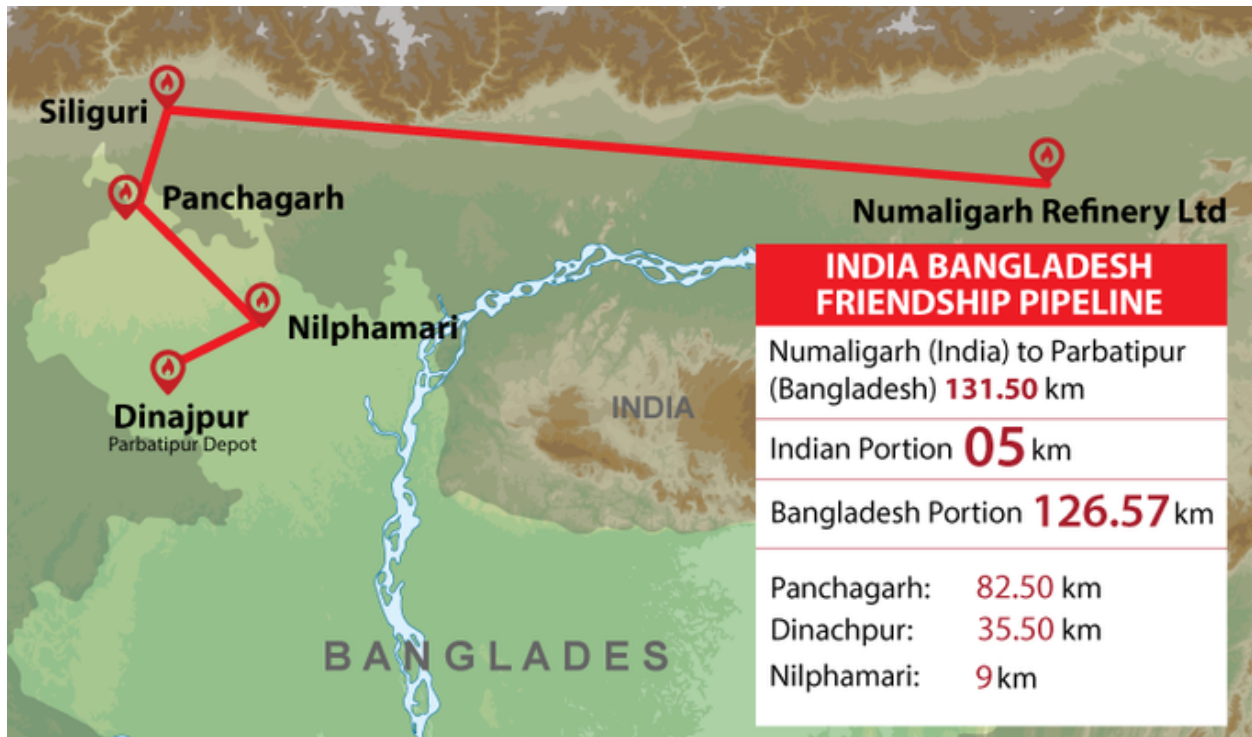


1. India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline

Topic: International Relations



In News: PM Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline.

More on the Topic:

- IBFP is the first cross border energy pipeline between India and Bangladesh with a capacity to transport 1 Million Metric Ton Per Annum (MMTPA) of High-Speed Diesel (HSD) to Bangladesh.
- Enhanced connectivity with Bangladesh will further strengthen people to people linkages between two sides.
- It is the second cross-border energy pipeline between India and its neighbours.
- In 2019, India-Nepal opened South Asia’s first cross-border oil pipeline i.e., Motihari (Bohar)-Amlekhgunj (Nepal) oil pipeline.

About India’s Energy Diplomacy:

- India in recent years has started to recognise energy as a crucial tool for bolstering its relationship with its neighbours.
- Quietly, **India is setting up a web of energy relationships in the extended neighbourhood covering Myanmar in the east to the Gulf in the west.**
- India has started to move beyond just physical connectivity and started to recognise energy as a tool of connectivity.

- India is accomplishing this by leveraging its position both as a large consumption centre and a major source of petro-products and expertise.
- In a significant boost for energy diplomacy, **Kazakhstan has offered ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), a stake in a medium-sized Abai oil block in the Caspian Sea.**
- **Other Examples:** India has Development Hydel Projects in Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan. E.g., Afghan-India Friendship Dam (Salma Dam) in Afghanistan.
- Development of Non-Renewable and other Renewable Energy power plants. E.g., Coal-fired Maitri power plant in Nepal and 100 MW Solar power plant in Sri Lanka.

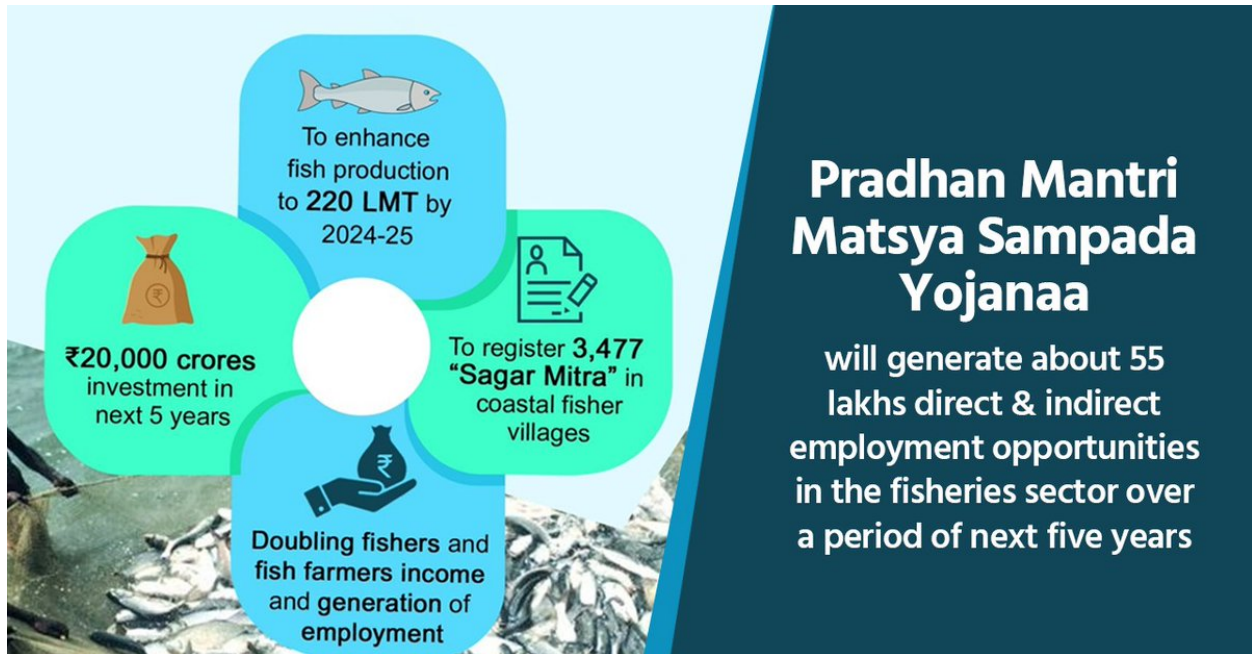
Benefits of e-NAM:

- e-NAM ensures **transparent online trading with enhanced accessibility to the market.**
- **Real time price discovery** for better & stable price realization for producers.
- This leads to reduced transaction cost for buyers.
- e-NAM has more efficient supply chain & warehouse based sales.
- E Nam also facilitates online payment directly to the bank accounts of the farmers.

Source: Indian Express

2. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

Topic: Government Schemes



Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

will generate about 55 lakhs direct & indirect employment opportunities in the fisheries sector over a period of next five years

- To enhance fish production to 220 LMT by 2024-25
- To register 3,477 "Sagar Mitra" in coastal fisher villages
- Investment of ₹20,000 crores in next 5 years
- Doubling fishers and fish farmers income and generation of employment

In News: During Sagar Paikarma program Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandary & Dairying informed that the provisions in the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) will be revised to suit the needs of fishermen.



More on the Topic:

- The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana. (PMMSY) is **designed to address critical gaps in fish production and productivity, quality, technology, post-harvest infrastructure and management, modernisation and strengthening of value chain, traceability, establishing a robust fisheries management framework and fishers' welfare.**
- The PMMSY is an umbrella scheme with **two separate Components namely (a) Central Sector Scheme (CS) and (b) Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).**
- The Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) Component is further segregated into Non-beneficiary oriented and beneficiary orientated subcomponents/activities under the following three broad heads:
 1. Enhancement of Production and Productivity
 2. Infrastructure and Post-harvest Management
 3. Fisheries Management and Regulatory Framework
- PMMSY targets to increase fish production to 22 million metric tons by 2024-25; reduce post-harvest losses from 20-25% to about 10% etc.

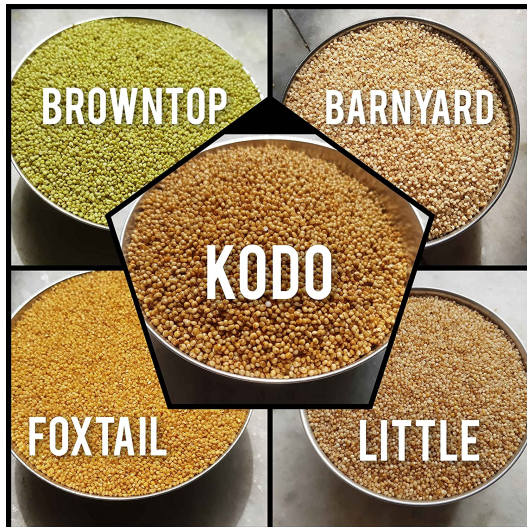
About Sagar Parikrama Program:

- **Sagar Parikrama** is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- It involves an organised navigation journey along a designated sea route involving India's coastal areas, along with an interaction program with fishing communities. Phase I of the program began on March 5th, 2022.
- The purpose of the initiative is **to demonstrate solidarity with fisher folk, fish farmers and other stakeholders while promoting a balance between the use of fisheries as a resource and protecting marine ecosystems.**

Source: AIR

3. Millets

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: Prime Minister Narendra has said millets can help tackle challenges of food security.

More on the Topic:

- Millets are group of small grained cereal food crops which are **highly tolerant to drought and other extreme weather conditions and are grown with low chemical inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides.**
- Most of millet crops are **native of India and are popularly known as Nutri-cereals** as they provide most of the nutrients required for normal functioning of human body.
- Millets are classified into **Major Millets and Minor Millets based on their grain size.**
- **Pseudo millets are so called because they are not part of the Poaceae botanical family,** to which ‘true’ grains belong, however they are nutritionally similar and used in similar ways to ‘true’ grains.

Importance of Millets:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has recognized the importance of Millets and declared Millets comprising of **Sorghum (Jowar), Pearl Millet (Bajra), Finger Millet (Ragi/ Mandua), Minor Millets i.e., Foxtail Millet (Kanngani/kakun), Proso Millet (Cheena), Kodo Millet (Kodo), Barnyard Millet (Sawa/Sanwa/Jhangora), Little Millet (Kutki), Brown top millet and two pseudo millets i.e., Buck- wheat (Kuttu), Amaranth (Chaulai)** as “Nutri-Cereals” for production, consumption and trade point of view.
- Millets are **gluten free and non- allergenic.**
- Millet consumption **decreases triglycerides and C- reactive protein, thereby preventing cardiovascular disease.**

- They are called **superfoods** for having nutrients like protein, Vitamin-A, Iron and Iodine, antioxidants, etc.
- **India accounts for 80% of Asia's production and 20% of global production.**
- All millets are **rich in dietary fibre.**
- Dietary fibre has water absorbing and bulking property. It increases transit time of food in the gut which helps in reducing risk of inflammatory bowel disease and acts as **detoxifying agent** in the body.

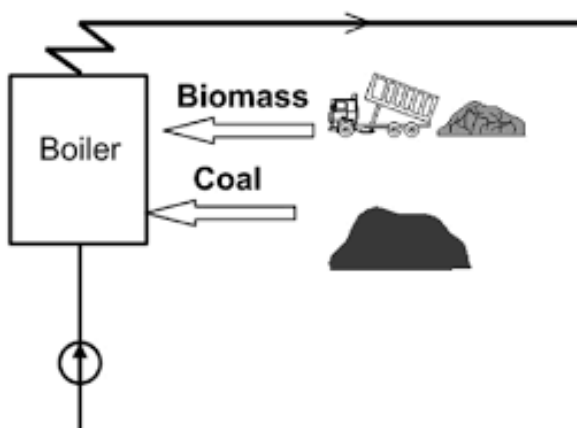
Initiatives to Promote Millets:

- Millets notified as **nutri-cereals and included under POSHAN Mission Abhiyan.**
- United Nations General Assembly **declared the year 2023 as International Year of Millets.**
- National Year of Millets celebrated in 2018.

Source: Hindu

4. Biomass Co-firing

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and adjoining areas has directed all thermal power plants in the National Capital Region to start co-firing biomass-based pellets with coal, targeting at least 5 per cent co-firing of biomass pellets by September and at least 10 per cent by December 2023.

More on the Topic:

- The focus should be on **paddy straw utilization for such co-firing.**
- Co-firing is **an option for converting biomass to electricity by adding biomass as a partial substitute fuel** in coal based boilers.
- It is an effective way to curb emissions from open burning of crop residue. It also decarbonises the process of electricity generation using coal.

Source: Indian Express

5. Vilayati Kikar

Topic: Environment and Ecology


File photo

NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Central ridge is spread over **864 hectares**

423 hectares to be restored over 5 years


COST
₹12.6 crore



THE PROJECT

➤ The 'invasive' vilayati kikar and lantana to be replaced by native species

First phase of restoration: Between SP Marg and Vande Mataram Marg



HOW IT WILL BE DONE

- Native tree species to be planted around vilayati kikar
- Canopy openings to be created to allow sunlight to reach the forest floor
- Creepers to be used on vilayati kikar to naturally 'strangulate' it
- The dead tree will then be removed, once native species around it grow to a certain height

In News: Work is set to begin on 10 hectares of land in the Central Ridge to remove vilayati kikar, an invasive species, and restore the natural biodiversity of the region in a pilot project.

More on the Topic:

- Vilayati kikar (*Prosopis juliflora*) is an invasive tree species introduced under the British Empire in the 1930s (native to Mexico, South America and the Caribbean) as part of development of Delhi.
- The tree does not let other trees flourish in the area, because of its deep roots and it monopolises water and sunlight in the area.
- These trees can dry up underground aquifers through its deep-root system, going as far as 20 metres or more in search of water, significantly higher than around 5 metres that native shrubs and trees go.

- It has a thick canopy and does not allow sunlight to reach the floor of the area where they are planted.

About Invasive Species:

- Invasive alien species are plants, animals, pathogens and other organisms that are non-native to an ecosystem, and which may cause economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health.
- They regenerate at an alarming speed and threaten to edge out the indigenous flora.

Source: Business Standard

6. Sayajirao Gaekwad III

Topic: Personalities in News



In News: Home Minister has mentioned that Central government has modelled the New Education Policy (NEP) to include the “visions” of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III, among other leaders.

More on the Topic:

- Maharaja (Sayajirao III) has emphasised **female education, eradicated purdah system, made a separate law for divorce, brought in the revolutionary widow remarriage rules and changed education policies** to ensure employment opportunities.
- He has made primary education free and compulsory in his state.
- **He patronized Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Dadabhai Naoroji and Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.**
- He was the **Maharaja of Baroda State from 1875 to 1939**, and is remembered for reforming much of his state during his rule.
- He belonged to **the royal Gaekwad dynasty of the Marathas** which ruled parts of present-day Gujarat.

Source: Business Standard

7. India's geoheritage sites of Jhamarkotra and Zawar

Topic: Art and Culture



In News: Jhamarkotra and Zawar are important geoheritage sites of India.

More on the Topic:

- Jhamarkotra is a **stromatolite fossil park**. it hosts stromatolites dating back 1.8 billion years, exhibiting a variety of textures and sizes.
- **A stromatolite is a layered sedimentary rock created by microorganisms.**
- As such, stromatolite fossils preserve records of cyanobacteria, commonly known as blue-green algae – the earliest life on the planet.
- Jhamarkotra's fossils are phosphate-rich because the trapped sediments were mainly phosphate minerals. These fossils are part of the reason why the region is a thriving mining hub today.
- **Zawar**, the world's oldest known zinc-smelting site. It is of archaeological and metallurgic importance.
- The landscape around Zawar bears numerous traces of zinc mining and smelting operations in ancient times.
- The discovery here of earthen retorts – brinjal-shaped, long-necked vessels – is particularly significant: their presence here suggests Zawar had a unique zinc-smelting legacy.

What is geoheritage?

- Geodiversity is the **variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, and natural processes that shape our landscapes** while **geoheritage refers to sites that offer insights into the evolution of the earth and can be used for research, reference, and awareness.**



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- The Geological Survey of India has recognised a number of geoheritage sites around the country, but there are more that deserve the recognition yet haven't.

Source: Business Standard

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