

1. Mob Lynching

Why in News?

- The Former Punjab Chief Minister has recently expressed concern over the incidents of lynching reported in Amritsar and Kapurthala.

Highlights:

- Mob lynching is a term used to describe the acts of targeted violence by a large group of people.
- The violence is tantamount to offences against human body or property- both public as well as private.
- The mob believes that they are punishing the victim for doing something wrong (not necessarily illegal) and they take the law in their own hands to punish the purported accused without following any rules of law.
- People are intolerant in accepting the acts of law and go on to punish the alleged person assuming the act to be immoral.
- Biases based on various identities like caste, class, religion, etc: mob lynching is a hate crime that is rising due to the biases or prejudices among various castes, classes of people, and religions.
- It is one of the crucial reasons that agitate the growing rise in mob lynching activities.
- Inefficient working of justice rendering authorities is the primary reason why people take law into their own hands and have no fear of the consequences.
- Police officers play an important role in protecting the life of the people and maintaining harmony among the people but due to their ineffective investigation procedure, this hate crime is rising day by day.
- Mob-Lynching based on the causes can be classified into five types, which are Communal based, Witchcraft, Honour killing, Bovine-related mob lynching, Suspicion of Child lifting and Theft cases

2. Pralay Ballistic Missile

Why in News?

- Recently, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted maiden flight test of a new indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay'.

Highlights:

- The missile was tested from the Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- Pralay' is India's first conventional quasi-ballistic missile and is an answer to any conventional missile attack from northern or western borders.
- A quasi-ballistic missile has a low trajectory, and while it is largely ballistic, it can Maneuver in flight.
- The missile has been developed in a way that it is able to defeat the interceptor missiles and also has the ability to change its path after covering a certain range mid-air.
- It is powered with a solid propellant rocket motor and many new technologies.
- The missile guidance system includes state-of-the-art navigation system and integrated avionics.
- It is a derivative of the Prahaar missile programme, which was first tested in 2011.
- Prahaar is a surface-to-surface missile with a range of 150 km.
- Primary objective is to bridge the gap between the unguided Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher and the guided Prithvi missile variants.
- The missile has a range of 150-500 kilometre and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
- Pralay will be the longest-range surface-to-surface missile in the inventory of the Army.
- The Army also has the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile in its arsenal, with a stated range of 290-plus kilometres.
- It will completely change the tactical battlefield dynamics and India will have two conventional missiles with long range.
- The BrahMos will be a cruise option and this one will be the ballistic option.

3. Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021.

Why in News?

- Recently, the Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has released the book 'Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021.
- The book highlights the growth achieved in the production of spices and increase in area during the last seven years from 2014-15 to 2020-21 in the country.

Key Points:

- **About Spices:**
 - ✓ Spices are aromatic flavourings from seeds, fruits, bark, rhizomes, and other plant parts.

- ✓ They are used to season and preserve food, and as medicines, dyes, and perfumes.
- ✓ Spices have been highly valued as trade goods for thousands of years.
- ✓ The word spice comes from the Latin species, which means merchandise, or wares.
- ✓ The demand of spices has tremendously increased due to the recognition of spices as a health supplement especially during the pandemic period.
- ✓ This can be clearly seen from the growing export of spices like turmeric, ginger, cumin, chilli etc.
- ✓ India is the world's largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices.
- ✓ Due to the varying climates – from tropical to subtropical to temperate-almost all spices grow Splendidly in India.
- ✓ In reality almost all the states and union territories of India grow one or the other spices.
- ✓ Under the act of Parliament, a total of 52 spices are brought under the purview of the Spices Board.
- ✓ Spices Board (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) is the flagship organization for the development and worldwide promotion of Indian spices.
- ✓ It was established by the Spices Board Act, 1986.
- ✓ In India, there are some states which grow the spices that have very high value in both national and international markets.
- ✓ The export of spices contributes 41% of the total export earnings from all horticulture crops in the country.
- ✓ It ranks fourth among agricultural commodities, falling behind only the marine products, non-basmati rice and Basmati Rice.

4. Problems within the UDAN scheme

Why in News?

- PM launched the UDAN scheme nearly five years back with the aim to take flying to the masses. However, many routes have launched by airlines have been discontinued.

UDAN Scheme:

- The Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme is a low-cost flying scheme launched with the aim of taking flying to the masses.
- The first flight under UDAN was launched by the PM in April 2017.
- It is also known as the regional connectivity scheme (RCS) as it seeks to improve air connectivity to tier-2 and tier-3 cities through revival of unused and underused airports.

Working of the Scheme:

- Airlines are awarded routes under the programme through a bidding process and are required to offer airfares at the rate of ₹2,500 per hour of flight.
- At least 50% of the total seats on an aircraft have to be offered at cheaper rates.
- In order to enable airlines to offer affordable fares they are given a subsidy from the govt. for a period of Three Years.

Present Status of working

- A total of nine rounds of bidding have taken place since January 2017.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has set a target of operationalizing as many as 100 unserved and underserved airports and starting at least 1,000 RCS routes by 2024.
- So far, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has awarded 948 routes under UDAN, of which 403 routes have taken off that connect 65 airports.
- Out of the total 28 seaplane routes connecting 14 water aerodromes, only two have commenced.

Issues with the Working:

- Discontinuance: In reality, some of the routes launched have been discontinued as most of the routes awarded under UDAN are not active.
- On-paper Ambitions: UDAN was expanded to provide improved connectivity to hilly regions and islands through helicopters and seaplanes. However, they mostly remain on paper.

The Reasons Include:

- Failure to set up airports or heliports due to lack of availability of land
- Airlines unable to start flights on routes awarded to them or finding the routes difficult to sustain Adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Various Challenges:

- Lack of funds: Many small airlines await infusion of funds, to be able to undertake maintenance of aircraft, pay rentals to lessors, give salaries to its staff, etc.
- Maintenance issue: Many players don't have more than one or two planes and they are often poorly maintained. New planes are too expensive for these smaller players.
- Availability of pilots: Often, they also have problems with the availability of pilots and are forced to hire foreign pilots which costs them a lot of money and makes the business unviable.

- **Competition:** Only those routes that have been bagged by bigger domestic players such as IndiGo and SpiceJet have seen a better success rate.

Way Forward:

- The govt offers subsidies for a route for a period of three years and expects the airline to develop the route during this time so that it becomes self-sufficient.
- Airlines need an extension of the subsidy period for their operational continuity.
- Due to the rise in COVID cases, travel restrictions and passenger safety too needs to be taken into consideration in the loss-making of such airlines.

5. RBI Proposes New Norms for Capital Requirement for Banks

Why in News?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed to replace existing approaches for Measuring Minimum operational risk capital requirements of banks with a new Basel-III Standardized Approach.

What are Capital Requirements of a Bank?

- Capital requirements are standardized regulations in place for banks and other depository institutions that determine how much liquid capital must be held of a certain level of their assets.
- They are set to ensure that banks and depository institutions' holdings are not dominated by investments that increase the risk of default.
- They also ensure that banks and depository institutions have enough capital to sustain operating losses (OL) while still honoring withdrawals.

Why Need such a requirement?

- An angry public and uneasy investment climate usually prove to be the catalysts for capital requirements provisions.
- This is essential when irresponsible financial behavior by large institutions is seen as the culprit behind a financial crisis, market crash, or recession.

What are the Risks for a Bank?

- There are many types of risks that banks face.
 - ✓ Credit risk
 - ✓ Market risk
 - ✓ Operational risk

- ✓ Liquidity risk
- ✓ Business risk
- ✓ Reputational risk
- ✓ Systemic risk
- ✓ Moral hazard

What is Operational Risk?

- ‘Operational risk’ refers to the risk of loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from external events.
- This has been defined by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision I as the risk of loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from External Events.
- This definition includes legal risk, but excludes strategic and reputational risk.

Pros of Capital Requirements:

- Ensure banks stay solvent, avoid default
- Ensure depositors have access to funds
- Set industry standards
- Provide way to compare, evaluate institutions

Unwanted Consequences of such move:

- Raise costs for banks and eventually consumers
- Inhibit banks’ ability to invest
- Reduce availability of credit, loans