INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY

Recently, the International Energy Agency said that strong GDP growth and a weak monsoon drove up India's energy-related carbon emissions by around 190 million tonnes in 2023, though the country's per capita emissions remain far below the global average.

International Energy Agency is an **autonomous inter-governmental organisation** within the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) framework.**

- **Mission:** It works with governments and industry to shape a secure and sustainable energy future for all.

- **Background**
  - It was created in **response to the 1973-1974 oil crisis** when an oil embargo by major producers pushed prices to historic levels and exposed the vulnerability of industrialised countries to dependency on oil imports.
  - It was **founded in 1974** to ensure the security of oil supplies.

  Membership: It is made up of **31 member countries**, 13 association countries, and 5 accession countries.

- **Criteria for membership:** A candidate country to the IEA **must be a member country of the OECD**. In addition, it must demonstrate several requirements.
  - Crude oil and/or product **reserves equivalent to 90 days** of the previous year's net imports, to which the government has immediate access (even if it does not own them directly) and could be used to address disruptions to global oil supply;
  - A demand restraint programme to reduce national oil consumption by up to 10%;
  - Legislation and organisation to operate the **Co-ordinated Emergency Response Measures** (CERM) on a national basis;
  - Legislation and measures to ensure that all oil companies under its jurisdiction report information upon request;

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

World Wildlife Day is observed annually on March 3 to raise awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation.

World Wildlife Day is celebrated to **promote sustainable practices** that can help **conserve biodiversity** and raise public awareness of the need to protect and care for animals.

- It aims to raise awareness of the interconnectedness of all living things on our planet and to promote peaceful coexistence between humans and animals through activism, campaigning and education.

- **History**
  - It was **first proposed by Thailand** to the UN General Assembly in 2013.
  - The idea was to set aside a day to promote awareness of wild animals and plants around the world.
  - The General Assembly adopted a resolution on 20 December 2013, designating March 3 as World Wildlife Day in 2014.
  - The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora** (CITES), a global agreement to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival, **was signed on this day in 1973.**

- **Theme of WWD 2024:** "Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation," highlights the potential of technology to advance conservation efforts.

- **Significance**
  - It is an important global awareness event for the protection and conservation of animals.
  - It **serves as a reminder** of the inherent **value of animals** and the need to treat them with kindness, decency and respect.

WHAT IS OBESITY?

The global rate of obesity has quadrupled in children and doubled in adults since 1990, according to a new analysis published in The Lancet, a medical journal, recently.

- Obesity is defined by **excess body fat** (adipose tissue) that may impair health.
- It is a long-term (**chronic) health condition** that progresses over time.
- **Causes**:
  - Obesity is the result of an **imbalance between daily energy intake and energy expenditure,** resulting in excessive weight gain.
  - It is a **multifactorial disease** caused by a myriad of genetic, cultural, and societal factors.
  - **Other causes** of obesity **include reduced physical activity, insomnia**, **endocrine disorders**, **medications**, the accessibility and consumption of excess carbohydrates and **high-sugar foods**, and decreased energy metabolism.
- Healthcare providers commonly **use the Body Mass Index (BMI) to define obesity** in the general population.
  - A **BMI over 25 is considered overweight, and over 30 is obese.**
- Obesity is **associated with cardiovascular disease, dyslipidemia**, and insulin resistance, causing **diabetes, stroke,** gallstones, **fatty liver**, hypoventilation syndrome, sleep apnea, **and cancers.**
- It is the **second-most common cause of preventable death** after smoking.
- Obesity **needs multiprong treatment** strategies and may **require lifelong treatment.**

What is Body Mass Index (BMI)?

- It is a **person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of their height** in meters. For example, a BMI of 25 means 25 kg/m2.
- For most adults, an **ideal BMI is in the 18.5 to 24.9 range**.

NHAVA SHEVA PORT

Customs officials recently seized a dual-use consignment on a Karachi-bound ship at Nhava Sheva port, suspecting it could be used for Pakistan's nuclear programs.

- The Port of Nhava Sheva lies to the **east of the Port of Mumbai,** about six nautical miles away **across Thane Creek on the Arabian Sea.**

- It is also **commonly known as the Jawaharlal Nehru Port,** as it is run by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust.

- It is known to be the **busiest port in India** and deals with almost **half of the country's imports and exports.**

- The **Port of Nhava Sheva and the Port of Mumbai have a common entry channel** that stretches about 21 kilometres (33.9 miles) and at a depth of 10.1 to 11 metres (33 to 36 feet).

- The Port of Nhava Sheva was **commissioned in 1989 as a satellite port to** relieve the **Port of Mumbai** from heavy congestion.

- As a small port in its early years, it only had single terminals for bulk cargos and containers.

- It has **since expanded to include five privately-operated port terminals** for **containerized cargo handling** and also a facility for **handling bulk liquid cargo.**

- It is recognized as **one of the top 30 global container ports** in terms of size and capacity.

WHAT IS PRESS AND REGISTRATION OF PERIODICALS ACT (PRP ACT), 2023?

The registration of newspapers and other periodicals will be governed by the provisions of the Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023, and its Rules, which came into effect recently.

About Press and Registration of Periodicals Act (PRP Act), 2023:

- It has **replaced the** colonial era **Press and Registration of Books Act** dating back to 1867.

- The **office of Press Registrar General of India** – PRGI (erstwhile Registrar of Newspapers for India – RNI) **shall be carrying out the purposes of the new Act**.

- It provides for an **online system for** facilitating **the registration of newspapers and other periodicals** in the country.

- The new system **replaces the existing manual**, **cumbersome processes** involving multiple steps and approvals at various stages, which were causing unnecessary hardships to the publishers.

- The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting launched the Press Sewa Portal** (presssewa.prgi.gov.in), the online portal of the Press Registrar General**, for receiving various applications** as mandated by the new Act.

- **All applications**, including the intimation by the printer of a periodical, application for registration of a facsimile edition of a foreign periodical, the application by a publisher for obtaining a certificate of registration of a periodical, application for revision of certificate of registration, application for transfer of ownership of periodicals, furnishing annual statement by the publisher of a periodical, and procedure for desk audit for verification of circulation of a periodical **will be online through the Press Sewa Portal.**

- Accordingly, **publishers intending to bring out periodicals need to register their titles** before publishing them.

- Notably, the PRP **Act exempts books and journals from the purview of registration** necessitated by the old PRB Act, **focusing solely on periodicals**, which are defined as publications, including newspapers, published and printed at regular intervals containing public news or commentary, but **excluding scientific, technical, and academic books or journals.**

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GENAI)

Why in the News?

- The Central government issued an advisory to all intermediaries and generative AI platforms using artificial intelligence (AI) models, software or algorithms.
- As per the advisory, all the above-mentioned entities to seek permission from the government and label their platforms as "under testing" before making them available to the public.

About Generative Artificial Intelligence:

- Generative AI refers to deep-learning models that can take raw data and "learn" to generate statistically probable outputs when prompted.
- Generative AI is powered by foundation models (large AI models) that can multi-task and perform out-of-the-box tasks, including summarization, Q&A, classification, and more.
- With minimal training required, foundation models can be adapted for targeted use cases with very little example data.

How Does Generative AI Work?

- Generative AI works by using a Machine Learning model to learn the patterns and relationships in a dataset of human-created content.
- It then uses the learned patterns to generate new content.
- The most common way to train a generative AI model is to use supervised learning - the model is given a set of human-created content and corresponding labels.
- It then learns to generate content that is similar to the human-created content and labeled with the same labels.

Common Generative AI Applications:

- Generative AI processes vast content, creating insights and answers via text, images, and user-friendly formats. Generative AI can be used to:
  - Improve customer interactions through enhanced chat and search experiences,

- o Explore vast amounts of unstructured data through conversational interfaces and summarizations,
- o Assist with repetitive tasks like replying to requests for proposals, localizing marketing content in five languages, and checking customer contracts for compliance, and more.

Role/Influence of GenAI on Elections in 2024:

- 2024 will see high-stakes elections in over 50 countries, including India, the US, the UK, Indonesia, Russia, Taiwan, and South Africa.

- Like in previous elections, one of the biggest challenges voters will face will be the prevalence of fake news, especially as AI technology makes it easier to create and disseminate.

- The World Economic Forum 2024 **Global Risk Report** ranked AI-derived misinformation and its potential for societal polarization as one of its top 10 risks over the next two years.

- People with very little technical expertise are capable of using generative AI tools to disseminate fake text, images, videos, and audio across a large digital base in multiple different languages.

- In addition to spreading propaganda using a small data set, AI is capable of creating deep-fakes and generating voice-cloned audio, presenting significant challenges for governments and organisations across the world.

- Through its mastery of language, AI can form intimate relationships with people, using that intimacy to personalize messages and influence worldviews.

- In India, AI is also being used by politicians to reach out to more people, especially in rural areas.
    - o For example, **a real-time AI-powered tool was used to translate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech from Hindi to Tamil during an event in Uttar Pradesh in December 2023**.

NATIONAL URBAN COOPERATIVE FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED (NUCFDC)

What is Cooperative Banking?

- **Meaning:** In order to support the financial needs of a community such as a village or a specific community, **people come together to pool resources** and provide banking services such as loans, savings accounts, etc.

About the NUCFDC:

- The NUCFDC has received **Certificate of Registration (CoR)** from the RBI to operate as a **Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC)** and serve as the umbrella organisation for the urban cooperative banking sector.
- In addition to this, it will be allowed to operate as a **Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO)** for the sector.
- The NUCFDC aims to **raise capital**, with plans to reach a capital base of Rs.300 crores.
    - It intends to utilise this capital **to support Urban Cooperative Banks and develop a shared technology platform to improve service offerings and reduce costs**.
- Besides offering liquidity and capital support, the umbrella organisation would set up a **technology platform** that can be shared by all UCBs, enabling them to widen their range of services at a relatively lower cost.
    - It can also offer **fund management and other consultancy services.**
- The umbrella organisation will **provide various facilities to small banks**, facilitate dialogue between banks and regulators, and work on improving communication.

Significance of the NUCFDC:

- If India wants to become the world's third-largest economy, **economic development should be inclusive and comprehensive**.
    - If India wants to move forward with this concept, **the goal should be to establish Urban Cooperative Banks in every city.**

INS JATAYU

Indian Navy will commission Naval Detachment Minicoy as INS Jatayu in the presence of the Chief of the Naval Staff on 06 Mar 2024.

INS Jatayu is the **second Naval base** in Lakshadweep after INS Dweeprakshak in Kavaratti.

- With the commissioning of INS Jatayu, the Indian Navy will strengthen its foothold in the Lakshadweep islands and along with **extending operational surveillance,** reach and sustenance.

- It will usher in a new era of capacity building and comprehensive development of the island territories.

- The event marks an important milestone in the Navy's resolve to incrementally augment security infrastructure at the strategically important Lakshadweep Islands.

Key facts about Minicoy Island

- It is the **southernmost island of Lakshadweep** which straddles the vital Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs).

- **Naval Detachment Minicoy** was set up in the early 1980s under the operational command of Naval Officer-in-Charge (Lakshadweep).

- **Significance of the Naval Detachment:**
  - Basing of an independent Naval unit with requisite infrastructure and resources will enhance the overall operational capability of the Indian Navy in the islands.
  - The base will enhance the operational reach and facilitate the Indian Navy's operational effort towards **Anti-Piracy and Anti-Narcotics Operations** in the Western Arabian Sea. It will also augment the Indian Navy's capability as the first responder in the region and augment connectivity with the mainland.