

1. International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

Topic: International Relations



In News: INSTC was operationalised recently as Russia sends consignments for Indian port.

More on the Topic:

- Russia has sent consignments for India from **St Petersburg** which will travel to India via **the Caspian Port of Astrakhan and Iranian Port of Anzali** and from there to **Bandar Abbas Port** and thereafter to Western Indian ports to operationalise INSTC.
- The total journey will take less than 25 days, compared to the nearly 40 days it currently takes to transport goods from Russia to India and vice-versa.

About INSTC:

- The INSTC is a **7,200 km-long multimodal transportation network** encompassing sea, road, and rail routes.
- It links the **Indian Ocean to the Caspian Sea via the Persian Gulf** onwards into Russia and Northern Europe and offers the shortest connectivity route between them.
- Multimodal routes through sea, rail, and road under the INSTC **aim to reduce the carriage cost between India and Russia by about 30%** and bring down the transit time from 40 days by more than half.

Participants of INSTC:

- The foundation of the North-South transport corridor was laid on September 12, 2000, in accordance with an intergovernmental agreement signed between **Russia, Iran, and India.**

- **Azerbaijan** joined this agreement in 2005. This agreement was **ratified by 13 countries** (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Armenia, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine).
- The project has a number of components such as Northern and Western Europe, the Russian Federation, Caucasus, Persian Gulf (Western route); Central Asia — Persian Gulf (Eastern Route); Caspian Sea – Iran Persian Gulf (Central Route).

Significance of INSTC:

- INSTC is considered a **viable option for Indo-Russian trade** amid current geo-political challenges.
- INSTC, in the longer run, **would be an alternative to the Suez Canal and Mediterranean** dominated by some powers.
- This corridor is capable of **boosting India’s economy**. Indian exports are expected to increase substantially during the next calendar year.
- This corridor is **expected to increase market access to the member nations** who can also benefit through various backward and forward linkages.

Source: Indian Express

2. National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) report

Topic: e-Governance

In News: National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) report was released recently.

More on the Topic:

- **Kerala had the highest overall compliance score** among all states and UTs.
- **Jammu and Kashmir, assessed for the first time, ranked the highest among Union Territories** with an overall compliance of nearly 90 percent for national e-governance service delivery assessment (NeSDA).
- Among the Services Portals for North-East and Hill States, the highest-ranking states of Meghalaya and Tripura showed improvement across all six sectors compared to NeSDA 2019.
- 28 central government ministries/departments have already adopted **e-office version 7.0** along with digitisation of the central registration units, enabling creation of



paperless secretariats 'where receipts move online, files move online and correspondence moves online'.

- The migration schedule of the remaining ministries/departments has been drawn up and by February 2023, all ministries will have e-Office version 7.0.

About e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) report:

- The report has been prepared covering the assessment of states, UTs, and focuses on central ministries **on their effectiveness in delivering online services to citizens.**
- It also provides suggestions for governments to further enhance their e-governance service delivery systems.
- **The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) had constituted the NeSDA in 2019** as part of its mandate to boost the e-government endeavours and drive digital government excellence.
- NeSDA 2021 covers services across seven sectors – **Finance, Labour & Employment, Education, Local Governance & Utility Services, Social Welfare, Environment and Tourism sectors.**
- The assessment covered 56 mandatory services for each States & UTs and 27 services for the focus Central Ministries.

Significance of e Governance:

- The limited file movement with four levels of submission and adoption of the desk officer system has ensured that **non-performing officials can no longer hide files.**
- **The uninterrupted functioning of the central secretariat in the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown was possible because of e-office.**

Source: Indian Express

3.Ramsay Hunt syndrome

Topic: International Relations

In News: Pop sensation Justin Bieber has revealed that Ramsay Hunt syndrome caused him partial facial paralysis.

More on the Topic:

- Ramsay Hunt Syndrome is neurological disease in which a virus – Varicella Zoster – causes inflammation of the nerves involved in facial movements.
- When the nerves get inflamed, they lose their ability to function, leading to temporary facial palsy or paralysis.
- What it means is that facial muscles in the infected person cannot receive necessary signals to function properly.



- There are 12 cranial nerves in the body. Ramsay Hunt Syndrome is the viral infection impacting the 7th cranial nerve that is involved in facial movements.
- The symptoms include painful, red rash and blisters in and around the ear, and facial paralysis on the same side.
- Patients also report hearing loss in the ear that has been impacted apart from Tinnitus or ringing sounds. Inability to close the eye causes dryness.

About The Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV):

- The Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) is **the same virus that causes chickenpox and shingles**.
- this virus belongs to the herpesvirus group and can stay in the body as a latent infection. The virus can stay dormant in a person's body and can reawaken to attack the nerves. According to doctors, VZV can get reactivated due to weakening of the immune system. Stress is also considered a trigger.
- It is treated using **anti-viral drugs, steroids and physiotherapy**. Steroids and anti-viral drugs are the cornerstone of the treatment.
- The disease is **not contagious** but can lead to chickenpox in those not vaccinated for the disease.
- The disease is **reversible**. Patients get cured within 15 days to three months of starting the treatment.

Source: Hindu

4. Indian Mouse Deer

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: In recent times, Indian Mouse deer has been reported in the news more often due to multiple incidents of hunting for bushmeat.

More on the Topic:

- The Indian Mouse Deer's appearance is **an odd mix of a deer, mouse and pig**.
- Its face resembles a mouse, it is petite like a deer weighing between 3 to 7 kg, and its four-toed hooves, protruding canines, absent facial scent glands and underdeveloped third stomach bring them close to pigs.



- Its legs are short and thin, which helps it **maintain a small profile while running through dense foliage** without being easily spotted. Both males and females have visible canines, the males with longer ones used during fights.
- The species **lives solitarily or in pairs** and reaches sexual maturity between 5 to 10 months of age.
- They play an **important role in ecology as seed dispersers and form prey to larger carnivores like tigers, leopards and the dhole**. However, their biggest threat and predator remain humans.

Conservation Status:

- **The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** has classified the status of the Indian Spotted Chevrotain as **‘Least Concern’ and ‘Lowest Risk’**. However, its true distribution and population size are largely unknown.
- The true status of the species is possibly unknown, **as rampant poaching has been documented in recent times and fragmentation of wild habitats forms its biggest threat** like other wildlife.

Source: Indian Express

5. India-Tajikistan Friendship Hospital (ITFH)

Topic: International Affairs

In News: A fully-fledged 50 bedded hospital India-Tajikistan Friendship Hospital (ITFH) was formally handed over





to the government of Central Asian country Tajikistan.

More on the Topic:

- This hospital which was renovated by India under a MoU between the two countries in 2013 has been giving free-of-cost valuable medical services for almost eight years to the Armed Forces and civilian population of that country.
- This free medical service is possible due to the financial assistance and technical support by the Indian government.
- India has sent more medical support to the Central Asian country in other forms. This includes through UNICEF 2 million doses of oral polio vaccine in 2010 following the outbreak of Polio in south-west Tajikistan.
- Also, almost 700,000 'Made in India' Covishield vaccines were supplied to Tajikistan in 2021.

About Tajikistan:

- Tajikistan is a country in Central Asia surrounded by **Afghanistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.**
- The Fann Mountains, near the national capital Dushanbe, have snow-capped peaks that rise over 5,000 meters.
- It has **Alay Range in North and Pamir Mountains** (part of the roof of the world, High Asia) in the southeast as main mountain ranges.
- Fedchenko Glacier, world's largest non-polar glacier is situated at Tajikistan.

Source: Business Standard

6. e-Vidhan system for paperless legislation

Topic: e-Governance

In News: A delegation of MLAs from Gujarat visited the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly to learn about the novel e-Vidhan system for paperless proceedings.

More on the Topic:

- The National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) is a system for digitising the legislative bodies of all Indian states and the Parliament through a single platform on which house proceedings, starred/unstarred questions and answers, committee reports etc. will be available.
- Nagaland became the first state to implement NeVA, in March 2022.
- The NeVA system has been developed to make all the work and data related to legislative bodies available online for the use of both citizens and the members of Assemblies.
- It includes a website and a mobile app.

Source: Hindu



1st Legislative Assembly where members can use NeVA app to participate in House proceedings



Enables automation of the entire law-making process, tracking decisions & documents



Spearheading the principle of 'One Nation - One Application'

7. Chelonoidis phantasticus

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: Chelonoidis phantasticus, a giant tortoise species discovered after a century.

More on the Topic:

- Chelonoidis phantasticus is a giant tortoise species believed to be extinct for more than a century. Now, a surviving member has been identified.
- Commonly called the Fernandina Island Galápagos giant tortoise, the species was so far known only from a single individual, collected in 1906.
- Fernandina Island is the youngest island of the Galápagos Islands.
- Like the others, the island was formed by the Galápagos hotspot.





RV Educational Institutions®
RV Training Academy
(Sardar Vallabh Bhai Academy)

- The island is an active shield volcano that has most recently been erupting since April 11, 2009.

Source: Indian Express

No 18, B.B.M.P Building
Kanakapura road,
Tata Silk Farm, Jayanagar,
Bengaluru, Karnataka-560028

+91 89710 43904

rvta@rvei.edu.in

Go, change the world