

IMPORTANT NEWS

The Ram Temple Consecration Ceremony Took Place in Ayodhya

Inside Story of the News:

- A 51-inch black granite idol, sculpted by Arun Yogiraj from Mysuru, was installed in the sanctum-sanctorum of the Ram Temple and a grand consecration ceremony, called Pran Pratishtha, took place in Ayodhya.
- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the temple.
- The event was attended by many of India’s biggest film and sports celebrities.
- In many cities, people lit lamps and installed flags with the images of Lord Rama on their rooftops to celebrate the event.
- The event was also celebrated by the Hindu diaspora in different parts of the world.

Importance of the Event:

- The temple is considered the result of the Babri Masjid dispute which began in the colonial period.
- The dispute was a political, historical, and socio-religious debate related to the ownership of a plot of land.

Claim of Hindus	Claim of Muslims
Originally the site had a Hindu temple to mark the birthplace of Hindu Lord Ram that was demolished to construct the Babri Masjid.	In 1528, Mir Baqi built a mosque on it following the orders of Babur, the first Mughal emperor.

- The long legal battle culminated with the Supreme Court’s judgement in 2019.
- A five-judge bench unanimously gave the disputed land to the Hindu petitioners for building a Ram Temple and directed the allotment of an alternate land for the mosque.

Some Key Features of the Temple:

Style of Architecture	Nagara
Agency Responsible for the Construction	Shri Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust
Designers of the Temple	Chandrakant Sompura and his son, Ashish
Area Covered by the Temple	2.7 acre
Length, Width, and Height	380 feet long, 250 feet wide, and 161 feet high
Mandapas	5 mandapas—Nritya Mandapa, Rang Mandapa, Sabha Mandapa, Prathana Mandapa, Kirtan Mandapa
Estimated cost	Between Rs 1,400 crore and Rs 1,800 crore

19th NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) Summit Held in Uganda

Inside Story of the News:

- The 19th Non-Aligned Movement Summit was hosted by Uganda in its capital, Kampala.
- NAM is to be chaired by Uganda from 2024 to 2027.
- The theme of the summit was Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence.
- The discussions at the summit were focused on—
 - Israel-Hamas war,
 - India's Vishwamitra initiative to play the role of a friend to the world and promote global solidarity and cooperation, and
 - a call for a multipolar world order.
- Dr S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India led the Indian delegation at the summit.

About NAM:

- NAM was formed during the Cold War era. It was an organization of newly independent states that did not want to ally with any of the two power blocs of that time—the US and the USSR.
- It was founded under the leadership of India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, Egypt, and Ghana.
- It held its first conference in 1961 in Belgrade, and adopted ten Bandung Principles as its goals.
- Currently, it has 121 member states.

Significance in the Current Scenario:

- NAM has the potential to play a key role in the following:
 - Safeguarding the interests, particularly economic interests, of the third world
 - Promoting cooperation among states
 - Supporting India to deal with China's hegemonic ambitions in Asia

Mosquirix, the World's First Malaria Vaccine Program for Children Launched by Cameroon

Inside Story of the News:

- Cameroon, an African country, becomes the first country to routinely give Mosquirix, a new malaria vaccine, to children.
- Africa accounts for 95 per cent of the world's malaria deaths.

About Mosquirix:

- Approved by WHO, it is also known as RTS,S/AS01.
- It is administered to children above 5 months of age.
- It is made up of proteins of the—
 - Plasmodium falciparum parasites
 - Hepatitis B virus
- Malaria can be prevented by using mosquito nets, repellents, and insecticide-treated bed nets.
- Diagnosis and effective antimalarial medication at an early stage reduce the risk of complications in malaria patients.

PM Announced the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana

Inside Story of the News:

- PM Narendra Modi announced the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana aimed at installing rooftop solar power systems in one crore households to generate electricity from solar energy.
- The scheme is set to provide electricity to low- and middle-income households across the nation.
- The PM also urged the officials to initiate a national campaign to mobilize residential segment consumers to adopt rooftop solar in large numbers.

About Rooftop Solar Panels and Their Benefits:

- These panels consist of solar modules and solar inverters, along with other electrical components, such as cables.
- The photovoltaic panels are installed on residential and commercial rooftops and connected to the main power supply units.
- The scheme is to bring about the following benefits:
 - Reduction of electricity bills for low- and middle-income households
 - Make India self-reliant in the energy sector
 - Reduction in the consumption of grid-connected electricity
 - Bring India closer to its target of reaching 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030

Social Audit Advisory Body (SAAB) Held Its First Meeting

Inside Story of the News:

- The Social Audit Advisory Body (SAAB) held its first meeting, chaired by the secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- As an advisory board, SAAB is aimed at guiding the ministry in institutionalizing social audits for its various schemes.

Social Audit: Meaning, Benefits, Challenges, and Implementation:

- Social Audit refers to the review and evaluation of a programme/scheme for cross-checking official records against the actual ground realities.
- It comprises an audit of the quality of work being done at various levels, along with the specifications related to payments, hired labourers employed, and materials used.
- *Jaankari*, *Bhagidari*, and *Suraksha* are the key principles of the social audit.
- The audit will ensure the following benefits:
 - Accountability in the execution of projects, laws, and policies
 - Transparency in the process
 - The space for corrective measures based on citizens' feedback
- The lack of awareness among the stakeholders and the apathetic attitude of the agencies implementing the policies, programmes, etc., may prove to be challenges to the process of social audit.
- The central government has introduced the social audit in many programmes.
- At the state level, the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has formed the National Resource Cell for Social Audit to ensure the auditing via dedicated units.

French President Emmanuel Macron Visited India as Republic Day Chief Guest

Inside Story of the News:

- French President Emmanuel Macaron was the chief guest at the 75th Republic Day celebration.
- The visit led to strengthened Indo-France bilateral cooperation.

Key Developments in Indo-France Relationship After the Visit:

- The visit led to various developments in the Indo-France relationship. Some of them are as follows:
 - Announcement of 2026 as India-France Year of Innovation
 - Collaboration on joint production ventures for defence equipment (helicopters and submarines for the Indian armed forces)
 - Signing of MoU between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Airbus to set up assembly line for H125 helicopters
 - Agreements for joint research on clean energy, applied mathematics, digital technologies, and precision agriculture
 - Signing of MoU between NewSpace India Limited and Arianespace S.A.S for satellite launches
 - Use of UPI at Eiffel Tower
 - Establishment of Solar Academy in Senegal under the STAR-C program of the International Solar Alliance
 - Young Professional Scheme under the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement to promote the exchange of professionals between the two nations
 - Later, France reiterated its support for a permanent seat for India in the UNSC.

Execution Carried Out Using Nitrogen Gas in the US

Inside Story of the News:

- In Alabama, the United States, the state executed a convicted murderer using nitrogen gas.
- Usually, the state uses lethal injections as the primary method of execution in the United States.
- This was the first time when the state used a different method for execution.

Reasons for which the Nitrogen Gas Execution is Controversial:

- The nitrogen gas execution is attracting criticism due to the following reasons:
 - May complicate the execution as the lack of oxygen may cause the person to vomit inside the mask and lead to choking
 - Could be fatal to those administering the execution
 - May lead to errors during the process as the process has not been tested sufficiently
 - May lead to prolonged trauma for the person

Controversy Related to the Death Penalty:

- The act has reignited the debate about the use of the death penalty as an effective way to reduce crimes in society.

Arguments in Favour of the Death Penalty

Arguments Against the Death Penalty

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fear of death discourages people from committing serious crimes2. Serves as a sense of justice to victims and their families3. Ensures that the offender does not repeat that heinous crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Violates the right to life and thereby human rights2. Has not shown any considerable reduction in crimes3. Irreversible in case of wrong decisions
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Odisha's Government Launched the LABHA Scheme for Minor Forest Produce

Inside Story of the News:

- The government of Odisha launched the LABHA (Laghu Bana Jatya Drabya Kraya) Scheme for the development of the tribal community in the region.
- It includes the 100 per cent minimum support price (MSP) scheme for minor forest produce (MFP).
- Initially, the state government has allocated 100 crores for the scheme.
- The collectors of the forest produce, mainly tribals, will sell their MFPs at the MSP via centres managed by the Tribal Development Cooperative Cooperation Limited of Odisha.
- The scheme is integrated with Mission Shakti to ensure the involvement, safety, and empowerment of women.
- The government will use direct benefit transfer to credit the amount to the beneficiaries' accounts.
- MFPs include non-timber forest produce of plant origin, like bamboo, cane, honey, waxes, cocoons, stumps, and medicinal plants.
- MFPs are important for the tribal communities as they serve as a source of subsistence as well as earnings for them.

First Computer Chip Embedded in a Human Brain

Inside Story of the News:

- A fully implantable Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) has been developed by Neuralink, a neurotechnology company.
- The chip will allow direct communication between the brain and a computer.
- Under this system, brain signals will be acquired and then processed to be translated into commands for interaction with external devices.

Advantages of Brain-Computer Interface:

- BCI may prove to be advantageous as follows:
 - Support to people with neuromuscular disorders or physical injuries
 - Restoration of various human capabilities, such as vision and speech
 - Improvement in national defence systems

Challenges to Brain-Computer Interface:

- The following are some challenges to BCI:
 - May lead to unauthorized access to sensitive brain data

- Capturing brain signals is a complicated process
- May lead to unintended effects, such as tissue damage, seizures, and cognitive impairments

Maratha Military Landscapes—India's Nomination for UNESCO World Heritage List 2024-2025

Inside Story of the News:

- India has nominated the Maratha Military Landscapes for the UNESCO World Heritage List for 2024-2025.
- It is a network of 12 forts that demonstrates the strategic military prowess of the Maratha rule in India.
- The 12 forts of this network are as follows—11 in Maharashtra and 1 in Tamil Nadu:
 - Salher
 - Shivneri
 - Lohagad
 - Khanderi
 - Raigad
 - Rajgad
 - Pratapgad
 - Suvarnadurg
 - Panhala
 - Vijaydurg
 - Sindhudurg
 - Gingee Fort (Tamil Nadu)

About Maratha Military Landscapes:

- These were developed between the 17th and 19th centuries as part of the fortification and military system of the Maratha rulers.
- It is a result of the integration of the environment, geography, and physiographic features unique to the Sahyadri mountain ranges, the Konkan Coast, the Deccan Plateau, and the Eastern Ghats in the Indian Peninsula.

About World Heritage Sites:

- World Heritage sites are places that have been recognized as having exceptional cultural, historical, scientific, or other values for humanity by UNESCO.
- Countries nominate their sites and then the nominated sites are evaluated by the World Heritage Committee based on their cultural significance, architectural uniqueness, historical importance, and ecological diversity.
- World Heritage Sites are divided into natural sites (areas characterized by natural phenomena), cultural sites (historical buildings, monuments, sculptures, paintings, etc.), and mixed sites (sites that include the aspects of both cultural and natural sites).