

NEWS TODAY

RUSSIA ACCUSED OF CLUSTER BOMBS AND THERMOBARIC WEAPONS

- Human rights groups accused Russia of using **cluster bombs and Thermobaric weapons** in the ongoing war.

Cluster munitions

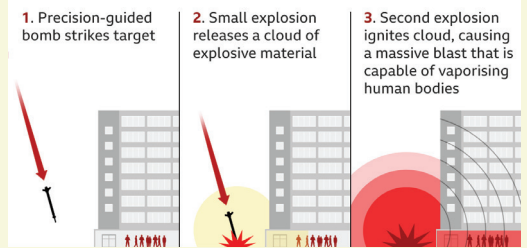
- These are **non-precision weapons** that are designed to injure or **kill human beings indiscriminately over a large area**, and to destroy vehicles and infrastructure.
- They **can be dropped from an aircraft or launched in a projectile**, scattering many bomblets as it travels.
- Many of these bomblets **end up not exploding**, but continue to lie on the ground, posing a threat to the civilian population for long after the fighting has ceased.
- Countries that have ratified **Convention on Cluster Munitions** are prohibited from using cluster bombs. As of date, **there are 110 state parties to the convention**.
 - Russia, Ukraine, India are not signatories.
- India has cluster munitions delivered by ground-launched artillery projectiles, rockets, and missiles.



Thermobaric weapon (also called aerosol bombs, fuel air explosives, or vacuum bombs)

- They **use oxygen from the air** for a large, high-temperature blast.
- Causes significantly greater devastation** than a conventional bomb of comparable size.
- The weapon goes off in **2 separate stages**:
 - As they hit their target, a **first explosion splits open the bomb's fuel container**, releasing a cloud of fuel and metal particles that spreads over a large area.
 - A **second explosion then occurs**, igniting the aerosol cloud into a giant ball of fire and sending out intense blast waves that can destroy even reinforced buildings or equipment and vaporise human beings.
- These are **not prohibited by any international law or agreement**.

How thermobaric weapons work



UNEA ADOPTS HISTORICAL RESOLUTION "END PLASTIC POLLUTION: TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONALLY LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT"

- Representatives from 175 nations endorsed the **resolution at UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5)** in Nairobi to End Plastic Pollution and forge an **international legally binding agreement by 2024**.
 - Under the legally binding agreement, **countries will be expected to develop, implement and update national action plans** reflecting country-driven approaches to contribute to the objectives of the instrument.
- About the resolution**
 - It is based on three initial draft resolutions of **Peru, Rwanda and Japan**.
 - It **addresses the full lifecycle of plastic**, including its production, design and disposal.
 - It **establishes an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee**, which will begin its work in 2022, with the ambition of completing a draft global legally binding agreement by the end of 2024.
- Extent of plastic pollution**
 - Plastic pollution **soared from two million tonnes in 1950, to 348 million tonnes in 2017**. This could **double by 2040**.
 - By 2050, greenhouse gas emissions associated with plastic production, use and disposal, would account for 15% of allowed emissions.
 - More than 800 marine and coastal species** are affected by this pollution through ingestion, entanglement, and other dangers.

About UNEA




UNEA

United Nations Environment Assembly
of the United Nations Environment Programme

- It is the **world's highest-level decision-making body** on the environment.
- It is the **governing body of UNEP**.
- It **meets biennially** to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law.
- It was **created in June 2012**.

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA) ADOPTS RESOLUTION TITLED 'AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE'

- The resolution demands that Russia **immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw** all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine.
 - Total of **141 countries** voted in favour of the resolution, while **35 abstained (including India)**.
 - **5 countries** - Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, Russia and Syria - voted against it.
- While abstaining, India demanded **safe and uninterrupted passage for all Indian nationals** stranded in Ukraine.
 - Earlier, India had **abstained from a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution** deploring Russian attack, while **asserting the need for respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity of states**.
- **About UNGA resolutions**
 - Resolutions and decisions are adopted at UNGA by a **majority of Member States present and voting**.
 - **Important questions including recommendations on international peace and security, election of members to some United Nations principal organs etc, must be decided by a two-thirds majority**.
 - While the decisions of UNGA have **no legally binding force on governments**, they carry the weight of world opinion and moral **authority of the world community**.
 - Also, when a resolution goes to vote in the General Assembly, **none of the permanent 5 members can use their veto**.

About UNGA

- It is the **main policy-making organ of UN** with **universal membership** (193 Member States).
- Each member has an **equal vote**.
- It makes **key decisions for the UN**, including:
 - **appointing Secretary-General** on recommendation of UNSC
 - **electing the non-permanent members** of UNSC
 - approving **UN budget**.

NEW INDIA ASSURANCE (NIA) SET TO INSURE KUDANKULAM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (KKNPP) WITH GLOBAL PARTICIPATION

- NIA will soon complete the placement of property cover for units three and four of KKNPP (Tamil Nadu).
- A nuclear plant has two covers: **a property cover and a liability cover**.
 - **Liability cover for a nuclear plant is always covered by Indian Nuclear Insurance Pool (INIP)**, formed by the general insurers and managed by state owned reinsurer General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC-Re).
- INIP provide insurance to cover the liability as **prescribed under Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act, 2010**.
- CLND Act was enacted with a view to provide prompt compensation to the victims for damage caused by a nuclear incident through a no-fault liability regime.
 - Act facilitates India becoming a State Party to **Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC)**.
- **Key features of CLND Act:**
 - **Exclusive jurisdictional competence** and a mechanism to provide compensation.
 - **Channelling liability to the Operator**
 - Operator means the Central Government or any authority or corporation established by it or a Government company who has **been granted a licence pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962**.
 - **Limiting liability of the operator** in amount and time
 - **Mandatory coverage by the operator** through financial security or insurance.

About Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC)

- CSC established in 1997 is a **worldwide liability regime to increase the amount of compensation available to the victims of nuclear accidents**.
 - A State which is a party to either the 1963 Vienna Convention on Civil Liability or the 1960 Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy can become a party to the CSC.
- A State which is **not a party to either of these conventions could also become a party to the CSC if its national law on nuclear liability is in compliance** with the provision of the CSC and its Annex.
 - India, **not being party to the Vienna or Paris Conventions, signed the CSC in 2010 on the basis of the CLND Act**.

MICROFINANCE'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA'S GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) LIKELY TO GROW, SAYS NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR APPLIED ECONOMIC RESEARCH (NCAER)

- According to a study by NCAER, the **microfinance sector contributed about 2% of India's GVA** (productivity metric for the economy) and about 5.5% in the entire financial sector in 2018-19.
- Microfinance refers to the **financial services provided to low-income individuals or groups** who are typically excluded from traditional banking.
 - The **Malegam Committee (2011)** helped establish microfinance as a legitimate asset class.
- **Microfinance Delivery Model in India:**
 - **Self-help group (SHG) - Bank linkage programme (SBLP):** Microfinance movement in India could be traced to SHG - SBLP started as a pilot project in 1992 by **NABARD**.
 - **Micro Finance Institution (MFI)** like NBFC, Cooperatives etc. It is regulated by RBI.
 - **Bank Partnership Model**
 - **Banking Correspondents**
- **Significance:**
 - **Women's empowerment** by routing credit directly to women, thereby enhancing their status within their families, the community and society at large.
 - **Promotes financial inclusion** enabling the poor and low-income households to come out of poverty, increase their income levels and improve overall living standards.
 - **Provision of credit to the poor** without the need for collateral.
 - **Employment generation**.
- **Challenges**
 - **Over-indebtedness of borrowers**
 - **Comparative high-interest rate**
 - **Over-reliance on commercial banks for funds availability**.

US BODIES PUSH BACK ON PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION (PDP) BILL 2019, SEEK NEW WORKING GROUP

- Trade and industry bodies, tech companies from the US have initiated talks with government officials in India to discuss issues related to the **Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019**.

➤ The new group will function differently from the currently operational **India-US working group on information and communication technology (ICT)**.

Concerns raised about bill include:

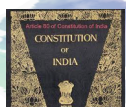
- Provisions of the Bill such as **insistence on local storage of data** and restrictions on cross-border flow of data.
- India **does not yet have large data centres for data localisation**. Small data centres are not very cost effective and do not meet the safety norms of the companies.
- **Inclusion of non-personal data** will hamper policy decision by the corporates.

Key features of PDP bill:

- Governs the **processing of personal data by government**, companies incorporated in India, and **foreign companies** dealing with personal data of individuals in India.
- **Categorises certain personal data** as sensitive personal data like financial data, biometric data etc.
- Personal data **can be processed only for specific, clear and lawful purpose**.
- Allows **processing of data** only by consent except in certain circumstances.
- **Sets up a Data Protection Authority** which may take steps to protect interests of individuals, prevent misuse of personal data etc.

Personal Data	Non-Personal Data
Personal data pertains to characteristics, traits or attributes of identity, which can be used to identify an individual .	Non-personal data includes aggregated data through which individuals cannot be identified .
E.g., while an individual's own location would constitute personal data; information derived from multiple drivers' location, which is often used to analyse traffic flow, is non-personal data.	

ALSO IN NEWS



Article 80 of The Constitution

- Chandigarh Municipal Corporation **has approved a proposal to amend Article 80 of the Constitution** so that its local body could send a representative to the Rajya Sabha.
 - Chandigarh is a Union Territory without any legislative assembly. Chandigarh has a seat of Member of Parliament (MP) only in Lok Sabha.
- Article 80** deals with the composition of the council of states also called the Upper House and Rajya Sabha.
- Now the proposal will be sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs for further consideration. It will then be forwarded to Parliament.



Empanelment rule for deputation of Deputy Inspector General (DIGs)

- Recently, Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) said that **IPS officers coming to the Centre at DIG level would no longer be required to be empanelled** at that level with the Union Government.
 - The move is **aimed at increasing the pool of DIG-level IPS officers for central deputation in the backdrop of massive vacancies** in central police organisations (CPOs) and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).
- According to previous rules, **a DIG-ranked IPS officer with minimum experience of 14 years could be deputed to the Centre only if the Union Home Secretary-led Police Establishment Board empanelled them** as DIGs at the Centre.










Electronic Bill (e-Bill) processing system

- On the 46th Civil Accounts Day, **Ministry of Finance launched e-Bill processing system**.
- E-Way bill system is for **GST registered person / enrolled transporter for generating the way bill electronically** on commencement of movement of goods **exceeding the value of Rs. 50,000**.
- Under this **vendors/supplier can upload their bills online along with supporting documents** from the convenience of their place at any time through digital signature.
- It **eliminate physical interface** between suppliers and government officers.
- It is developed by the **Public Financial Management System (PFMS) Division**.



Umbrella Scheme for 'Relief and Rehabilitation of Migrants and Repatriates' (RRMR)

- Government has **approved continuation of 7 existing sub schemes under the Umbrella Scheme RRMR** for the period **2021-22 to 2025-26** with an outlay of Rs.1,452 crore through the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
 - Scheme **enables migrants and repatriates**, who have suffered on account of displacement, **to earn a reasonable income and facilitate their inclusion** in mainstream economic activities.
 - Some of schemes include Relief and Rehabilitation of displaced families of **Pakistan Occupied Areas of Jammu and Kashmir and Chamb**, **relief assistance provided to Sri Lankan Tamil refugees**, **Brus lodged in relief camps in Tripura** and **enhanced relief to 1984 anti-Sikh riot victims etc.**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It provide relief and rehabilitation assistance to the refugees, displaced persons, civilian victims of terrorist/communal/LWE violence etc.
 <p>Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government argued in Supreme Court that the purpose of PMLA is lost when accused is alerted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was said in response to the petitions alleging the misuse of PMLA. PML Act seeks to combat money laundering in India and has three main objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent and control money laundering To confiscate and seize property obtained from the laundered money; and To deal with any other issue connected with money laundering in India. Enforcement Directorate under Ministry of Finance, is responsible for investigating the offences of money laundering under the PMLA.
 <p>Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field assessment was launched by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Swachh Survekshan, conducted by MoHUA since 2016, is the world's largest urban sanitation and cleanliness survey. Primary goal of SS is to encourage large scale citizen participation and create awareness amongst all sections of society about the importance of working together towards making towns and cities better places to reside in. It is conducted under the ambit of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban). It started in 2016 with 73 cities with million plus population, and covered 4,320 cities in 2021.
 <p>SUTRA [Susceptible, Undetected, Tested (positive), and Removed Approach] Model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SUTRA model has disagreed with the underlying assumptions of the latest study that predicts a fourth COVID wave in India around June. SUTRA is a mathematical model used for forecasting pandemics developed at IIT-Kanpur. It is being used to track the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic in India. It explicitly accounts for large numbers of undetected asymptomatic patients; spatial spread of a pandemic over time and numerically stable methods for estimating the values of all the parameters using the daily new infections data series.
 <p>Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice President urged schools, local bodies and NGOs to organise regular camps to train youngsters in CPR. CPR is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating. Immediate CPR can double or triple chances of survival after cardiac arrest. It includes rescue breathing (mouth-to-mouth) and chest compressions to temporarily pump enough blood to the brain until specialised treatment is available.
 <p>Places in news</p>	<p>Moldova</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India evacuated stranded citizens from Ukraine via Moldova. Features & boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a landlocked Eastern European country. Bounded by Ukraine to the north, east, and south and by Romania to the west. Largest city and capital: Chisinau (Kishinev). It became part of the Soviet Union after World War II and remained so till collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Geographical features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> River: Bulk of the country lies between the Prut and Dniester rivers. Mountains: Moldova lies to the east of the great arc of Carpathian Mountains. Northern and central Moldova is a forest zone, while a steppe belt crosses the south. 
 <p>Flag Code of India, 2002</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre has allowed manufacture and import of machine-made polyester national flags by amending the Flag Code of India 2002. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earlier only flags made by "hand-spun and woven wool or cotton or silk khadi bunting" were allowed. Flag Code of India, 2002 is a compilation of all the laws, practices, conventions, instructions and guidelines governing the display of the National Flag. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It lists the general descriptions of the flag and covers the aspect of display of the flag by the private and public organisations.