

# NEWS TODAY

## Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM) successfully flight-tested by DRDO

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted test from the **Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur** on the eastern coast.
- **About ITCM**
  - ⊕ Developed by the **Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE)** of DRDO.
  - ⊕ It is a **long-range subsonic cruise missile** powered by an indigenous propulsion system.
    - ◆ The propulsion system is developed by **Gas Turbine Research Establishment**.
    - ◆ Cruise missiles are **unmanned vehicles that remain within the atmosphere** and can fly as low as a few meters off the ground.
    - ◆ Subsonic cruise missile flies at a **speed lesser than that of sound (around 0.8 MACH)**

### Reasons for Missile and Satellite launch from the Eastern coast

- ⊕ A satellite launched from the sites near the equator towards the east direction **gets an initial boost equal to the velocity of Earth's surface**.
  - ◆ It helps in cutting down the cost of rockets used to launch the satellites.
- ⊕ **In case of the failure of satellite/missile, the Bay of Bengal provides a safe corridor** that does not fall on built-up hinterland.
- ⊕ Does not have major international maritime or airline routes crisscrossing testing.
  - ◆ During test launches, the few existing routes can be closed temporarily without causing much disruption.

### Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE)

- **Located:** Bengaluru
- **About:** It is a key Aeronautical Systems Design House involved in the design and development of state-of-the-art Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and Aeronautical Systems and technologies.
- **Major activities:**
  - ⊕ **ABHYAS: High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT).**
  - ⊕ **Rustom-1: the first Indian Remotely Piloted Aircraft System** to have conventional take-off and landing capabilities.
  - ⊕ Provided state-of-the-art inertial and **Global Navigation Satellite System** sensors for the UAV flight control and guidance.

## Survival International Report Highlights Six UNESCO World Heritage Sites on Indigenous People's Land

- **Sites include** Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Odzala-Kokoua National Park, Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex, Kaziranga National Park, and Chitwan National Park.
- **Indigenous people**
  - ⊕ They are **distinct social and cultural groups** that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live e.g. Maori, Inuit, etc.
  - ⊕ Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples, **an official definition of "indigenous" has not been adopted by any UN system body.**

### Issues of Indigenous people:

- ⊕ **Extreme Poverty:** Although they make up just 6 percent of the global population, they account for about 19 percent of the extreme poor.
- ⊕ **Land evictions and Forced displacement:** Due to development projects e.g. Dams, Mining, etc.
- ⊕ **Restricted access to health care:** They have higher rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, and lower life expectancy.
- ⊕ **Human Rights Violations:** Their human rights are violated by authorities, and they face **high levels of marginalization and discrimination.**
- ⊕ **Other Issues:** Poor political representation, Lack of access to social services, housing and education, climate change, etc.

### Steps Taken for the Protection of Indigenous People

Global Steps	Indian Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>➤ United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues.</li> <li>➤ Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>➤ UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fifth and Sixth Schedule of Constitution.</li> <li>➤ Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)</li> <li>➤ Eklavya Model Residential Schools.</li> <li>➤ Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana.</li> <li>➤ Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana</li> </ul>

## Sweden becomes 38<sup>th</sup> country to join Artemis Accords

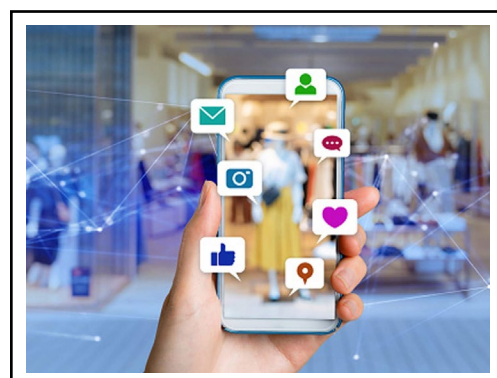
- Artemis Accords was **established in 2020 by NASA**, in coordination with the US Department of State, together with **seven other founding member nations**.
- **About Artemis Accords**
  - ⊕ Grounded in **Outer Space Treaty (OST) of 1967**, these are a **non-binding set of principles** designed to **guide civil space exploration and use** in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
  - ⊕ It represents **multilateral leadership in civil space diplomacy** and brings together a diverse set of nations with a shared vision of peaceful space cooperation.
  - ⊕ India is a **signatory to the Artemis Accords**.
- **Commitment of Signatories under the Accords**
  - ⊕ Broad dissemination of national **space policies and scientific information** resulting from their activities.
  - ⊕ Recognize **development of interoperable and common exploration infrastructure and standards** such as communication systems, landing structures, etc.
  - ⊕ Implement **MoUs** between governments or agencies as per the **Outer Space Treaty 1967**.
  - ⊕ **Preserve outer space heritage**, including **historic landing sites and evidence of activity on celestial bodies**.
  - ⊕ **Mitigate orbital debris** and induce **safe and timely disposal of spacecraft** at the end of missions.

### International Treaties Governing Outer Space

- **Outer Space Treaty (1967)**: Provides basic framework for international space law.
  - **Rescue Agreement (1968)**: To rescue and assist astronauts in distress.
  - **Liability Convention (1972)**: Provides that launching State shall be absolutely liable to pay compensation for damage caused by its space objects on the surface of the Earth or to aircraft.
  - **Registration Convention (1976)**: Registration of objects launched into outer space.
  - **Moon Agreement (1979)**: Provides that the Moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of humankind.
- Note:** India has ratified all these treaties, except the Moon Agreement of 1979. India, however, is a signatory to Moon Agreement.

## Voluntary Code of Ethics for Social Media Platforms (SMPs)

- X (formerly Twitter) withheld 4 posts for Model Code of Conduct violation at the request of the Election Commission of India (ECI), adhering to the **'Voluntary Code of Ethics'** for social media platforms.
- **Voluntary Code of Ethics (CoE)**
  - ⊕ CoE aims to ensure **free, fair, and ethical usage of SMPs** to maintain the integrity of the electoral process
  - ⊕ First presented to the ECI by various **SMPs and Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)** in **2019**.
  - ⊕ Code also promises to facilitate **transparency in paid political advertisements**.
- **Commitment of SMPs under CoE**
  - ⊕ **ECI can notify the relevant platforms of potential violations of Section 126 of Representation of People Act, 1951, and other applicable electoral laws** which shall be **acknowledged/ processed within 3 hours**.
    - ◆ **Section 126(1)(b)** prohibits displaying any election matter in any electronic media during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for conclusion of poll.
  - ⊕ Platforms have to create **high priority dedicated reporting mechanism for ECI** for taking expeditious action on any reported violations.
  - ⊕ Platforms to provide a **mechanism for political advertisers** to submit **pre-certified advertisements** issued by Media Certification and Monitoring Committee.



### Challenges posed by SMPs for Free and Fair Elections

- **Echo chambers and filter bubble**: Algorithms reinforce existing biases and limit exposure to diverse viewpoints.
- **Voter profiling and Micro-targeting**: Potential misuse of personal data for voter profiling and micro-targeting.
- **Misinformation and disinformation**: Rapid dissemination of false information, including fabricated news, doctored images or videos, etc.
- **External influence**: SMPs can be used by foreign actors to influence elections through coordinated disinformation campaigns, amplification of divisive content, etc. [e.g., **Cambridge Analytica Controversy in the US (2018)**]

## 'Navchetana - National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation (ECS)' released

- ▶ Framework document aims to fill the conceptual and practical gaps in understanding and implementing care and stimulation from birth until the first three years of a child's growth.
- ▶ **Childhood Stimulation:** Stimulation activities involve intentional efforts to activate the child's early development.
- ▶ **Need of ECS**
  - ⊕ At this age baby's brain is twice as active as an adult's brain and patterns of thinking and responding are established.
  - ⊕ At birth only 25% of the eventual brain is formed, while 75% develops in the first 3 years of a child's life.
- ▶ **Key highlights of the ECS Framework**
  - ⊕ **Objective:** To empower caregivers and Anganwadi Workers for holistic early stimulation, through responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning, for optimal development of children.
  - ⊕ Document emphasizes on **two of the five components of nurturing care framework: 'responsive caregiving' and 'creating opportunities for early learning'**.
    - ◆ **Nurturing care framework** for Early Childhood Development was provided by WHO in 2018.
  - ⊕ Entails **36 sets of activities** for children from months 0 to 36 for holistic stimulation of child's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, physical, and creative development.

### Measures for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in India

- ▶ **Article 45:** Directs the State to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years.
- ▶ **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009:** Provides that appropriate government may make necessary arrangements for pre-school education.
- ▶ **National Education Policy, 2020:** Recommended a sub-framework for 0-3 years old under National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education
- ▶ **Others:** India is also a signatory to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989.

## Sugar content of Nestle infant milk in poorer countries is higher than in developed countries

- ▶ **Public Eye**, a Swiss investigative organization, and **International Baby Food Action Network** revealed it.
  - ⊕ According to World Health Organization (WHO), early exposure to sugar creates a **lifelong preference for sugar increasing the risk of obesity and other chronic illnesses**.
- ▶ This double standard raises **ethical concerns and underscores the need for ethical and responsible business practices**.
- ▶ **Ethical concerns**
  - ⊕ **Breach of trust:** Selling an inferior product breaches consumer trust.
  - ⊕ **Health Impact:** It shows disregard of the company towards the health of the people in the developing world for profit maximization.
  - ⊕ **Against the principle of fairness:** as the company is differentiating between rich and poor countries customer.
  - ⊕ **Lack of transparency and accountability:** about ingredients and the negative impacts of the product.
- ▶ **Regulations for ensuring the quality of food products**
  - ⊕ **The Codex Alimentarius** is a collection of internationally recognized standards, guidelines, and codes of practice for food safety and quality.
    - ◆ **Developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission**, a joint body of the Food and Agriculture Organization and WHO.
  - ⊕ **The Food Safety and Standards Act 2006**, defines food safety and establishes the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India** as the apex regulatory body for food safety and quality in India.

## Also in News



### Infectious Respiratory Particles (IRPs)

- ▶ WHO published a global technical consultation report introducing updated terminology for pathogens that transmit through the air.
- ▶ **About IRPs**
  - ⊕ **IRPs are infectious particles**, generated and expelled by individuals infected with a respiratory pathogen, **containing the pathogen**, through their mouth or nose by breathing, talking, etc.
  - ⊕ **Pathogens** covered include those that cause respiratory infections, e.g., COVID-19, influenza, measles, Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), TB, etc.
  - ⊕ IRPs exist on a **continuous spectrum of sizes**, and no single cut off points should be applied to distinguish smaller from larger particles.



### Parkinson Plus Syndrome (PPS)

- ▶ A patient from France received India's first high cervical spinal cord stimulation for **PPS**.
- ▶ **About PPS**
  - ⊕ Also called **atypical Parkinsonism**.
  - ⊕ Refers to a group of **neurodegenerative movement disorders** that resemble idiopathic Parkinson's disease.
    - ◆ **Idiopathic** means the cause is unknown.
  - ⊕ Certain distinguishing **clinical and pathophysiological features** include early-onset dementia, hallucinations, problems with balance, etc.
- ▶ **Parkinson disease** is a brain condition that causes problems with movement, mental health, sleep, pain and other health issues.





### Snail Mucin

- Snail Mucin has caught the attention of both beauty enthusiasts and experts alike.
- **About Snail Mucin:**
  - ⊕ It is a gooey secretion that snails produce **when they crawl**.
  - ⊕ It protect snails from **cuts and wounds**.
  - ⊕ It can be used in the form of **serum, moisturizers, and wound healer**.



### Aral Sea

- Study has found that the desert which emerged due to the drying up of the Aral Sea has made Central Asia a much dustier place.
- **About Aral Sea**
  - ⊕ It was once-large saltwater lake of **Central Asia**.
  - ⊕ Lies on the **boundary between Kazakhstan** to the north and **Uzbekistan** to the south.
- **Other important lakes that shrunk in last few decades:**
  - ⊕ **Lake Urmia:** Lies in the bottom of the large central depression of the Azerbaijan region in **northwestern Iran**.
  - ⊕ **Lake Hamoun:** Freshwater Lake in Iran on Iran – Afghanistan border.



### World Craft City (WCC)

- The World Crafts Council International (WCCI) has picked **Srinagar** to map its craft clusters before its final nomination as the **WCC**.
- **About WCC**
  - ⊕ Launched in **2014** by the **WCCI**.
  - ⊕ It recognizes role of **local authorities, craftspeople, and communities** in cultural, economic, and social development worldwide.
  - ⊕ It establishes a **dynamic network of craft cities** across the globe, aligning with the principles of the **creative economy**.
- WCCI is a **Kuwait-based organization** working on the **recognition and preservation of traditional crafts** across the globe.



### Longevity India Initiative (LII)

- Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has launched the 'Longevity India' Initiative to support ageing research in India.
- **About LII**
  - ⊕ Seeks to **enhance understanding of ageing** through both **fundamental and applied research**, and to develop solutions that can improve quality of life.
  - ⊕ Brings together a **multidisciplinary team of experts** from academia, and industry to promote healthy ageing across India.
  - ⊕ **Research focus** includes identifying early disease indicators, investigating ageing biomarkers, and developing new therapeutics and technologies to aid in healthy ageing.



### Exoskeleton

- Recently, the first international workshop on 'Emerging Technologies and Challenges for Exoskeleton' was held by DRDO.
- **About Exoskeleton**
  - ⊕ It is a **mobile machine consisting primarily** of an outer framework ( akin to an insect's exoskeleton) worn by a person.
  - ⊕ It is powered by a system of motors, hydraulics, or pneumatics that **delivers energy for limb movement**.
  - ⊕ **Applications:** Aid for people with disabilities, helps soldiers to carry heavy loads, Factories and assembly lines, etc.



### New Archaeological sites in Telangana

- Archaeologists have discovered 3 new archaeological sites in Telangana.
- **New Archaeological sites include:**
  - ⊕ **Ooragutta:** An Iron Age megalithic site.
  - ⊕ **Two new rock art sites at Damaratogu** in Gundala mandal of Bhadradi Kothagudem district.
    - ◆ **Devarlabanda Mula:** Has only depictions of animals and no humans or weapons.
- Usually in this region, a type of megalithic monument known as '**Dolmenoid Cists**' are found.
  - ⊕ Dolmenoid cists are **chamber tombs which are semi-subterranean**.

## Places in News



### Uzbekistan (Capital: Tashkent)

- Chief of the Army Staff inaugurated a high-tech IT laboratory at the Academy of Armed Forces in Uzbekistan.
- **Political features:**
  - ⊕ It is a double **landlocked** country in Central Asia.
  - ⊕ **Bordering Countries:** Kazakhstan (North), Kyrgyzstan (East), Tajikistan (South-east), Afghanistan (South), Turkmenistan (South-west).
- **Geographical Features:**
  - ⊕ **Desert:** Kyzyl Kum.
  - ⊕ **Highest Point:** Khazret Sultan
  - ⊕ **Major rivers:** Syr Darya River, Amu Darya River
  - ⊕ The **Aral Sea**, is located in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI