

NEWS TODAY

4TH ASIA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (AMC) ON TIGER CONSERVATION

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change released its statement on 4th AMC hosted by Malaysia in collaboration with Global Tiger Forum (GTF).

➤ **AMC is a meeting of thirteen tiger range countries (TRC)** to discuss the plight and plans for conservation of the wild Tiger population.

➤ TRCs consist of Malaysia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

➤ According to the **St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation (2010)**, TRC agreed to Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP) which envisages doubling the wild tiger population by 2022.

- Tiger Conservation efforts of India:**

➤ Under **Project Tiger** (launched in 1973), **India has achieved the remarkable feat of doubling the tiger population in 2018 itself**, 4 years ahead of the 2022 target.

➤ India has 70% of the world's tiger population.

➤ **Conservation Assured Tiger Standards CA|TS:** It is a set of criteria which allows tiger sites to check if their management will lead to successful tiger conservation.

➤ 14 Tiger Reserves in India have already been awarded with international CA|TS accreditation.

➤ **Tiger Reserves (TRs) increased to 51 TRs**, spreading over 18 tiger range states.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CONSERVATION

- The **Successful model of India's tiger governance is now replicated for other wildlife conservation** like Lion, Dolphin, Leopard, Snow Leopard and other small wild cats.

- Tiger guarantees the wellbeing of forested ecosystems and habitats they inhabit in India-** high mountains, mangroves swamps, tall grasslands, dry and moist deciduous forests and evergreen forest systems.

- Being top predators in an ecosystem, Tigers are **vital in regulating and perpetuating ecological processes.**



DEEP OCEAN MISSION A PATH FOR BLUE ECONOMY

- The Chief of the Naval Staff, and Government discussed the modalities to deepen cooperation in Deep Ocean Mission (DOM).
- DOM **aims to explore deep ocean for resources and develop deep sea technologies** for sustainable use of ocean resources.
 - Mission will be implemented in a **phase-wise manner with a total budget of Rs. 4077 Crore over a period of 5 years.** Ministry of Earth Sciences will be the nodal Ministry.

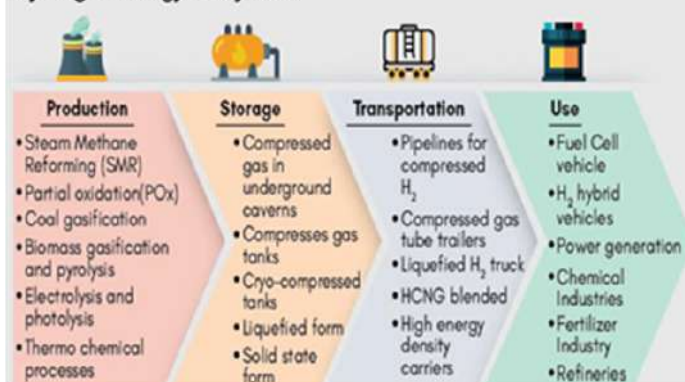
- Major components of the Mission:**

Component	Objective
Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A manned submersible (MATSYA 6000 developed) to carry three people to a depth of 6000 metres. An Integrated Mining System for mining Polymetallic Nodules in the central Indian Ocean.
Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand and provide future projections of important climate variables on seasonal to decadal time scales.
Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bioprospecting of deep sea flora and fauna including microbes and studies on sustainable utilization of deep sea bio-resources.
Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore and identify potential sites of multi-metal Hydrothermal Sulphides mineralization along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges.
Energy and freshwater from the Ocean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies and detailed engineering design for offshore Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion powered desalination plant.
Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of human capacity and enterprise in ocean biology and engineering. Will translate research into industrial application and product development.

HYDROGEN COSTS TO FALL OVER 95% BY 2050, PREDICTS REPORT

- According to the report by Rethink Energy Research, **investments to the tune of \$10 trillion in the hydrogen sector by 2050 will pull down the cost of the fuel and disrupt the energy sector.**
 - Hydrogen is a clean fuel that, when consumed in a fuel cell, produces only water.
 - Hydrogen can be **produced from a variety of domestic resources, such as natural gas, nuclear power, biomass, and renewable power like solar and wind.**
- Key findings**
 - The cost of green hydrogen will fall from about \$3.70 per kilogram today to just over \$1 / kg in 2035, and around \$0.75 / kg by 2050.
 - The **annual demand for hydrogen will hit 771 million tonnes globally** by 2050, as the industry accelerates decarbonisation efforts.
 - Hydrogen will **decarbonise 25% of energy consumption across the globe** and will become the most cost-effective means of energy supply.
 - Green hydrogen technology will fill the gap between renewable energy and Net Zero carbon emissions.**
 - Also, **green hydrogen will replace oil and gas** as well as create a new landscape for geopolitics and clean commodities trading.
 - Green hydrogen is hydrogen generated** either entirely by renewable energy such as **solar and wind, or from low-carbon power.**

Hydrogen energy ecosystem



PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC) ON HOME AFFAIRS ECHOES 2017 HATE SPEECH PROPOSALS BY LAW COMMISSION

- Request has been forwarded by the chairman of the PSC for **suitable amendments to Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)** to tackle hate speech.
 - Hate speech is being used to **spread enmity and disharmony among religion, caste and ethnicity.**
- The Law Commission headed by **Justice B S Chauhan** made **recommendations on the issue in its 267th report in 2017.**

Key recommendations

- Commission proposed the definition of hate speech** as any word written or spoken, signs, visible representations within the hearing or sight of a person with the intention to cause fear or alarm, or incitement to violence.
 - Presently, there is **no specific legal definition of hate speech.**
- Insertion of new Section 153C in IPC** to prohibit incitement to hatred **and also Section 505A** covering causing of fear, alarm or provocation of violence in certain cases.
 - A jail term of up to 1-2 years and Rs 5,000 fine,** was proposed for hate speech offences covered by the two new provisions.
- The **Viswanathan Committee report, 2019 and Bezbaruah Committee 2014** also proposed changes on similar lines.

PRESENT PROVISIONS TO DEAL WITH HATE SPEECH

- Sections 153A and 153B of IPC:** Provides punishment for acts that cause enmity and hatred between two groups.
- Section 295A of IPC:** Deals with punishing acts which deliberately or with malicious intention outrage the religious feelings of a class of persons.
- Sections 505(1) and 505(2) of IPC:** Make publication and circulation of content which may cause ill-will or hatred between different groups an offence.
- Section 8 of the Representation of People's Act, 1951 (RPA):** Prevents a person convicted of the illegal use of the freedom of speech from contesting an election.

WORKSHOP HELD ON 'INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE & HEALTH CARE: THE WAY FORWARD'

- Indigenous Knowledge (IK) or Traditional knowledge (TK)** is knowledge, know-how, skills and practices that are developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity.
 - India has a **rich tribal knowledge base with Indigenous and tribal people living in close association to forest plants and wildlife for food, medicines, and forest materials** to construct dwelling units.
- The use of indigenous knowledge to meet primary health care needs goes back to 1978 when the **World Health Assembly announced the potential use of traditional medicine and urged member states to use traditional medical practices in primary health care.**
- Issues in TK include** - decline in TK as new generations move away from the tribal cultures and habitats and protection of Intellectual property rights on TK.
- Steps taken by government in this regard**
 - Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)** by CSIR in association with AYUSH is aimed at preserving traditional knowledge of Indian herbal medicinal drugs under it.
 - Biological Diversity Act, 2002** was enacted for **preservation, maintenance of TK along with equitable sharing of benefits arising from use of TK** with communities.

INDIA'S ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) TRANSITION AND THE ROLE OF FINANCE

- NITI Aayog, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), and RMI India released a report, titled '**Banking on Electric Vehicles in India**', which **outlines the importance of priority-sector recognition for retail lending** in the electric mobility ecosystem.
- **Inclusion of EVs in priority-sector lending (PSL)** to encourage the financial sector to mobilise necessary capital.

➤ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the PSL guidelines in 1972 **to expand financial access to vulnerable sections of society by enhancing credit for "priority" sectors with high employment and poverty alleviation potential but low bankability.**

➤ Current priority sectors that can receive this credit include **agriculture; micro, medium, and small enterprises (MSMEs); housing; renewable energy; education; social infrastructure; export credit; self-help groups and startups; and weaker sections of society.**

• The Potential of PSL to Scale EV Finance

- Inclusion can directly **incentivise banks to enhance lending** as a part of priority sector targets.
- **Institutionalising the importance of EVs** in India's financial industry.
- **Inclusion for retail lending to EVs has the potential to increase investor confidence** by providing a market signal of ongoing government commitment to the sector.




Exhibit 7

Inclusion of clean energy technologies in priority sector guidelines

Priority sector	Lending guidelines	Clean energy technologies included
Agriculture	Solar equipment loans for farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of stand-alone solar agriculture pumps and for solarising grid-connected agriculture pumps • Installation of solar power plants on barren/fallow land or on stilts on agricultural land owned by farmer
Renewable energy	Loans up to INR 30 crore for commercial borrowers and up to INR 10 lakh for households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar-based power generators, biomass-based power generators, windmills, micro-hydel plants • Renewable energy-based public utilities (i.e., street lighting systems and remote village electrification)

ALSO IN NEWS

<p>50th Statehood Day of Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the three north-eastern states became full-fledged states under the North Eastern Region (Re-Organization) Act, 1971. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The erstwhile princely states of Tripura and Manipur were merged into the Indian Union in October 1949 and became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972. ➤ Meghalaya was part of Assam before becoming a full-fledged state on the same day • In addition, the then UTs of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh also came into being courtesy of the 1971 Act.
<p>Suo moto declaration under RTI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matter came up as a plea to the Supreme court to encourage Suo moto disclosure under Right to Information Act, 2005. • Section 4 of the act provides that Public authorities should provide as much information suo motu to public at regular intervals through various means of communications, so that public have minimum resort to the use of RTI act.
<p>National Single Window System (NSWS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister of Commerce and Industry has called on Indian Missions abroad to popularise the NSWS and suggested that greater awareness be created on it through presentations before large corporations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This comes days after the NSWS granted its first approval in 63 days to a vehicle scrappage facility in Gujarat. • NSWS is a digital platform for guidance of investors to identify and to apply for approvals as per their business requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Know Your Approvals (KYA) module supports information across 32 Central Departments and 14 States.
<p>Online Storage Management (OSM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Food and Public Distribution and Food Corporation of India has developed a roadmap to roll out OSM. • It envisages a single source of information for the stored food grains for central pool through integrating State portals with the central portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OSM will develop an ecosystem of storage management applications across the Decentralised procurement (DPC) states. • Significance: cut down cost for food Storage, address leakages promote efficiency and transparency in stocking.

 <p>NASSCOM report on Startups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the report, more than 2,250 startups in India were added in the year 2021, over 600 more than what was added in the previous year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Startups raised USD 24.1 billion in 2021, a two-fold increase over pre-COVID levels. Startups provided 6.6 lakh direct jobs and more than 34.1 lakh indirect jobs. Indian startups in 2021 had the highest growth rate in terms of deals, and number of startups in comparison to UK, US, Israel, and China.
 <p>Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMRBP is given as recognition to children residing in India, above the age of 5 years and not exceeding 18 years with exceptional abilities and outstanding achievement in 6 fields of Innovation, Scholastic achievements, Sports, Arts & Culture, Social Service and Bravery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each awardee is given a medal, a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000 and a certificate. The awardees also take part in the Republic Day parade every year. For the first time, winners of PMRBP 2022 will be given digital certificates using Block Chain Technology.
 <p>Amar Jawan Jyoti</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government has put out the eternal flame of the Amar Jawan Jyoti underneath India Gate and merged it with National War Memorial (established in 2019). About Amar Jawan Jyoti <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in 1972, to mark India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 War. It symbolised the nation's tributes to the soldiers who have died for the country in various wars and conflicts since Independence.
 <p>Living root bridges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNESCO Heritage tag is being sought for the bridge. Living root bridges are Ficus elastica-based suspension bridges within dense tropical rainforests of Meghalaya. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ficus elastica (Rubber Tree) – a tree that grows abundantly in the subtropical terrain of Meghalaya. Ranging in span from 15 feet to 250 feet, these bridges are grown by indigenous Khasi tribes over a time period of 15 to 30 years, and last for several centuries. Significance: minimal material and maintenance cost, no environmental damage, carbon sequestration, exceptional robustness under extreme climatic conditions including storm surges and flash floods. 

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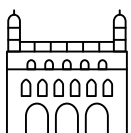
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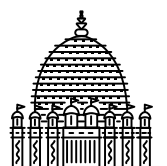
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