

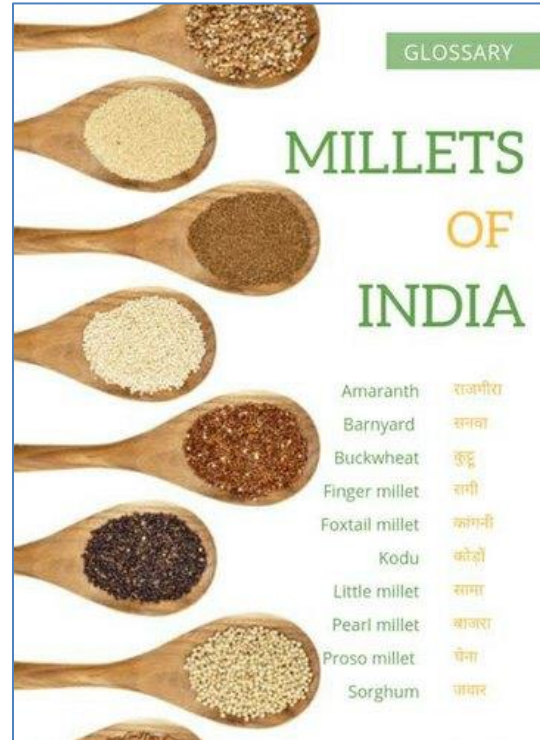
## 1. National Conference on Millets

**Topic: Environment and Ecology/Agriculture**

**In News:** Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries has inaugurated the National Conference on Millets on the theme 'The Future Super Food for India' recently.

**More on the Topic:**

- Millets have been **among the oldest eatables in the country.**
- It is a crop which can be grown well in **dry areas or even on lands with deficient and low fertility** thus is known as the **superfood of India.**
- Due to their short growing season, **millets can develop from seeds to ready-to-harvest crops in just about 65 days** and this characteristic of the millets is of vital importance in thickly populated regions of the world.
- If stored properly, **millets can keep well for two years or beyond.** There is a need to mainstream millets to improve India's nutrition outcomes.



**Significance of Millet Cultivation:**

- They are **adapted to wide range of temperatures.**
- Millets act as a **prebiotic feeding micro-flora in our inner ecosystem.**
- Millets **have low burden on land and being native crops**, they require minimum amount of water and are mostly rain fed.
- They require **minimum maintenance** and in overall growing millets is **economically prudent.**
- They are **resistant to climate change and extreme weather events.**

**Major Millet Growing States of India:**

- India is now the 5th largest exporter of millets globally. The major millets producing states in India include **Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana.**

**Government Initiatives:**

- Under the National Food Security Mission (NFSM) - Special focus on millets for promoting its cultivation.
- Millets have been included in price support and Public distribution system.

**Source: Indian Express**

## 2. India's GSAT-24 Satellite

### Topic: Science and Technology

**In News:** New Space India Limited (NSIL) launched GSAT-24 in its first "demand-driven" communication satellite mission post space sector reforms

#### More on the Topic:

- The entire satellite capacity on-board GSAT-24 will be leased to its committed customer Tata Play, the DTH business of Tata Group, for meeting their DTH application needs.
- GSAT-24 is a 24-Ku band communication satellite weighing 4180 kg with Pan-India coverage for meeting DTH application needs.



#### About NSIL:

- NSIL, incorporated in March 2019, is a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE), under Department of Space (DOS) and is the commercial arm of ISRO.
- Its primary responsibility is **of enabling Indian industries to take up high technology space-related activities** and is also responsible for the promotion and commercial exploitation of the products and services emanating from the Indian space program.

#### About Demand Driven Model:

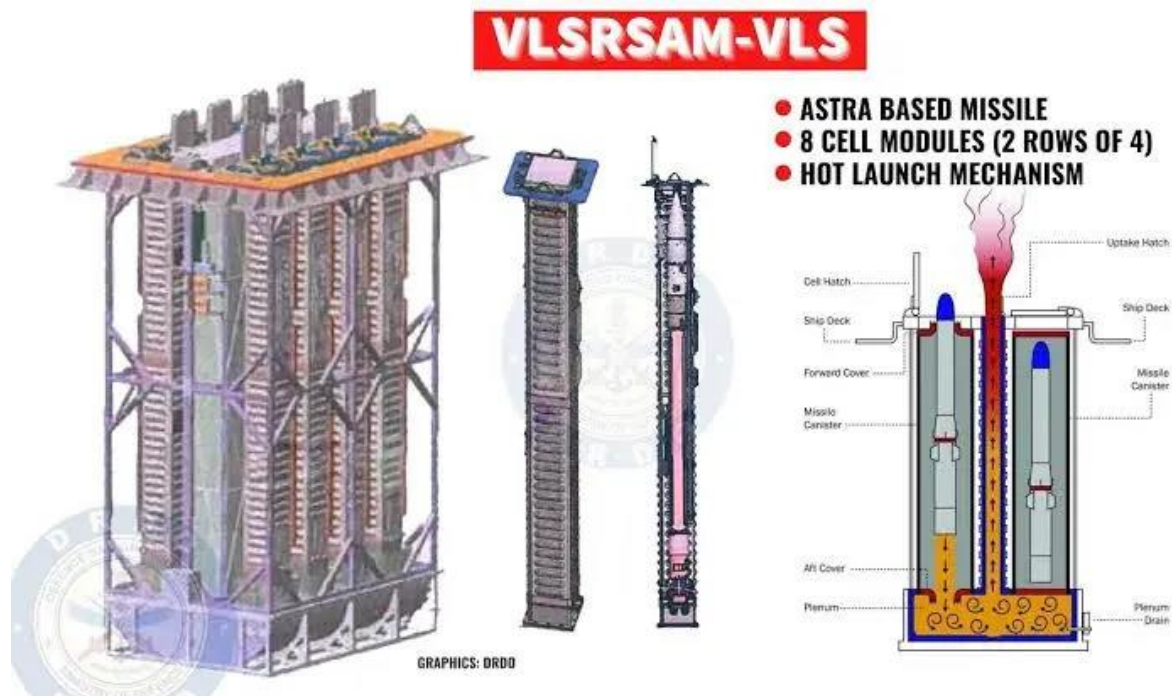
- In June 2020, NSIL was mandated **to undertake operational satellite missions on a "demand driven" model**, wherein it has **the responsibility to build, launch, own & operate satellites and provide services to its committed customer**.
- Demand-driven' mode basically means when satellite is launched, **one will know who the end customers are going to be and what's the kind of utilisation and commitment**.
- Earlier, the mode was more supply driven, with capacity being leased after the launch with largely no firm commitment by customers beforehand.

**Source: TOI**

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### 3.Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM)

Topic: Science and Technology



**In News:** India has recently successfully flight-tested the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile.

#### More on the Topic:

- It is A **surface-to-air missile** developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- **VL-SRSAM is a canisterised system**, which means it is stored and operated from specially designed compartments. In the canister, the inside environment is controlled, thus making its transport and storage easier and improving the shelf life of weapons.
- The VL-SRSAM system has been designed to strike at the high-speed airborne targets at the range of 40km to 50km and at an altitude of around 15km.
- The missile is for **neutralizing various aerial threats at medium and close ranges**, including fighter aircraft and sea skimming anti-ship missiles.

Source: Hindu

## 4. National Conference of Scheduled and Multi-State Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies

### Topic: Economy

**In News:** The National Conference of Scheduled and Multi-State Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies was organized by the Ministry of Cooperation recently.

#### More on the Topic:

- The Conclave will felicitate Urban Cooperative Banks **that have completed 100 years of service to society.**
- There are 197 such banks in the country. This gives an indication of the deep roots of cooperatives and cooperative banks in the country.



#### About Urban Cooperative Banks:

- The term Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs), though not formally defined, **refers to primary cooperative banks located in urban and semi-urban areas.**
- These banks, till 1996, **were allowed to lend money only for non-agricultural purposes. This distinction does not hold today.**
- **The Cooperative banks are governed by the Banking Regulations Act, 1949 and Banking Laws (Cooperative Societies) Act, 1955.**
- The cooperative banks have **important role in providing the bargaining power to the poor, promoting leadership & financial inclusion, etc.**

#### Background of Urban Cooperative Banks:

- These banks were **traditionally centred around communities, localities work place groups.** They essentially lent to small borrowers and businesses. Today, their scope of operations has widened considerably.
- The first known mutual aid society in India was probably **the "Anyonya Sahakari Mandali"** organised in the erstwhile princely State of Baroda in 1889 under the guidance of **Vithal Laxman** also known as Bhausahab Kavthekar.

#### Recent Developments:

- In January 2020, the RBI revised the Supervisory action Framework (SAF) for UCBs.
- In June 2020, the Central government approved an Ordinance to bring all urban and multi-state cooperative banks under the direct supervision of RBI.

Source: Indian Express

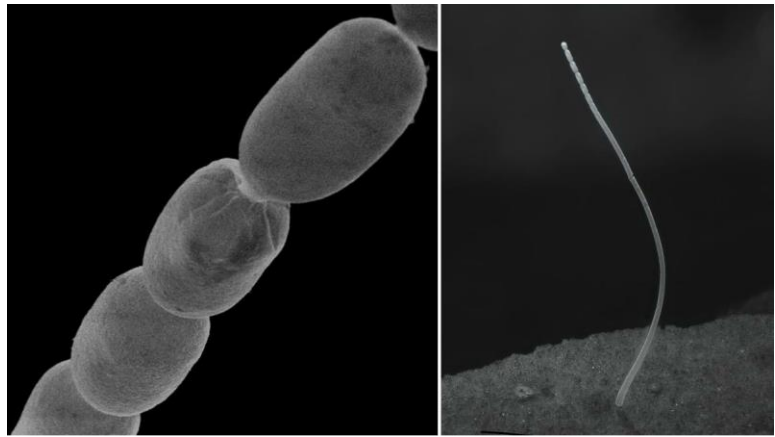
## 5. Largest Bacteria in the World

### Topic: Environment and Ecology

**In News:** World's Largest Bacterium was Discovered in Caribbean Mangrove Swamps.

#### More on the Topic:

- The bacterium, roughly the shape and size of an eyelash, was first discovered in 2009 in the mangrove swamps of Guadeloupe, an island in the Lesser Antilles.
- The bacteria appeared as **long translucent centimeter-long strings** on decaying leaf matter in the water.
- The new species is named as **Thiomargarita magnifica**, meaning “sulfur pearl”.
- These bacteria are about 5,000 times larger than most bacteria.



#### Structure of the Bacteria:

- Inside the gigantic cell, they found an unusual structure. It has a large central compartment, or vacuole. Vacuoles are frequently generalist, multi-functional spaces within cells that contain fluids, waste or collections of enzymes. The vacuole in these cells, however, is strange in that it runs the entire length of the cell and takes up most of the cell's volume.
- T. magnifica did not have nuclei or mitochondria. The team found sulfur granules inside.
- It reproduces by constricting one end before the cell splits in two.

#### Difference from Other Bacteria:

- Bacteria are **commonly thought to be “bags of enzymes,”** where there is no nucleus or Golgi apparatus or any other organelles, and DNA simply floats freely through the cell.
- However, T. magnifica not **only contains DNA within a membrane, but also ribosomes—which create proteins—**cohabitating with the genome.

**Source: Business Standard**



## 6. Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)

### Topic: Economy

**In News:** SEBI has relaxed regulatory framework for AIFs targeting 'accredited investors'.

#### More on the Topic:

- AIFs that are **'large value funds for accredited investors'** have been exempted from filing their placement memorandum by SEBI and merely have to intimate the regulator about the launch of their scheme.
- SEBI also relaxed the conditions for such funds which are **close-ended in nature to extend their tenure beyond two years**, provided appropriate disclosures are made.
- SEBI also has directed all AIFs to **designate an employee as compliance officer**, who shall be a person other than the CEO.
- "The compliance officer shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of the SEBI Act, AIF Regulations and circulars."



#### About Alternative Investment Fund:

- Alternative Investment Funds (AIF for short) are **those funds created or established in India as a privately pooled investment vehicle** in order to collect funds from specific investors as per a previously defined investment policy.
- Hence, in India, AIFs are **private funds which are otherwise not coming under the jurisdiction of any regulatory agency in India**.
- AIF does not include funds covered under the SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996, SEBI (Collective Investment Schemes) Regulations, 1999 or any other regulations of the Board to regulate fund management activities.

#### About accredited investors':

- An 'accredited investor' is also called qualified investor or professional investor.
- They are **a class of investors who have an understanding of various financial products and the risks-** returns associated with them and so, are able to take informed decisions regarding their investments.
- They can be an individual or a business entity that is allowed to trade unregistered securities with financial authorities.



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- Accredited Investors are considered to be capable of dealing in relatively riskier investment products due to their financial capacity and ability to absorb possible financial losses.

**Source: Hindu**

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