MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MOE) RELEASES ALL INDIA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION (AISHE) 2020-2021

- AISHE has been conducted since 2011 by MoE **covering all higher educational institutions located in country.**
  - It collects **detailed information on different educational parameters.**
  - For the first time, Survey **collected data using an entirely online data collection platform through Web Data Capture Format (DCF).**
  - **DCF** was developed by **Department of Higher Education** through the **National Informatics Centre (NIC).**
- Key Findings

Specification	2020-21	Trend w.r.t 2014-15
Total student enrollment: UP, Maharashtra, TN, MP, Karnataka and Rajasthan are top 6 States in terms of number of student enrolled.	4.14 crore	21% **rise**
Female enrolment	2.01 crore	28% **rise**
Percentage of female enrolment to total enrolment	49%	**4% rise**
Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): Percentage of students belonging to eligible age group (18-23 years) enrolled in Higher Education	27.3	**3-point rise**
Gender Parity Index (GPI): Ratio of female GER to male GER	**Increased** from 1 in 2017-18 **to 1.05**	-------
● **Institutes of National Importance (INIs)** ● **Enrolment in INIs**	● **149** ● **61 %**	● **Almost doubled (75)** ● **Increased**
Female per 100 male faculty	75	Increased (63)

CENTRE SETS UP PANELS FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST ONLINE PLATFORMS

- **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** (MeitY) has established **three Grievance Appellate Committees (GAC)** under rule 3A of IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.
- **Composition of GACs**
  - Each GACs consists of a **chairperson as Ex-officio, and two whole-time members (one is retired member)** for **a term of three years** from the date of assumption of office or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

First GAC	Headed by **Chief Executive officers of Indian Cyber Crime Coordination centre(I4C) under Ministry of Home Affairs.**
Second GAC	Chaired by **Joint Secretary in charge of policy and administration division in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.**
Third GAC	Chaired by a **senior scientist at MeitY.**

- **Role of GACs**
  - **Oversee and revoke content moderation-related decisions** taken by social media and other internet-based platforms.
  - If a user is unsatisfied with content moderation decision taken by a social company's grievance officer, they can **appeal to GACs within one month.** GAC will have to resolve the appeal within a month of receipt of appeal.
  - Committees can **seek assistance of people with expertise and experience** while dealing with users' appeals.
  - They will adopt an **online dispute resolution mechanism.**

NEED OF GACS

- To ensure that Internet in India is **Open, Safe & Trusted, and Accountable.**
- Large numbers of grievances are being left unaddressed by Internet Intermediaries.
- To create a **culture of responsiveness amongst** Intermediaries towards consumers.

PRIME MINISTER (PM) SPOKE ABOUT DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY

- In latest address to Citizens, PM spoke about grassroots-level governance (Uthiramerur inscriptions, Anubhav Mandapam of Lord Basaveshwara and Kakatiya dynasty) that was practiced during ancient and medieval times.

Uthiramerur inscriptions	• This inscription, dated around 920 A.D in reign of **Parantaka Chola-I (907-955 AD).**
	• It is **an ancient Chola village** once known **as Chaturvedimangalam** and is located near Chennai in Tamil Nadu.
	• Chola's self governance was built upon **'general assemblies' or 'sabhas' or 'maha sabha' of villages.**
	• As per Uthiramerur inscriptions on **Chola Kudavolai Election System:**
	  ➤ Every village was categorised as **kudumbu (ward in modern day parlance)** where representatives of **general assembly were elected.**
	• **Qualification for contesting: Must own land, own a house built** on legally-owned site, have knowledge of 'Mantrabrahmana', and **above 35 years of age and below 70 years.**
	• **Disqualification:** If elected members proven guilty of misconduct, they were disqualified from contesting future elections.
	  ➤ Acts of misconduct included accepting bribes, misappropriating else's property.
	• **Committees:** Village general assembly resolved to choose member for **Annual Committee, Garden Committee, and Water bodies Committee.**

Anubhava Mantapa of Lord Basaveshwara	• It was established by **Lord Basaveshwara** to facilitate **gathering for philosophy and experience.**
	• **Anubhava Mantapa** was one of the **earliest Parliament in history of mankind.**
	  ➤ **Prabhudeva,** a great **Yogi of extraordinary achievement,** was the **President** and **Lord Basava** acted as the **Prime Minister.**
	  ➤ Problems tackled were of various natures covering **social, religious, spiritual, yogic psychological, economic, and literary spheres.**
	• Only difference between the present-day parliament and Anubhava Mantapa is that members **were not elected by people,** but were **picked up or nominated by higher authorities of Mantapa.**
	• **Lord Basaveshwara (1105-1167)**
	  ➤ He was a **12th century poet and born in Karnataka.**
	  ➤ Known for **Socio-Religious Reforms, Anubhava Mantapa, Vachana Literature and Lingayat Movement** in south India.
	  ➤ **Basava Purana,** written by Palkuriki Somanatha in 13th-century, holds full account to Basavanna's life and ideas.
	  ➤ Who rejected gender and caste discrimination, superstitions and rituals. A strong **promoter of ahimsa (non-violence),** he condemned human and animal sacrifices.
	  ➤ **Basava Jayanthi** is an annual event celebrated in his honour of birth.

Kakatiya Tradition	• It ruled the region comprising present-day **Telangana and Andhra Pradesh from 12th to 14th centuries, with Warangal as Capital.** • They constructed **irrigation tanks that played a critical role in peasantry life. These tanks are in use currently.** • There were **elected committees in the villages** to look after installation and maintenance of tanks, canals, and reservoirs.

OBC (OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES) SUB-CATEGORISATION PANEL GETS 14TH EXTENSION

- Government had constituted the **Rohini commission** in 2017 under **Article 340 to examine issues related to sub-categorisation of OBCs.**
  - ➤ **Article 340** states that President appoints the Commission to investigate conditions of socially and educationally backward classes.
- **Objective of Rohini Commission is to examine the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation** (i.e. 27% reservation in jobs and education) among castes or communities with reference to central OBC list.
- **Need for sub-categorisation**
  - ➤ OBCs are currently **granted 27% reservation in jobs and education** under central government.
  - ➤ However, it is **perceived that only a few affluent communities** in Central List of OBCs **have secured a major part** of this reservation.
- **Earlier commissions**
  - ➤ **First Backward Class Commission report, 1955** proposed **sub-categorization of OBCs** into **backward** and **extremely backward communities.**
  - ➤ **Mandal Commission report, 1979** proposed sub-categorization in intermediate and depressed backward classes.
  - ➤ In 2015, **National Commission for Backward Classes proposed** that OBCs division into; **Extremely Backward Classes** (EBC-Group A)**, More Backward Classes** (MBC-Group B)**, and Backward Classes (BC-Group C).**

UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) DOES NOT REFLECT TODAY'S REALITIES: UNGA (UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY) PRESIDENT

- UNGA President, during his visit to India, underscored the shortcomings of UNSC and asserted for need of reforms in it.
  - His remarks came **in the backdrop of Russia,** a permanent member of UNSC (refer infographics), **attacking Ukraine.**
- UNSC, **established by UN Charter** in 1945, is **one of the six principal organs of UN** with a primary responsibility **for maintaining international peace and security.**
  - **UNSC is composed of 15 members** (refer infographic).
  - Under UN Charter, **all Member States are obligated to comply** with Council decisions.
  - Security Council has **power to make binding decisions on member states.**
- **Issues with UNSC**
  - UNSC **does not represent contemporary world.**
  - **Inadequate regional representation.** Developing countries are underrepresented, and there are no permanent members from either Africa or Latin America.
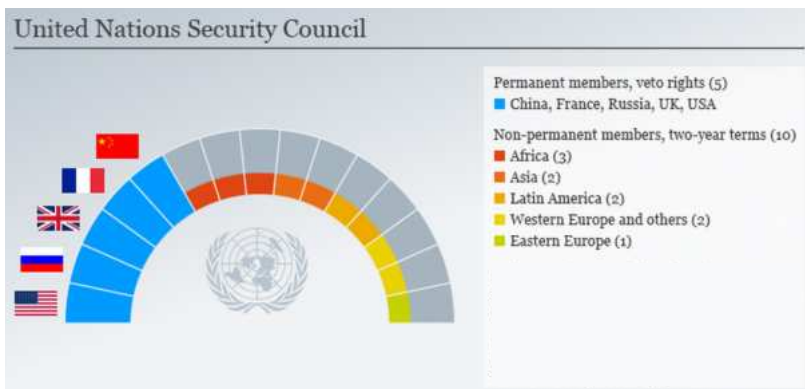 - **Lack of transparency and efficiency** in decision-making process.
  - **Misuse of veto power** by permanent members. Russia has **vetoed UNSC resolutions on Ukraine.**
- **India's key demand on reforms include**
  - **Permanent membership** to G4 members (India, Germany, Brazil, Japan and India).
  - **Abolition of veto.**
  - **Equitable geographical representation.**

United Nations Security Council

Permanent members, veto rights (5)
- 🔵 China, France, Russia, UK, USA

Non-permanent members, two-year terms (10)
- 🟥 Africa (3)
- 🟧 Asia (2)
- 🟧 Latin America (2)
- 🟨 Western Europe and others (2)
- 🟩 Eastern Europe (1)

ALSO IN NEWS

Bail Process	• SC presses need for reform on bail processes. • Bail refers to the **temporary release of the accused in a criminal case** in which court has a **trial pending** and is yet to announce the judgement. ➤ **Bail is a right** if the person accused is detained or arrested for a **bailable offence (Section 436 of CrPC).** ➤ **Anticipatory Bail:** A person can apply for this if there is a threat that he/she could be arrested **for a non-bailable offense (Section 438 of CrPC).** • Court has power to cancel bail at any stage under sections 437 and 439 of CrPC. ➤ Grounds of cancellation of bail: When a person is indulged in criminal activity and misuse of their liberty.
Topchi 2023	• **Indian army** carried out the annual exercise named **'Exercise Topchi'.** • Army demonstrated its **artillery firepower, aviation, and surveillance capacity** in exercise. • **Aviation assets** showcased were **indigenous advanced light helicopter,** light combat helicopter, cheetah and chetak helicopters. • Focus of the exercise was to showcase **indigenous capabilities and strides made in achieving self-reliance** in defense sector.
Red-headed vulture	• Red Headed vulture was spotted in India after a gap of 2 decades. • **Red-headed vulture** is also known as **Asian King Vulture or Pondicherry Vulture.** ➤ It was extensively found in the **Indian Subcontinent** but their population was drastically reduced by **diclofenac poisoning.** ➤ IUCN Status: **Critically Endangered** Species. ➤ **Scientific name:** Sarcogyps calvus.

Aviation gasoline	• In a first, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has started **exports of Aviation gasoline.**
	• Aviation gasoline **powers unmanned aerial vehicles and piston-engine aircraft** used by flying schools.
	  ➤ It is a **higher-octane aviation fuel** meeting the **product specifications with superior performance, and quality standards** and is cheaper compared to imported grades.
	  ➤ Fuel that fires the engines of large commercial jets is called aviation turbine fuel (ATF).
	  ➤ Global market of Aviation gasoline is about USD 2.7-billion.
	  ➤ The Gasoline has been **tested and certified by Directorate General of Civil Aviation.**
	  ➤ **High demand for fuel** is in South America, Asia Pacific, West Asia, Africa and Europe.
	  ➤ Currently, great majority (more than 99%) of aviation fuel used in both civil and military aircraft is **jet fuel.**

Noble's Helen Butterfly	• Noble's Helen, a **swallowtail butterfly** disappearing from its previously known ranges **has been sighted in India for the first time.** • Species was recorded at **Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh.** ➤ Park is named after **Namdapha river** that flows in a North-South direction of Park. • **Butterflies** are considered **vital indicators** representing state of **biodiversity and key ecosystem functions.** • **Distribution:** Myanmar, Yunnan and Hubai regions of China, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand.

Munroe Thuruthu Island	• Study by **National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS)** revealed anthropogenic interventions as main reason **for sinking of Munroe Thuruthu island.**
	  ➤ Almost 39% of its land area has been lost in past 2 decades.
	  ➤ Island is in **confluence of Ashtamudi Lake and Kallada River in Kerala.**
	  ➤ Island's subsidence began with **construction of Thenmala dam under Kallada Irrigation Project.**
	• **Proposed Mitigation measures:** Reverse Landscaping, Regulating Sand mining in Ashtamudi lake and Kallada River, **Improving Construction method** of buildings, etc.

Heimang	• It grows widely in **Manipur and other north-eastern regions.** • Flowers of heimang tree are **used as food and medicine.** ➤ They can be used for **common Gastrointestinal ailments purposes and urinary ulcers.** • Other parts of the heimang tree such as its leaves (including abnormal growths or galls on them), roots, stem, and bark are also found to have **preventive and therapeutic effects.** • Local communities in state use heimang leaves to prepare **herbal shampoo called chinghi** by boiling them with rice water. • Despite its extraordinary versatility, heimang has **not yet found widespread commercial use.**

Dinosaurs' fossils in Narmada Valley	• Researchers have discovered **92 nesting sites containing around 256 fossil eggs of titanosaurs** in Narmada Valley.
	  ➤ Dinosaurs **buried their eggs in shallow pits** like modern-day crocodiles.
	  ➤ Presence of a **rare case of "egg-in-egg,"** indicates that they had a reproductive physiology that parallels that of modern birds.
	• Narmada valley is an important area from a **geological, geotechnical and palaeontological aspect.**
	  ➤ It is a graben and has been **formed as a rift valley due to geological disturbances** and it is 300 metres above mean sea level.

Sponge City	• Urban floods as seen in Acuklad recently could be avoided by implementing "sponge city concept".
	• Sponge city is a **city that is designed to passively absorb, clean, and use rainfall in an ecologically friendly way** that reduces dangerous and polluted runoff.
	  ➤ In early 2000s, Chinese architect Kongjian Yu created the concept of "sponge city".
	  ➤ Concept incorporates **green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable pavements to absorb and filter water.**
	  ➤ **More green space and trees are incorporated** into street and neighbourhood designs.
	  ➤ It retains **funneling rainwater** for use within its own boundaries.