

Current Affairs (2023): Western India At a Glance

Gujarat

* **'Prerana' Programme'**- The Ministry of Education launched 'Prerana', an experiential learning programme. This programme will operate from the vernacular school in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthplace Vadnagar, Gujarat where he studied when he was a student.

Objective: To offer a meaningful, unique, and inspiring experience to all participants, thereby empowering them with leadership qualities. Prerana is driven by a strong commitment to integrate principles of Indian education system and the philosophy of value-based education which is a corner stone of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

* **Surat Diamond Bourse**- Launched by former Chief Minister of Gujarat, Smt. Anandiben Patel, in February 2015. The SDB is a diamond trade centre located at DREAM (Diamond Research and Mercantile) city in Surat, Gujarat. The city is also known as "diamond city" for its diamond industry which processes 85 to 90% of the world's rough diamond here. It is the world's largest diamond trading hub with a floor space of 660,000 square metres, as well as the world's largest office building, ahead of The Pentagon.

* **Theme**- The thematic landscaping of the project is based on the 'Panchtatva' theme, representing the five elements of nature – air, water, fire, earth, and sky.

* **Gujarat emerged as India's 'Petro Capital'**- With the world's largest grassroots oil refinery in Jamnagar and the OPaL petrochemical complex at Dahej, Gujarat is acknowledged as India's 'petro capital'. The Jamnagar refinery, owned by Reliance Industries Ltd. has a capacity to process 1.4 million barrels of crude per day. It hosts the world's largest units including the fluidised catalytic cracker, Coker, petcoke gasification plants.

* **Ghol fish declared state fish of Gujarat**- The fish is valuable and is in demand because of its meat and air bladder. Used to make beer and wine and its air bladder is used in pharmaceuticals. It was declared the state fish of Gujarat by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel during Global Fisheries Conference India in Ahmedabad. The fish is found in the marine areas of Gujarat and Maharashtra in a golden-brown colour.

Goa

* **Kadamba inscription**- Recently, an inscription of the 10th century A.D. from the Kadamba period was discovered in the Mahadeva temple at Cacoda in southern Goa. It is written in Kannada and Sanskrit. The inscription opens with an auspicious word be it well (Swasthi Shri). It records that when Talara Nevayya was administering the mandala, his son Gundayya having taken a vow to fulfil his father's desire of capturing a gopura of the port of Goa, fought and died after fulfilling his father's wish. It is in the literary style of the Talangre inscription of Jayasimha I of the same period.

* **Goa Maritime Conclave 2023**- The Indian Defence Minister declared that a "free, open, and rule-based" maritime order cannot have "might is right" in his keynote speech at the 4th Goa Maritime Conclave. He emphasized that a free, open, and rule-based maritime order is a priority for all of us and that it is imperative that multi-national collaboration frameworks be established in order to successfully address shared maritime concerns in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The GMC is the Indian Navy's outreach Initiative providing a multinational platform to harness the collective wisdom of practitioners of maritime security and the academia towards garnering outcome-oriented maritime thought. The previous editions of the biennial event were held in 2017, 2019, and 2021.

Maharashtra

* **Polygonum Chaturbhujam**- New Plant Species (herb) of Polygonum genus discovered at Gol Pahadi Island of the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra. Six plant species endemics to India have also been found in Pench. They are Aegineta Indica, Boerhavia Crispa, Habenaria Gibsonii Var Foetida, Iphigenia Pallida, Petalidium Barlerioides and Barleria Gibsonii

* **Pramod Mahajan Grameen Kaushalya Vikas Kendras**- PM Modi will launch 511 Pramod Mahajan Grameen Kaushalya Vikas Kendras in Maharashtra through video conferencing. These centres, being established across 34 rural districts of the state, will conduct skill development training programs with about 100 youths in at least 2 vocational courses across various sectors to provide employment opportunities to rural youth

* **Bhagwan Birsa Munda Road Scheme**- Enhance Road connectivity in tribal areas of the state (18th August 2023)

Rajasthan

* **Rajasthan Minimum Guaranteed Income Bill 2023**- Aim- Social security to support the individuals or households with an additional minimum guaranteed income in the form of a guaranteed wage or social security pension. Under the Bill, all families of the state get guaranteed employment of 125 days every year. The aged, disabled, widows, and single women will get a minimum pension of Rs 1,000 per month. Importantly, the pension will be increased at the rate of 15% each year. The Bill has three broad categories: Right to Minimum Guaranteed Income, Right to Guaranteed Employment, and Right to Guaranteed Social Security Pension.

The Government anticipates an additional expenditure of Rs 2,500 Crore per year for this scheme, which may increase with time

* Rajasthan gets **fifth tiger reserve** after nod to **Dholpur-Karaul reserve**- Area- 1,058 sq. km, including 368 sq. km of core area and 690 sq. km of buffer area.