

### RANI LAKSHMIBAI

Recently, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid tributes to Rani Lakshmibai, the Jhansi queen known for her role in the 1857 Mutiny, on her 187th birth anniversary.



#### About:

- Rani Lakshmibai, one of the warriors of India's struggle for Independence, was born as Manikarnika Tambe in Varanasi.
  - Lakshmibai got married to Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, the Maharaja of Jhansi and got the name of Rani Lakshmibai.
  - Then Lakshmibai and Gangadhar Rao adopted Rao's cousin's son, Anand Rao, who was later renamed as Damodar. Soon after they adopted Anand, Maharaja died due to an illness.
  - The East India Company took advantage of the Maharaja's death and applied the **Doctrine of Lapse**.
- #### What was the Doctrine of Lapse?
- It was an annexation policy followed widely by **Lord Dalhousie** when he was India's Governor-General from 1848 to 1856.
    - According to this, any princely state under the direct or indirect (as a vassal) control of the East India Company where the **ruler did not have a legal male heir would be annexed by the company**
    - As per this, **any adopted son of the Indian ruler could not be proclaimed as heir to the kingdom**. This challenged the Indian ruler's long-held authority to appoint an heir of their choice.
  - So, due to the Doctrine of Lapse, Britishers did not accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir. **The plan of the Britishers was to annex Jhansi**. They seized the state jewels, granted her an annual pension of Rs 60,000 and asked her to leave the fort forever.

## INDIA-AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE AGREEMENT (AI-ECTA)

Recently, an Australian parliamentary committee on treaties has recommended to its government to ratify the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA).



### About

- AI-ECTA needs ratification by the Australian parliament before its implementation. **In India, such pacts are approved by the Union**

### Cabinet.

- The agreement, once implemented, will provide **duty-free access to the Australian market for over 6,000 broad sectors of India**, including textiles, leather, furniture, jewellery and machinery.
- Under the pact, **Australia is offering zero-duty access to India for about 96.4% of exports (by value) from day one**. This covers many products that currently attract 4-5% customs duty in Australia.
- India's goods exports stood at USD 8.3 billion** and imports aggregated to USD 16.75 billion in 2021-22. The agreement would help in taking bilateral trade from USD 27.5 billion at present to USD 45-50 billion in the next five years.
- The Agreement inter-alia covers areas like **Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures**.

### Rules of origin

- Rules of origin are the **criteria needed to determine the national source of a product**. Their importance is derived from the fact that duties and restrictions in several cases depend upon the source of imports.
- The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has no specific rules governing the determination of the country of origin** of goods in international commerce. Each contracting party was free to determine its own origin rules, and could even maintain several different rules of origin depending on the purpose of the particular regulation.

## INDIRA GANDHI PRIZE FOR PEACE, DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF 2021

Recently, the former Vice-President Hamid Ansari presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development of 2021 to Pratham, an NGO functioning in the field of education



### About:

- The award is in recognition of Pratham's work in ensuring quality education for children of the country, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Pratham also used digital technology to deliver education so that the children could learn during the school closure amid the pandemic.
- The foundation's **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)**, serves as a model to assess education outcomes and learning deficiencies across 14 countries in three continents
- The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, is **given to people whose work have exemplified Indira's ideals and causes**. It consists of a monetary award of ₹25 lakh along with a citation.

## SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI

Sangeet Natak Akademi organized a variety of cultural programmes at the India Gate Lawns in New Delhi as part of a campaign named, Kalanjali.



### About:

Under Kalanjali, cultural programmes are to be organised at Central Vista every week. The programmes organised included Chenda Melam, Kathak Dance, Puppet Show, Manipuri Dance.

- **Panchari Melam** is a percussion ensemble, performed during temple festivals in Kerala, India. Panchari Melam (or simply panchari), is **one of the major forms of Chenda Melam** (ethnic drum ensemble), and is the best-known and most popular in the kshetramvadyam (temple percussion) genre.
- **Kathak** is one of the eight major forms of Indian classical dance. It is the classical dance form of **Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Puppetry** is a form of theatre or performance that involves the manipulation of puppets – inanimate objects, that are animated or manipulated by a human called a puppeteer.
- **Manipuri Dance: Manipuri dances** encompasses both classical and folk dance forms. The Raas Leela is one of the major Indian classical dance forms.

### Important points

- Sangeet Natak Akademi – The national Academy of Music, Dance and Drama was created by a resolution of the (then) Ministry of Education dated 31 May 1952. The Akademi became functional the following year, with the **appointment of its first Chairman, Dr P.V. Rajamannar**.
- Financed by the government of India, the Akademi functions as an autonomous organization under **Ministry of Culture**, and is registered under the **Societies Registration Act**.
- The scheme of Financial Assistance to Cultural Institution is one of several schemes formulated by the Akademi to further its objectives.

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## COP27 | U.N. CLIMATE TALKS POISED FOR DEAL CREATING ‘LOSS AND DAMAGE’ FUND

### In News:

- The draft decision text of the COP27 of the UN climate negotiations, which was just revealed, included **both of India's important points in the mitigation clause**.
- In addition, the draft agreement seemed to be on track to meet a crucial demand of developing countries by creating a new fund for **loss and damage**.

## Key points of the draft decision:

- No fossil fuel phase down is listed in the text
- Keep 1.5-degree Celsius goal alive
- Require a transformation of the financial system
- Urges countries to “significantly scale” adaptation finance.
  - Since it misses the call to double financing, it’s weaker than Glasgow pact (COP26).
- Requests countries who haven't done so to update and strengthen their climate plans before COP28
- Welcomes the new UN net zero rules for corporations **to stop greenwashing.**
  - Greenwashing is the practice of making false claims in order to mislead consumers into believing that a company's products are more environmentally friendly or have a higher positive environmental impact than they actually do.

## Draft decision's mitigating clause and India’s influence on it:

- **Mitigation clause:** It now calls upon countries to -
  - Accelerate the development, deployment and dissemination of technologies.
  - Adopt policies to transition towards low-emission energy systems.
  - Rapidly scale up the deployment of clean power generation and energy efficiency measures.
  - Accelerate efforts towards the **phase-down** of unabated coal power.
  - Phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, while **providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable**, recognizing the need for support towards a just transition.
- **Two important insertions suggested by India:**
  1. **“Phase-down”** of unabated coal power.
  2. The conditionality of the fossil fuel subsidies which relates to "offering targeted assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable."
    - Initial draft used “phase-out” (instead of phase-down) for coal and missed the targeted support point, resulting in facing objections from India.
    - India had got both these points inserted in the Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26) last year. These two will now continue to be in the final decision of the COP27.

- The draft decision text will now be discussed in the plenary for final decision (outcome of the COP27) with consensus, involving 195 countries.

## Loss and damage (L&D) points in the draft decision:

- The text addresses the basic demand - a fund as well as new 'funding arrangements'.
- It seeks to link L&D with 1.5-degree Celsius warming limit (an indirect reference to mitigation).
- The main body of the text begins with acknowledging assistance needed for “particularly vulnerable” developing countries but the decision on funding makes a more general reference to 'developing countries'.
- There are multiple references to the use of existing funds.
- Seeks to expand sources of funding, including “innovative sources”.
- Pushes for financial reform discussions at International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) next year.

## Concerns:

- **No funds have been pledged for the fund.** Climate disaster-affected developing countries are still a long way from being able to obtain financial resources to reconstruct.
- **The exact definitions of terms** such as “particularly vulnerable”, “most vulnerable” are potential points of disagreement which have been left to be resolved at a later stage.
- **Additional burden being put on the developing countries.** One of the contentions is to ask each country to revise its climate action plans, formally known as nationally-determined contributions (NDCs), with progressively stronger actions every year.
- **Developed countries have failed to deliver on their promise** to mobilise a relatively small sum of USD 100 billion each year. The draft text just "urges" developed countries to reach this aim and makes no mention of a timeline.

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## [PM MODI INAUGURATES KASHI-TAMIL SANGAMAM IN VARANASI](#)

### In News:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the month-long Kashi Tamil Sangamam at the amphitheatre ground of the Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi.

## **Kashi-Tamil Sangamam**

### **Background:**

- The National Education Policy 2020 lays emphasis on nurturing a generation that is modern and in sync with the 21st century mindset, while being rooted in the Indian culture and ethos.
- Among other things, the policy recommends research to integrate the wealth of Indian Knowledge Systems with the more recent body of knowledge.
  - Few examples where fusion of the traditional with the modern have had enriching results:
    - Mainstreaming Yoga, Ayurveda to bolster modern medicine,
    - Use of new technology for producing ancient crafts,
    - integrating ancient vaastushilpa with modern archaeology,
    - innovative renditions of old Raagas, etc.
- Rediscovering ancient knowledge and integrating them with modern thought, philosophy, etc. can help us create a valuable body of knowledge.
- Direct interaction between scholars, experts and practitioners of various trades, crafts and professions can help them exchange their expertise and best practices and learn from each other.
- Keeping this in mind, month long Kashi-Tamil Sangamam has been launched.

### **Why Kashi and Tamil Nadu have been chosen?**

- These two regions, though geographically distant, have had deep and vibrant links over centuries. These regions are also hailed as manifestations of Indian Culture by many.
  - Knowledge seekers from near and far used to come to Kashi, and places in and around like Prayagraj, Ayodhya, Gorakhpur, which are internally connected as Knowledge Hubs.
  - Similarly, in Tamil Nadu, places like Kanchipuram, Puducherry, Madurai, Thanjavur, Rameshwaram, Srirangam, Kanyakumari, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, Tamraparani River have been excellent knowledge centres.

- The ancient connect between the two centres of knowledge is evident in many walks of life like similar themes in literature, presence of the name of Kashi in every village in Tamil Nadu etc.
- Saint Kumaragurupara from Tamil Nadu has excelled in bargaining with Sultanate of Kashi with audacity and drove a lion to his courtyard to get back the Kedarghat and a place for consecration of Vishweshwara Lingam.
- He has written “**Kashi Kalambakam**” a grammatical composition of poems on Kashi.
- King Adhiveera Rama Pandiyan of Pandya Dynasty dedicated a Shiva Temple at Tenkasi of Tamilnadu after his pilgrimage to Kashi, whose ancestors have established Sivakasi.
- He wrote “**Kashi Kandam**” of Skanda Purana in Tamil poetic verses.
- Hence exploring and rediscovering the links between these two centres can lead to the creation of important bodies of knowledge both in the intellectual and practical realms.

## News Summary: Key highlights of PM Modi’s speech

- **Preserve the legacy of Tamil**
  - PM Modi lamented that despite having one of the world's oldest living languages, Tamil, we lack in honouring it fully.
  - In this context, he said that it is the responsibility of 130 crore Indians to preserve the legacy of Tamil and ignoring it will be a great disservice to the nation.
  - He stressed on removing linguistic differences and establishing emotional unity.
- **Importance of Kashi and Tamil Nadu**
  - He hailed Kashi and Tamil Nadu as timeless centres of culture ('sanskriti') and civilisation ('sabhyata').
  - Both regions are also the centres of the world's oldest languages like Sanskrit and Tamil.
  - The Kashi-Tamil Sangamam is a celebration of India's diversity and uniqueness.
  - Kashi-Kanchi have an important place among the '**Sapta Puris**', the seven pilgrimage centres that, according to Hindu beliefs, lead to salvation.
- The Sapta Puris are - Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Mayapuri or Haridwar), Kashi (Varanasi), Kanchi (Kanchipuram), Avantika (Ujjain) and Dwaravati (Dwaraka).



## DONYI POLO AIRPORT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Greenfield airport in Arunachal Pradesh -- the Donyi Polo Airport at Itanagar.



### About

- With Donyi Polo Airport, **all eight northeastern state capitals will now have airports**. This will be the **third operational airport in Arunachal Pradesh**.

Pradesh.

- The name of the airport reflects the traditions and rich cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh and its **age-old indigenous reverence to the Sun (Donyi) and Moon (Polo)**.
- This is the **seventh airport to have been built in the Northeast in the last eight years**. This rapid development of airports in the region is in keeping with the government's emphasis on increasing connectivity.
- This is also the **first greenfield project in northeast India**.

### What are greenfield projects?

- A Greenfield project is a project built from scratch or from ground up and it lacks constraints of prior work. In a greenfield project there are no existing buildings or infrastructure, everything is built from scratch ,and in such projects, there is no need to demolish or remodel any existing project.

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## IVORY TRADE

For the first time since joining the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) in 1976, India did not vote against a proposal seeking to re-open the ivory trade.



### About:

- The proposal, to allow a regular form of **controlled trade** in ivory from Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, was defeated at the 19th meeting of the CITES (CoP19) in Panama City.

- India's abstention — a break from its past stand — was in tune with what Namibia had asked for when it agreed to **transfer cheetahs this summer.**

## **Ivory trade Ban**

- The ivory trade was **globally banned in 1989** when all African elephant populations were put in CITES Appendix I.
- **No trade is allowed in species listed in CITES Appendix I** while trade is **strictly regulated in those under Appendix II.**

## **What is CITES?**

- It is an international agreement to which States and regional economic integration organizations adhere **voluntarily.**
  - It was drafted as a result of a **resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union).** It **entered into force in July 1975.**
  - Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants **does not threaten the survival of the species.**
  - Although CITES is **legally binding on the Parties** – in other words they have to implement the Convention – **it does not take the place of national laws.**
  - **The CITES Secretariat is administered by UNEP** and is located in Geneva, Switzerland. **The Conference of the Parties to CITES is the supreme decision-making body** of the Convention and comprises all its parties.
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