

AKASH MISSILE

Context: Akash, a surface to air missile, manufactured by BDL to meet the requirement of the armed forces

About AKASH Missile:

- ✚ It is a **Medium-Range Mobile surface-to-air missile** defense system developed by the DRDO and produced by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) for Missile Systems
- ✚ The missile system can target aircraft up to 30 km away, at altitudes up to 18,000 m.
- ✚ It flies at **supersonic speed**, reaching around **Mach 2.5**.
- ✚ It can reach an altitude of 18 km and can be fired from both **tracked and wheeled platforms**
- ✚ It has the capability to "**neutralise aerial targets like fighter jets, cruise missiles and air-to-surface missiles**" as well as ballistic missiles.
- ✚ It is in operational service with the **Indian Army and the Indian Air Force**.
- ✚ The missile is guided by a phased array fire control radar called '**Rajendra**' which is termed as Battery Level Radar (BLR) with a tracking range of about 60 km.

**KISAN URJA SURAKSHA EVAM UTTHAAN MAHABHIYAN (KUSUM)**

- ✚ The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy** has formulated a Scheme '**Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM)**'

About KUSUM:

The proposed scheme provides for:

- ✚ **Installation of grid-connected solar power plants** each of Capacity up to 2 MW in the rural areas
- ✚ **Installation of standalone off-grid solar water pumps** to fulfil irrigation needs of farmers not connected to grid; and
- ✚ **Solarisation of existing grid-connected agriculture pumps** to make farmers independent of grid supply and also enable them to sell surplus solar power generated to DISCOM and get extra income.

ELLORA CAVES

Context: Over 300 centrally protected monuments and sites, including World Heritage Sites, across the country are “under encroachment”

About Ellora Caves:

- ✚ It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** located in the Aurangabad district of **Maharashtra**.
- ✚ It is **one of the largest rock-cut monastery temple cave complexes** in the world, featuring **Buddhist, Hindu and Jain** monuments, and artwork, dating from the 600–1000 CE period.
- ✚ **Cave 16:** in particular, features the largest single monolithic rock excavation in the world, the **Kailasa temple**, a chariot shaped monument dedicated to Shiva is being **built by Krishna I**
- ✚ Unlike other temples at the site, which were first delved horizontally into the rock face, the Kailasa complex was excavated downward from a basaltic slope and is therefore largely exposed to sunlight.
- ✚ **Cave 10:** The **Vishvakarma cave** has carvings of Hindu and Buddhist figures as well as a lively scene of dancing dwarfs.
- ✚ **Cave 32:** Notable among the **Jain temples**, which includes fine carvings of **lotus flowers and other elaborate ornaments**.
- ✚ Each year the caves attract large crowds of religious pilgrims and tourists.
- ✚ The **annual Ellora Festival** of Classical Dance and Music is held there in the **third week of March**.



FOREIGN CURRENCY CONVERTIBLE BONDS

Context: In a sign of stress widening across India’s credit market, Suzlon Energy has defaulted on redemption of its **Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds (FCCB)** worth \$172 million, due on Tuesday

What is FCCB?

- ✚ **Foreign Currency Convertible Bond is a type of convertible bond** issued in a currency different than the Issuer’s Domestic currency.
- ✚ It is a **quasi – debt instrument** which are attractive to both investors and issuers.
- ✚ The Investors receive the safety of guaranteed payments on the bond and are also to take advantage of any large price appreciation in the company’s stock.
- ✚ Due to the equity side of the bond. Which adds value, the coupon payments on the bond are lower for the company, there by reducing its debt-financing costs.

VAN MITRA PORTAL

- ✚ The **Madhya Pradesh government** has recently begun organising gram sabhas in villages to consider afresh rejected claims of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers to forest land rights under the **Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006**.
- ✚ To **streamline** the application process and deal with the bulk of claims, the State has also launched an **online application system, Van Mitra**, in the Hoshangabad district on a pilot basis.
- ✚ Applicants can **upload their documents** on the portal or approach **Gram Rozgar Sahayak** present in each gram panchayat to help them with it.
- ✚ It's a **transparent system** wherein applicants can check the status of their claim at every stage and, in case of its rejection, know the reason
- ✚ **Key facts:**
- ✚ Madhya Pradesh has 24 tribal districts, the most in the country, and the **largest forest cover** of 77,414 sq. km., according to the **India State of Forest Report, 2017**

FINSPY- MALWARE

Context: Russia's Kaspersky Lab Finds Says Notorious '**FinSpy**' Malware Can Read Secret Chats

About FINSPY:

- ✚ **FinSpy is the latest version of spyware virus** designed to track nearly every interaction on a mobile device.
- ✚ It allows attackers to spy on all device activities and exfiltrate sensitive data such as GPS location, messages, pictures, calls and more.
- ✚ It can work both on **iOS and Android devices**, can monitor activity on almost all popular messaging services, including encrypted ones, and hide their traces better than before
- ✚ It is an extremely effective software tool for targeted surveillance that has been observed stealing information from international NGOs, governments and law enforcement organizations all over the world.

RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (RPT)

Context: Disputes over RPTs have been a recurring theme in India Inc. from time to time.

- ✚ Related Party Transactions are just that — **transactions that a company does with parties related to it.**
- ✚ So, if Company A buys goods or services from its director X, it counts as an RPT.

- ✚ In RPTs, there is a **risk that the related party may be favoured** with terms that could harm the interests of the company's shareholders.
- ✚ For instance, if Company A rents office premises from Y, a relative of its director X, and pays higher than market rent in a sweetheart deal, it helps Y and indirectly X, but harms shareholders of Company A.
- ✚ That said, **RPTs need not always be bad** for a company's shareholders.
- ✚ In many cases, RPTs make commercial and operational sense for the company.
- ✚ So, the **Companies Act has not banned RPTs** but instead laid down safeguards to be followed.
- ✚ As a result, RPTs, in general, **need the approval of the company's Board of Directors and the Audit Committee.**

ITSSO INVESTIGATION TRACKING SYSTEM FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES (ITSSO)

- ✚ Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO) is **meant for Law Enforcement Agencies in the country.**
- ✚ It is an **online module** available to law enforcement agencies at all levels- **National, State, District and Police Station** that allows State to undertake real-time monitoring and management for completion of investigation in rape cases **in 2 months.**
- ✚ It **leverages the existing CCTNS data base**, which covers nearly 15000 police stations in the country.
- ✚ ITSSO would greatly strengthen States ability for analytics and prognosis for timely investigation and prosecution in rape cases.
- ✚ ITSSO is one of such measures developed by **Ministry of Home Affairs** towards Smart Policing.

VIKRAMSHILA GANGETIC DOLPHIN SANCTUARY (VGDS)

Context: Speed restrictions and sound alerts mooted for protection of dolphins

- ✚ The **Ministry of Shipping** plans to safeguard the population of the Ganges River Dolphin in the **Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS)** by restricting the speeds of vessels and blowing sirens and horns.
- ✚ **National Waterway-1:** connecting **Haldia to Varanasi** passes through the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (VGDS).

Steps taken by the Government:

- ✚ Vessel speed would be **restricted to 2.7 knots** in VGDS area to reduce the noise generation from propeller.

- ✚ If any aquatic mammal/dolphin is spotted, then the measures will be taken to push it away through sirens/signals.
- ✚ Vessels to be **fitted with propeller guards** and dolphin deflectors to minimise dolphin accidents.
- ✚ Using **Non-Toxic Paints** for painting vessels.

Key Facts:

- ✚ The **Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary** (VGDS), from Sultanganj to Kahalganj on the Ganga in **Bihar is the only dolphin sanctuary** in the country.
- ✚ The sanctuary is a 50 km stretch of the **Ganges River** from Sultanganj to Kahalganj.
- ✚ Designated in 1991, it is protected area for the **endangered Gangetic dolphins** in Asia. **Once** found in abundance, only a few hundred remain, of which half are found here

About Gangetic Dolphins:

- ✚ It is primarily found in the **Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers** and their tributaries in **India, Bangladesh and Nepal**.
- ✚ It has been declared as the **National Aquatic Animal of India**

IUCN Red List of Threatened Species	Endangered
Wildlife Protection Act, 1972	Schedule-I
CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)	Appendix I