNESCO**.
- Santa Monica Church is over 450 years old, having been one of the first churches the Portuguese built in Goa in 1525.

- **Upcoming Collaborations**

- Portugal could join the **International Solar Alliance** in the near future.
- India as an Associate Observer of the **Community of Portuguese Language Countries**, so that both the countries can amplify their developmental partnerships in Africa and elsewhere.
- India's deepening engagement with the European Union (EU), especially when Portugal assumes the Presidency of the **EU** in 2021.

## Note

- **St. Francis Xavier** was the greatest Roman Catholic missionary of modern times who was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in India, the Malay Archipelago, and Japan.
- **Community of Portuguese Language Countries** (CPLP) is a multilateral forum whose objective is to deepen the mutual friendship and cooperation among its members.
  - It was created on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 1996.
  - It has eight member states which have Portuguese as their official language: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe.



- Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1949.

- Bilateral relations, however, went into decline after 1950 over Portugal's refusal to surrender its enclaves of Goa, Daman Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli on India's west coast.

By 1955, the two nations had cut off diplomatic relations which were followed by Indian military forces liberating Goa in 1961 through **Operation Vijay**, ending over 450 years of Portuguese rule in India.

- In **1974**, India and Portugal signed a treaty recognising India's sovereignty over Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and related matters. With the signing of this treaty, diplomatic relations were re-established.
- **Bilateral S&T cooperation** is being actively fostered between the two countries under the Agreement for Cooperation in Science and Technology signed on 3rd December, 1998.
- The Centre for Indian Studies at the University of Lisbon was inaugurated in April 2016 by the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva. It is the first centre in any university in Portugal dedicated to the study of India.

**Source: PIB**

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## Women Eligible for Permanent Commission

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### Why in News

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The Supreme Court has ruled that the **Short Service Commission (SSC) women officers are eligible for the permanent commission and command posts in the Army** irrespective of their years of service.

- The verdict came on a nearly 10-year-old appeal filed by the government against the 2010 decision of the Delhi High Court to grant SSC women officers permanent commission.
- The court ordered the government to implement its judgment in **three months**.

### Background

- Under the **Short Service Commission (SSC) scheme**, women were commissioned into the Army for a period of 10 years, extendable up to 14 years.
- Women were, however, **restricted to roles in specified streams** such as Army Education Corps, Corps of Signals, Intelligence Corps, and Corps of Engineers. These specified streams **excluded combat arms** such as infantry and armoured corps.

- While **male SSC officers could opt for permanent commission** at the end of 10 years of service, this **option was not available to women officers**. Women officers, were, thus, **kept out of any command appointment**, and **could not qualify for government pension**, which starts only after 20 years of service as an officer.
- However, in the **February 2019** policy statement, the **Government endorsed the permanent commission for SSC women officers in 10 streams** of the 'Combat Support Arms' and 'Services' sections. But it was said that the **women officers would not be offered any command appointments**, and would serve only in staff posts.

## Highlights of the Judgement

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- **All Serving Women Officers will be eligible for the Permanent Commission (PC)**
  - The court dismissed the government's stand that only women officers with less than 14 years of service ought to be considered for permanent commission, and those with over 20 years service should be pensioned immediately.
  - The court has **done away with all discrimination on the basis of years of service** for grant of PC in 10 streams of combat support arms and services, bringing them on a par with male officers.
- **Eligible for Command Posts**
  - The court held that **women officers will also be eligible for command posts** in non-combat areas since "an absolute bar on women seeking criteria or command appointments would not go with the **guarantee of equality under Article 14**".
  - The court held that since command appointments were not automatic for men officers, so would it be for women. It was left to the Army to take a call on a case to case basis.
- **SC's stand on Combat Role**

The exclusion of women from combat operations was not examined by the court as it was not the contested in the appeal.

- **Criticized the Government's Note**

- **Reflects Poorly on Women:** The note had shown women officers in a poor light, saying isolation and hardships would eat into their resolve and that they would have to heed to the call of pregnancy, childbirth and family. The note had mentioned that women ran the risk of capture by enemy and taken prisoner of war.
- **Patriarchal Notion:** The court held that the the note reflected the age-old patriarchal notion that domestic obligations rested only with women.
- **Sex Stereotype:** The court also dismissed the point that women are physiologically weaker than men as a "sex stereotype".
- **Offence to dignity of Indian Army:** The court noted that challenging abilities of women on the ground of gender is an offence not only to their dignity as women but to the dignity of the members of the Indian Army – men and women – who serve as equal citizens in a common mission.

- **Appreciated the Government's February, 2019 Decision**

The court noted that the policy decision of the Union government is a recognition of the right of women officers to equality of opportunity.

## Implication of the Judgement

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- The women officers will be eligible to occupy all the command appointments, at par with male officers, which would open avenues for further promotions to higher ranks for them.

If women officers had served only in staff, they would not have gone beyond the rank of Colonel.
- After implementation of the judgement, a woman can rise to the rank of Colonel and above based on merit, like their male counterparts.
  - At the rank of Colonel, an officer picks up a substantive command and would be delegated to carry out independent tasks.
  - A Colonel commands a battalion, which typically consists of 850 men. A woman officer who is successful in this position could technically rise to the highest ranks of the Army, though, **women officers will not be inducted into the combat arms** such as the infantry, artillery or armoured corps.

## Way Forward

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- The court observed that women were being kept out of command posts on the reasoning that the largely rank and file will have problems with women as commanding officers. Thus, **changes have to take place in the culture, norms, and values** of not only the rank and file of the Army but also that of society at large. The responsibility to usher these changes lies with the senior military and political leadership.

- The **United States, Israel, North Korea, France, Germany, Netherlands, Australia and Canada** are among the global militaries that employ women in front-line combat positions.
- It is the right of every woman to pursue a career of her choice and reach the top. **Equality is a constitutional guarantee.**

**Source: IE**

## Battle of Gallipoli

### Why in News

India has objected to Turkey President's comparison of the Kashmir situation to the Battle of Çanakkale/Gallipoli of **World War I (1914–18)**. He has compared the struggle of Kashmiris with that of Turkey during World War I.

Earlier in September, 2019 Turkey had raised the Kashmir issue in the United Nations General Assembly.

Key Points



- **Gallipoli Campaign (1915-16):** The Battle of Gallipoli or the **Dardanelles Campaign** was an unsuccessful attempt by the Allied Powers to **control the sea route from Europe to Russia** during World War I.
- The campaign began with a **failed naval attack by British and French** ships on the **Dardanelles Straits** (connecting the **Sea of Marmara to the Aegean Sea** and the **Mediterranean Sea**) involving British and French troops as well as **divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC)**. ANZAC corps was created early in World War I (1914–18).

- **Failure:** Lack of sufficient intelligence and knowledge of the terrain, along with a fierce Turkish resistance (Ottoman army), hampered the success of the invasion.
- **Result:** It is considered to be one of the bloodiest battles of World War I leading to the death of tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides.
- **Legacy of the Battle :** The Battle resulted in the downfall of Winston Churchill and the **emergence of the Turkish military hero, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.**
  - The event is today one of the central pillars of the **modern Turkish identity.**
  - The campaign is also seen to have **seeded Australian and New Zealand national consciousness.**
  - The date of the Gallipoli landings i.e **April 25, 1915** is observed by **Australia and New Zealand** as **ANZAC Day**, the day of national remembrance for the war dead.

## World War I

- **World War I** was fought between the **Allied Powers** and the **Central Powers.**
- **Allied Powers:** The main members **were France, Russia, and Britain.** The **United States** joined the Allies after 1917.
- **Central Powers:** The main members **were Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria.**

Source:IE

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## Kambala

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### Why in News

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The Kambala jockey who was compared to world record holder Usain Bolt after a video went viral showing him 'finishing 100 metres in 9.55 seconds', has refused to participate in athletics trials.

### Key Points

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- **Kambala** is a traditional **buffalo race** in paddy fields filled with slush and mud which generally takes place in **coastal Karnataka** (Udupi and Dakshina Kannada) from **November to March.**
  - Traditionally, it is sponsored by local **Tuluva landlords** and households in the coastal districts. Tuluva people are an ethnic group native to Southern India. They are native speakers of the **Tulu language.**
  - During the race, the racers try to bring the buffaloes under control by holding their reins tight and whipping them.

- **Tradition:** In its traditional form, Kambala was **non-competitive** and **buffalo pairs raced one after another in paddy fields**.  
It was also observed as **thanksgiving to gods for protecting the animals from diseases**.
- **Concerns:** Animal activists **criticize** the sport and argue that the Kambala involves **acts of cruelty** on animals which are not physiologically suited for racing and they run in the race due to fear of being beaten.  
According to them, it violates the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960**. The Act prevents practices which involve **unnecessary pain** to the animal amounting to cruelty.



## Background

- The Supreme Court had **banned jallikattu, bullock-cart races, and kambala** events in its judgement on **May 7, 2014**.
- The judgement upheld the Constitution of India read with legislation under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and provided animals with the fundamental right to be **treated with compassion and dignity** and to be free from unnecessary pain and suffering
- However, the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Karnataka Amendment) Ordinance, 2017** approved the organising of kambala event, provided steps are taken to avoid cruelty to the participating bulls.

## Jallikattu

- **Jallikattu** is a traditional **bull-taming** event that is organised in the **Tamil Nadu** every year as part of the harvest festival **Pongal**.



- The sport requires fighters to pounce on a running bull, try to hold on to its hump and move along with the animal without falling or getting hurt.

**Source: TH**

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## State of India's Bird 2020

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **State of India's Bird 2020 was released** at the **13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals** which is taking place in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- The **first-of-its-kind analysis** was carried out by **ten research and conservation organisations across India**.
- It used a massive database of over **10 million observations** uploaded by 15,000 birdwatchers on the **online platform (e-Bird)** and '**citizen science data**' to assess the distribution and trends of **common Indian birds**.

### Key Points

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- **Declining trend:**

The groups that show the **greatest decline** are raptors, migratory shorebirds, and habitat specialists, including White-rumped Vulture, Richard's Pipit, Indian Vulture, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Pacific Golden Plover and Curlew Sandpiper.
- **Increasing Trend:**

The species that have shown an **increase in numbers** include Rosy Starling, Feral Pigeon, Glossy Ibis, Plain Prinia and the Ashy Prinia
- **Categorisation of Birds:**
  - The study categorised **101** species as "**high concern**", **319** as "**moderate concern**" and **442** into "**low concern**".
  - Out of the species categorised as a high concern, 26% are classified globally by IUCN as "least concern".

### Analysis of Species

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- **Indian Peacocks:**
  - The numbers of **India's national bird, the Indian Peacock**, has **increased** dramatically over the past few decades.
  - The increase in numbers of the species has been attributed to a combination of the **bird expanding its range** (earlier it was absent in Kerala), **conservation efforts** and associated **penalties for poaching** under **Schedule I of the Wildlife Act**.
  - It is listed as '**Least Concern**' on the **IUCN Red List**.
- **Indian vultures:**
  - It has experienced catastrophic **population declines** starting in the early 1990s.
  - The declines are almost entirely attributable to inadvertent poisoning by the livestock **anti-inflammatory drug diclofenac**.
  - Surveys conducted have shown that **White-rumped Vulture** has **suffered the most severe declines**, followed by **Indian Vulture** and **Egyptian Vulture**.
- **House Sparrow:**
  - The House Sparrow has been found to be **stable across the country** as a whole, although **declining in the major cities**.
  - It has been declared as the "**State Bird of Delhi**" to save the species and enhance awareness about their life and habitat.
  - The reasons for the decline include **decreasing insect populations** (a key part of the diet of sparrow chicks) and **paucity** of suitable **nesting sites**.
  - Moreover, the popular theory that radiation from mobile phone towers is a factor is **not supported** by the findings of this report.
- **Bustards in India:**
  - All the four species of bustards in India (the **Great Indian Bustard**, Macqueen's Bustard, Lesser Florican and Bengal Florican) have suffered **continuous population declines**.
  - The decline is observed due to historical hunting and widespread habitat loss, with their slow growth and reproduction.
- **Waterbirds:**
  - It showed overall **long-term declines**, amongst which migratory shorebirds and gulls and terns appear to have declined the most.
  - Overall, migratory species (both long-distance and within-subcontinent) show steeper declines than residents.

## Key Recommendations

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- Updation of global and national priorities using conservation assessments.
- Fund conservation efforts on High Concern species and habitats where species have declined.
- Support monitoring efforts by citizen scientists and researchers.
- Promote collaborations between researchers and the public at large

**Source: IE**

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## 100 years of Jamshedpur City

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### Why in News

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Jamshedpur City is celebrating the completion of 100 years.

Jamshedpur is one of the **first industrial planned cities** of India and the **most populous urban agglomeration** in Jharkhand.

### Key Points

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- The city, originally a village called **Sakchi**, was **renamed** as **Jamshedpur** by then Viceroy of India **Lord Chelmsford (1916-21)** in 1919 in the honour of Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, founder of the Tata group.
- It is located in **Chota Nagpur plateau**, surrounded by the **Dalma Hills** and at the **confluence** of **Kharkai** and **Subarnarekha Rivers**.
- Jamshedji Tata had established the **Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO)** in Jamshedpur in **1907**. TISCO (now Tata Steel Ltd) is the oldest iron and steel enterprise of India.

### Subarnarekha River

- Subarnarekha (Line of gold) river flows through the states of **Jharkhand, West Bengal** and **Odisha**.
- **Major Tributaries: Kanchi River** and **Kharkai river**

**Source: PIB**

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## E-MASIHA

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Ministry of Minority Affairs** has informed that India has made the **Haj 2020 process completely digital**.

### Key Points

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- India has become the **first country in the world** which has made the entire Haj 2020 process **100% digital**.

- The online facilities include application procedure, E-Visa, Haj mobile app, “E-MASIHA” health facility and “E-luggage pre-tagging” providing all information in India itself regarding accommodation/transportation in Makkah-Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

### **E-MASIHA**

- E-MASIHA (E-Medical Assistance System for Indian Pilgrims Abroad) is an online system to create and maintain the complete health database of Indian pilgrims.
- It also provides doctors’ prescriptions, medical treatment as well as medicine disbursements, and has been developed to deal with any emergency in Makkah-Madinah.

**Source: PIB**

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## Arab World's First Nuclear Power Plant

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has issued an **operating licence** for the **Arab world's first nuclear power plant**, paving the way for it to start production in 2020.

### Key Points

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- The **Barakah nuclear power plant** in **Abu Dhabi** is being built by **Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO)**, was originally due to open in 2017.
- Barakah will have **four reactors** with a **total capacity of 5,600 megawatts**. It will be almost a **fifth of the country’s current installed generating capacity**.
- The plant is located on a sparsely populated **strip of desert on the Persian Gulf coast**.



**Source: HT**

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## SUTRA-PIC

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Ministry of Science and Technology** has launched the “**Scientific Utilization through Research Augmentation-Prime Products from Indigenous Cows**” (SUTRA-PIC India).

It is one of the research programmes into indigenous cattle announced during the **2019-20 Union Budget**, which aims to develop products as well as improve the genetic quality of indigenous cattle breeds.

### Key Points

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- It is a **collaborative effort** of the Department of Biotechnology, **the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research**, the **Ministry for AYUSH (Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy)** and the Indian Council of Medical Research.

- The department of the **Science for Equity, Empowerment and Development (SEED)**, under the Ministry of Science and Technology, is in charge of the programme. It can be noted that SEED had also constituted a National Steering Committee to initiate a National Programme on **“Scientific Validation and Research on Panchagavya” (SVAROP)** in 2017.
- The programme consists of **five** themes:
  - **Uniqueness** of Indigenous Cows,
  - Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for **Medicine and Health**,
  - Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for **Agricultural Applications**,
  - Prime-products from Indigenous Cows for **Food and Nutrition**,
  - Prime-products from indigenous **cows-based utility items**.
- The above themes **aim to perform**:
  - Scientific research on the complete **characterisation of milk and milk products** derived from Indian indigenous cows.
  - Scientific research on **nutritional and therapeutic properties of curd and ghee** prepared from indigenous breeds of cows by traditional methods.
  - Development of standards for traditionally processed dairy products of Indian-origin cows, etc.

## **Panchagavya**

Panchagavya is an Ayurvedic panacea and is a mixture of five (pancha) products of the cow (gavya) — milk, curd, ghee, dung and urine. Its proponents believe it can cure, or treat a wide range of ailments.

**Source: TH**

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