



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 20-June-2019

GS-1

Site of national importance:

Why in News?

An ancient site with chariots, swords and other objects pointing to the presence of a warrior class around 4,000 years ago in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat district could be declared a site of national importance soon.

Details:

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has started the process of declaring the site at Sadikpur Sinauli, which is spread over 28 hectares, of national importance, issuing a notification on June 6 seeking objections, if any, from the public for a period of two months.
- After taking any objections into consideration, the Union government is likely to proceed with notifying the site as one of national importance.

Significance of the site:

- The site, where excavation and preservation work is still ongoing after being started in 2018, was deemed to have national importance due to the finds uncovered.
- Among the treasures unearthed are three chariots, legged coffins, shields, swords and helmets – all which point towards a warrior class that must have existed around 2,000 BCE, according to an ASI statement.
- In an official statement about the excavation earlier this year, ASI said the site, which is 68 km north-east of Delhi, was the “largest necropolis of the late Harappan period datable to around early part of second millennium BCE”.
- According to the ASI, a legged coffin with steatite inlays and holding a female skeleton was found in a burial pit, along with jewellery, pottery and an antenna sword near the head.
- Remains of four furnaces were found in another part of the site.

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Acute encephalitis syndrome

Why in News?



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Acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) in Bihar's Muzaffarpur has so far claimed over 110 children. At present, more than 400 children with AES have been admitted to various hospitals. Most of the deaths have been attributed to low blood sugar level (hypoglycaemia).

What is acute encephalitis syndrome (AES)?

- Acute encephalitis syndrome or AES is a basket term used for referring to hospitals, children with clinical neurological manifestation that includes mental confusion, disorientation, convulsion, delirium, or coma.
- Meningitis caused by virus or bacteria, encephalitis (mostly Japanese encephalitis) caused by virus, encephalopathy, cerebral malaria, and scrub typhus caused by bacteria are collectively called acute encephalitis syndrome.
- While virus or bacteria cause all the other conditions, encephalopathy is biochemical in origin and hence very different from the rest.
- There are different types of encephalopathy. In the present case, the encephalopathy is associated with hypoglycaemia and hence called hypoglycaemic encephalopathy.

Is litchi fruit responsible for causing hypoglycaemic encephalopathy?

- In 2012-2013, a two-member team headed by virologist Dr. T. Jacob John suspected, and next year confirmed, a toxin found in litchi fruit that was responsible for causing the hypoglycaemic encephalopathy. In 2017, a large Indo-U.S. team confirmed the role of the toxin.
- The toxin is called methylene cyclopropyl glycine (MCPG)..
- Litchi does not cause any harm in well-nourished children, but only in undernourished children who had eaten litchi fruit the previous day and had gone to bed on empty stomach.

Why is the toxin more dangerous to undernourished children?

- In well-nourished children, reserve glucose is stored as glycogen (glucose polysaccharide) in the liver.
- Whenever glucose level goes down, the glycogen is broken down into glucose and circulated in the blood for use.
- But undernourished children lack sufficient glycogen reserve that can be converted into glucose.
- Therefore, the natural mechanism in undernourished children is unable to correct the glucose level in blood, leading to hypoglycaemia.



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- Normally, when glycogen reserve in the liver is exhausted or is not sufficient, the body converts the fatty acid (non-carbohydrate energy source) into glucose.
- But in the presence of the litchi toxin, the conversion of fatty acid into glucose is stopped midway. As a result, no glucose is generated and the low blood glucose level is not corrected by the body.

Can hypoglycaemic encephalopathy be prevented in undernourished children?

- Yes, hypoglycaemic encephalopathy can be easily prevented in malnourished children. Making sure that undernourished children do not eat plenty of litchi fruit and ensuring that they eat some food and not go to bed on empty stomach can easily keep hypoglycaemic encephalopathy at bay.
- Since 2015, the prevention strategy as recommended by Dr. Jacob John's team helped in sharply reducing the number of deaths from hypoglycaemic encephalopathy in Muzaffarpur. In 2017, the Indo-U.S. team published their paper corroborating these findings and recommendations.

Indian Diaspora:

Why in News?

The population of Indian-origin people in America grew by 38% in seven years between 2010 and 2017, a South Asian advocacy group has said in its latest demographic report.

Findings of Report:

- There are at least 630,000 Indians who are undocumented, a 72% increase since 2010, the South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) said in its snapshot.
- The increase in illegal Indian-Americans can be attributed to Indian immigrants overstaying visas, it said.
- Nearly 250,000 Indians overstayed their visa in 2016 therefore becoming undocumented, it said.
- In general, the population of American residents tracing their roots to South Asia grew by 40%. In real terms, it increased from 3.5 million in 2010 to 5.4 million in 2017, SAALT said.

Income inequality



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- The demographic snapshot is based primarily on Census 2010 and the 2017 American Community Survey.
- According to the report, income inequality has been reported to be the greatest among Asian Americans.
- Nearly one per cent of the approximately five million South Asians in the US live in poverty.
- SAALT said there has been a rise in the number of South Asians seeking asylum in the US over the last 10 years.
- The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has detained 3,013 South Asians since 2017. US Customs and Border Patrol arrested 17,119 South Asians between October 2014 and April 2018 through border and interior enforcement, it said.

Poverty prevails

- Nearly 472,000 or 10% of the approximately five million South Asians in the US live in poverty, the report said.
- Among South Asian Americans, Pakistanis (15.8%), Nepalis (23.9%), Bangladeshis (24.2%), and Bhutanese (33.3%) had the highest poverty rates, it said.
- Bangladeshi and Nepali communities have the lowest median household incomes out of all Asian American groups, earning \$49,800 and \$43,500 respectively, it said.
- Nearly 61% of non-citizen Bangladeshi American families receive public benefits for at least one of the four federal programmes including TANF, SSI, SNAP and Medicaid/CHIP, 48% of non-citizen Pakistani families and 11% of non-citizen Indian families also receive public benefits, the report said.
- According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), 49.9% of voting-age Asian American citizens cast a ballot in 2016.
- The number of Asian American voters in the last decade has nearly doubled from about two million voters in 2001 to 5 million voters in 2016.
- Of these, Indians account for more than 1.5 million, followed by Pakistanis (222,252) and Bangladeshi (69,825), SAALT added.

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Digital Tax:

Why in News?



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The Finance Ministers of the G20 member nations on Saturday called for the creation of a digital tax for multinational technology companies, the details of which will be finalized next year.

About the initiative:

- The initiative was debated on Thursday during a G20 Ministerial Symposium in the Japanese city of Fukuoka, with the world's leading industrialized countries coming out in favour of setting up a new tax model that is adapted to the digital economy, .
- The representatives from Japan, US, China, France and the UK supported modifying their current regulations that allow digital giants such as Amazon, Google and Facebook to be taxed where they are headquartered, and instead implement taxes based on their revenue and number of users in every market where they operate.
- "G20 leaders agreed to work together to seek a consensus-based solution to address the impacts of digitalization on the international tax system.
- The G20 ministers committed to working on charting out a "digital tax" by the end of the year and publish a report in 2020 in which the details of the measure are to be finalised, according to the working calendar established by the Organization for the Economic Co-operation and Development.

How will it Work?

- The initiative would have two fundamental pillars: one based on ending with the principle of taxation according to the physical presence of the country, with the second aimed at stopping the tax competition and companies turning to countries with less tax pressure.

Financial Stability and Development Council

Why in news?

The 20th Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held here today under the Chairmanship of the Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman.



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About FSDC:

- **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)** is an apex-level body constituted by the [government of India](#).
- The idea to create such a super [regulatory body](#) was first mooted by the *Raghuram Rajan Committee* in 2008.
- An apex-level FSDC is not a statutory body.
- The recent global economic meltdown has put pressure on governments and institutions across the globe to regulate their economic assets.
- This council is seen as [India's](#) initiative to be better conditioned to prevent such incidents in future.
- The new body envisages to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism of maintaining [financial stability](#), [financial sector development](#), inter-regulatory coordination along with monitoring *macro-prudential regulation* of [economy](#).
- No funds are separately allocated to the council for undertaking its activities

Responsibilities

- Financial Stability
- Financial Sector Development
- Inter-Regulatory Coordination
- Financial Literacy
- Financial Inclusion
- Macro prudential supervision of the economy including the functioning of large financial [conglomerates](#)
- Coordinating India's international interface with financial sector bodies like the [Financial Action Task Force \(FATF\)](#), [Financial Stability Board \(FSB\)](#) and any such body as may be decided by the Finance Minister from time to time.