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GENERAL BIPIN RAWAT



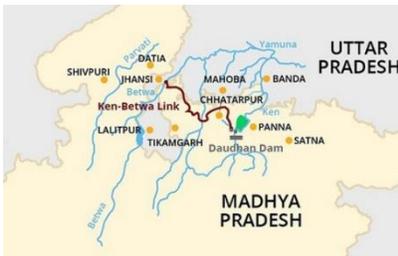
General Bipin Laxman Singh Rawat (1958 – 2021) was an Indian military officer who was a four-star general of the Indian Army.

About:

He served as the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of the Indian Armed Forces from January 2020 until his death in a helicopter crash in December 2021. Prior to taking over as the CDS, he served as 57th and last Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee as well as 26th Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army. On 8 December 2021,

Rawat died in the crash of an Indian Air Force Mi-17 helicopter in Tamil Nadu. He was accompanied by his wife Madhulika Rawat and members of his personal staff, who were also killed in the crash.

KEN-BETWA INTERLINKING OF RIVERS PROJECT



The Union Cabinet has approved the funding and implementation of Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers project.

About:

This project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers, the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage -and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.

The project will provide an annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh ha, drinking water supply to a population of about 62 lakhs and also generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW solar power. The Project is proposed to be implemented in 8 years with state of the art technology. The Project will be of immense benefit to the water starved Bundelkhand region, spread across the states of MP and UP. This project will provide enormous benefits to the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi & Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh. The total cost of Ken-Betwa link project has been assessed at Rs.44,605 crore at 2020-21 price levels. The Union Cabinet has approved central support of Rs.39,317 crore for the project, covering grant of Rs.36,290 crore and loan of Rs.3,027 crore.

- **Background:** On 22nd March 2021, a historic agreement was signed between the Union Minister of Jal Shakti and the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to implement the first major centrally driven river interlinking project in the country.

CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF (CDS)

The first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was Bipin Rawat who took office on 1 January 2020 and held it till his death on 8 December 2021.



About:

The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the military head and chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Indian Armed Forces. The CDS is the senior-most and highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian military, and is the principal staff officer and chief military adviser to the Minister of Defence. The CDS is a four-star officer selected from among the serving officers of the Indian Armed Forces. While being "first among equals" among the service chiefs, the CDS is a single-point military advisor to the defence minister. The CDS is assisted by a deputy, the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff. The CDS heads the Department of Military Affairs under the Ministry of Defence, as its secretary. Apart from heading the DMA, the CDS is the Permanent Chairperson of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (PC-CoSC).

AMBERGRIS

The Crime Branch of the Pimpri Chinchwad police has arrested two persons in Pune and seized 550 grams of ambergris, also known as 'floating gold'.

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About:



Ambergris, which means gray amber in French, is a waxy substance that originates from the digestive system of the protected sperm whales. While it is incorrectly referred to as 'whale vomit,' one of the theories about its formation suggests that it is produced in the gastrointestinal tract of some of the sperm whales for the passage of hard, sharp objects that are ingested when the whale eats large quantities of marine animals. The ambergris is said to be passed like feces and has a very strong fecal odour combined with a strong marine odour. The freshly passed ambergris is a light yellowish substance and is fatty but as it ages it turns waxy and gets red brownish, sometimes with shades of gray and black in colour and attains a mild, earthy, sweet smell but still with notes of mild marine odour.

Important Info :

What are the uses of ambergris and why is it so expensive?

- Investigating agencies from across India who have seized ambergris in the recent past estimate its value to be somewhere between Rs 1 to 2 crores per kilogram, depending on the purity and quality. Being extremely rare contributes to its high demand and high price in the international market.
- Traditionally, ambergris is used to produce perfumes which have notes of musk. While there are records of it being used to flavor food, alcoholic beverages and tobacco in some cultures in the past, it is rarely used for these purposes presently.

PRADHAN MANTRI AWAAS YOJANA – GRAMIN (PMAY-G)

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Department of Rural Development for continuation of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G) beyond March 2021 wherein financial assistance is to be provided for the construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses, as on 31st March, 2021 under the scheme within total target of 2.95 crore houses.

The details of the approval given by the Cabinet are as follows:

- Continuation of PMAY-G beyond March 2021 till March 2024 as per the existing norms to complete remaining houses within a cumulative target of 2.95 crore houses.
- The total financial implication for construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses is Rs. 2,17,257 crore (Central Share Rs.1,25,106 crore and State Share Rs.73,475 crores) for achieving cumulative targets of 2.95 crore houses in rural areas under the PMAY-G and an additional requirement of Rs.18,676 Crore towards the interest repayment to NABARD.
- The phasing out of EBR and provision of entire scheme funding through Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) shall be decided in consultation with the Ministry of Finance.
- Release of additional ₹45 lakh administrative funds annually from the Central share of Administrative funds (0.3% out of total Administrative fund of 2%) to each smaller State viz. Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Goa, Punjab, Uttarakhand, the NE States except for Assam and Tripura and all UTs except J&K over and above 1.70 % administrative funds released to said States/UTs.
- Continuation of Program Management Unit (PMU) and National Technical Support Agency (NTSA) till FY 2023-24.

22nd LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

The Government of India has informed the Supreme Court that appointment of the Chairperson and Members of the 22nd Law Commission of India, the Government's top body to recommend crucial legislative reforms, is under consideration.

About:

- The 22nd Law Commission was constituted by the Government on February 21, 2020. However, no progress has been made in the appointments till date and the short affidavit filed by the Law Ministry in the court does not explain the reasons for the delay.



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The Centre also made it clear that there was no such proposal to make the Law Commission a statutory body.

Key facts

- **Status:** The Law Commission of India is a non-statutory body constituted by the Government of India from time to time.
- **Background:** The Commission was originally constituted in 1955 and is re-constituted every three years.
 - The first such Commission was established in 1834 under the Charter Act of 1833 under the Chairmanship of Lord Macaulay.
 - The First Law Commission of Independent India was established in 1955 under the Chairmanship of the then Attorney-General of India, M. C. Setalvad.
- **Composition:** The 22nd Law Commission will consist of –
 - a full-time Chairperson;
 - four full-time Members (including Member-Secretary)
 - Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs as ex-officio Member;
 - Secretary, Legislative Department as ex officio Member; and
 - not more than five part-time Members.

JNANPITH AWARD

Renowned Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo has been conferred with 57th Jnanpith Award for the year 2022. Noted Assamese poet Nilmani Phookan has bagged 56th Jnanpith award for the year 2021.

Damodar Mauzo

- Mauzo is second Konkani writer to receive the highest literary award, earlier being given to Writer Ravindra Kelekar in 2006.
- Mauzo is short story writer, novelist and screenplay writer. His several short stories are translated into other languages and have appeared in various magazines. Stories of Mauzo depict the struggle of poor people, their agonies and sorrows.
- His novel Karmelin had bagged Sahitya Akademi award in 1983.

Jnanpith Award

- **Jnanpith Award is given by Bharatiya Jnanpith**, a literary and research organization based in Delhi.
- It is given annually to an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature".
- It is bestowed **only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English.**
- **Instituted in:**
 - There are **no posthumous conferral**. Also only works published during the preceding twenty years is considered for the award.
 - The award consists of cash prize is ₹11 lakh and a Bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom.



MONETARY POLICY

The Reserve Bank of India maintained status quo in key policy rates as the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

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voted unanimously to keep the policy repo rate at four percent to keep the stance accommodative.



About:

- While announcing the Bi-monthly Policy, RBI Governor Shaktikant Das said, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and bank rate will remain unchanged at 4.25 percent.
- Reverse repo rate will also remain unchanged at 3.35 percent.
- He said that the projection for real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is retained at 9.5 percent in 2021-22, consisting of 6.6 percent in the third quarter and six percent in the fourth quarter. He pointed out that the real GDP growth is projected at 17.2 percent for Q1 of 2022-23 and at 7.8 percent for Q2 of 2022-23.
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation is projected at 5.3 percent in 2021-22, which consists of 5.1 per cent in Q3, and 5.7 percent in Q4 with risk broadly balanced.
- Das also informed that RBI is planning to launch Unified Payment Interface (UPI)-based payment products for feature phone users in order to further deepen digital payments and make them more inclusive.
- The Central Bank will also enhance the transaction limit for payments through UPI for the Retail Direct Scheme for investment in G-secs and Initial Public Offering (IPO) applications from two lakh to five lakh rupees.