



News Analysis (23 Oct, 2021)

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G7 Digital Trade Principles

Why in News

Recently, the **Group of Seven (G7)** wealthy nations agreed on a **joint set of principles to govern cross-border data use and digital trade**.

- The deal is a **first step in reducing trade barriers**, and could lead to a common rulebook of **digital trade**.
- Earlier, **India attended the 47th G7 Summit as a guest country**.



Key Points

- **Digital Trade:** It is broadly defined as **trade in goods and services that is either enabled or delivered digitally**, encompassing activities from the distribution of films and TV to professional services.

- **G7 Digital Trade Principles:**

- **Open Digital Markets:** Digital and telecommunications markets should be competitive, transparent, fair, and accessible to international trade and investment.
- **Cross Border Data Flows:** To harness the opportunities of the digital economy and support the trade of goods and services, data should be able to flow freely across borders with trust, including the trust of individuals and businesses.
- **Safeguards for Workers, Consumers, and Businesses:** Labour protections must be in place for workers who are directly engaged in or support digital trade, providing decent conditions of work.
- **Digital Trading Systems:** To cut red tape and enable more businesses to trade, governments and industry should drive forward the digitisation of trade-related documents.
- **Fair and Inclusive Global Governance:** Common rules for digital trade should be agreed and upheld at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

These rules should benefit workers, consumers, and businesses in developing economies, as well as those in developed economies, while safeguarding each country's right to regulate for legitimate public policy objectives.

- **Significance:**

- **Middle Ground:** The deal sets out a middle ground **between highly regulated data protection regimes used in European countries and the more open approach of the United States.**

The deal envisages removing unjustified obstacles to cross-border data flows, while continuing to address privacy, data protection, the protection of intellectual property rights, and security.

- **Liberalise Digital Trade:** The agreement reached by the elite global group is considered to be significant as **it could liberalise hundreds of billions of dollars of digital trade.**

Enabling cross border data flows and clarifying the framework for processing and storing data will be required to further expand the contribution of digital exports.

- **Associated Concerns:**

- The G7 countries have **raised concerns about situations where data localisation requirements are being used for protectionist and discriminatory purposes.**
- The statement assumes significance as **India has been contemplating measures for data localisation.**
 - Recently, India has scored **90.32% in UNESCAP Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.**
 - In **2018**, the **economic value of digital trade-enabled benefits to the Indian economy** is estimated to be worth up to **USD 35 billion.**

Data Localisation

- **About:** Data localisation is the **practice of storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of the country** where the data is generated. As of now, most of this data is stored, in a cloud, outside India.
Localisation mandates that companies collecting critical data about consumers must store and process them within the borders of the country.
- **Advantages of Data Localisation:**
 - **Secures citizen's data and provides data privacy and data sovereignty** from foreign surveillance. Example - Facebook shared user data with Cambridge Analytica to influence voting.
 - Unfettered supervisory access to data **will help Indian law enforcement ensure better monitoring.**
- **Disadvantages of Data Localisation:**
 - Maintaining multiple local data centres may lead to **significant investments** in infrastructure and higher costs for global companies.
 - **Splinternet or 'fractured internet'** where the domino effect of protectionist policy can lead to other countries following suit.
- **Indian Scenario:**
 - Recently, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) barred three foreign card payment network firms** from taking new customers on board **over the issue of storing data in India.**
 - India is contemplating an umbrella legislation on data protection, the **Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019.**
 - As per the bill, the Central Government shall notify categories of personal data as **critical personal data** that shall **only be processed in a server or data centre located in India.**
 - The **Justice BN Srikrishna committee** has recommended setting up of a data protection authority and placing restrictions on cross-border data flows.
 - India is also opposed to joining any global deal on e-commerce with the Prime Minister **refusing to sign the Osaka Track**, an overarching framework promoting cross-border data flow, at the recently held **G-20 summit.**

Way Forward

- **Global Cyber Security Framework:** Good regulatory frameworks are essential to address issues such as privacy and cybersecurity.
Thus, on the sideline of negotiations of free flow to digital trade, a global framework for cybersecurity should be established.
- **Removing Bureaucratic Hurdles:** To maximise the positive impact of digital trade, issues such as undue red tape on digital enterprises, restricted cross-border data flows, and imbalanced copyright and intermediate liability regulations, need to be addressed.

- **Role of India:** There is an opportunity for India to play a leading role, not only at home, but also abroad in pushing for facilitative digital trade rules in its various bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations.
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Global Agricultural Productivity Report (GAP Report)

Why in News

According to a new report, **Global agricultural productivity is not growing as fast as the demand for food**, amid the **impact of climate change**.

The report was released in conjunction with the **World Food Prize** Foundation's annual conference.

Key Points

Findings of the Report:

TFP Growth:

Total Factor Productivity (TFP) is growing at an annual rate of 1.36% (2020-2019).

This is **below the Global Agricultural Productivity Index** that has **set an annual target of 1.73% growth** to sustainably meet the needs of consumers for food and bioenergy in 2050.

Difference between TFP and Yield

- **Yield:**

Yield **measures output per unit of a single input**, for example, the amount of crops harvested on a hectare of land. Yields can increase through productivity growth, but they can also increase by applying more inputs, called input intensification. Therefore, an increase in yield **may or may not represent improvements in sustainability**.
- **TFP:**
 - Total factor productivity **captures the interaction between multiple agricultural inputs and outputs**.
 - TFP growth indicates that more farmers generate more crops, livestock, and aquaculture products with the same amount or less land, labor, fertilizer, feed, machinery, and livestock. As a result, TFP is **a powerful metric for evaluating and monitoring the sustainability of agricultural systems**.

- **Factors Responsible for Low TFP Growth:**

TFP growth is influenced by climate change, weather events, changes in fiscal policy, market conditions, investments in infrastructure and agricultural research and development.

- **Situation in Different Regions:**

- **Drier Regions** (Africa and Latin America): Climate change has **slowed productivity growth by as much as 34%**.
- **High-Income Countries** (in North America and Europe): **Modest TFP** growth.
- **Middle Income Countries** (India, China, Brazil and erstwhile Soviet republics): **Strong TFP** growth rates.
- **Low-Income Countries** (Sub-Saharan Africa): TFP is **contracting by an average of 0.31% per year**.

- **Significance of Productivity Growth:**

- **Destruction of Forest Areas:** 36% of the world's land is used for agriculture. Forests and biodiverse areas will be destroyed for planting or pasture.
- **Diet-Related Diseases:** **USD 2T in economic losses and 4 million deaths** are attributed to diet-related diseases each year.
- **Soil Degradation:** 90% of the earth's soils could be degraded by erosion by 2050.
- **Methane Emissions:** 37% of methane emissions from humans influenced activity come from cattle and other ruminants.
- **Loss of Irrigation Water:** 40% of irrigation water is lost due to inefficient irrigation.

Water sources will be depleted, making prime agricultural land unusable.

- **Suggestions:**

- Invest in agricultural research and development
- Embrace science-and-information-based technologies
- Improve infrastructure for transportation, information and finance
- Cultivate partnerships for sustainable agriculture, economic growth and improved nutrition
- Expand and improve local, regional and global trade
- Reduce post-harvest loss and food waste

Indian Scenario

- **About:**
 - **Strong TFP Growth:**
 - India has seen strong TFP and output growth this century.
 - The most recent data shows **an average annual TFP growth rate of 2.81%** and output growth of 3.17% (2010–2019.)
 - **Impact of Climate Change:**
 - By the end of the century, the **mean summer temperature** in India **could increase by five degrees Celsius**.
 - This rapidly rising temperature, combined with changes in rainfall patterns, could **cut yields for India's major food crops by 10% by 2035**.
 - **Other Challenges:**
 - In addition to the challenges for environmental sustainability, India's small-scale farmers **face significant obstacles to economic and social sustainability**.
 - Of the 147 million landholdings in India, **100 million are less than two hectares in size**. Nearly 90% of farmers farming less than two hectares participate in a government food ration program.
- **Initiatives Taken:**
 - **Soil Health Card Scheme:** To create awareness for farmers about the appropriate amount of nutrients for the crop depending on the quality and strength of the soil.
 - **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA):** It is envisaged as one of the eight Missions outlined under **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**, which is aimed at promoting Sustainable Agriculture through climate change adaptation measures.
 - **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY):** It was launched during the year 2015-16 with the motto of '**Har Khet Ko Paani**' for providing end-to-end solutions in irrigation supply chain, viz. water sources, distribution network and farm level applications.

Source: DTE

Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme

Why in News

Recently, the Central government announced the **calendar for Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB)** that will be issued in **four tranches**, from October 2021 to March 2022.

Key Points

- **Launch:**

The SGB scheme was launched in **November 2015** with an objective **to reduce the demand for physical gold** and shift a part of the domestic savings - used for the purchase of gold - into financial savings.

- **Issuance:**

- The Gold Bonds are issued as Government of India Stock **under the Government Securities (GS) Act, 2006.**
- These are issued by the **RBI (Reserve Bank of India)** on behalf of the Government of India.
- Bonds are **sold through** Commercial banks, Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices and recognised stock exchanges viz., **National Stock Exchange of India Limited** and Bombay Stock Exchange, either directly or through agents.

- **Eligibility:**

The bonds are restricted for sale to resident individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), trusts, universities and charitable institutions.

- **Features:**

- **Issue Price:** Gold bond prices are linked to the price of gold of 999 purity (24 carats) **published by India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), Mumbai.**
- **Investment Limit:** Gold bonds can be **purchased in the multiples of one unit**, up to certain thresholds for different investors.
 - The upper limit for retail (individual) investors and HUFs is 4 kilograms (4,000 units) each per financial year. For trusts and similar entities, an upper limit of 20 kilograms per financial year is applicable.
 - **Minimum permissible investment is 1 gram** of gold.
- **Term:** The gold bonds come with **a maturity period of eight years**, with **an option to exit the investment after the first five years.**
- **Interest Rate:** A fixed rate of **2.5% per annum** is applicable on the scheme, **payable semi-annually.**

The interest on Gold Bonds **shall be taxable** as per the provision of Income Tax Act, 1961.

- **Benefit:**

- Bonds can be used as **collateral for loans.**
- The **capital gains tax** arising on redemption of SGB to an individual **has been exempted.**
 - Redemption is the act of an issuer repurchasing a bond at or before maturity.
 - Capital gain is the profit earned on the sale of an asset like stocks, bonds or real estate. It results in when the selling price of an asset exceeds its purchase price.

- **Disadvantages of Investing in SGB:**
 - This is a **long term investment unlike physical gold** which can be sold immediately.
 - Sovereign gold bonds are **listed on exchange but the trading volumes are not high**, therefore it will be difficult to exit before maturity.

Source: PIB

Saksham Centres: DAY-NRLM

Why in News

Recently, as part of **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**, a total of 152 **Centre for Financial Literacy & Service Delivery (SAKSHAM Centres)** across 77 districts of 13 states were launched.

The centres were launched under **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)** of the **Ministry of Rural Development**.

Key Points

- **SAKSHAM Centres:**
 - **About:**

Centre for Financial Literacy & Service Delivery (CFL&SD) would act as a **one stop solution/single window system** for basic financial needs of **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** households in rural areas.
 - **Objective:**

To **provide financial literacy & facilitate delivery of financial services** (savings, credit, insurance, pensions etc.) to SHG members and rural poor.
 - **Managed By:**

SHG network, largely at the level of the Cluster Level Federations (CLFs), with the help of trained Community Resource Persons (CRPs).
- **SAKSHAM Application:**

A **mobile & web-based application called “SAKSHAM”** has also been developed.

It will be used by the **community resource person of the Centre** to know the penetration of various financial services for each SHG & village, identify major gaps and accordingly provide training and deliver the required financial services.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission

- **About:**

It is a **centrally sponsored programme**, launched by the Ministry of Rural Development in June 2011.

- **Aim:**

To **eliminate rural poverty** through the promotion of multiple livelihoods and improved access to financial services for the rural poor households across the country.

- **Functioning:**

- It **involves working with community institutions** through community professionals in the spirit of self-help which is a unique proposition of DAY-NRLM.
- It impacts the **livelihoods through universal social mobilization** by inter alia organising one-woman member from each rural poor household into **Self Help Groups (SHGs)**, their training and capacity building, facilitating their micro-livelihoods plans, and enabling them to implement their livelihoods plans through accessing financial resources from their own institutions and the banks.

- **Implementation:**

It is **implemented in a Mission mode by special purpose vehicles** (autonomous state societies) with dedicated implementation support units at the national, state, district and block levels, using professional human resources in order to provide continuous and long-term handholding support to each rural poor family.

- **Sub-Schemes:**

- **MKSP:** In order to promote agro-ecological practices that **increase women farmers' income** and reduce their input costs and risks, the Mission has been implementing the ***Mahila Kisan Shashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)***.
- **SVEP and AGEY:** As part of its non-farm livelihoods strategy, DAY-NRLM is implementing **Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)** and **Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)**.
 - SVEP aims to support entrepreneurs in rural areas to set up local enterprises.
 - AGEY, launched in August 2017, to provide safe, affordable and community monitored rural transport services to connect remote rural villages.
- **DDUGKY:** Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) aims at building placement-linked skills of the rural youth and placing them in relatively higher wage employment sectors of the economy.
- **RSETIs:** The Mission, in partnership with 31 Banks and State Governments, is supporting **Rural Self Employment Institutes (RSETIs)** for skilling rural youth to take up gainful self-employment.

- **Outcomes:**

- Today, ten years since the NRLM was first launched, **India has the largest network of women's SHGs across the world.** As of May 2021, there are 6.9 million SHGs in India with 75 million members across 7,83,389 villages.
- The Mission has achieved significant success in **improving the last mile delivery of credit services** through the agency of SHGs.
- The NRLM has **enabled rural families to negotiate for greater access to essential services** such as education and healthcare. It has had an impact on food security, improved school enrolment, access to land for women to grow food, and on gender issues with women's groups taking on issues like dowry, child marriage, and discrimination against girls.

Source: PIB

Public Safety Act: J&K

Why in News

Ahead of the Home Minister's visit, around 700 people have been detained in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and a few under the stringent **Jammu & Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978.**

Key Points

- **About:**

Under PSA, an individual **can be detained on the basis of an executive order for a maximum of two years, without trial**, if their act is prejudicial to the security of the State or the maintenance of public order.

- **Enforcement:**

Detention order is **passed either by the Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate.**

- **Challenging the Detention:**

The only way the **administrative preventive detention order can be challenged** is through a **habeas corpus** petition filed by relatives of the detained person.

- The **High Court and the Supreme Court have jurisdiction** to hear such petitions and pass a final order seeking quashing of the PSA.
- However, if the order is quashed, there is **no bar on the government passing another detention order** under the PSA and detaining the person again.
- There can be **no prosecution or any legal proceeding against the official who has passed the order.**

- **Issues with PSA:**

- **Detention Without Trial:**

- The PSA allows for the detention of a person without a formal charge and without trial.
 - It can be slapped on a person already in police custody; on someone immediately after being granted bail by a court.
 - Unlike in normal circumstances, a person who is detained under the PSA need not be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of the detention.

- **No Right to File Bail Application:**

The detained person does not have the right to move a bail application before the court, and cannot engage any lawyer to represent him or her before the detaining authority.

- **Section 8 of the PSA:**

- It provides **a vast number of reasons for detention**, ranging from “promoting, propagating, or attempting to create, feelings of enmity or hatred or disharmony on grounds of religion, race, caste, community, or region” to incitement, instigation, abetment and actual commission of such acts.
 - It **leaves it to district collectors or district magistrates** to decide, giving a 12-day period within which an advisory board has to approve the detention.

- **No Distinction Between Minor and Major Offences:**

It allows detention for up to 1 year for disturbance of public order and 2 years for actions prejudicial to the security of the State.

- **Supreme Court on Public Safety Act:**

- The **Supreme Court** (SC) has held that while detaining a person under the PSA, the **DM has a legal obligation to analyse all the circumstances** before depriving that person of his/her personal liberty.
 - It has also held that when a person already under police custody is slapped with the PSA, the **DM has to record “compelling reasons”** for detaining that person.
 - While the DM can detain a person multiple times under the PSA, he or she has to **produce fresh facts** while passing the subsequent detention order.
 - Also, all the **material** on the basis of which the detention order has been passed, **should be provided to the detained person** for making an effective representation.
 - The **grounds of detention** have to explain and communicate to the person **in the language understood by the detained person**.

Habeas Corpus

- It is a Latin term which literally means ‘**to have the body of**’. This writ is **a bulwark of individual liberty** against arbitrary detention.
- It can be issued against **both public authorities as well as private individuals**.

- The writ, on the other hand, is **not issued where the:**
 - detention is lawful,
 - the proceeding is for contempt of a legislature or a court,
 - detention is by a competent court, and
 - detention is outside the jurisdiction of the court.

Way Forward

- Now that the state has become a union territory, PSA should have been **brought in line with the all-India legislation.**
- Regional leaders remain India's best bet in J&K, their continuing detention will not go well in pursuance of establishing peace and finding a political solution in J&K.
- The Supreme Court has held that in order to prevent misuse of this potentially dangerous power, the law of preventive detention has to be strictly construed and meticulous compliance with the procedural safeguards, is mandatory and vital.
- If citizens' right to criticise a government becomes a law and order threat, the future of the republic as a functioning democracy becomes an open question.

Source: TH

Azad Hind Formation Anniversary

Why in News

The anniversary of the formation of the **Azad Hind Government** is celebrated on **21st October every year.**

The day marks the **announcement of India's first independent provisional government** named Azad Hind Government.

Key Points

- On **21st October 1943**, **Subhash Chandra Bose** announced the **formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) in Singapore**, with himself as the Head of State, Prime Minister and Minister of War.

- The Provisional Government not only enabled Bose to negotiate with the Japanese on an equal footing but also **facilitated the mobilisation of Indians in East Asia to join and support the Indian National Army (INA)**.
 - The struggle for independence was carried on by Subhash Chandra Bose from abroad. He found the **outbreak of the Second World War** (1939-45) to be a convenient opportunity to strike a blow for the freedom of India.
 - Bose had been put **under house arrest in 1940** but he managed to **escape to Berlin** on 28th March, 1941. The Indian community there **acclaimed him as the leader (Netaji)**. He was **greeted with 'Jai Hind' (Salute to the motherland)**.
 - In **1942**, the **Indian Independence League was formed** and a decision was taken to form the Indian National Army (INA) for the liberation of India.
 - On an invitation from Ras Bihari Bose, Subhash Chandra Bose **came to East Asia on 13th June, 1943**. He was made **president of the Indian Independence League and the leader of the INA** popularly called '**Azad Hind Fauj**'.
 - The **INA was first formed under Mohan Singh and Japanese Major Iwaichi Fujiwara** and comprised Indian prisoners of war of the British-Indian Army captured by Japan in the Malayan (present-day Malaysia) campaign and at Singapore.
 - In **November 1945**, a British move to put the **INA men on trial** immediately sparked massive demonstrations all over the country.
 - He gave the famous **battle cry 'Chalo Dilli'**. He promised independence to Indians saying, 'tum mujhe khoon do, main tumhe Azadi dunga' (You give me blood, I will give you freedom).

Subhash Chandra Bose

Birth:

Subhas Chandra Bose was born on **23rd January 1897**, in Cuttack, Orissa **Division, Bengal Province**, to Prabhavati Dutt Bose and Janakinath Bose.

His Jayanti is celebrated as '**Parakram Diwas**' on 23rd January.



- **Education and Early Life:**

- In 1919, he had **cleared the Indian Civil Services (ICS) examination**. Bose, however, resigned later.
- He was highly **influenced by Vivekananda's teachings** and considered him as his spiritual Guru.
- His **political mentor was Chittaranjan Das**.

He worked as the editor for Das's newspaper, Forward, and later started **his own newspaper, Swaraj**.

- **Association with Congress:**

- He stood for **unqualified swaraj (independence)**, and **opposed the Motilal Nehru Report** which spoke for dominion status for India.
- He actively **participated in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930** and vehemently **opposed** the suspension of **Civil Disobedience Movement** and signing of the **Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931**.
- In the 1930s, he was closely **associated with left politics** in Congress along with **Jawaharlal Nehru and M.N. Roy**.
- Bose **won the congress presidential elections at Haripura in 1938**.
- **Again in 1939 at Tripuri**, he won the presidential elections against Gandhi's candidate Pattabhi Sitarammaya. Due to ideological differences with Gandhi, Bose resigned and left congress. Rajendra Prasad was appointed in his place.
- He founded **a new party, 'the Forward Bloc'**. The purpose was to consolidate the political left and major support base in his home state Bengal.

- **Death:**

He is said to have **died in 1945** when his plane crashed in Taiwan. However, there are still many conspiracy theories regarding his death.

Source: PIB

World Meteorological Congress 2021

Why in News

Recently, the **World Meteorological Congress 2021** has endorsed a **Water Declaration**, including the **Water and Climate Coalition**.

It has also **approved a new vision and strategy for hydrology** and an associated plan of action.

World Meteorological Congress

The World Meteorological Congress is the **supreme body of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**. WMO is a **specialised agency of the United Nations** for meteorology, operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences. **India is a member**. It **produces annually the State of the Global Climate Report**.

Key Points

- **Concerns:**
 - Only **40% of countries** globally have **operational early flood and drought warning systems**.
 - Some **60%** of WMO member countries **lack hydrological monitoring capabilities**. Globally, **more than three billion people have no quality management system** for their water-related data in place.

It means **close to half of the world's population is at risk due to a lack of information on the state of their water resources** including rivers, lakes, groundwater, according to the most recent **United Nation (UN)** estimates.
 - Some **107 countries are not on track** to have **sustainably managed water resources**.
- **Water Declaration:**
 - By 2030 **early warnings for early action related to floods and droughts** will be **available for people everywhere** on the planet to access.
 - **Policies for water and climate action** developed within the sustainable development agenda **will be integrated to yield maximum benefit for people**.
 - Members will **pursue these goals through partnerships** for capacity development, knowledge exchange and information sharing, etc.

- **Water and Climate Coalition:**
 - The coalition is **made for promoting sharing and access** to integrated hydrological, cryosphere, meteorological and climate information.
 - It aims to **boost resilient water adaptation to climate change** as well as demographic and socio-economic development for the future.
 - It is also aimed at accelerating the progress of water-related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially SDG6 (water and sanitation for all).
- **Hydrology Action Plan:**
 - **Impact Based Early Warning System:**
 - There should be impact-based end-to-end Early Warning Systems (EWS) for flood forecasting in the context of a broader integrated flood management strategy implemented by Members, including through the **Associated Programme on Flood Management**.
 - Congress approved a new **Sustainability Strategy for the future development and implementation of the Flash Flood Guidance System** with Global Coverage.
 - **Water Resource & Quality Assessment:**

The concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) including water use and allocations for supporting food production should be widely accepted and followed.
 - **Reducing Impact of Droughts:**

Members should **reduce adverse impacts of drought** at all levels by implementing **integrated drought management systems**, including drought monitoring, early warnings, vulnerability and impact assessments, and drought mitigation, preparedness and response measures.
 - **Food Security:**

Food security should be **enhanced by informed end-users' decisions** at all levels from regional to local.
 - **High Quality Data:**

There should be increased discoverability, availability, and use of high-quality hydrological and hydrometeorological data for scientific analysis, as promoted by the **Global Hydrometry Support Facility (HydroHub)**.
 - **Research and Application of Operational Hydrology:**

There should be a **reduced gap between research and operational hydrology applications**; operational hydrology uses improved understanding of Earth system science.

Source: DTE

Kaziranga National Park: Assam

Why in News

The **Central Empowered Committee (CEC)**, constituted by the Supreme Court, has asked the Assam government to take **action on illegal construction in the identified wildlife corridors** of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.

Earlier, **Kaziranga National Park** became the first in the country to use satellite phones and Dehing Patkai and Raimona were **designated as National Parks** and the Eco-sensitive zone of the Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary was notified.



7 NATIONAL PARKS IN ASSAM

- 6th : Raimona National Park (Notified in 2021)
- 7th : Dihing Patkai National Park (Notified in June 2021)

Key Points

- **Location:**
It is located in the **State of Assam** and covers 42,996 Hectare (ha). It is the **single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.**
- **Legal Status:**
 - It was declared as a **National Park in 1974.**
 - It has been declared a **tiger reserve since 2007.**
- **International Status:**
 - It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1985.
 - It is recognized as an **Important Bird Area** by BirdLife International.

- **Biodiversity:**

- It is the **home of the world's most one-horned rhinos.**
Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary has the highest density of one-horned rhinos in the world and second highest number of Rhinos in Assam after Kaziranga National Park.
- Much of the focus of conservation efforts in Kaziranga are focused on the '**big four**' species - Rhino, **Elephant**, **Royal Bengal tiger** and **Asiatic water buffalo**.
 - The 2018 census had yielded 2,413 rhinos and approximately 1,100 elephants.
 - As per the figures of tiger census conducted in 2014, **Kaziranga had the third highest population in India** after **Jim Corbett National Park** in Uttarakhand and **Bandipur National Park** in Karnataka.
- Kaziranga is also **home to 9 of the 14 species of primates** found in the Indian subcontinent.

- **Rivers and Highways:**

- **National Highway 37** passes through the park area.
- The park also has more than 250 seasonal water bodies, besides the **Diphlu River** running through it.

Source: TH
