



Daily Current Affairs

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Armed Forces Flag Day

Why in news?

Armed Forces Flag Day has been observed annually in India on December 7 since 1949.

History:

- Immediately after India achieved independence, a need arose for the government to manage the welfare of its defence personnel.
- On August 28, 1949, a committee set up under the defence minister decided to observe a Flag Day annually on December 7.
- The idea behind observing a Flag Day was to distribute small flags to the general population and in return collect donations.
- Flag Day gains more significance as it considers that it is the responsibility of the civilian population of India to take care of the families and dependents of the armed forces personnel who fight for the country.

Significance and purpose:

The Flag day is mainly observed to serve three basic purposes

- Rehabilitation of battle casualties
- Welfare of serving personnel and their families
- Resettlement and welfare of ex-servicemen and their families.

International Year of Millets in 2023

Why in news?

Food and Agriculture organisation (FAO) Council in its 160th session approves India's proposal to observe an International Year of Millets in 2023.

Why International Year of Millets?

It will enhance global awareness to bring back these nutri-cereals to the plate, for food and nutrition security and hence increase production for resilience to challenges posed globally by climate change.

About National Year of Millets 2018:

Government has approved 2018 as National Year of Millets to boost production of the nutrient-rich millets and the sunrise agri industry involved in it.

Significance

- Observation of Year of Millets will help in promotion of production and consumption of millets will substantially contribute in fight against targeted hunger and mitigate effect of climate change in long run.
- Popularizing millets will also benefit future generations of farmers as well as consumers. Millets are smart food and good for consumers, farmers and planet multiple and has untapped uses such as food, feed, biofuels and brewing.

Benefits of Millets

1. Nutritional Superiority: Millets are nutritionally superior to wheat and rice owing to their higher levels of protein with more balanced amino acid profile, crude fibre and minerals such as Iron, Zinc, and Phosphorous.

It provides nutritional security and act as shield against nutritional deficiency, especially among children and women.

2. Health Benefits: Pellagra (niacin deficiency), Anaemia (iron deficiency), B-complex vitamin deficiency can be effectively tackled with intake of less expensive but nutritionally rich food grains like millets.

It can also help tackle health challenges such as obesity, diabetes and

lifestyle problems as they are gluten free and also have low glycemic index and are high in dietary fibre and antioxidants.

3. Income and livelihood Source: Millets are important staple cereal crop for millions of small holder dryland farmers. They offer nutrition, resilience, income and livelihood for farmers even in difficult times. They have multiple untapped uses such as food, feed, fodder, biofuels and brewing. Thus, millets are Smart Food as they are Good for the Farmer and Good for Planet.

4. Resilient of Climate Change: Millets are photo-insensitive and resilient to climate change. They are hardy, resilient crops that have low carbon and water footprint. They can withstand high temperatures and grow on poor soils with little or no external inputs. In times of climate change they are often last crop standing and thus are good risk management strategy for resource-poor marginal farmers.

NITI Aayog Launches Global Hackathon On Artificial Intelligence

Why in news?

Recently NITI Aayog Launches Global Hackathon On Artificial Intelligence.

With the vision to further expand the idea of 'Artificial Intelligence, AI for All' articulated in the National AI Strategy, NITI Aayog organises hackathons to source sustainable, innovative and technologically-enabled solutions to address various challenges in the development space.

Objective:

- The objective of this hackathon is to promote awareness and subsequently develop solutions that deliver the twin benefit of efficient computing to address the infrastructure challenges, while also not compromising on privacy of data for training AI algorithms.
- The challenge question seeks to develop solutions in Distributed Computing and Privacy Preserving techniques, such as multi-party computation, in AI.

Earlier Events:

NITI Aayog organized its first hackathon, 'MoveHack' in August, on the sidelines of the Global Mobility Summit 2018, with the aim of garnering cutting-edge mobility applications. Over 2,000 submissions were received out of which the Top 10 teams were awarded at the summit.

Areas of competition:

The first stage will invite ideas for use cases of multi-party computation in areas such as Healthcare, Education, Agriculture, Urbanization, Financial Inclusion. The second stage will call for these ideas to be matured and developed, with a focus on privacy preserving AI and distributed computing.

Skoch Award for National Significance

Why in news?

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India has been conferred the Skoch Award for National Significance at an event held recently in New Delhi.

ABOUT SKOCH GROUP:

- Skoch Group is a think tank dealing with socio-economic issues with a focus on inclusive growth since 1997. The group companies include a consulting wing, a media wing and a charitable foundation.
- Skoch Group is able to bring an Indian felt-needs context to strategies and engages with fortune-500 companies, state owned enterprises, government to SMEs and community-based organisations with equal ease.
- The repertoire of services include field interventions, consultancy, research reports, impact assessments, policy briefs, books, journals, workshops and conferences.
- Skoch Group has instituted India's highest independent civilian honours in the field of governance, finance, technology, economics and social sector.

Key Facts:

- The award has been conferred on the Ministry considering its purpose and critical role played in installing about 73 GW renewable energy capacity in the country.
 - With 21 per cent of total installed capacity, within the year renewable energy grossed a magic figure of providing one billion units of electricity in the country.
 - India ranks 4 in the world in wind energy capacity and 5th in solar & total renewable energy capacity installed in the world.
 - India has played a critical role in setting up of international solar alliance where India committed to invest billions of dollars in solar energy.
 - India has set goal to generate 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022.
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