News Analysis (10 Aug, 2020)

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Andaman and Nicobar Islands to be Maritime and Startup Hub

Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister has declared that the **Andaman and Nicobar islands** will be developed as a **"maritime and startup hub".**
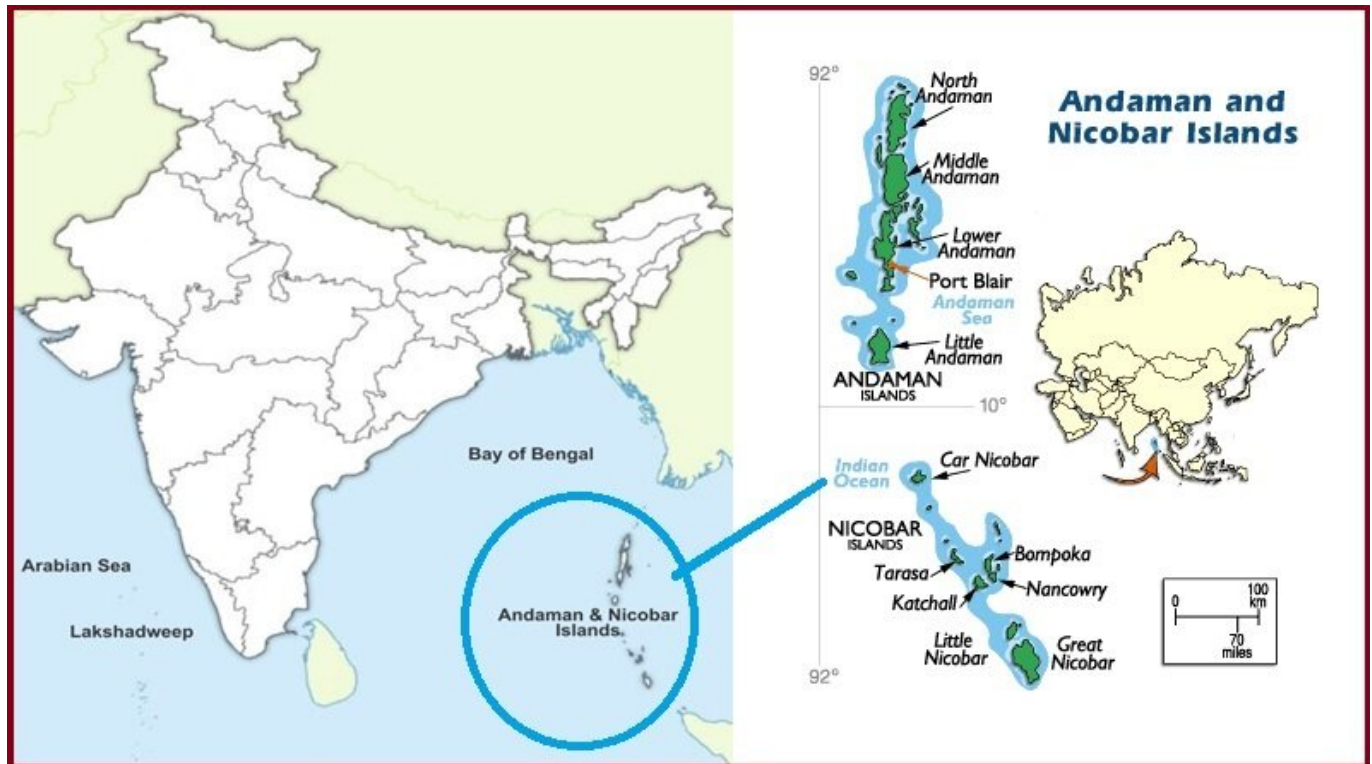
Key Points

- A **transhipment hub** has been proposed in the Andaman and Nicobar islands.
    - A **transshipment** is when cargo or a container is moved from one vessel to another while in transit to its final destination.
    - It will be built in South Bay, Great Nicobar Island, to provide Indian shippers an alternative to the **Colombo (Sri Lanka), Singapore and Port Klang (Malaysia) transshipment ports.**
- 12 islands of the archipelago have been selected for **high-impact projects** with an emphasis on boosting trade of **sea-based, organic and coconut-based products** of the region.
- A **submarine cable project** has been launched in the islands to make it digitally independent.
    - 2300 Km of submarine optical fibres cable (OFC) have been laid down
    - The fibre will connect chennai and port blair and seven other islands- **Swaraj Deep (Havelock)**, Long island etc.
    - The connectivity project was funded by the Centre through the **Universal Service Obligation Fund** under the Ministry of Communications.
    - It was executed by **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited** (BSNL) and **Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL)** was the technical consultant.
- In addition, **Port Blair airport** is to be **expanded** and some of the islands will be also **connected with seaplanes.**

- **Background:**
    - In 2015, the government had announced an ambitious, **Rs 10,000 crore economic plan** to transform the Andaman and Nicobar Islands into the **country's first maritime hub.**
    - This included infrastructure construction, protection of the original **Jarawa inhabitants** and boosting the **tourism potential.**
    - Earlier, India had also invited **global investors to develop** the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.
    - The Union Government constituted the **Island Development Agency** on 1st June, 2017 for the development of islands.

Benefits

- **Governance:**
    - Better connectivity in the region will facilitate the delivery of **e-governance** services such as **telemedicine** and **tele-education,** as a part of **Digital India** initiative.
    - The region will play an important role in his government's **self-reliant India** project.

- **Economic:**
    - Small enterprises, Business Process Outsourcing Services and other medium and large enterprises will also benefit from better connectivity and opportunities in **e-commerce**,
        - This can be leveraged to promote the government's **Startup India** initiative.
    - The internet costs will also come down and it will give a boost to **tourism** and the **local economy.**
    - The building of a transshipment hub will be critical for **India's trade** and help the group of islands become an important centre of the **blue economy**.

- **Strategic:**
    - The islands are critical for **India's security** because of their **strategic location** in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR).** Better infrastructure and connectivity will help India enhance its **military and naval strength** in the islands.
    - The islands are home to India's only tri-services command, the **Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC)** which is strategically important, more so, on the backdrop of the **Chinese aggression** in the region.
        - Earlier this year, China was accused by Vietnam of **sinking its sea** in its **Exclusive Economic Zone.**
- **International Relations:**
    - It will also help India to build better economic relations with **ASEAN** region.
    - The importance of the islands has increased in light of India's **'Act East'** policy.

Submarine Communications Cable

- It is a cable **laid on the seabed** between land-based stations to transmit **telecommunication signals** across stretches of ocean and sea.
- The optical fibre elements are typically coated with **plastic layers** and contained in a **protective tube** suitable for the environment where the cable will be deployed.
- Compared to satellites, using internet connection through submarine cables is more **reliable, cost efficient** and **of large capacity.**

Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)

- USOF ensures that there is universal **non-discriminatory access to quality ICT services** at economically efficient prices to people in rural and remote areas.
- It was created under the Department of Telecommunications in **2002.**
- It is a **non-lapsable fund,** i.e., the unspent amount under a targeted financial year does not lapse and is accrued for next years' spending.
- All credits to this fund require **parliamentary approval** and it has statutory **support** under **Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003.**

Way Forward

Provision of reliable, robust, and high-speed telecom and broadband facilities in these islands will be a landmark achievement from the viewpoint of consumers, as well as for strategic and governance reasons.

Source: TH

Negative Imports List for Defence

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** has announced a negative list of 101 defence items that the MoD will stop importing.

Key Points

- **Indigenisation of Defence Production:**
    - This will **boost indigenisation of defence production** and is in line with the government's target to **reach a turnover of USD 25 billion** by 2025 through indigenously manufactured defence products.
        - Government also targets to **export** these indigenously manufactured defence products worth USD 5 billion by 2025.
        - The manufacturers could be **private sector players** or **Defence Public Sector Undertakings** (DPSUs).
    - This will **reduce the government's defence import bill.**
- **List of Items:**
    The list comprises simple parts to high technology weapon systems like artillery guns, assault rifles, sonar systems, transport aircrafts, radars, and many other items.

- **Implementation:**
  - The imports on these 101 defence items is planned to be **progressively implemented between 2020 to 2024.**
  - MoD has also **bifurcated the capital procurement budget** for 2020-21 **between domestic and foreign capital** procurement routes.
      - A separate budget head has been created with an outlay of nearly Rs. 52,000 crore for domestic capital procurement in the current financial year.
  - **In any government contract over Rs. 200 crore, no foreign company can participate** in the tendering process.
- **Benefits:**
  - It will **offer an opportunity** to the Indian defence industry **to manufacture the items in the negative list** by using their own design and development capabilities or adopting the technologies designed and developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces.
  - It is a big step towards self-reliance in defence under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.**
- **Issues Involved:**
  - At least a third of the 101 items are already being produced in India.
      - Some items in the list are under development by domestic industry, and are not produced by any other country. E.g. the **Light Combat Helicopter** and the **light transport aircraft.**
  - Items like the AK-203 rifle, to be produced by the Ordnance Factory Board in Amethi with Russian collaboration are **stuck over pricing issues.**
  - The items in the list are of proven technologies, and **do not involve any critical or cutting-edge technology** for a next-generation weapon system or platform.
  - Challenge for the government and the armed forces will be **to keep this commitment to domestic producers** in the event of an operational requirement.
      - E.g. **Make in India** scheme announced in 2014 aimed to develop the indigenous defence industry, but has failed to achieve its targets.

Way Forward

- By supporting its domestic manufactures, India can become the centre of excellence in the small arms sector. It will also reduce the import dependence of arms and ammunition. Domestic manufacturing of arms will also create jobs for Indians.
- However, the Government must address the challenges and further focus on transfer of cutting edge technologies through bilateral agreements with major defence players in order to support domestic industry.

Source: TH

GCC Backs UN Arms Embargo on Iran

Why in News

Recently, the **Gulf Cooperation Council** (GCC) has sent a letter to the **United Nations Security Council** (UNSC) backing an **extension of its arms embargo on Iran,** just two months before it is set to expire.

Gulf Cooperation Council

- It is a **political and economic alliance** of countries in the Arabian Peninsula.
- It was **established in 1981** to foster socioeconomic, security, and cultural cooperation.
- **Members:** Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
    All these member countries of the GCC come under the **Persian Gulf Region**.

Key Points

- The GCC has **alleged that Iran had not ceased or desisted from armed interventions** in neighbouring countries, directly and through organisations and movements armed and trained by Iran.

- **Allegation on Iran:**
  - The UN, the USA and other armament experts have accused Iran of **providing arms to <u>Yemen's Houthi rebels.</u>**
  - Iran **allegedly arms Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and Syria** and also provides **weapons to Shiite militias in Iraq** and **terrorist groups in Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.**
  - The letter also mentioned **Iran's shootdown of a Ukrainian passenger plane** and its **navy accidentally killing 19 sailors** in a missile strike during an exercise.
  - Iran also is **suspected of launching an <u>attack on Saudi Arabia's oil industry</u>** in September 2019.
- **Arms Embargo:**
  - In **2010,** the **UN banned Iran from purchasing foreign-made weapons** like fighter jets, tanks and warships amid tensions over Iran's nuclear program.
    - The embargo **blocked Iran from replacing its ageing equipment,** much of which had been purchased before the **<u>1979 Islamic Revolution.</u>**
    - An earlier embargo had **targeted Iranian arms exports.**
  - In **2015,** under **<u>Iran's nuclear deal</u> (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action),** the **UN agreed to end the arms embargo in October 2020.**
    In **2018,** the **<u>USA unilaterally withdrew from the deal</u>** as a part of the maximum pressure campaign to hurt Iran's already ailing economy.
- **Internal Conflict in GCC:** Even though the GCC has offered a unified statement, it **remains affected by internal conflict** among the member nations. For example:
  - **<u>Qatar crisis</u>**, which saw Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates cut diplomatic ties with Qatar and launch a boycott of the nation beginning in 2017.
    - **Qatar has had good relations with Iran** and has used its airspace while sharing a vast offshore oil and gas field with Tehran (Iran's capital).
    - Qatar is **home to the massive Al-Udeid Air Base** and the forward headquarters of the USA military's Central Command.
  - **<u>Oman</u>** also has had **close ties to Iran** and has served as an **interlocutor between Tehran and the West.**
  - On the other hand, **Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are suspicious of Iran** and accuse it of stirring up dissent among Shiite populations in the region.
- **Iran's Stand:**
  - Iran has **denied the various accusations** of its involvement in arms supply.
  - Iran has **condemned the GCC letter** and called it an irresponsible statement that serves the USA's interests.
  - It has also **criticized the GCC countries for being "among the largest arms buyers in the region and the world,"** even amidst the economic downturn caused by the **<u>Covid-19</u>** <u>pandemic</u>.

<u>Source: IE</u>

Electric Vehicles Policy 2020: Delhi

Why in News

Recently, the Delhi government has notified the **Electric Vehicles (EV) Policy 2020.**

It lays the maximum emphasis on replacement of two-wheelers, public transport and shared vehicles and goods-carriers instead of private four-wheelers, with **Electric Vehicles** (EVs).

Key Points

- **Features:**
  - It envisions the **replacement of the existing auto rickshaws and State-run buses with e-autos and e-buses** respectively. It will also ensure that **delivery-based services** operating in the city are powered by e-mobility.
  - It talks about **increasing road tax for fuel-based vehicles,** at least in the luxury segment and imposing in certain parts of the city a congestion fee that EVs will be exempt from.
  - It has a **'scrapping incentive'** for those people who want to make the switch, allowing them to exchange an old fuel-based vehicle while purchasing a new EV, further reducing its cost.
  - The government will also **offer low-interest rate loans** to people interested in buying commercial EVs.
  - The policy also offers **subsidies and road tax and registration fee waivers,** for EVs bought in the capital.
    - At present, road tax ranges from 4% to 10% of the cost of the vehicle, while the registration fee could cost up to Rs. 3,000.
    - In addition, a subsidy of Rs. 5,000 per kWh of the battery capacity up to Rs. 30,000 will be given on the purchase of each EV.
    - For the first 1,000 e-cars or electric four-wheelers, a subsidy of Rs. 10,000 per kWh will be given, capped at Rs. 1,50,000 per vehicle.
  - These **grants will be in addition to the subsidies offered by the Union government** under its **FAME India Phase 2 scheme**, which offers similar incentives, especially on the purchase of electric two-wheelers and electric heavy passenger and goods vehicles.
  - A **State EV** fund will be set up, encompassing all the expenditure of the EV Policy. A **State Electric Vehicle Board** will be constituted for effective implementation of the policy and managing the fund. Besides, a **dedicated EV Cell** will also be constituted.

- **Aims:**
  - To **reduce air pollution** and to **kick-start the economy by spurring demand.**
    - Delhi experiences a public health emergency every winter due to the rise in air pollution, which has become a recurrent annual crisis.
    - During the **Covid-19** induced **lockdowns**, the capital witnessed a drastic **reduction in the PM10 and PM2.5 levels**.
  - To address both **problems of the high cost of purchase** and the **lack of sufficient charging infrastructure.**
  - To register **at least 5,00,000 EVs in Delhi** in the **next five years.**
- **Delivery-based and Ride-hailing Services:**
  - Ride-hailing service providers will be **allowed to operate electric two-wheeler taxis** subject to operating within the guidelines to be issued by the Transport Department.
  - It is expected that the incentives provided by the policy would **encourage delivery service providers** related to food delivery, **e-commerce** logistics providers and couriers to switch to using electric two-wheelers.
  - All delivery service providers shall be **expected to convert 50%** of their fleet operating in Delhi to electric **by 31st March 2023** and **100% by 31st March 2025.**
  - Delivery service providers who **commit to achieving these targets will be eligible for financing support** from the Delhi Finance Corporation.
- **Autorickshaws:**
  - **Incentives** will be provided related to the purchase **(Rs. 30,000 per vehicle)** and use of new electric autos.
  - An **open permit system** will be put in place to **provide permits on a first-come, first-served basis** to those with valid light motor vehicle driving licences and a Public Service Vehicle badge.
    - The open permit system for e-autos shall be subject to the cap on the maximum number of autos if the **Supreme Court** will direct so in future.
  - There will be **no cap on permits issued to e-autos in Delhi** since they are **zero-emission vehicles and can be very effective in ensuring clean,** last-mile connectivity.
    - Currently, there is a cap on the number of CNG-run auto rickshaws, allowed to ply in the city.
- **Buses:**
  - The policy envisions that **half of the State-run buses to be procured over the next three years will be pure electric buses.**
  - It will start doing so with the **induction of 1,000 pure electric buses by 2020.**

Central Government Initiatives on EVs

- Government has set a **target of EV making up 30% of new sales of cars and two-wheelers by 2030.**

- To build a sustainable EV ecosystem, initiatives like **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan** (NEMMP) and **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India** (FAME India) have been launched.
  - **NEMMP** was launched in **2013** with an aim to **achieve national fuel security** by promoting hybrid and EVs in the country. There is an ambitious target to achieve 6-7 million sales of hybrid and EVs year on year from 2020 onwards.
  - **FAME India** was launched in **2015** with the objective to support hybrid/EV market development and manufacturing ecosystem. The scheme has 4 focus areas viz. technology development, demand creation, pilot projects and charging infrastructure.
- Organisations like **Bureau of Indian Standards** (BIS), Department of Heavy Industry, **Automotive Research Association of India** are devising design and manufacturing standards of EVs, Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSEs) and charging infrastructure to smoothen the advent of in-house production of EVs.

Way Forward

- **Affordable, accessible, inclusive and safe mobility solutions** are primary strategic levers for rapid economic development and improving **'Ease of Living'.**
- Establishing the right coordination among **three pillars of EV industry** viz. **urban planning, transportation and power sectors** will assist in systematic adoption of EVs.
- EVs are a **rapidly growing sunrise sector** which can give a push to 'Make in India'.

Source: TH

Quit India Movement

Why in News

On 8th Aug 2020, India completed 78 years of **Quit India Movement** also known as **August Kranti.**

- Taking inspiration from the Quit India Movement, the Prime Minister gave a call for the **revival of its spirit** of the Quit India Movement by coining a new slogan *karenge aur karake rahenge* in place of Gandhi's slogan of *karo ya maro* (Do or Die).
- The aim of this slogan is to achieve the goal of building a **"New India"** by **2022.**

Key Points

- **About:** On 8th August 1942, **Mahatma Gandhi** gave a clarion call to end the British rule and launched the **Quit India Movement** at the session of the **All-India Congress Committee in Mumbai.**
    - Gandhiji gave the call **"Do or Die"** in his speech delivered at the **Gowalia Tank Maidan,** now popularly known as August Kranti Maidan.
    - **Aruna Asaf Ali** popularly known as the 'Grand Old Lady' of the Independence Movement is known for hoisting the Indian flag at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai during the Quit India Movement.
    - The slogan 'Quit India' was coined by **Yusuf Meherally,** a socialist and trade unionist who also served as Mayor of Mumbai.
        > Meherally had also coined the slogan "Simon Go Back".
- **Causes:**
    - The **immediate cause** for the movement was the **collapse of Cripps Mission.**
    - The British assumption of unconditional support from India to British in **World War II** was not taken well by the **Indian National Congress**.
    - The anti-British sentiments and demand for full-independence had gained popularity among indian masses.
    - The two decades of mass movement which were being conducted on a much more radical tone under the leadership of the various associated and affiliated bodies of the Congress, like **All India Kisan Sabha, Forward Bloc** etc. had already **prepared the ground** for the movement.
    - There were **militant outbursts** happening at several places in the country which got channelized with the Quit India Movement.
    - The **economy was also in shatters** as a result of World War II.
- **Demands**
    - The demand was to end the British rule in India with immediate effect to get the cooperation of Indians in World War-II against fascism.
    - There was a demand to form a **provisional government** after the withdrawal of the Britishers.
- **Phases:** The movement had three phases
    - **First Phase** urban revolt, marked by strikes, boy cott and picketing, which were quickly suppressed.
        - There were **strikes and demonstrations** all over the country and workers provided the support by not working in the factories.
        - Gandhiji was soon imprisoned at **Aga Khan Palace in Pune** and almost all leaders were arrested.
    - In the **second phase,** the focus shifted to the **countryside,** which witnessed a major **peasant rebellion,** marked by **destruction of communication sys-tems,** such as railway tracks and stations, telegraph wires and poles, **attacks** on government buildings or any other visible symbol of colo nial authority.
    - The **last phase** witnessed the formation of **national governments or parallel governments** isolated pockets (Ballia, Tamluk, Satara etc.)
- **Spontaneous Violence:** The movement saw **violence** at some places which was not premeditated.

- **Future Leaders:** Underground activities were taken by leaders that included **Ram Manohar Lohia, J.P. Narayan, Aruna Asaf Ali, Biju Patnaik, Sucheta Kriplani,** etc which later emerged as prominent leaders.
- **Women Participation:** Women took active participation in the movement. Female leaders like **Usha Mehta** helped set up an underground radio station which led to the awakening about the movement.
- **Support:**
  - **Muslim League, the Communist Party of India and the Hindu Mahasabha did not support the movement.** The Indian bureaucracy also did not support the movement.
    - The League was not in favour of the British leaving India without partitioning the country first.
    - The Communist party supported the British since they were allied with the Soviet Union.
    - The **Hindu Mahasabha** openly opposed the call for the **Quit India Movement** and boycotted it officially under the apprehension that the movement would create internal disorder and will endanger internal security during the war.
  - Meanwhile, Subhas Chandra Bose, organised the **Indian National Army** and the Azad Hind government from outside the country.
  - As **C Rajagopalachari** was not in favour of complete independence, he resigned from the INC.

Cripps Mission

- **Japanese aggression** in South-East Asia, keenness of British Government to secure the **full participation of India in the war,** mounting **pressure from China and the United States,** as well as from the **Labour Party** in Britain, led British Prime Minister **Winston Churchill** to send Cripps Mission to India in **March 1942.**
- Under Stafford Cripps, the mission was sent to **resolve the Indian question of a new constitution and self-government.**
- **Main proposals** of the mission were:
  - An Indian Union with a **dominion status** would be set up; it would be free to decide its relations with the Commonwealth and free to participate in the United Nations and other international bodies.
  - **A constituent assembly** would be convened after the war to frame a new constitution.
  - Members of the assembly **partly elected** by the provincial assemblies and partly nominated by the princes.
  - Any province not willing to accept the constitution would be given **'the same full status as the Indian Union', -** designed to appease the Muslim League's call for Pakistan.
  - The constitution making body and the British Government would negotiate a **treaty to effect the transfer of power** and to safeguard racial and religious minorities.

- The Indian National Congress, however, was not satisfied as its **demand for immediate complete independence had been rejected.**
- Mahatma Gandhi said that Cripps' offer of Dominion Status after the war was a **"post-dated cheque drawn on a failing bank".**

Outcomes

- The Quit India movement was **violently suppressed** by the British – people were shot, lathi-charged, villages burnt and enormous fines imposed.
- Over 100000 people were arrested and the **government resorted to violence** in order to crush the agitation.
- The Britishers declared the **INC** to be an **unlawful association.**
- New leaders like **Aruna Asaf Ali** emerged out of the vacuum of leadership.
- While the Quit India campaign was **crushed in 1944,** with the British refusing to grant immediate independence, saying it could happen only after the war had ended, they came to the important realization that **India was ungovernable in the long run** due to the cost of World War II.
- It changed the **nature of political negotiations with British** the, ultimately paving the way for **India's independence.**

Source: IE

Telemedicine Service Platform: eSanjeevani

Why in News

The **telemedicine service platforms of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** i.e. **'eSanjeevani'** and **'eSanjeevaniOPD'** have completed 1.5 lakh tele-consultations.

- The **top two States** which have registered highest consultations through the platforms are **Tamil Nadu** (32,035 consultations) and **Andhra Pradesh** (28,960).
    - Since November 2019, tele-consultation by eSanjeevani and eSanjeevaniOPD have been implemented by 23 States.
- Both the platforms have been developed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)** Mohali.
    - C-DAC is the **premier R&D organization of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** for carrying out R&D in IT, Electronics and associated areas.

Key Points

- **Telemedicine:** As per the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, telemedicine is the delivery of health care services, where distance is a critical factor, by all health care professionals **using Information Technology (IT)** for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease and injuries, research and evaluation, etc, all in the interests of advancing the health of individuals and their communities.
    - **Tele-consultation is one of the applications of telemedicine.** It uses IT to facilitate communications between a patient and a doctor who are otherwise geographically separated.
- **eSanjeevani:**
    - It is a **doctor to doctor telemedicine system,** being implemented under the **Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWCs) programme**.
        - AB-HWCs are envisaged to be the platform for delivery of an expanded range of primary health care services closer to the communities.
    - It **seeks to connect all 1,50,000 HWCs using the hub-and-spoke model by December 2022.**
        - Under the model, a network will be established comprising an anchor establishment, or hub, which offers a full array of services, and will be complemented by secondary establishments, or spokes, which offer limited services, routing patients needing more intensive services to the hub for treatment.
    - Presently, telemedicine is being provided through more than 3,000 HWCs in 10 States.
- **eSanjeevaniOPD:**
    - It was **launched amid the Covid-19 pandemic** to enable **patient-to-doctor tele-consultations.**
    - Offered at **no cost,** this **e-health service** has made it convenient for the people to avail of the health services without having to travel. It enables **two-way interaction** and even generates a prescription slip.
    - It is **hosting over 40 online Out Patient Department (OPD) services,** more than half of these are speciality OPDs which include Gynaecology, Psychiatry, **AntiRetroviral Therapy (ART) for the AIDS/HIV patients**, **Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)** etc.

Way Forward

- These platforms can be a **gamechanger for people in the rural areas** who do not have easy access to medical specialists located in cities.
- Telemedicine saves time and cost. Further, these platforms are in line with the government's vision of **'Digital India'** and necessary to tackle situations created by a pandemic like Covid-19.

Source: PIB

Comptroller and Auditor General

Why in News

Girish Chandra Murmu has been appointed the **Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).**

He has replaced Rajiv Mehrishi and will have a tenure up to 20th November, 2024.

Key Points

- **Constitutional Body: Article 148** provides for an independent office of the CAG. It is the **supreme audit institution of India.**
  - **Other Provisions** Related to CAG include: **Articles 149-151** (Duties & Powers, Form of Accounts of the Union and the States and Audit Reports), **Article 279** (calculation of net proceeds, etc.) and **Third Schedule** (Oath or Affirmation) and **Sixth Schedule** (Administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram).
- **Profile in Brief:**
  - Head of the **Indian Audit and Accounts Department -** created in 1753.
  - **Guardian of the public purse** and controls the entire **financial system** of the country at both the levels–**the Centre and the state.**
  - **One of the bulwarks** of the democratic system of government in India.
    - The others being the **Supreme Court**, the **Election Commission** and the **Union Public Service Commission.**
  - The **accountability of the executive (i.e. Council of Ministers)** to the Parliament in the sphere of **financial administration** is secured through audit reports of the CAG.
- **Appointment:** Appointed by the **President of India** by a warrant under his hand and seal.
- **Tenure:** A period of **six years** or upto the age of **65** years, whichever is earlier.
- **Removal:** CAG can be removed by the President on the **same grounds and in the same manner as a judge of the Supreme Court.** He **does not hold his office till the pleasure of the President.**
  - In other words, he can be removed by the President on the basis of a **resolution** passed to that effect by both the **Houses of Parliament with special majority,** either on the ground of **proved misbehaviour or incapacity.**

- **Other Related Points:**
  - **Not eligible for further office,** either under the Government of India or of any state, after he ceases to hold his office.
  - **Salary and other service conditions are determined by the Parliament.**
  - The administrative expenses of the office of the CAG, including all salaries, allowances and pensions of persons serving in that office are **charged upon the <u>Consolidated Fund of India</u>** (thus are **not subject to the vote of Parliament).**
  - **No minister can represent the CAG in Parliament.**
- **Duties & Powers** as also under the **CAG's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971:**
  - Audits the accounts related to all **expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India,** consolidated fund of each state and consolidated fund of each union territory having a Legislative Assembly.
  - Audits all expenditure from the **Contingency Fund of India** and the **Public Account of India** as well as the contingency fund of each state and the public account of each state.
  - **Audits** profit and loss accounts, balance sheets and other subsidiary **accounts kept by any department of the Central Government and state governments.**
  - Audits the receipts and expenditure of the following:
    - Bodies and authorities substantially **financed from the Central or state revenues;**
    - **Government companies;** and
    - Other corporations and bodies, when so required by related laws.
  - Audits the accounts of any other authority when **requested by the President or Governor.** For example, the audit of local bodies.
  - Acts as a **guide, friend and philosopher of the Public Accounts Committee** of the Parliament.
- **Limitation:**
  - The Constitution of India visualises the CAG to be Comptroller as well as Auditor General. However, in practice, the CAG is **fulfilling the role of an Auditor-General only and not that of a Comptroller.**
  - In other words, the CAG has no control over the issue of money from the consolidated fund and many departments are authorised to draw money by issuing cheques without specific authority from the CAG, who is concerned only at the audit stage when the expenditure has already taken place.
  - In this respect, the CAG of India **differs totally from the CAG of Britain** who has powers of both Comptroller as well as Auditor General.
    - In other words, in Britain, the executive can draw money from the public exchequer only with the approval of the CAG.

<u>Source: TH</u>

World Tribal Day

Why in News

World Tribal Day or **International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples** is observed on **9th August** every year.

Key Points

- **Aim:** The day is aimed at **promoting and protecting the rights of the world's indigenous population** and to acknowledge the contributions that indigenous people make towards world issues such as environmental protection.
- **Background:** The day recognizes the **first meeting** of the **United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations in Geneva in 1982.**
  - It has been celebrated every year since 1994, in accordance with the declaration by the United Nations.
- **Theme 2020: "Covid-19 and the indigenous peoples' resilience"**
- **Tribes in India:**
  - According to the 2011 census, tribals make up 8.6% of India's population.
  - There are over 700 tribal groups in India, out of which around 75 are **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).**
    - The **Gond** comprise the largest tribal group of India
  - The **largest number** of tribal communities **(62) are found in Odisha.**
  - **No Tribe** identified in **Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Puducherry.**
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - **Article 342(1)-** The **President** may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor, by a public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State or Union Territory.
  - **Article 15- Prohibition of discrimination** on grounds of **religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth only.**
  - **Article 16-** Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment
  - **Article 46-** Promotion of educational and economic interests of scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes and other weaker sections,
  - **Article 335-** Claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts.
  - As per **Article 338-A** of the Constitution of India, the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes** has been set-up.
  - **5th and 6th Schedule-** Administration and control of Scheduled and Tribal Areas.

- **Legal Provisions:**
  - **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955** against Untouchability.
  - **Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** to prevent the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
  - **Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996** to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas.
  - **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006** to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- **Committees Related to Tribal Communities**:
  - **Xaxa Committee** (2013)
  - **Bhuria Commission** (2002-2004)
  - **Lokur Committee** (1965)

Source