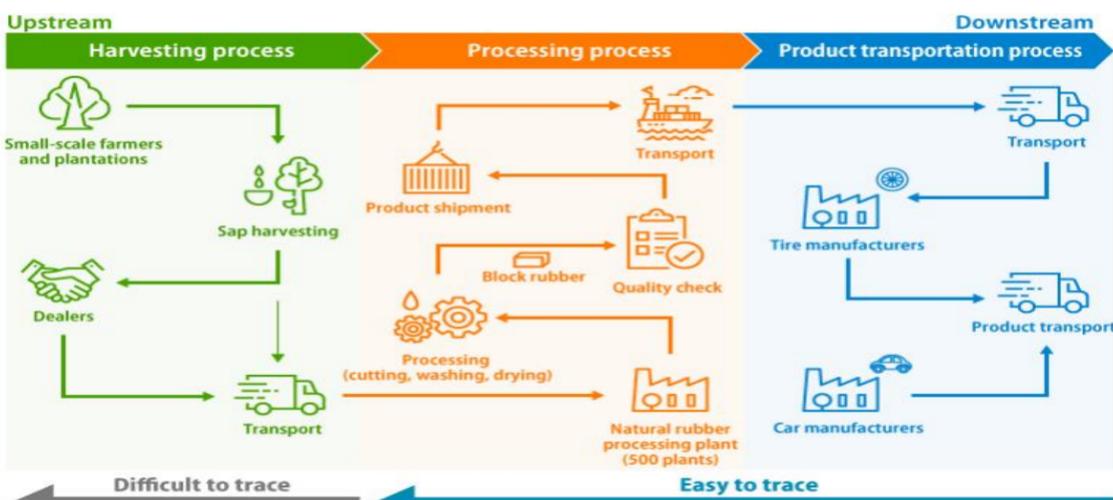# Falling Natural Rubber Prices

❖ **Context**
  ➢ The price of natural rubber (NR) has crashed to a 16-month low of ₹150 per kg (RSS grade 4) in the Indian market leading to protests by farmers.

❖ **Causes of the Fall**
• Weak demand from China in wake of zero COVID strategy. **China is the largest consumer in the world (42% of the global volume).**
• Europe energy crisis.
• Inflation.
• Excessive supply of import material - Block rubber from the Ivory coast and compounded rubber from the Far East - in the domestic market.

❖ **Production and Consumption of Natural Rubber in India**
• India is currently the **world's fifth largest producer** of natural rubber and **second biggest consumer** of the material globally.
• **Kerala** accounts for nearly 75% of the total production.
• **Thailand** is the largest producer of rubber in the world.
• The **auto-tyre manufacturing sector** accounted for 73.1% of the total quantity of natural rubber consumption in 2021-22.
• India imported nearly 40% of its total demand in 2021-22.

❖ **Demands of Farmers**
• The Union government should **increase the import duties** on latex products and compound rubber to make it on par with natural rubber.
• State government should **increase the replanting subsidy** in Kerala.
• The support price of the crop, under the price stabilisation scheme, should be increased to ₹200 from ₹170.

❖ **About Price Stabilisation Scheme**
• The Rs 300-crore Price Stabilisation Scheme is **implemented jointly by the Kerala and Rubber Board of India**. The objective is to sustain the price of rubber at a support price.
• Under the scheme, the **difference** between the support price and the daily price of rubber would be **granted as a subsidy to the farmer.** Around 10 lakh small and medium rubber farmers get the benefit of the scheme.

❖ **Rubber Board of India**
• It is a **statutory body** constituted by the Government of India, under the **Rubber Act 1947**, for the overall development of the rubber industry in the country.
• It is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Commerce**. Its headquarter is in Kottayam, Kerala.
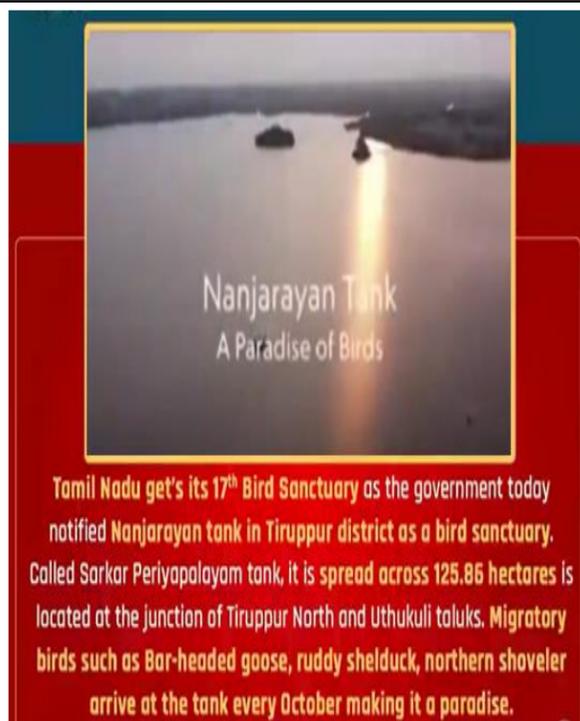
Nanjarayan Tank

❖ **Context**
  ➢ The Tamil Nadu government recently issued an order to set up a bird sanctuary at Nanjarayan Tank in Tiruppur district.

❖ **Key Highlights**
• Bird sanctuaries are nature facilities that advocate the conservation of various species of birds and their natural habitats while promoting rehabilitation and survival
• It will be the 17th bird sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.
• This sanctuary is going to be home to around 130 bird species.
• There are total 72 bird sanctuaries in India.

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01

Free Breakfast Scheme for govt. Students

❖ **Context**
  ➢ Tamil Nadu recently launched the first phase of a state-wide free breakfast programme in Madurai for the students in Classes **one to five** in selected state government schools.

❖ **Key Highlights**
• The first such scheme in the state, which pioneered the noon meal scheme a century ago and was later modelled by several states across the country, will benefit approximately 1.14 lakh children in the initial phase at a total cost of Rs 33.56 crore.

The phase will be rolled out in 1,545 schools, including 417 in cities, 163 in towns and district centres, 728 in rural areas, and 237 in remote and hilly areas.
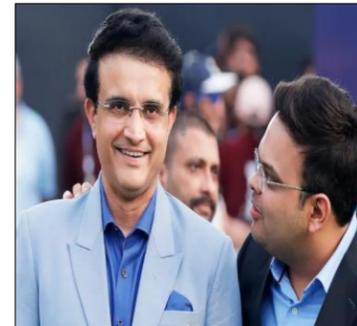
Urban Wastewater Scenario in India

❖ **Context**
  ➢ India launched joint whitepaper on **'Urban Wastewater Scenario in India'** with Denmark at World Water Congress and Exhibition 2022 in Copenhagen recently.

❖ **Key Highlights**
• India has committed investments of more than 140 Billion dollars by 2024 in the water sector.
• With the help of community-centric approach, at least 10 percent of the funds are contributed by community in every program ensuring community ownership and participation.

• The whitepaper aims at holistically capturing the current status of wastewater treatment in India and potential pathways for future treatment structures, co-creation, and collaborations.
• This whitepaper is a result of the Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic Partnership, which is focused on green hydrogen, renewable energy, and wastewater management.

Board of Control for Cricket in India

❖ **Context**
  ➢ Supreme Court has allowed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to amend its constitution relating to the cooling-off period for the president, secretary among other office-bearers.
  ➢ This amendment may enable the current board President Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah to have longer tenures in BCCI.

❖ **About BCCI**
• The **Board of Control for Cricket in India** (**BCCI**) is the governing body for cricket in India.
• Its headquarters are situated at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.
• The BCCI is an autonomous organisation and does not fall under the purview of the National Sports Federation of India.
• It does not receive any grants or funding from Ministry of Sports.
• The board was formed in December 1928 as a society, registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act.

• **Note: Cooling-Off Period** is a period of time that must pass before someone can do something or before an agreement becomes final.

BCCI- Board of Control for Cricket in India

Board of Control for Cricket in India, is the national governing body for cricket in India. It is affiliated to International Cricket Council (ICC), founded in 1928 and headquartered at Mumbai, India. It controls all the tournaments which happens in India and outside India in which Indian player are participating. R. E. Grant Govan was made its first president and Anthony De Mello its first secretary.

Cabinet Approves Addition of Four Tribes to Scedule Tribe

❖ **Context**
  ➢ The Union Cabinet has approved the addition of four tribes to the list of Scheduled Tribes, including those from Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh.

❖ **Key Highlights**
• **The Hatti tribe** in the Trans-Giri area of Sirmour district in Himachal Pradesh, the **Narikoravan** and Kurivikkaran hill tribes of Tamil Nadu & the Binjhia in Chhattisgarh, who were listed as ST in Jharkhand & Odisha but not in Chhattisgarh, were the communities newly added to the list.
• Further, the Cabinet approved a proposal to bring the Gond community residing in 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh, under the ST list from the Scheduled Caste list.
• This includes the **5 subcategories** of the Gond community (Dhuria, Nayak, Ojha, Pathari & Rajgond).

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02

• The inclusion of the Hatti community will benefit around 1.6 lakh people of this area-specific tribe in Himachal Pradesh.	• The process to include tribes in the ST list begins with the recommendation from the respective State governments, which are then sent to the Tribal Affairs Ministry, which reviews and sends them to the Registrar General of India for approval. • This is followed by the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes' approval before the list is sent to the Cabinet for a final decision.

'Irreversible' Law on Nuclear Arms Use

❖ **Context**
  ➢ North Korea has recently passed a law enshrining the right to **'automatically'** use preemptive nuclear strikes to protect itself.
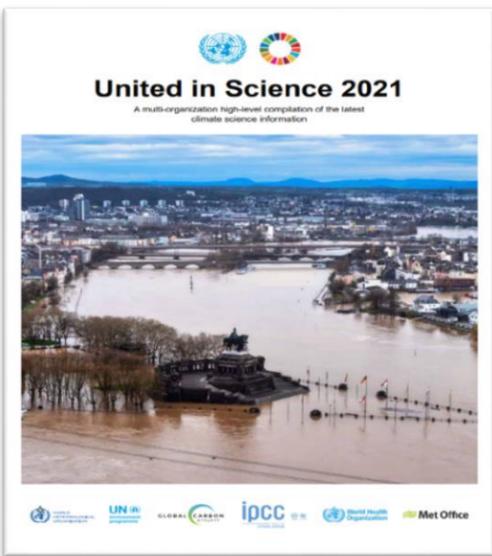
❖ **Key Highlights**	❖ **Significance**
• This new law makes the country's nuclear status 'irreversible' and bars any talks of denuclearisation.	• The new law is important because, it authorises preemptive nuclear strikes.
• This move comes as Pyongyang is seemingly preparing to resume nuclear testing for the first time since 2017.	• That means this law could be implemented if Pyongyang thinks there is an impending nuclear attack or if Pyongyang believes that its state's existence faced threats or the command organisation of its nuclear forces were threatened.
• The provisions of this new law, Kim has "all decisive powers" over nuclear weapons, but in case that command-and-control system were to be threatened, then nuclear weapons may be launched "automatically".	• The law also bans the sharing of nuclear arms or technology with other countries, and is aimed at reducing the danger of a nuclear war by preventing miscalculations among nuclear weapons states and misuse of nuclear weapons.

News in Between the Lines

United in Science Report
 	
Daily Current Affairs
 	
Daily Pre PARE   Daily MCQ Quiz
	❖ **Context**
	  ➢ The report by the **United Nations** and global scientific partner organisations provides a holistic assessment of the most recent climate science.
	❖ **Key Highlights**
	  • This report has been **compiled by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)** on behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General to bring together the latest climate science related updates from a group of key global partner organisations: **WMO, Global Carbon Project (GCP), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organisation (WHO), the Met Office (United Kingdom, UK).**
	  • According to the report, the ambition of new mitigation pledges for 2030 needs to be four times higher to limit global warming to 2 °C and seven times higher to get on track to limit global warming to 1.5 °C.
	  • The current state of the climate can be understood through the use of climate indicators. These indicators include **temperature, glacial mass extent, ocean heat content and sea-ice extent**, among others.
	  • 2018–2022 was the fourth warmest 5-year period on record and **2015-2021 were the seven warmest consecutive years on record. Cities** that host billions of people are responsible for upto **70% of human-caused emissions.**

Childline 1098	❖ **Context**
	  ➢ The Union government has informed the States and the Union Territories that the child helpline is going to be integrated with the **national emergency number 112.**
	❖ **Key Highlights**
	  • Childline is run as a partnership between civil society and the government, as a private trust called **Childline India Foundation** which is **funded by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)**.
	  • Set up in **1996** as a project at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the child helpline now receives 80 lakh calls a year with the presence in nearly 700 districts. With the integration, the childline would be moved from the administrative control of the MWCD to the Home Ministry.

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Nagorno-Karabakh Region

❖ **Context**
➢ A fierce border fighting occured between **Armenia and Azerbaijan** since their war two years ago over the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region.

❖ **Key Highlights**
- Nagorno-Karabakh is a **mountainous, landlocked region** inside the borders of Azerbaijan that has been a source of dispute for more than a century.
- The area is recognised internationally as Azerbaijan's territory but has a primarily Armenian population who have resisted Azerbaijani rule.
- In 1991, the region of about 150,000 people declared independence and since then it has ruled itself - with Armenian support - as the **unrecognised Republic of Artsakh.** Regional powers including Russia, Turkey and Iran are invested in the south Caucasus to varying degrees.
- The wider south Caucasus is a crucial artery for gas and oil from Azerbaijan into Turkey and on to Europe and other world markets.
- Turkey has already declared its staunch support for Turkic-speaking Azerbaijan, while Russia has a security alliance with Armenia.

Dengue Vaccine

❖ **Context**
➢ The **Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL),** a leading vaccine manufacturer in the country, has got permission for Phase-1 trial of dengue vaccine.

❖ **Key Highlights**
- IIL is developing the dengue vaccine in collaboration with the US-based National Institute of Health (NIH) which has provided the virus.
- There is **no vaccine for dengue yet (in India).** According to the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC), nearly 1.90 lakhs cases of dengue and 346 deaths were reported across the country last year.
- It is a **subsidiary of the National Dairy Development Board** which manufactures animal and human vaccines.
- It is one of the two suppliers of the **goat pox vaccine**, currently being administered to prevent lumpy skin disease in cattle.
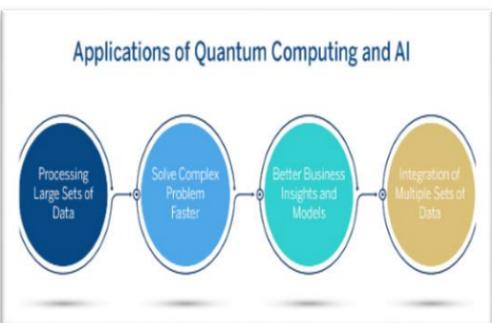
Asia Pacific Group (APG)

❖ **Context**
➢ The Asia-Pacific Group of **the Financial Action Task Force** FATF has rated Pakistan's level of effectiveness as 'low' on 10 out of 11 international goals on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terror.

❖ **Key Highlights**
- **APG** on Money Laundering is the **Sydney-based regional affiliate of the FATF**. It is an **inter-governmental organisation**, consisting of 41 member jurisdictions, including India. It is part of a global network of similar bodies, referred to as **Financial Action Task Force-Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs)** and is the largest in terms of membership numbers and geographical size.
- FATF is a global watchdog for terror financing and money laundering.
- Under the FATF-APG assessment mechanism, effective ratings on 11 **"Immediate Outcomes"** reflect the extent to which a country's measures are effective.

Quantum Computing

❖ **Context**
➢ International Business Machines (IBM) has partnered with Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, (IIT-Madras), to advance quantum computing skill development and research in India.

Quantum Computing
- Quantum computers are different from digital electronic computers based on transistors.
- Quantum computation uses quantum bits called qubits.
- Much more faster and many times more powerful.
- Actual quantum computers is still in its infancy, but experiments have been carried out in which quantum computational operations were executed on a very small number of quantum bits.

❖ **Key Highlights**
- Quantum computing is a rapidly-emerging technology that harnesses the laws of quantum mechanics to solve problems too complex for classical computers.
- The joint research on quantum computing will help a variety of industries & disciplines, including finance, energy, chemistry, materials science, optimization, machine learning and even space research.

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04