NEWS TODAY

MINISTRY OF POWER SEEKS COMMENTS ON DRAFT CARBON CREDIT TRADING SCHEME

- Earlier, **Parliament cleared Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022** with provisions to **make use of clean energy mandatory** and thereby **paving way for setting up a carbon market.**
  - Carbon markets are a **tool for putting a price on carbon emissions—** they establish **trading systems where carbon credits or allowances can be bought and sold.**
  - A carbon credit is a kind of tradable permit that **equals one tonne of carbon dioxide removed, reduced, or sequestered from the atmosphere.**
- **Types of carbon markets:**
  - **Compliance markets:** created because of any national, regional and/or international requirement.
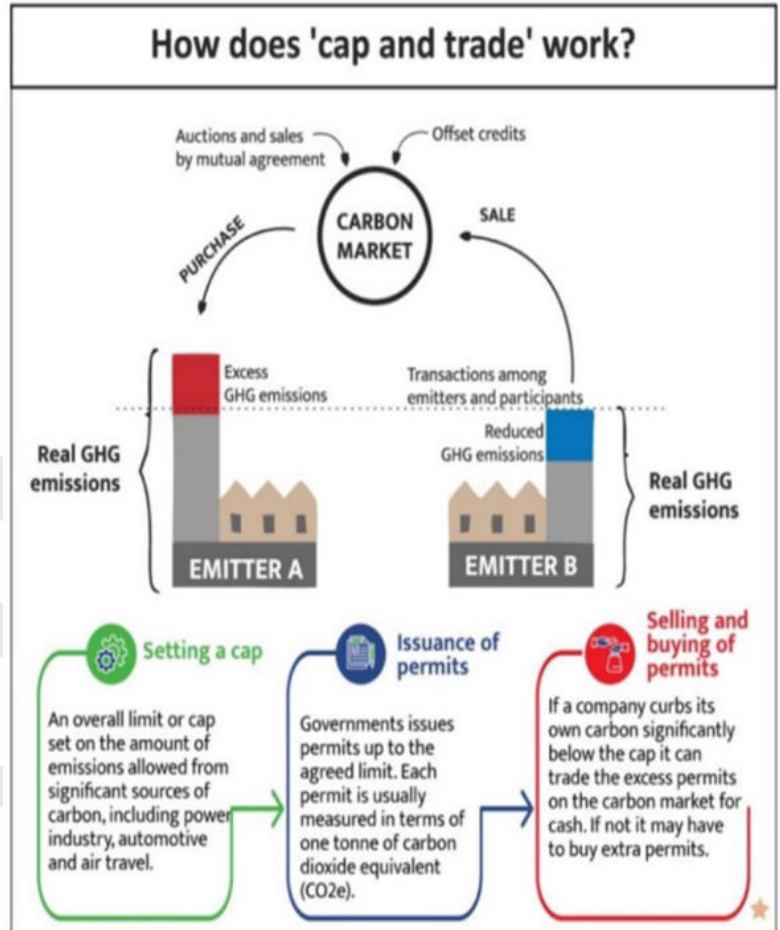 - **Voluntary markets:** Issuance, buying and selling of carbon credits, on a voluntary basis.
- **Examples** include **EU's emissions trading systems (ETS), India's— Renewable Energy Certificates and Energy Savings Certificates, Clean Development Mechanism (CDM),** adopted under Kyoto Protocol.
- **Key provisions of draft scheme**
  - **Set up an Indian Carbon Market Governing Board** (ICMGB) for administrative and regulatory functioning of the market.
  - **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) would be the administrator** for carbon market and operate as secretariat for ICMGB.
  - **Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) as regulator** of trading activities in carbon market.

How does 'cap and trade' work?

Setting a cap: An overall limit or cap set on the amount of emissions allowed from significant sources of carbon, including power industry, automotive and air travel.

Issuance of permits: Governments issues permits up to the agreed limit. Each permit is usually measured in terms of one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e).

Selling and buying of permits: If a company curbs its own carbon significantly below the cap it can trade the excess permits on the carbon market for cash. If not it may have to buy extra permits.

INDIA'S FIRST QUANTUM COMMUNICATION TELECOM NETWORK LINK MADE OPERATIONAL

- A highly secured link, **developed by Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT),** under Department of Telecommunications, was **established for the first time** in India.
- **Quantum Communication** refers to communication channels that **leverage laws of quantum physics to protect data** and make it more secure than traditional transmission.
  - In **traditional key-based cryptography, data and keys are sent as classical bits (representing 1 and 0)** as a stream of electrical or optical pulses.
- However, in a **quantum communication network, data is transmitted via qubits.**
  - **Qubits are particles –** usually photons of light – **in a superposition state,** meaning they **can be in multiple states** and represent numerous **combinations of 0 and 1.**
  - If a hacker tries to read them in transit, **super-fragile quantum state "collapses" to either 1 or 0 and attempt to hack will also be recorded eventually.**
- This property has helped to create **networks for transmitting highly sensitive data based on** a process called **quantum key distribution, or QKD.**
  - QKD involves **transmission of encrypted data as classical bits** while **decryption key is encoded** and transmitted **in a quantum state using qubits.**

JAPAN TO CONNECT LANDLOCKED NORTH EAST REGION (NER) WITH BANGLADESH

- Northeast India may soon get a **trade gateway through Matarbari deep seaport in Bangladesh.**
- **Japan is supporting Bangladesh** in development of **Matarbari port and improve connectivity** in region through **Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative.**
  - ➤ BIG-B aims **to accelerate industrial agglomeration along Dhaka-Chittagong-Cox's Bazar belt area** and beyond, encompassing **developing economic infrastructure,** improving **investment environment and fostering connectivity.**
- Recently, **Japanese PM** while outlining Japan's Indo-Pacific strategy stated that Japan **will promote Bay of Bengal-Northeast India industrial value chain concept** to foster growth of entire region.
  - ➤ Japan is **also assisting in road connectivity in NER to connect to** Japanese-assisted **projects in Bangladesh.**
- **Japan has been working closely** with India **to support development of NER** through **India-Japan Act East Forum (AEF).**
  - ➤ AEF aims **to promote connectivity within this region** and between this region and Southeast Asia.
  - ➤ Forum reflects **synergy between India's Act East Policy and Japan's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific.**
- **Other initiatives for NER**
  - ➤ **Kaladan Multimodal** Transit Transport Project for connectivity with Myanmar.
  - ➤ **Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade** between India and Bangladesh.
  - ➤ **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.**

DON'T INTRODUCE LION IN SAME REGION AS CHEETAH: NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (NTCA)

- **Supreme Court had in 2013** ordered to **translocate Asiatic lions from Gujarat to Kuno National Park** (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh.
  - ➤ Experts had recommended relocation of lions **because Gir (Gujarat) was becoming crowded,** and there was a **risk of a disease decimating the entire population,**
- However, **NTCA has now stated that it is not appropriate** to introduce lion in the same area as the cheetah **as this would be detrimental to the survival of both species** due to interspecies competition.
  - ➤ Recently, Cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa were introduced in KNP.
- Earlier, **Project Lion,** prepared by **Wildlife Institute of India** for Gujarat government, envisaged **landscape ecology based conservation** in Gujarat by integrating **conservation and eco-development.**
  - ➤ **It also identified Barda (Gujarat) as a potential site** where Asiatic lions can be **introduced and populated.**
- **About Asiatic Lion**
  - ➤ **Only found in India**
  - ➤ **Habitat:** Population limited to following protected areas in Gujarat – **Gir National Park, Gir Sanctuary, Pania Sanctuary, Mitiyala Sanctuary, and Girnar Sanctuary.**
  - ➤ **IUCN status:** Endangered.
  - ➤ **Threat:** Vulnerable to disease, genetic inbreeding, potential poaching, accidental deaths due to human causes etc.

National Tiger Conservation Authority

HQ New Delhi

- **Genesis:** A **statutory body** constituted **under 'The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972'.**
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
- **Chairperson:** Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change.
- **Objective:**
  - ○ Providing statutory authority to Project Tiger.
  - ○ Fostering accountability of Center-State in management of Tiger Reserves
  - ○ Addressing livelihood interests of local people in areas surrounding Tiger Reserves.

INDIA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT (IMD) TO ISSUE HEAT INDEX (HI) READING

- IMD, in addition to giving out day's maximum and minimum temperatures, **will soon issue a HI- a reading that gives estimation of what temperature actually feels like.**
  - ➤ It **factors** day's **relative humidity, wind speed, maximum temperature,** and **cloud cover.**
  - ➤ **A colour-based warning will also be issued,** based on the expected HI, listing precautions people can take.
- Calculation of HI **will help states in formulating better Heat Action Plans (HAPs) for heatwave assessment,** forecast, preparedness and mitigation.
  - ➤ Heat wave is considered if **maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C for Plains and at least 30°C for Hilly regions.**
- Recently, **an assessment of HAPs across states by Centre for Policy Research (CPR)** highlighted that:
  - ➤ **Humid heat spells are not being considered** in making HAPs.
  - ➤ Most HAPs are **not built for local context** and have an **oversimplified view of the hazard.**
  - ➤ HAPs **fail to identify vulnerable groups.**
- **Recommendations by CPR on HAPs**
  - ➤ **Incorporation of climate projections, and localisation** of heat hazard definition.
  - ➤ **Incorporate vulnerability assessments** and holistic risk assessments.
  - ➤ Create mechanisms for **inter- and intra-state sharing of knowledge** and best practices.

FAME II SUBSIDY FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVs) AT ONLY 52% OF THE TARGET

- Findings are part of a **parliamentary standing committee report highlighting issues and suggesting ways** to improve implementation of **Faster Adoption & Manufacturing of Electric (& Hybrid) Vehicles (FAME) Scheme.**
- **Issues highlighted**
  - **Lacklustre progress** in both **physical and financial targets.**
  - Only **few cities were covered for e-Buses.**
  - **EV charging stations** sanctioned **only for a few cities.**
  - **Varying utilization of subsidies** across EV segments. While **target for e-buses was achieved** but in **three-wheelers just 15.17% of the target** has been reached.
- **Recommendations**
  - Scheme **should be extended further with new targets, incentives, and measures.**
  - Place greater **emphasis on implementation and extend subsidy to private vehicles,** along with exemption from road tax, registration fee, etc.
  - **Boost to charging** infrastructure.
- Ministry of Heavy Industries **launched FAME scheme** in 2015 **under National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP)** to encourage electric and hybrid vehicle purchase by providing financial support.
  - **FAME Phase I,** functional till 2019, had **four focus areas** i.e., technological development, demand generation, pilot project and charging infrastructure components.
  - **FAME-II** was launched in 2019 and **will continue till March 2024** focusing **electrification of public & shared transportation.**

ALSO IN NEWS

Open ballot system	• **Supreme Court (SC) dismissed a PIL seeking to allow secret ballot** in polls for Rajya Sabha and state legislative councils.
	  ➢ SC observed that **open ballot system is needed to prevent cross voting and maintain party discipline.**
	• **Conduct Of Election Rules makes it mandatory** for an MLA and an MP **to show marked ballot paper to polling agent of a political party** in polls for Rajya Sabha and state legislative councils.
	  ➢ **Showing** a marked ballot **to anyone other than one's own party's authorised agent will render vote invalid.**

Borrowers must be heard before fraud tag	• **Supreme Court** in a recent judgment **stated that principle of natural justice demand that borrowers,** who face a condition akin to blacklisting, **should be given a chance to be heard first.** • **Currently,** a borrower account is **declared as fraud based on the findings of a forensic report** where the **loan has become a non-performing asset** (where interest or principal payment is overdue for 90 days). ➢ **A 2016 circular by RBI** allowed banks to classify **wilful defaulters as 'fraud'.**

Index Providers	• Government has put onus of **regulating the Index Providers on SEBI.**
	• Index providers are **those institutions that formulate and manage indices.**
	  ➢ Their function is **to classify and define markets or a proportion of a market and provide a benchmark of performance** for that market.
	  ➢ An index **allows investors and other stakeholders** to get a **snapshot of the market.**
	• In India, it is **carried out by subsidiaries of stock exchanges,** as a joint venture between the exchange and an index provider.
	• Ex. **Nifty50 by NSE Indices, and Sensex by a venture of S&P Dow Jones and BSE.**

Incubation of New cities	• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is evaluating **proposals from several states for creation of new cities.** • **XV Finance Commission** had recommended a **performance-based challenge fund of ₹ 8,000 crore** to States **for incubation of new cities.** ➢ **Amount available** for each proposed new city is ₹ **1,000 crore and a State can have only one new city.**

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)	• **Ministry of Rural Development** (MoRD) signed a MoU with **few Captive Employers** and provided them a **target under DDUGKY.** • **About DDUGKY:** ➤ Launched in 2014, it is a **skill training and placement program** of MoRD. ➤ It is a part of **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM).** ➤ **Features:** ▪ **Demand led skill training** aimed at rural poor youth **between 15 and 35 years of age.** ▪ Mandatory coverage of **socially disadvantaged groups** (SC/ST 50%; Minority 15%; Women 33%) ▪ Shifting Emphasis **from Training to Career Progression** etc.
Kaziranga National park (KNP)	• After **zero cases of rhinoceros poaching recorded in Assam in 2022,** first such case was reported recently in KNP. • **Geographical location and other features of KNP:** ➤ Edge of **Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots-** Golaghat and Nagaon district of Assam. ➤ Brahmaputra lies on North and **Karbi Anglong hills** on South of Kaziranga. ➤ A **UNESCO's World Heritage Site and a Tiger Reserve.** ➤ Houses **largest-population of one-horned rhinoceros** in world. ➤ **Flora:** Indian gooseberry, cotton tree, elephant Apple etc. ➤ **Fauna:** Great Indian Rhinoceros, Tiger, Leopard, Elephant etc.
Daylight saving time (DST)	• There was **widespread confusion in Lebanon** over the **implementation of the annual DST.** • DST is the practice of **setting of the clocks forward one hour from the standard time during the summer and back again in the autumn.** • It is **done to make better use of natural daylight** and reduce energy consumption. • **It is not widely used in Tropical region** as the regions near the Equator do not experience much variations in daytime hours, between seasons.
Universal Acceptance (UA)	• **India has been chosen as flag-bearer** for this year to promote **UA for digital inclusion.** • **UA ensures that all domain names and email addresses are treated equally** and can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems. • UA means **building a technical environment** to allow computing devices, operating systems, browsers, social media or e-commerce **to accept instructions in local language other than English.** • **UA is a priority for ICANN,** a not-for-profit partnership dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable.
Ubuntu	• Experts suggest that **African philosophy 'Ubuntu'** can help us **fight climate crisis.** • **About Ubuntu:** ➤ African word Ubuntu means **'humanity to others'.** This indigenous philosophy (focusing **on altruism**) provides an **alternative way of thinking to** rampant individualism. ➤ It will help us **focus on and rebuild our relationship with the natural world** and prioritise interconnectedness. ➤ It invokes a spirit of **collective, global and regional inter-governmental** action, as well as **communal and individual efforts** to resolve complex climate crisis.
Places in news	**Egypt (Capital: Cairo)** • Egypt is planning to **import rice from India through rupee trade route.** • **Political Boundaries** ➤ Located in **north-eastern corner of Africa.** ➤ Borders by **Libya** (west), **Sudan** (south), **Israel** (northeast), **Red Sea & Gulf of Aqaba** (east), and **Mediterranean Sea** (north). ➤ **Suez Canal** in Egypt **connect Mediterranean and Red seas.** • **Geographical features** ➤ **Major River:** Nile, longest river of world. ➤ **Highest Peak:** Mount Catherine. ➤ **Major Lakes:** Lake Nasser.