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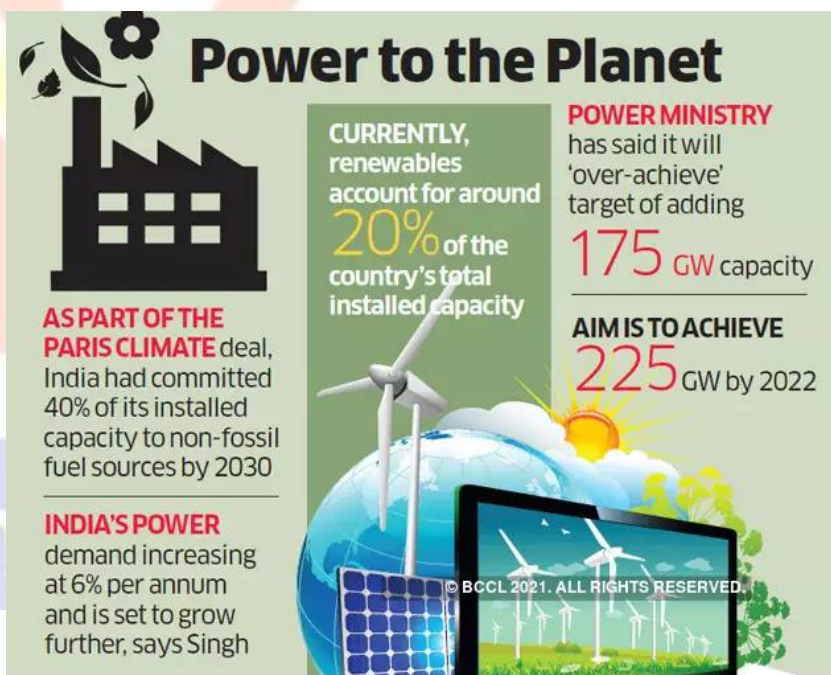
Renewable Energy Target

Why in News

- **India has achieved its target of achieving 40% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil energy sources by 2030** in November 2021, which was committed at COP 21 (UNFCCC), as part of its **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) (Paris Agreement)**.

Renewable Energy (RE) Capacity of India:

- **The country's installed Renewable Energy (RE) capacity stands at 150.54 GW** as of 30th Nov. 2021 while its nuclear energy-based installed electricity capacity stands at 6.78 GW. India has the **4th largest wind power capacity in the world**.
- This brings the **total non-fossil-based installed energy capacity to 157.32 GW** which is **40.1%** of the total installed electricity capacity of 392.01 GW.



Challenges in Achieving the Target:

- **Mobilization of the Necessary Finance**





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- **Land Acquisition**
 - The decision on land lease rent, clearance from the revenue department, and other such **clearances take time.**
 - **State governments have to play a major role** in the acquisition of land for RE projects.
- **Creating an innovation and manufacturing eco-system** in the country.
- **Integrating a larger share of renewables** with the grid.
- Enabling **supply of firm and dispatchable power** from renewables.
- **Enabling penetration of renewables** in the so-called hard to decarbonize sectors.

Way Forward

- **Identification of Areas:**
 - Renewable resources especially wind **require a specific location.** Identification of these **specific locations, integrating them with the main grid and distribution of powers,** A combination of these three is what will take India forward.
- More **storage solutions need to be explored.**
- **Agricultural subsidies** should be rectified in order to **ensure that only the required amount of energy is consumed.**
- We need to work upon **Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Based Vehicles and Electric Vehicles.**

Innovations for Net Zero

Why in News

- Recently, India and the US launched a program titled ‘**Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero**’ to tackle **climate and clean energy challenges.**

Key Points

- It is a programme to support **India-US S&T (Science and Technology)-based entrepreneurial initiatives** that address the development and implementation of next-generation **clean and renewable energy, energy storage, and carbon sequestration.**
- The new program aligns with the **goals of the U.S.-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP)** which was launched in accordance with the **US - India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership** announced by both countries at the **Leaders’ Summit on Climate** held earlier this year (2021).
- It will **identify and support “technology showstoppers”** or promising joint India-US S&T-based entrepreneurial initiatives in this area.

United States-India Science & Technology Endowment Fund



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- The governments of the US (through the **Department of State**) and India (through the **Department of Science & Technology**) have established the **US–India Science & Technology Endowment Fund (USISTEF)**.
- It has been established for the **promotion of joint activities that would lead to innovation and entrepreneurship**.
- The aim of the Fund is to **support and foster joint applied R&D to generate public good through the commercialization of technology**.
- The **U.S.-India Science and Technology Endowment Fund** activities are implemented and administered through the bi-national **Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF)**.



Konark Sun Temple

Why in News

- Recently, the **Archeological Survey of India (ASI)** has revealed it is working on a preliminary roadmap to **safely remove sand** from the interiors of **Konark Sun Temple**, which was filled over a century ago by the **British in Jaga Mohan (assembly hall)** of the Sun Temple **for the stability of the temple**.

Conservation Process:

- The **British administration in 1903** had filled the hall with sand and sealed it in order to maintain the durability of the **thirteenth-century world heritage site**.
- The need to remove the sand was felt after a study **warned of possible damage caused by the sand settling down**.

About Konark Temple:

- Konark Sun Temple, located in **East Odisha near the sacred city of Puri**.
- **Built-in the 13th century by King Narasimhadeva I (AD 1238-1264)**.
- **Its scale, refinement, and conception represent the strength and stability of the Eastern Ganga Empire** as well as the value systems of the historic milieu.
 - **Eastern Ganga dynasty** was the large Indian royal dynasty in the medieval era that **reigned from Kalinga from as early as the 5th century to the early 15th century**.



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- The beginnings of this dynasty came about **when Indra Varma I defeated the Vishnukundin king.**
- The **temple is designed in the shape of a colossal chariot.** It is dedicated to the **Sun God** and was **declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1984.**
- The Konark temple is widely known not only for its **architectural grandeur** but also for the **intricacy and profusion of sculptural work.**
- There are two rows of **12 wheels on each side of the Konark sun temple** which represents the **24 hours in a day or 12 months.**
- The seven horses are said to **symbolize the seven days of the week.**
- Sailors once called it, **Black Pagoda** because it was supposed to **draw ships into the shore and cause shipwrecks.**



Other Important Monuments in Odisha are:

- **Jagannath Temple**
- **Tara Tarini Temple**
- **Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves**
- **Lingaraja Temple**

‘India Out’ Campaign in the Maldives

Why in News:

- Recently, the **‘India Out’ campaign has gained momentum in the Maldives, with their former President Abdulla Yameen leading it.**

About:

- Over the last 3 years **since Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was elected to office, an ‘India Out’ campaign has cropped up every now and then** within the Maldives, mostly on social media.
- The campaign is led by government critics who **accuse their government of “allowing Indian boots on the ground”**, and thereby “compromising the sovereignty” of the Indian Ocean Island nation.



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- But the **ruling administration has denied there is any Indian military presence** in the country or a threat to Maldives' sovereignty.
- **During Mr. Yameen's term as President, New Delhi-Male relations deteriorated drastically.** He is perceived as a friend of China.
- The **campaign has gotten louder** around key bilateral developments such as the signing of the **Uthuru Thila Falhu harbor development deal with India.**
- **New Delhi is helping Male develop the Maldives National Defence Force Coast Guard Harbour.**
- Factors that have led to such anti-India sentiments in the Maldives are the **controversy over India's gift of Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters, Domestic Politics, Perception of interference in Domestic Affairs,** etc.

INDIA APPROVED TWO NEW VACCINES:

- India has cleared **two more covid vaccines and one pill.**
- The two latest vaccines **approved by drug regulator CDSCO are Corbevax and Covovax.**
 - **CORBEVAX vaccine is India's 1st indigenously developed RBD protein sub-unit vaccine** against COVID19, Made by Hyderabad-based firm Biological-E.
 - The **Nanoparticle Vaccine, COVOVAX, will be manufactured by Pune-based firm Serum Institute of India.**
- **The anti-viral drug approved is Molnupiravir.** With this approval, the number of Covid vaccines which have received **emergency use authorization** in the country has **increased to eight.**
- So far six COVID-19 vaccines approved are —
 - **Serum Institute's Covishield,**
 - **Bharat Biotech's Covaxin,**
 - **Zydus Cadila's ZyCoV-D,**
 - **Russia's Sputnik V,** and
 - **the US-made Moderna,** and
 - **Johnson and Johnson**

Boosting arsenal against Covid

Two vaccines and an antiviral pill were given EUA in India

| NEW VACCINES | | ANTIVIRAL PILL |
|---|--|---|
| Covovax 90% efficacy (against original variant) Developer: Novavax Indian maker: Serum Institute of India Expected supply: SII began production in June with a target monthly production of 150 mn by March 2022 | Corbevax 80-90% estd efficacy Developer: Baylor College of Medicine and Biological E Indian maker: Biological E Expected supply: Around 150 mn doses already stockpiled | Molnupiravir 30% reduction in risk of hospitalisation/death Developer: Merck and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics Indian maker: Consortium of 8 pharma companies |





Centre declares Soya Meal as an Essential Commodity:

- In a bid to cool down the domestic prices of Soya Meal, Government has notified order under the Essential Commodities Act to declare 'Soya Meal' as Essential Commodities under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- This step is expected to stop any unfair practices (like hoarding, black marketing, etc) in the market having the potential to hike the prices of soya meals.
- Soybean meal is the most important protein source used to feed farm animals.
- It is also used for human consumption in some countries. Soybean meal is the by-product of the extraction of soybean oil.

J&K real estate open to all:

- The Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory governments, at the first-ever 'J&K Real Estate Conference' held recently in Jammu, have decided to throw open local real estate for "second homes and summer homes" to all the citizens of the country, in a major push to attract investments from real estate bigwigs.
- Under the newly introduced Jammu and Kashmir Development Act, the term 'being a permanent resident of the State' as a criterion has been 'omitted', paving the way for investors outside Jammu and Kashmir to invest in the Union Territory.
- As a result, any citizen of India can buy non-agriculture land in Jammu and Kashmir.

Nilgai:

Why in News:

- The Bihar government has announced that it will not cull the Blue Bull, locally known as the nilgai or ghurparas, anymore. It will, instead, sterilize them to control their increasing population in the state.

About:

- The nilgai is the largest Asian antelope and is ubiquitous across the northern Indian subcontinent and has IUCN status of Least Concern.
- The nilgai is the sole member of the genus *Boselaphus* and is placed in the family Bovidae.
- Sexual dimorphism is prominent; the males are larger than females and differ in coloration.





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- It occurs in **India, Nepal, and Pakistan**. Significant numbers occur in the Terai lowlands in the foothills of the Himalayas.
- It is **indigenous to the Indian subcontinent**.



RaghukulCS

