

INDIAN OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION (IOA)

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) formed a three-member ad hoc committee to run the day-to-day affairs of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) recently.



About Indian Olympic Association (IOA):

- The IOA is the governing body for the Olympic Movement and the Commonwealth Games in India.
- As an affiliated member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), and Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC), the IOA administers various aspects of sports governance and athletes' welfare in the country.
- IOA oversees the representation of athletes or teams participating in the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, and other international multi-sport competitions of the IOC, CGF, OCA, and ANOC.
- Beyond participation in the Games, the IOA has also established various initiatives with different stakeholders for the development of sports education and Olympic studies.
- IOA is recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Foundation:

- It was established in 1927 with Sir Dorabji Tata and Dr. A.G. Noehren as the Founding President and Secretary General, respectively.
- It is registered as a Non-Profit Organisation under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.
- Members:
 - The members of the IOA include National Sports Federations (NSFs), State Olympic Associations, IOC Members, and other select multi-sport organisations.

- In accordance with the Olympic Charter, the membership NSFs mostly include NSFs that govern sports featured in the sports programme of the Summer Olympic Games, Winter Olympic Games, Asian Games, and Commonwealth Games.
- **Governance:**
 - It is currently governed by a **32-member Executive Council**, headed by the President.
 - **The election** for the Executive Council is **held once in every four years**.
 - The working of the Executive Council is also assisted by **different Standing Committees** of the IOA that are constituted **with experts in the subject-field** to help in various aspects of governance.

Key Facts about Wrestling Federation of India (WFI):

- It is a **governing body of wrestling** in India.
- It was founded in 1958 and is **based in New Delhi**.
- It **promotes wrestling players** for the Olympics, Asian Games, National Wrestling Championships, and World Wrestling Championships.

WHAT IS THE KNOW INDIA PROGRAMME (KIP)?

The Secretary (CPV & OIA) recently addressed the Valedictory Session of the 70th edition of the Know India Programme (KIP) at a function held at the Ministry of External Affairs.



About the Know India Programme (KIP):

- KIP is a flagship programme of the **Ministry of External Affairs** for engagement with **Indian origin youth (between 18 and 30 years old)**.
- It is a **three-week orientation programme** for diaspora youth conducted with a view to **promoting awareness** of different facets of life in **contemporary India**.
- The programme has been in **existence since 2003**.

Features of KIP:

- As a part of the programme, the applicants finalized through the selection process **visit India for a 21-day schedule.**
- **90% of the cost of international airfare** for KIP participants visiting India is **borne by the Ministry**, while the remaining 10% is borne by the applicants themselves.
- During the period of their stay in India, the **Ministry provides for their accommodation, meals, and domestic transportation** by road/air.
- During the period of their stay in India, the KIP participants are **given insights into their understanding of India's political system, economy, society, and developments** in various key sectors.
- Further, they are also provided exposure to India's history and heritage by **visiting places of historical and cultural significance.**
- The Ministry also facilitates their **interactions with students and professionals** from various fields, along with arranging for meetings and call on visits with senior officials and leadership.
- The KIP participants are also **taken for a 7–10-day state visit to one or more Indian states** as a part of the Programme.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - The programme is open to **youth of Indian origin (excluding non-resident Indians)** in the age group of **18-30 years**, with **preference given to those from Girmitiya countries** (Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, T&T, Jamaica, etc.).
 - Those who have **not visited India before** will be given preference.
 - **The minimum qualification** required for participating in KIP is **graduation** from a recognized University /Institute **or enrolled for graduation.**
 - The **applicants should be able to speak in English, have studied English as a subject** at the High School level, or have English as the **medium of instruction for undergraduate course.**

NATIONAL TRANSIT PASS SYSTEM

Recently, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the National Transit Pass System (NTPS) pan-India.



About National Transit Pass System:

- It is to facilitate the seamless **transit of timber, bamboo, and other forest produce** across the country.
- Currently, the transit permits are issued for transport of timber and forest produce based on state specific transit rules.
- The NTPS is envisioned as a "**One Nation-One Pass**" regime, which will enable seamless transit across the country.
- This initiative will streamline the issuance of timber transit permits by providing a unified, online mode for tree growers and farmers involved in agroforestry across the country, contributing to the ease of doing business.
- It offers seamless transit permits, managing records for both **inter-state and intra-state transportation** of timber, bamboo and other forest produce obtained from various sources like **private lands, government owned forest and private depots**.
- The **QR coded transit permits** generated under NTPS will allow check gates across various states to verify the validity of the permits and allow seamless transit.
- It is designed for user convenience, featuring desktop and mobile applications for easy registration and permit applications.
- Transit permits will be issued for **tree species which are regulated**, while the **users can self-generate No Objection Certificates** for exempted species.
- Presently, 25 States and Union Territories have embraced the unified permit system, streamlining interstate business operations for producers, farmers, and transporters.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

ULFA SIGNS PEACE ACCORD WITH CENTRE, ASSAM GOVT

Why in news?

- The pro-talks faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) signed a peace accord with the Central government and the Assam government.
 - In the last five years, 9 peace and border-related agreements have been signed across Northeast.
 - In November 2023, a peace agreement was signed with the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) in Manipur, a Meitei separatist group.
- With this Memorandum of Settlement, the ULFA faction has formally agreed to shun violence and join the mainstream.

Insurgency in Assam

- Assam has seen insurgency by various tribal militant groups, particularly from the 1980s onwards.
 - This was even after Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh were carved out of Assam.
- The core demand of most of these groups has been greater political autonomy, primarily through separate statehood demands.

Reasons behind the insurgency in Assam

- **Ethnic minefield**
 - The Assam region has a long history of tensions between the indigenous ethnic groups.
 - There are 15 recognised tribes in the autonomous districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills and 14 recognised tribes in the rest of the state.
 - Of these, the major tribes are **Bodo** (35% of the state's tribal population), **Mishing** (17.52%), **Karbi** (11.1%), **Rabha** (7.6%), **Sonowal Kachari** (6.5%), **Lalung** (5.2%), **Garos** (4.2%), and **Dimasas** (3.2%).
 - Of these, the most sustained and violent movement for autonomy has been carried out by Bodo groups.
 - However, there have also been Karbi and Dimasa groups that waged militant operations over the decades.

- **Immigration**

- The large-scale immigration of Bengali-speaking Muslims from the neighboring country of Bangladesh has been a major source of tension in the region.
- The Assamese people see this immigration as a threat to their identity, culture, and economic well-being.

- **Political factors**

- This region saw movements which ask for recognition of sub-regional aspirations.
- These movements often came in direct conflict with the State Governments or even the Autonomous Councils.
 - E.g., All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) stepped up the movement in 1987 for a separate state of Bodoland on the North Bank of the Brahmaputra.

- **Economic factors**

- The isolation of the region after partition was a big blow to the economy of the region.
- The perception of exploitation of NE resources by the government in Delhi boosted insurgency.

News Summary: ULFA signs peace accord with Centre, Assam govt

- The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)'s pro-talks faction signed a tripartite Memorandum of Settlement with the Centre and the Assam government.
 - The ULFA pro-talks faction was led by its chairperson Arabinda Rajkhowa.
 - This faction joined peace talks with the government on September 3, 2011, after an agreement for Suspension of Operations was signed between it and central and state governments.
 - The hardline faction of the ULFA headed by Paresh Baruah is still not part of the peace accord.
 - Baruah reportedly lives along the China-Myanmar border.
 - A major development package will be given to Assam under the agreement with ULFA.
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WHAT IS PARKINSON'S DISEASE?

Indian brain researchers recently discovered how a complex interplay between two crucial brain chemicals leads to the development of Parkinson's Disease.



About Parkinson's Disease:

- It is a **progressive neurological disorder** that affects the **nervous system** and the parts of the body controlled by the nerves.
- It is a condition in which a **patient has limited or no control over his movements** and body balance.
- **The risk of developing Parkinson's disease naturally increases with age**, and the **average age at which it starts is 60 years old**.
- Many studies have suggested that **men are more likely to be affected** by Parkinson's than women.
- **Cause:**
 - It is caused by the **degeneration of nerve cells** in the part of the brain called the substantia nigra, which controls movement.
 - These nerve cells die or become impaired, **losing the ability to produce** an important chemical called **dopamine**.
 - **Dopamine** operates with other neurotransmitters to **help coordinate** the millions of **nerve and muscle cells involved in the movement**.
 - **Lack of dopamine causes the slowed movements and tremors** symptoms of Parkinson's disease.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Parkinson's disease symptoms can be **different for everyone**.
 - **Early symptoms** may be **mild and go unnoticed**.
 - **Symptoms often begin on one side** of the body and **usually remain worse on that side**.
 - Parkinson's symptoms may include:

- **Tremors** (trembling in the hands, arms, legs, and jaw); rigidity (stiffness of the limbs); **slowness of movement**; and **impaired balance** and coordination.
 - Patients may also experience **other symptoms** such as **difficulty in swallowing, chewing, and speaking, urinary problems**, constipation, skin problems, depression, emotional changes, and sleep disruption.
 - **Diagnosis: Currently, no blood laboratory or radiological tests are available** to diagnose Parkinson's disease.
 - **Treatment:** There's **no cure** for this disease, but **treatments can help** significantly **improve your symptoms**.
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INDIA'S LITHIUM DEAL WITH ARGENTINA

Why in News?

- India is on the brink of securing a significant deal for five lithium blocks in Argentina, with negotiations reportedly in the final stages.
- This strategic move could be a game-changer in reducing India's reliance on China for critical minerals.

About Lithium:

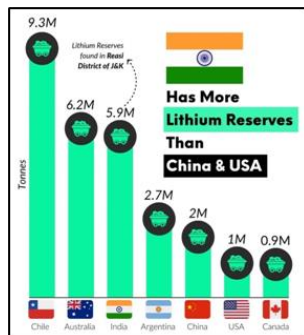
- Lithium is a chemical element with the symbol Li and atomic number 3. It is a **soft, silvery-white** alkali metal.
- Lithium is a special metal in many ways. It's light and soft — it can be cut with a kitchen knife and so low in density that it floats on water.

Applications of Lithium:

- The most important use of lithium is in **rechargeable batteries for mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras and electric vehicles (EVs)**.
 - Lithium is often dubbed as “**white gold**” for electric vehicles.
- Lithium metal is made into alloys with aluminium and magnesium, improving their strength and making them lighter.

- Aluminium-lithium alloys are used in aircraft, bicycle frames and high-speed trains.
- Lithium has no known biological role. **It is toxic**, except in very small doses.

Where is Lithium Found Naturally?



- Lithium makes up a mere **0.0007 per cent** of the Earth's crust and it's only found locked up in minerals and salts.
- With 9.3 million tonnes, **Chile has the world's largest known lithium reserves**.
- Chile is followed by **Australia (6.2 million tonnes)**.
- In 2023, the Geological Survey of India, found that **9 million tonnes** have been found in Salal-Haimana area of Reasi district of J&K.
 - India now has the third largest resource of lithium globally, but it will take time to convert it to reserves.
- India is followed by **Argentina (2.7 million tonnes)** and **China (2 million tonnes)**.
- Global lithium production surpassed **100,000 tonnes** for the first time in 2021, quadrupling from 2010. Currently, **Australia alone produces 52% of the world's lithium**.

Future of Lithium Production:

- As the world produces more batteries and EVs, the **demand for lithium is projected to reach 1.5 million tonnes of lithium carbonate equivalent (LCE) by 2025 and over 3 million tonnes by 2030**.
- Based on the above demand projections, production needs to triple by 2025 and increase nearly six-fold by 2030.