

Maharashtra State News

Maharashtra Diwas

- Maharashtra Day, also known as Maharashtra Diwas, is **celebrated annually on May 1 to commemorate the formation of the state of Maharashtra.**
- Maharashtra, **established in 1960** through the **Bombay Reorganization Act.**

About Formation of Maharashtra:

- The **Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti (United Maharashtra Committee)** was established in **1956** to **advocate for a separate state for Marathi-speaking individuals.**
- In **1959**, the Indian government created a panel to reorganise states along linguistic lines.
- The panel **advocated for a distinct Marathi-speaking state that would include Bombay City and other Marathi-speaking territories** within the state of Bombay.

Fast-track courts under POCSO

- The **Bombay High Court (HC)** directed its **administrative department and the state government's law and judiciary department to collaborate.**
- The collaboration is to **determine the requirements to establish 138 fast-track courts** under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act** in the state.

About Fast-track courts:

- Fast-track courts are **specialised establishments aimed at expediting the trial process** for cases related to sexual offences, particularly those involving rape and violations of the **POCSO Act.**

About POCSO Act:

- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, established in **2012** in India, is designed to **protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse.**
- **Objective:** The primary goal of the POCSO Act is to **safeguard children under the age of 18** from offences like sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography.

District Good Governance Index (DGGI)

- **Raigad district topped the list** in the recent **District Good Governance Index (DGGI)** of Maharashtra.
- The **DGGI evaluates 10 governance sectors** with **161 indicators** and over **300 data points.**

Key points:

- The index is the **first of its kind** carried out by the **department of administrative reforms and organisation and methods.**
- **Maharashtra has become the fifth state in the country to implement such an exercise.**
- In terms of **citizen-centric governance and human resources development**, **Nashik district stood second**, followed by **Gondia and Pune districts**, respectively.
- **Raigad district topped the list** with **529 points**, followed by **Gondia** with **518 points.**

Shakti Criminal Laws

- Maharashtra State Home Minister presented a report on the Shakti Bill.
- The committee submitted the **amendments to the Shakti Bill**, which was sent to the **joint committee.**
- The **Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 2020** is a bill on **crimes against women and children.**

Key points:

- The bill has recommended **capital punishment for rape cases.**
- It also recommends a **time-limit of 30 days for completing the probe** since the day of registration of the complaint.
- The amendment has put the **onus on social media platforms and companies providing Internet data** to share data for police investigation.

Majhi Vasundhara (MV) Curriculum

- The Maharashtra Government is introducing a **comprehensive curriculum for Grades I-VIII.**

- The aim is to **inculcate climate-consciousness and green values** in the next generation.

Key points:

- The **new curriculum has been developed** by the **Department of Environment and Climate Change** and **UNICEF**.
- The curriculum is named the “**Majhi Vasundhara (MV) Curriculum**”.
- The **curriculum aims to inculcate application-based awareness on issues like climate change** among students from Grades I-VIII.
- The curriculum will raise awareness among students by **keeping a balance between traditional and local knowledge**.

Article 39 (b) of the Indian Constitution

- The **Solicitor General, representing the Union and Maharashtra governments**, stated in the Supreme Court that the **application of Article 39 (b) mandates state policies to aim for an egalitarian society by distributing material resources of the community to subserve common good**.
- It was **limited by the laws framed by Parliament and assemblies** to enact appropriate legislation to achieve the goal.
- The **term ‘community’, used in Article 39 (b)**, must be **understood** not in the colloquial way but **in its wider sense of society in general**.

About Article 39 (b):

- Article 39(b) of the Indian Constitution is **part of the Directive Principles of State Policy**, which guides the State in formulating policies and laws.
- Article 39(b) mandates that the **State should ensure that the ownership and control over the community’s material resources are distributed in a manner that best serves the common good**.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)

- **Mangroves** in Thane district, Maharashtra, are being **cleared for the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PM Awaas scheme)**.

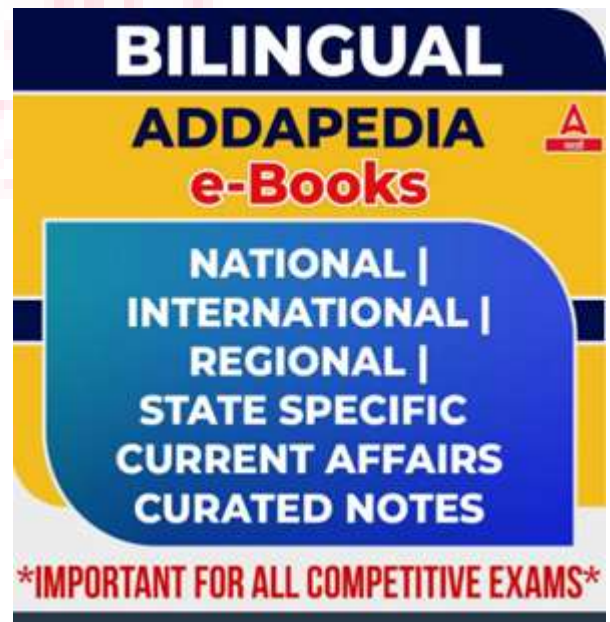
- Activists have raised an alarm over this issue, as **mangroves play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance**.

About PMAY:

- The **main goal of PMAY is to provide affordable housing to the urban poor and economically weaker sections**.
- **Target Group:** The scheme targets the economically weaker sections (EWS), low-income groups (LIG), and middle-income groups (MIG) of the society. It also specifically targets women, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and other backward classes.
- **PMAY includes four major components:**
 - **In-situ Slum Redevelopment** using land as a resource with private sector participation.
 - **Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)** for EWS, LIG, and MIG categories.
 - **Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP)** with public and private sectors.
 - **Subsidy for Beneficiary-led Individual House Construction/Enhancement**.

Think:

- Read about Mangroves.



Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project

- The Indian government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a 300-million-dollar loan on September 8, 2021.
- The loan agreement was signed as additional financing to scale up the improvement of rural connectivity in Maharashtra.

Key points:

- The additional financing for the “Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project” will help in improving an additional 1,100 rural roads and 230 bridges.
- Under the project, a gender action plan has been prepared to focus on capacity development of women workers so that they can benefit from semi-skilled and unskilled labour opportunities.

Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

- Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic with the aim of generating jobs.
- The scheme had a target of spending Rs 22810 crores till March 31, 2024.
- Maharashtra has the highest number of beneficiaries under this scheme, making it the top state.
- Following Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka are the states with the next highest number of beneficiaries.

Mission Vatsalya

- The Maharashtra government has launched a special initiative named “Mission Vatsalya”.
- Mission Vatsalya is designed to provide a range of services and approximately 18 benefits under a single platform.

Key points:

- The mission has been specifically designed for widows, with a particular emphasis on those from rural areas, poor backgrounds, and deprived sections.
- Schemes such as the Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana and Gharkul Yojana will be included in this mission to benefit these women.
- This mission is being implemented by the women and child development (WCD) Department.

New species of jumping spiders discovered

- Researchers recently discovered a new species of jumping spiders in Solapur and Dharashiv districts of Maharashtra.
- The species named *Stenaelurillus solapur* and *Stenaelurillus naldurg* were found only in the habitat they were discovered in.

Key points:

- The spiders were found in a compact and fragmented semi-arid grassland patch.
- The species of spiders lived secluded in colonies and were rare to find.
- Researchers conducted the exploration of the species in the Western Ghats, Deccan Plateau and the eastern coastal region.
- The other two species of jumping spiders found in Tamil Nadu were named *Stenaelurillus feral* (from Villupuram) and *Stenaelurillus judithblesternae* (from Coimbatore).
- Jumping spiders play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance.
- Acting as predators, they help control the population of insects and other arthropods, thus reducing the spread of diseases and damage to crops.

Enforcement Directorate (ED)

- A Bombay court has recently emphasized the constitutional obligation of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to ensure speedy trials.
- The court made this observation while granting bail to two accused in the Cox and Kings case.

About ED:

- The Enforcement Directorate is a law enforcement agency and economic intelligence agency responsible for enforcing economic laws and fighting economic crime in India.
- It was established in 1956.
- The ED operates under the Department of Revenue of the Ministry of Finance.
- Primary Functions:
 - Enforcement of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA), which replaced the earlier Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973 (FERA).

- Enforcement of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP)

- The Borivali Residents Association complained to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) about the large-scale dumping of debris at the border of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP).

About Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP):

- Situated in Mumbai, Maharashtra, it is one of the major national parks existing within a metropolis limit and is one of the most visited parks in the world.
- The park was established in 1969, Originally named Krishnagiri Park, it was later renamed in the 1980s after Sanjay Gandhi.
- The 2,000-year-old Kanheri caves, sculpted by monks out of the rocky basaltic cliffs, lie within the park.
- The park is also known as the lungs of the city.
- The governing body of the national park is the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in Information Technology (IT)

- The Maharashtra government has announced the creation of a new award named the "Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in Information Technology (IT)".
- The award will be presented to institutions and companies for their outstanding performance in the IT sector.
- The presentation will coincide with the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.
- The state government will collaborate with several organizations, including NASSCOM, to finalize the modalities of the award.

Maharashtra Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy

- The Maharashtra government has unveiled the "Maharashtra Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy".
- The policy was unveiled by the State Environment Minister and was approved by the cabinet.

- The aim of the policy is to promote the adoption of electric vehicles, their production, and the strengthening of necessary infrastructure.
- The policy seeks to ensure that EVs comprise at least 10% of new vehicles registered by 2025 and 25% electrification of public transport by 2025 in six urban centres: Mumbai, Nagpur, Pune, Amravati, Aurangabad, and Nashik.
- The policy also plans to set up 2,500 charging stations in urban areas and highways.

Maharashtra Prevention of Human Sacrifice and Other Inhuman, Inhuman and Inhumane Practices of Witchcraft Act

- A horrific incident occurred in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra, where two elderly tribals were attacked and burnt alive by villagers over suspicion of witchcraft.
- The police registered a case under sections 302, 307, 201, 143, 147, 149, and Sub-Section 3 (2) of the Maharashtra Prevention of Human Sacrifice and Other Inhuman, Inhuman and Inhumane Practices of Witchcraft Act.

About act:

- The law aimed at combating superstitious practices in Maharashtra.
- The act aims to combat and criminalize the practice of human sacrifices and other harmful practices rooted in superstition that exploit people's beliefs, especially those that could cause harm or danger to life.
- The law was enacted in 2013, following the assassination of Narendra Dabholkar, an anti-superstition activist, which accelerated the legislative process.
- The law also emphasizes the importance of education and awareness campaigns to educate the public about the harmful effects of such practices and to promote a scientific temper among the populace.

Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal (MAT)

- A decision by the Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal (MAT) to set aside the termination order of a police patil in Miraj, Sangli.

About MAT:

- The **Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal (MAT)** was established to handle disputes and complaints related to the recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the State of Maharashtra.
- MAT exercises **jurisdiction over matters specified in the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985**. It deals primarily with matters concerning **government employees' recruitment and conditions of service**.
- **Composition:** The tribunal is typically composed of a **Chairperson, who is or has been a judge of a High Court**, and **other judicial and administrative members** who are or have been **high-ranking officials or have legal experience**.
- **Appeal Process:** Decisions made by the Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal **can be challenged and appealed in the High Court**.

Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA)

- The **Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA)** has been invoked in the **Salman Khan firing case**.

About MCOCA:

- MCOCA is a law **enacted by Maharashtra state in India in 1999 to combat organized crime and terrorism**.
- **Objective:** The primary objective of MCOCA is to **dismantle organized crime syndicates** by enabling law enforcement agencies to intercept communications, use confessions to police as admissible evidence, and attach properties acquired through the proceeds of crime.
- **Special Courts:** MCOCA provides for the **establishment of Special Courts to ensure speedy and efficient trial of cases** under its provisions.
- **Tough Bail Conditions:** Under MCOCA, **getting bail is challenging as the law requires the court to be satisfied that the accused is not likely to commit a similar offense while on bail**.
- **MCOCA shifts the burden of proof to the accused**, requiring them to prove their innocence in certain scenarios, which is **contrary to the usual criminal justice**

system premise where the burden is on the prosecution.

Right to Education Act 2009

- This year, **Maharashtra recorded only around 47,654 applications under the Right to education**, as against the available over **8.7 lakh seats**.
- A section of educational activists **attribute the drop in the applications to the amendment in the RTE Act**.

About RTE act:

- The **Right to Education Act (RTE)**, officially known as **The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act**, was enacted in **India in 2009**.
- **Age Group Covered:** The RTE Act provides free and compulsory education to children between the ages of **6 to 14 years** in India.
- **Compulsory Education:** It mandates that **every child has a right to full time elementary education** of satisfactory and equitable quality in a **formal school** which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.
- **No Detention Policy:** The **Act originally included a no-detention policy**, meaning that students were automatically promoted to the next grade. This was to minimize the stress of board exams. **However, as of 2019, amendments allow states to hold back students in certain circumstances**.
- **Private School Quota:** The Act mandates that **non-government schools must reserve 25% of seats for children from economically weaker sections and disadvantaged communities**.

Heritage Tree

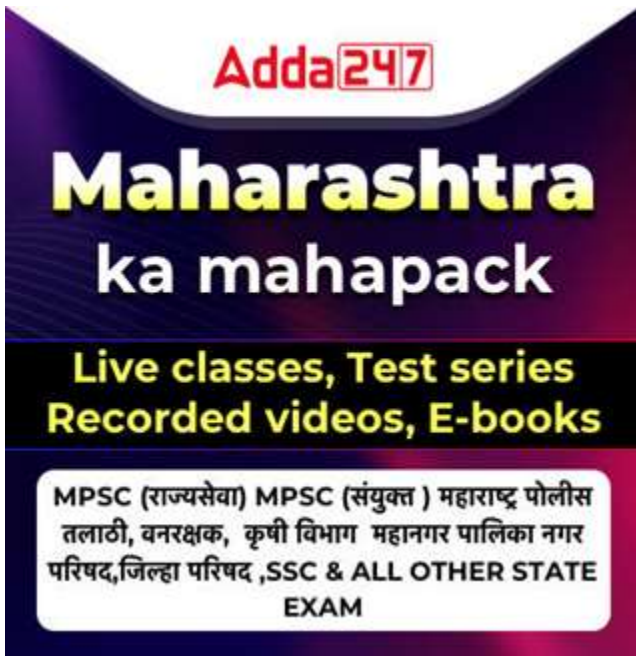
- The **Maharashtra Cabinet** approved an **action plan to protect ancient and old trees aged 50 years and above in urban areas**.

About Heritage Tree:

- **Heritage Tree Concept:** The Cabinet approved the **implementation of the 'Heritage Tree' concept in Maharashtra**.
- **Amendment to Act:** The action plan amends the **Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Tree Protection and Conservation Act, 1975**. The amendment aims to **safeguard the green cover across urban landscapes and**

provide a robust mechanism to protect heritage trees.

- **Details of Amendments:** The government will introduce the “concept of Heritage Trees” and the **age of trees for their protection and preservation**. The amendment ensures **compensatory plantation**, proposes reserving common land for plantation, and suggests following scientific methods like **Miyawaki plantation**.
- **Maharashtra State Tree Authority:** To protect a significant number of trees, the Maharashtra government will set up the “Maharashtra State Tree Authority”.



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