

1. The annual Global Trends Report

Topic: Reports and Indices

In News: The annual Global Trends Report by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) was released recently.

More on the Topic:

- The report highlighted that globally **100 million people were forced to flee their homes last year** due to violence, human rights abuses, food insecurity, the climate crisis, war in Ukraine and other emergencies from Africa to Afghanistan.
- There were **23.7 million new internal displacements globally due to disasters** (these are in addition to those internally displaced due to conflict and violence). This represented a decrease of seven million, or 23 per cent, compared to the previous year.
- The largest displacements in the context of disasters in 2021 occurred in China (6.0 million), the Philippines (5.7 million) and India (4.9 million).
- At the end of 2021, **89.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide**, including 27.1 million refugees.
- **Nearly five million people in India were internally displaced due to climate change and disasters in 2021.**
- Food scarcity, inflation and the climate crisis are adding to people's hardship.

Displacement Within their Countries:

- Last year also saw **the 15th straight annual rise in people displaced within their countries** by conflict, to 53.2 million. The increase was driven by mounting violence or conflict in some places, for example **Myanmar**.
- The conflict in **Ethiopia's Tigray** and other regions has spurred the flight of millions within the country. **Insurgencies in the Sahel drove** fresh internal displacement, particularly in **Burkina Faso and Chad**.

Source: Indian Express



2. RBI 'Payments Vision 2025'

Topic: Economy

In News: The Reserve Bank of India has published its 'Payments Vision 2025' document.

More on the Topic:

- Total digital payments have increased by **216 per cent and 10 per cent in terms of volume and value, respectively**, for the month of March 2022 when compared to March 2019.
- **The document seeks a three-fold jump in the number of digital payments**, is progressive and aims to establish India as a powerhouse of payments globally, opined industry players.
- **It also envisages more than 3x increase in number of digital payments.**
- Increase in debit card transactions at PoS by 20%;
- **Reduction in Cash in Circulation (CIC) as a percentage of GDP;** among others.
- The core theme of the vision documents is '**E-Payments for Everyone, Everywhere, Everytime**' (4Es), with an overall objective to provide every user with safe, secure, fast, convenient, accessible, and affordable e-payment options.
- The document envisions **the global outreach of UPI, RTGS, NEFT and RuPay cards with internationalisation.**
- The Vision document leverages India's efforts and builds on the focus of G-20 to enhance cross-border payments by addressing the four key challenges of cost, speed, access and transparency.
- The Vision comes with **an objective of providing strategic direction and implementation plan for structured development of the payment and settlement systems in India** through periodic Payments Vision documents, which was started from the year 2001.

Source: Indian Express



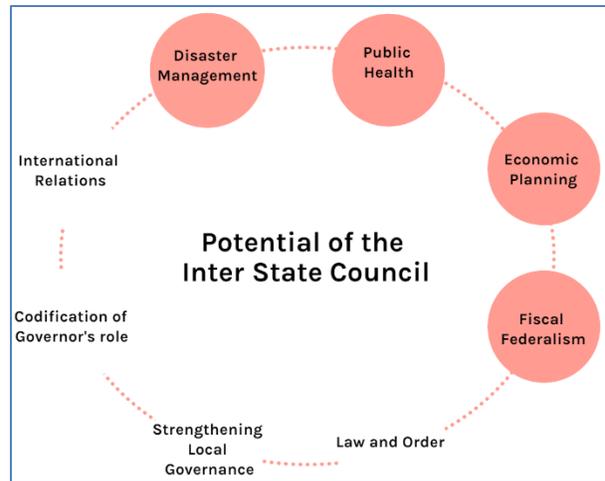
3. Inter-State Council

Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin wrote to Prime Minister asking that at least three meetings of the Inter-State Council should be held every year to “strengthen the spirit of cooperative federalism”.

More on the Topic:

- The Inter-State Council was established under **Article 263 of the Constitution**, which states that the President may constitute such a body if a need is felt for it.
- **The Prime Minister is the chairman of the Council**, whose members include the Chief Ministers of all states and UTs with legislative assemblies, and Administrators of other UTs. Six Ministers of Cabinet rank in the Centre’s Council of Ministers, nominated by the Prime Minister, are also its members.
- **In 1988, the Sarkaria Commission suggested the Council should exist as a permanent body**, and in 1990 it came into existence through a Presidential Order.



Functions of The Council:

- Inter-State Council is a mechanism that was constituted “**to support Centre-State and Inter-State coordination and cooperation in India**”.
- The Council is **basically meant to serve as a forum for discussions among various governments**.
- The main functions of the Council are **inquiring into and advising on disputes between states, investigating and discussing subjects** in which two states or states and the Union have a common interest, and making recommendations for the better coordination of policy and action.

Criticism Regarding Functioning of Inter State Council:

- **Lack of regular meetings:** The Council has met only once in the last six years — and that there has been no meeting since July 2016.
- Since its constitution in 1990, the body has met only 11 times, although its procedure states it should meet at least three times every year.
- There is an institutional gap in the Indian union due to non-functional Inter State Council. It needs to be filled before inter-state frictions get out of control.
- The council also lack a **permanent secretariat** which might have ensured the periodic meetings and fruitful results.

Source: Hindu

4. Meghalaya's Mawsynram

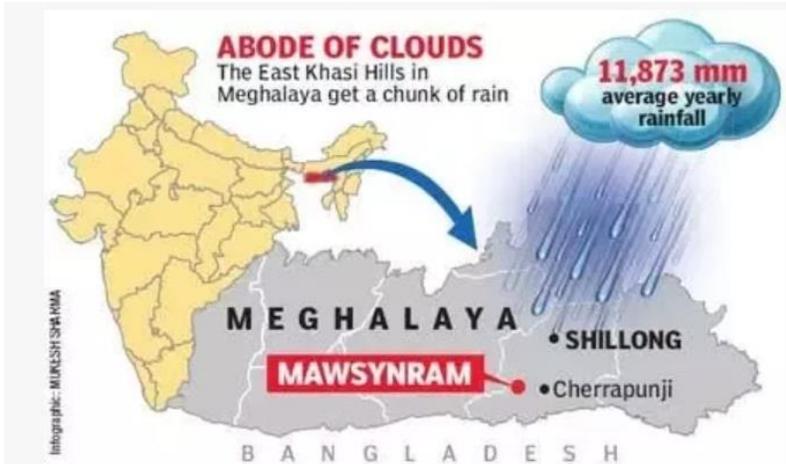
Topic: Places in News

In News: Mawsynram and Cherrapunji together got more rainfall in a day than entire country's average in June.

More on the Topic:

- Mawsynram is a town in the East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya state in northeastern India, 60.9 kilometres from Shillong.
- Mawsynram receives the highest rainfall in India.
- It is reportedly the wettest place on Earth, with an average annual rainfall of 11,872mm.
- Cherrapunji or Sohra is a subdivisional town in Meghalaya.
- It sits on a plateau in the southern part of the Khasi Hills.

Source: Indian Express



5. West Bank

Topic: Places in News

In News: Military clashes are happening in the West Bank.

More on the Topic:

- The West Bank is located on **the west bank of the Jordan River** and is bounded by Israel on the north, west and south.
- On the east of this river lies Jordan. Since the Six-Day War in 1967, also known as the **Third Arab-Israeli War**, the **West Bank has been occupied by Israel**.
- Both Israelis and Palestinians assert their rights to the territory of the West Bank and its disputed status and the conflict has not been resolved as yet.

Source: Business Standard



6. Ancient rock paintings - Bargur

Topic: Art and Culture

In News: Over 200 prehistoric paintings were recently identified at a cave in the forest area of Bargur Hills.

More on the Topic:

- Paintings are in **red ochre and white**. A hunting scene in red displays human figures and a herd of deer standing opposite each other, while in some images, deer of various sizes are presented.
- About 30 feet above the ground, **an anthropomorphic painting, four feet high**, was seen.
- It looks similar to **the Mother Goddess megalithic structures identified at T. Mottur village in Tiruvannamalai district**.
- Two deer and a few animals can be seen beneath the leg of the painting, which depicts the deity blessing humans with resources for hunting.



Source: Hindu

7. Green Mining

Topic: Economy

In News: Coal India is exploring Green Mining Options To Minimise Adverse Environmental Impacts.

More on the Topic:

- For this purpose, coal India is looking at exploring ramping up its underground production by four-fold to 100 million tonne by FY2030 from 25.6 MT in FY22.
- Underground output is environmentally clean, minimally invasive on land degradation, and society friendly.
- Around 70% of the country's coal reserves are conducive for UG mining.



Significance:

- With land turning out to be a major pain point for expansion of coal mining operations, eco-friendly technologies bypass land acquisition and avoid its degradation.
- The locked-up coal assets left out earlier due to techno-commercial and safety concerns can now be unearthed through these technologies.

Source: Hindu