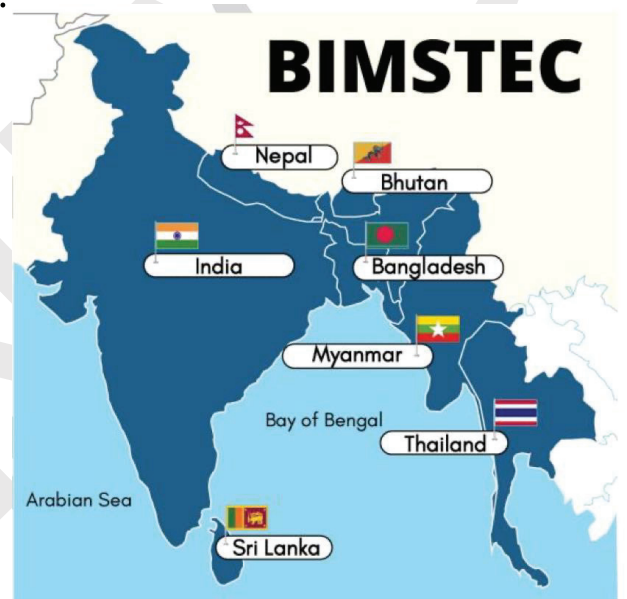


# NEWS TODAY

## SRI LANKA HOSTS 5TH BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BIMSTEC) SUMMIT

- During the summit, **Indian PM called for greater cooperation among BIMSTEC countries** and said it was **time to make the Bay of Bengal (BoB) a "bridge of connectivity, prosperity and security"**.
  - India also **pledged \$1 million to augment BIMSTEC secretariat's budget**.
- Key outcomes:**
  - Adoption and signing of BIMSTEC Charter** to formalizes the grouping into an organization made up of member states that are littoral to, and dependent upon, the BoB.
    - Charter gave BIMSTEC an **international identity and formally stated its purposes and principles**.
    - In the absence of a dedicated charter, BIMSTEC was running with the **spirit of Bangkok Declaration of 1997**.
  - Leaders of BIMSTEC agreed to **divide the working of the grouping into seven segments**, with India providing leadership to the security pillar.
    - Seven segments are:
      - Trade, Investment & Development,
      - Environment and Climate Change,
      - Security,
      - Agriculture and Food Security,
      - People-to-People Contact,
      - Science, technology & Innovation,
      - Connectivity.
  - Declaration of 'Master Plan for Transport Connectivity'** to provide a framework for regional and domestic connectivity.



## CABINET APPROVES USD 808 MILLION FOR RAISING AND ACCELERATING MSME PERFORMANCE (RAMP)

- RAMP is a **World Bank assisted Central Sector Scheme**, supporting various COVID Resilience and Recovery Interventions of **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)**.
  - It is a new scheme that would commence in financial year 2022-23 for **5-year period**.
- It aims at **improving access to market and credit, strengthening institutions and governance at the Centre and State, improving Centre-State linkages and partnerships**, addressing issues of delayed payments and greening of MSMEs.
  - Monitoring and policy overview of RAMP would be done by an **apex National MSME Council, headed by Minister for MSME**, including representation from various Ministries and supported by a secretariat.
- Significance of RAMP scheme**
  - Complement Atmanirbhar Bharat mission** by fostering innovation and enhancement in industry standards, promoting domestic manufacturing etc.
  - Act as Policy Provider** to enable delivery of more effective and cost-efficient MSME interventions to improve competitiveness and business sustainability.
  - Provide necessary technological inputs** to MSMEs to make them competitive and self-reliant.
  - Scale up implementation capacity and MSME coverage** in states as well.
  - Act as **job-enabler, market promoter, finance facilitator**, and will support vulnerable sections and greening initiatives.

### Objective of the scheme is to

- Strengthen institutions and governance of MSME programme
- To support to market access, firm capabilities and access to finance.

## GOVERNMENT EXTENDS SCOPE AND VALIDITY OF EMERGENCY CREDIT LINE GUARANTEE SCHEME (ECLGS) TILL MARCH 31, 2023

- **National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)** has issued modifications to operational guidelines for ECLGS 3.0.
  - Under ECLGS 3.0, business enterprises in hospitality, travel and tourism, leisure and sporting sectors would be able to avail credit under ECLGS.
- **Major modifications**
  - **Increased additional credit support** from existing 40% of fund-based credit outstanding to 50% of fund and non-fund based credit outstanding under ECLGS 3.0.
  - **Cap on maximum borrowing** by a single MSME from aviation industry has been increased to Rs 400 crore from Rs 200 crore earlier.
  - **Eligible borrowers in civil aviation sector** now permitted to avail of non-fund based emergency credit facilities.
- ECLGS, announced in 2020, as one of the key components of Rs 2 trillion economic stimulus package under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'.
  - It aims to provide 100% guaranteed coverage to banks, non-banking financial institutions (NBFCs) in order to enable them to extend emergency credit to business entities in view of Covid-19 to meet their additional term loan/ working capital requirements.
  - Interest rates are capped at 9.25% for Banks and Financial Institutions (FIs), and 14% for NBFCs.

## MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST INTRODUCES RELAXED NORMS FOR GENETICALLY MODIFIED PLANTS AND ORGANISMS

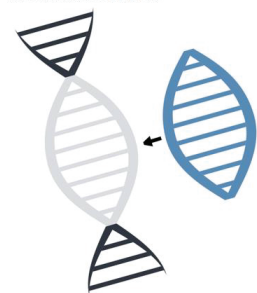
- Central government has for the first time issued an order exempting certain types of genome edited crops from the stringent regulations applicable on genetically modified or GM crops thus giving a big boost to their further research and development.
  - In the recent past, many countries have either developed or approved for commercial cultivation of vegetables, fruits, oilseeds and cereals developed through genome editing such as Gamma-aminobutyric acid or GABA tomato, high oleic canola and soybean, non-browning mushroom etc.

### ● Key highlights

- It allows SDN1 and SDN2 genome-edited products to be exempted from being treated as transgenic products (GMOs) and taking them out of the purview of Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee or GEAC.

#### GMOs

Technique: a foreign gene is inserted into the DNA strand.



Result: the crop takes on improved characteristics associated with the new gene and the genetic modification can be detected through tests.

#### CRISPR gene editing

Technique: gene is cut and its DNA is modified.



Result: the crop's DNA is changed, but tests cannot distinguish the genetically engineered crop from traditional techniques.

- SDN1 and SDN2 involve "knocking off" or "overexpressing" certain traits in a genome without any insertion of gene material from outside.
- SDN stands for Site-directed Nuclease and refers to the practice of cleaving DNA strands to effect the subsequent genome editing.
- SDN3 genome-edited products will be treated as genetically modified organisms (GMOs).
  - SDN3 involves insertion of foreign genes.

- **Gene editing** is a way of making specific changes to the DNA of a cell or organism while GMOs, are the result of tweaking the DNA of a living organism.

## INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO) TO STEP UP TRACKING OF SPACE DEBRIS

- ISRO is building up an orbital debris tracking capability under the 'network for space objects tracking and analysis (NETRA)' project which is an early warning system to detect debris and other hazards to Indian satellites.
  - At present, we have a Multi Object Tracking Radar at Sriharikota range, but it has a limited range.

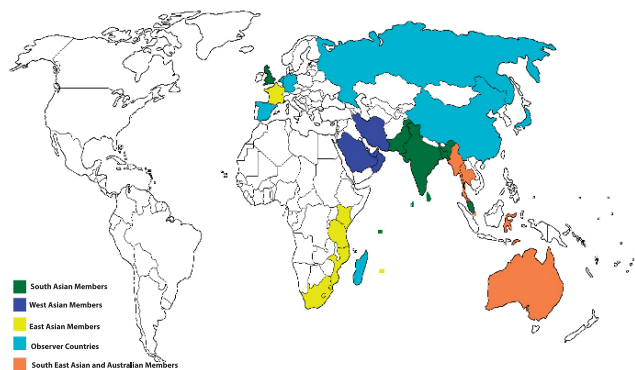
### ● Key highlights

- A space debris tracking radar with a range of 1,500 km and an optical telescope will be inducted.
- The radar, which will be capable of detecting and tracking objects 10 cm and above in size. It will be indigenously designed and built.
- **Space Debris** is any piece of machinery or debris left by humans in space—principally in Earth orbit. These include dead satellites, fragments of rocket bodies and spacecraft etc.
  - Currently, an estimated 20,000 objects including satellites and space debris are crowding low-Earth orbit.
  - It can be a hazard to active satellites and spacecraft; Potential collision threat to space station; Earth orbit could even become impassable if the risk of collision grows too high.





- Radars and optical telescopes are vital ground-based facilities for keeping an eye on space objects, including orbital junk.

# INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL SYMPOSIUM (IONS) HOLDS MAIDEN MARITIME EXERCISE

- Maiden edition of IONS Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22) was **conducted at Goa and in Arabian Sea** with the **aim to enhance interoperability in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations among member navies**.
  - It witnessed participation of 15 out of the 25 member nations of IONS.
- IONS, established in 2007, is a **voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
  - It has **enabled discussions on regional maritime issues, promoted friendly relationships, and significantly improved maritime security cooperation** in the IOR.
  - **Inaugural IONS Seminar was held by the Indian Navy in 2008.**
- **IONS includes 24 nations that permanently hold territory that lies within the IOR (See Map)**
- **Importance of IONS for India**
  - Strengthening and **deepening relations with Indian Ocean littoral states.**
  - Establishing its leadership potential and aspirations of being a **net-security provider.**
  - Fulfilling **India's vision of a rules-based and stable maritime order in IOR.**
  - **Counter-balance** the increasing **presence of China in the region.**



## ALSO IN NEWS

 <p><b>Collective investment schemes (CIS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has tightened the norms pertaining to <b>CIS bringing them on a par with the mutual fund (MF) regulations and removed "regulatory arbitrage"</b>.</li> <li>• A CIS is an investment scheme <b>where various individuals come together and pool their money in order to invest their whole fund collection in a particular asset.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The <b>returns and profits arising from this investment would be shared as per the agreement finalised amongst the investors prior to the act.</b></li> <li>➤ Scheme by a <b>co-operative society are not considered CIS.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>'Ambedkar Young Entrepreneur-Mentor'</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective is <b>to assist entrepreneurs belonging to SCs and OBCs</b> who are unable to take advantage of the venture capital fund (VCF) scheme devised for them by Ministry of social justice and empowerment.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ VCF for SCs and OBCs was launched under the Social Sector Initiatives to promote entrepreneurship among the scheduled castes and to provide concessional finance to them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Under the scheme, <b>the VCF manager, will empanel established businessmen or head of companies or veterans of banking and financial institutions, as 'mentors'</b> who will help the 'mentees' in building prototypes and in investment advice.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Geological heritage sites</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified two geological heritage sites in the Indian Himalayan Region of India.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Siwalik Fossil Park, Himachal Pradesh</b>, displays a rich collection of vertebrate fossils recovered from the Siwalik rocks of the area of Plio-Pleistocene age.</li> <li>➤ <b>Stromatolite bearing Dolomite / Limestone of Buxa Formation at mamley, Sikkim</b>, provides one of the rare examples of early life in Sikkim Himalaya.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Geological Survey of India (GSI) declares geo-heritage sites/ national geological monuments for protection and maintenance. These sites are preserved in the respective States.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Indian Wolf</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first scientific population estimate of <b>Indian peninsular wolves (Canis lupus pallipes)</b> has revealed that only 3,100 members of the species are left in the country.</li> <li>• Indian wolf is a <b>subspecies of grey wolf.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is one of the common large carnivores <b>found in scrub, grasslands and agro-pastoral regions of semi-arid India.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Highest concentration</b> is currently in <b>Madhya Pradesh</b>, followed by Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.</li> <li>➤ <b>Threat-</b> Hunting, encroachment and land conversion, growing man-animal conflict.</li> <li>➤ <b>Conservation status</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Endangered species in Schedule I</b> of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.</li> <li>➤ Appendix 1 of CITES.</li> <li>➤ <b>IUCN-</b> Least Concern</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>





### Digital Sansad App

- **Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) is developing Digital Sansad** - a platform that brings citizens, Members of Parliament and all other stakeholders together.
  - It will enable the parliamentarians and stakeholders to efficiently discharge their duties.
  - It is a **one-stop, seamless, paperless and a sophisticated platform** for viewing all information related to the daily business of the Lok Sabha.
  - It will take forward Indian PM's vision of Digital Government.



### Personality in news

- Shyamji Krishna Varma** (4 October 1857- 31 March 1930)
- He **founded the Indian Home Rule Society, India House (1905) and The Indian Sociologist in London.**
    - India House developed as an organised meeting point for radical nationalists among Indian students in Britain.
    - The monthly **Indian Sociologist became an outlet for nationalist ideas** and through the **Indian Home Rule Society, he criticised British rule in India.**
  - **Ideals & Values:** Staunch nationalist, revolutionary, social reformer, and leader.
  - A memorial called **Kranti Teerth** dedicated to him was built and inaugurated in 2010 near Mandvi.
- Harichand Thakur**
- Harichand Thakur **was born in 1812 in Orakandi in Bangladesh** in a peasant farmer family of the Thakur community (SC community).
  - Thakur, whose family were Vaishnavite Hindus, **founded a sect of Vaishnavite Hinduism called Matua.**
    - This was **adopted by members of the Namasudra community**, who were then also known by the common pejorative name of Chandalas and considered untouchable.
    - The sect opposed the caste oppression.
  - **Ideals & Values:** social reformer, care and kindness
  - Harichand Thakur devoted his life to the **cause of betterment of the oppressed, downtrodden and deprived people in undivided Bengal during the pre-independence era.**



### Places in news

- Sariska Tiger Reserve**
- **Sariska** is located in **Alwar, Rajasthan**
  - It is famous for the **Royal Bengal Tiger**. Other important fauna include Leopard, Wild Dog, Jungle Cat, Hyena etc.
  - It is a **wildlife sanctuary and a tiger reserve.**
  - It is also famous for **Kankarwadi fort, Neelkanth temple and Pandupol hanuman temple.**



#### Yemen (Capital: Sanaa)

- **Saudi Arabia announced that the kingdom and its allies will observe a unilateral cease-fire** in the war in Yemen.
- **Political & boundaries:**
  - Situated in the **southern corner of Arabian Peninsula**
  - **Bordered** by Saudi Arabia to the north, Oman to the east, Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea to the south, and Red Sea to the west.
  - **Shares maritime borders** with the African nations of Djibouti, Eritrea, and Somalia.
    - **Bab el Mandeb**, strait linking the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden lies in Southwest.
- **Geographical features:**
  - **Climate:** lies between two main weather patterns: regular northerly winds (from Mediterranean basin) and southwest monsoon winds.
  - **Highest Point:** Jabal an Nabi Shu'ayb (3,760m).
  - It is an **arid country, and there are no permanent watercourses.**
  - **Socotra Island** (Arabian Sea) is Yemen's largest Island.
- **Old City of Sana'a is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.**

