

# 10 Feb 2020: Comprehensive News Analysis

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## A. GS 1 Related

**Category: SOCIAL ISSUES**

### 1. 'Only 82 trafficking survivors awarded relief in last 8 years'

**Context:**

- The report titled "UNCOMPENSATE VICTIMS", released by Sanjog, a technical resource organization that works to combat trafficking and gender-based violence.

**Background:**

- **The Section 357-A of Code of Criminal Procedure** has provisions to compensate victims who suffered because of a crime.
- In 2012, the government announced **₹1,000 crore Nirbhaya fund** to be used to combat sexual violence against persons including children or adults. Part of the Nirbhaya fund is being used in the **Victim Compensation Scheme. It is a national scheme to compensate survivors of rape, acid burns, and trafficking among other forms of violence.**

#### Details:

- According to **NCRB reports, between 2011 and 2018, a total of 35,983 cases of human trafficking** were recorded in India.
- However, the response obtained through RTI queries from 25 States and seven Union Territories reveals that between March 2011 and April 2019, **only 82 human trafficking victims were awarded compensation.**
- This means, **only 0.2%** of all survivors of human trafficking received the compensation announced by the government in the last eight years.

#### Concerns:

- The revelation highlights the **poor status of compensation awarded to survivors of human trafficking in India.** Also notably, among the 82 survivors who were awarded compensation, only 77 received the relief amount.
- Despite the Supreme Court directing **NALSA (National Legal Services Authority)** to frame a standardized victim compensation scheme, the amount of **compensation** to victims of trafficking **varies from state to state.**
- The low number of trafficking survivors who have applied for the victim compensation scheme suggests that there remains a **lack of awareness on the part of the victims.**
  - This might be primarily due to **lack of initiative** on the part of legal services authority or **low investment** on part of legal aid that results in very few survivors having access to compensation.
- The current framework to deal with the issue of human trafficking is also a challenge given that from the **stage of rescue till rehabilitation, the survivors are in touch with multiple agencies** and have to fulfill various procedures and formalities.
- The District and State Legal services authorities' response to the compensation claims has been slow, and often **place the burden of proof on the survivors.**

## 2. No tally of govt. buildings to be made accessible

#### Context:

Review meeting of the **Accessible India Campaign by Social Justice and Empowerment Minister.**

#### Background:

The Accessible India Campaign was launched in December 2015, to **make public offices, transport, and websites accessible to persons with disabilities (PwD) by March 2020.**

#### Details:

##### Public offices:

- Worryingly, the minutes of the meeting reveals that the number of buildings of the Central Public Works Department across the country is not known exactly.
- **The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, under which the CPWD operates, claims that 787 out of 889 buildings had been made accessible so far, while approval for 13 buildings had been received from various Ministries. For the remaining 89 buildings, **approval of respective Ministries is still awaited.**

#### Transport:

##### *Airports:*

- According to the Civil Aviation Ministry, **all 35 international airports and 55 domestic airports under the Airports Authority of India have been made accessible** by providing ramps and had accessible toilets and provision for audio and Braille commands in lifts.
- Though there has been notable progress on making airports more accessible, all aspects of air travel, including aircraft and buses used to ferry passengers from terminals, needed to be compatible to be truly effective.

##### *Railways:*

- 7,000 wheelchairs have been provided at major stations and 22 stations have an online booking facility for a wheelchair.

##### *Roadways:*

- Worryingly, the Ministry of Road Transport states that **only 3.6% of buses had been made fully accessible.**

#### Websites:

- Though the **government intends to make at least 50% of the government websites accessible**, the exact number of websites is not known exactly.

For more information on this issue: [Check CNA dated 14 Dec 2019](#)

## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. 'People may criticise us, but environment is top priority for Bhutan'

##### Context:

Meeting of the **Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement.**

##### Details:

- Bhutan, in spite of deciding to stay out of the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement, took part in its meeting as an observer.
  - Bhutan claims that its **infrastructure does not have the capacity** to allow all the truck traffic to travel through Bhutan. It claims that in spite of the apparent benefits and **economic potential of the BBIN-MVA**, given Bhutan's current infrastructure it cannot consider the proposal of being part of the agreement.
  - **Bhutan aspires to be a carbon-negative country**, and given the fact that motor vehicles are one of the biggest emitters of [greenhouse gases](#), it is another reason for Bhutan opting out of the agreement.
- Bhutan has also introduced a levy on Indian tourists, being referred to as **the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF)**.
  - The decision is based on the **country's environmental carrying capacity**. Bhutan has a limited size and its carrying capacity for visitors is limited, given that its road surface area is limited, and it intends to further enhance the **72% land under forest cover**.
  - The decision will also help **redistribute the tourists amongst destinations** as the Sustainable Development Fee (SDF) will not be charged to those travelling to 11 out of the 20 districts in Central and Eastern Bhutan, while it will be charged for those travelling to the Western tourist destinations.
- Bhutan's Prime Minister claims that **Bhutan's commitment to sustainability** justifies the decision to levy a tourism fee on Indians and stay out of the regional transport pact.

## Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

### 1. Cases of sexual harassment at workplace: SC rejects plea

#### Context:

Special leave petition filed in the [Supreme Court](#).

#### Background:

- A special leave petition was filed in the SC highlighting the issue that **the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013** does not have any provision mandating protection for victims and witnesses in workplace sexual abuse cases.
- A similar plea was rejected by the Delhi High Court in July 2019, saying that the petition was effectively seeking the creation of a new offence under the head of 'retaliation', something which the Act does not provide for. **The High Court had held that the courts cannot legislate.**

#### Details:

- The Supreme Court has refused to entertain the appeal seeking **protection for complainants and witnesses** in sexual harassment-at-workplace cases **from victimization or retaliation** by the accused or organizations involved.

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

## 1. Cauvery delta to be declared a protected agriculture zone

### Context:

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister stating the government's intention to declare the **Cauvery Delta region as a Protected Special Agriculture Zone**.

### Background:

#### Hydrocarbon resources in the region:

- The Central government had stated in 2017 that two areas, Karaikal located in Puducherry and Neduvasal located in Tamil Nadu awarded under **DSF (Discovered Small Field)** bidding round have an in-place volume of 4,30,000 metric tonnes of oil and oil equivalent gas.
- Subsequently, more than 700 wells have been drilled for extraction of oil and gas in Tamil Nadu. Given the possibility of more reserves in the region, there have been exploratory drilling activities in the surrounding regions.

#### Amendment of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification of 2006:

- Recently, **the Environment Ministry had issued a notification, amending the EIA rules**. It dealt with granting exemption to oil and gas firms involved in exploratory drilling, from seeking environmental clearance.
- The notification would allow **companies to carry out hydrocarbon exploration activities without applying for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and holding public consultations**.
- Amid fears that the exploratory drilling would lead to the **destruction of agricultural fields in the Cauvery delta**, affect the fragile ecosystem of the region and have **health hazards**, there have been protests from environmentalists and farmers in the region.

#### Agricultural Protection Zoning:

- **Agricultural Protection Zoning (APZ)** is a practice followed in the United States.
- APZ refers to **local zoning codes**, which include provisions such as large lot size requirements and use limitations, to separate farming and related activities from other land uses.
- It helps **preserve the availability of agricultural lands for farming** and thus the agricultural base of the community, by **constraining non-agricultural development and land uses in designated areas**.
- **The Cauvery delta region is an important agricultural region in Tamil Nadu** and considered the **rice bowl of the state**. Also given the fact that the delta region is close to the sea, there is a need to safeguard the region.

### Details:

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has announced that the Cauvery delta region comprising of eight districts would be declared as a Protected Special Agriculture Zone.
- The eight districts include Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Pudukottai, Cuddalore, Ariyalur, Karur and Tiruchirapalli.
- The move is aimed towards **preventing the implementation of oil exploration projects and other hydrocarbon projects in the Cauvery delta region** and will help not only ensure **food security** of the State but also **livelihood opportunities** of the farmers and other agriculture-based labourers.
- The state government is also considering allowing only agro-based industries in the river Cauvery fed regions.



- The State government would hold consultations with legal experts, and steps would be taken to **enact special legislation** to implement the government's intention.

For more information on this topic: [CNA dated Jan 21, 2020](#)

**Category: ECONOMY**

### 1. Four-fold jump in Li-ion batteries imports since 2016, govt. tells LS

**Context:**

The Ministry of Science and Technology's response to a query in the [Lok Sabha](#).

**Background:**

Lithium-ion Batteries:

- **Lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries** are vital for powering a range of devices from cellphones to electric vehicles.
- Lithium-ion batteries are one of the most popular types of rechargeable batteries, with one of the **best energy-to-weight ratios, low self-discharge rate, high cycle life** and a slow loss of charge when not in use.

Electric mobility:

- **The National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage, under the [NITI Aayog](#)**, to “drive clean, connected, shared, sustainable and holistic mobility initiatives” aims to **promote indigenous development of Li-ion batteries**.
- Given the fact that the government has announced investments worth \$1.4 billion to make **India one of the largest manufacturing hubs for electric vehicles by 2040**, electric vehicles are expected to account for a significant share in the growth of the Li-ion battery demand in India.

Domestic efforts:

- **The Indian Space Research Organization ([ISRO](#)) manufactures Li-ion batteries** but the volumes currently being manufactured are limited, and their usage is restricted to only space applications.
- In June 2018, **the Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (CECRI), under the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), and RAASI Solar Power Pvt. Ltd. signed a Memorandum of Agreement for transfer of technology for India's first lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery project.**

**Details:**

- As per the Science Ministry's admission in the Lok Sabha, **India has quadrupled its imports of lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries** and more than tripled its import bill on the Li-ion batteries between 2016 and 2018.
- **India is among the largest importers of Li-ion batteries in the world.** The major sources of these batteries for India are China, Japan, and South Korea. China dominates the Li-ion battery market.

**Category: INTERNAL SECURITY**

## 1. Odisha plans projects in Naxal stronghold

### Context:

Developmental work in Naxal strongholds.

### Background:

- Maoist violence has **killed nearly 12,000 in the last two decades** and has severely affected developmental works in many regions.
- Recognizing the threat posed by Left Wing Extremism, the government has formulated a **dual strategy to solve the problem of Naxalism**. It involves using both **force and development** as a strategy to combat the Naxal influence.

### Details:

#### Counter-Insurgency operations and Area Domination:

- **Swabhiman Anchal in Odisha's Malkangiri district** is considered a stronghold of the CPI (Maoist).
- The Odisha police claim to have established their **domination** in 70% of Swabhiman Anchal.
- Along with the Odisha police and their counterparts in Andhra Pradesh, paramilitary forces such as the BSF and the CRPF are deployed in the area consisting of 151 villages.

#### Developmental work:

- Swabhiman Anchal had remained **outside the ambit of development** for years due to its remoteness, poor connectivity, hilly and inhospitable terrain and the presence of **Naxalites** in the region who **opposed any developmental work in the region**.
- Avoiding a top-down approach in development, the government is considering taking **decisions based on the needs and interests of the locals**.
- The State government has planned many development projects to **counter the Maoist influence in the region and build goodwill among the residents of the region**.

#### *Livelihood programmes and irrigation facilities:*

- The administration would be promoting turmeric cultivation by replacing the prohibited cannabis cultivation which has been acting as a source of finance for the Naxalites. **Integrated farming** would be introduced in the area.
- The administration is contemplating taking up **millet cultivation** in the region given the suitability of the crop to the region. It is also planning on procuring the surplus produce from villages.
- To help agricultural activities and also ensure water availability, **lift irrigation projects** have been planned.
- The administration proposed to provide an **11-kV power line** exclusively for irrigation projects.

#### *Critical road networks:*

- The Odisha government has managed to construct a bridge over the Gurupriya River despite stiff resistance from the extremists, **ending its decades-old remoteness**.

#### *Forest Rights Act (FRA):*

- Implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has been given priority.
- **Approval and sanction of community forest rights (CFR) and individual forest rights (IFR) under the FRA have been prioritized** as the prompt sanction of titles under the FRA is seen as a **confidence-building measure** in Swabhiman Anchal.
- The government will emulate the **model of Maharashtra** where CFR has been granted in an expeditious manner for making tribals partners in development.

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

**Category: SECURITY**

### 1. Bodo accord- Searching for a solution

#### Background

##### Who are the Bodos?

- They are an **ethnic and linguistic group speaking Tibeto-Burman languages**, residing in the Brahmaputra valley in the northeast of India.
- The Bodos are the largest plains tribe in **Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD)** straddling four districts – Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri – of western Assam.
- The word 'Bodo' has been derived from the word 'Bod' which means Tibet. The Bodos speak the Bodo language.
- Bodos traditionally practise **Bathouism**, which is the worshiping of forefathers, known as **Obonglaoree**.

##### British Rule and loss of economic and political freedom

- A very **complex economic situation had developed in the societies of the Brahmaputra Valley** of Assam with the taking over of power by the British imperialists.
- This new form of economy unfolded new complexities with serious **socio-economic and political ramifications** into the medieval society of the Valley.
- Much of the 19th century was a **time of economic degradation, displacement and land alienation for the Bodo people**. This may also perhaps be seen as a loss of political power of the Bodos.

##### Socio-economic grievances of the Bodos

- The **policies and developmental activities of the Government could not bring the desired socioeconomic development** for the Bodo community. This impacted immensely on the Bodo psyche.
- In the years, following independence, most of the Bodo grievances remained unattended to by the Government. As a result, problems of **land alienation, poverty, indebtedness, severe unemployment, economic exploitation and cultural and political neglect** became increasingly acute among them.
- There were **two prime reasons behind the Bodo demand for a separate state**:
  - One was the matter of economic under-development of the community.
  - Other of course was the rising political aspirations of the Bodo leaders.



## Waves of Protests

- The **First** trouble across the **Bodo domain began in the 1930s** when **Bodo leader Kalicharan Brahma** submitted a memorandum to the **Simon Commission**, demanding a separate political set-up for the indigenous and tribals of Assam.
- The **second** wave of demand to '**divide Assam 50-50**' in the late 1960s fizzled out like the first.
- The **third** movement turned violent in 1986 with the establishment of the **National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)**

## **Birth of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)**

- The Bodo movement had **Ranjan Daimary**, who in 1986, formed an armed organisation called the **Bodo Security Force (BdSF)**.
- The BdSF was renamed as the National Democratic Front of Bodoland.
  - The NDFB, under Daimary, killed, **kidnapped and extorted mercilessly**—and had built a reputation of being brutally unrelenting towards anyone who didn't toe its line.

## Objectives

- The purported objective of this outfit is to secure a "Sovereign Bodoland" in the areas north of the river Brahmaputra.
- While the other Bodo groups, such as the **Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT)**, demanded a separate state within the Indian Territory for the Bodo people, the NDFB wanted a separate country for itself.
- The NDFB was originally founded to protect the interests of the Bodos; but, over the years, this objective was diluted, and it joined hands with the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Asom), which fights against the non-Assamese domination in the State.
- Their objectives did put the NDFB at loggerheads with other Bodo outfits.

## Areas of Operation

- During its active days, the areas in the north and north-west of the river Brahmaputra in Assam formed the main expanse of operation of the outfit.

## Operations on NDFB

- The army came down heavily on the NDFB in the '90s in a series of counter operations, forcing them to retreat to Bhutan.
- Bhutan did provide a safe haven, but not for too long.
- In the early 2000s, the Indian Army with the help of the Royal Bhutan Army launched a massive operation to eliminate NDFB militants hiding in Bhutan.
  - **Operation All Clear** was a military operation conducted by Royal Bhutan Army forces against Assam separatist insurgent groups in the southern regions of Bhutan.
- NDFB realized their cadre strength was decreasing and was running out of options.
- Finally, in 2005, a **tripartite agreement was signed** between the government of India, the Assam government and NDFB for holding peace talks.

In 2008, the group submitted its demand of a separate Bodoland, and the talks didn't go far. The NDFB suffered a major split when founder chairman Ranjan Daimary was accused of being involved in serial blasts. In the immediate aftermath, Ranjan Daimary was expelled from the party.

## **National Democratic front of Bodoland-Progressive (NDFB-P)**

- Vice-president **Sungthagra (alias Dhiren Boro)** declared himself the new president and gave the organisation a new name: **National Democratic front of Bodoland-Progressive (NDFB-P)**.
- It was just a splinter group, **which wanted to talk with the government**.
- The faction led by Ranjan Daimary was called the **NDFB (R)**, after his name.

## Arrest of Daimary

- In 2010, Daimary was apprehended by the Bangladeshi security forces, who handed him over to their Indian counterparts. Daimary was released in 2013.
- Daimary had given up his demand for a sovereign state and was willing to negotiate with the government without any pre-condition.

### NDFB(S)

- While Daimary was in jail though, his deputy, **Ingti Kathar Songbijit**, who was firmly against any kind of peace talks and unwavering in his demand for a separate Bodoland, split from the outfit along with his supporters and formed the NDFB(S).
- Songbijit quit the group in 2016 and formed the **People's Democratic Council of Karbi Longri (PDCK)**.
- The outfit he left behind continued to be called the **NDFB-S** as **B. Saoraigwra**, a former leader of the All Bodo Students' Union, took over as chairman.

### **Bodo Accord 2020**

- The Central and Assam governments and the NDFB's Saoraigwra faction, or NDFB-S, signed a tripartite agreement for the cessation of operations.
  - The Saoraigwra faction agreed to shun violence and join the peace process.
  - The NDFB-S is the third and last faction of the outfit.
- The **All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU)**, which has been spearheading a movement for a Bodoland State since 1972, and another group called United Bodo People's Organisation were also signatories to the accord.
- The **Memorandum of Settlement (MoS)** said "All NDFB factions under **SoO [Suspension of Operations]** shall abjure path of violence, surrender their weapons and disband their armed organisations within one month of signing this MoS."
- The 2020 agreement says the Government of Assam "will notify Bodo language in Devanagiri script as the associate official language in the state".

### What is the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)?

- It is an autonomous body under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. There have been **two Bodo Accords earlier, and the second one led to the formation of BTC**.
- The ABSU-led movement from 1987 **culminated in a 1993 Bodo Accord**, which paved the way for a **Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC)**, but ABSU withdrew its agreement and renewed its demand for a separate state.
- In 2003, the second Bodo Accord was signed by the extremist group **Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF)**, the Centre and the state. This led to the BTC.

### What was agreed on territory?

- The area under the jurisdiction of BTC, formed under the 2003 Accord, was called the Bodo Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD). The BTAD will now be renamed Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).
- The new Accord provides for "alteration of area of BTAD" and "provisions for Bodos outside BTAD". A commission appointed by the state government will examine and recommend if villages contiguous to BTAD and with a majority tribal population can be included in the BTR while those now in BTAD and with a majority non-tribal population can opt out of the BTR.
- The government will set up a **Bodo-Kachari Welfare Council** for focused development of Bodo villages outside BTAD — which opens up a way to potentially address the needs of Bodos outside BTAD.



### Rehabilitation Program

- The Cadres of NDFB will be rehabilitated by the Centre and the Assam Government. They will be assimilated in the mainstream and will surrender.
- The generous terms promise an expanded area to be renamed as **BTR**, a ₹1,500-crore **development package, and greater contiguity of Bodo-populated areas**.
- The **MoS** says that the criminal cases registered against members of the NDFB factions for “**non-heinous**” crimes shall be withdrawn by the Assam government and in cases of **heinous crimes** it “shall be reviewed case by case according to the existing policy”.
- Families of those killed during the Bodo movement will be given ₹5 lakh.

### How is the 2020 Accord different from the earlier Accords?

- Unlike the **2003 Accord** which clearly identified 3,082 villages to be included in Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC):
  - **2020 Accord** ambiguously points to the inclusion of contiguous tribal majority villages outside the BTC area within BTR while simultaneously excluding non-tribal majority areas that are not contiguous with the Sixth Schedule area within BTC.
    - It is thus clear that the Accord seeks to perpetuate Bodos’ “self-rule” and territorial control in BTR by exclusively privileging their political, social, cultural and identity interest over everything else.
- Again, unlike the two tripartite accords signed by the Bodo rebels in 1993 and 2003, the 2020 Accord specifically seeks to **invest BTC with “legislative” power in addition to “executive, administrative and financial” powers on 12 additional subjects** including trade and commerce, welfare and development of minorities/indigenous faith.
- The 2020 Accord also enlarges the scope of representation by **increasing the strength of BTC from 40 to a maximum of 60 members**.
  - However, unlike the 2003 Accord which clearly reserved 35 of the 40 elected seats for tribals (read as Bodos), this agreement does not specify the seat share of Bodos and other non-Bodo communities.

### Advantages of the Peace deal

- It successfully brings together the leading **stakeholders** under one framework.
- Those who were previously associated with armed resistance groups will now be entering the mainstream and contributing to our **nation’s progress**.
- The Accord with Bodo groups will further **protect and popularise the unique culture of the Bodo people**.
- They will get access to a wide range of **development-oriented** initiatives.

### Concerns

- The failure to envision a power-sharing arrangement with non-Bodos makes the BTR a very weak “shared-rule” model of autonomy. This weakness **could induce violence and deepen ethnic fractionalisation**.
- The conspicuous absence of reference to legal safeguards to land extended by the 2003 Bodo Accord to non-Bodos on matters pertaining to, inter alia, land settlement, ownership and inheritance of property would make them more vulnerable.

### Other extremist organizations not part of the Peace deal

- The peace deal with NDFB-S leaves very few members of the **Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO)** still at large with their leader Jiban Singh, while the **PDCK**, a group of miscreants is not a signatory to this pact.

### Conclusion

- If the Accord delivers what it promises, it would lead to the end of one of Northeast’s long-running insurgencies.

- But for the Northeast to truly enjoy fruits of peace and development, and become a bridge between India and Southeast Asia under New Delhi's Act East policy, other insurgency movements too need a negotiated settlement.

## Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### 1. Cat conundrum

#### Background

[Check CNA dated Jan 29, 2020](#) to read about the topic.

#### Key fact

- According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List, cheetah's population is '**vulnerable**' witnessing a decreasing trend with only less than 7,000 of them left in the wild globally.

#### Concerns

- A few conservationists fear that India will end up housing the animals in semi-captive conditions, secured open-air zoos rather than allowing them to live free.
- Man-animal conflict is an area of worry.
- The current prey base sustains tigers and leopards. The introduction of a new predator may add pressure to the existing ecosystem.
- Cheetahs are genetically fragile and lose cubs prematurely, affecting the establishment of a viable population.

#### Conclusion

- India will need to **maintain strict protocols** to reduce the risk of human injury, livestock predation and stress, and improve identification of prey and non-prey species.
- The plan to bring the cheetah to India should have a minimum requirement of setting up a **Grassland Policy**.
- India should also focus on the species it has and restore ecology.

## Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

### 1. Seeking a more progressive abortion law

[Check CNA dated Jan 31, 2020](#) to read about the topic.

## 1. India-Bangladesh rail link to be ready by 2021

- **The Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER)** has announced that the landmark rail line to **connect the northeastern region of India with Bangladesh** will be ready by the end of 2021.
- The proposed line will **link Agartala in Tripura and Akhaura in Bangladesh**.
- The Ministry for Development of North Eastern Region would bear the cost of the 5.46-km track on the Indian side, and the cost of the 10.6-km track on the Bangladesh side is being borne by the Ministry of External Affairs.

## 2. Start new businesses with e-forms

- Continuing efforts to **improve the ease of doing business**, the government will soon introduce an **integrated electronic form for incorporating new companies**, wherein the EPFO and ESIC registration numbers will also be allotted at the same time.
- The incorporation of companies is made through the **Corporate Affairs Ministry's portal MCA21**. Currently, the Corporate Affairs Ministry has the electronic form **SPICe (Simplified Proforma for Incorporating Company Electronically)** and that would be replaced with SPICe+ offering 10 services.
- The 10 services offered through the new form would help in saving time and efforts for starting a business in India.

## 3. Punjab village fights drugs with youth power

- Villages in Mansa district in Punjab are **using youth volunteers to run socially relevant campaigns in the villages**.
- They run campaigns on single-use plastics, stubble burning, tree planting, road safety, preventive healthcare, and against drugs. The motto of the youth program is **'mera pind-mera maan' (my village, my pride)**.
- Apart from the obvious benefits of cleaner, greener surroundings, it will also notably, **prevent idle time and potential drug addiction among the youth**.

## 4. Agro units of cooperative sector to come up in all Rajasthan districts

- A minimum of **one agro-processing unit of the cooperative sector will come up in each district of Rajasthan** by 2020 with an emphasis on **agricultural marketing**.
- The agro-processing units would help **ensure preservation and processing of agricultural produce for food and medicinal use and help augment farmers' income**.

## 5. Country's first 'darknet' narcotics operative held

- **The Narcotics Control Bureau**, the central anti-narcotics agency, has stated that it has arrested the **country's first 'darknet' narcotics operative**.
- He was arrested under **the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act**.



- Darknet refers to the **hidden internet platform** that is used for narcotics sale, exchange of pornographic content and other illegal activities by using the secret alleys of **the onion router (ToR) to stay away from the surveillance of law enforcement agencies.**
- Owing to its end-to-end encryption, the darknet is considered very tough to crack when it comes to investigating criminal activities being rendered over it.
- **The NCB was part of a global 'Operation Trance'**, launched in December 2019, entailing a joint intelligence-gathering action on international postal, express mail and courier shipments containing psychotropic drugs that are abused as sedatives and painkillers.
- The **payment gateways of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoins and Litecoin** were used by the operators to conceal the transactions from regulatory agencies.

## G. PRELIMS FACTS

### 1. Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power

- The UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1985.
- It is not a legally binding document, but the Declaration can be used as a benchmark for measuring State practice in relation to victims' rights.
- The Declaration requires that the views and concerns of victims should be allowed and considered at all appropriate stages without prejudice to the accused.
  - It sets out basic principles of treatment for crime victims, based on compassion and respect for human dignity.
  - The Declaration urges access to judicial and administrative processes, restitution, compensation and assistance for victims.
- India is a signatory.

#### Victims

- "Victims" means persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Van Vihar National Park is located in which of the following states?

- a. Chhattisgarh
- b. Madhya Pradesh
- c. Uttar Pradesh
- d. Rajasthan

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- Van Vihar National Park is located in Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh in central India. It was declared a national park in 1979.
- Though it has the status of a national park, it is developed and managed as a modern zoological park, following the guidelines of the Central Zoo Authority.
- Animals are kept in near-natural habitats. Most animals are either orphaned and brought from various parts of the state or are exchanged from other zoos. No animal is deliberately captured from the forest.

**Q2. Which of the following pairs of crop and the largest producing state is wrongly matched?**

- a. Cotton: Maharashtra
- b. Coffee: Karnataka
- c. Jute: West Bengal
- d. Pulses: Madhya Pradesh

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

Cotton: Gujarat

**Q3. Which of the following is/are not considered under the Accessible Indian Campaign of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment?**

1. Built environment accessibility
2. Education system accessibility
3. Transportation system accessibility
4. Financial system accessibility
5. Information and communication eco-system accessibility

**Options:**

- a. 2, 3 and 4 only
- b. 4 and 5 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 2 and 4 only

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- The Accessible India Campaign was launched in December 2015, to make public offices, transport, and websites accessible to persons with disabilities (PwD) by March 2020.
- It includes targets for
  - Built environment accessibility
  - Transportation system accessibility
  - Information and communication eco-system accessibility

**Q4. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to River Cauvery?**

1. It has its origin in Kodagu, Karnataka.
2. Its tributaries include the Harangi, Kabini, Noyyal and Arkavati.
3. The Shivanasamudra Falls is located on the river Cauvery.

**Options:**

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. 2 and 3 only

**Answer: c****Explanation:**

- Cauvery River flows through the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It is the third-largest river, after Godavari and Krishna in South India.
- Its tributaries include the Harangi, Hemavati, Kabini, Bhavani, LakshmanaTirtha, Noyyal and Arkavati.
- The river basin covers three states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Analyze the Government's approach to counter the challenges posed by Left wing extremism in India and its effectiveness. (10 marks, 150 words)
2. Discuss the major provisions of the recent accord signed between the government and the Bodo groups. Analyze the significance of the agreement and the possible concerns with respect to the deal. (15 marks, 250 words)

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Read previous [CNA](#).