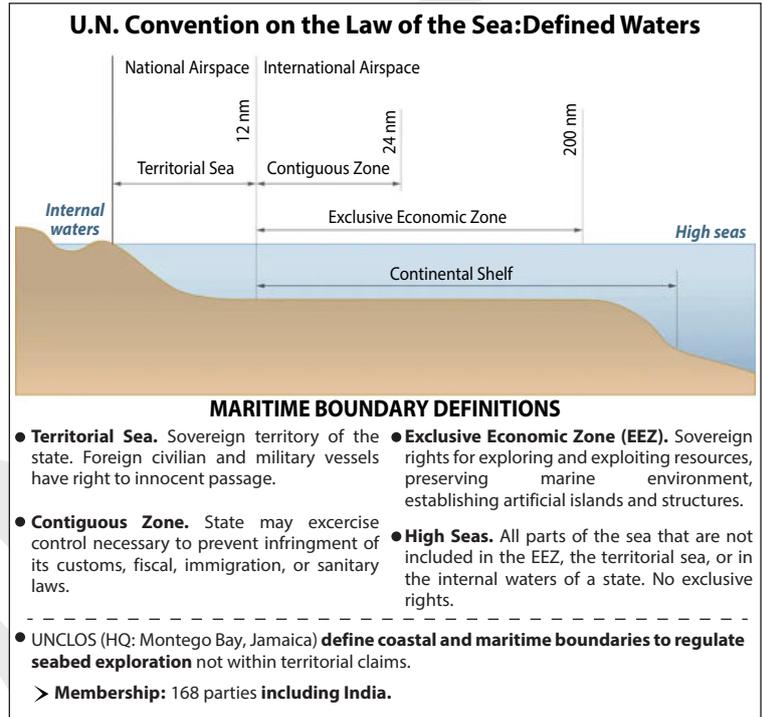


NEWS TODAY

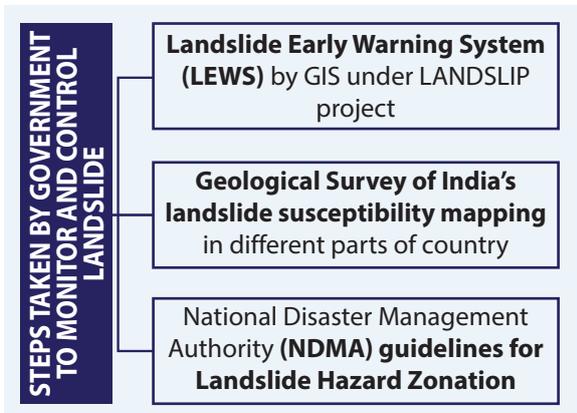
UNITED NATIONS (UN) MEMBERS REACH ACCORD TO PROTECT MARINE LIFE ON HIGH SEAS

- For the first time, UN members have agreed on **unified treaty to protect biodiversity in high seas**.
 - Treaty was negotiated under **United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982** which governs rights of countries regarding marine resources.
- **Treaty of High Seas**, also known as **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty**, will create a **new body to manage conservation of ocean life** and establish **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in high seas**.
 - It'll **put limits on how much fishing can take place**, exploration activities like deep sea mining etc.
- **Significance of treaty**
 - Enforcing UN Biodiversity Conference's pledge to **conserve 30% of world's land and ocean by 2030 (Achieving 30x30 Goal)**.
 - **Obliges countries** to conduct **environmental impact assessments** of proposed activities **on high seas**.
 - **Combine different regional treaties to address threats** and concerns across species' ranges.
- **High seas begin at border of countries' EEZ**, which **extend up to 370km from coastlines** (refer image).
 - They comprise **more than 60% of world's oceans and nearly half planet's surface**.
 - Only **about 1% of high seas are currently protected**.



NATIONAL REMOTE SENSING CENTRE (NRSC), HYDERABAD RELEASES 'LANDSLIDE ATLAS OF INDIA'

- For the first time, NRSC scientists did **risk assessment on landslides recorded between 1988 and 2022** in 147 districts in **17 states and two union territories** to build a Landslide Atlas of India.
 - Atlas, prepared under **Disaster Management Support Programme of ISRO**, provides **state-wise geospatial distribution** of landslides using **space data and geospatial models**.
 - **NRSC is responsible for managing data from aerial and satellite sources**.
- **Key findings**
 - India is **third most landslide prone country** in world.
 - **12.6% of India's land area**, excluding snow covered area, is **prone to landslide**.
 - **Northwest Himalayas** contribute **66.5% of landslides** in India, followed by **Northeast Himalayas (18.8%) and Western Ghats (14.7%)**.
 - **Top 5 districts based on their exposure to landslide:** Rudraprayag and Tehri Garhwal (Uttarakhand), Thrissur (Kerala), Rajouri (J&K) and Palakkad (Kerala).



- Landslide is defined as the **movement of mass of rock, earth or debris down a slope**.
- **Causes of Landslides:** Socio-economic parameters like total population, number of households etc., deforestation, heavy rainfall, earthquake etc.
- **Impact of landslides:** Loss of lives and infrastructure, risk of floods, creates financial burden for rebuilding infrastructure.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS 3-YEAR APPROVAL TO NANO-DIAMMONIUM PHOSPHATE (DAP) FERTILIZER MARKET LAUNCH

- Ministry of Agriculture has allowed IFFCO (**cooperative organization**) and Coromandel International to start production of nano-DAP for three years that would be available from **2023 kharif season**.
- Nano-DAP is a **next-generation fertilizer** with **nanoparticles of Nitrogen and Phosphorus**, i.e., particles with size between **1 to 100 nanometres**.
 - In 2021, IFFCO launched Nano-Urea. It is also **planning to launch nano-potash, nano-zinc and nano-copper fertilizers**.
 - DAP is a **phosphate-based fertilizer** manufactured by **reacting Ammonia** with **Phosphoric acid**, containing **Nitrogen and Phosphorus**.
 - **Nitrogen and Phosphorus** are **primary macronutrients** and part of 18 essential plant nutrients.
- **Advantages of using Nano-DAP**
 - **Reduced fertilizer subsidy burden** and **import dependence** due to its **higher use-efficiency**.
 - **Reduced input cost to agriculture** and helping to double farmers' income.
 - **Improved Agriculture Sustainability** through higher nutrient uptake, lower water consumption and reduction in environmental losses.
- **Concerns of using Nano-DAP**
 - **Increased nanoparticles in soil and crops** from continued nanoparticles use.
 - **Health Hazard** from nano-size particles at higher concentrations.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) - UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF) JOINT REPORT ON SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

- Report titled "More than a billion reasons: The urgent need to build universal social protection for children" reflects **shared commitment to strengthening social protection systems** and expanding them to **reach every child at risk**.
 - **Key highlights**
 - Globally, **just 1 in 4 children (aged 0-15 years)** are covered by social protection.
 - **2.4 billion children in world need adequate social protection**. However, children are still twice as likely as adults to live in poverty.
 - **Increasing number of children without critical social protection** globally, threatening SDGs achievement - **SDG 1 (No Poverty)** and **SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)**.
 - **Challenges children face are growing** and compounded due to COVID-19, increasing cost-of-living, fragility, climate emergency etc.
 - Social protection is defined as **set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout life cycle**.
 - E.g., Benefits for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury etc.
 - **Need for Child centric Social protection:** Boost their **productivity and earning potential**, addressing issues such as **child labour, drivers of gender inequality and exclusion** etc., increased access to food, nutrition, education and healthcare.
-
- Six Steps recommended on the High Road to Universal Social Protection for Children**
- Ensure that social protection systems are adapted to developments in the world of work
 - Accelerate progress towards universal coverage for children for improved well-being
 - Guarantee adequate benefit levels for meaningful change in children's lives
 - Provide a comprehensive range of benefits supporting children and families through a life-cycle approach
 - Ensure sustainable and equitable financing of social protection systems
 - Build rights-based, inclusive, gender-responsive, informed social protection systems

5 YEARS OF ELECTORAL BOND (EB) SCHEME

- EB is a **bearer instrument** in the nature of a **Promissory Note** and an **interest free banking instrument**. EBs was introduced in Union Budget 2017-18.
 - **Citizen of India or a body incorporated in India** is eligible to purchase bond.
 - EBs are issued/purchased for **any value**, in multiples of Rupee **1,000, 10,000, 1,00,000, 10,00,000 and 1,00,00,000** from **specified branches of State Bank of India**.
 - Between March 2018 and November 2022, **64.74 percent of EBs redeemed**.
- **Political parties** receiving donations through EBs have to **redeem them within 15 days otherwise EBs** shall be deposited by authorised bank with **Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF)**.
- **Eligibility of political parties:**
 - **Registered under section 29A of Representation of People Act, 1951** and which **secured not less than one percent of the votes polled in last general election** to House of People or a Legislative Assembly.
- **Significance:** Limit use of cash in political funding, eliminate fraudulent political parties, protecting donor from political victimization, curb black money etc.

Concerns: EBs has been challenged in SC as **EBs do not carry payee name**, this anonymity **impinges upon ethical funding**. Also, there is **no limit on donation by a company to political party** through EBs.

GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP 23 RIVER SYSTEMS FOR CARGO AND PASSENGER VESSEL MOVEMENT

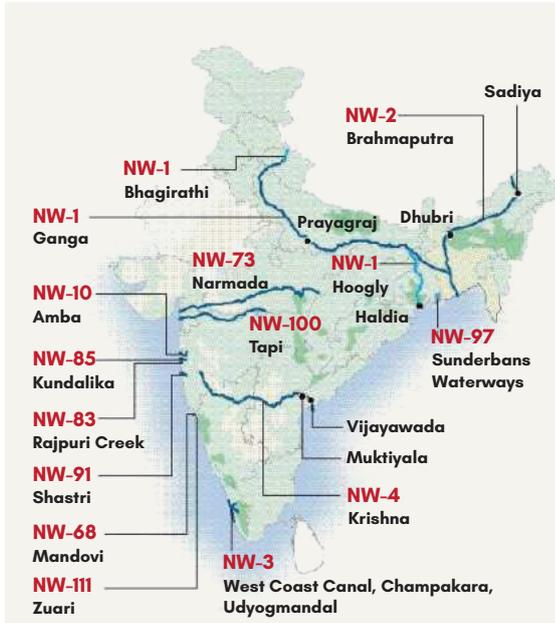
23 river systems are identified out of 111 national waterways based on their feasibility for navigation.

National Waterways (NWs) are declared under National Waterways Act, 2016 to promote Inland Water Transport (IWT) in India.

Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Allahabad to Haldia) was first NW declared in 1986.

Recently, NW-68 between Panjim to Vasco on Mandovi River in Goa was completed.

India has an extensive network of inland waterways in the form of rivers, canals, backwaters and creeks. Inland waterways contribute only around 2% in India's internal freight movement.



THE LINKS AND THE LENGTHS		
NW-1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly (Haldia-Prayagraj)	1,620 KM
NW-2	Brahmaputra river	891 KM
NW-3	West Coast Canal- Champakara Canal- Udyogmandal Canal	205 KM
NW-4	Krishna (Muktiyala-Vijayawada)	82 KM
NW-10	Amba river	45 KM
NW-83	Rajpuri Creek	31 KM
NW-85	Revadanda Creek- Kundalika river	31 KM
NW-91	Shastri river-Jaigad Creek System	52 KM
NW-68	Mandovi river (Usgaon Bridge- Arabian Sea)	41 KM
NW-111	Zuaririver (Sanvordem Bridge-Marmugao Port)	50 KM
NW-73	Narmada river	226 KM
NW-100	Tapi river	436 KM
NW-97	Sunderbans Waterways	172 KM

Benefits of IWT: Eco-friendly and cheaper (less fuel consumption per tonne-km), better connectivity to hinterland, require relatively less maintenance, **reduced pollution** of air, water, noise etc.

Challenges with IWT: Absence of storage facilities, limited number of vessels, inadequate inland ports and logistics system, low technology adaptation etc.

Initiatives for Inland Waterways Development

Establishment of **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** in 1986.

Inland Vessels Act, 2021 replaces Inland Vessels Act, 1917.

River Cruise Tourism on NWs.

PANI (Portal for Asset & Navigation Information) platform for **river navigation and infrastructure information.**

ALSO IN NEWS

Hallmark Unique Identification Number (HUID)

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has prohibited the sale of **hallmarked gold jewellery or gold artifacts without HUID** after 31st March 2023.

Hallmarking of Gold jewellery is done as per **Indian Standards** specified in **IS 1417: 2016** with **3 symbols** (refer image) as

➤ **BIS logo** as first symbol.

➤ **Purity and fineness of gold** as second symbol.

➤ **HUID** as third symbol, **a unique 6-digit alphanumeric** code given to every piece of jewellery to enable traceability.

■ It can be verified in **BIS CARE** app.

Benefit: Provide **third party assurance on purity and fineness of gold jewellery.**



Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023

36 Women WASH Champions across the country receive Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023 by President of India.

Event was organized by **Ministry of Jal Shakti** to felicitate **exceptional and exemplary work being done at grassroots level by women** in implementation of

➤ **Swachh Bharat Mission – Grameen (SBM-G); Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM); Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA-CTR).**

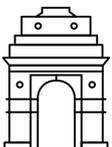
Other highlights

➤ Release of **National Water Mission's (NWM) SoPs on Source Sustainability.**

➤ Launch of **JSA-CTR 2023.**



 <p>BrahMos missile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Navy successfully test-fired ship-launched version of BrahMos missile with an indigenous seeker and booster in Arabian Sea. Earlier, Indian Air Force had also successfully tested BrahMos missile from Sukhoi Su-30 MKI aircraft. BrahMos is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft, or land having range of 450 km. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a joint venture of India and Russia and it's named after rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva. It is a two-stage missile with solid propellant booster engine as its first stage and a liquid ramjet as second stage. Operates on Fire and Forget principle. It flies at a speed of 2.8 Mach or almost three times speed of sound.
 <p>Bamboo Crash Barrier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India has installed the world's 1st Bamboo crash barrier on Vani-Warora highway in Maharashtra. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200m long Bamboo Crash Barrier, named Bahu Balli, is made from Bambusa Balcoa species of bamboo. Bambusa Balcoa, also known as Female Bamboo, is a tropical clumping bamboo mainly grown in Northeast India and West Bengal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is commonly used in building material for houses, bridges, fishing floats, scaffolding, baskets etc. Benefits as Crash Barrier: An alternative to current steel barriers, bamboo barriers have higher recycling value (50-70%) as compared to steel barriers (30-50%).
 <p>Great Seahorses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per a new study, extensive fishing off the Coromandel coast could be forcing great seahorse to migrate toward Odisha. Seahorses are a type of fish with horse-like heads. They are poor swimmers but migrate by rafting (clinging to floating substrata). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 46 species of seahorses reported worldwide. Coastal ecosystems of India house 9 out of 12 species found in Indo-Pacific. Habitat: Seagrass, mangroves, macroalgal beds, and coral reefs. IUCN status: Vulnerable.
 <p>Global Education Monitoring Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report was released by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Key findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 17% of countries cover sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression issues - least covered areas in CSE curricula. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality. Only 20% countries have laws and 39% have a national policy that specifically addresses sexuality education. Sexuality education in primary education is compulsory in 68% countries and in secondary education in 76%. Contraception issues are covered in school curriculum in two-thirds of countries.
 <p>Lewis Super Acids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers at Paderborn University, Germany have been able to make a unique class of catalysts called Lewis super-acids. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Named for chemist, G N Lewis, Lewis super-acids derive from Lewis acids. A Lewis acid is any substance, such as a Hydrogen ion (H+) that can accept a pair of nonbonding electrons. In other words, it is an electron-pair acceptor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are often used to speed up chemical reactions. Lewis superacids are stronger than antimony pentafluoride-- strongest Lewis acid -- and can break even toughest bonds. <p>NOTE: A Lewis base is any substance, such as OH- ion, that can donate a pair of nonbonding electrons. Therefore, it is an electron-pair donor.</p>



DELHI



LUCKNOW



JAIPUR



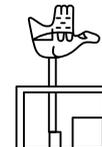
HYDERABAD



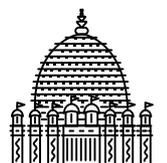
PUNE



AHMEDABAD



CHANDIGARH



GUWAHATI