

INDIA'S FIRST PRIVATE LAUNCH VEHICLE ALL SET FOR MAIDEN FLIGHT

In News:

- India's first privately developed launch vehicle –**Vikram-S** – is all set to make its maiden flight from the country's only spaceport in Sriharikota between November 12 and 16.

Background:

- Led by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), India's space program has impressively evolved for the past 50 years.
- In terms of technological capabilities India ranks among the top 5 space faring nations of the world.
 - India is globally recognised for building low-cost satellites and launch vehicles.
- Despite having world's most accomplished space program, India's space sector accounts for only 2-3% of the global space economy.
 - The global space economy is estimated at ~US \$440 billion.
- To increase the share in the global business, Government of India has initiated the space sector reforms, to promote, handhold, regulate and authorise private enterprises and start-ups to undertake space activities.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe):

- IN-SPACe is an independent nodal agency under **Department of Space (DoS)**.
- It was set-up for allowing space activities and usage of DoS owned facilities by non-governmental private entities as well as to prioritize the launch manifest.
 - As a part of space sector reforms in **June 2020**, the Government of India had set up the IN-SPACe.
- **Objective – To ensure greater private participation in India's space activities.**
- IN-SPACe will act as an interface between ISRO and private parties, and assess how best to utilise India's space resources and increase space-based activities.

- It will assess the needs and demands of private players, including educational and research institutions, and, explore ways to accommodate these requirements in consultation with ISRO.
- Headquarters of IN-SPACE is located in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.
- IN-SPACE is the second space organisation created by the Government in the last two years.
- In 2019 Union Budget, the Central Government had announced the setting up of a **New Space India Limited (NSIL)**.
- NSIL is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) set up to serve as a marketing arm of ISRO.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Approval in Space Sector:

- Presently, FDI in space is allowed under government route only for satellite establishment and operations.
- FDI in space is approved by the Government on a case-by-case basis and often this approval takes time.
- However, witnessing the change in approach of the Indian Government towards private players involvement, **Indian companies will be allowed to invest up to 100% and 70% through FDI with approval of centre in all the streams** Upstream, mid-stream and downstream segment.

Present Scenario:

- IN-SPACE has so far received 67 proposals in the areas of launch vehicles, satellites, space applications, ground systems and research from entities from small to big entities.
- Moreover, 10 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) have been signed between private players and IN-SPACE, including eight in payload and two in vehicle launches.

About Mission Prarambh:

- The Vikram-S rocket is a single-stage sub-orbital launch vehicle.
- Sub-orbital flight are those vehicles which are travelling slower than the orbital velocity – meaning it is fast enough to reach outer space but not fast enough to stay in an orbit around the Earth.
- Under mission Prarambh, Vikram-S will carry three customer satellites in a sub-orbital flight.
- With this mission, Skyroot Aerospace is set to become the first private space company in India to launch a rocket into space.

- Skyroot's launch vehicles are named 'Vikram' as a tribute to the founder of the Indian space programme and renowned scientist Vikram Sarabhai.

MOTHER TONGUE SURVEY OF INDIA

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has completed the Mother Tongue Survey of India (MTSI) with field videography of the country's 576 languages.



About:

According to the report, the Mother Tongue Survey of India is a project that “surveys the mother tongues, which are returned consistently across two and more Census decades”.

- It also documents the linguistic features of the selected languages.
- The report states that the NIC and the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) will be documenting and preserving the linguistic data of the surveyed mother tongues in audio-video files.
- Video-graphed speech data of Mother Tongues will also be uploaded on the NIC survey for archiving purposes.
- Linguistic Survey of India (LSI) is a regular research activity in the country since the 6th Five Year Plan.

How many “mother tongues” does India have, and what is spoken the most?

- As per an analysis of 2011 linguistic census data in 2018, more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.
- The category “mother tongue” is a designation provided by the respondent, but it need not be identical with the actual linguistic medium.
- After subjecting the 19,569 returns to linguistic scrutiny, edit and rationalisation, they were grouped into 121 mother tongues.
- According to the 2011 linguistic census, Hindi is the most widely spoken mother tongue, with 52.8 crore people or 43.6 per cent of the population declaring it as the mother tongue.

- The next highest is Bengali, mother tongue for 9.7 crore individuals, and accounting for 8 per cent of the population.

Mother tongue in the education of children:

- The new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for the foundational stages of education, has recommended that mother tongue should be the primary medium of instruction in schools for children up to eight years of age.
- The focus on mother tongue as the medium of instruction, especially for primary schooling, has been a feature of education policies for years.
- The new NCF, which deals with pre-school and classes I-II, emphasises the virtues of the mother tongue as the primary medium of instruction, saying that by the time children join pre-school, they acquire significant competence in the “home language”.
- According to the NCF, evidence from research confirms the importance of teaching children in their mother tongue during the foundational years and beyond.
- NCF also states that since children learn concepts most rapidly and deeply in their home language, the primary medium of instruction would optimally be the child’s home language/ mother tongue/ familiar language in the Foundational Stage.

NATIONAL POPULATION REGISTER (NPR)

According to the Union Home Ministry Annual Report, there is a need to update the National Population Register (NPR) again to incorporate the changes due to birth, death and migration for which demographic and other particulars of each family and individual are to be collected.



About:

- The National Population Register (NPR) is a register of usual residents of the country.
- It includes both Indian citizens as well as a foreign citizen.

- According to the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, a usual resident is a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.
- It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National level under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.

Timeline:

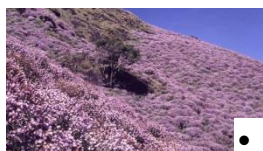
- The first National Population Register was prepared in 2010 and updation of this data was done during 2015 by conducting door to door survey.
- The next update of the NPR will take place next year from April to September 2020 in all the States/UTs except Assam along with the Houselisting phase of the Census 2021.

Details required for NPR:

- The demographic details of every individual are required on 21 points which includes 'date and place of birth of parents', last place of residence, Permanent Account Number (PAN), Aadhar (on a voluntary basis), Voter ID card number, Driving License Number and Mobile Number.
- In the last NPR done in 2010, the data was collected on the 15 points and it did not include 'date and place of birth of parents' and last place of residence.

NEELAKURINJI

Neelakurinji largely bloomed on the Kallippara hills in Idukki, Kerala from the first week of October.



About:

- **Scientific Name:**Strobilanthes kunthianus.
- **Common Names:**Neelakurinji; Kurinji.
- **Distribution:**
 - It is a shrub prominently found in the shola forests of the Western Ghats.
 - Besides it is also seen in the Shevroys in the Eastern Ghats.
- **Blooming period:**The blue flowers of Neelakurinji blossoms only once in 12 years.

- **Conservation:** Core area of Kurinjimala Sanctuary, in Idukki district of Kerala, protects the kurinji.
 - **Cultural significance:**
 - Nilgiri Hills (Literally meaning the blue mountains), got their name from the blue flowers of Neelakurinji.
 - The Paliyan tribes (in Tamil Nadu) use it as a reference to calculate their age.
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ZERO TOLERANCE FOR GREENWASHING, UN CHIEF GUTERRES WARNS COMPANIES

In News:

- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned companies and other non-state entities pursuing net-zero goals to not indulge in greenwashing.
- He made those remarks while launching the report of an expert group on the issue of greenwashing.
 - The expert group was formed last year to suggest measures to prevent greenwashing by private corporations and other non-state actors.

Greenwashing

- It refers to a range of activities that companies or even countries indulge in to present misleading or dubious claims about their climate action.
- There is a growing tendency among firms & governments to mark all kinds of activities as climate-friendly. Many of these claims are unverifiable, misleading, or dubious.
- While they help in boosting the image of the entity, sometimes even helping them garner benefits, they do nothing in the fight against climate change.
- It presents a false picture of the progress being made on the climate change front, thereby pushing the world towards disaster, while at the same time rewarding entities for irresponsible behaviour.

Examples of greenwashing

- Developed countries are often accused of greenwashing their normal business investments in developing countries, or their bilateral aid.
 - They often highlight climate co-benefits of these financial flows, sometimes with very little justification.
- The Volkswagen scandal was a case of greenwashing.
 - In this scandal, the German car company was found to have been cheating in emissions testing of its supposedly green diesel vehicles
- Several other multinational corporations, including oil giants like Shell, BP, and Coca Cola have faced accusations of greenwashing.

Key highlights

- **Carbon free commitment is increasing**
 - A growing number of governments and non-state actors are pledging to be carbon-free — and that is good news.
 - The problem is that the criteria and benchmarks for these net-zero commitments have varying levels of loopholes.
- **Net zero commitment and greenwashing**
 - Net zero refers to a situation in which an organisation's, or a country's, total emissions are balanced by absorption or removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
 - Countries have also taken net-zero targets.
 - Most of the developed countries have promised to become net zero by 2050.
 - China has a net zero target for 2060 while India has pledged to become net-zero by 2070.
 - If greenwash premised upon low-quality net zero pledges is not addressed, it will undermine the efforts of genuine leaders, creating both confusion, cynicism and a failure to deliver urgent climate action.
- **Buying cheap carbon credits to fulfil net-zero targets**
 - There is an increasing trend in which companies and other entities are buying “cheap” carbon credits to fulfil their net-zero targets.
 - The trade in carbon credits is a legitimate exercise and is officially encouraged.

- Countries or firms that reduce emissions beyond their mandate are granted carbon credits, which can then be bought for money by entities that need it to achieve their targets.
- There was a carbon market under the Kyoto Protocol, and a new one is being created under the Paris Agreement as well.
 - These cheap credits often lack integrity and do not represent actual reductions in emissions

MODI UNVEILS LOGO, THEME, SITE OF G-20 PRESIDENCY

In News:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi unveiled the logo, theme and website of India's G-20 Presidency via video conferencing.
- The G20 Leaders' Summit at the level of Heads of State/Government is scheduled to be held on September 9 and 10, 2023 in New Delhi.

In Focus: G-20



- G-20 was a group of finance ministers and central bank governors from 19 individual countries and European Union. It was established in 1999.
- G20 was elevated to a forum of Heads of State/Government in 2008 to effectively respond to the global financial crisis of 2008.
- G-20 is a forum, not a legislative body. Its agreements and decisions have no legal impact, but they do influence countries' policies and global cooperation.

Working of G20

- The G20 has no permanent secretariat. The agenda and work are coordinated by representatives of the G20 countries, known as 'Sherpas'.
 - For India, ex-NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant is the current G20 Sherpa.

- The presidency of the G20 rotates every year among members, and the country holding the presidency, together with the previous and next presidency-holder, forms the ‘Troika’.
- Troika ensures continuity of the G20 agenda.
- During India’s presidency, India, Indonesia and Brazil will form the troika.

Key Highlights:



- **The logo** — Earth juxtaposed with the lotus,
- **Theme** — “Vasudhaiva Kutumba-kam” or “One Earth One Family One Future”
- The logo reflects India’s idea of VasudhaivaKutumbakam (the whole earth is a family), because of which India has always believed in global harmony.

Key highlights of the speech delivered by PM Modi

- India’s G20 presidency is coming at a time of crisis and chaos in the world.
- The world is going through the after-effects of a disruptive once-in-a-century pandemic, conflicts and a lot of economic uncertainty.
- The symbol of the lotus in the G20 logo is a representation of hope in this time.
- Elaborating on the theme, PM Modi said India is working on the vision of bringing the whole world together for a common objective, for a better future.
- It will be India’s endeavour that there should not be any first world or third world, but “**only one world**”.
- India, with its mantra of ‘One Sun, One World, One Grid’, has called for a renewable energy revolution in the world.
- India took up a campaign of ‘One World, One Health’ to strengthen global health.
- Now, in the G20 also, India’s mantra is One Earth, One Family, One Future.

[RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK](#)

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has recently ordered that Ranthambore Festival, a musical extravaganza proposed to be conducted close to the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan, can be held only if it is permitted by the authorities.



About:

- Ranthambore National Park is located in Rajasthan.
- It is located at the junction of the Aravali and Vindhya hill ranges.
- It is the natural habitat to the significant number of Royal Bengal tigers.
- Apart from tigers, the major wild animals include Leopard, Nilgai, Wild boar, Sambar, Hyena, Sloth bear and Chital.
- The number of tigers and their cubs in the adjoining areas of Ranthambore has gone up from 66 in 2019 to 81 in 2021.

History:

- Ranthambore National Park was established initially as Sawai Madhopur Game Sanctuary in 1955 by the Government of India.
- In 1973, it was declared as one of the Project Tiger reserves in India.
- It was on 1st November, 1980 that Ranthambore was declared a national park, while the forests located beside it were named Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary & Keladevi Sanctuary.