Daily Current Affairs

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Rani Lakshmibai

Why in news?

India celebrated one of freedom fighter and warrior Rani Lakshmibai birthday anniversary across India.

About Rani Lakshmibai

- Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi (1828 – June 1858), was the queen of the princely state of Jhansi in North India currently present in Jhansi district in Uttar Pradesh, India.
- She was one of the leading figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for Indian nationalists.

History of Jhansi, 1842 - May 1857

- Manikarnika was married to the Maharaja of Jhansi, Raja Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, in May 1842 and was afterwards called Lakshmibai (or Laxmibai) in honour of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi.
- She gave birth to a boy, Damodar Rao, in 1851, who died after four months. The Maharaja adopted a child called Anand Rao, the son of Gangadhar Rao's cousin, who was renamed Damodar Rao, on the day before the Maharaja died.
- The adoption was in the presence of the British political officer who was given a letter from the Maharaja instructing that the child be treated with respect and that the government of Jhansi should be given to his widow for her lifetime.

- After the death of the Maharaja in November 1853, because Damodar Rao (born Anand Rao) was an adopted son, the British East India Company, under Governor-General Lord Dalhousie, applied the Doctrine of Lapse, rejecting Damodar Rao's claim to the throne and annexing the state to its territories.
- When she was informed of this she cried out "I shall not surrender my Jhansi" (Mein meri Jhansi nahi doongi). In March 1854, Lakshmibai was given an annual pension of Rs. 60,000 and ordered to leave the palace and the fort.

First War of Indian Independence:

- On 10 May 1857 the Indian Rebellion started in Meerut. The leaders the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Tope, the Nawab of Banda, and Rao Sahib came to Gwalior and joined the Indian forces who now held the city (Maharaja Scindia having fled to Agra from the battlefield at Morar).
- They moved on to Gwalior intending to occupy the strategic Gwalior Fort and the rebel forces occupied the city without opposition.
- The rebels proclaimed Nana Sahib as Peshwa of a revived Maratha dominion with Rao Sahib as his governor (subedar) in Gwalior.
- The Rani was unsuccessful in trying to persuade the other rebel leaders to prepare to defend Gwalior against a British attack which she expected would come soon.
- On 17 June in Kotah-ki-Serai, near the Phool Bagh of Gwalior,She sacrified her life on war field by the enemy.
- In the British report of this battle, Hugh Rose commented that Rani Lakshmibai is "personable, clever and beautiful" and she is "the most dangerous of all Indian leaders"

PM launches Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge

Why in news?

The Prime Minister, today launched the Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge at an event in New Delhi.

Objective of Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge

To invite innovative ideas based on Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Big Data Analytics, Blockchain and other cutting edge technology to reform Government processes.

About Ease of Doing Business

The ease of doing business index is an index created by the World Bank Group to indicate better, usually simpler, regulations for businesses and stronger protections of property rights.

A nation's ranking on the index is based on the average of 10 subindices:

- Starting a business – Procedures, time, cost and minimum capital to open a new business.
- Dealing with construction permits – Procedures, time and cost to build a warehouse
- Getting electricity – procedures, time and cost required for a business to obtain a permanent electricity connection for a newly constructed warehouse
- Registering property – Procedures, time and cost to register commercial real estate
- Getting credit – Strength of legal rights index, depth of credit information index
- Protecting investors – Indices on the extent of disclosure, extent of director liability and ease of shareholder suits.
- Paying taxes – Number of taxes paid, hours per year spent preparing tax returns and total tax payable as share of gross profit.
- Trading across borders – Number of documents, cost and time necessary to export and import.
- Enforcing contracts – Procedures, time and cost to enforce a debt contract
- Resolving insolvency – The time, cost and recovery rate (%) under bankruptcy proceeding

The Doing Business project also offers information on following datasets:

- Distance to frontier - Shows the distance of each economy to the "frontier," which represents the highest performance observed on

each of the indicators across all economies included since each indicator was included in Doing Business

- Entrepreneurship - Measures entrepreneurial activity. The data is collected directly from 130 company registrars on the number of newly registered firms over the past seven years
- Good practices - Provide insights into how governments have improved the regulatory environment in the past in the areas measured by Doing Business
- Transparency in business regulation - Data on the accessibility of regulatory information measures how easy it is to access fee schedules for 4 regulatory processes in the largest business city of an economy.

India ease of doing business rank:

- India ease of doing business rank jumps 23 places to 77 in World Bank's Doing Business 2019 survey.
- Last year, India saw a record jump of 30 places to reach the 100th position in the rankings. In more than four years of the NDA, India's ranking improved 65 places from 142nd in 2014 to 77th in 2018, a record for a major economy.
- The reforms in India included streamlining the process of obtaining a building permit and improved building quality controls.
- Starting a business was made easier through consolidation of multiple application forms and introduction of a goods and services tax (GST), while getting electricity was made faster and cheaper.
- Other reforms in India included strengthening access to credit as well as making it easier and faster to pay taxes and trade across borders.

Commerce Minister Releases Report on Industrial Park Rating System

Why in news?

The Union Minister for Commerce & Industry released the report prepared by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP),

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, on Industrial Park Rating System.

About Industrial Park Rating System

- This system is being developed by the ministry to assess industrial parks in the country based on four pillars -- internal and external infrastructure, connectivity, environment and safety management, and business support services.
- There are over 3,000 industrial parks in sectors including engineering, software, food processing and chemicals- Under the system, the ministry would assess 200 such parks on several parameters such as sewage effluent and treatment; and water
- treatment.
- Development of industrial park rating system would help increase competitiveness of industries and promotion of the manufacturing sector.

About Industrial Information System (IIS)

- To optimise resource utilisation and enhance the efficiency of the manufacturing sector, DIPP launched the Industrial Information System (IIS), a GIS-enabled database of industrial areas and clusters across the country in May 2017.
- The portal serves as a one-stop solution to the free and easy accessibility of all industrial information including availability of raw material – agriculture, horticulture, minerals, natural resources, distance from key logistic nodes, layers of terrain and urban infrastructure.

Government of India to commemorate 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev

Why in news?

Government of India has decided to commemorate 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji from November, 2018 at national

as well as international level in a befitting manner.

Highlights:

- The Year long Celebration starting Novmber 23rd this year will include a number of commemorative as well as constructive activities will be taken up during the commemoration period.
- A number of religious activities like kirtan, katha, prabhat pheri, langar and educational activities such as seminars, workshops, lectures etc. will be organised. SGPC, Amritsar will be the knowledge partner of the Government of India. Commemorative coin and postage stamp will also be released.
- Sultanpur Lodhi will be developed as a heritage city incorporating 'Pind Babe Nanak Da'. A high powered telescope will be installed in Indian territory to view Kartarpur Sahib, Pakistan.

About Guru nanak:

- Guru Nanak (29 November 1469 – 10 October 1539) was the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus.
- His birth is celebrated worldwide as Guru Nanak Gurpurab on Kartik Pooranmashi, the full-moon day in the month of Katak, October–November.
- Guru Nanak travelled far and wide teaching people the message of one God who dwells in every one of His creations and constitutes the eternal Truth.
- He set up a unique spiritual, social, and political platform based on equality, fraternal love, goodness, and virtue.
- Guru Nanak's words are registered in the form of 974 poetic hymns in the holy text of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib, with some of the major prayers being the Japji Sahib, the Asa di Var and the Sidh-Ghost.
- It is part of Sikh religious belief that the spirit of Guru Nanak's sanctity, divinity and religious authority descended upon each of the nine subsequent Gurus when the Guruship was devolved on to them.

ExseedSAT-1

Why in news?

ExseedSAT-1, India's first fully privately-built satellite without any help from ISRO, will launch on the SSO-A SmallSat Express mission

What is it for?

- The satellite will provide services and functionality to the amateur (ham) radio community around the world, which would typically be very useful in times of emergencies and natural disasters.
- Unlike any other commercially available communication systems, amateur radio is not affected by terrestrial systems that could fail.
- India has previously launched a ham radio satellite called HAMSAT by amateur radio operators' collective Amsat India, in collaboration with both ISRO and the Netherlands.
- Indian private companies have not yet launched any satellites before, although ISRO's IRNSS-1I satellite was assembled, integrated, and tested (AIT) by a consortium of private companies in Bengaluru. Colleges and universities also regularly launch student satellites aboard ISRO rockets.
- ExseedSAT-1 is not being launched on an ISRO rocket due to a slot not being available.

The kilogram is being redefined

Why in News?

The international prototype kilogram keeps changing weight. This is why scientists have come up with a new way to calculate based on precise values of constants of nature.

Why?

- Since 1889, countries who are members of the General Conference on Weights and Measures have agreed to use a standard block of metal – kept near Paris – to define the kilogram.
- But although the modern block is stored in a highly controlled environment, its weight can change by tiny amounts as wear and tear causes it to lose mass and dirt causes it to increase.
- To address this problem, scientists around the world have spent nearly two decades discussing how the kilogram could instead be defined in relation to constant measurements of nature. And now they have finally reached a decision.

About first kilogram

- The first kilogram (originally called a grave) was defined in 1793 by a commission of the French Academy of Sciences, who wanted a better standard than the fixed amounts of grain that had traditionally been used.

- The commission decided that the new measure would be the mass of one cubic decimetre of distilled water at 4°C (the temperature at which water has its highest density under standard conditions).
- This had the advantage in that most properly equipped labs would be able to reproduce this standard. Subsequently, a prototype of this mass was cast in brass.

Issue and Soulution

- Unfortunately, this definition of mass depended upon another variable measurement, the **metre**. At this point, the metre was only provisionally defined as part of the distance from the North Pole to the equator.
- Once the value of the metre and the temperature of water at its densest were more accurately defined, the kilogram also had to be replaced. And a new prototype was cast in platinum to represent this mass.

- Eventually, this was replaced with the international prototype kilogram (IKP) used today, cast from a mixture of platinum and iridium to make it very hard and prevent it reacting with oxygen.
- The IPK and six copies are kept by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures in the Pavillon de Breteuil, Saint-Cloud, near Paris in France to act as a reference to measure against.
- Copies of the IPK are transported across the world to ensure all participating countries use the same standard.