

## CURRENT AFFAIRS – Part II

### 22. 'OPERATION KABADDI'

Operation Kabaddi was the largest planned operation by the Indian Army to tackle and finish cross-LOC infiltration by capturing at least 25 selected Pakistani posts along the Line of Control in September 2001. However, the planned operation was not carried out.

### 23. ALLIANCE TO END PLASTIC WASTE (AEPW)

The Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) is designed as a non-profit organization. It comprises of 30 companies. It includes companies from across North and South America, Europe, Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa as well as Middle East in the alliance. They have pledged over 1 Billion \$ to eliminate plastic waste across the world.

Plastic waste management is a complex and serious global challenge. The issue of plastic waste is seen and generating concern and becoming a serious threat to existence of human on land. The issue must be addressed.

The aim of the alliance is to develop solutions to mitigate plastic pollution and promote a circular economy by utilizing used plastics.

This new alliance is the most comprehensive effort to date to end plastic waste in the environment.

### 24. GLOBAL ECONOMY

Global Economy Watch report has been released by London based multinational professional services network- Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC).

PwC's Global Economy Watch is a publication that looks at the trends and issues affecting the global economy. It gives the projections for the world's leading economies.

According to report, India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in 2019 economy rankings. And, India's climb up the ranking is likely to be permanent and stable.

### 25. LAST FOUR YEARS HOTTEST ON RECORD

The last four years were the hottest since global temperature records began. The U.N. confirmed this and observed "clear sign of continuing long-term climate change. The U.N.'s World Metrological Organisation said in November that 2018 was set to be the fourth warmest year in recorded history, stressing the urgent need for action to rein in runaway planetary warming.

The average global surface temperature in 2018 was 1°C above pre-industrial baseline levels. 2016 remains the hottest year on record. In 2006 strong El Nino was responsible for abnormal rise in temperature.

The WMO also said that the 20 warmest years in history all occurred within the last 22 years. Secretary-General of WMO- Petteri Taalas.

The WMO said heightened temperatures also contributed to a number of extreme weather events such as hurricanes, droughts and flash flooding.

In 2019, Australia is experiencing its warmest January on record. WMO warned that intense heatwaves are becoming more frequent as a result of climate change.

## **26. POLAR VORTEX**

A phenomenon called the polar vortex has hit central and eastern parts of the United States. It has brought with it snow, brutally cold temperatures and potentially life-threatening wind chill.

In Chicago the temperature dropped to -46°C.

Schools and businesses have closed, and flights have been cancelled.

Polar Vortex is an upper level jet stream that circulates around the North and South poles keeping the coldest air there. When the jet streams weaken, it disrupts weather patterns bumping warmer air into Alaska and pushing cold winds down into the U.S. Midwest and East Coast

## **27. THE DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGE FAMILY**

The Dravidian language family's four largest languages- Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. Tamil is oldest. The Dravidian language family consisting of 80 varieties spoken by nearly 220 million people across southern and central India and surrounding countries, originated about 4,500 years ago.

## **28. UNEMPLOYMENT**

In India the unemployment rate in 2015-16 was 3.7%.

## **29. RING OF FIRE**

The Ring of Fire is a Pacific region home to over 450 volcanoes, including three of the world's most active volcanoes- Mount St. Helens in the USA, Mount Fuji in Japan and Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines.

It is also called the circum-Pacific belt.

The Ring of Fire is the result from subduction of oceanic tectonic plates beneath lighter continental plates. The area where these tectonic plates meet is called a subduction zone.

The world's deepest earthquakes happen in subduction zone areas as tectonic plates scrape against each other- and the Ring of Fire has the world's biggest concentration of subduction zones.

Indonesia is located along the Ring of Fire region. Indonesia has been hit hard due to its position on a large grid of tectonic plates.

## **30. KATOWISE PACKAGE**

The Katowise package includes guidelines that will operationalize the transparency framework. It sets out how countries will provide information about their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) that describe their domestic climate actions. This information includes mitigation and adaptation measures as well as details of financial support for climate action in developing countries.

The Katowise package also includes guidelines that relate to process for establishing new targets on finance from 2025 onwards to follow on from the current target of mobilizing \$100 billion per year from 2020 to support developing countries.

It also includes how to conduct the Global Stock take (GST) of the effectiveness of climate action in 2023 and how to assess progress on the development and transfer of technology. It is Outcome of COP 24 in Poland.

## **31. ECO NIWAS SAMHITA 2018**

Ministry of Power has launched ECO Niwas Samhita 2018.

It is an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings (ECBC-R).

The code was launched on National Energy Conservation Day 2018. Aim of ECO Niwas Samhita 2018 is to benefit the occupants and the environment by promoting energy efficiency in design and construction of homes, apartments and townships.

**32. THE PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMMAN NIDHI**

Under the scheme ₹ 6000 per year would be provided to farmers holding cultivable land of up to 2 hectares. It is estimated it will help 12 crore small and marginal farmers. The scheme is being implemented with effect from December 1, 2018.

**33. FERTILIZER SUBSIDY**

2018-19 70,075 Cr.  
2019-20 74,986 Cr.

**34. WATER CONSERVATION FEE**

The Central Ground Water Authority of Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation on December 12, 2018 notified revised guidelines for ground water extraction. The revised guidelines, which will be effective from June 1, 2019, aim to ensure a more robust groundwater regulatory mechanism in the country. The guidelines were revised in the wake of the directions issued by the National Green Tribunal to address various shortcomings in the existing guidelines of ground water extraction.

**35. FUTURE EARTH PROGRAM**

Future Earth is a 10-year international research program which aims to build knowledge about the environmental and human aspects of Global change, and to find solutions for sustainable development. It aims to increase the impact of scientific research on sustainable development.

Future Earth is an interdisciplinary research program bringing together natural and social sciences as well as the humanities, engineering and law, and focused on designing and producing research together with stake holders from outside the scientific community.

**36. PHOTO DNA TECHNOLOGY**

This technology has been developed by Microsoft and improved by Hany Farid of Dartmouth College.

The technology will aid in finding and removing known images of child exploitation. The technology computes hash values of images, video and audio files to identify similar images. Photo DNA is primarily used in the prevention of child pornography and works by computing a unique hash that represents the image. This hash is computed such that it is resistant to alterations in the image, including resizing and minor colour alterations. It works by converting the image to black and white, resizing it, breaking it into a grid, and looking at intensity gradients or edges.

**37. PROCEDURE FOR DISSOLVING ASSEMBLY**

The Governor of the State is the Political Head. He has to ensure smooth functioning of government.

If the constitutional machinery breaks down in a state or the government loses majority support in the Assembly, the government resigns. The Governor may ask the resigning chief minister to carry on the responsibility till alternative arrangements are made. The caretaker government looks after day to day functioning and doesn't take major policy decisions till a responsible government is in place.

Sometimes the Centre invokes President Rule by dismissing the State Government under Article 356 of the Constitution. At that time the financial Bills of the state is passed by the Parliament.

If Governor is dissolving the Assembly due to no party or group is having the majority and will not able to form a suitable and long lasting government. In this case Governor will send the report to President about the condition of State Government and assembly will be dissolved. Then there will be Governor's rule in the State.

### **38. RBI-CONTINGENCY RESERVE FUND**

In 1998, RBI adopted RBI's internal group Chairman V Subrahmanyam's recommendation to achieve contingency reserve at 12% of total assets by 2005.

However, barring four years when reserves stood at over 11% mark, for 16 years it was below 10%. Now it stands at 7.05%

Contingency fund is kept to cover unexpected or unforeseen events like depreciation in the value of securities or exchange rate risks.

The contingency reserve's overall 12 % target is inclusive of one % of Asset Development Reserve (ADR.)

For three years 2013-15 under former governor Raghuram Rajan, contingency reserves remained stagnant, as RBI transferred 100% profits (excluding expenditure) to government.

### **39. JEWS IN INDIA**

Mizoram is home to around 20,000 Jews-lost tribe of Israel. Jews believe in Jesus Christ.

### **40. LIQUIDITY COVERAGE RATIO**

Is a tool that assesses a financial institutions strength in terms of its high liquid assets in hand such as cash & Govt securities to meet any short-term liquidity issues.

### **41. ONGC GAS PRODUCTION**

ONGC domestic output of natural gas production 70 million standard cubic m/day

The gas is found in shallow sea off AP /Gujarat/ Mumbai West blocks.

India imports 80% of its needs

### **42. SUB-PRIME LENDING**

In finance subprime lending means making loans to people who may have difficulty maintaining the repayment schedule.

These loans are characterized by higher interest rates, poor quality collateral and less favorable terms in order to compensate for higher credit risk.

Many subprime loans were packaged into mortgage-backed securities and ultimately defaulted, contributing to the financial crises of 2007-2008.

### **43. IMPORTANCE OF BANKING SECTOR IN INDIA**

In India only 3% of savings goes into the stock market. India's economy is bank-driven and not a market driven economy. All listed companies put together contribute only 5% of India's GDP. Entire corporate sector listed and unlisted put together constitute 15% of India's GDP. MSME sector contributes 50% of India's GDP and 90% of Employment 70% of India's export.

### **44. INCOIS**

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services

### **45. SARAT**

The Search & Research Aid Tool

#### 46. **RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

Supreme Court has specified 4-fold test for Privacy:

- legality
- need
- Proportionality
- process

#### 47. **THALASSEMIA**

Thalassemia are inherited blood disorders characterized by abnormal hemoglobin production.

There are two main types:

Alpha Thalassemia

Beta Thalassemia

It is due to missing genes. There are four genes of alpha globin and two genes for beta globin.

Diagnosis may occur before birth through parental testing.

Treatment: Blood transfusion

#### 48. **BOGIBEEL PROJECT**

Bogibeel bridge is a combined road cum rail bridge over the Brahmaputra river in Assam. The bridge has a double rail line on the lower deck and a 2 lane road on the upper deck. The bridge is between Dhemaji and Dibrugarh district. The construction started in 2002. Bogibeel river bridge is the longest rail-cum-road bridge in India. It is 4.94 km over the Brahmaputra river. The bridge site is in earthquake prone area. It is the first bridge to have fully welded steel-concrete support beams that can withstand earthquakes of magnitudes up to 7 on the Richter scale. Its life is 120 years.

It is the 5<sup>th</sup> longest bridge in India after Bhupen Hazarika Setu

Dibang River Bridge

Mahatma Gandhi Setu

Bandra -Worli Sea link

The bridge is located just over 20km away from the Assam - Arunachal Pradesh border and acts as an alternative to the Kolia Bhomora Setu, Tejpur in providing connectivity to nearby five million people residing in Upper Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

#### 49. **HIMA DAS**

Hima Das nicknamed the “Dhing Express” is an Indian sprint runner from the State of Assam. She holds the current Indian national record in 400 meters with a timing of 50.79s that she clocked at 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia. Gold Medal: Athletics at the 2018 Asian Games- Women’s 4x400 meters relay.

#### 50. **SANCTUARY VS. NATIONAL PARK**

There are three major differences between the National Parks and Wild Life Sanctuaries. Livestock grazing is not allowed in a National Park, but it can be allowed in a regulated manner in a Sanctuary. A Sanctuary can be upgraded to a National Park, but a National Park cannot be downgraded as a Sanctuary.

No human activity is allowed inside National Parks

In biosphere reserve limited economic activity like sand mining and stone mining is permitted.

Wild life sanctuaries of India are classified as IUCN Category IV protected areas.

Between 1936 and 2016, 543 wild life sanctuaries were established in the country.

Area of Sanctuaries: In 2017 about 1.2 Lakh km

**National parks in India:** 104 in 2018 covering an area of 40,501 Square Km that is 1.23% of total area of India.

**Hemis National Park** is the largest national park in terms of area. It covers around 3350 sqkm. And is located in Leh district of J&K.

**Largest Sanctuaries in the World:**

**Natural Park of the Coral Sea:** Largest Marine Park of the World spread over 5lakh square miles. It is east of Australia.

**Second largest is Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area-** It is located on convergence of the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Area 2 lakh square miles

**Third largest is Northeast Greenland National Park:**

Extending across nearly half of all of Greenland, Northeast Greenland National Park. Established in 1974.

Area 3.75 lakh square miles

## 52. MUSLIMS ON EARTH

There are 2 billion Muslims on Earth

## 53. PAVAKATHAKALI

Pavakathakali (glove puppet kathakali) was probably born in 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Pavakathkali performers from the Andipandaram community belong to a small number of families from Paruthippully village in the Palghat region. Their ancestors appear to have emigrated from Andhra Pradesh during 14<sup>th</sup> century to establish themselves in Kerala.

Pavajathakali puppets measure between 40 and 60 centimeters in height. The finely sculpted head and arms attached by thick cotton knots on a small bag. The puppets are very colourful, adorned with fine, small metallic golden ornaments, cowrie shells, coral, gemstones, peacock feathers, etc.

The Puppeteer places his hand in the bag and manipulates the puppet's arms with the thumb and middle finger and moves the head with the index. The puppet's gestures requires great dexterity.

In 2010, K V Ramakrishnan and K C Ramakrishnan, performers of Pavakathakali received the national Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for their contribution to Indian puppetry.

## 54. THE SHRINKING STANDARD

In regression analysis a fitted relationship appears to perform less well on a new data set than on the data set used for fitting. In particular the value of the coefficient of determination shrinks. There are shrinkage estimators that incorporates the effects of shrinkage. This means that a raw estimate is improved by combining it with other information.

Machine learning is the scientific study of algorithms and statistical models that computer systems use to effectively perform a scientific task without using explicit instructions, relying on patterns and inference instead. This is subset of artificial intelligence.

## 55. MANIKA BATRA

Manika Batra is an Indian table tennis player. She is the top-ranked female table tennis player in India.

In 2011, she won the silver medal in the under 21 category of the Chile Open. She won three gold medals at the 2016 South Asian Games.

Batra led the Indian women's team a gold medal win in the final against four-times gold medalists and defending champions Singapore at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia.

Manika Batra became 1<sup>st</sup> Indian Woman to bag a commonwealth table tennis individual gold medal in CWG 2018. She defeated Yu Mengyu of Singapore.  
On December 12, 2018 she became the only Indian to receive "The Breakthrough Star Award" by ITTF.

#### **56. LOOK OUT CIRCULAR**

Look out circular is a circular letter used by authorities to check whether a travelling person is wanted by the police.

Recently CBI has reportedly issued a look-out notice against ICICI Ex. MD Chanda Kochhar, her husband Deepak Kochhar and Videocon's Venugopal Dhoot in connection to the ICICI - Videocon controversy.

#### **57. BANKS- PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION**

The PCA framework was introduced in December 2002.

The revised PCA Framework was issued on 13 April 2017.

11 Banks out of total 21 Public Sector Banks were put under PCA in May 2017.

Under PCA, banks are mandated to cut lending to corporates and focus on reducing concentration of loans to certain sectors.

They are also restricted from opening new branches and paying dividends.

The RBI has specified certain regulatory trigger points, as a part of prompt corrective action Framework. Three parameters are:

Capital to Risk Assets Ratio (CRAR)

Net-Non-Performing Assets (NPA)

Return on Assets (RoA)

##### **Four Public Sector Banks:**

Bank of Maharashtra

Corporation Bank

Allahabad Bank

Bank of India

Have been taken out of PCA conditions in January 2019 due to improved performance.

#### **58. KHASHOGGI**

Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi was a Saudi Arabian dissident, author, columnist for the Washington Post and a general manager and editor-in-chief of Al-Arab News Channel who was assassinated at the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul on October 2 2018 by agents of the Saudi government.

Motive for murder: Allegedly to remove a prominent dissident and critic of the Saudi leadership.

#### **59. NRITYA CHOODAMANI AWARD**

Award was instituted in 1974. Given every year by Sri Krishna Gana Sabha.

On the inaugural day of the Sabha's annual December Art and Dance Festival and the All India Natya Kala Conference, a dance artiste of merit and popularity is honoured with the birudhu "Nritya Choodamani" carrying a cash award- a gold medallion, a scroll and a shawl. It is one of the most prestigious and coveted titles in the world of classical dance.

#### **60. EXTRADITION TREATY**

Extradition is an act where one jurisdiction delivers a person accused or convicted of committing a crime in another jurisdiction, over to their law enforcement. It is cooperative

law enforcement process between the two jurisdictions and depends on the arrangements made between them.

Besides the legal aspects of the process, extradition also involves the physical transfer of custody of the person being extradited to the legal authority of the requesting jurisdiction.

India has extradition Treaty with 47 countries and Extradition Arrangement with 10 countries

Ex. Australia 2011

Bahrain 2005

Bangladesh. 2013

Belarus 2008

UAE 2013

Nepal

Bhutan

#### **61. RAILWAY MADAD APP**

Rail Madad is Complaint Registration System of Indian Railway.

Rail Madad registers a complaint with minimum inputs and issues unique ID. It relays the complaint online to relevant officials for immediate action

The action taken on the complaint is then relayed to the passenger through SMS.

The App displays various helpline numbers ex. Security, Child help line etc. and provides direct calling facility for immediate assistance.

All modes of filing complaints including offline and online modes are being integrated into a single platform.

**MENU ON RAILS APP**

Menu on Rails app displays menu served on all types of trains.

For Mai/Express trains foods items are covered in 4 categories namely Beverages, Breakfast, Meals, and A-La-Carte

The App also displays the menu to be served in Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto group of trains.

#### **62. RAILWAY VISTADOME COACHES**

The Vistadome coach is glass roofed. These coaches are running on IR.

- Visakhapatnam and Araku Valley hill station

- Dadar and Madgaon (Goa)

- Kalka- Shimla

These coaches have been introduced to promote Tourism. It has electronically controlled glass roof, seats that rotate 180 degrees, an observation lounge and automatic doors.

The capacity of coach 40 seats.

#### **63. TRAIN 18**

Train 18 also known as Vande Bharat Express is an Indian semi-high speed intercity electric multiple unit. It was designed and built by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Chennai.

It was under make in India initiative.

The unit cost of first rake was 100Cr.

It has a driver coach at either end.

The train has 16 passenger cars.

Seating capacity 1,128

The train has regenerative braking system

Operational speed 160kmph can go upto 180kmph

20 another highspeed train is planned to replace the Rajdhani Express.

It will be ready by 2020.

The first train service will run between Delhi and Varanasi.



#### **64. COPE INDIA 2018**

Cope India are a series of International Airforce exercises between the Indian Airforce and the United States Air Force conducted on and over Indian soil.

The first such exercises were done in 2004 at the air force station in Gwalior.

Second in 2005 then in 2006 and 2009.

2018- Kalaikunda Air force base.

33 fighters have taken part

12 F15 of the US AirForce

The two air forces are performing air defence, air combat and attack drills as part of the exercises.

The exercises were for two weeks Dec 3 to 14

#### **65. KANDAN DALIT**

A Dalit, Kandan took on caste oppression in the village, and spearheaded a movement to draw water from Vanjinagaram's public well, among other issues. In 1987, Kandan was hacked to death.

In honour of Kandan's work and sacrifice while seeking equality and basic civil rights, a memorial stone with his face painted on it was raised by the Dalits of the village. Such stories of Dalit struggle and sacrifice- largely unheard in mainstream media and literature- are now being documented by a group of sculpturs, supported by director Pa. Ranjith's Neelam Panpaatu Maiyam.

#### **66. NAVY CHOKE POINT**

In military strategy, a choke point is a geographical feature on land such as a valley, defile or a bridge or at sea such as valley, defile or a bridge or at sea such as a strait, which an armed force is forced to pass, sometimes on a substantially narrower front and therefore greatly decreasing in combat power, to reach its objective.

#### **67. NIPAH VIRUS**

Nipah virus infection is a viral infection caused by Nipah virus. Symptoms from infection vary from none to fever, cough, headache, shortness of breath and confusion. This may worsen into coma over a day or two. Complications can include inflammation of the brain and seizures.

The Nipah virus is a type of RNA virus in the genus Henipavirus.

It can spread between people and from other animals to people.

Spread typically requires direct contact with an infected source.

The virus normally circulates among specific types of fruit bats.

There is no vaccine.

In India outbreak was reported in Kerala.

The disease was first identified in 1998 during an outbreak in Malaysia. The virus was isolated in 1999. It was named after a village in Malaysia Sungai Nipah.

Pigs also get infected.

The risk of exposure is high for hospital workers and caretakers of those infected with the virus.

In India the disease has been linked to consumption of raw date palm (Toddy) and contact with bats.

**68. ASIA BIBI**

The Asia Bibi blasphemy case involves Pakistani Christian woman Aasiya Noreen commonly known as Asia Bibi. She was convicted of blasphemy by a Pakistan court and was sentenced to death.

In June 2009, Noreen was accused of blasphemy after an argument with co-workers while harvesting berries.

On 31 st October, Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitted Noreen citing material insufficient and not conclusively proved.

But now she is barred from leaving the country.

**69. GREEN CRACKERS**

Firecrackers are responsible for air pollution so to minimize the pollution the concept of green crackers emerged.

Fire crackers contains gunpowder.

Green crackers are less harmful as they do not contain harmful chemicals.

Conventional fire crackers contain aluminium, barium potassium nitrate

Fire crackers contains chemicals and substances like cadmium, lead, chromium, aluminium, magnesium, nitrates, carbon monoxide, copper, potassium, sodium, zinc oxide, manganese dioxide.

**70. Emblems and Names (Prevention of improper use) Act, 1950**

Emblems and Names (Prevention of improper use) Act 1950 prohibits the use of National Symbols for commercial use in India.

No individual or private organization is permitted to use the emblem for official correspondence.

**71. National Honour Act, 1971**

The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 is an act of the Parliament of India which prohibits the desecration of or insult to the country's national symbols, including the National Flag, the Constitution, the National Anthem and map of India including contempt of Indian Constitution.

National Anthem:

As provided in Section 3 of the Act, whoever intentionally prevents the singing of the Jana Gana Mana or causes disturbances to any assembly engaged in such singing shall be punished with imprisonment for a term, which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

**72. The Flag Code of India, 2002**

A flag protocol defines the proper placement, handling, use and disposal of flags.

When flags of many nations are flown the flag of the hosting country should be placed on the right with the rest following in alphabetic order in the language of the host country.

Sometimes in ceremonial fly-past a flag is flown from a weighted rope dangling from beneath a helicopter.

Insult to the national flag, are punishable by law with imprisonment up to three years, or a fine, or both.

The flag must never touch the ground or water or be used as a drapery in any form.

Disposal of damaged flags is also covered by the flag code. Damaged or soiled flags may not be cast aside or disrespectfully destroyed. They have to be destroyed as a whole in private, preferably by burning or by any other method consistent with the dignity of the flag.

**73. BLUE BOOK FOR SECURITY GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PM.**

Blue Book is a classified document and it lays down comprehensive security plan for VVIPs during their movements, including for the President and the Prime Minister.

The Special Protection Group is an armed force of the Union for providing proximate security to the Prime Minister of India and former PM's of India and members of their immediate families.

Depending on the threat perception, the category is divided into four tiers Z<sup>+</sup>, Z, Y, X.

Z<sup>+</sup> security cover of 55 personnel including 10<sup>+</sup> NSG Commando

Z security cover of 22 personnel including 5 NSG Commando

Y security cover of 11 personnel including 1-2 Commando

X security cover of 2 personnel no Commando

**74. REPURPOSE USED COOKING OIL (RUCO)**

It is an initiative that will enable collection and conversion of food cooking oil to biodiesel. It is launched by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). FSSAI has estimated that India has the potential to recover 220 crore litres of used cooking oil for the production of biodiesel by 2022.

**75. TRANS REGIONAL MARITIME NETWORK (T-RMN)**

The network facilitates information exchange on the movement of commercial traffic on the high sea.

The information is available primarily through the Automatic Identification system (AIS) fitted on merchant ships with more than 300 registered tonnage as mandated by the International Maritime Organization.

The AIS information comprises name, MMSI number, position, course, speed last port visited, destination and so on. This information can be picked up through various AIS sensors including coastal AIS chains and satellite based receivers. The project is steered by Italy.

**75. WHITE SHIPPING AGREEMENT (WSA)**

It is an information network protocol that allows the navies of the two countries to exchange information about ships in their oceanic territories. Ships would be classified into white (Commercial ships) Grey (Military Vessels) and black illegal vessels.

**76. DIP IN STUBBLE- BURNING CASES**

Paddy is grown in about 30 lakh hectares in Punjab. After its harvesting, about 20 million tonnes of straw is left on the field. It is estimated that 15 million tonnes of straw is burnt on the open fields to clear the land for next crop. This year the cases of stubble burning has come down

In Haryana Paddy had been sown on 13 lakh hectares in Haryana.

**77. EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL BORROWINGS (ECB)**

ECB refers to commercial loans in the form of bank loans, buyers' credit, suppliers' credit, securitised instruments availed non-resident lenders with minimum average maturity of 3 years.

ECB loans are in foreign currency to Indian borrowers.

For infrastructure and greenfield projects funding up to 50% through ECB is allowed.

## **78. THE RICH ARE GETTING RICHER**

The rich are getting richer. The wealth of the world's billionaires increased by \$900 billions in 2018. Between 2017-2018 a new billionaire was created every two days. At the same time, the number of people living in extreme poverty continued to fall-from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 736 million in 2015.

But the pace of poverty reduction has halved since 2013. This is as per report of Oxfam for 2018.

26 richest people own the same wealth as the 3.8 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity.

World Bank says that global extreme poverty declined on average by 1% point per year between 1990 and 2015, but only 0.6 % points per year between 2013 and 2015, and by even less between 2015 and 2018.

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