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**GS-2**

**Roshni:**

**Why in News?**

In a bid to assist visually impaired people to easily determine denomination of currency notes, the Indian Institute of Technology at Ropar in Punjab has developed an Android App "Roshni", using image processing and analytics.

**About the App:**

- The App was launched on Wednesday at the IIT Ropar. Assistant professor Puneet Goyal, said that 'Roshni' is the first Android App that works successfully with new currency notes that were released after demonetisation and it works well in broad range of light conditions and holding angles.
- This App utilises an adaptable deep learning framework, which further uses the patterns and features embedded on the notes to differentiate and determine the currency denomination.
- IPSA (Image processing, Security and Analytics) lab prepared a rich dataset of more than 13, 000 images of currency notes under varied real-world conditions.
- The user has to bring the currency note in front of phone camera and the App would provide audio notification intimating the currency note denomination to the user.
- The Seeing AI App by Microsoft is the only other App that facilitates recognition of both old and new Indian currency notes, but it is an iOS App and not available for school for visually impaired recently and performed the App testing there.

**India Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)- 2019:**



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**Why in News?**

The final planning conference to work out the modalities for Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 is being conducted at Pune on 23-24 January 2019.

Delegates from Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda, Niger & Zambia attended the conference.

**About the Exercise:**

- Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 is scheduled to be conducted at Aundh Military Station and College of Military Engineering, Pune from 18 March to 27 March 2019.
- The joint training exercise is being conducted with more than a dozen African countries & India.
- It aims at synergising humanitarian mine action and joint peace operations.
- The initial planning conference for the exercise was held in December 2018.
- The IAFTX-2019 is a positive step towards growing political and military ties with the member nations of African continent and will boost the already strong strategic cooperation between the countries.

**MoC between India and Japan in the field of Food Processing Industry:**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval to the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between India and Japan in the field of food processing sector.

**Benefits:**

- Bilateral cooperation in the field of food processing between India and Japan will be mutually beneficial to the food processing sector in both countries.
- It will promote understanding of best practices in food processing in the two countries and will help in improving the food processing sector as well as improved market access, leading to equity and inclusiveness.



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- The MoC will lead to betterment of the food processing sector in the country by introducing innovative techniques and processes.
- It will help in increasing food processing in the country by getting access to best practices and better markets

### **GS-3**

#### **Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries:**

##### **Why in News?**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given ex-post facto approval for amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate a 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the Facility of USD 2 billion .

##### **Salient features:**

- Due to heightened financial risk and volatility in global economy, short term swap requirements of SAARC countries could be higher than the agreed lines.
- The incorporation of 'Standby Swap' within the approved SAARC Swap Framework would provide necessary flexibility to the Framework and would enable India to provide a prompt response to the current request from SAARC member countries for availing the swap amount exceeding the present limit prescribed under the SAARC Swap Framework.

##### **Background:**

- Cabinet approved the Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries on March 1, 2012 with the intention to provide a line of funding for short term foreign exchange requirements or to meet



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balance of payments crises till longer term arrangements are made or the issue is resolved in the short-term itself.

- Under the Facility, RBI offers swaps of varying sizes in USD, Euro or INR to each SAARC member country depending on their two months import requirement and not exceeding US\$ 2 billion in total.
- The swap amount for each country has been defined in the above Facility, subject to a floor of USD 100 Million and a maximum of USD 400 Million.
- Each Drawal will be for three months tenor and upto maximum of two rollovers.
- RBI will negotiate the operational details bilaterally with the Central Banks of the SAARC countries availing the Standby Swap.

### **National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT):**

#### **Why in News?**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).

#### **About the Tribunal:**

- The National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal shall be situated at New Delhi.
- GSTAT shall be presided over by its President and shall consist of one Technical Member (Centre) and one Technical Member (State).
- The creation of the National Bench of the GSTAT would amount to one time expenditure of Rs.92.50 lakh while the recurring expenditure would be Rs.6.86 crore per annum.

#### **Details:**



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- Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal is the forum of second appeal in GST laws and the first common forum of dispute resolution between Centre and States.
- The appeals against the orders in first appeals issued by the Appellate Authorities under the Central and State GST Acts lie before the GST Appellate Tribunal, which is common under the Central as well as State GST Acts.
- Being a common forum, GST Appellate Tribunal will ensure that there is uniformity in redressal of disputes arising under GST, and therefore, in implementation of GST across the country.
- Chapter XVIII of the CGST Act provides for the Appeal and Review Mechanism for dispute resolution under the GST Regime.
- Section 109 of this Chapter under CGST Act empowers the Central Government to constitute, on the recommendation of Council, by notification, with effect from such date as may be specified therein, an Appellate Tribunal known as the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by the Appellate Authority or the Revisional Authority.

### **Sea Vigil:**

#### **Why in News?**

Ten years after "26/11", the Indian Navy commenced the largest coastal defence exercise off the Indian coast today.

#### **About the Exercise:**

- Exercise SEA VIGIL, a first of its kind, is being undertaken along the entire 7516.6 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India and is involving all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories along with all maritime stakeholders, including the fishing and coastal communities.
- Exercise SEA VIGIL aims to comprehensively and holistically validate the efficacy of the measures taken since '26/11'.



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- Seaward monitoring during the exercise will entail patrolling off coast, in Offshore Development Areas and off our islands by the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, supported by the State Marine Police. Closer coast, strategic assets, ports, Single Point Moorings (SPMs) will be patrolled by designated agencies.
- Seaward monitoring will also entail inputs from technical means, including intelligence sources.
- Shore-based monitoring will entail enhanced vigil by the State Police along the coast; monitoring of fish landing centres by state fisheries departments; as also monitoring of port areas by respective port authorities.

#### **Aim of the Exercise:**

- The exercise aims to simultaneously activate the coastal security mechanism across all States and Union Territories.
- The exercise will cover a wide frontage covering for the first time the entire coast of India, including island territories.
- The exercise will also go deeper, being spread over seaward, coastal, and hinterland areas.
- Evaluation of critical areas and processes, including inter-agency coordination, information sharing and technical surveillance will be undertaken.
- Multi Agency Audit and identification of gaps, shortfalls and incorporation of lessons learnt into SOPs are also the desired outcomes.

#### **Other Salient Features:**

- The scale of the exercise is unprecedented in terms of the geographical extent, the number of stakeholders involved, the number of units participating and in terms of the objectives to be met.
- The exercise is a build up towards the major theatre level tri-service exercise TROPEX [Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise] which Indian Navy conducts every two years.
- SEA VIGIL and TROPEX together will cover the entire spectrum of maritime security, including transition from peace to conflict.
- All Operational assets of the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard are participating in the SEA VIGIL.
- The conduct of the exercise SEA VIGIL is also being facilitated by the Ministries of Defence, Home Affairs, Shipping, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Fisheries, Customs, State Governments and other agencies of Centre/ State.

#### **Background:**



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- Post '26/11', the Indian Navy was designated as the agency responsible for overall maritime security, including offshore and coastal security.
- The Naval Commanders-in-Chiefs at Mumbai, Kochi, Visakhapatnam and Port Blair were also designated as Cs-in-C Coastal Defence.
- The Indian Coast Guard was designated as the agency responsible for coastal security in territorial waters, including waters to be patrolled by the State Marine Police. In the discharge of these very responsibilities, Exercise 'SEA VIGIL' has been planned by the Indian Navy.
- Coastal security is complex construct since it involves activities both at sea and at land.
- The targets of the terrorists could be well inland. In the aftermath of "26/11", a whole-of-government approach to maritime security was adopted and a large number of measures were taken by a host of stakeholders.
- At the apex level National Committee on Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS) with Cabinet Secretary at the helm was established to review important matters pertaining to Coastal Security and for effective centre-state coordination.
- Likewise committees have also been established at State and District level. At the operational level, it included setting up of Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) of the Navy and Coastal Security Operations Centres of the Indian Coast Guard.

### **Microsat-R:**

#### **Why in News?**

Just before midnight on Thursday, Indian Space Research Organisation's first mission of 2019 will put into space a 740-kg military imaging satellite, Microsat-R.

#### **About the Satellite:**

- ISRO has shied away from sharing details of the spacecraft or its uses as it does routinely each time during its missions; except to say the satellite would be placed within 15 minutes after take-off in a polar orbit 274 km away from Earth.



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- This is much lower than any of its civil Earth observation spacecraft, which fly pole to pole over the globe at between 400 km and 700 km.
- According to information obtained from different sources Microsat-R and its payload come assembled from a handful of laboratories of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and is meant for military use.
- The satellite was "assembled outside and ISRO only interfaced it" with its own systems and the launch vehicle, just as it treats any customer satellite.
- C-44 will be launched around 11.30 p.m. from the older First Launch Pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

### **Significance:**

- For its part, ISRO is experimenting on two aspects of the vehicle.
- One is to reuse a waste stage.
- For the third time in ISRO's recent history, the mission team is slated to cut off and restart the PS4 engine twice over a flight lasting around 100 minutes.
- The other experiment with the launcher PSLV-C44 vehicle will be a new third variant having two strap-on boosters.
- Called the PSLV-DL, D standing for demonstration, it ranges between the older two variants