

1. Parliamentary Standing Committee on e-Commerce

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: The Standing Committee on Commerce presented its report on 'Promotion and Regulation of e-commerce in India' recently.

More on the Topic:

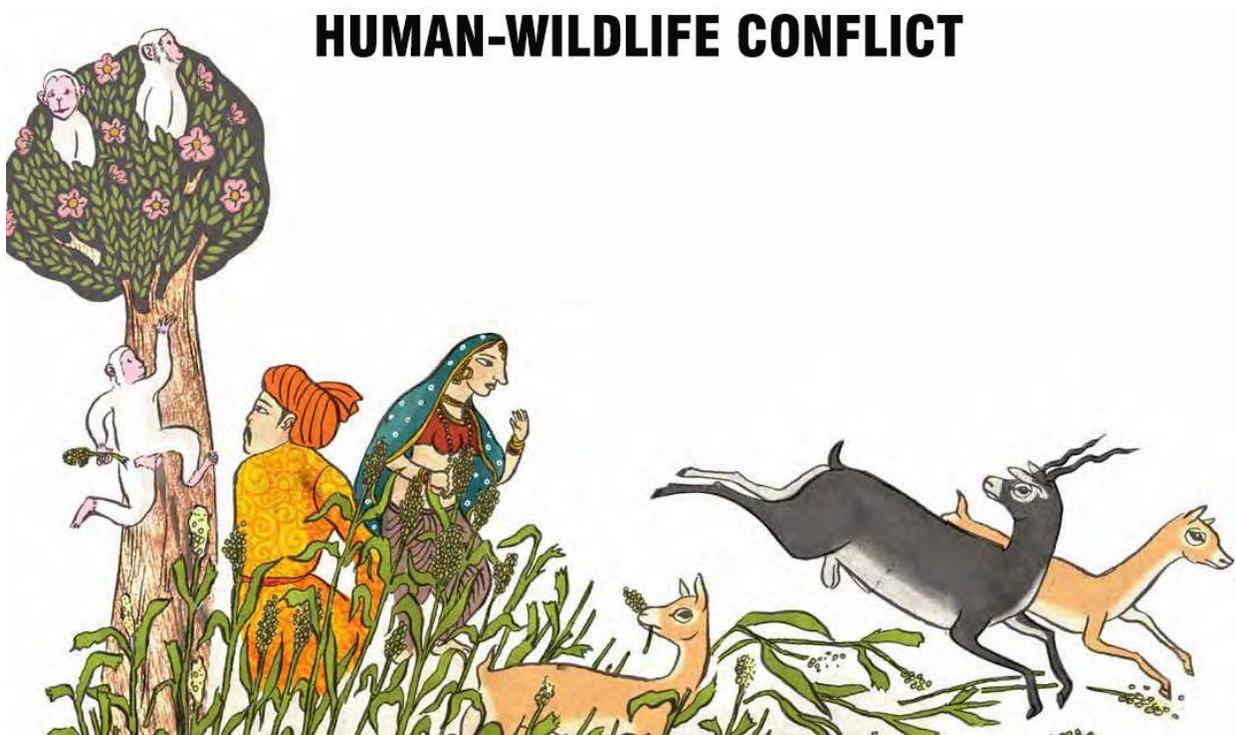
- **Recommendations:**
- **Anti-Competitive Practices:** The Committee recommended **prohibition of selective discounts and arbitrary classification of buyers and sellers** on e-commerce platforms.
- To improve transparency in data handling and search rankings, it recommended that the **government should to formulate a clear policy regulating the collection of data** on the platform, its use and sharing of such data with third parties.
- In addition, e-commerce platforms should **publish their criteria for determining rankings**, and disclose terms and conditions required to become a seller on the platform such as platform fee, commissions, and levies.
- Unilateral revision of these terms and conditions which can be detrimental to any stakeholder must be prohibited.
- **FDI Policy:**
- The FDI Policy on E-Commerce allows FDI-backed e-commerce entities to operate only as a marketplace.
- **The policy is limited in addressing anti-competitive practices in e-marketplace.**
- There should be **a framework to address these issues for both foreign and domestic funded marketplaces.**
- Strengthen enforcement mechanism under the FDI Policy for proactive actions on flouting rules.
- **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC):**
- The Committee noted that ONDC, an initiative of the Department of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), aims to promote an open network for all aspects of digital trade. However, the Committee recommended that DPIIT should address issues such as maintaining a level playing field between small businesses and e-commerce giants and provide technical support to small and local businesses.

- **Addressing Challenges:** Challenges such as digital exclusion of MSMEs, IPR infringement, absence of data use policy etc.exists.
- There is a need for **creation of Digital Market Division** to overcome regulatory gaps. Enact the Personal Data Protection Bill of 2019 and a separate framework for regulation of personal and non-personal data.

Source: Indian Express

2. Human Wild Life Conflict

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: There is increase in human animal life conflict in the recent years

More on the Topic:

- **Elephant deaths:** Between 2018-19 and 2020-21, 222 elephants were killed by electrocution across the country, 45 by trains, 29 by poachers and 11 by poisoning.
- **Tiger Deaths:** Among tigers, too, 29 were killed by poaching between 2019 and 2021, while 197 tiger deaths are under scrutiny.
- **Human Casualties:** Elephants have killed 1,579 humans in three years from 2019 to 2022.
- Tigers killed 125 humans in reserves between 2019 and 2021. Maharashtra accounted for nearly half these deaths.

The main causes of human wildlife conflict:

- Habitat loss, growth of population of wild animals, changing cropping patterns that attract wild animals to farmlands.
- Movement of wild animals from forests area to human dominated landscapes for food and fodder.
- Movement of human beings to forests for illegal collection of forest produce
- Habitat degradation due to growth of invasive alien species, etc.

Way Ahead:

- Increased vigilance and protection of identified locations using **hi-tech surveillance tools like sensors for knowing Animal movements – Eg. Buxa forest**
- Construction of highways/railways bypassing wildlife rich areas like Trans-Canada Highway bypassed Banff National park
- **Expansion of protected reserves** : in-situ and ex-situ habitat conservation measures will help in securing animals their survival and reduced conflict with humans
- **Safe animal zones creation:** re-locating of animal habitats away from residential and commercial centres will serve to minimize animal-man conflict for illegal and self-interested motives
- **Community based rehabilitation measures:** making community responsible for resolution of animal-man conflict will aid in decentralized approach of governance for wildlife preservation. For ex it is done Keibul Lamjao National Park, Kaziranga national park, Sundarbans etc;

Source: Indian Express

3.States and the FRBM Act

Topic: Economy





In News: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has informed that the borrowing by state public sector undertakings or their special purpose vehicles (SPVs) will be considered as borrowing by the state under the FRBM Act.

More on the Topic:

- Borrowings by State Public Sector companies/corporations, Special purpose vehicles (SPVs) and other equivalent instruments, where principal and/or interest are to be serviced out of the State Budgets and/or by assignment of taxes/cess or any other State's revenue, **shall be considered as borrowings made by the State needs the consent of the Union Government under Article 293(3) of the Constitution of India.**
- **Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance** generally follows the fiscal limits mandated by the accepted recommendations of the Finance Commission while exercising the powers to approve borrowings by States under Article 293 (3) of the Constitution of India.

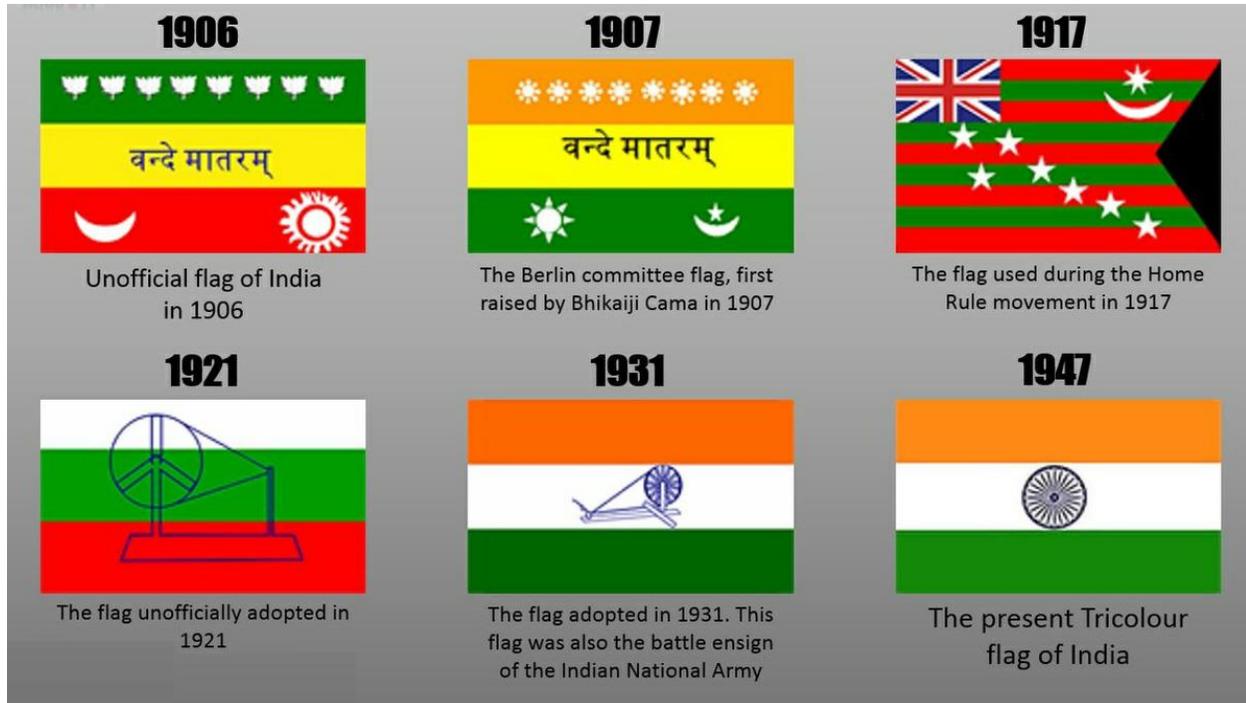
About FRBM Act:

- All States have enacted their Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act Compliance to the State FRBM Act is monitored by the respective State Legislatures.
- **The FRBM Act is a law enacted by the Government of India in 2003** to ensure **fiscal discipline** by setting targets including reduction of fiscal deficits and elimination of revenue deficit.
- The normal Net Borrowing Ceiling (NBC) of each State is fixed by the Union Government in the beginning of each financial year.
- **NBC of the states FY 2022-23 has been determined at 3.5% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** based on the 15th FC recommendation.
- Apart from these, states are also eligible for **additional borrowing of 0.05 of GSDP linked to the performance of the power sector.**

Source: Hind

4. The Flag Code of India

Topic: Governance



In News: The Indian government has amended some the provisions of Flag code of India.

More on the Topic:

- The Centre amended the Flag Code of India, allowing the national flag to be flown both in the day and at night if it is displayed in the open or on the house of a member of the public. Earlier, the tricolour could be hoisted only between sunrise and sunset.
- In an earlier amendment in December, 2021, the government had allowed the use of machine-made and polyester flags. Previously, such flags were not allowed to be used.
- The Centre is encouraging citizens to **hoist the national flag on their houses between August 13 and 15, as part of the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign.**

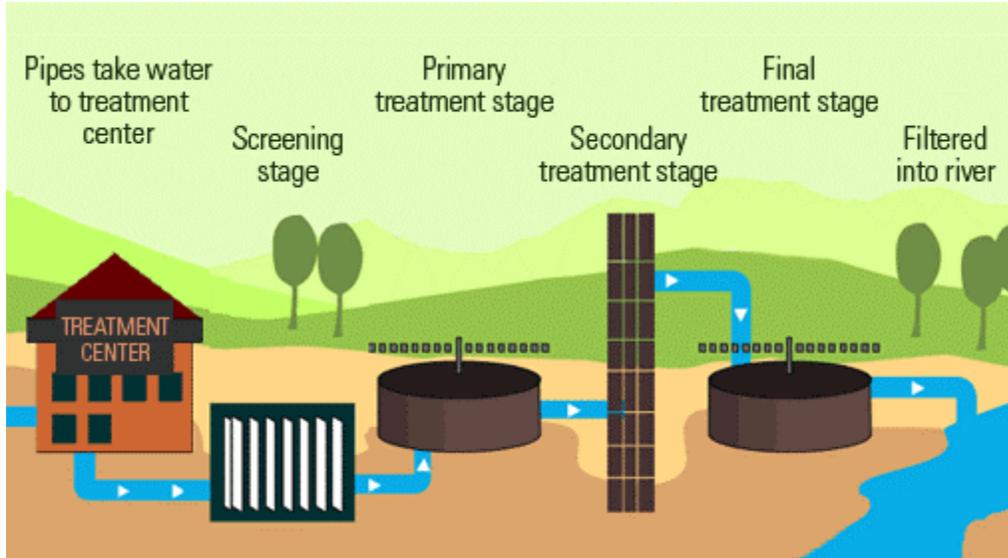
A brief about the Indian national flag:

- The Indian national flag is rectangular, with stripes in three colours: saffron, white, and green.
- It has a **24-spoke navy blue wheel** known as the Ashok Chakra at its centre.
- It was adopted at a meeting of the Constituent Assembly on July 22, 1947.

Source: Indian Express

5. N-Treat Technology

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: IIT-Bombay to help treat Mumbai's sewage with new N- Treat technology.

More on the Topic:

- N-Treat is a seven-stage process for waste treatment that uses screens, gates, silt traps, curtains of coconut fibres for filtration, and disinfection using sodium hypochlorite.
- The first stage involves screening to prevent the entry of floating objects such as plastic cups, paper dishes, polythene bags, sanitary napkins, or wood.
- The second stage has proposed the construction of a silt trap, which creates an inclination and 'parking spot' on the bed of the nullah for sedimentation.
- The next three stages are the installation of 'bio zones' in the form of coconut fibre curtains that will act as filters and promote the growth of biofilm
- to help in the decomposition of organic matter.
- The final stage for sewage treatment will include disinfection using sodium hypochlorite, to kill the bacteria in the water.

Source: Business Standard

6. Alibag's white onion

Topic: Miscellaneous



In News: Alibag's white onion was granted GI tag.

More on the Topic:

- GI tag will benefit farmers as white onion will get premium price.
- It is characterized by its sweetness.
- White onions are grown in Alibagh only with traditional methods and genuine seeds and Geo-climatic conditions of region is the reason for **unique taste, flavour, and shape as well.**

GI Tag:

- GI of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 govern GI tags in India. Geographical indications registered as collective and certification marks are generally protected for renewable ten-year periods.

Source: Business Standard

7. Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: 'Chenkurunji' trees of Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary is battling climate change.

More on the Topic:

- Located in Southern Kerala, the Shendurney wildlife sanctuary owes its name to the endemic species, Ghuta Travancorica, locally known as 'Chenkurunji'.
- Gluta travancorica is **very susceptible to climate change** and the present condition of the species is quite bad with low regeneration performance.
- **The sanctuary was established in 1984 as a part of Agasthyamali Biosphere Reserve.**
- It is a valley of green splendour acclaimed for its rich biodiversity
- lying on either side of the Shendurney River.

Source: Business Standard
