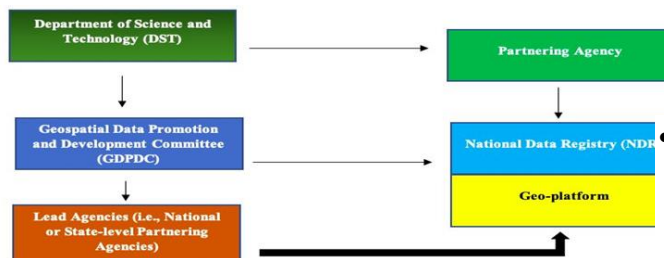


GOOGLE STREET VIEW COMES TO INDIA, WITH DATA FROM LOCAL PARTNERS

In News:

- Google has launched a 360-degree interactive panorama feature for 10 Indian cities as part of its Street View services, which is also known as Project Gullify.
- This has been made possible by the new **National Geospatial Policy 2021**.
- The policy allows local companies to collect this type of data and license it to others, making it the first country where Street View is primarily enabled by partners.

The National Geospatial Policy (NGP) 2021:



About:

• NGP was launched by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology.

- It provides a framework for the DST and its state and central partnering agencies (e.g., government departments, regulatory authorities, etc.) to enable access to and promote the use of geospatial data.
- It aims to boost geospatial entrepreneurship for the socio-economic development of India.
- It also aims to promote the use of geospatial products and services, generate useful insights from geospatial data and strengthen India's geospatial infrastructure and capabilities.

News Summary:

- **About Google Street View:**
 - In collaboration with Tech Mahindra and Mumbai based Genesys International, **Google** has launched its 'Street View' experience in India.

- This project was relaunched a decade after it was barred from collecting data for its Street View services.
- **Called Project Gullify**, Street View will begin in 10 Indian cities (including Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Pune, etc.).
- From now, it will be available on **Google Maps**, with new imagery licensed from local partners. The clarity brought about by the new NGP enabled the launch.
- The policy requires that all data be collected by local entities. As a result, the partners are the ones who collect and own the data.
- The policy even specifies areas where data can be collected and which cannot, such as government, defense and military areas.
- **Significance:**
 - Because of its integration with Google Maps, Street View is expected to have a much greater impact, assisting users in better understanding road conditions and discovering local businesses.
 - Google Maps has also announced the addition of speed limit data for Bengaluru and Chandigarh, as well as road congestion data for 9 cities.
 - It is also developing the environmental insights explorer tool, which will allow planners to better understand how to reduce emissions in cities by measuring emissions based on traffic patterns.
 - In a few cities, it will also begin to display localised street-level Air Quality Index (AQI) numbers.
 - This data will aid in infrastructure planning and will spark new use cases, such as the creation of base data for autonomous vehicles in India.

CASH INCENTIVES TO TACKLE FARM FIRES

In News:

- The Punjab government has proposed the Air Quality Commission to provide a cash incentive of Rs 2,500 per acre to farmers for not burning stubble.

Why Farmers opt for Stubble Burning?

- Rice and wheat straws left in the field, after combine harvesting, are generally burnt by the farmers to facilitate seed bed preparation and seeding.
- Farmers find this method as quick and cheap compared to other practices for crop residue management.
- Since input costs of farming is going up day by day, farmers are not willing to further invest in equipments useful for crop residue management.
- Happy Seeder (a tractor-operated machine for in-situ management of paddy stubble) continues to be an expensive method for majority of farmers.

Areas where this practice is rampant

- Burning of agricultural residue is done on a large-scale basis in states such as Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and National Capital Region of Delhi.
- This is prevalent in other states too. This includes: Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal etc.

Impact of Agriculture Fire

• Environmental Pollution

- Pollutants from these fires spread across the region, triggering smog and extreme air quality situations.
- An increase in the concentration of particulate matter (PM) 2.5 and PM 10 in the atmosphere is observed in north India in October-November

• Harmful to the health of soil

- Burning of crop residues removes huge amount of nutrient & organic carbon content from the soil.

Steps Taken by the government to tackle this issue

• Taken by Centre

- A Central Sector Scheme on ‘Promotion of Agricultural Mechanisation for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi’ was approved for the period from 2018-19 to 2019-20. This Scheme was further extended

- Farmers are being provided 50% of the cost of machinery/equipment as financial assistance for the purchase of such machinery.
- Over the last 3 years, the Centre has been heavily subsidizing various agriculture machines.
- Profit from the left-over biomass is shared with farmers.
- **Pusa Decomposer by Indian Agricultural research Institute (IARI)**
 - The Pusa decomposer is a bio-enzyme developed by the IARI to decompose crop residue.
 - It decomposes stubble within 20-25 days after spraying and turn it into manure, improving the soil quality.
- **Taken by State Governments and Other agencies**
 - Sensitising farmers on healthier practices.
 - Recently Punjab government decided to give incentives to industries which install paddy-straw-fired boilers.
 - It also decided to provide non-fiscal incentives to these industries in terms of availability of Panchayat land for storage of paddy straw with lease agreement upto 33 years.

Way Forward:

- Creation of markets for crop residue-based briquettes (a compressed block of coal dust or other combustible biomass material).
- Nearby thermal power plants must mandatorily undertake co-firing of crop residues with coal.
- A special credit line should be established for financing farm equipment and working capital for private sector participation.
- Alternate beneficial use of crop residues must be promoted.
 - These include: compost production, bioenergy production, biochar production, in pulp and paper industry etc.
- There is a huge potential to convert crop residues and food/ plant wastes into bio-fuel. Government should start incentivising such

[SC UPHOLDS POWERS OF ARREST, RAID UNDER PMLA](#)

In News:

- The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, as amended from time to time.

Background:

- The amendments were introduced to the 2002 Act by way of Finance Acts. 240 petitions were filed against the amendments.
- These petitioners claimed that these amendments would violate personal liberty, procedures of law and the constitutional mandate.
- They claimed that the process itself was the punishment.
- The current judgement of SC came in response to these petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the PMLA.

Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002

- PMLA was enacted to curb money laundering and to provide for seizure of property derived from money-laundering.
- The act has undergone various critical changes from time to time in order to give itself more strength and meaning. The latest amendment was done in 2019
 - E.g., the definition of Money Laundering under the act was broadened via amendments done in 2012 and again in 2019.

Enforcement Directorate (ED):

- It was established in the year 1956 as an ‘Enforcement Unit’ under the Department of Economic Affairs.
- Later, in 1957, this Unit was renamed as ‘Enforcement Directorate’.
- Presently, it is under the administrative control of the Department of Revenue (Ministry of Finance) for operational purposes.
- ED is responsible for enforcement of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA), and certain provisions under the PMLA.
- ED has the power to attach the asset of culprits found guilty of the violation of FEMA.

- It has also been empowered to undertake, search, seizure, arrest, prosecution action, and survey, etc. against the offences committed under PMLA.

News Summary

- SC upheld the core amendments made to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.
- These amendments gave the government and the ED virtually unbridled powers which included the power of summons, arrest, and raids.
- It also made bail nearly impossible while shifting the burden of proof of innocence on to the accused rather than the prosecution.

INDIA'S ROLE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

Two BSF personnel who were part of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), were among five people killed during a protest in an eastern town near the border with Uganda on July 26.



About:

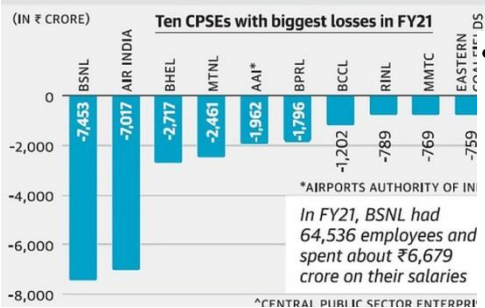
- India has a long history of service in UN Peacekeeping, having contributed more personnel than any other country. To date, more than 2,53,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN Peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948.
- Currently, India is the fifth largest troop contributor (TCC) with 5,323 personnel deployed in 8 out of 13 active UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping began with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in the 1950s, where India's mediatory role in resolving the stalemate over prisoners of war in Korea led to the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War.
- In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.

- A total 175 Indian peacekeepers have so far died while serving with the United Nations. India has lost more peacekeepers than any other UN Member State.

REVIVAL PACKAGE OF BSNL

To make BSNL financially viable in the Telecom Sector, the Union Cabinet approved the revival package of BSNL amounting to Rs 1.64 Lakh Crore.

Good call | The government on Wednesday approved a package for the revival of state-owned telecom firm BSNL which recorded the biggest loss among CPSEs[^] in FY21



About:

Revival measures approved by the Cabinet focus on infusing fresh capital for upgrading BSNL services, allocating spectrum, de-stressing its balance sheet, and augmenting its fiber network by merging Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL) with BSNL.

- To improve existing services and provide 4G services, BSNL will be allotted Spectrum in 900 and 1800 Mega Hertz band administratively at the cost of 44 thousand 993 crore rupees through equity infusion.
- It is expected that with the implementation of this revival plan, BSNL will turn-around and earn profit in FY 2026-27.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ (NIRD&PR)

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of MoU between National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) and University of Reading (UoR), United Kingdom (UK) for collaboration in the field of agriculture and rural development in developing countries.

About:



- This MoU will help NIRDPR faculty in acquiring and widening their knowledge, and develop an international professional network in agriculture, nutrition and rural development.
- NIRD&PR, an autonomous organisation under the Union Ministry of Rural Development, is a premier national centre of excellence in rural development and Panchayati Raj.
- Recognized internationally as one of the UN-ESCAP Centres of Excellence, the Institute is located in Hyderabad, Telangana. In addition to the main campus at Hyderabad, this Institute has North-Eastern Regional Centre at Guwahati, Assam.

FIFA UNDER 17 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2022

The Union Cabinet has approved the Signing of Guarantees for hosting Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Under 17 Women's World Cup 2022 in India.



About:

- FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 is scheduled to be held in India between 11th and 30th October 2022. The seventh edition of the biennial youth tournament will be the first-ever FIFA women's competition to be hosted by India.
- The FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup is the world championship for female players under or upto the age of 17, organized by FIFA. The event started in 2008 and is traditionally held in even-numbered years. The 6th edition of the event was held in Uruguay from 13th November to 1st December, 2018. Spain is the current champion of FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup.

NATIONAL ANTI-DOPING BILL, 2021

The Lok Sabha has passed the National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021 by voice vote.

About:



- The bill provides for constitution of the National Anti-Doping Agency- NADA for regulating anti-doping activities in sports.
- Its functions include planning, implementing, and monitoring anti-doping activities as well as investigating anti-doping rule violations.
- It also seeks to give effect to the UNESCO

International Convention against doping in sports and compliance of such other obligations and commitments.

- The legislation prohibits athletes, athlete support personnel, and other persons from engaging in doping in sports. Under the new legislation, violation of anti-doping rules may result in disqualification of results including forfeiture of medals, points, and prizes, ineligibility to participate in a competition or event for a prescribed period, and financial sanctions.
- The Bill also proposes to establish the National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports with a view to make recommendations to the government on anti-doping regulations and compliance with international commitments on anti-doping. The Board will oversee the activities of NADA and issue directions to it.