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Current Affairs - 17 September 2024

WHAT IS LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL (LAC)?



The Union Ministry of External Affairs recently said that about 75% of the “disengagement problems” with China on the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh have been “sorted out”

- The LAC is the demarcation that **separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory.**
- Although **not recognised as an official border**, it serves as a **de facto border** between India and China.
- India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long, while the Chinese consider it to be only around 2,000 km.
- It is divided into **three sectors**:
 - the **eastern sector** which spans **Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim**
 - the **middle sector**, in **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh**, and
 - the **western sector** in **Ladakh**.
- It runs along **Tibet and Xinjiang on the Chinese side.**
- The LAC has always remained a major **cause of tension between India and China**. There are areas along the border where **India and China have differing perceptions of the LAC.**
 - Due to both sides undertaking patrolling upto their respective perceptions of the LAC, transgressions do occur.
- **India’s claim line** is the line seen in the official boundary marked on the maps as released by the Survey of India, **including both Aksai Chin and Gilgit-Baltistan**. This means **LAC is not the claim line for India.**
- In **China’s case, LAC is the claim line except in the eastern sector**, where it claims the entire Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet.



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BATTLE OF SARAGARHI



Recently, the 127th anniversary of the Battle of Saragarhi was celebrated on September 12 and it is regarded as one of the finest last stands in global military history.

Battle of Saragarhi was fought on 12 September 1897, in the then **North-West Frontier Province of British India**, which was concentrated on **Saragarhi post**.

- On this day only 21 soldiers **from the 36th Sikh** (now 4 Sikh) led by **Havildar Ishar Singh** and a non-combatant **called Daad** fought against over 8,000 Afridi and Orakzai tribal militants.
- It is considered one of the finest last stands in the military history of the world.

How are the slain soldiers remembered?

- In 2017, the Punjab government decided to observe **Saragarhi Day on September 12** as a holiday.
- Even today the **Khyber Scouts regiment** of the Pakistani army mounts a guard and salutes the Saragarhi memorial close to **Fort Lockhart**.
- The British, who regained control over the fort after a few days, used burnt bricks of Saragarhi to **build an obelisk** for the martyrs.

Importance of Saragarhi Post for Britishers

- Saragarhi was a post, a key landmark between the two forts, **Lockhart and Gulistan**, which were originally built by **Ranjit Singh** of Punjab during his western expedition.
- It was a critical post for the British, helping to monitor any aggressive moves by the Afghans.
- Saragarhi helped to link up the two important forts which housed a large number of British troops in the rugged terrain of NWFP.



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INDIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY REVOLUTION STORY

Why in News?

At the 4th Global Renewable Energy Investors Meet and Expo (RE-INVEST 2024) in Gandhinagar, the PM declared that **India's solar revolution story will be painted in gold** when the history of the 21st century is written.

This is because installed **solar energy capacity in India has increased by 30 times in the last 9 years** reaching 89.43 GW (as of August 2024).

The PM also highlighted that the **government has taken many big decisions in the green energy sector.**

Renewable Energy Installed Capacity in India:

- **As of August 2024**, Renewable Energy (RE) sources (including large hydropower) have a **combined installed capacity of 199.52 GW.**
- The following is the installed capacity for Renewables:
 - Wind power: 47.19 GW
 - Solar Power: 89.43 GW
 - Biomass/Cogeneration: 10.35 GW
 - Small Hydro Power: 5.07 GW
 - Waste To Energy: 0.60 GW
 - Large Hydro: 46.92 GW
- As per REN21 Renewables 2024 Global Status Report, **India stands 4th globally** in RE installed capacity (including large hydro), **4th in Wind Power capacity** and **5th in Solar Power capacity.**

Key Growth Drivers of Renewable Energy in India:

- **Government commitments:**
 - **Reduce India's total projected carbon emission** by 1 Bn tonnes by 2030,



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- **Reduce the carbon intensity** of the nation's economy by less than 45% by the end of the decade, and
 - **Achieve net-zero** carbon emissions by 2070.
 - **Proposed solar cities and parks:**
 - The government approved solar city per state and the setting up of 57 solar parks of 39.28 GW capacity across the nation.
 - The government is also giving a push to **Floating PV Projects**.
 - **National Green Hydrogen Mission:** The government launched the mission with an aim to produce 5 million metric tonne (MMT) green hydrogen per annum with an associated renewable energy capacity of about 125 GW by 2030.
 - **Off-shore Wind Energy:** The medium and long-term targets for off-shore wind power capacity additions are 5 GW by 2022 and 30 GW by 2030.
 - **Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy:** In 2018, national policy was announced to promote an extensive grid-connected wind-solar PV hybrid system for efficiently utilising transmission infrastructure and land.
 - **AatmaNirbhar Bharat:** The PLI scheme in Solar PV manufacturing was introduced under AatmaNirbhar Bharat.
 - **Promoting FDI:** Up to 100% FDI is allowed under the automatic route for renewable energy generation and distribution projects subject to provisions of the Electricity Act 2003.
 - **Union Budget 2024 Highlights:**
 - The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Solar Power (Grid) has been allocated INR 10,000 Cr.
 - **PM-Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana** has been allocated INR 6,250 Cr. Under this scheme, the government provides funds and helps in installation of solar rooftops in every household.
 - Exemption of Basic Customs Duty (**BCD**) on imports of 25 critical minerals important for the renewable energy sectors has also been announced.
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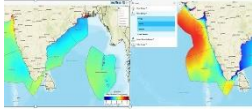
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INTEGRATED OCEAN ENERGY ATLAS



WebGIS interface depicting annual integrated ocean energy (right) in the Indian EEZ

Integrated Ocean Energy Atlas showcases the vast **potential of ocean energy resources** encompassing **marine meteorological** (solar and wind) and **hydrological** (wave, tide, currents, ocean thermal, and salinity gradients) energy forms.

- It identifies areas with high potential for energy generation and will **serve as a reference for policymakers**, industry and researchers for harnessing the rich energy resources available in the Indian EEZ.
- INCOIS prepared the annual, monthly, and daily energy estimates of ocean energy components following standard methods that can be visualised through a WebGIS interface at 5 km grid resolution.

Key facts about the INCOIS

- It was established as an **autonomous body** in 1999 under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** and is a unit of the **Earth System Science Organization (ESSO)**.
- Mandate: To provide the best possible **ocean information and advisory services** to society, industry, government agencies, and the scientific community through sustained ocean observations and constant improvements through systematic and focussed research.
- **Activities:**
 - It provides **round-the-clock monitoring and warning services** for the coastal population on tsunamis, storm surges, high waves, etc. through the in-house Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC).
 - It provides daily advisories to fisher folk to help them easily **locate areas of abundant fish** in the ocean.
 - Short-term (3-7 days) **Ocean State Forecasts**(waves, currents, sea surface temperature, etc.) are issued daily to fisher folk, the shipping industry, the oil and natural gas industry, the Navy, the Coast Guard, etc.



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CENTRE FOR RURAL ENTERPRISE ACCELERATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY



(CREATE)

- It will enhance **local productivity, product quality,** and economic potential and improve livelihoods for the local communities.
- It will help advance **rural industrialization and foster enterprise** creation, to retain the traditional artisans particularly in regions like Ladakh.
- **CREATE will provide**
 - A **Pashmina Wool Roving Facility.**
 - Training for development of production facility for Essential Oil Extraction from Roses and Other Flowers and Training for development of production facility for Bio-processing of available fruits and other raw materials.
 - The machinery required for Pashmina wool roving has been installed, commissioned and is ready for operation.

What is Pashmina Wool?

- Pashmina refers to a fine variant of **spun cashmere** (the animal-hair fibre), that is derived from the downy undercoat of the Changthangi.
- Pashmina is obtained from a **breed of mountain goats** (*Capra hircus*) found on the Changthang Plateau in Tibet and parts of Ladakh.

SMART PRECISION HORTICULTURE PROGRAMME



- It uses **smart technology** such as **Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence,** drones and data analytics to boost production through maximal use of resources while minimising environmental impact.
- It will cover 15,000 acres of land in **five years from 2024-25 to 2028-29** and is expected to benefit about 60,000 farmers.
 - At present, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), has provisions for financing infrastructure projects for smart and precision agriculture.



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- Apart from offering financial support, the Centre is also considering **collaborating with the Netherlands and Israel**, where tech-based modern farming solutions are being used, through Centres of Excellences (CoEs).
- The Centre has also set up 22 **Precision Farming Development Centres (PFDCs)** across the country to test new technologies and modify them according to local needs.

Impacts of Smart and precision farming

- It **maximises use of resources** like water, fertilisers and pesticides to increase production quality and quantity.
- It also insulates farmers from **vagaries of climate change** and other uncertainties, besides ensuring sustainable farming.

WHAT IS INVEST INDIA?



- It is the **National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency** of India and acts as the first point of reference for investors in India.
- It was set up as a **non-profit venture** under the aegis of the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India**.
- It facilitates and **empowers all investors under the 'Make in India' initiative** to establish, operate, and expand their businesses in India.
- The agency aims at **sector-specific investor targeting** and **development of partnerships**, thereby channelising sustainable investments in the country.
- It is also engaged in developing partnerships with investment promotion agencies and multilateral organisations.
- It provides multiple forms of support, such as market entry strategies, deep dive industry analysis, partner search and location assessment, and policy advocacy with decision makers.
- **Headquarters: New Delhi**



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Key Facts about National Start-up Advisory Council:

- It was **constituted by the DPIIT** under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Objective:** To advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for **nurturing innovation and startups** in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large-scale employment opportunities.
- **Composition:**
 - **Chairman: Minister for Commerce & Industry.**
 - **Ex-officio Members:** Nominees of the concerned Ministries/Departments/Organisations not below the rank of Joint Secretary.
 - Besides the ex-officio members, the council has **non-official members, representing** various stakeholders such as **founders of successful startups** and **veterans** who have grown and scaled companies in India.
- NSAC is playing an important role in **identifying areas of intervention** for the expansion of the startup ecosystem and ideating and **nurturing national programs under the Startup India initiative.**

DRUGS AND MAGIC REMEDIES (OBJECTIONABLE ADVERTISEMENTS) ACT,



1954

- It is a legislative framework to **control the advertisement of drugs** and **prohibit claims of magical qualities in remedies.**
- It encompasses **various forms of advertisements, including written, oral, and visual**
 - Under the Act, the term “**drug**” refers to **medicines intended for human or animal use, substances for diagnosis** or treatment of diseases, and **articles affecting the body’s functions.**
 - Other than articles meant for consumption, the definition for “**magic remedy**” under this Act **also extends to talismans, mantras, and charms** that allegedly possess miraculous powers for healing or influencing bodily functions.

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- **Regulations on advertisements:**
 - It imposes strict regulations on the publication of advertisements related to drugs.
 - It **prohibits advertisements that give false impressions, make false claims, or are otherwise misleading.**
 - **Violations** of these provisions **can result in penalties**, including imprisonment or fines, upon conviction.
 - The term “**advertisement,**” under the Act, **extends to all notices, labels, wrappers, and oral announcements.**
 - **Who comes under the Magic Remedies Act?**
 - The Act applies to **all individuals and entities involved in the publication of advertisements**, including manufacturers, distributors, and advertisers.
 - The Act can **hold both individuals and companies accountable** for contraventions.
 - **If a company violates the act, individuals in charge of its business operations may also be deemed guilty** unless they can prove lack of knowledge or demonstrate due diligence in preventing the offense.
 - **Directors, managers, or officers of the company may also be held liable** if they consented to or neglected the offense.
 - **Punishment:**
 - Violating the Act can result in **imprisonment, fines, or both.** If this is the first conviction for the violator, they may face up to six months in prison, fines, or both.
 - For subsequent conviction, imprisonment may extend to one year, fine, or both.
 - The Act does not include any limits for the fines that may be imposed on individuals or organisations.
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