



Current Affairs

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- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) declared April 18th as the International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day, in 1982.
- The theme for this year is "Heritage Changes," which focuses on the role of cultural heritage in climate action and its importance in protecting vulnerable communities.
- India is currently home to 40 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, making it the country with the sixth-largest number of sites in the world.
- Out of these, 32 are cultural sites, 7 are natural sites, and one is a mixed-type site, the Khangchendzonga National Park.
- The cultural heritage sites in India include ancient temples, forts, palaces, mosques, and archaeological sites that reflect the rich history and diversity of the country.
- The natural heritage sites in India include national parks, wildlife reserves, and natural landscapes that showcase the country's unique biodiversity and ecological significance.

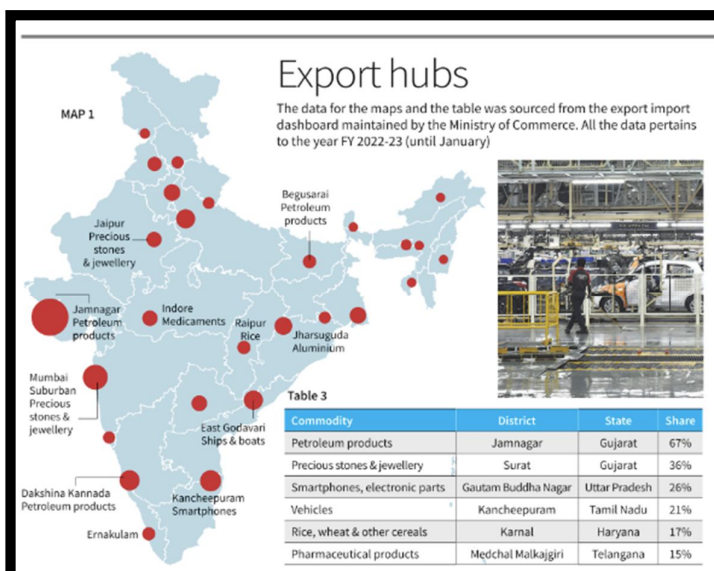




- The mixed-type site in India, the Khangchendzonga National Park, is known for its cultural significance as well as its biodiversity, as it is home to several rare and endangered species.
- In the six years since April 2016, Chhattisgarh recorded the most extrajudicial killing cases at 259, followed by Uttar Pradesh at 110 and Assam with 79.

2. Top Exporting District in India -

- Jamnagar in Gujarat is the top exporting district in India. It formed about 24% of India's exports in value terms in FY23 (till January).
- Surat in Gujarat and Mumbai Suburban in Maharashtra feature second and third by a distance, forming only about 4.5% of the country's exports in the period.



- The other districts in the top 10 are Dakshina Kannada (Karnataka), Devbhumi Dwarka, Bharuch and Kachchh (Gujarat), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Kancheepuram (Tamil Nadu) and Gautam Buddha Nagar (Uttar Pradesh).
- The merchandise trade deficit, which is the gap between exports and imports, increased by over 39% in 2022-23 to record USD 266.78 billion, as compared to USD 191 billion in 2021-22.
- Merchandise imports increased by 16.51% in 2022-23, while merchandise exports rose by 6.03%. Overall trade deficit, however, stood at USD 122 billion in 2022-23, as compared to USD 83.53 billion in the 2022, gaining support from trade surplus in services.



India's Major Export Arenas-

- A. **Engineering Goods:** They registered a 50% growth in exports, at USD 101 bn in FY22.
- B. **Agriculture Products:** Agricultural exports were buoyed by the government's push to meet global demand for food amid the pandemic. India exports rice worth USD 9.65 bn, the highest among agricultural commodities.
- C. **Textile and Apparels:** India's textile and apparel exports (including handicrafts) stood at USD 44.4 billion in FY22, a 41% increase on a YoY basis. Government's scheme like Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (MITRA) Park are giving a strong boost to this sector.
- D. **Pharmaceuticals and Drugs:** India is the third-largest producer of medicines by volume and the biggest supplier of generic drugs. India supplies over 50% of Africa's requirement for generics, around 40% of generic demand in the US and 25% of all medicine in the UK.

3. National Civil Services Day 2023 celebrates on 21st April

- In India, April 21 is celebrated as National Civil Service Day, to recognize and appreciate the vital role played by civil servants in the advancement and betterment of the nation.
- This day offers a chance to express gratitude towards the contributions made by civil servants to society. The prime minister of the country presents awards of excellence on this occasion, to encourage civil servants to continue their efforts towards serving the public effectively.
- Civil Services Day is an occasion for civil servants to rededicate themselves to the cause of citizens and renew their commitments and excellence in work. The theme of this year's Civil Service Day is very apt- Viksit Bharat aimed at 'Empowering Citizens and



Reaching the Last Mile'. The theme underscores the Government's resolve and firm commitment to achieving a more equitable and prosperous India for all its citizens by engaging in inclusive growth.

- The inaugural National Civil Service Day was celebrated on April 21, 2006, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. This particular date was chosen to honour the occasion in 1947 when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first home minister of independent India, addressed Administrative Services Officers 'probationers. During his motivational speech, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel recognised civil servants as the "steel frame of India."
- National Civil Service Day serves as a platform to appreciate the exceptional services rendered by government workers in the country. On this day, the administration also acknowledges the accomplishments of experienced civil servants and presents medals to select individuals for their contributions towards the development of the nation.

4. Apple's First Store In India Opens In Mumbai -

- Apple opened its first official store in Mumbai, India. Located at the Jio World Drive mall in the Bandra Kurla Complex area, the store is the first of the two outlets Apple to open in India.
- Apple CEO Tim Cook threw open the gates to the 28,000 sq ft store. An Apple store is aimed at providing a top-notch experience to customers by functioning as a





one-stop destination for product sales, services and accessories.

- These stores are also architectural marvels, adding to an unrivalled customer experience. The opening of Apple's two retail stores in India has generated much public excitement, especially among users of the tech giant's products. People have travelled from as far as Gujarat and Rajasthan to attend the grand opening of the store. 2023 marks 25 years of Apple presence in India.
- The opening of its retail stores underlines Apple's growing plans for India. The tech giant currently has a share of about 4 per cent in India's huge smartphone market dominated by Chinese and South Korean manufacturers, primarily due to high prices of its products.
- The company is now focusing on a retail push in what is the world's second largest mobile phone market. It has also started expanding its local manufacturing footprint. Apple's focus on India as a key market is also aimed at reducing its dependence on China at a time when relations between Washington DC and Beijing are strained.
- Apple's history in India can be traced back to the 1990s when the company first started selling its products in the country. However, it wasn't until the 2000s that Apple began to focus more on the Indian market.
- In 2007, Apple opened its first retail store in India, which was located in Mumbai. However, the company faced several challenges in expanding its retail presence in the country, including restrictions on foreign investment in the retail sector.

5. Recently, the government has launched the fifth round of the Regional Connectivity Scheme – UDAN (UDAN 5.0) -

UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) Scheme-

- The scheme was launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation for regional airport development and regional connectivity enhancement.



- It is a part of the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016. The scheme is applicable for a period of 10 years.

Objectives:

- Improve the air connectivity to remote and regional areas of India.
- Development of remote areas and enhancing trade and commerce and tourism expansion.
- Enable common people to access air travel with affordable rates.
- Employment creation in the aviation sector.

Key Features-

- Under the scheme, airlines have to cap airfares for 50% of the total seats at Rs. 2,500 per hour.
- This would be achieved through a financial stimulus in the form of concessions from Central and State governments and airport operators, Government grant provided to the airlines to bridge the gap between the cost of operations and expected revenue.

Previous Phases of the Scheme-

- Phase 1 was launched in 2017, with the objective of connecting underserved and unserved airports in the country.
- Phase 2 was launched in 2018, with the aim of expanding air connectivity to more remote and inaccessible parts of the country.
- Phase 3 was launched in November 2018, with the focus on enhancing air connectivity to hilly and remote regions of the country.
- Phase 4 of the UDAN scheme was launched in December 2019, with a focus on connecting islands.

Key Features of UDAN 5.0-

- It focuses on Category-2 (20-80 seats) and Category-3 (>80 seats) aircrafts.
- There is no restriction on the distance between the origin and the destination of the flight.



- The same route would not be awarded to a single airline more than once, whether in different networks or in the same network.
- This has been done to prevent exploitation of the monopoly on a route.
- Airlines would be required to commence operations within 4 months of the award of the route; earlier this deadline was 6 months.

Map

