




15 July 2024

National and International News

<p>Mahabodhi Temple Complex</p> 	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Satellite images suggest architectural wealth beneath Mahabodhi temple in Bodh Gaya. <p>About Mahabodhi Temple Complex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significance: One of the four holy sites related to Lord Buddha's life, marking the spot of his Enlightenment. ● Location: Bodh Gaya, central Bihar, on the banks of the Niranjana River. ● Historical Importance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First temple built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C. ○ Present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries. ○ Surviving example of early brick structures from the late Gupta period. ○ Influential in the development of brick architecture. ● Architecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grand temple's pyramidal shikhara (tower) with layers of niches, arch motifs, and fine engravings. ○ Four smaller identical towers at the corners, topped with umbrella-like domes. ○ Yellow sandstone statue of the Buddha inside the shrine. ● Bodhi Tree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supposed direct descendant of the original Bodhi Tree where Buddha attained enlightenment. ○ Ashoka's stone slab marks the exact spot of Buddha's enlightenment, known as Buddha's vajrasana ("diamond throne" or "thunder seat"). ● UNESCO World Heritage Site: Recognized in 2002.
<p>e-office Platform</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Government of India, as part of its 100-day agenda, has announced a plan to implement the e-office platform in 133 attached, subordinate offices, and autonomous bodies. <p>About e-office Platform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiative Overview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aimed to streamline operations and enhance efficiency across 133 identified offices. ○ Spearheaded by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation by: National Informatics Centre (NIC) as the knowledge partner for e-Office implementation. ● Key Components of e-Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ File Management System (eFile): Workflow-based system extending manual file handling to an efficient electronic system. ○ Knowledge Management System (KMS): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Central repository for organizational documents. ■ Allows users to create, manage, and track electronic documents, including version history. ○ Work from Anywhere (WAW) Portal: A virtual office gateway enabling secure access to office functions from anywhere. ○ Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Web-based application for processing Annual Performance Appraisal Reports (APAR). ■ Enables employees to fill, report, and review APARs within the official hierarchy.
<p>Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog (CHAPEA) project</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A NASA crew has emerged from a year-long simulated Mars mission as part of the CHAPEA project, which took place in a 17,000 sq ft habitat at Johnson Space Center. <p>About CHAPEA project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Simulate year-long stays on Mars to assess NASA's food system and physical and behavioral health in humans for future space missions. ● Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Four private crew quarters ○ Dedicated workstations ○ Dedicated medical station ○ Common lounge areas ○ Galley and food-growing stations ● Mission Environment: Simulates realistic Mars conditions with environmental stressors such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resource limitations ○ Isolation ○ Equipment failure ○ Significant workloads ● Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct simulated spacewalks. ○ Provide data on physical and behavioral health and performance.
<p>World Population Prospects Report 2024</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) recently released the World Population Prospects 2024 report.



	<p>About World Population Prospects Report 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● India's Population: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Projected to be 1.45 billion in 2024. ○ Expected to peak at 1.69 billion in 2054. ● Global Population Growth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expected to peak at around 10.3 billion people in the mid-2080s, up from 2 billion in 2024. ○ Projected to decline gradually after peaking, falling to 10.2 billion by the end of the century. ● Fertility Rate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Currently stands at 2.25 live births per woman, down from 3.31 births in 1990. ○ More than half of all countries and areas have fertility rates below the replacement level of 2.1 live births per woman. ● Life Expectancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reached 73.3 years globally in 2024, an increase of 8.4 years since 1995. ○ Projected to rise to an average of 77.4 years globally by 2054.
<p>Agri-SURE initiative</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has recently announced the Agri-SURE (Agri fund for Start-Ups & Rural Enterprises) initiative. <p>About Agri-SURE initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objective: Supports start-ups and agripreneurs in agriculture and allied sectors. ● Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total: ₹750 crore Category-II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF). ○ Contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NABARD: ₹250 crore. ■ Ministry of Agriculture: ₹250 crore. ■ Other institutions: ₹250 crore. ● Investment Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides investments through sector-specific, sector-agnostic, and debt AIFs. ○ Direct equity support to agricultural start-ups. ● Target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support approximately 85 agri start-ups. ○ Investment sizes of up to ₹25 crore each. ● Focus Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote innovative, technology-driven agricultural initiatives. ○ Enhance farm produce value chain. ○ Create new rural ecosystem linkages and infrastructure.



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- Generate employment.
- Support **Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs)**.
- Encourage IT-based solutions and machinery rental services for farmers.
- **Management:** NABVENTURES, a fully owned subsidiary of NABARD, will act as the fund manager.

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