

## Current Affairs: 22.12.2021

### ANTI NATIONAL

The word 'anti-national' has not been defined in statutes, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed the Lok Sabha.



#### About:

It added that 'anti-national activity' was inserted in the Constitution during Emergency in 1976 but was removed later. The Constitution (Forty-Second Amendment) Act, 1976 inserted in the Constitution Article 31D (during Emergency) which defined 'anti-national activity' and this Article 31D was, subsequently, omitted by the Constitution (Forty-third Amendment) Act, 1977. The word 'anti-national' has not been defined in statutes. However, there are criminal legislation and

various judicial pronouncements to sternly deal with unlawful and subversive activities which are detrimental to the unity and integrity of the country.

In 2019, when the National Crime Records Bureau released the annual 'Crime in India' report for 2017, it included for the first time a chapter on 'Crime Committed by Anti National Elements'. The chapter listed "North East insurgents, Left Wing Extremists and Terrorists (including Jihadi terrorists)" as the three anti-national elements.

### WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2021

2021 World Press Freedom Index  
(Selected countries and territories)

Ranking	Country/ territory	Ranking	Country/ territory
1	Norway	119	Indonesia
2	Finland	101	Malaysia
3	Sweden	140	Thailand
4	New Zealand	136	Philippines
9	Australia	139	Myanmar
26	South Korea	142	India
42	Taiwan	158	Singapore
43	U.S.	175	Vietnam
44	Japan	177	China
66	Hong Kong	180	North Korea
80		179	

Source: Reporters Without Borders

The Centre does not agree with the conclusions drawn by Reporters Without Borders about press freedom in India for various reasons, including very low sample size and little or no weightage to the fundamentals of democracy, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry told the Lok Sabha.

**About:** In a written reply to a question on India being placed 142 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index, Information and Broadcasting Minister said the adoption of the methodology by the

publisher of the report is "questionable and non-transparent". The World Press Freedom Index is published by a foreign non-government-organisation, Reporters Without Borders. The Minister said the government was committed to ensuring the right to freedom of speech and expression enshrined under Article 19 of the Constitution

### CHILLAI KALAN

Kashmir is in a deep freeze as the 40-day harshest spell of winter, locally called 'chillai kalan', started on December 21, 2021, with the minimum temperature already sub-zero in the entire Valley.

**About:** Chillai Kalan or Chillia Kalan is a Persian word which literally means forty days of intense cold. It is the local name given to 40 day period of harsh winter in Kashmir. It is the coldest part of winter, starting from 21 December to January 29 every year. Chillai-Kalan is followed by 20-day long Chillai Khurd (small cold) that occurs between January 30 and February 18 and a 10-days long Chillai Bachha (baby cold) which is from February 19 to February 28. Impact of Chillai Kalan on daily life of Kashmiris: Use of Pheran (Kashmiri dress) and a traditional firing pot called Kanger increases. Due to subzero temperature, tap water pipelines freeze partially during this period and world-famous Dal Lake also freezes.

# Cross & Climb, Rohtak



## DRONES IN AGRICULTURE

**Union Agriculture Minister releases Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for use of Drone in Pesticide Application for Crop Protection and for spraying Soil and Crop Nutrients.**

**About:** The SOP for drone regulation for pesticide application covers important aspects like statutory provisions, flying permissions, area distance restrictions, weight classification, drone registration, safety insurance, piloting certification, operation plan, air flight zones, weather conditions, SOPs for pre, post and during operation etc. The use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) commonly known as drones have great potential to revolutionize Indian agriculture and ensure country's food security. The National drone policy has been notified and the Drone Rules 2021 have been made significantly easier for people and companies in the country to now own and operate drones.

### Important Info :

#### Use of drones in Agriculture

- Drones are well-equipped with many features like multi-spectral and photo cameras and can be used in many areas of agriculture sector such as monitoring crop stress, plant growth, predict yields, deliver props like herbicides, fertilizer and water.
- Drones can be used for assessing the health of any vegetation or crop, field areas inflicted by weeds, infections and pests and based on this assessment, the exact amounts of chemicals needed to fight these infestations can be applied thereby optimizing the overall cost for the farmer.
- Drone planting systems have also been developed by many start-ups which allow drones to shoot pods, their seeds and spray vital nutrients into the soil. Thus, this technology increases consistency and efficiency of crop management, besides reducing the cost.
- The Minister informed that the drones were used for the first time in warding off the locust attacks in various states of the country.

## ARMoured ENGINEER RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLE



**The first set of indigenously developed next generation Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle was inducted into the Corps of Engineers of Indian Army in a uncton attended by Gen MM Naravane, the Chief of Army Staff at Pune.**

**About:** The system has been designed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by Ordnance Factory Medak & Bharat Electronics Limited, Pune. The vehicle is capable of carrying out reconnaissance of water obstacles and boggy patches for execution of engineer tasks with capabilities to carry out reconnaissance and provide real time update to force commanders. The system will enhance existing engineer reconnaissance capabilities of Indian Army and would be a major game changer in support of mechanised operations in future conflicts.

## MILLETS



**NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) on 20th December 2021.**

### About:

The partnership focuses on mainstreaming of millets and supporting India in taking lead globally in knowledge exchange using the opportunity of 2023 as an International Year of Millets. The Sol focuses on strategic and technical collaboration between NITI Aayog and WFP, to strengthen the climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.

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**The outcome of this partnership will be achieved in following four phases:**

- Phase I: Development of a best practice compendium around millet mainstreaming and a scale-up strategy
- Phase II: Support scale-up of millet mainstreaming through knowledge sharing and intense engagement with select states
- Phase III: Leverage India's expertise to support developing countries for millet mainstreaming
- Phase IV: Working on building capacities for climate resilient and adaptive livelihood practices

**Initiatives for millets**-Recognizing the importance of millets, Government of India observed 2018 as a year of millets to encourage and promote the millet production. Leading this initiative further, GoI spearheaded the UNGA resolution for declaring 2023 as International Year of Millets. Numerous steps have been taken to promote millets including establishment of centre for Excellence, Integration of nutri-cereals in National Food Security Act and establishment of Millet Mission in multiple states.

## AgriTech COHORT



**Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.**

**About:** AIM, NITI Aayog in partnership with UNCDF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rabo Foundation launched a South-South innovation platform to enable cross-border exchange of innovations, insights and investments in July this year 2021. Through this platform, cross-border collaborations among emerging markets across India, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia would be enabled. For its first platform AgriTech Challenge Cohort and Agri-Fintech innovators, applications were invited to facilitate their expansion to the international markets through two tracks- Main track and AIM track. The key objective of the main track applications was 'Expansion – Support solution pilot in the chosen international market.' The Cohort represents a diverse range of solutions across the value chain of the smallholder farmer, including soil analysis, farm management & intelligence, dairy ecosystem, carbon credits, solar-based cold storage, digital marketplace, fintech, livestock insurance, among others.

## 'MEET THE CHAMPIONS' CAMPAIGN

**Taking the Prime Minister Modi's unique school visit campaign ahead, Indian wrestler and Tokyo Olympics Bronze Medallist Bajrang Punia will visit Haryana's Aarohi Model School in Panipat on December 23rd and meet the young students to talk about the importance of Santulit Aahaar (Balanced Diet), Fitness and Sports.**

**About:** The unique initiative is part of the government's 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', and was kicked off by Olympic Gold medallist Neeraj Chopra in Gujarat this month. The special school campaign is jointly being organized by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The coming months will see our Olympic and Paralympic heroes visit as many schools across the country as possible. During their visit, the athletes will share their own experiences, life lessons, tips on how to be the next great sports person and also give an overall inspirational boost to the school children.

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## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Prayagraj and participated in a programme being held to empower women, especially at the grassroot level.



**About:**The Prime Minister transferred an amount of Rs. 1000 crore in the bank account of Self Help Groups (SHGs), benefitting around 16 lakh women members of the SHGs. This transfer is being done under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), with 80,000 SHGs receiving Community Investment Fund (CIF) of Rs. 1.10 lakh per SHG and 60,000 SHGs receiving Revolving Fund of Rs. 15000 per SHG. The programme witnessed the Prime Minister encouraging Business Correspondent-Sakhis (B.C.-Sakhis), by transferring Rs. 4000 as first month's stipend in account of 20,000 B.C.-Sakhis. During the programme, the Prime Minister also transferred a total amount of over 20 crore to more than 1 lakh beneficiaries under the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme.