

My Notes...

NATIONAL

UTTARAKHAND UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

- Uttarakhand has become the **first State** in independent India to implement a **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**.
- The Uniform Civil Code is to formulate and implement personal laws of citizens which **apply on all citizens** equally regardless of their religion, gender and sexual orientation.
- The **Code applies to residents of the state**, but **only to those who identify within the binary genders of male and female** who are in **heterosexual relationships**, thus **leaving most LGBT persons** outside its ambit.

SC STRIKES DOWN ELECTORAL BONDS SCHEME

- A **five-judge bench of the Supreme Court** gave its **verdict** on the **legality of the electoral bonds scheme**, holding it **"unconstitutional"** in a **unanimous judgement**.
- The **electoral bonds scheme** violates the **right to information under Article 19(1)(a)**, which guarantees the freedom of speech and expression.

PM-MKSSY APPROVED

- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)** is a Central Sector Sub-scheme under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojan (PMMSY)**.
- **PMMSY (2020)** aims to **bring the Blue Revolution** through sustainable and responsible development of **fisheries sector in India**.

NAZOO LAND

- **Violence erupted** in **Uttarakhand's Haldwani district** after the **administration conducted a demolition drive** at the **site of a mosque and madrasa**, allegedly on **Nazool land**, killing five and injuring many more.
- **Nazool land** is **owned by the government** but **most often not directly administered as state property**.
- The state **generally allots such land to any entity on lease for a fixed period**, generally **between 15 and 99 years**.

GEO-TAGGING DEADLINE EXTENDED

- The **national capital's property geotagging deadline** has been **extended**, according to a statement released by the **Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)**.
- **Geotagging** is the **process of allotting geographic coordinates** to media based **on the location of a mobile device**.
- **Geotags** can be applied to **photos, videos, websites, text messages**, and **QR codes**, and could also include **time stamps** or other **contextual information**.

UPI AT THE ICONIC EIFFEL TOWER

- **India** officially launched the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** at the **iconic Eiffel Tower** in France, marking a significant step towards realising **"vision of taking UPI global."**
- **Unified Payments Interface** is an Indian instant payment system which was **developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in 2016**.

INTERNATIONAL

GENOCIDE IN GAZA

- The **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** ruled that **Israel** must “**take all measures within its power**” to **prevent genocidal acts in Gaza**, but **stopped short of ordering a ceasefire**.
- At this stage, the **World Court did not rule on the core of the case** brought by **South Africa**, that is, **whether Israel is committing genocide in Gaza**.
- But an **overwhelming majority** of the **17 judges presiding over the case** voted for **emergency measures** to be implemented.

THREE-STAGE HAMAS CEASEFIRE PLAN

- **Amid mounting deaths and devastation**, Hamas had proposed a **three-stage plan** to halt its ongoing conflict with **Israel**.
- **In phase 1**, **Israeli women hostages, boys under 19**, and **the sick and the elderly will be released**, in exchange for **Palestinian women and children in Israeli jails**.
- **In phase 2**, the **other male hostages will be released** and **Israeli troops will withdraw from all of Gaza**.
- **In phase 3**, **bodies and mortal remains of those killed on both sides** will be exchanged.

BAPS TEMPLE IN UAE

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **the BAPS Swaminarayan temple** in Abu Dhabi, the **first Hindu temple in the Gulf nation**.
- **The temple** has been built by the **Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS)**, a **denomination of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya**, a **Vaishnav sect of Hinduism**.

OPERATION DARA-E-BOLAN

- The **Baloch Liberation Army (BLA)** has launched ‘**Operation Dara-e-Bolan**’ in the Mach and Bolan regions of Balochistan in **alliance with the BLA’s elite units**, including the **Majeed Brigade, Special Tactical Operations Squad, Fateh Squad, and Intelligence Wing**.
- **Baloch Liberation Army** demands **independence of Balochistan** from Pakistan.
- **The people of Balochistan** believe that when **India and Pakistan were divided**, they were forcibly included in Pakistan.

ECONOMY

WHITE PAPER ON ECONOMY

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** presented a “**white paper**” on the **Indian economy** in Parliament.
- **A white paper** typically **provides information about a specific issue**.
- Governments present a white paper to **make people aware of the nature and scope of the problem** and the possible ways to resolve it.

BLUE ECONOMY 2.0

- The **Interim Budget** presented by **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** on 1 February 2024 stressed on **environment-friendly development** through the **promotion of 'blue economy'**.
- For promoting climate resilient activities for **blue economy 2.0**, a scheme for **restoration and adaptation measures**, and **coastal aquaculture** and **mariculture** with **integrated** and **multi-sectoral approach** will be launched.
- The term **blue economy** can simply refer to **economic activities related to the sea and the coasts**, it is generally understood **to have an element of sustainability in it**.

THE GENDER BUDGET

- This year, the total allocation under **the gender budget** stands at **₹three lakh crore**, which is **almost 6.5% of the total expenditure**.
- This is an **increase of almost 40%** over the gender budget for the previous year, **and the highest increase** in the last decade.
- A **separate statement of the Union budget**, it provides an estimate of **budgetary allocations** and expenditure targeted towards **women and girls**.
- The **practice of issuing an annual gender budgeting statement (GBS)** as part of the Union budget began in **2005-06**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SEAFOOD OUTSIDE THE SEA

- **Kochi-headquartered ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)** has entered into a **collaborative research agreement** with a **private-sector start-up** offering **cultivated meat technology solutions** to **grow fish meat in the laboratory**.
- **Seafood without the sea** is 'grown' in the same way as **other cultivated meats are grown** — without the **need to raise and kill an animal**.
- **Cultivated fish meat** is produced by **isolating specific cells from fish** and **growing them in a laboratory** setting using media that is free of animal components.

NASA'S PACE SATELLITE

- **Nasa's PACE (Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem) satellite** launched on a **SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket** from the **Cape Canaveral Space Force Station's Space Launch Complex**.
- **PACE, Nasa's newest Earth-observing satellite**, will help scientists **better understand how climate change is affecting blooms of ocean phytoplankton**.
- **Phytoplankton**, also known as **microalgae**, is the **foundation of the ocean's food web**.

TEST TUBE RHINOS

- The **death of the last male in 2018** made the **extinction of the northern white rhino inevitability**.
- Recently, the scientists announced the **first-ever rhino pregnancy achieved** by transferring a **lab-made rhino embryo into a surrogate mother**.
- It took **13 attempts** for the breakthrough with a **southern white rhino**, a **closely-related subspecies** that branched away from the northern whites about a million years ago.

NANO DAP TO BE EXPANDED

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman**, presenting the **interim budget** on 1 February 2024, announced the **expansion of the application of Nano DAP** on **various crops** in **all agro climatic zones**.
- **DAP**, or **di-ammonium phosphate**, is the **second most commonly used fertiliser** in India **after urea**.
- **Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative's (IFFCO's) Nano DAP**, containing **8% Nitrogen** and **16% Phosphorus** by volume.
- Unlike **conventional DAP**, which comes in **granular form**, IFFCO's Nano DAP is in **liquid form**.

MISCELLANEOUS

ATMOSPHERIC RIVER

- The **atmospheric river systems**, also called as "**rivers in the sky**" by the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**, refer to the **long streams of moisture present in the atmosphere**.
- The **atmospheric rivers** which affecting **western US** are getting supercharged by the **water vapours evaporated off the Pacific Ocean** and are being moved from **the tropics or subtropics** by other weather systems.

FIRST FUNCTIONAL 3D-PRINTED BRAIN TISSUE

- Researchers have created the **first functional 3D-printed brain tissue** that can develop and form connections in the same way as **real human brain tissue**.
- This remarkable accomplishment by a team at the **University of Wisconsin–Madison** provides neuroscientists with a new tool for studying communication **between brain cells and other parts of the human brain**, potentially leading to better ways of treating diseases like **Alzheimer's and Parkinson's**.