

### TOURISM IN INDIA: WORKING HAND IN HAND TO SHOWCASE INDIA

#### Context:

- On the **National Tourism Day** (January 25), the Ministry of Railways in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, is launching its Jagannath Yatra train package.
- Linked to **theme-based tourist circuit trains**, the initiative is Government of India's one among many to showcase India's rich heritage using a '**whole of government**' approach and promote tourism.

#### Tourism sector in India:

- In the past 75 years, **India has become synonymous with tourism, spirituality, transformation, culture and diversity.**
- The Tourism sector generated Rs 16.91 lakh crore (USD 240 billion) or 9.2% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018 and has supported around 42.67 million jobs or 8.1% of total employment.
- India is estimated to contribute **250 Bn \$ GDP from Tourism, 137 mn jobs** in the Tourism sector, 56 bn \$ in Foreign Exchange Earnings and 25 mn foreign arrivals are expected to be achieved by **2030.**
- With tourism as its primary concern, the Ministry of Tourism has launched a number of initiatives and **implemented a four-pronged development strategy** that focuses on:
  - Improving the connectivity - air, rail, and roads.
  - Enhancing the tourism infrastructure and dependent services.
  - Streamlining branding and promotion.
  - Showcasing the culture and heritage.
- Various **tourist circuits** are being promoted and a new 'Ambedkar Circuit' and 'Himalayan Circuit' will also be promoted under the action plan for development of tourist circuits.
- A number of projects have been sanctioned under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme** for building tourist infrastructure across various themes.

- The Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (**PRASHAD**) Scheme aims to strengthen the tourist facilities around spiritual locations, under which 39 projects have been sanctioned in 24 States.
- According to the Ministry of Tourism, the financial assistance to the tourism sector, which is the biggest sufferer due to Covid 19, continues to be extended upto 31st March, 2023.

## NATIONAL VOTERS' DAY

The Election Commission of India is celebrating the 13th National Voters' Day on 25th January 2023.



### About National Voters' Day

- National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year since 2011, all across the country to mark the **foundation day of the Election Commission** of India, i.e. 25th January 1950.
- The main purpose of the celebration is to create electoral awareness amongst citizens and encourage them to participate in the electoral process.
- Dedicated to the voters of the country, National Voters' Day is also used to facilitate the enrolment of voters, especially the newly eligible young voters.
- The theme for 2023: **Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure.**

## GREEN COMET

Astronomers recently spotted a comet using the wide-field survey camera at the Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF) in the US, which is appearing near earth after nearly 50,000 years.



### What are Green comets?

- Comets are **frozen rocky or gas-filled objects** that are remnants of the formation of the solar system.

- The solid portions of a comet which is mostly water ice with embedded dust particles.
- When near the sun, the icy cometary surfaces vaporise and emit large amounts of gas and dust, resulting in a massive atmosphere and tails.
- The fluorescence of these gases, and especially the reflection of sunlight from the minute dust particles in the comet's atmosphere and tail, is what gives these objects their visual impact.
- Just like other bodies in space, comets also **have orbits**. They are sometimes pulled in close to the sun because of the sun's gravity acting on them.
- The orbit indicates this comet comes from the edge of our solar system, a distant reservoir of comets we call the **Oort cloud**.
- The Oort cloud is thought to be a big, spherical region of outer space enveloping our sun, consisting of innumerable small objects, such as comets and asteroids.
- **What is the reason for the Green colour?** Laboratory research has linked this green-like aura to a reactive molecule called **dicarbon**, which emits green light as sunlight decays it.

## OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLE

Recently, Hundreds of Olive Ridley turtles were found dead in their breeding grounds between Kakinada and Antarvedi in the Godavari region of India's east coast.



### About Olive Ridley turtle

- The Olive Ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada**, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- They are **carnivores** and get their name from their olive-colored carapace, which is heart-shaped and rounded.
- **Habitat:**
  - They are mainly found in the warm waters of the **Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans**.
  - Odisha's **Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary** is known as the world's largest rookery (a colony of breeding animals) of sea turtles.

- **Conservation status**
- **IUCN Red List: Vulnerable**
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1
- CITES Appendix I

### **The initiative was taken to protect the Olive Ridley turtle**

- **Operation Olivia:** Every year, the Indian Coast Guard's "Operation Olivia", initiated in the early 1980s, helps protect Olive Ridley turtles as they congregate along the Odisha coast for breeding and nesting from November to December.

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## STATE VISIT OF PRESIDENT OF EGYPT TO INDIA

### **Why in news?**

- President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, is on a State visit to India from 24-26 January 2023.
- President Sisi, who is on his second State Visit to India, will also be the Chief Guest on India's 74th Republic Day.
- This is for the **first time** that President of the Arab Republic of Egypt has been invited as Chief Guest on our Republic Day.
- A military contingent from Egyptian Army will also participate in the Republic Day parade.

### **India – Egypt Bilateral Relation: in brief**

- India and Egypt enjoy warm and friendly relations marked by civilizational, cultural and economic linkages and deep-rooted people-to-people ties.
- India and Egypt are celebrating 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations this year.
- Egypt has also been invited as a 'Guest Country' during India's Presidency of G-20 in 2022-23.

### **Trade relation**

- Bilateral trade between India and Egypt achieved a record high of USD 7.26 billion in FY 2021-22.

- The trade was fairly balanced, with USD 3.74 billion Indian exports to Egypt and USD 3.52 billion imports from Egypt to India.
- More than 50 Indian companies have invested around USD 3.15 billion in diverse sectors of Egyptian economy, including chemicals, energy, textile, garment, agri-business, retail, etc.

### **Defence cooperation**

- In October 2021, **Desert Warrior** exercise was conducted as the first-ever joint tactical exercise by the air force of the two countries.
- The more recent exercise between the special forces is another indication of the growing willingness to work together.
- The Egyptians have also shown some interest in India's Tejas fighter jets and Dhruv light attack helicopters.

### **Cooperation during Covid-19 & Russia – Ukraine war**

- When India was hit hard by the second wave of COVID-19, Egypt responded by dispatching three plane loads of medical supplies and providing 300,000 doses of Remdesivir in May 2021.
- India reciprocated a year later when Egypt, the world's largest importer of wheat, was facing a dire situation following the abrupt halt in wheat shipments from Ukraine following the war.
- In May last year, India — which had put a ban on sale of wheat — allowed export of 61,000 tonnes to Egypt.

### **What is the significance of the Republic Day invite?**

- An invitation to be the Republic Day chief guest is highly symbolic from the Indian government's perspective.
- The choice of chief guest every year is dictated by a number of reasons — strategic and diplomatic, business interests, and international geo-politics.

### **Why Egypt has been chosen this year?**

- **Push to engage the Global South**
  - The invitation to Mr. Sisi is also being seen as part of the government's push to engage the Global South.
- **Rekindling of the principles of non-alignment**

- This invitation is also seen as an attempt to rekindle the principles of non-alignment that have come back to the fore during Russia – Ukraine war.
- **Strategic weight of Egypt**
  - With a population of almost 110 million, Egypt is situated at a location that straddles Africa and Asia.
  - India is keen on further expanding its ties with Egypt, a **key player in the politics of both the Arab world as well as Africa.**
- **Egypt's plans to develop the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZONE) into a global manufacturing hub**
  - The ambitious plans to develop the Suez Canal Economic Zone into a global manufacturing hub are now gathering critical mass.
    - Almost, 20 percent of global container trade takes place through this canal.
- **Resetting India's ties with Muslim-majority countries**
  - India's ties with Muslim-majority countries were tested following controversial remarks made by then spokesperson of ruling party in June 2022.
  - Egypt was one of the few countries from the Arab world which did not react officially to the controversial remarks.

## WHAT IS THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK?

Atomic scientists reset the "Doomsday Clock" recently, moving its hands to 90 seconds to midnight - closer than ever before to the threat of annihilation.



About Doomsday clock:

- **What is it?** It is a symbolic timepiece showing how close the world is to ending.
- **The hands of the clock are moved closer to or further away from midnight based on the scientists' reading of existential threats at a particular time.**
- **Purpose:**
  - It warns how many metaphorical “minutes to midnight” humanity has left.

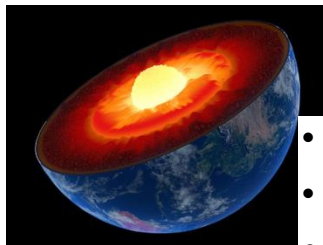


- It is intended to warn the public and inspire action.
- **How is the clock set? A Chicago-based non-profit organization called the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists updates the time annually** based on information regarding catastrophic risks to the planet and humanity
- **Origin and History:**
  - The clock was created in 1947 by a group of atomic scientists, including Albert Einstein, who had worked on the Manhattan Project to develop the world's first nuclear weapons during World War Two.
  - When it was created in 1947, the placement of the Doomsday Clock was based on the threat posed by nuclear weapons.
  - In 2007, the Bulletin began including catastrophic disruptions from climate change in its hand-setting deliberations.
  - The furthest the clock has been set was 17 minutes to midnight, in 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- **What time is it now?**
  - At 90 seconds to midnight, the "Doomsday Clock" is now the closest it has ever been to midnight.
  - It is the first time it has moved since it was set at 100 seconds to midnight in 2020.
  - Its setting reflects the revived fears of a nuclear war due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

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## WHAT IS THE INNER CORE OF THE EARTH?

A recent study says that the inner core of Earth seems to have stopped spinning in the same direction as the rest of the planet.



**About the Inner core of the Earth:**

- It is the innermost layer of the Earth.
- **Structure:**
  - It is a solid metallic ball made mainly of iron.

- The **inner core** is solid due to the pressure caused by the weight put on it by the Earth's other top layers.
- It is **distinct from the outer core, which is a liquid.**
- **Radius:**
  - The inner core has an **average radius of 1220 km.**
  - The **boundary between the inner and outer cores** is located at approximately **5150 km below the surface of the Earth.**
  - This boundary is **called the Lehman Seismic Discontinuity.**
- **Temperature:** Inner core temperatures reach extraordinary levels, estimated to be between **7,200–8,500°F (4,000–4,700°C).**
- **Properties:**
  - It is predicted to have very **high thermal and electrical conductivity.**
  - The inner core **generates its own magnetic field and spins a bit faster than the rest of the planet.**

## What are the three layers of Earth?

- The earth is made up of **three different layers:** the crust, the mantle and the core.
- **The crust:** This is the **outside layer of the earth** and is made of **solid rock, mostly basalt and granite.**
- **The mantle:** It lies below the crust and is up to **2900 km thick.** It consists of **hot, dense, iron and magnesium-rich solid rock.**
- **The core:** It is the **center of the earth** and is made up of two parts: the **liquid outer core and solid inner core.** The outer core is made of **nickel, iron and molten rock.**

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## [SC REMOVES MAGISTRATE-NOD RIDER TO PREPARE 'LIVING WILL'](#)

### Why in News?

- The Supreme Court has removed the condition that managed a magistrate's approval for withdrawal or withholding of life support to a terminally ill person.



## What is the Concept of Euthanasia?

- Euthanasia is defined as the **hastening of death of a patient to prevent further sufferings.**
- **Active Euthanasia –**
  - Active euthanasia refers to the physician deliberate act, usually the administration of lethal drugs, to end an incurably or terminally ill patient's life.
  - There are three types of active euthanasia, in relation to giving consent for euthanasia, namely:
    - Voluntary euthanasia – at patient request,
    - Nonvoluntary – without patient consent,
    - Involuntary euthanasia – patient is not in a position to give consent.
- **Passive Euthanasia –**
  - Passive euthanasia refers to withholding or withdrawing treatment which is necessary for maintaining life.

## What is 'Living Will'?

- The "living will" is a **person's right to issue advance directive on the course of his/her treatment, including withdrawal of life support, should such a situation arise.**
- However, there is no way a living will provision can be made fool-proof requiring no intervention of the doctor or immediate decision makers around a person.

## Is Euthanasia Legal in India?

- A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court in **Common Cause vs Union of India (2018)** recognised a person's right to die with dignity.
  - It said that a **terminally ill person can opt for passive euthanasia and execute a living will to refuse medical treatment.**
- The Court permitted an individual to draft a living will specifying that she or he will not be put on life support if they slip into an incurable coma.
- The Court recognised the **right to die with dignity as a fundamental right** and an aspect of **Article 21** (Right to Life).
- **Is Active Euthanasia Legal?**
  - In India, active euthanasia is a crime.

- Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) deals with the attempt to commit suicide and Section 306 of the IPC deals with abetment of suicide – both actions are punishable.
- Only those who are brain dead can be taken off life support with the help of family members.

### News Summary:

- The Supreme Court has modified its order in the 2018 judgement on passive euthanasia.
- With the modified order, the Court aims to make the procedure of removal of (or withholding) life support from terminally ill patients less cumbersome for the patients, their families and the doctors by limiting the role played by government officials.

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## NOROVIRUS CASES DETECTED IN KERALA

### Why in news?

- The Kerala Health Department has confirmed two cases of the gastrointestinal infection norovirus in class 1 students in Ernakulam district.

### What is norovirus?

- Noro is a group of viruses that cause abdominal illness. It is a highly contagious virus.
- A virus is an infectious microbe consisting of a segment of nucleic acid (either DNA or RNA) surrounded by a protein coat.
- A virus cannot replicate alone; instead, it must infect cells and use components of the host cell to make copies of itself.
- Often, a virus ends up killing the host cell in the process, causing damage to the host organism.
- It is also nicknamed the "winter vomiting bug".
- The virus is capable of surviving low temperatures, and outbreaks tend to be more common during the winter and in colder countries.
- The human norovirus was earlier known as Norwalk virus as it was first identified in the stool samples collected during an outbreak in Norwalk.
- While there is no particular medication to cure norovirus infection, cleanliness is the only way one can avoid it.

### What are the symptoms of Norovirus infection?

- Vomiting is the main classic symptom of Norovirus infection.
- Other symptoms of the infection are nausea, diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, and lethargy.
- In children, it also causes dehydration. Dehydration in kids will lead to decrease in urination, dry mouth and throat and feeling dizzy even when standing for a few minutes.
- According to the US CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), norovirus can cause stomach and intestine inflammation.
- The symptoms usually last for 1 or 2 days and the patient recovers within one to three days.
- This infection is rarely serious but if not checked at the right time it can spread fast.

### **How does it spread and how to prevent its spread?**

- Unclean and contaminated food and water are the carriers of the norovirus. The virus mainly spreads through the fecal-oral route.
  - The infection spreads either by direct consumption of infected food or else when food is served or prepared by an infected person.
  - Good hand hygiene is the best way to prevent infection. Washing hands is considered effective while hands sanitisers are thought to **not work** too well against norovirus.
  - As the infection can be transmitted by foods, it is suggested that a sick person not prepare food for others.
  - All food items should be carefully washed and cooked at high temperatures.
  - Norovirus can survive in temperature up to 60°C.
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