

1. PM WANI Scheme

Topic: Government Schemes

In News: Recently, RailTel has launched the Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme across 100 Indian Railways stations.

More on the Topic:

- Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) is being seen as an attempt by the government to **elevate wireless internet connectivity in the country.**
- Public Data Offices (PDOs) will be established on the lines of **Public Call Offices (PCOs)**. These PDOs will establish, operate, and maintain only the WANI compliant Wi-Fi access points to deliver broadband services to its subscribers.
- These PDOs will **either provide internet on their own or will lease from some other Internet Service Provider (ISP).**
- PDO Aggregators (PDOAs) will also be set up. These will perform the function of authorisation and accounting of the numerous PDOs.
- The government **will develop an application which will register the users on to the network.**
- The application will also help them discover WANI-compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in nearby areas
- A central registry will be set-up which will maintain details of all app providers, PDOAs and PDOs. The registry will be handled by the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT).

RailTel Corporation:

- RailTel Corporation is a PSU of Ministry of Railways a "Mini Ratna (Category-I) and is a largest neutral telecom services providers in the country.
- It has a Pan-India optic fiber network covering all important towns and cities of the country and several rural areas covering 70% of India's population.

Source: Indian Express



2. 48% of bird species declining globally

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: According to State of World's Birds report around 48% of bird species worldwide are known or suspected to be undergoing population declines.

More on the Topic:

- The report sighted following reasons as the cause for population decline.
- Human influenced factors such as loss or degradation of habitats, changes in land use, overexploitation, and climate change.
- The loss in avian diversity is no less alarming in India, where current annual trends available for the past five years have been estimated for 146 species.
- Of these, nearly 80% are declining in numbers, and almost 50% plummeting strongly.
- The Indian report had found that endemic species, birds of prey, and those dwelling in forests and grasslands were the most threatened.
- Although there are no confirmed recent continental extinctions in Asia, numerous threatened species have not been seen in recent years.
- For example, **the critically endangered Jerdon's Courser**, endemic to the Eastern Ghats in India, has not been seen since 2009.

State of World's Birds report:

- State of the World's Birds is **BirdLife International's flagship science publication**, using birds to assess the condition of our ecosystems as a whole.

Source: Indian Express

3. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: The 15th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is taking place at Abidjan, the economic capital of the Ivory Coast.



More on the Topic:

- A hallmark report released by UNCCD in advance of the COP – the Global Land Outlook 2 (GLO2) – is serving as the scientific foundation for discussions.
- Among other staggering facts, the report found that 40 percent of all ice-free land is degraded, which has direct consequences on half of humanity and poses risks for half of global GDP.
- The need for gender equity is a main theme for discussion. The event opened with launch of a new report on the **gendered effects of desertification and drought**.
- The Great Green Wall a UNCCD-led effort **to restore a green belt across the Sahelian region to prevent the southward spread of the Sahara Desert** – remains achievable but needs significantly more support to be realized.
- Leaders are calling for more funds, national coordination and task forces to ramp up the initiative.
- “Abidjan Call” – a collective assertion from leaders stressing the need to make drought an issue of highest global priority and to continue working toward a net-neutral level of annual land degradation by 2030 was an important outcome.

United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification:

- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), was established in 1994.
- UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.
- The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands.
- It is the only convention stemming from a direct recommendation of the **Rio Conference’s Agenda 21**.
- **The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** is the nodal Ministry for this Convention.

Source: Indian Express

4. AIM PRIME

Topic: Government Schemes

In News: Atal Innovation Mission- PRIME (Program for Researchers for Innovation, Market Readiness and Entrepreneurship) Playbook & Startup showcase was launched recently.

More on the Topic:

- Programme was aimed at **promoting early-stage science-based, deep technology ideas to market through training and guidance** over a period of 12 months using a blended learning curriculum.
- The programme will serve an important purpose of creating strong indigenous manufacturing capabilities in all critical sectors.

Atal Innovation Mission:

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a **flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog** in 2016 to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country.
- AIM's objectives are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.
- AIM has multiple programs to encourage and support innovation in the country like Atal Tinkering Labs, Atal Incubators.

Source: Indian Express



5. Lesser Florican and Great Indian Bustard

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: The Supreme Court has directed the installation of bird diverters on overhead power transmission lines at the States of Gujarat and Rajasthan for the protection of the endangered birds Great Indian Bustard and Lesser Florican.



More on the Topic:

- The existence of overhead power lines is one of the reasons for Great Indian Bustard and Lesser Florican getting killed.
- Lesser Florican is a small and slender bird species belonging to the bustard group, found in tall grasslands, for which Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has launched a **recovery programme**.
- The Lesser Florican is protected under **Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**,
- The bird is listed as **“Critically Endangered”** on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List of Threatened Species.
- The Great Indian Bustard (GIB), **the State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered India’s most **critically endangered bird**.
- It is considered the flagship grassland species, representing the health of the grassland ecology.

Source: Business Standard

6. Government Social Security Schemes

Topic: Government Scheme

In News: Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) complete 7 years of providing social security net.

More on the Topic:

- These three social security schemes are dedicated to the **welfare of the citizens**, **recognising the need for securing human life from unforeseen risks/losses and financial uncertainties**.

What is it ?



social security is defined as “security that society furnishes through appropriate organization, against certain risks to which its members are exposed”

- In order to ensure that the people from the unorganised section of the country are financially secure, the Government launched two insurance schemes –Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY); and introduced Atal Pension Yojana (APY) to cover the exigencies in the old age.
- While the **PMJJBY and PMSBY** provide access to **low cost life/accidental insurance cover to the people**, the **APY** provides an opportunity for saving in the present for getting a **regular pension in old age**.

Source: Hindu

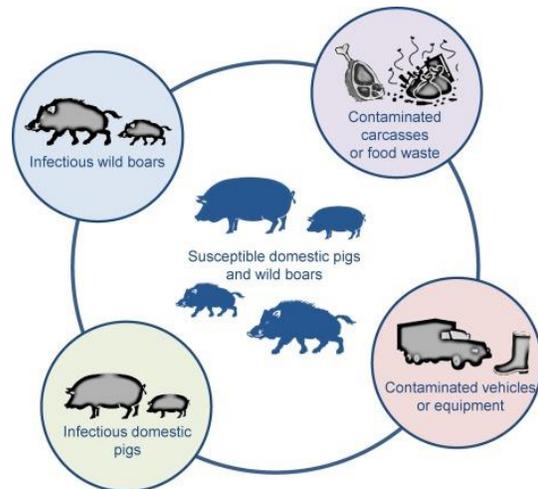
7. African Swine Fever

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: African Swine Fever was detected in Tripura.

More on the Topic:

- It is a **highly contagious and fatal animal disease** that infects and leads to an acute form of hemorrhagic fever in domestic and wild pigs.
- It was first detected in Africa in the 1920s
- ASF is not a threat to human beings since it only spreads from animals to other animals.
- It is caused by a virus of the genus Pestivirus of the family Flaviviridae, which is closely related to the viruses that cause bovine viral diarrhoea in cattle and border disease in sheep.
- Mortality is 100%.



Source: Hindu