

## **1. Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System (ECWCS)**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) has handed over a Technology for indigenous Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System (ECWCS) to five Indian companies.
- Earlier, DRDO successfully conducted maiden flight test of a new indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay'.

### **Highlights:**

- It is an ergonomically designed modular technical clothing with improved thermal insulation and physiological comfort based on the insulation required at various ambient climatic conditions in Himalayan regions during different levels of physical activity.
- The ECWCS embodies physiological concepts related to the reduction in respiratory heat and water loss, unhindered range of motions and rapid absorption of sweat while providing waterproof, windproof features with adequate breathability and enhanced insulation as well as strength features required for high altitude operations.
- It is designed to suitably provide thermal insulation over a temperature range of +15 to -50 degrees Celsius with different combinations of layers and intensity of physical work.
- It is required by the Indian Army for its sustained operations in glacier and Himalayan peaks. The Army, till recently has been importing extreme cold weather clothing and several Special Clothing and Mountaineering Equipment (SCME) items for the troops deployed in high altitude regions.
- It provides an advantage of fewer combinations to meet the required insulation for the prevailing climatic conditions, thereby providing a viable import alternative for the Indian Army.

## **2. Apatani Textile**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, an application seeking Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Arunachal Pradesh Apatani textile product has been filed by a firm.

### **Highlights:**

- The Apatani weave comes from the Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh living at Ziro, the headquarters of lower Subansiri district.

- The Apatani community weaves its own textiles for various occasions, including rituals and cultural festivals.
- The woven fabric of this tribe is known for its geometric and zigzag patterns and also for its angular designs.
- The tribe predominantly weaves shawls known as jig-jiro and jilan or jackets called supuntarii.
- The people here use different leaves and plant resources for organic dyeing the cotton yarns in their traditional ways.
- The traditional handloom of this tribe is a type of loin loom, which is called Chichin, and is similar to the traditional handloom of the Nyishi tribe.
- It is portable, easy to install and operated by a single weaver, especially the female members of the community
- Aaptani are a tribal group of people living in the Ziro valley in Arunachal Pradesh.
- They speak a local language called Tani and worship the sun and the moon.
- They celebrate major festivals – Dree with prayers for a bumper harvest and prosperity of all humankind and Myoko to celebrate Friendship.



### **3. Star Rating Protocol of Garbage Free Cities- Toolkit 2022**

#### **Why in News?**

- On the eve of Good Governance Day (25<sup>th</sup> December), the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the 'Star Rating Protocol of Garbage Free Cities- Toolkit 2022'.

#### **Highlights:**

- It is the most important governance tool of waste management – the Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free Cities.
- In the revised protocol the entire process of applying for certification has been simplified and made completely Digital, Paperless.
- And new components pertaining to Information, Education & Communication (IEC) , capacity building, revenue from sale of waste by-products have been added to encourage cities to build an ecosystem to strengthen waste management systems.

- The Star Rating Protocol was launched by the MoHUA in 2018 to institutionalise a mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status, and to motivate cities to achieve higher degrees of sustainable cleanliness.
- In the recently concluded certification exercise for Garbage Free Cities nearly 50% of ULBs( Urban Local Bodies) (2,238 cities) participated in the certification exercise, of which a total of 299 cities have been certified.
- 9 cities have been rated as 5-star, 143 cities rated as 3-star and 147 cities as 1-star.
- In October 2021, Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 was launched, to create “Garbage Free Cities” (GFC), thereby placing India on a new trajectory of growth towards an ecosystem of holistic sanitation and waste management.
- It is one of the various initiatives which intends to make Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) a successful project.

#### **Based On:**

- It is based on 12 parameters which follow a SMART framework – Single metric, Measurable, Achievable, Rigorous verification mechanism and Targeted towards outcomes.
- The star rating conditions have been designed in a way to enable cities to gradually evolve into a model (7-star) city, with progressive improvements in their overall cleanliness.
- It is a comprehensive framework that assesses cities across 23 different components of Solid Waste Management (SWM) and is graded based on overall marks received.

## **4. Konark Sun Temple**

### **Why in News?**

- The Archaeological Survey of India is working on a preliminary roadmap to safely remove sand from the interiors of Odisha’s Sun Temple, which was filled up by the British 118 years ago to prevent it from collapsing.



### **Konark Sun Temple:**

- Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE Sun temple at Konark about 36 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India.
- The temple is attributed to king Narasinga Deva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE.
- Declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1984 it remains a major pilgrimage site for Hindus, who gather here every year for the Chandrabhaga Mela around the month of February.
- Its architecture:
- Dedicated to the Hindu Sun God Surya, what remains of the temple complex has the appearance of a 100-foot (30 m) high chariot with immense wheels and horses, all carved from stone.
- Its architecture has all the defining elements of the Kalinga architecture – it includes Shikhara (crown), Jagmohana (audience hall), Natmandir (dance hall), and Vimana (tower).
- Also called the Surya Devalaya, it is a classic illustration of the Odisha style of Architecture or Kalinga Architecture.
- Once over 200 feet (61 m) high, much of the temple is now in ruins, in particular the large shikara tower over the sanctuary; at one time this rose much higher than the mandapa that remains.
- The structures and elements that have survived are famed for their intricate artwork, iconography, and themes, including erotic kama and mithuna scenes.
- The Jagamohan is the only structure that is fully intact now.
- Earlier restoration efforts:
- It had been filled with sand and sealed by the British authorities in 1903 in order to stabilize the structure, a/c to ASI.
- The sand filled in over 100 years ago had settled, leading to a gap of about 17 feet.
- However, the structure was found to be stable.

## **5. Why the Aadhaar-Voter ID Link must be stopped**

### **Why in News?**

- The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 which facilitates amendment to the Representation of People's Act, is a step toward implementing online-based remote e-voting for which the use of Aadhaar will be the primary identity.

### **Objectives of Linking:**

- The linking of Aadhaar with one's voter ID was primarily to build a biometric dependent voting system from the very beginning.
- The change could help fight fraud and duplicates in the electoral rolls.
- Pilot programmes on linking the voter id:
- In 2014, the Election Commission of India (ECI) conducted two pilot programmes on linking the voter id with Aadhaar in the districts of Nizamabad and Hyderabad.
- Based on the effectiveness, the ECI called for a National Consultation on Aadhaar and voter id linking.
- The ECI launched the National Electoral Roll Purification and Authentication Programme (NERPAP) on April 1, 2015, which had to be completed by August 31, 2015.
- After a Supreme Court of India order on August 11, 2015, it was announced that this NERPAP would be shut down.
- But as Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were early adopters of this programme since 2014, both States have nearly completed linking Aadhaar and voter id for all residents.
- Methodology is unknown: The methodology followed by the ECI to find duplicate voters using Aadhaar is unknown to the general public.
- SRDH data used: In a letter from the CEO Andhra Pradesh (then for Telangana and Andhra Pradesh) to the ECI, it is clear that the State Resident Data Hub (SRDH) application of the Government of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh was used to curate electoral rolls.
- The SRDH has data on residents of the State which is supplied by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) or collected further by the State governments.
- While the UIDAI was constrained not to collect data on caste, religion and other sensitive information data for Aadhaar, it recommended to the States to collect this information, if required, as part of Aadhaar data collection; it termed the process as Know Your Resident (KYR) and Know Your Resident Plus (KYR+).

- It is these SRDH applications that the ECI used to curate electoral rolls which resulted in the deletion of a sizeable number of voters from the list in Telangana in 2018.

### Concerns:

- Disenfranchisement: The role of the ECI to verify voters using door-to-door verification (in 2015) has been subsumed; a software algorithm commissioned by the Government for purposes unknown to the public and maintained by a private IT company is in control now.
- Subjecting key electoral rolls to surveillance software damages the concept of universal adult suffrage.
- What the experience in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh highlights is voter suppression and disenfranchisement.
- Issue of ensuring electoral integrity: In a situation where the role of money makes a mockery of the democratic process, linking Aadhaar will be futile.
- Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), if foolproof, put an end to the days of booth capturing prevalent in the days of paper ballots.
- E-voting can also be gamed using malware to change the outcome of an election.
- While the Bill does not look into large-scale e-voting, there is an issue of ensuring electoral Integrity.
- Voter profiling: An Aadhaar-voter ID linkage will also help political parties create voter profiles and influence the voting process.
- Online trends on the day of voting and micro-targeting voters using their data will make it easier for political parties in power to use data for elections.