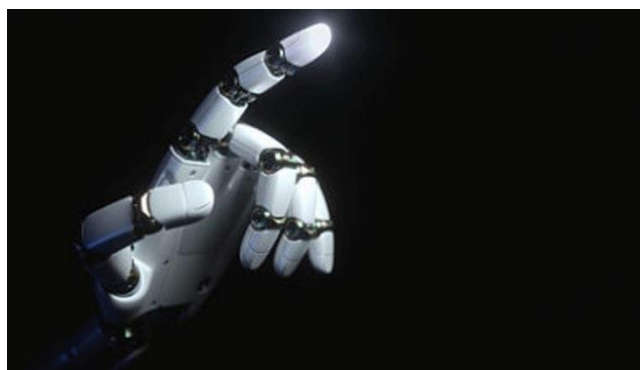


CURRENT AFFAIRS= 29-11-2020

GLOBAL INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCE (GITA)



At celebration of the 9th Foundation Day of GITA, Union Minister of Science & Technology underlined how Global Innovation and Technology Alliance (GITA) served as a catalyst for nurturing innovation and industrial R&D.

About:

- Global Innovation & Technology Alliance (GITA) is a “not-for-profit” Section-8 Public Private Partnership (PPP) company.
- It is promoted jointly by the Technology Development Board (TDB), Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- The Prime Minister’s Council on Trade & Industry had, in 2010, recommended incorporation of a Government’s arm’s length entity under PPP mode to professionally manage the Government’s funds for providing flexibility to industry for undertaking R&D along with global partners.

INTER-MODAL STATION PROJECT (IMS), AJANI



Speculation is around the corner that about 7,000 trees are proposed to be felled for the proposed Inter-Modal Station Project (IMS) at Ajani in Nagpur.

About:

- Regional office of National Highway Authority of India clarified that the IMS project is in resonance with Environment Impact Assessment. As per Detailed Project Study approximately only 1,940 trees are proposed to be felled.
- A compensatory afforestation of 25,000 trees shall be carried out by the NHAI on the available vacant spaces on the National Highway Projects land in and around Nagpur.

- Inter-Modal Station proposed to be constructed at Ajni, with a Land Acquisition of 44.4 acres of Indian Railway land, available adjacent to Railway tracks, for handling capacity of over 3 lakhs passengers per day with a facility of Bus Stand , Railway Station and a Metro Station in the proposed vicinity. This Project is taken up for development of the city of Nagpur.

PRESIDENT'S POWERS TO PARDON — IN US, INDIA

With less than two months of his tenure remaining, US President Donald Trump exercised his powers under the Constitution to pardon Michael Flynn, his former National Security Advisor, who had twice pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI.

How US President pardons?

- The President of the US has the constitutional right to pardon or commute sentences related to federal crimes. The US Supreme Court has held that this power is “granted without limit” and cannot be restricted by Congress.



Clemency is a broad executive power, and is discretionary — meaning the President is not answerable for his pardons, and does not have to provide a reason for issuing one.

Important Info :

How Indian President pardons?

- Unlike the US President, whose powers to grant pardons are almost unfettered, the President of India has to act on the advice of the Cabinet.
- **Under Article 72 of the Constitution**, “the President shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence where the sentence is a sentence of death”.
- In several cases, the SC has ruled that the President has to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers while deciding mercy pleas. These include **Maru Ram vs Union of India in 1980**, and **Dhananjay Chatterjee vs State of West Bengal in 1994**.

PERMITTING INDUSTRIAL HOUSES TO OWN AND CONTROL BANKS



An Internal Working Group (IWG) of the RBI has recently made a far-reaching recommendation: To permit industrial houses to own and control banks.

About:

- According to the report, the main benefit is that industry-owned banks would increase the supply of credit, which is low and growing slowly.
- The IWG acknowledges that it ignored the experts the group had consulted. The report states that all the experts except one “were of the opinion that large corporate/industrial houses should not be allowed to promote a bank”.

Important Info :

Arguments against:

- Reacting to it, two former chief economic advisors — Shankar Acharya and Arvind Subramanian — as well as a former finance secretary — Vijay Kelkar — have called this step a grievous mistake, one that would seriously set back Indian economic and political development.
- The problem with banks owned by corporate houses is that they tend to engage in connected lending. This can lead to three main adverse outcomes:
 - Over-financing of risky activities;
 - encouraging inefficiency by delaying or prolonging exit; and
 - entrenching dominance.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS CENTRE (IMAC)

Speaking on the 12th anniversary of the 26/11 attacks, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that “ the Indian Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Police have prepared a three-tier security cover in the coastal areas of the country”.

About:

- IMAC, based in Gurgaon, was established in November 2014.
- It is jointly operated by the Navy and Coast Guard.



It is the nodal centre for maritime security information collation and dissemination. It is the cornerstone of the National Command Control Communication and Intelligence Network for monitoring maritime traffic in India’s area of interest.

IMAC’s task is to facilitate exchange of

maritime security information among various national stakeholders, and generate a common operational picture.



Important Info :

- IMAC tracks only non-military or commercial ships, known as white shipping.
- Military ships, or grey hull ships, are tracked by the Directorate of Naval Operations, as this is on a classified network.

LA GLOTTOPHOBIE

France's national assembly has taken the first steps towards approving a law that would ban discrimination against people with pronounced regional accents across the country.



About:

A new bill banning accent-based discrimination, or 'la glottophobie', was approved with 98 votes against three, and spurred a lively debate in the lower house of the French parliament.

If passed, the new law will make linguistic discrimination a criminal

offence along with sexism, racism and other forms of outlawed bigotry.

- A person found guilty of discrimination on the basis of regional accents could face a maximum of three years in prison and a fine of up to €45,000 (INR 39.8 lakh).

Important Info :

- Discrimination against people with strong regional accents was rampant in society, particularly at the workplace, and is a "form of racism".
- According to Ouest-France, a poll conducted in January 2020 showed that around 16 per cent of the French population claim to have been discriminated against during hiring because of their accent.

DAME SUSAN JOCELYN BELL BURNELL

The Royal Society unveiled a new portrait of astrophysicist Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell who is credited with discovering pulsars when she was a PhD student at Cambridge University.

About:

- Dame Susan Jocelyn Bell Burnell (born 1943) is an astrophysicist from Northern Ireland who, as a postgraduate student, discovered the first radio pulsars in 1967.
- She was credited with "one of the most significant scientific achievements of the 20th century".



The discovery was recognised by the award of the 1974 Nobel Prize in Physics, but although she was the first to observe the pulsars, Bell was not one of the recipients of the prize.

- That Bell did not receive recognition in the 1974 Nobel Prize in Physics has been a point of controversy ever since.

CROSS & CLIM