

### INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TESTS BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE INTERCEPTOR CAPABLE OF NEUTRALISING LONG-RANGE ADVERSARY MISSILES

#### **In News:**

- India conducted the first successful flight test of the Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) interceptor missile from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.

#### **India's Ballistic Missile Defence programme**

- India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) programme aims to provide an air-defence shield from all types of hostile missiles, even the nuclear ones.
- DRDO is developing a two-tier BMD system to provide a multi-layered shield against ballistic missile attacks.
- The two-tier system is intended to destroy an incoming missile, at a higher altitude, in the exo-atmosphere and if that miscarries, an endo-atmospheric interception will take place.

#### **Two-tiers of BMD system**

- **Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) missile**
  - This can intercept and destroy missiles at exo-atmospheric altitudes of 50–180 kilometres.
  - It is based on the Prithvi missile. Pradyumna Ballistic Missile Interceptor is going to replace the Prithvi air defence.
- **Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Missile**
  - The second layer is Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Missile for lower altitude interception.
  - This is designed to knock down hostile missiles in the endo-atmosphere at altitudes of 15-40 kilometres.
  - Akash Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM) is part of AAD.
  - DRDO had also planned to develop two new ballistic missiles, namely **AD-1** and **AD-2**, in phase 2 of the missile shield development.

- The AD-1 and AD-2 interceptors can engage intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) / intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

## News Summary

- India conducted a critical test to validate and showcase its ballistic missile defence (BMD) capabilities to intercept long-range missiles.
- The long-range interceptor missile, called AD-1, was successfully tested by the DRDO.
- The AD-II, which is capable of neutralising missiles of even higher ranges, is also said to be under development.

## AD-1 (Air Defence)

- AD-1 is a long-range interceptor missile designed for both low exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric interception of long-range ballistic missiles as well as aircraft.
- The missile is propelled by a two-stage solid motor and equipped with an indigenously developed advanced control system and a navigation and guidance algorithm.
- These algorithms precisely guide the vehicle to the targets that move at very high speeds.

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## 7 OF 10 NEW SCHOOLS IN INDIA PRIVATE, SAYS UNESCO REPORT

- According to the UNESCO's recently released Global Education Monitoring Report 2022, South Asia has undergone tremendous education expansion in the last 30 years, surpassing the rest of the globe.
- While India is driving these regional averages, 7 of every 10 new schools built in the last eight years in India have been private independent institutions.

## United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

- It is a **specialised agency** of the United Nations (UN), headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France.

- It was founded in **1945** as the successor to the League of Nation's International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, aimed at **promoting world peace and security** through international cooperation in five key program areas -
  - Education; Natural sciences; Social or human sciences; Culture; Communication/information.
- It has 193 member states and 12 associate members, as well as partners in the non-governmental, intergovernmental and private sector.
  - UNESCO is governed by the General Conference, composed of member states and associate members, which meets biannually to set the agency's programmes and the budget.
- UNESCO is **a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group**.
  - Thus, UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the SDGs defined in the 2030 Agenda, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

## Functions

- UNESCO funds projects that promote literacy, technical training and education, science, independent media and press freedom, regional and cultural history preservation and cultural diversity.
- UNESCO's activities have expanded over the years. g., it aids in the translation and dissemination of world literature, assists in the establishment and protection of **World Heritage Sites** of cultural and natural importance, works to bridge the global digital divide, etc.
- To accomplish its basic aims, UNESCO has created a number of initiatives and worldwide movements, such as **Education for All**.
- It also publishes the **Global Education Monitoring Report**.

## The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report:

- Launched in **2016**, GEM Report is an **annual** editorially independent report, hosted and published by UNESCO.
- Previously titled the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (to keep the global community accountable for their pledges to educational progress), it published 12 Reports from 2002 until 2015.

- It was then renamed and relaunched under a new UN mandate to monitor progress towards the education targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and have tracked country progress, highlighted critical challenges and become an invaluable part of the international education architecture.
- The year 2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the GEM Report.

## ONE NATION, ONE ITR FORM? HOW WILL CBDT'S NEW PROPOSAL HELP TAXPAYERS?

### **In News:**

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has proposed a single income tax return (ITR) form for all taxpayers.
- A draft form has been released, to which all stakeholders can provide inputs up to December 15.

### **About Central Board of Direct Taxation:**

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes is a **statutory authority** functioning under the **Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963**.
- It is responsible for the administration of direct taxation in India.
- It is administered by the **Department of Revenue** under the **Ministry of Finance**.

### **What is the need for a common ITR Form?**

- The proposal of having a common ITR Form is aimed at making it easier for citizens for file returns, and also to considerably reduce the time taken for the job by individuals and non-business-type taxpayers.
- With a common ITR form, the taxpayers will not be required to see the schedules that do not apply to them.
- It intends the smart design of schedules in a user-friendly manner with a better arrangement, logical flow, and increased scope of pre-filling.

- It will also facilitate the proper reconciliation of third-party data available with the Income-Tax department vis-à-vis the data to be reported in the ITR to reduce the compliance burden on the taxpayers.

## How many kinds of ITR Forms are there now?

- Currently, there are **seven kinds of Income Tax Return (ITR) forms** which are used by different categories of taxpayers. They are as follows –

<b>ITR-1 'Sahaj'</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For small and medium taxpayers.</li> <li>• These are individuals who have an annual income of up to Rs. 50 lakhs.</li> </ul>
<b>ITR-2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For people with income from residential property.</li> </ul>
<b>ITR-3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For people who have income as profits from business/profession.</li> </ul>
<b>ITR-4 'Sugam'</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) and firms with a total income up to Rs. 50 lakhs from business and profession.</li> </ul>
<b>ITR-5, 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) and Businesses, respectively.</li> </ul>
<b>ITR-7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Trusts and Non-Profit Organizations.</li> </ul>

The draft ITR form aims to bring ease of filing returns and reduce the time for filing the ITR by individuals and non-business-type taxpayers considerably.

- It proposes to introduce a common ITR by merging all the existing returns of income except ITR-7. However, the current ITR-1 and ITR-4 will continue.
- This will give an option to such taxpayers to file the return either in the existing form (ITR-1 or ITR-4), or the proposed common ITR, at their convenience.

## ZOJILA DAY



**Zojila Day was commemorated at Zojila War Memorial near Drass on November 1.**

**About:**

- It aims to celebrate the gallant action by Indian troops in '**Operation Bison**' in 1948 which was launched on the icy heights of Zojila pass, the gateway to Ladakh.
- This day marked the Indian Army's historic win over the Pakistani regulars and infiltrators, and helped recapture the strategic Zojila Pass
- **This battle was also historic for the reason that tanks were used for the first time at such heights.**

### Zojila Pass:

- Zojila is a pass connecting the Kashmir Valley with the cold Indus valley desert in Ladakh region through the 434-km strategic Srinagar-Leh National Highway.
- It runs at an elevation of approximately 3,528 metres (11,575 ft), and is the second highest pass on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway after Fotu La.
- It is often closed during winter. The Beacon Force unit of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is responsible for its clearing and maintenance during Winter.

### DONYI POLO AIRPORT, ITANAGAR

The Union Cabinet has recently approved the naming of Hollongi Greenfield Airport in Itanagar of Arunachal Pradesh as “Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar”.



### About:

- The name reflect the people’s reverence of the Sun as Donyi and the Moon as Polo to symbolize the traditions and rich cultural heritage of the State.
- In January,2019, the Central government granted in-principle’ approval for development of Hollongi Greenfield Airport.
- The project is being developed by Airports Authority of India with the help of Central Government and the State Government of at a cost of ₹646 crore.
- With a 2,300 metre runway, the greenfield airport is the first in Arunachal Pradesh to have the capacity to land big aircraft.



- The Hollongi airport is the state's third after Pasighat and Tezu airports and only airport in the capital city.
- The central government had earlier accorded its approval for setting up of the "greenfield airport" under the `Capital Connectivity Scheme` to build up fixed wing air connectivity facility to the state capital.
- The Donyi Polo airport in Itanagar is northeast India's 16th airport.

## ETHANOL BLENDED PETROL (EBP) PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, CCEA yesterday approved mechanism for ethanol procurement by public sector oil marketing companies under Ethanol Blended Petrol programme.



### About:

- The Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) seeks to achieve blending of Ethanol with motor spirit with a view to reducing pollution, conserve foreign exchange and increase value addition in the sugar industry enabling them to clear cane price arrears of farmers.
- The EBP programme was launched by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in 2003, to promote the use of alternative and environment friendly fuels.
- Under this programme, starting with 5% blending, the government later increased the target of 10% ethanol blending by 2022.
- India's goal is to grow this ratio to 20% by 2030, but when the NITI Aayog released the ethanol roadmap in 2021, that deadline was advanced to 2025.

## ELA RAMESH BHATT

Ela Ramesh Bhatt, popularly known as Elaben, a noted Gandhian, leading women's empowerment activist, and renowned founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) passed away recently.



**About:**

- She was known as the "Gentle Revolutionary" who changed the lives of lakhs of women through her organisation, providing them microloans for five decades.
- She was the founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA).
- SEWA was founded by her in 1972. It is one of the largest cooperatives working for women, with a base of over two million members from around 18 States in the country and in neighbouring nations.
- She headed the women's wing of Majoor Mahajan Sangh – the Textile Labour Association founded by Anasuya Sarabhai and Mahatma Gandhi.
- She was the chairperson of the Sabarmati Ashram Memorial and Preservation Trust, also co-founded the Women's World Banking, a global network of microfinance organisations, of which she was chairperson from 1984 to 1988.
- She was also nominated to Rajya Sabha, was a member of the Planning Commission, and was advisor to organisations like the World Bank.
- In 2007, she joined the Elders, a group of world leaders founded by Nelson Mandela to promote human rights and peace.
- She was a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, Ramon Magsaysay Award and Indira Gandhi International Prize for Peace among many other awards.

## RHINOCEROS

According to a study, published in the latest edition of *People and Nature* by the British Ecological Society, the horns of rhinoceroses may have become smaller over time from the impact of hunting.



**About:**



- The recent study analysed artwork and photographs of the animal spanning more than five centuries.

### **Five species face threat:**

- Rhinos have long been hunted for their horns. The five surviving rhino species are threatened by habitat loss and hunting.
- The study found that the rate of decline in horn length was highest in the critically endangered Sumatran rhino and lowest in the white rhino of Africa, the most commonly found species in the wild and in captivity.
- This observation follows patterns seen in other animals, such as tusk size in elephants and horn length in wild sheep, which have been driven down by directional selection due to trophy hunting.

### **The Greater One-horned Rhinoceros:**

- The greater one-horned rhino (or “Indian rhino”) is the largest of the rhino species.
- It is identified by a single black horn and a grey-brown hide with skin folds.
- It is one of the five species of Rhinos.
  - The other four species are:
    - **White rhino** : It is native to northern and southern Africa
    - **Black rhino** : It is native to eastern and southern Africa
    - **Javan rhino** : It is also known as Sunda rhino or lesser one-horned rhino
    - **Sumatran rhino** : Critically Endangered species of rhino
  - **Habitat:**
    - Greater one-horned rhinos are grazers. When not grazing on land, they like to immerse themselves in water, where they also graze on aquatic plants.
    - This species of rhino is commonly found in Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and in Assam, India.
  - **Protection Status:**
    - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable