

## Puisne Judge:

### ❖ Context

- While recommending two names for appointment as judges of the Supreme Court, the Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said that the collegium had taken into “**consideration the seniority of Chief Justices and senior puisne Judge**”.

### ❖ What does Puisne Mean, and who are Puisne Judges?

- According to the dictionary, the **word puisne** has French origins, which means “later born” or younger.
- **Puisne is almost always** used in the context of judges, and essentially denotes seniority of rank.
- **The term puisne judge is** used in common law countries to refer to judges who are ranked lower in seniority, i.e., any judge other than the Chief Justice of that court.

### ❖ Common Law Countries:

- **Common law** is the body of law that is created by judges through their written opinions, rather than through statutes or constitutions (statutory law).
- Common law, which is **used interchangeably with ‘case law’**, is based on judicial precedent.
- **The United Kingdom (UK)** and the Commonwealth countries, including India, are common law countries.

### ❖ Is a “Puisne Judge” in India the same as in the UK?

- **In the UK, puisne judges** are judges other than those holding distinct titles.
- **The Supreme Court of Judicature Act, 1877** defined a “puisne judge” as any judge of the High Court besides the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice of England, and the Master of the Rolls.
- **In India**, all judges have the same judicial powers. As the seniormost judge of a court, the Chief Justice has an additional administrative role.

- **In India, there is a reference to a puisne judge** only while considering the order of seniority for appointments, elevations to High Courts, etc., but it does not have a bearing on the exercise of a judge’s judicial power.

### ❖ What did the collegium say about Puisne judges?

- **The Supreme Court collegium recommended** Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Aravind Kumar, the current Chief Justices of the Allahabad and Gujarat High Courts respectively, for appointment as judges of the Supreme Court.
- While giving reasons for its recommendation, **the collegium said that the decision** was made taking “into consideration the seniority of Chief Justices and senior puisne Judges in their respective parent High Courts as well as the overall seniority of the High Court Judges”.
- **This was done because** seniority is one of the several criteria that are considered while making appointments to the higher judiciary.

### ❖ Third Judges Case:

- **In the Third Judges Case ruling in 1998**, one of the two cases that led to the evolution of the collegium system, the Supreme Court clarified that “The Chief Justice of India must make a recommendation to appoint a Judge of the Supreme Court and to transfer a Chief Justice or puisne Judge of a High Court in consultation with the four senior most puisne Judges of the Supreme Court.”

## Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)

### ❖ Context

- In the recently presented Union Budget, the Centre has cut the allocation for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) by 21.66% for 2023-24, attracting criticism from some quarters.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

#### • Fund Allocations Over the Years

- Finance Minister has allocated **Rs 60,000 crore for the scheme**, lower than the budgetary estimate of **Rs 73,000 crore for 2022-23**.
- The reduction is sharper when compared with the **revised estimate of Rs 89,400 crore** for the current financial year.
- In 2021-22, an actual **expenditure of Rs 98,468 crore was incurred on the MGNREGS**.

#### • Economic Survey’s Observation

- The Economic Survey 2022-23, said there has been a **Year-on-Year (YoY) decline in monthly demand for MGNREGS**.
- **Reason-** The rural economy is normalising due to strong agricultural growth and a swift bounce-back from Covid-19.

### ❖ About MGNREGS:

- The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 introduced the scheme.
- The scheme was introduced as a social measure that guarantees “**the right to work**”
- It **guarantees 100 days of work a year** to every rural household with an aim to enhance the livelihood security of people.
- In 2010, NREGA was renamed as MGNREGA.
- **Within 15 days** of submitting the application or from the day work is demanded, wage employment will be provided to the applicant.
  - Applicant will get **unemployment allowance** in case employment is not provided within fifteen days of submitting the application.
- The Act currently covers all districts except for those that have a **100% urban population**.



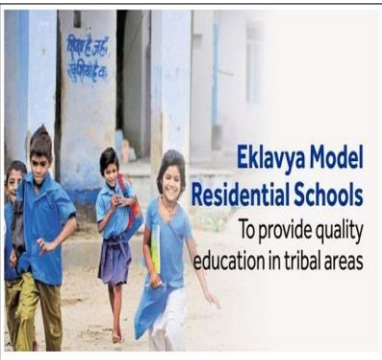
## Face to Face Centres



- The **Ministry of Rural Development (MRD)** in association with the state governments monitors the implementation of the scheme.
- **Social Audit** of MGNREGA works is mandatory, which lends to accountability and transparency.
- It is the **Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat** which approves the shelf of works under MGNREGA and fix their priority.

## News in Between the Lines

### Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)



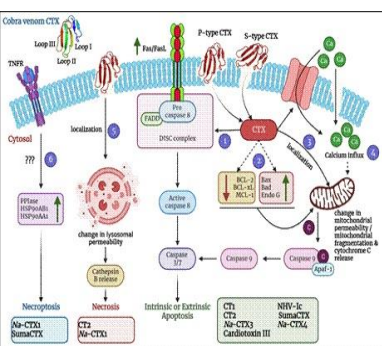
#### ❖ Context

- In the next three years, the **Centre will recruit 38,800 teachers and support staff for the 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools**, serving 3.5 lakh tribal students.

#### ❖ About Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)

- EMRS are set up in States/UTs with grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution of India.
- It started in the year **1997-98**.
- The scheme is being implemented by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India**.
- The EMR School follows the **CBSE curriculum**.
- Each school has a capacity of 480 students, catering to students from Class VI to XII.
- **688 EMRSs** have been sanctioned so far, of which **392 are functional**.
- **Eklavya Model Day Boarding School (EMDBS)**.
  - Wherever the density of ST population “is higher in identified Sub-Districts (90% or more), it is proposed to set up Eklavya Model Day Boarding School (EMDBS) on an experimental basis for providing additional scope for ST Students seeking to avail school education without residential facility.
- **Objectives**
  - To provide quality middle and high level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in remote areas.
  - Comprehensive physical, mental and socially relevant development of all students enrolled in each and every EMRS.

### Anti-Venom Therapy



#### ❖ Context

- Current insight on the mechanisms of Cobra venom cytotoxins can help anti-venom therapy.

#### ❖ Key Highlights:

- **Scientists have** traced the mechanisms of the toxic action of cobra venom, paving a path towards developing strategies for application of antivenom or small molecule inhibitors.
- **It can help** mitigate the local toxic effects of cobra venom retained at the bite site.
- **Cobras (genus Naja)** are widely distributed over Asia and Africa, and cobra bites are responsible for large mortality and morbidity on these continents, including the Indian sub-continent.
- Like other elapid venoms, cobra venoms are **neurotoxic in nature**. However, they also exhibit local cytotoxic effects at the envenomed site, and the extent of cytotoxicity may vary from species to species.
- IUCN Status – **Indian Cobra (Naja naja)** is listed as **Least Concern**.

### Caesium-137



#### ❖ Context

- Recently, authorities recovered a **tiny radioactive Caesium-137 capsule**, smaller than a coin, lost in Australia’s vast Outback.

#### ❖ Key Highlights:

- Caesium-137 (Cs-137) is a radioactive isotope of caesium with a half-life of about 30 years.
- **It is produced through nuclear reactions**.
- It is commonly used in various applications, such as medical treatments, industrial irradiation, and scientific research.
- Radioactive materials like **Caesium-137 produce beta and gamma radiation**, both of which are harmful for humans.
- **Risks**
  - When exposed to them, short term risks include that of radiation poisoning (which can be deadly) whereas in the long term, it can also be a cause of cancer and damage human DNA.

## Face to Face Centres



## Amrit Dharohar



### ❖ Context

➤ Union Finance minister announced **Amrit Dharohar scheme** during her budget speech.

### ❖ About Amrit Dharohar:

- Amrit Dharohar will **encourage optimal use of wetlands**, and enhance bio-diversity, carbon stock, eco-tourism opportunities and income generation for local communities.
- This scheme will be **implemented over the next three years**.
- Amrit Dharohar **will emphasise on the importance of wetlands and their preservation**, with an outlook that is inclusive of local communities as caretakers of the ecosystem.
- **Ramsar Sites**
  - Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance that have been designated under the criteria of the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (1971)** for containing representative, rare or unique wetland types or for their importance in conserving biological diversity.
  - These sites sustain a diverse variety of flora and fauna, from endangered aquatic life to migratory birds.
  - The **total number of Ramsar sites** in India has increased to **75**.
  - As many as 49 new sites have been added to the list since 2019, with **19 being added in 2022**.

## Entrenched Inflation



### ❖ Context

➤ The Economic Survey may have presented an optimistic growth outlook for the next year, but it did **highlight the risks of an “entrenched inflation”**.

### ❖ Difference between Transitory and Entrenched Inflation?

- **Transitory inflation** is a temporary increase in the general price level of goods and services that typically lasts for a short period of time.
- This type of inflation is usually caused by transitory supply-side factors, such as a natural disaster that disrupts supply chains or a temporary increase in the cost of raw materials.
- **Entrenched inflation**, on the other hand, is a persistent increase in the general price level of goods and services that lasts for an extended period of time.
- This type of inflation is **usually caused by demand-side factors**, such as an increase in consumer spending or a decrease in the supply of money.
- Entrenched inflation **can be more problematic than transitory inflation** because it tends to be persistent and can be more difficult to control or reverse.

## Yaya Tso Lake



### ❖ Context

➤ Recently, Yaya Tso Lake proposed as Ladakh's first biodiversity heritage site (BHS).

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- Yaya tso is **located at an altitude of 4,820 metres**.
- Yaya Tso is a **nesting habitat for a large number of birds and animals**, such as the bar-headed goose, black-necked crane and brahminy duck.
- It also has the distinction of being one of the **highest breeding sites of the black-necked crane** in India.

## Beresheet 2 Lunar Mission



### ❖ Context

➤ The Israel Space Agency signed an agreement with NASA for full collaboration on the Beresheet 2 lunar mission.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- Three spacecraft make up the mission: **an orbital** vehicle that will stay in orbit **and two landers** that will touch down on the moon.

### ❖ How is NASA helping Israel's Beresheet 2 mission?

- **NASA will provide SpacEL** and the Israel Space Agency with its advanced communications systems, which is crucial to tracking the spacecraft during the critical phase of the mission.
- **Regarding technology**, one of the Beresheet 2 landers is set to land on the dark side of the Moon while carrying NASA scientific instruments.
- These will carry out another important part of the mission: **Carrying out radiation measurements**.

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## ATMANIRBHAR CLEAN PLANT PROGRAM



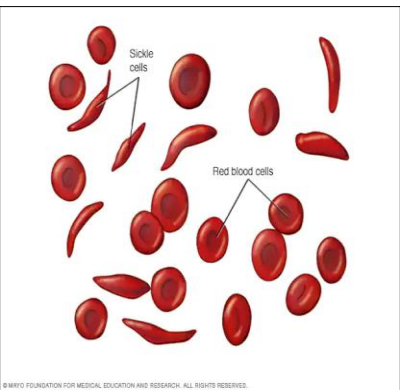
### ❖ Context

- Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program to be launched.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- India is a top producer of many fruits like banana, mango, pomegranate and papaya, yet its contribution in exports is not up to the mark, sometimes owing to poor quality of the produce.
  - **For instance** India's share in global banana production is 27 per cent, but the share in exports is around 1 per cent only.
- Now, in **order to produce high-quality and disease-free material** for horticulture crops, Finance Minister announced Atmanirbhar Clean Plant Program.
- The programme will be anchored by the **National Horticulture Board** which in turn will set up Clean Plant Centers across the country.
- **These centers will ensure** access to disease-free horticulture planting material for the global competitiveness of the Indian horticulture sector.
- **The clean plant programme will aim to** enhance the yield of horticulture crops, dissemination and adoption of climate resilient varieties; protect the ecosystem through proactive virus and disease control measures.

## Sickle Cell Anaemia



### ❖ Context

- The Finance Minister said in her Budget speech that **a mission to eliminate Sickle Cell Anaemia by 2047 will be launched.**

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- It will entail awareness creation, **universal screening of 7 crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in affected tribal areas.**
- It will also have counselling through **collaborative efforts** of central ministries and state governments.

### ❖ Sickle Cell Anaemia:

- Sickle Cell Anaemia is a **genetic condition that causes Red Blood Cells to deform and break down.**
- This can lead to **reduced oxygen delivery** to the body's tissues, causing various health problems, including anemia, pain, organ damage, and increased risk of infections.
- **Treatment**
  - Bone marrow or stem cell transplantation.
- **Side Note**
  - Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is widespread among the tribal population in India where about 1 in 86 births among STs have SCD.

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