

## My Notes....

### NATIONAL

#### MUMBAI TRANS HARBOUR LINK INAUGURATED

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **country's longest bridge over the sea**, the **22 km Mumbai Trans Harbour Link**, officially the **Atal Setu Nhava Sheva Sea Link**.
- The objective of the project is to **improve connectivity** in the **Mumbai Metropolitan Region** which comprises the **districts of Mumbai, Thane, Palghar, and Raigad**, and promote the **region's economic development**.

#### SC LEGAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

- **Supreme Court judge Justice BR Gavai** has been nominated as the **Chairman** of the **Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC)**
- The **Supreme Court Legal Services Committee** was constituted under **Section 3A** of the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, to provide "**free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society**", in cases falling under the **top court's jurisdiction**.

#### SC OVERTURNS REMISSION GIVEN TO BILKIS BANO'S CASE

- The **Supreme Court** has **struck down the remission granted to 11 men** convicted in the **Bilkis Bano gangrape case of 2002**.
- The **court has ruled** that the **Gujarat government's decision to remit their sentences** and **set them free was illegal**.
- The court ruled that the **competent government in this matter** would be the **Maharashtra government**.

#### INDIVIDUAL TERRORIST UNDER UAPA

- **Gangster Goldy Brar**, the **mastermind** behind the murder of **Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala**, was declared a **designated terrorist by the Centre** under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)**.
- **Amendments introduced in 2019** brought in provisions by which the **Centre can declare individuals** — not **only organisations** — as **designated terrorists**. Here is how this works.

### INTERNATIONAL

#### OP PROSPERITY GUARDIAN

- The **recent attacks on ships passing the Red Sea**, a **crucial trade route** that connects the **Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean**, have prompted **many businesses** to pause the movement of **cargo through the region**.
- The **United States Secretary of State Lloyd Austin** announced a **joint maritime security initiative** called **Operation Prosperity Guardian** to **aid the safe movement of ships**.

#### THE SHIA HOUTHIS

- The **United States and the United Kingdom** launched **strikes** aimed at **Houthi groups in Yemen**, in response to the **persistent Houthi attacks on ships** passing through the **Red Sea**.
- The **Houthis have attacked ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden** to **protest the Israeli military's continuing bombardment of Gaza**.
- The **Houthis**, also known as **Ansar Allah (supporters of God)**, are an **armed group** that control most **parts of Yemen**, including the **capital, Sanaa**, and some of the western and northern areas close to **Saudi Arabia**.

## ECONOMY

### INDIANS ESCAPE MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

- **24.82 crore people** escaped **multidimensional poverty in last nine years**. Findings of **NITI Aayog's Discussion Paper 'Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06'** give credit for this remarkable achievement to **significant initiatives of the government** to address all dimensions of the poverty between 2013-14 to 2022-23.
- The **Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)** is a globally recognized **comprehensive measure** that captures poverty in multiple dimensions **beyond monetary aspects**.

### INDIVIDUAL INCOME INEQUALITY HAS SIGNIFICANTLY DECLINED

- **Individual income inequality** has significantly declined **during FY14-FY22** because of a "**great migration**" at the bottom of the pyramid, even as individual's weighted mean income has risen from **₹3.1 lakh to ₹11.6 lakh** during FY14-FY21, according to SBI's economic research department (ERD).
- **Gini coefficient** estimated using **ITR (Income Tax Return) data of taxable income** of individuals show that **individual income inequality** has significantly declined from 0.472 to 0.402 during FY14-FY22.

### WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

- The **World Economic Forum (WEF)** is holding its **Annual Meeting** from 15 to 19 January 2024 **in Davos, Switzerland**.
- **Klaus Schwab** founded **WEF in 1971**, originally known as the **European Management Forum**.
- The **WEF** is largely **funded by its partnering corporations**. These are **generally global enterprises with annual turnover greater than \$5 billion**.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### FIRST X-RAY POLARIMETER SATELLITE

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** launched of its **first X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XpoSat)**
- It is a **space-based observatory to study X-ray polarisation and its cosmic sources — celestial bodies** including **black holes, neutron stars and magnetars**.
- **XpoSat is only the world's second such mission**. In **2021**, NASA had launched **Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE)** to **operate and perform X-ray polarisation measurements** within the **soft X-ray band**, whereas **XPoSat** will operate within the **medium X-ray band**.

### ADITYA AT L1

- **Aditya-L1** arrives at **its destination, L1** or the **first Sun-Earth Lagrangian point**.
- **Aditya-L1** was **launched by ISRO** on 2 September 2023 with **the mission of observing, and helping us better understand the Sun**.

### THE SQUARE KILOMETER ARRAY PROJECT

- **India** had decided to **formally join the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) project**, an **international scientific collaboration** working to build the **world's largest radio telescope**.
- The **decision to join SKA as a full member** ensures **India's participation** in yet another **international mega science project** in the most advanced areas of scientific research.

- The **Square Kilometer Array** will not be a **single large telescope**, but a **collection of thousands of dish antennas** operating as a **single unit**.

### UAV 'DRISHTI 10 STARLINER'

- **Indian Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar** unveiled the **first indigenously** manufactured **Drishti 10 Starliner Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)** in a ceremony held in **Adani Aerospace Park at Hyderabad**.
- **Drishti 10 Starliner Unmanned Aerial Vehicle** is an **advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platform**, developed by **Adani Defence and Aerospace**, and represents a significant leap forward in **India's defence technology**.

### CYBER KIDNAPPING

- A **Chinese student** who was a victim of '**cyber kidnapping**' has been found in **rural Utah**, unharmed.
- **Cyber kidnapping** refers to a crime where the '**kidnappers**' convince their victim to hide, and then contact their loved ones for ransom.
- The victim is also **made to send pictures** that make it look like they are being held captive — showing them bound or gagged.

### FIRST SET OF STARLINK SATELLITES

- **Elon Musk's SpaceX** launched a **Falcon 9 rocket** with the **first set of Starlink satellites** that can beam phone signals from space directly to smartphones.
- **Starlink satellites with Direct to Cell capability** have an advanced **eNodeB modem onboard** that acts like a **cellphone tower in space**, allowing **network integration similar** to a **standard roaming partner**.

### GM MUSTARD

- The **Supreme Court** questioned the Centre on **why reports of the court-appointed Technical Experts Committee (TEC)** on the **biosafety of genetically modified (GM) crops** were not looked into by the **Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)**.
- The **GEAC** functions under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** and has been tasked with the **appraisal of proposals** relating to the "release" of **GM organisms and products** (ordinarily considered hazardous) into the environment.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### NEW LAW FOR HIT-AND-RUN

- The **Nationwide strike** was launched by **truck, bus and tanker drivers** to protest against the **stringent jail and fine regulations** under the newly implemented **Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS)** for **hit-and-run cases**.
- **Under the new law**, which replaced the **colonial era Indian Penal Code**, **drivers who cause a serious road accident** by **negligent driving** and **run away without informing the police** or **any official from the administration** can face **punishment of up to 10 years** or a **fine of Rs 7 lakh**.

### AI CAN HELP DETECT CANCER

- Given the **escalating cases of cancer**, the **shortage of specialists** poses a significant challenge in **curbing fatalities**. To address this gap, **Mumbai's Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH)**, the **biggest cancer hospital in India**, is turning to **artificial intelligence (AI)**.

**1-15 January 2024**

- By established a '**Bio-Imaging Bank**' for cancer, the hospital is utilising **deep learning** to **craft a cancer-specific tailored algorithm** that **aids in early-stage cancer detection**.

## **MAKAR SANKRANTI, PONGAL, LOHRI**

- **Cultural celebrations** are held across **many states of India** under **different names** – **Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Magh Bihu**, etc. on 14 January 2024.
- The day is a **marker for a change of season** – **warmer months are close** and **we are moving away from winter**, which is seen as a **period of inactivity** in many ways.
- It is said that the **northward journey of the sun (Uttarayan) begins** on this day.

## **VULTURE RESTAURANT**

- A '**Vulture restaurant**' has been set up in **Jharkhand** in a bid to conserve the fast **dwindling population of the bird species** due to rampant use of drugs in livestock.
- The restaurant has been set up in **Koderma district** and will begin functioning once the protocol for **goshalas (cow shelter)** and **municipalities** for providing **diclofenac-free animal carcasses** is ready.
- The **first 'vulture restaurant'** came up in 2015 at **Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary** in Raigad district of Maharashtra in response to videos of **white-rumped vulture** chicks starving to death in the **western ghats**.