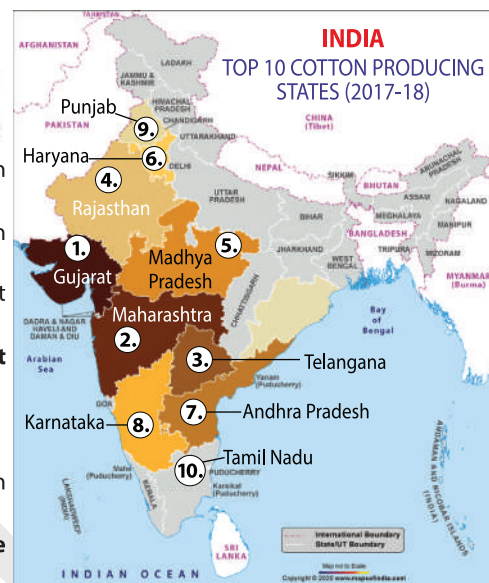


# NEWS TODAY

## INDIA GETS ITS FIRST EVER BRAND & LOGO FOR ITS COTTON ON 2<sup>nd</sup> WORLD COTTON DAY (7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER)

- India's premium Cotton **would be known as Kasturi Cotton in the world cotton Trade.**
  - Kasturi Cotton brand will represent Whiteness, Brightness, Softness, Purity, Luster, Uniqueness and Indianness.
- India grows all four species of cultivated cotton** *Gossypium arboreum* and *herbaceum* (Asian cotton), *G. barbadense* (Egyptian cotton) and *G. hirsutum* (American Upland cotton).
- Cotton is a **Kharif crop and grows well in black cotton soil** (high water retention capacity) of Deccan plateau.
  - Annual temperature requirement is **20-28 degree Celsius** and rainfall of **55-110 cm is ideal**. It requires **minimum 180 frost-free days**.
- India is the **2nd largest cotton producer** (produces 23% of the world cotton) **and the largest consumer** of cotton in the world.
  - India produces about **51% of the total organic cotton production** of the world.
  - It provides livelihood to about **6 million cotton farmers**.
- Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) **has developed a mobile app, Cott-ALLY** for providing information regarding weather condition, Crop situation and best farm practices.
  - CCI, under Ministry of Textiles, is a Public Sector Undertaking. Its **major role is to undertake price support operation for cotton**.



## CABINET RATIFIED BAN OF SEVEN PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POP's) LISTED UNDER STOCKHOLM CONVENTION

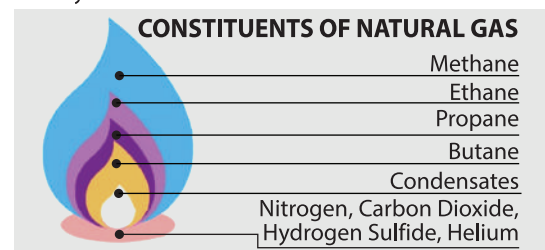
- 7 POP's are** Chlordecone, Hexabromobiphenyl, Hexabromodiphenylether and Hepta bromodiphenyl ether (Commercial octa-BDE), Tetrabromodiphenylether and Pentabromodiphenylether (Commercial penta-BDE), Pentachlorobenzene, Hexabromocyclododecane and Hexachlorobutadiene.
- The ratification process **would enable India to access Global Environment Facility (GEF) financial resources** in updating National Implementation Plan (NIP).
  - GEF, established in Rio Earth Summit 1992, **funds developing countries and countries with economies in transition** to meet the objectives of the international environmental conventions and agreements.
  - NIP is to meet the country's obligations under the Stockholm Convention.
- Stockholm Convention is a **global treaty to protect human health and environment from POPs**.
  - It is **legally binding**.
- India **ratified the Stockholm Convention in 2006**.
  - Ministry of Environment had notified the 'Regulation of POP Rules' in 2018, under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- POP's are chemical substances that **persist in environment for a long period, bio-accumulate in living organisms, adversely affect human health/ environment** and have the property of long-range environmental transport.
  - Exposure to POPs can lead to** cancer, damage to central and peripheral nervous systems, diseases of immune system, reproductive disorders and child development.

## CABINET COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS APPROVES NATURAL GAS MARKETING REFORMS

- The reforms are:
  - Standard procedure to discover market price of gas** to be sold in the market by gas producers.
    - Director General of Hydrocarbon will suggest an **e-bidding platform to provide a transparent and competitive** method of discovering market prices.
  - Permit for the Affiliate Companies** (associated gas companies and not producers) to participate in bidding process. This will kindle competition in the gas market.
  - Complete marketing and pricing freedom** to domestic gas production companies that discovered and developed field plans after February 2019.
    - Last year, Government declared that **new gas discoveries will get pricing and marketing freedom**.
- Reforms are aimed at giving a **boost to the gas economy and reducing import dependence**.
  - Gas comprises about 6.2% of India's primary energy mix** (global average is 24%). The government **plans to increase this share to 15% by 2030**.
  - India currently **produces 84 million standard cubic meters a day (mmscmd) of natural gas** and imports around the same. Reforms are expected to **increase domestic gas production** by an additional 40 mmscmd.

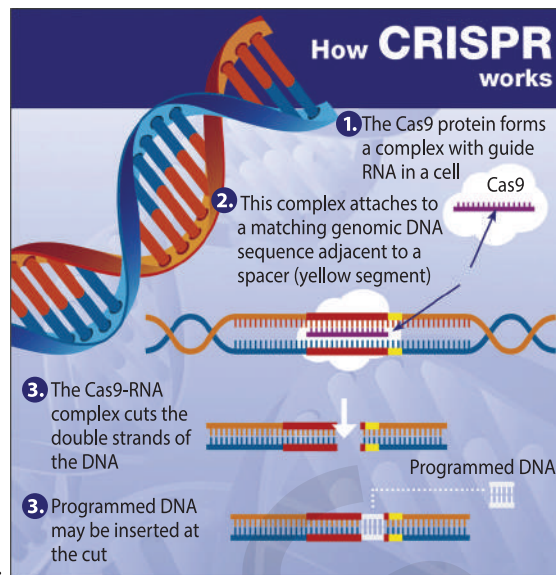
## RIGHT TO PROTEST IN PUBLIC SPACE

- Supreme Court gave a verdict on **Right to protest vs. Right to mobility** on a plea against **blocking of road in Shaheen Bagh in Delhi over Citizenship Amendment Act protests**.
- Highlights of the verdict**
  - Judgment upheld the right to peaceful protest against a law but made it unequivocally clear that **public ways and public spaces cannot be occupied, and that too indefinitely**.
  - In democracy, rights of free speech and peaceful protest were indeed "treasured", but were **subject to reasonable restrictions**.
  - Fundamental rights do not live in isolation**. The right of the protester has to be balanced with the right of the commuter.
  - It noted **Social media channels are often fraught with danger** and can lead to the creation of highly polarised environments.
- Article 19(1)(a)** of the constitution guarantees **fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression**; **Article 19(1)(b)** assures citizens the right to assemble peaceably and without arms.
  - Article 19(2) and 19(3)** imposes **reasonable restrictions** on above rights on various grounds including sovereignty and integrity of India, security of State, public order, etc.



# NOBEL PRIZE FOR CHEMISTRY, 2020

- This year's prize has been awarded to **Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A Doudna** for developing a technique for Genome Editing called "CRISPR-Cas9 Snipping Scissors".
- Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats CRISPR Associated protein 9 (CRISPR-Cas9)** - is used to modify gene function to change genetic code or edit DNA at particular locations.
  - > **Gene** contains bio-information defining an individual like skin-colour, height, hair-colour etc. These attributes can be changed by changing genes, known as **Gene editing**.
- How it works?**
  - > It works as **cut and paste mechanism on DNA Strands**. The genetic codes that need to be changed are identified. The **Cas9 protein is used as a pair of scissors to cut off a part from the strand**.
  - > The strand when broken has self-repairing tendency. This way a damaged DNA strands can be removed and help the human body restore to healthy state.
- Applications:** Edit genes in human embryo, change genetic codes of crops to improve crop resilience, creating new therapies for Cancer treatment, curing inheritable diseases etc.
  - > It is cheap, quick, easy, safe and more accurate.
- Concerns:** Potential of misuse to produce babies with desired characteristics (Designer babies).



## ALSO IN NEWS

<b>Poverty and shared prosperity 2020 Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a <b>biennial report of World Bank</b>.</li> <li><b>Key highlights of the report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Global extreme poverty is expected to rise for the first time in 20 years</b> because of COVID-19.</li> <li>&gt; If the pandemic had not come, poverty rate would have dropped by 7.9% in 2020. Now Global poverty rate is projected to increase to 9.2% in 2020.</li> <li>&gt; About India, report cites lack of sufficient data for estimation. However, it states that <b>India holds largest population of extreme poor</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>India-Japan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key highlights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Both sides <b>finalized a cybersecurity agreement</b> that promotes cooperation the areas of Critical Information Infrastructure, 5G, Artificial Intelligence etc.</li> <li>&gt; Japan agreed to be the lead partner in the connectivity pillar of the <b>Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI)</b>.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ IPOI is launched by India in 2019, aimed at making meaningful efforts <b>to create a safe and secure maritime domain in the Indo-Pacific</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This initiative aims <b>to grant debt-service suspension to poorest countries</b> to help them manage the severe impact of COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>It allows poor countries to <b>concentrate their resources on fighting pandemic and safeguarding lives</b>.</li> <li>It was endorsed by <b>World Bank's Development Committee, IMF and G20 Finance Ministers</b> in April 2020.</li> <li>IMF and World Bank are supporting the implementation of the DSSI.</li> </ul>
<b>Memorandum of Understanding between Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and International Barcode of Life (iBOL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It will help to further <b>efforts in DNA barcoding and comparing individual sequences to a reference database</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; DNA barcoding helps in identifying species by <b>sequencing a short segment of standardized gene regions</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ZSI, under Ministry of Environment, was <b>established in 1916 to promote survey, exploration and research</b> for advancement of our knowledge of various aspects of animal life of India.</li> <li><b>iBOL, a Canadian not-for-profit corporation</b>, is a research alliance to enable expansion of the global reference database and/or the analytical protocols needed to use the reference library to <b>inventory, assess, and describe biodiversity</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Rapid Action Force (RAF)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a specialized force, raised in 1992, <b>to deal with riots and riot like situations</b>, to instil confidence amongst all sections of the society and also, <b>handle internal security duty</b>.</li> <li>It is a <b>zero-response force</b> which gets to the crisis situation within a minimal time, thus <b>enthuses an immediate sense of security and confidence amongst the general public</b>.</li> <li>It is a <b>specialised wing of the Central Reserve Police Force</b> (under Ministry of Home Affairs).</li> </ul>
<b>My Ganga My Dolphin campaign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campaign aims to <b>conduct census in the 250 km stretch of the Ganga River</b>.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; According to last census, there are about <b>2,500 to 3,000 Gangetic dolphins in India</b>. <b>Dams are biggest hindrance</b> as they disturb their migration.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Gangetic Dolphin is National Aquatic Animal of India</b>.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; It is protected under First Schedule of <b>Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972</b>.</li> <li>&gt; IUCN status: "Endangered"</li> <li>&gt; It is covered under <b>Appendix I of CITES and Appendix II of convention on migratory species</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Aero India 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13th edition of Aero India <b>will be held in Bengaluru, Karnataka from February 2021</b>.</li> <li>Aero India exhibition is <b>organized every alternate year</b>. It is one of the major <b>exhibitions for aerospace and defence industries with a public air show</b>.</li> <li>It enables industry professional to <b>gain market insights, announce new developments and gain media coverage</b>.</li> </ul>

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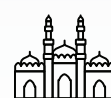
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