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Cauvery Water Distribution:

Why in News?

The [Cauvery Water Management Authority](#) on Tuesday ordered Karnataka to release 9.19 tmcft of water for the month of June from the Biligundlu reservoir to the Mettur Dam, in Tamil Nadu.

It was a unanimous decision. The forecast, so far, is for a normal monsoon and keeping in view the water level in the dams and reservoirs it was directed to 9.19tmcft of water to be released for the month of Jun.

Background:

- The quantum of water to be released is in line with the [Supreme Court's order](#) on the February 16 last year.
- While conferring authority to the CWMA to decide on releasing Cauvery water, the Supreme Court said that Karnataka would have to supply 177.25 tmcft from its Billigundlu site to Mettur dam.

WHO on Violence to Women:

Global estimates published by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.

Worldwide as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner. What make this worse for countries like India is the fact that intimate partner violence is the highest at 37.7% in the WHO South-East Asia region.

Statistics:



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- As per figures released by WHO, the violence ranges from 23.2% in high-income countries and 24.6% in the WHO Western Pacific region to 37% in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean region.
- "Violence against women — particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence — is a major public health problem and a violation of women's human rights.
- WHO together with UN Women and other partners has developed a framework for prevention of violence against women called Respect which can be used by governments to counter this menace," noted WHO.

Multiple ramifications

- Meanwhile, healthcare professionals cautioned that violence can negatively affect a woman's physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health, and may increase the risk of acquiring HIV in some settings.
- Explaining how gender-based violence is perpetrated, the global health organisation said that men are more likely to perpetrate violence if they have:
- Low education, a history of child maltreatment, exposure to domestic violence against their mothers, harmful use of alcohol, unequal gender norms, including attitudes accepting of violence, and a sense of entitlement over women.
- Women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence if they have low education, exposure to mothers being abused by a partner, abuse during childhood, and attitudes accepting violence, male privilege and women's subordinate status.

Way forward:

WHO said: "There is now evidence that advocacy and empowerment counselling interventions, as well as home visitation are promising in preventing or reducing intimate partner violence against women."

Bay of Bengal community (BIMSTEC):

Why in News?



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India has invited several heads of state, including those from the Bay of Bengal community (BIMSTEC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing-in ceremony on May 30.

This is in line with government's focus on its 'Neighbourhood First' policy.

About BIMSTEC:

- The **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** is an international organisation of seven nations of [South Asia](#) and [South East Asia](#), housing 1.5 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.5 trillion (2018).
- The BIMSTEC member states—[Bangladesh](#), [India](#), [Myanmar](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Thailand](#), [Nepal](#) and [Bhutan](#)—are among the [countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal](#).
- Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors.
- A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018).
- Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. The permanent secretariat is in [Dhaka](#).

Background

- On 6 June 1997, a new sub-regional grouping was formed in [Bangkok](#) under the name BIST-EC ([Bangladesh](#), [India](#), [Sri Lanka](#), and [Thailand](#) Economic Cooperation).
- Following the inclusion of Myanmar on 22 December 1997 during a special Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok, the [Group was renamed 'BIMST-EC'](#) (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation).
- In 1998, Nepal became an observer. In February 2004, Nepal and [Bhutan](#) became full members.
- On 31 July 2004, in the first Summit the grouping was renamed as BIMSTEC or the [Bay of Bengal](#) Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation



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Akash Missile:

The DRDO on Monday successfully test-fired the new version of the Akash surface-to-air defence missile system with a new indigenously-developed seeker in Balasore off the Odisha coast.

This is the second successful test of the missile following another on Saturday.

About the Missile:

- The medium range multi-target engagement capable missile was developed as part of the Integrated Guided-Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) other than Nag, Agni, Trishul, and Prithvi missiles.
- The supersonic missile has a range of around 25 km and up to the altitude of 18,000 metres.
- The missile uses high-energy solid propellant for the booster and ramjet-rocket propulsion for the sustainer phase. The missile system is said to be highly mobile.
- Several variants of the missile — Akash MK1, Akash-MK2 — with improved accuracy and higher ranges are under development by the DRDO.
- The missile system was formally inducted into the IAF on July 10, 2015, and in the Army on May 5, 2015. In September that year, the Defence Acquisition Council cleared seven additional squadrons of the missile for the IAF.
- However, it had been bogged in controversies with a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report in 2017 stating that 30% of the missiles failed when tested.

India is slowly plugging the holes in its air defence elements by developing the advanced surface-to-air missile named MRSAM — Medium Range Surface to Air Missile in collaboration with Israel.

Besides that, five regiments of the renowned S-400 air defence system are under procurement from Russia. The delivery is slated to begin in 2020.



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Sumatran Rhinoceros:

Why in News?

Malaysia's last male Sumatran rhinoceros has died, an official said on May 27, dashing efforts to save the critically [endangered species](#) in the country.

The rhino, named Tam, was about 30 years old and lived at a wildlife reserve in Sabah state on Borneo island since his capture in 2008.

About Sumatran Rhino:

- The Sumatran rhino, the smallest species of rhinoceros, was declared extinct in the wild in [Malaysia](#) in 2015.
- Wildlife experts estimate that only about 30 to 80 Sumatran rhinos remain in the world, mostly on the Indonesian island of Sumatra and on the Indonesian side of Borneo.
- Their isolation, caused by habitat loss and poaching, means they rarely breed and may go extinct in a matter of decades, according to conservation group International Rhino Foundation.
- Since 2011, Malaysia has tried to breed the species in captivity through in vitro fertilization, but without success.
- Tam's genetic material has been preserved for future attempts to reproduce Sumatran rhinos.

Confucius:

Context:

[China](#) has begun five-day Confucian culture immersion courses for religious leaders in the sage's hometown as part of a campaign to extend government control over faith communities through a process of sinicization.

About Confucianism:

- Confucianism's emphasis on strict social organization, advancement through study and exam taking, adherence to hierarchy and maintenance



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of social harmony appeals especially to the heavily bureaucratic party, which brooks no challenge to its authority.

- That's been accompanied with a campaign of removing crosses and bulldozing many churches, destroying mosques and locking an estimated 1 million Chinese Muslims in camps where they are forced to renounce Islam and their cultural traditions.
- Despite international condemnation, China claims it upholds [freedom of religion](#) and is seeking only to ensure regulations are followed while discouraging religious extremism and violence.

Who is Confucius?

- Confucius was believed to have been born in the 6th century B.C. in the eastern town of Qufu.
- He is credited with authoring or editing key texts of statesmanship and social order, particularly the Analects that contain his key aphorisms and teachings.

New Export Policy:

Context:

The Commerce Ministry has come out with a comprehensive draft of the export policy which includes product- specific rules with a view to provide a ready reckoner for exporters.

About the policy:

- Based on inputs received from various partner government agencies, it is proposed to bring out a comprehensive [exports](#) policy for all ITC (HS) tariff codes (including items which are 'free' for export and do not currently exist in the policy), covering conditions/restrictions imposed by partner government agencies on exports,
- The draft policy aims at consolidating the export norms for each product as applicable at different government agencies.
- ITC-HS Codes are Indian Trade Clarification based on Harmonised System of Coding. It was adopted by India for import-export operations.
- Every product has been accorded eight digit HS codes.



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- The compendium will help an exporter know all the applicable norms pertaining to a particular product, helping him/her understand policy conditions for that item.

River Pollution:

Why in news?

[Rivers](#) worldwide are polluted with antibiotics that exceed environmental safety thresholds by up to 300 times, according to research unveiled at a conference.

Scientists found one or more common antibiotics in two-thirds of 711 samples taken from rivers in 72 countries, they told a meeting of environmental toxicologists in Helsinki.

Important findings:

- In dozens of locations, concentrations of the drugs — used to fight off bacterial infection in people and livestock — exceeded safety levels set by the AMR Industry Alliance, a grouping of more than 100 biotech and pharmaceutical companies.
- Ciprofloxacin, a frontline treatment for intestinal and urinary tract infections, surpassed the industry threshold at 51 of the sites tested.
- At one location in Bangladesh, concentrations of another widely used antibiotic, metronidazole, were 300 times above the limit.

Effects:

- The widespread presence of antibiotics not only impacts wildlife, but likely contributes to the problem of antimicrobial resistance.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that the world is running out of antibiotics that still work, and has called on industry and governments to urgently develop a new generation of drugs.
- Discovered in the 1920s, antibiotics have saved tens of millions of lives from pneumonia, tuberculosis, meningitis and a host of deadly bacteria.



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- Overuse and misuse of the drugs are thought to be the main causes of antimicrobial resistance.

Thames to Tigris:

- But the growing presence of antibiotics in the environment may be a key factor too, the new research suggests.
- Safety limits were most frequently exceeded in Asia and Africa, but samples from Europe and the Americas showed that the problem is global in scope.
- The countries with the highest levels of antibiotic river pollution were Bangladesh, Kenya, Ghana, Pakistan and Nigeria.
- Within Europe, one site in Austria had the biggest concentrations anywhere on the continent.
- Water samples were collected from the Danube, Mekong, Seine, Thames, Tigris, Chao Phraya and dozens of other rivers.