

PM-MITRA SCHEME

Recently, the Prime Minister of India has lauded the foundation stone laying of 2 mega textile parks in Maharashtra and Gujarat under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme.



About PM-MITRA:

- It will offer the opportunity to create an **Integrated Textiles Value Chain** right from spinning, weaving, processing/dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing etc. at one location and will reduce the logistics cost of the Industry.
- A **Special Purpose Vehicle** owned by the Centre and State Government will be set up for each park which will oversee the implementation of the project.

Funding

- The Ministry of Textiles will provide financial support in the form of Development Capital **Support up to Rs. 500 crores per park** to the Park SPV.
- A Competitive Incentive Support (CIS) of up to Rs 300 crore per park to the units in PM MITRA Park shall also be provided to incentivise speedy implementation.
- State governments will provide a contiguous and encumbrance-free **land parcel of at least 1000 acres of land.**

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Textiles

- Government of India has planned to establish these parks in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

EXERCISE NOMADIC ELEPHANT

A bilateral joint military exercise “NOMADIC ELEPHANT-23” is scheduled to be conducted between India and Mongolia at Ulaanbaatar from 17 to 31 July 2023.



About Exercise Nomadic Elephant:

- It is the **15th edition** of bilateral joint **military exercise**.
- It is an annual training event with Mongolia which is **conducted alternatively in Mongolia and India**
- Soldiers of the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 from and Indian Army soldiers from the JAMMU AND KASHMIR LIGHT INFANTRY Regiment will be participating in the exercise.
- The aim of this exercise is to **build positive military relations**, exchange best practices, develop inter-operability, bonhomie, camaraderie and friendship between the two armies.
- The primary theme of the exercise will focus on **counter-terrorism operations** in mountainous terrain under United Nations mandate.
- The scope of this exercise involves Platoon level **Field Training Exercise (FTX)**.
- During the exercise, Indian and Mongolian troops will engage in various training activities designed to enhance their skills and capabilities.
- These activities include endurance training, reflex firing, room intervention, small team tactics and rock craft training. Soldiers from both sides will learn from each other’s operational experience.

DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION BILL, 2022

Why in News?

- The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 could empower the Central government to **lower the age of consent from 18**, for accessing Internet services without parental oversight.

About Digital Person Data Protection Bill, 2022:

- Personal data is defined as any data about an individual who is identifiable by or in relation to such data.

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been deliberating on various aspects of digital personal data and its protection, and has formulated a draft Bill, titled ‘The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022’.
- The purpose of the draft Bill is to provide for the processing of digital personal data in a manner that recognizes both the right of individuals to protect their personal data and the need to process personal data for lawful purposes.
- The Bill frames out the rights and duties of the citizen (**Digital Nagrik**) on one hand and the obligations to use collected data lawfully of the Data Fiduciary on the other hand.

Key Features of Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022:

- **Applicability –**
 - The Bill will apply to the processing of digital personal data within India.
 - It will also apply to the processing of personal data outside India, if it is for offering goods or services or profiling individuals in India.
- **Consent –**
 - Personal data may be processed only for a lawful purpose for which an individual has given consent.
 - A notice must be given before seeking consent.
 - Notice should contain details about the personal data to be collected and the purpose of processing. Consent may be withdrawn at any point in time.
 - **For individuals below 18 years of age, consent will be provided by the legal guardian.**
- **Rights and Duties of Data Principal –**
 - An individual, whose data is being processed (data principal), will have the right to
 - (i) obtain information about processing,
 - (ii) seek correction and erasure of personal data,
 - (iii) nominate another person to exercise rights in the event of death or incapacity
- **Transfer of personal data outside India –**
 - The central government will notify countries where a data fiduciary may transfer personal data.
 - Transfers will be subject to prescribed terms and conditions.

• Data Protection Board of India –

- The central government will establish the Data Protection Board of India.
- Key functions of the Board include
 - (i) monitoring compliance and imposing penalties,
 - (ii) directing data fiduciaries to take necessary measures in the event of a data breach, and
 - (iii) hearing grievances made by affected persons.

News Summary:

- The upcoming Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 could empower the Central government to **lower the age of consent from 18**, for accessing Internet services without parental oversight.
- The Bill could also exempt certain companies from adhering to additional obligations for protecting kids’ privacy if they can process their data in a “verifiably safe” manner.
- These two changes are major departure from the earlier draft of the Bill in which the age of consent was hardcoded at 18 years – meaning that for processing data of individuals below the age of 18, companies were required to seek their parents’ consent.
- This had been a key ask of the industry, especially social media companies, as a **hardcoded age of consent would have meant business disruptions for them on account of setting up new systems for obtaining parental consent for users under 18 years of age**.
- The change was made on account of considerations that children can be independent stakeholders on the Internet, and might want to access services without always needing their parents’ consent.
- The Bill is expected to be tabled in Parliament’s Monsoon session.

What is the Age of Consent for Data Protection in Other Countries?

- Under the **European Union**’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), age of consent has been kept at 16, but it **allows member states to lower it to as much as 13**.
- The **United States**’ Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) has **capped the age of consent at 13**, and verifiable parental consent is needed only for those who are younger.

- In **China**, entities handling personal data of individuals younger than 14 years must obtain their parents' or other guardians' consent before processing their data.
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INDIA-MYANMAR-THAILAND TRILATERAL HIGHWAY

India's External affairs minister recently met his Myanmar counterpart and discussed expediting projects, especially the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway.



About India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway:

- It is a significant regional connectivity project that aims to establish a road link between India, Myanmar, and Thailand.
 - The highway will span a distance of approximately 1,360 kilometres (845 miles), starting from Moreh in Manipur, India, and passing through Myanmar before reaching Mae Sot in Thailand.
 - It was first proposed by former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and was approved at a ministerial-level meeting between India, Myanmar and Thailand in April 2002.
 - The construction of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway began in 2012 and is being implemented in several phases.
 - The India-Myanmar Friendship Road forms the first segment of the IMT Highway. It runs from the border at Tamu/Moreh to Kalemmyo and Kalewa.
 - **Implementing agencies:** On the Indian side, the project is being implemented by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) with the cooperation of its counterparts in Myanmar and Thailand and budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance.
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WHAT ARE PILOT WHALES?

Seventy-eight long-finned pilot whales, a species of oceanic dolphins, were slaughtered near the capital of Faroe Islands recently.



About Pilot Whales:

- Despite their name, pilot whales are **one of the largest members of the dolphin family**.
- They belong to the **dolphin family Delphinidae**.
- There are **two species of pilot whales**:
 - **Short-finned pilot whales** (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), which are **mainly found in tropical and warm-temperate regions**.
 - **Long-finned pilot whales** (*G. melas*), which **inhabit colder waters**.

Features:

- They are characterized by a **round bulging forehead, a short beaklike snout, and slender pointed flippers**.
- The **short-finned pilot whale** (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*) and the **long-finned pilot whale** (*G. melas*) are **similar in appearance except for the pronounced difference in flipper length** between the two species.
- Both long-finned and short-finned pilot whales are **about 4–6 metres (13–20 feet) long**.
- **Males of both species are larger** than females.
- **Both species are black**, and some individuals have a pale, elongated anchor-shaped mark adorning the throat and chest.
- **Pilot whales live in groups** numbering from dozens to hundreds.

WHAT IS FIBROMYALGIA?

Fibromyalgia may be associated with an elevated risk of mortality owing to sensitivity to accidents, infections, and, in particular, suicide, according to a pooled data analysis.



About Fibromyalgia:

- It is a long-term (**chronic**) health

condition that causes pain and tenderness throughout your body.

- It causes **musculoskeletal pain and fatigue.**

What causes it?

- The **cause of fibromyalgia is not known**, but studies show that **people with the disorder have a heightened sensitivity to pain**, so they feel pain when others do not.
- Researchers believe that **fibromyalgia amplifies painful sensations by affecting the way your brain and spinal cord process painful and nonpainful signals.**
- People with fibromyalgia usually **experience symptoms that come and go in periods called flare-ups.**

Symptoms: The two most common symptoms of fibromyalgia are **pain and fatigue.** Other symptoms include,

- **Muscle pain** or tenderness.
- **Fatigue.**
- Face and jaw pain (temporomandibular joint disorders).
- **Headaches** and migraines.
- **Digestive problems**, including diarrhoea and constipation.
- **Bladder control issues.**

Who is affected by fibromyalgia?

- **Anyone can develop fibromyalgia.** It affects people of any age, including children.
- **Women are more likely to develop** fibromyalgia than men.

Treatment:

- While there is **no cure for fibromyalgia**, a variety of **medications can help control symptoms.**
- Treatment typically involves a **combination of exercise or other movement therapies**, psychological and behavioural therapy, and **medications.**

INDIA'S ACT EAST POLICY

Why in news?

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar co-chaired the 12th Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) meeting in Bangkok along with his Laos counterpart.
- While addressing the summit, EAM said that peace and prosperity in the Mekong region play a pivotal role in realising India's vision for security and growth for all countries in the region under its Act East policy.

Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

- MGC is an initiative by six countries for cooperation in tourism, culture, education, as well as transport and communications.
- It was launched in 2000 at **Vientiane, Lao PDR**.
- Both the Ganga and the Mekong are civilizational rivers, and the MGC initiative aims to facilitate closer contacts among the people inhabiting these two major river basins.
- The MGC is also indicative of the cultural and commercial linkages among the member countries of the MGC down the centuries.
- The MGC meetings are co-chaired alternatively every year between India and one of the 5 Mekong countries.
- **Members**
 - India and five ASEAN countries — Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Objectives

- Promoting economic cooperation and trade among member countries,
- Enhancing cultural and people-to-people exchanges, and
- Fostering dialogue and cooperation on issues of common interest

Act East Policy

- India's 'Act East' policy is a diplomatic initiative which seeks to enhance India's engagement with the countries of East Asia, particularly the ASEAN member states.

- Basically, it aims to promote economic, strategic and cultural relations with the vast Asia-Pacific region at different levels.
- The policy was launched in 2014 by the PM Modi, as a continuation and upgrade of the earlier Look East Policy (LEP).
- LEP was launched by former PM P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1991.

Differences between LEP (Look East Policy) and AEP (Act East Policy).

- **Look East Policy**
 - The main focus of this policy was to shift the country's economic focus from the west and neighbours to the booming South East Asian countries.
 - Focus was to increase economic integration with the South East Asian countries.
- **Act East Policy**
 - It seeks to deepen and diversify engagements through greater connectivity, trade, investment, and cultural exchanges.
 - It focusses on the **extended neighbourhood in the Asia-Pacific region.**

Objective

- To promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationship with countries in the Asia-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.
- To increase the interaction of the North-Eastern Indian states with other neighbouring countries.
 - The North East of India has been a priority in Act East Policy (AEP).
- To curb the increasing impact of China in the ASEAN region.

Major projects under this policy

- Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project, Border Haats and Rhi-Tiddim Road Project, etc.