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## Current Affairs - 09 September 2024

### WHAT IS SUKANYA SAMRIDDHI YOJANA?



Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) is a savings scheme launched in 2015 under the Government of India's "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" campaign, which aimed to promote the education of girl children.

- SSY is a **small-deposit scheme** tailored specifically for the girl child.
- This scheme enables guardians to open a savings account for their girl child with an authorised commercial bank or India Post branch.
- **Eligibility:**
  - The girl must be an **Indian resident**.
  - The account can be initiated by the parent or legal guardian of the girl child.
  - The **girl child must be below the age of 10** at the time of opening the account.
  - **Only one SSY account is allowed per girl child.**
  - A family is limited to opening a maximum of two SSY scheme accounts.
  - **NRI's are not eligible to open these accounts.**
  - The girl must operate the account once she attains the age of 18 years.
- **Features:**
  - The minimum and maximum deposits that can be made in an account in a financial year are **250 and Rs.1.5 lakh**, respectively. The deposits can be made in multiples of 100.
  - Deposits towards the scheme should be made for a period of 15 years. However, the scheme **matures after 21 years**.
  - **No interest will be payable once the account completes twenty-one years from the date of opening.**
  - **Partial Withdrawal:**
    - Withdrawal up to a **maximum of 50%** of the amount in the account at the end of the financial year preceding the year of application for withdrawal shall be allowed for the **purpose of education** of the account holder.

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- Such withdrawal shall be allowed **only after the account holder has attained the age of 18 years** or has passed the 10th standard, whichever is earlier.
  - **Tax benefits:** To encourage investments in SSY, the scheme offers the tax benefits under **Section 80C Deductions and Tax-Exempt Interest.**
  - **Tax-Free Proceeds:** The proceeds received upon maturity or withdrawal from the SSY account are also exempt from income tax.
- **New Rules:**
    - **Guardian Changes:** In case of **accounts opened under the guardianship of grandparents** (who are **other than legal guardians**), the guardianship **shall be transferred to** a person entitled under the law in force, that is, to the **natural guardian** (alive parents) **or Legal Guardian.** If it is not done, the account will be closed and this will be a permanent closure.

**Irregular Accounts:** Families with more than two SSY accounts will face closures of excess accounts, deemed to be in violation of scheme rules.

### WHAT IS SUGAMYA BHARAT APP?



- It is an initiative of the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**
- Designed to aid people with disabilities and the elderly, the Sugamya Bharat app allows users to report accessibility problems in public infrastructure, transportation and buildings.
- **Objectives:**
  - Identification of issues/complaints from the public related to accessibility at public places (Need to capture location of the place through Google Maps).
  - **Uploading geotagged pictures:** To understand and identify which type of public place is having issues related to accessibility for disabled people.



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- Any person facing difficulty or issue related to accessibility in India can raise their concerns/grievances on the App.
  - Only accessibility-related issues pertaining to Buildings, Transportation Systems and ICT (websites and TV viewing) can be registered at the App.
  - Complaints are filed by uploading photos, which are then forwarded to relevant authorities.
  - To enhance the app's features, the government plans to **redesign it with AI capabilities**.
    - The upgraded version will include an **AI-powered chatbot** and **multilingual interface**, improving its overall functionality.
    - A partnership has been established with the NGO Mission Accessibility and the research institute I-STEM to develop the AI-enabled app.
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### YUDH ABHYAS

India-U.S. bilateral Army exercise Yudh Abhyas is set to commence at the Mahajan field firing ranges in Rajasthan.



Yudh Abhyas is a **joint military exercise** conducted annually between **India and USA**.

- It has been ongoing since **2004**.
- It is designed to promote cooperation between the two militaries while sharing training, cultural exchanges and building joint operating skills.
- The **previous edition** of the exercise was conducted at Fort Wainwright, **Alaska, USA**.
- **Yudh Abhyas 2024:**
  - It marks the **20th edition** of the
  - **Location: Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan**
  - It is designed to **enhance interoperability** and strengthen the operational capabilities of both forces.



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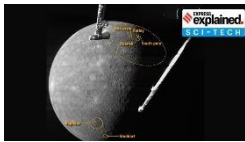


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- It will feature a range of advanced military tactics and coordinated manoeuvres aimed at improving the readiness of both armies in high-stakes scenarios.
- It is going to feature one of the **largest U.S. contingents** at the exercise with around 600 personnel and the U.S. Army is also **set to deploy Stryker infantry vehicles and the M142 HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System)**.
- These advanced rocket systems, which have gained prominence for their use in Ukraine, can deliver precision strikes over extended ranges.

### BEPICOLOMBO SPACECRAFT



Recently, the BepiColombo spacecraft gave scientists their first clear view of Mercury's south pole.

**BepiColombo spacecraft** is a joint **European Space Agency (ESA)** and **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)** mission to Mercury.

- The mission was named after Giuseppe "Bepi" Colombo, an Italian mathematician and engineer who made significant contributions to the understanding of Mercury's orbit.
- It was launched on October 20, 2018, and is an ambitious and complex mission designed to **study Mercury's surface**, composition, magnetic field and its interaction with the solar environment.
- The BepiColombo spacecraft consists of two main components:
  - **Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO)**: The MPO is primarily provided by ESA and is responsible for mapping and studying Mercury's surface, as well as its composition and topography.
  - **Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO)**: The MMO is provided by JAXA and focuses on studying Mercury's magnetic field and magnetosphere.
- **Objectives:**
  - **Investigating Mercury's surface and composition** to better understand its geological history and formation processes.



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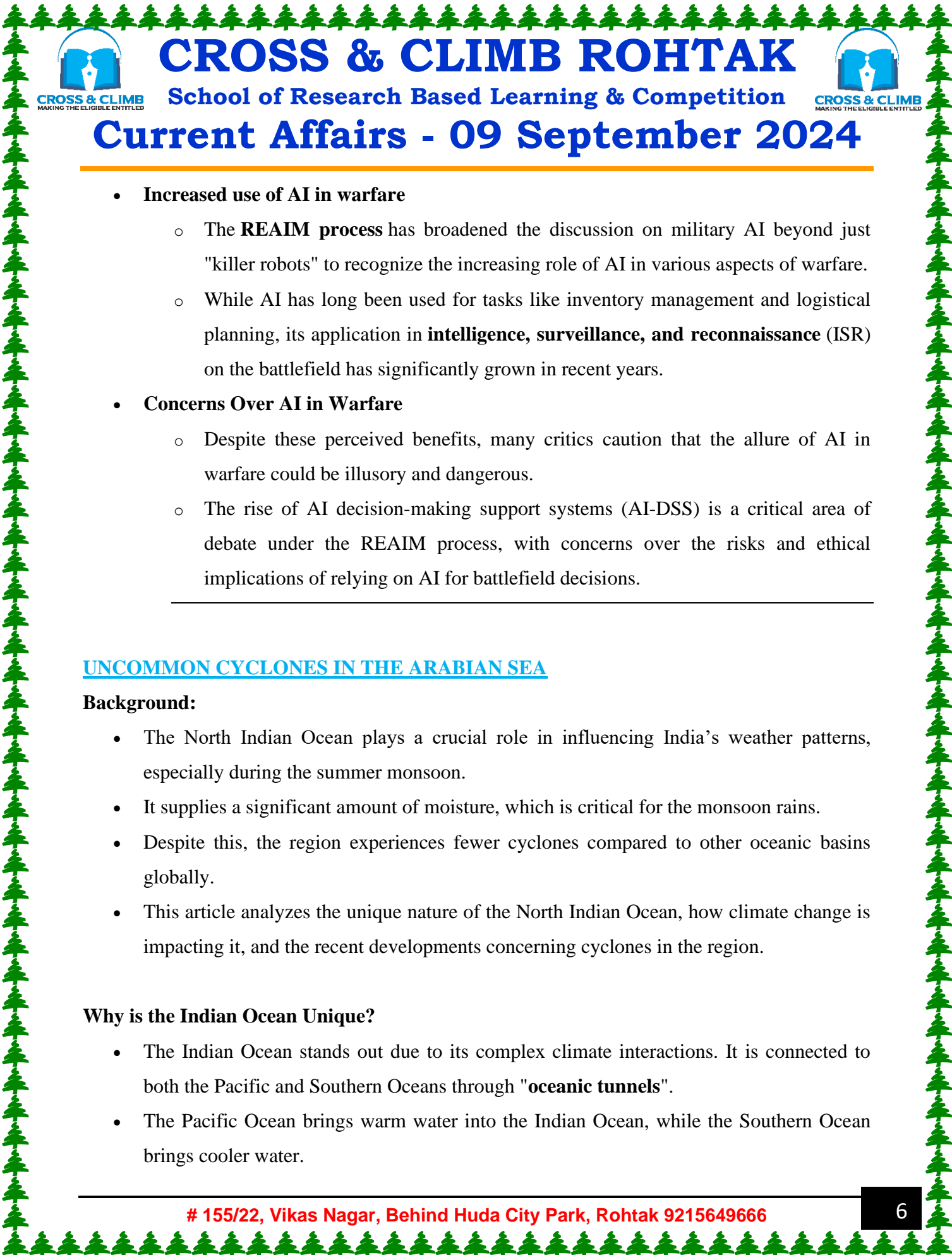
- Studying **Mercury's magnetic field** and magnetosphere to gain insights into its internal structure and how it interacts with the solar wind.
  - Measuring **Mercury's exosphere** (a thin atmosphere) and understanding its composition and dynamics.
  - Conducting experiments to test certain principles of general relativity and improve our understanding of gravity.
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### RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN WAR

- The Summit on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) is part of a growing global effort to establish norms for AI's military applications.
- This is the **second iteration of the summit**. It begins on September 9 in **Seoul**, co-hosted by Kenya, the Netherlands, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.
- **Objectives of the Korea Summit**
  - The second REAIM summit in South Korea aims to build on the progress from the first summit and achieve a three-fold objective:
    - Understand the implications of military AI on global peace and security.
    - Implement new norms for using AI systems in military affairs.
    - Develop ideas for long-term global governance of AI in the military domain.
- **Outcome of the first summit**
  - The first summit, held in February 2023 in The Hague, broadened the debate on military AI, focusing on issues like autonomous weapons or "killer robots."
  - A key concern is keeping humans in the decision-making loop on the use of force.
  - Discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS) have been ongoing at the United Nations since 2019.

### The AI Debate in Warfare

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- **Increased use of AI in warfare**
    - The **REAIM process** has broadened the discussion on military AI beyond just "killer robots" to recognize the increasing role of AI in various aspects of warfare.
    - While AI has long been used for tasks like inventory management and logistical planning, its application in **intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR)** on the battlefield has significantly grown in recent years.
  - **Concerns Over AI in Warfare**
    - Despite these perceived benefits, many critics caution that the allure of AI in warfare could be illusory and dangerous.
    - The rise of AI decision-making support systems (AI-DSS) is a critical area of debate under the REAIM process, with concerns over the risks and ethical implications of relying on AI for battlefield decisions.
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### UNCOMMON CYCLONES IN THE ARABIAN SEA

#### **Background:**

- The North Indian Ocean plays a crucial role in influencing India's weather patterns, especially during the summer monsoon.
- It supplies a significant amount of moisture, which is critical for the monsoon rains.
- Despite this, the region experiences fewer cyclones compared to other oceanic basins globally.
- This article analyzes the unique nature of the North Indian Ocean, how climate change is impacting it, and the recent developments concerning cyclones in the region.

#### **Why is the Indian Ocean Unique?**

- The Indian Ocean stands out due to its complex climate interactions. It is connected to both the Pacific and Southern Oceans through "**oceanic tunnels**".
- The Pacific Ocean brings warm water into the Indian Ocean, while the Southern Ocean brings cooler water.



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- This unique combination leads to varied sea temperatures, which in turn impact monsoon winds and cyclogenesis (the formation of cyclones).

### Monsoonal Influence on Cyclogenesis:

- The **Arabian Sea** and the **Bay of Bengal**, both parts of the Indian Ocean, warm up significantly before the monsoon.
- The Bay of Bengal, in particular, becomes a hotbed for atmospheric convection, which leads to rainfall and low-pressure systems.
- These systems, however, rarely turn into cyclones because of a phenomenon known as "**vertical shear**".
- This shear strips cyclones of their energy, especially during the monsoon season.

### Impact of Climate Change on the Indian Ocean:

- Climate change is significantly altering the Indian Ocean's dynamics.
- Increased warming from the Pacific Ocean and changes in atmospheric conditions are causing rapid warming of the Indian Ocean itself.
- This warming is influencing the monsoon and leading to new challenges in terms of **cyclogenesis** and extreme weather events.
  - Cyclogenesis refers to the process of cyclone formation and intensification, which occurs when favorable atmospheric and oceanic conditions come together.

### The Role of the Indian Ocean in Global Warming:

- The Indian Ocean acts as a clearinghouse for global ocean warming, impacting other oceans like the Pacific and the North Atlantic.
- As the Indian Ocean warms, it alters global ocean currents and affects climate patterns across the world.
- This has had a direct impact on cyclogenesis, contributing to the increasing unpredictability of cyclones in the region.

Climate change is making cyclones in the Indian Ocean more unpredictable. Factors such as global warming, El Niño, and even underwater volcanic eruptions have contributed to extreme weather events worldwide, including India.

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### MUSHARRAF'S ANCESTRAL LAND IN UP TO BE AUCTIONED UNDER ENEMY PROPERTY ACT

#### Why in news?

The Indian government is set to auction a parcel of land in Uttar Pradesh that once belonged to the family of former Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. The land, measuring around 13 bighas in the Kotana Bangar village of Baghpat district, is being sold under **The Enemy Property Act**.

In this regard, the Union Home Ministry has posted a notice on the land.

#### Enemy Property

- Enemy property is property left behind by the people who migrated to enemy countries.
- Under **The Enemy Property Act**, properties belonging to individuals who migrated to enemy countries (such as Pakistan or China) after wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971 are seized by the Indian government.
- These properties are managed by the **Custodian of Enemy Property** and can be sold by the government as per legal provisions.

#### Background

- Following the India-Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971, many people migrated from India to Pakistan, leading the Indian government to seize their properties under the Defence of India Rules (framed under the Defence of India Act, 1962).
- These properties were handed over to the Custodian of Enemy Property for India.
  - Similar action was taken for properties left behind by those who moved to China after the 1962 Sino-Indian War.
- The Tashkent Declaration of January 1966 included a provision for India and Pakistan to discuss the return of such properties.
- However, Pakistan sold off these properties in 1971, leaving the issue unresolved.



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### Enemy property in India - Statistics

- There are 13,252 enemy properties in India, valued at over Rs1 lakh crore.
- **Uttar Pradesh** (5,982) has the highest number of enemy properties, followed by West Bengal (4,354).
- The central government launched a survey in the past year to further identify and monetize these properties. Many of these properties have gone under encroachment and unauthorised occupancy.

### Laws dealing with enemy property in India

- **The Enemy Property Act of 1968**
    - This act ensured that properties of individuals or firms from enemy nations remained vested with the **Custodian of Enemy Property for India**.
  - **Amendment introduced in 2016**
    - In 2017, Parliament passed the Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016. This bill updated the 1968 Act and the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.
    - The amended law states that enemy property continues to vest in the Custodian even after the enemy's death, change of nationality, or other status changes.
    - The Custodian can sell these properties with government approval, and the central government can direct the Custodian on how to manage and dispose of them.
  - **Need for such amendments**
    - The amendments to the Enemy Property Act were introduced to prevent claims of succession or transfer of properties left by individuals who migrated to Pakistan and China after the wars.
      - The statement of objects and reasons in the Bill explained that various court judgments had weakened the Custodian's powers, making it difficult for the Custodian to act under the original 1968 Act.
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