

1. Colombo Security Conclave

Topic: International Affairs

In News: Fifth NSA-level meeting of the Colombo Security Conclave was held recently.

More on the Topic:

- It is a regional security grouping comprising India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and newest member of the Conclave Mauritius.
- The recent conclave finalised following five-point roadmap to enhance and strengthen regional security.
- Maritime Safety and Security
- Countering Terrorism and Radicalisation
- Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime
- Cyber Security, Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology
- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

About Colombo Security Conclave:

- The Colombo Security Conclave was founded as a trilateral security framework between India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.
- **Aim:** To create a platform for closer cooperation in maritime security and address the challenges such as narco-trafficking, human trafficking, piracy, terrorism and extremism.

Colombo Security Conclave and India:

- India has a large coastline along with islands of strategic importance, this makes maritime security an utmost priority for the country.
- Closer cooperation among regional partners will aid India's efforts to ensure security and stability in the region.
- India can restrict China's growing dominance in the region and reduce the Chinese influence on the member countries through the conclave.
- The grouping is also in line with India's vision of "**SAGAR: Security and Growth for all in the Region**".
- India has strong bilateral relations with each of the member and observer countries and the grouping will further assist in regional cohesion and collaboration.

Source: Financial Express

MEMBERS

India
Sri Lanka
Maldives
Mauritius

OBSERVERS

Bangladesh
Seychelles



2. World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines on Abortion

Topic: Social Justice

In News: The World Health Organization (WHO) presented new guidelines on abortion care. **More on the Topic:**

- Key guidelines include the following
- Provision for access to quality information and counselling.
- Recommendation against mandatory waiting period.
- Autonomy to women in the choice of abortion.
- Recommendation to fully decriminalise abortion.



Statistics:

- **Developing countries bear the burden of 97% of unsafe abortions**, according to the WHO's website.
- The proportion of abortions that are unsafe is also significantly higher in countries with highly restrictive abortion laws than in those with less restrictive laws.
- Over 53% of all unsafe abortions occur in Asia, the majority of those in south and central Asia.
- Abortion rates were highest in low-income countries with the most legal restrictions to abortion care.

Reproductive Health intervention by Government of India:

- The Government provides safe and comprehensive abortion care (CAC) services to women in health facilities under **RMNCH+A (Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health) program of National Health Mission**.
- Guidelines on Comprehensive Abortion care services and Medical Methods of Abortions (MMA) have been provided to all the States.
- Supply of **Nischay Pregnancy detection kits to sub-centers** for early detection of pregnancy.

Abortion Laws in India:

- In 2021, MTP Amendment Act 2021 was passed with certain amendments in the MTP Act 1971 including all women being allowed to seek safe abortion services on grounds of contraceptive failure, increase in gestation limit to 24 weeks for special categories of women, and opinion of one doctor required up to 20 weeks of gestation.

- Abortion can now be performed until 24 weeks pregnancy as the MTP Amendment Act 2021 has come in force by notification from September 2021.

Source: Indian Express

3. Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Topic: International Affairs

In News: UN Security Council discussed the biological weapon concerns associate with alleged biological laboratories in Ukraine.

More on the Topic:

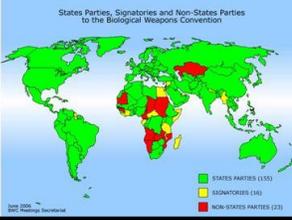
- Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is a disarmament treaty that effectively bans biological and toxin weapons by prohibiting their development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use.

- It has came into force on 26 March 1975.
- The BWC was **the first multilateral disarmament treaty to ban the production of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.**
- The convention is of unlimited duration.
- As of January 2022, 183 states have become party to the treaty. **India has signed and ratified this treaty.**
- Convention's effectiveness has been limited due to insufficient institutional support and the absence of any formal verification regime to monitor compliance.

Source: PIB

Banning Biological weapons

- Geneva Protocol
 - Use of biological weapons was banned in international law by the Geneva Protocol of 1925.
- Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
 - The 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention extended the ban to almost all production, storage and transport of any types of biological weapons.

4. Mugger Crocodile

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: Around 50 mugger crocodiles have died recently in 'The Kala Talab ('black pool')' of Rajasthan's Kota city as a result of it being filled up for developmental activities.



More on the Topic:

- The Kala Talab ('black pool') is connected via a canal to **the Chambal river**.
- It is rich in aquatic life including mugger crocodiles, but has not been declared a wetland.
- However, the rules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, are applicable here as it concerns a Schedule I animal.
- The mugger crocodile, also called the Indian crocodile, or marsh crocodile, is found throughout the Indian subcontinent.
- **It is listed as vulnerable by IUCN.**
- The mugger is mainly a freshwater species, and found in lakes, rivers and marshes.
- There are three species of crocodylians found in India — saltwater, Mugger and Gharial.

Source: The Hindu

5. Strengthening Of Pharmaceutical Industry (SPI) Scheme

Topic: Government Schemes

In News: Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has released the guidelines for the scheme "Strengthening of Pharmaceutical Industry (SPI)".

More on the Topic:

- The objectives of the scheme are to strengthen the existing infrastructure facilities in order to make India a global leader in the Pharma Sector.





- The scheme will address the rising demand in terms of support required to existing Pharma clusters and MSMEs across the country to improve their productivity, quality and sustainability.
- The Scheme has 3 components / sub-schemes:
- **Assistance to Pharmaceutical Industry for Common Facilities (APICF)**
- This is to strengthen the existing pharmaceutical clusters' capacity for their sustained growth by creating common facilities
- **Pharmaceutical Technology Upgradation Assistance Scheme (PTUAS)**
- This is to facilitate Micro, Small and Medium Pharma Enterprises (MSMEs) of proven track record to meet national and international regulatory standards.
- **Pharmaceutical & Medical Devices Promotion and Development Scheme (PMPDS)**
- This is to facilitate growth and development of Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Sectors through study/survey reports, awareness programs, creation of database, and promotion of industry.

About Indian Pharmaceutical Industry:

- India is **the world's third largest provider of generic medicines by volume, with a 20% share of total global pharmaceutical exports.**
- It is also the largest vaccine supplier in the world by volume, accounting for more than 50% of all vaccines manufactured in the world.

Concerns Related to Indian Pharma Industry:

- The Indian pharma industry is **highly fragmented**. This is a cause for concern because high fragmentation causes instability, volatility and uncertainty.
- There is a **huge shortfall in 'Healthcare Manpower'** of the country, right from Pharmacists, Nurses and Doctors and related.
- **Unexpected and frequent domestic pricing policy changes** in India create ambiguity among investors.
- India is heavily dependent on other countries for active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) and other intermediates. **80% of the APIs are imported from China.**

Source: Indian Express

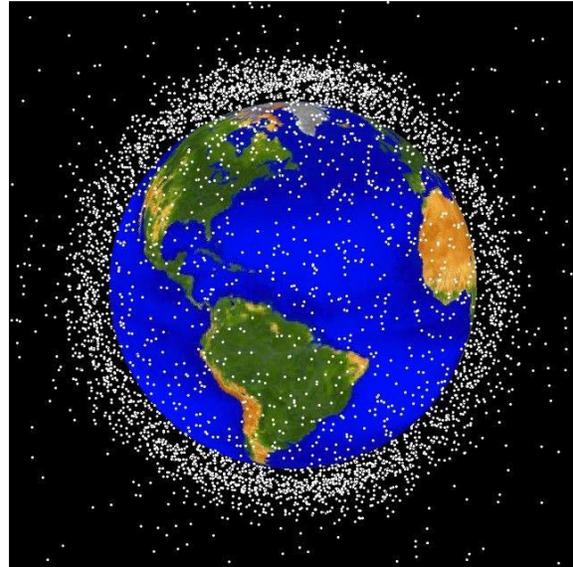
6. Space Junk

Topic: Science and Technology

In News: A three-tonne piece of Chinese rocket debris slammed into the Moon, creating a 65 feet wide crater on the lunar surface.

More on the Topic:

- Unoperational / Expired / Exploded satellites, rocket parts or spacecrafts can be considered as space junk.
- Currently, an estimated 20,000 objects—including satellites and space debris—are crowding low-Earth orbit.
- Space junks may lead to following problems.
- It Can be a hazard to active satellites and spacecraft.
- A Potential collision is a grave threat to the space stations.
- It could hinder ability to use weather satellites, and hence to monitor weather changes.



About Kessler Syndrome:

- The Kessler syndrome is a scenario in which the density of objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) is high enough that collisions between objects could cause a cascade that increases the likelihood of further collisions.
- It could result in a chain reaction where more and more objects will collide and create new space junk in the process, to the point where Earth's orbit became unusable.

Examples of Space Junk Management Programmes:

- In August 2020, NETRA Project was initiated by ISRO which is an early warning system to protect the satellites from space debris and other hazards of Space
- **Orbital Debris Program Office was set up by NASA which issued the world's first set of debris-mitigation guidelines in 1995**
- **it proposed that satellites be designed to re-enter Earth's atmosphere within 25 years of mission completion**
- **Europe plans ClearSpace-1, Earth's first space debris removal mission in 2025**

Indian Express

7. Sickle Cell Anemia

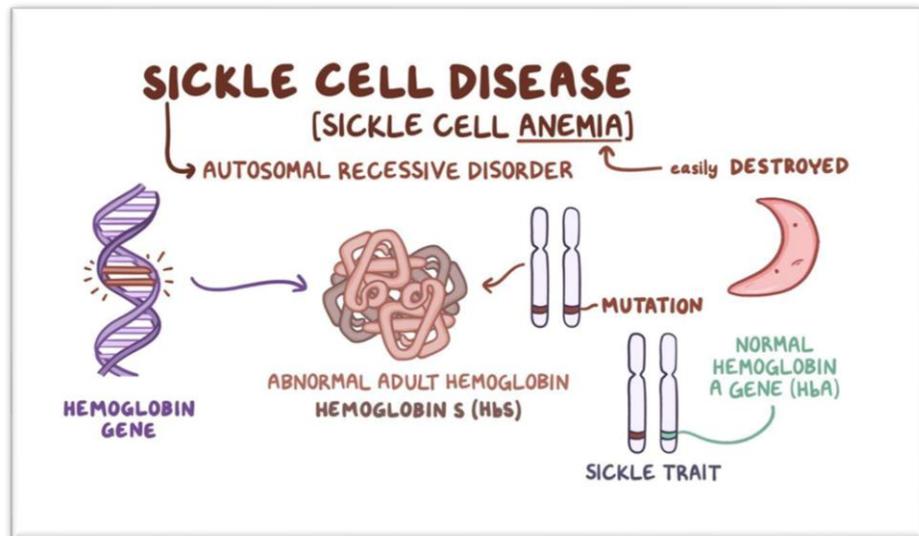
Topic: Science and Technology

In News: In Kerala Sickle cell Anemia Protesters organized a dharna demanding establishment of research and care centre.

More on the Topic:

- Sickle cell anaemia is an inherited blood disorder. The disorder is highly prevalent among the tribes in South Indian States.
- The disease affect hemoglobin, the molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen to cells throughout the body.
- People with this disease have atypical hemoglobin molecules called hemoglobin S, which can distort red blood cells into a sickle, or crescent shape.
- This blocks blood flow and oxygen from reaching all parts of the body.
- Over time, people with sickle cell disorders can experience damage to organs including the liver, kidney, lungs, heart and spleen. Death can also result from complications of the disorder.

Source: Hindustan Times





MCQs:

1. Which of the following statement/s is/are true?

- 1. Haemoglobin is a protein and the respiratory pigment found in red blood cells.**
- 2. Haemoglobin transports oxygen from the lungs to the different parts of our body through the blood.**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: c

2. The Kessler syndrome is associated with?

- (a) Space Science
- (b) Economy
- (c) Biotechnology
- (d) Archeology

Ans: a

3. Donbass region is located at?

- (a) Ukraine
- (b) Russia
- (c) Italy
- (d) Eritrea

Ans: a

4. Which of the following statement/s are true?

- 1. The Sun's corona is the outermost part of the Sun's atmosphere.**



2. It emits ultra-violet and X-ray wavelengths of the electromagnetic spectrum.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans c

5. Which of the following is correct about ozone?

- (a) it is a light pink coloured gas
- (b) it is odourless
- (c) it is harmless in small concentrations
- (d) All of the above

Ans: c