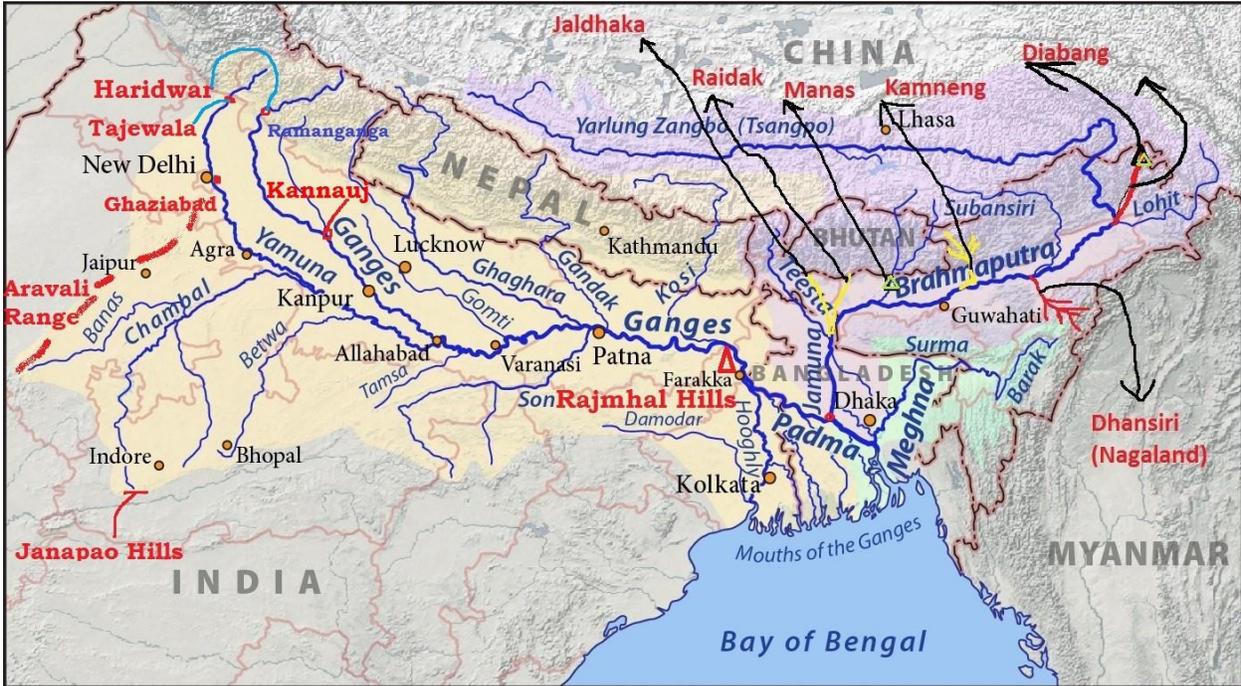


1. Arth Ganga

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: The Director General of the National Mission for Clean Ganga, spoke about the Arth Ganga model during his virtual keynote address to the Stockholm World Water Week 2022.

More on the Topic:

- PM Modi first introduced the concept during the first National Ganga Council meeting in Kanpur in 2019, where he urged for a shift from Namami Gange, the Union Government’s flagship project to clean the Ganga, to the model of Arth Ganga.
- The latter focuses on the sustainable development of the Ganga and its surrounding areas, by focusing on economic activities related to the river.
- At its core, the Arth Ganga model seeks to use economics to bridge people with the river.

Features of Arthganga:

- Under Arth Ganga, the government is working on six verticals.
- The first is **Zero Budget Natural Farming**, which involves chemical-free farming on 10 km on either side of the river, and the promotion of cow dung as fertiliser through the **GOBARDhan** scheme.
- **The Monetization and Reuse of Sludge & Wastewater is the second**, which seeks to reuse treated water for irrigation, industries and revenue generation for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- This is **Livelihood Generation Opportunities**, by creating haats where people can sell local products, medicinal plants and ayurveda.

- The fourth is **to increase public participation by increasing synergies between the stakeholders involved with the river.**
- The Fifth vertical intends **to promote the cultural heritage and tourism of Ganga and its surroundings, through boat tourism, adventure sports and by conducting yoga activities.**
- Lastly, the model seeks **to promote institutional building by empowering local administration** for improved water governance.

Source: Indian Express

2. Pradhanmantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojna (PMBJP)

Topic: Government Schemes



In News: The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers announced One Nation One Fertiliser scheme.

More on the Topic:

- As part of the initiative, fertilisers will be sold under a single brand name, 'Bharat' irrespective of the manufacturing companies under PMBJP.
- Under ONOF companies are allowed to display their name, brand, logo and other relevant product information only on one-third space of their bags.
- On the remaining two-thirds space, the "Bharat" brand and Pradhanmantri Bharatiya Jan Urvarak Pariyojana logo will have to be shown.
- This scheme applies to both public & private sector companies. It will bring about uniformity in fertiliser brands across the country.

Government Involvement in the Fertiliser Industry:

- The maximum retail price of urea is currently fixed by the government, which compensates companies for the higher cost of manufacturing or imports incurred by them.
- Apart from subsidising and deciding at what price companies can sell, the government also decides where they can sell. This is done through the Fertiliser (Movement) Control Order, 1973. The department also regularly monitor movement to ensure fertiliser availability as per requirement, including remote areas.

Criticism About the Scheme:

- The branding by government **disincentives fertiliser companies from undertaking marketing and brand promotion activities**. They will now be reduced to contract manufacturers and importers for the government.
- Fertiliser companies said this **will destroy their own branding and lead to an unnecessary uniformity in the market**.
- Currently, in case of any bag or batch of fertilisers not meeting the required standards, the blame is put on the company. But now, that may be passed on fully to the government.

Source: Indian Express

3. Constitution Bench

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, who has sworn in as the 49th Chief Justice of India has assured there will be at least one Constitution Bench functioning throughout the year in the Supreme Court.

More on the Topic:

- The initiative comes at a time when the **Supreme Court's pendency has crossed over 71,000 from a little over 55,000 in 2017**.

- This is despite the fact that the sanctioned judicial strength of the court was increased to 34 judges in August 2019.
- A steady rise in arrears regardless of the periodic increase in judicial strength has been a constant phenomenon since 1950.

About Constitution Bench:

- Constitution bench is the name given to the benches of the Supreme Court of India which consist of at least five judges of the court.
- The Chief Justice of India has the power to constitute a Constitution Bench and refer cases to it.
- Constitution Bench is set up only if one or more of the following circumstances exist.
- It sits to decide any **case “involving a substantial question of law as to the interpretation”** of the Constitution of India or **"for the purpose of hearing any reference" made by the President of India under Article 143.**
- This provision has been mandated by **Article 145 (3)** of the Constitution of India.
- Two or more three-judge benches of SC have delivered conflicting judgments on the same point of law, thus warranting a definitive pronouncement by a larger bench.
- Two or more three-judge benches of SC have delivered conflicting judgments on the same point of law, thus warranting a definitive pronouncement by a larger bench.

Source: Hindu

4.Credit Rating Agencies

Topic: Economy

No	S&P	Moody's	Fitch	Meaning and Color
1	AAA	Aaa	AAA	Prime
2	AA+	Aa1	AA+	High Grade
3	AA	Aa2	AA	
4	AA-	Aa3	AA	
5	A+	A1	A+	Upper Medium Grade
6	A	A2	A	
7	A-	A3	A-	Lower Medium Grade
8	BBB+	Baa1	BBB+	
9	BBB	Baa2	BBB	
10	BBB-	Baa3	BBB-	Non Investment Grade Speculative
11	BB+	Ba1	BB+	
12	BB	Ba2	BB	
13	BB-	Ba3	BB-	
14	B+	B1	B+	Highly Speculative
15	B	B2	B	
16	B-	B3	B-	Substantial Risks
17	CCC+	Caa1	CCC+	
18	CCC	Caa2	CCC	Extremely Speculative

In News: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has issued fresh guidelines for the credit rating agencies (CRAs) to improve transparency and usability of information disclosed on their websites.

More on the Topic:

- The new rules mandate **credit rating agencies to compare two consecutive rating actions if the change between two consecutive actions** is more than or equal to three notches downward.
- The rule aims **to standardize the methodology of computation and disclosure of a sharp rating action.**
- Sharp rating action is when the credit rating of an issuer gets downgraded in a very short time period.
- While withdrawing any credit rating, CRAs must assign a credit rating to such security in its press release, except securities that do not have outstanding obligations, or security rated is wound up, merged or amalgamated with another company.

Credit Rating Agencies:

- A credit rating is **an assessment of the creditworthiness of a borrower** in general terms or with respect to a particular debt or financial obligation.
- A credit rating agency is a company **that assigns credit ratings, which rate a debtor's ability to pay back debt by making timely principal and interest payments and the likelihood of default.**
- The credit rating agencies in India are authorized and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India as per the SEBI Regulations, 1999 of the SEBI Act, 1992.
- India has seven credit rating agencies namely the CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, Brickwork Rating, India Rating and Research Pvt.

Source: Indian Express

5. India and Bangladesh Discussed River Water Issues

Topic: International Relations



In News: India and Bangladesh discussed a wide range of issues related to the major common rivers such as the Ganga, Teesta and several smaller rivers during the 38th meeting of the Joint River Commission (JRC).

More on the Topic:

- They finalised text of MoU on **interim water sharing of Kushiyara river**. The Kushiyara River is a distributary river in Bangladesh and Assam, India.
- It forms on the India-Bangladesh border as a branch of the Barak River, when the Barak separates into the Kushiyara and Surma.

India Bangladesh Water Sharing Troubles:

- India shares 54 trans-boundary rivers with Bangladesh with several disputes including Teesta, Power project on Barak river etc.
- Bangladesh requested for conclusion of the long-pending **Teesta Waters Sharing Treaty at an early date**. The Indian side assured of their utmost efforts in concluding the agreement.
- Teesta River is a 315 km long river that rises in the eastern Himalayas, flows through the Indian states of Sikkim and West Bengal through Bangladesh and enters the Bay of Bengal.
- The point of contention between India and Bangladesh is mainly the lean season flow in the Teesta draining into Bangladesh.
- **Bangladesh has sought an “equitable” distribution of Teesta waters** from India, on the lines of the Ganga Water Treaty of 1996, but to no avail.
- The failure to ink a deal remains an issue.
- Another problem between India and Bangladesh is the Lack of transparent data regarding trans-boundary rivers.
- Ganga water Treaty 1996 which was signed between India and Bangladesh is about to expire in 2026 its updation is still awaited. The treaty was signed to settle Ganges river water sharing issues with Bangladesh.

Joint River Commission:

- The Joint Rivers Commission of India and Bangladesh was constituted in the year 1972 as a bilateral mechanism to address issues of mutual interest on common / border / transboundary rivers.
- The JRC is headed by Water Resources Ministers of both countries.

Source: Business Standard

6. GAGAN Augmentation System

Topic: Science and Technology

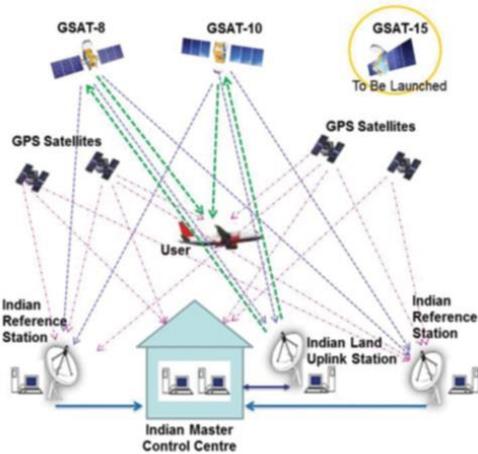


Image: Isro

In News: Boeing 787 aircraft exempted from GAGAN augmentation system compliance till 2025.

More on the Topic:

- GAGAN is India's own **satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS)** which is jointly developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to provide the best possible navigational services over Indian FIR (Flight Information Region) with the capability of expanding to neighbouring FIRs.
- Notably only few countries including the United States (US), Japan, and Europe have their own SBAS.
- GAGAN provides lateral and vertical guidance as an aircraft approaches the runway for landing. **It provides GPS signal corrections, giving better position accuracy.**
- It helps aircraft with guided landing at airports that **do not have instrument landing system for low-visibility operations.**
- **GAGAN also corrects for GPS signal errors caused by ionospheric disturbances,** timing and satellite orbit errors. It even provides vital information regarding the health of each satellite.
- It also helps during natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes by sending messages to affected people.

Source: Business Standard
