

## **1. Bhumisparsha Mudra:**

### **Why in News?**

- ▶▶ A 12<sup>th</sup>-century bronze idol of Buddha in a Bhumisparsha Mudra which was stolen from Nalanda Museum in 1961 and returned to India by the UK last year was formally handed over to the Archaeological Survey of India.



### **About Bhumisparsha Mudra:**

- ▶▶ This is a common pose found in idols of the Buddha in many countries.
- ▶▶ This means: ‘Touching the Earth’.
- ▶▶ In this posture, the right-hand points downwards towards the earth, hanging over the knee and palm facing inwards. The left-hand rests on the lap with the palm upright.
- ▶▶ Significance of the pose: This pose represents the moment when the Buddha attained enlightenment. It stands for ‘Calling the Earth to Witness the Truth’.

## **2. ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon**

### **Why in News?**

- ▶▶ Design for Divyangjan-accessible toilets showcased in ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon.
- ▶▶ Participants of the ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon came up with thought-provoking ideas for accessible toilets for the physically challenged (Divyangjans).

### **About ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon:**

- ▶▶ It was organized jointly by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and 91springboard were also part of this initiative.

- ▶▶ This was an initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- ▶▶ Applications were invited for designs that make toilets smarter, more accessible, and easier to use. The government said that it was looking for smart, scalable and innovative solutions for economical toilets for individual and community use in rural and urban contexts. Three innovators were selected winners from the shortlisted 21 applications.

### **3. Consumer Price Index**

#### **Why in News:**

- ▶▶ The consumption basket of CPI-AL [which determines MGNREGA wage revisions] has not been updated for more than three decades, and rural consumption patterns have changed drastically in that time.

#### **About National Consumer Price Index Numbers:**

- ▶▶ At the national level, there are four Consumer Price Index (CPI) numbers. These are:
  - ❖ CPI for Industrial Workers (IW),
  - ❖ CPI for Agricultural Labourers (AL),
  - ❖ CPI for Rural Labourers (RL) and
  - ❖ CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME).
- ▶▶ The base years of the current series of CPI(IW), CPI(AL) and CPI(RL), and CPI(UNME) are 1982, 1986-87 and 1984-85, respectively.
- ▶▶ While the first three are compiled and released by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour, the fourth one is released by the Central Statistical Organisation in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

### **4. INS Khanderi**

#### **Why in News:**

- ▶▶ Three landmark events are planned on September 28 - the commissioning of the second Scorpene submarine, Khanderi; the launch of the first P-17A frigate, Nilgiri, and the commissioning of the largest dry dock of the Indian Navy

#### **About Khanderi:**

- ▶▶ INS Khanderi (2017) is the second of the Indian Navy's six Kalvari-class submarines being built in India. It is a diesel-electric attack submarine which is designed by French naval defence and energy company and being manufactured at Mazagon Dock Limited in Mumbai.

### About Nilgiri:

- ▶▶ The Nilgiri-class frigate or Project 17A is a follow-on of the Project 17 Shivalik-class frigate for the Indian Navy.

## 5. Brent Crude:

### Why in News:

- ▶▶ The immediate impact of last week's drone attacks on the Saudi Aramco-owned Khurais oilfield and Abqaiq oil processing facility has been that Brent crude futures, the international benchmark, spiked by as much as 19.5%, the largest intraday jump on record.

### About Brent Crude:

- ▶▶ Brent Crude is a major trading classification of sweet light crude oil that serves as a benchmark price for purchases of oil worldwide .

### Notable Features:

- ▶▶ This grade is described as light because of its relatively low density, and sweet because of its low sulphur content.
- ▶▶ **Light crude oil** is liquid petroleum that has a low density and flows freely at room temperature. It has a low viscosity, low specific gravity and high API gravity due to the presence of a high proportion of light hydrocarbon fractions.
- ▶▶ It generally has a low wax content. Light crude oil receives a higher price than heavy crude oil on commodity markets because it produces a higher percentage of gasoline and diesel fuel when converted into products by an oil refinery.

## 6. India's Strategic Oil Reserves

### Why in News:

- ▶▶ Strategic oil reserves in focus after drone attacks on Saudi Aramco facility
- ▶▶ About Global Strategic Petroleum Reserves (GSPR)
- ▶▶ They are stockpiles of crude oil maintained by countries or private industries as a hedge against potential future energy crises.
- ▶▶ Strategic reserves do not get counted among a nation's or company's proven oil reserves, as proven reserves must be available for production by definition.

- ▶▶ Strategic Petroleum Reserves In India
- ▶▶ The Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve (ISPR) refers to the emergency fuel storage maintained by Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited, a Special Purpose Vehicle - wholly owned subsidiary of Oil Industry Development Board under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- ▶▶ Strategic crude oil storages are at Mangalore (Karnataka), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Padur (Karnataka) as per Phase I. They have fuel storage of total 5.33 MMT (Million Metric Tonnes).
- ▶▶ The government of India is planning to set up two more such caverns at Chandikhol (Odisha) and Udupi (Karnataka) as per phase II through Public-Private Partnership. This will give an additional 6.5 million tons of the oil reserves.

## **7. Tylophora balakrishnanii and Tylophora neglecta**

### **Why in News?**

- ▶▶ A team of researchers have reported the discovery of two new plant species belonging to the Asclepiadaceae or milkweed family from the shola forests of the Western Ghats, highlighting its rich biodiversity and the need for a conservation strategy for the fragile ecosystem.

#### **1. Tylophora Balakrishnanii**

- ❖ Tylophora balakrishnanii, a straggling vine, has been discovered from the Thollayiram shola in Wayanad, a biodiversity hotspot in the Nilgiri biosphere reserve. Latex in plant parts and pappus seeds are the general characteristics of the family.
- ❖ Flowers of the plant are reddish pink and the species is similar to the coastal plant Tylophora flexuosa. However, it differs in its floral parts arrangement and morphology. The species has been christened after V. Balakrishnan, member-secretary, Kerala State Biodiversity Board, and former director of the MSSRF, Wayanad, in recognition of his contributions to biodiversity.

#### **2. Tylophora neglecta**

- ❖ It has been discovered from the shola forest on the Thooval Mala hill under the Achencoil forest division in Kollam. The flowers of the new species are white with a violet tinge. Its leaves are thick and bristly in nature.