

Polio Vaccine

❖ Context

- Recently, The West Bengal government announced that it was introducing an additional dose of injectable polio vaccine as part of the **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)** for children.



❖ Key Highlights:

- The State is being considered among **high risk areas for polio**.
- It announced that **this dose will be given at nine months**, in addition to the existing doses in the current UIP.
- An additional dose of inactivated poliovirus (IPV) at nine months will protect against any polio thereafter — Vaccine Associated Paralytic Polio or Vaccine Derived Polioviruses.

❖ Polio

• About :

- **Polio**, or **poliomyelitis**, is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus.
- The virus **spreads from person to person** and can infect a person's spinal cord, causing paralysis (can't move parts of the body).
- Poliovirus can invade the central nervous system.
- It multiplies and destroy the nerve cells that activate muscles, causing irreversible paralysis in hours.
- Of those paralysed, **5-10% die when their breathing muscles become immobilised**.
- It largely affects children under 5 years of age.
- There are **three types of polio virus serotypes** :
 - Types 1, 2 and 3.
- **Cure:**
 - There is **no cure for polio**, but there are **safe, effective vaccines** which, given multiple times, protect a child for life.
 - Polio held the world in a bind of fear until **Jonas Salk developed the first polio vaccine**.
 - Later, **Albert Sabin** made a 'live' polio vaccine that could be administered orally.

• Vaccines :

- **Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV)** : It is given orally as a birth dose for institutional deliveries, then primary three doses at 6, 10 & 14 weeks & one booster dose at 16-24 months of age.
- **Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV)** : It is introduced as an additional dose along with the 3rd dose of DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus) under the **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)**.

❖ India's Polio-Free Status:

- In 2012, the WHO removed India from the list of endemic countries.
- As per the India Polio Learning Exchange portal, the last case of :
 - **Poliovirus Type 2** case was recorded in India in October 1999 at Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.
 - **Poliovirus type 3** case was recorded on October 22, 2010, at Pakur, Jharkhand.
 - **Poliovirus type 1** case was recorded on January 13, 2011, at Howrah, West Bengal.
- India received **polio-free certification** by the World Health Organisation (**WHO**) in **2014**, after three years of zero cases.
- As of October 2022, the WHO said only two countries worldwide remain with indigenous transmission of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) - **Afghanistan and Pakistan**.
- It also recorded that so far, **33 countries have outbreaks of variant polioviruses**, such as in the U.K., the U.S., Israel & Malawi.
- In 1995, the Union government announced the first National Polio Immunisation Day.
- **Side Note : World Polio Day:** Observed on 24 October, to commemorate the birthday of Jonas Salk.

Regulatory Framework for Share Market

❖ Context

- Recently, the Supreme Court asked the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** and the government to produce the existing regulatory framework in place to protect investors from share market volatility.



❖ Market Governing Laws:

- The securities market in India is **regulated by four key laws** :

1. The Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 (SCRA) :

- The SCRA empowers SEBI :
 - To recognise (and derecognise) stock exchanges.
 - To prescribe rules & bye laws for their functioning.
 - To regulate trading, clearing and settlement on stock exchanges.]

2. The Depositories Act, 1996 :

- As part of the development of the securities market, Parliament passed the Depositories Act and SEBI made regulations to enforce the provisions.

- This Act introduced and **legitimised the concept of dematerialised securities** being held in an electronic form.
- The depository regulations **empower SEBI to regulate functioning of depositories** and depository participants.
- 3. **The Companies Act, 2013** : It regulates companies incorporated/registered in India.
 - It has delegated the authority to enforce some of its provisions to SEBI, including the regulation of raising capital etc.
- 4. **The Securities & Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 (SEBI Act).**

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❖ **About SEBI:**

- It is the **regulator of the securities and commodity market** in India owned by the Government of India.
- It was **established in 1988** and given statutory status through the **SEBI Act, 1992**.
- SEBI is responsible for the **needs of three groups:**
 - Issuers** of securities.
 - Investors.**
 - Market intermediaries.**

• **Functions:**

- **Quasi-legislative :** Drafts regulations.
- **Quasi-judicial :** Passes rulings and orders.
- **Quasi-executive :** Conducts investigation and enforcement action.



• **Powers :**

- **To approve by-laws of Securities exchanges.**
- **To require the Securities Exchange to amend its by-laws.**
- **Inspect the books of accounts** and call for **periodical returns** from recognised Securities exchanges.
- Inspect the books of **accounts of financial intermediaries.**
- **Compel certain companies** to list their shares in one or more Securities exchanges.
- **Registration of Brokers and sub-brokers.**
- **Appeals :** Appeals against orders of SEBI and the stock exchanges can be made to the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) comprising three members.
 - Appeals from the SAT can be made to the Supreme Court.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti

❖ **Context**

- February 19 marks the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the progenitor of the Maratha Empire.



❖ **Key Highlights:**

- In many ways, the **Marathas took fort-building to its zenith**, not only building forts capable of surviving long sieges and battles but putting special attention to their placement and locations.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, at the time of his death, is said to have control of over **200 forts across his territories.**
- **Grant Duff**, a soldier of the East India Company, wrote: "There is probably no stronger country in the world than the Deccan from the military defence point of view."

❖ **Why were forts so important for the consolidation of the Maratha Empire?**

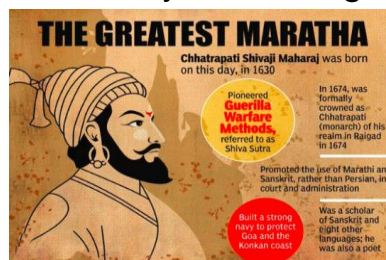
- **The terrain of the Maratha country:** It was different from the plains of North India with the **Arabian Sea** on one side, the **Konkan plains** in the center and the **Western Ghats** overlooking the plains, in the 17th century much of the region was covered in thick jungles.
- **Warfare in such terrain** is qualitatively different, with large conventional armies prone to getting bogged down.
- Thus, as Shivaji began to consolidate and expand his influence in the region, his strategies evolved to be significantly different from the **common military doctrine of the time.** Crucial to his military strategy were hill forts.

❖ **A Native Of Hill Forts:**

- The Maratha icon was born and raised in the **hill fort of Shivneri** (around Pune), given to his grandfather by the Sultan of Ahmadnagar in lieu of his services as a military commander. Thus, growing up in the hills & valleys around Pune, Shivaji understood the salience of hill forts in controlling the land.
- Over his storied life, he captured multiple such forts, including Torna (when he was only 16), **Rajgad, Sinhagadh and Purandar.**

❖ **Shivaji's Famous Guerilla Tactics:**

- Shivaji's armed forces had some **major limitations.** **First**, he did not have the man or horsepower compared to most of his enemies.
- **Second**, he was heavily reliant on obtaining supplies such as muskets and gunpowder from the Europeans, mainly the Portuguese.



- Thus, **Shivaji adopted guerilla tactics:** his men would travel in small, highly mobile & heavily armed attachments, wreak havoc in the often sluggish **Mughal or Adil Shahi armies.**

- **Crucial to such plans were hill forts.** Marathas forces would strike quickly and retreat to the many hill forts of the region.
- **These forts were designed** such that the approach to them was tricky, often treacherous, to large groups of men.
- Consequently, these were perfect defensive positions where either the bigger armies would not bother to attack or would have to sacrifice their strength in numbers if they did choose to attack.

❖ **Creating an empire with the help of Hill Forts:**

- What hill forts effectively allowed Shivaji to do was project his power, beyond what would have been possible through conventional means.
- The relative safety of his forts allowed him to successfully carry his lightning tactics while fighting formidable enemies.
- While a variety of factors, concerning both the Marathas and their rivals, contributed to their rise, the significance of hill forts cannot be overlooked.



News in Between the Lines

Bandipur Tiger Reserve



❖ Context

- PM lauds Bandipur Tiger Reserve staff for saving an injured elephant. Between 2014 and 2022, **72 elephants died of electrocution** in Karnataka.

❖ About Bandipur National Park:

- Bandipur National Park has the **second highest Tiger population** in India and is located in Gundulpet taluk, Karnataka.
- Park is **part of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve** making it the largest protected area in Southern India and largest habitat of Wild Elephants in South Asia.
- Bandipur National Park **shares its boundary with 3 other National parks** namely Nagarahole National Park, Wayanad National Park and Mudumalai National park.
- Apart from Tiger and Elephant a number of **other endangered species** such as sloth bears, gaurs, Indian rock pythons, jackals, muggers, and four-horned antelopes can be spotted in this national park.
- Bandipur also shelters mouse deer, chital, sloth bear, and the **rare flying lizard**, it also supports a wide range of timber trees including **teak, rosewood, sandalwood**, etc.

Trading Of Carbon Credits



❖ Context

- The Union government has finalized a list of **activities to be considered for trading of carbon credits under Article 6.2 mechanism** to facilitate transfer of emerging technologies and mobilize international finance in India.

❖ Key Highlights:

- India has also notified the National designated Authority for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (**NDAIAPA**) in May 2022.
- NDAIAPA is mandated, inter-alia, **to take decisions on the type of projects** that may take part in the international carbon market under **Article 6 mechanisms**.
- **Overall 13 activities have been** finalized under three heads - GHG mitigation activities, alternate materials, and removal activities.
- The **final list for GHG mitigation includes** areas like renewable energy with storage (only stored component), solar thermal power, off- shore wind, green hydrogen, compressed biogas, etc.
- **Green ammonia** received final approval as an alternative material for removal activities, carbon capture utilisation and storage.
- These activities will **facilitate adoption/transfer** of emerging technologies and may be used to mobilize international finance in India. The activities will **initially be for the first three years** and may be updated by NADAIPA.

Rhododendrons



❖ Context

- Recently, the latest publication of the **Botanical Survey of India (BSI)** revealed that **Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalayas are home to more than one-third of all types of rhododendrons found in India.**

❖ Key Highlights:

- Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalayas comprise only 0.3% of India's geographical area but the region is home to one-third (34%) of all Rhododendron types.
- Rhododendron is a **very large genus of about 1,024 species of woody plants** in the heath family (Ericaceae). Rhododendron, meaning rose tree in Greek, is considered an **indicator species for climate change**.
- They can be either evergreen or deciduous.
- The flowering season for rhododendrons starts in March and continues till May.
- **Distribution** : Most species are **native to eastern Asia and the Himalayan region**.
 - Smaller numbers occur elsewhere in Asia, & in North America, Europe & Australia.
- **Side Note** : It is the national flower of Nepal, the state flower of Nagaland in India, the provincial flower of Jiangxi in China & the state tree of Sikkim and Uttarakhand in India.

Antarctica's "Doomsday Glacier"

❖ Context

- Scientists studying **Antarctica's vast Thwaites Glacier** - nicknamed the Doomsday Glacier - say warm water is seeping into its weak spots, worsening melting caused by rising temperatures.

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❖ **Key Highlights:**

- **Thwaites**, which is roughly the size of Florida, represents more than half a meter (1.6 feet) of global sea level rise potential.
- It **could destabilize neighbouring glaciers** that have the potential to cause a further three-meter (9.8-foot) rise.
- As part of the **International Thwaites Glacier collaboration** - the biggest field campaign ever attempted in Antarctica - a team of 13 U.S. and British scientists spent about six weeks on the glacier in late 2019 and early 2020.
- Using an **underwater robot vehicle known as Icefin**, mooring data and sensors, they monitored the glacier's grounding line, where ice slides off the glacier and **meets the ocean for the first time**.

Sagar Parikrama



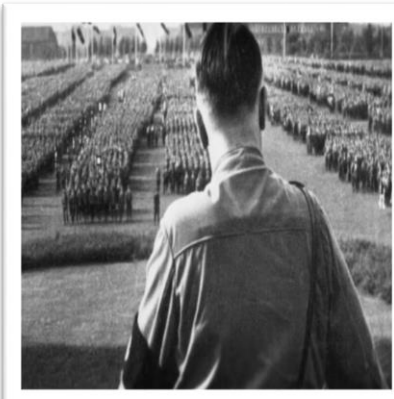
❖ **Context**

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, starts the **Sagar Parikrama Phase-III from Hazira Port, Gujarat**.

❖ **About Sagar Parikrama:**

- The main **objectives of 'Sagar Parikrama'** are: To facilitate interaction with fishermen, coastal communities and stakeholders so as to disseminate information of various fisheries related schemes and programs being implemented by the Government.
 - Demonstrating solidarity with all fisher folk, fish farmers and concerned stakeholder as a spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
 - To promote responsible fisheries with focus on sustainable balance between the utilization of marine fisheries resources for the food security of nations and livelihoods of coastal fisher communities.
 - Protection of marine ecosystems.

Crimes Against Humanity



❖ **Context**

- Recently, US Vice President Kamala Harris said that The United States has determined that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine.

❖ **About Crimes Against Humanity**

- Unlike genocide and war crimes, **crimes against humanity aren't officially codified in an international treaty** but are still adjudicated in the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other global bodies.
- **Historical Background :**
 - One of the first instances of prosecuting crimes against humanity was during the **Nuremberg trials of former Nazi officials after the end of World War II**.
 - According to the United Nations, it isn't clear when was the 1st time the term was used. Some believe its origin goes back to the late 18th and early 19th century, when it was used in the context of **slavery** and the slave trade.
- **Defining Crimes Against Humanity:**
 - The **1998 Rome Statute**, which established the ICC, defines the term.
 - It says crimes against humanity are acts such as murder, enslavement, torture and rape that are "committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack."
 - "Crimes against humanity do not need to be linked to an armed conflict and can also occur in peacetime, similar to the crime of genocide."

Current Account Deficit (CAD)



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Context

- Data released by the government shows that India's exports and imports declined by 6.59% and 3.63% respectively in January.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- There are indications that the **current account deficit (CAD) will moderate** despite the global slowdown triggered by the rising inflation and interest rates.
- The moderation in CAD is expected to be **aided by the fall in commodity prices, rising workers remittances and services exports**, and abatement of selling pressure by foreign investors.

Current Account Deficit (CAD)

- **About :** When the value of the goods and services that a country imports exceeds the value of the products it exports, it is called the current account deficit.
 - CAD and the fiscal deficit together make up the **twin deficits** - the enemies of the stock market and investors.
- **Significance of CAD :** If the current account - the country's trade and transactions with other countries - shows surplus, that indicates -
 - Money is flowing into the country.
 - Boosting the foreign exchange reserves and the value of rupee against the dollar.
- These are factors that will have ramifications on the economy and the stock markets as well as on returns on investments by people.

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