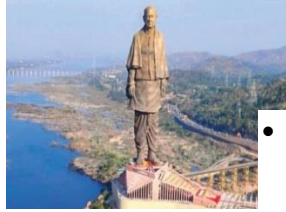


NATIONAL UNITY DAY

National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is celebrated on October 31, every year since 2014 to mark the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.



About:

- This year marks the **147th birth anniversary of freedom fighter Vallabhbhai Patel.**
- **Sardar Vallabhbhai merged 565 princely states to make India one nation.** This is the reason why National Unity Day is celebrated on his birth anniversary.

Important facts

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was appointed as the **first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India from 1947 to 1950.**
- He was so influenced by Gandhiji's ideas that in the year 1920 in the non-cooperation movement, he adopted indigenous Khadi items and started boycotting foreign clothes.
- Patel led the **Satyagraha movement in Nagpur in 1923** against the British law of banning the hoisting of the Indian Flag.
- He was the **second candidate for the post of President after Mahatma Gandhi** at the **Lahore session of the Indian National Congress in 1929.**
- In the year 1950, the health of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel started deteriorating and on 15 December 1950, he said goodbye to the world.
- **Ahmedabad's airport** has also been named Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport.
- In 2013, Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Sardar Patel's memorial in the Narmada district of Gujarat. It was named the **Statue of Unity.**

THE EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL DELUSIONS OF RAJ BHAVAN

Context

- The article critically analyses the powers and limitations of Governor in respect of recent actions by Governor's office that have evoked nationwide attention for all the wrong reasons.

Background

- **Recent controversy:** A tweet put out recently by the office of the Kerala Governor stated that the statements of individual Ministers that lower the dignity of the office of the Governor can invite action including "withdrawal of pleasure".
- **Constitutional backing:** Though Raj Bhavan did not explicitly say that such Ministers would be expelled but, going by the text of Article 164(1) of the Constitution, this gave a clear indication of the consequences.
 - As per Article 164(1) the ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor.
- **Demonstration:** This was made even more apparent when the Governor sent a letter to the Kerala Chief Minister asking him to act against the State Finance Minister, who, according to the Governor, had "ceased to enjoy" the Governor's "pleasure". The Chief Minister however, declined to do so.
- **Other actions:** The Governor's other move, for ousting Vice-Chancellors of universities in the State, alleging deficits in their appointment process, is claimed to be in exercise of his statutory power as Chancellor.
 - But he has no such special power and can only act within the bounds of Constitution.

Conclusion

- The governors should act in a nonpartisan way while fulfilling their constitutional duties and the parliament should consider the recommendations of various commissions to reform the office of the governor further for a better and healthy democracy.

[NCERT PROPOSAL FOR 'PARAKH': GLOBAL BODIES EXPRESS INTEREST IN SETTING UP SCHOOL EXAM REGULATOR](#)

In News:

- Three global educational non-profits recently approached the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to set up the proposed regulator PARAKH.
- **PARAKH** - Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development - is also part of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 proposals.

PARAKH - Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development:

Background:

- Earlier, the NCERT convened a series of meetings with various stakeholders towards the implementation of NEP 2020. This discussion also included the establishment of a new assessment regulator.
- During the discussions, most states endorsed the NEP proposal of developing a benchmark framework to ensure consistency between state and central boards
- As a result, the Union Ministry of Education recently invited bids to establish a regulator - PARAKH.

About PARAKH:

- The benchmark assessment framework - PARAKH, has been proposed by the NEP 2020.
- It will function as a standard-setting body for student assessment and evaluation for all school boards in the country and will put an end to the emphasis on rote learning.
- While the NCERT is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Education, PARAKH will act as a constituent unit of the NCERT.
- PARAKH will be tasked with -
 - **Setting norms, standards and guidelines** for student assessment and evaluation for all recognised school boards of India.
 - Holding **periodic learning outcome tests** like the National Achievement Survey (NAS) and State Achievement Surveys.
 - If the plans are on track, the NAS in 2024 will be conducted by PARAKH.

- PARAKH will manage India's participation in international assessments such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in addition to NAS.
- PARAKH will eventually become the national single-window source for all assessment-related information and expertise, with a mandate to assist all forms of learning assessment, both nationally and globally.

Significance:

- **Uniformity:** PARAKH would be expected to address the issue of differences in scores among students associated with different boards, who are at a disadvantage during college admissions when compared to their CBSE peers.
- **Standardisation:** It will establish and implement technical standards for test design, administration, analysis and reporting at all levels of schooling.
- **Skill development:** It will encourage and help school boards to shift their assessment patterns towards meeting the skill requirements of the 21st century.

SPECIAL OPERATION MEDAL

Union Home Minister's "Special Operation Medal" for the year 2022 awarded for 4 Special Operations.



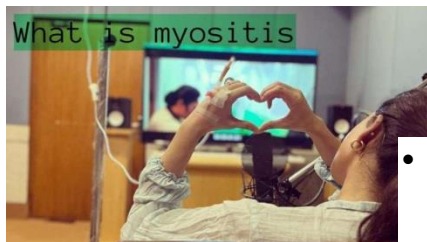
About:

- The medal was **constituted in 2018** with the objective to recognize those operations, which have high degree of planning, high significance for the security of the country/State/UT and have significant impact on the security of larger sections of the society.
- The award shall be conferred for Special Operation in the areas such as **counter terrorism, border action, arms control, prevention of narcotics smuggling and rescue operations.**

- All recommendations for the award is sent to the MHA within three months of the special operation.
 - It is **announced on 31st of October every year.**
 - In a year, **normally 3 Special Operations are considered for the award** and in extra ordinary circumstances; the award may be given up to **5 Special Operations to encourage State/UT Police.**
-

MYOSITIS

Samantha Ruth Prabhu, recently revealed that she has been diagnosed with an autoimmune condition called Myositis.



About:

- **What is myositis?** It is a rare condition that causes muscles to become weak, painful and tired. Myo means muscle, itis means inflammation. When muscles are inflamed, they may be swollen and susceptible to pain.
 - **Causes:** It is usually caused by a problem with the immune system, where it mistakenly attacks healthy tissue. In most cases, the exact cause of myositis is unknown and therefore considered idiopathic.
 - **Prevalence:** Around **4-22 cases per one lakh population.** Myositis can affect both children and adults. With the exception of one type of myositis, **women are more likely to be affected by this disease than men.**
 - **Types of myositis:**
 - Dermatomyositis
 - Inclusion-body myositis
 - Juvenile myositis
 - Polymyositis
 - Toxic myositis
-

- **Symptoms:** The general symptoms may include muscle pain and soreness, fatigue, trouble swallowing, and difficulty breathing.
 - **Treatment:** Since there is no one medical treatment that fits all, immunosuppressant drugs are recommended along with physical therapy, exercise, stretching, and yoga which can help keep muscles strong and flexible and prevent muscle atrophy.
-

AMUR FALCONS



Amur falcons, the world's longest travelling raptors, began to arrive in Manipur's Tamenglong district as part of its annual routine migration.

About:

- **Migration Journey:**
 - Locally known as **Akhuipuina**, the bird arrives mainly in **Manipur and Nagaland** on its southbound migration from breeding grounds in North China, Eastern Mongolia and far-east Russia en-route to its wintering grounds in South Africa.
 - The one-way journey via India is about **20,000 km long and the birds do this twice a year.**
 - **Conservation efforts:**
 - Amur falcon is protected under the **Wildlife Protection Act 1972 and included under its Schedule IV.**
 - Hunting of the birds or possessing its meat is punishable with **imprisonment up to three years or a fine up to Rs 5,000.**
 - In 2018, the forest department started a conservation programme by **radio-tagging the birds to study their migratory route.**
 - IUCN status is **Least Concern.**
-

INDIA, GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL GROUP LIKELY TO START FREE TRADE PACT NEGOTIATIONS NEXT MONTH

In News:

- India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member countries are expected to start negotiations for a free trade agreement next month.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)



- The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a political and economic alliance of six countries in the Arabian Peninsula.
- These six countries are: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.
- Established in 1981, the GCC promotes economic, security, cultural and social cooperation between the six states.
- It holds a summit every year to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.

Significance of GCC for India

- **Energy Security**
 - Together, the GCC countries possess almost half of the world's oil reserves.
 - Currently, GCC suppliers account for around 34% of India's crude imports.
- **Trade and investments**
 - Currently, the region is expanding beyond the energy sector into other fields, such as tourism, construction and finance.
 - This opens up the opportunities for trade and investments for countries like India.
- **Presence of Indian Diaspora**
 - Indian diaspora in the Middle East accounts for around 7.6 million people.
 - As per the RBI report, remittances sent from this region stands to be around 30% of the total remittances received by India from abroad.
- **Geostrategic**
 - GCC countries sit across the Persian Gulf, which is an important sea lane for global trade.

- From the strategic point of view, India and GCC share the desire for political stability and security in the region.

Significance

- **Huge untapped potential**

- Experts believe, the GCC region holds huge trade potential and a trade pact will help in further boosting India's exports to that market.
- GCC is a major import dependent region. India can increase its exports of food items, clothing and several other goods.

- **Boost to already existing trade ties**

- India's exports to the GCC stands at USD 44 billion in 2021-22 and imports for the same period stands at USD 110.73 billion.
- The share of GCC members in India's total imports rose to 18 per cent in 2021-22 from 15.5 per cent in 2020-21.

- **Major source of remittances**

- Gulf nations are host to a sizeable Indian population. Out of about 32 million non-resident Indians (NRIs), nearly half are estimated to be working in Gulf countries.
- According to a November 2021 report of the World Bank, India got USD 87 billion in foreign remittances in 2021.
- Of this, a sizeable portion came from the GCC nations.

- **Good relationship with most of the countries in the region**

- Saudi Arabia was India's fourth-largest trading partner last fiscal.
- From Qatar, India imports 8.5 million tonnes a year of LNG and exports products ranging from cereals to meat, fish, chemicals, and plastics.
- Kuwait was the 27th largest trading partner of India in the last fiscal, while the UAE was the third-largest trading partner in 2021-22.

- **Boost to India's own ambition of increasing its global trade**

- India targets to ramp up exports of goods and services to \$2 trillion by 2030.

- It also eyes to raise the share of its exports in global trade to 3% by 2027 and 10% by 2047 from the current 2.1%.
 - At the same time, India is working towards promoting hundred Indian brands as global champions.
-

TATA-AIRBUS UNIT: MAKE IN INDIA, MAKE FOR GLOBE, SAYS PM MODI

In News:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of a C295 aircraft manufacturing plant in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- The Tata-Airbus consortium will manufacture the transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- It is the **first project** of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company.
- It is also the first time that the C295 aircraft will be manufactured outside of Europe.

C295 aircraft

Background:

- The C295 was originally produced by a Spanish aircraft manufacturer named Construcciones Aeronauticas SA.
- This company is now part of Airbus and the aircraft's manufacturing takes place at Airbus's plant in Spain.
- In September 2021, India signed a Rs 21,935 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure 56 C295 aircraft to replace the IAF's ageing Avro-748 planes.
- Under the agreement:
 - Airbus will deliver the first 16 aircraft in 'fly-away' condition from its final assembly line in Seville, Spain,
 - The 16 fly-away aircraft are scheduled to be delivered to the IAF between September 2023 and August 2025.



CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- The subsequent 40 aircraft will be manufactured by Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) in India as part of an industrial partnership between the two companies.
- The first Made-in-India aircraft will be rolled out of the manufacturing facility in September 2026.

About

- The C295MW is a transport aircraft with 5 to 10-tonne capacity and a maximum speed of 480 kmph.
- It has a rear ramp door for quick reaction and para-dropping of troops and cargo.
- The company claims this aircraft has the longest unobstructed cabin in its class which can accommodate 71 seats.
- It also claims that C295 can carry more cargo than its competitors with direct off-loading through the rear ramp.

Role

- As a tactical transport aircraft, the C295 can carry troops and logistical supplies from main airfields to forward operating airfields of the country.
- It can also operate on short unprepared airstrips as it is capable of Short Take-off and Landing (STOL).
- The aircraft can additionally be used for casualty or medical evacuation, performing special missions, disaster response and maritime patrol duties.