





MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS

- MAUNA KEA  PRELIMS, GS-3
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PRELIMS
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PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Consider the following statements on Amit Brikshya Andolan.

1. The Assam Government initiated the “Amrit Brikshya Andolan” campaign to enhance the state’s greenery by planting saplings, with a focus on commercial trees.

2. Accordingly, nine Guinness World Records were created in nine categories.

Select the correct codes.

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither of them.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. The most important fishing grounds of the world are found in the regions where

- (a) warm and cold atmospheric currents meet
- (b) rivers drain out large amounts of freshwater into the sea
- (c) warm and cold oceanic currents meet
- (d) continental shelf is undulating

MAUNA KEA

Science Ministry team visits Hawaii to take stock of telescope project

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

In a signal of renewed enthusiasm for a global scientific project, an official delegation from the Department of Science and Technology visited Mauna Kea, an inactive volcano on the island of Hawaii in the U.S., to discuss "challenges" to the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project, a press release said.

The TMT has been conceived as a 30-metre diameter primary-mirror optical and infrared telescope that will enable observations into deep space. It is proposed as a joint collaboration involving institutions in the U.S., Japan, China, Canada, and India. Indian participation in the project was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2014. India expects to be a major



Clear view: Mauna Kea, an inactive volcano on the island of Hawaii, hosts multiple telescopes. AP

contributor to the project and will provide hardware worth \$200 million.

Mauna Kea hosts multiple telescopes. However, upcoming projects have invited local opposition on the grounds that building telescopes violates religious and cultural customs, with many of these projects having been imposed upon the region without addressing the concerns of inhabitants.

Though permits for constructing the TMT were availed, the Supreme Court of Hawaii invalidated them in 2015. Permissions were restored in 2018, though construction is yet to begin because of continued local opposition. There are plans to construct the TMT at an alternate site, with the Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos (ORM) on La Palma in Spain's Canary Is-

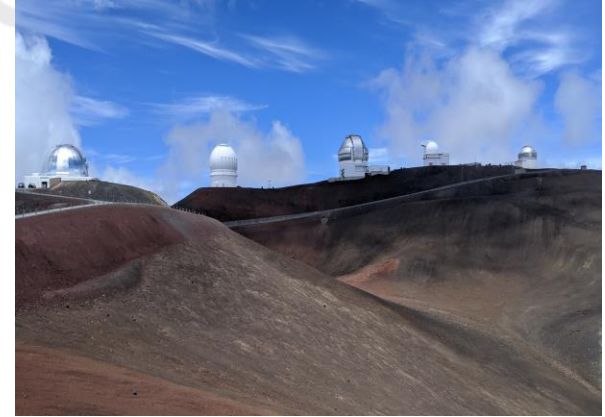
lands seen as the next best choice.

In 2020, Ashutosh Sharma, the then-Secretary of the DST, told *The Hindu*, "We would like the project to move to an alternate site if all the procedures and permits there are in place. The difficulty is that even if construction [in Mauna Kea] were to go ahead, there could be future agitations." However, it is not clear whether India's views have changed.

"The Mauna Kea site is the world's best for astronomy. Discussions are on to see how best the project can go forward with consensus and support of the local people. Hopefully, a decision on the site should be firm in the next two years," Annapurni Subramaniam, director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIAP), told *The Hindu*.

CONTEXT

- **Mauna Kea** is home to several observatories and **telescopes**, including some of the **world's largest** and **most advanced telescopes**.
- The telescopes found at the summit of Mauna Kea are **funded** by government agencies of **various nations** and the **University of Hawai 'i** directly administers two telescopes.



- The **Thirty-Meter Telescope** (TMT), named after the **diameter** of its **primary mirror**, is one of the **world's largest telescopes** and is currently under construction on Mauna Kea.
- **Mauna Kea** is unique as an **astronomical observing site** due to its extremely dry atmosphere, which is important in measuring **infrared** and **submillimeter radiation**.

ABOUT TMT

- The **Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT)** project has been conceived as a **30 metre diameter primary mirror optical and infrared telescope** that will enable observations into **deep space**.
- It is proposed as a **joint collaboration** involving institutions in the **U.S., Japan, China, Canada** and **India**.



INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAUNA KEA TELESCOPE PROJECT

- **Indian participation** in the project was approved by the **Union Cabinet** in 2014.
- **India** expects to be a **major contributor** to the project and will **provide hardware** worth \$200 million.

- **Very High Precision Sensors** and Actuators: India will produce very high precision sensors and actuators for the telescope
- Software Systems: India will contribute to the development of software systems for the telescope.
- India's **participation** in the **Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project** at Mauna Kea in Hawaii is significant, as it will **enhance science collaborations** for the next generation and contribute to the **development of state-of-the-art observing facilities.**

AKASH-NG MISSILE



DRDO conducts successful flight test of Akash missile

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight test of the new generation Akash surface-to-air missile (SAM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha, on Friday. "The flight test was conducted against a high-speed unmanned aerial target at very low altitude. The target was successfully intercepted by the weapon system and destroyed. It has validated the functioning of the complete weapon system consisting of the missile with indigenously developed radio frequency seeker, launcher, multi-function radar and command, control & communication system," the DRDO said in a statement. The successful flight test has paved the way for user trials, it stated.

CONTEXT

- Recently, the **Defence Research and Development Organisation** (DRDO) conducted a successful flight test of the **New Generation AKASH (AKASH-NG) missile**.



ABOUT

- The test took place at the **Integrated Test Range (ITR)**, **Chandipur**, off the coast of **Odisha**.
- The **AKASH-NG** is a **medium-range, mobile surface-to-air missile defense system**.
- The missile has a range of around 80 km, making it capable of engaging aerial threats within this distance.

- The **AKASH-NG** incorporates **advanced technologies**, including improved missiles, seekers, and radars.
- The **missile system** includes **indigenously developed components** such as a **Radio Frequency Seeker**, **Launcher** and **Multi-Function Radar**.
- The **AKASH-NG** is designed to **intercept high-speed** and agile **aerial threats**, showcasing its capability to counter a variety of airborne challenges.

BENGALI: WEST BENGAL'S BID FOR CLASSICAL STATUS



CONTEXT

- The Chief Minister of West Bengal has made a significant request to the central government, advocating for the inclusion of 'Bangla' (Bengali language) as a **classical language** in India.



CRITERIA FOR CLASSICAL LANGUAGE STATUS IN INDIA

- The Indian government has set specific criteria for a language to gain classical status:
 - **Antiquity of Texts:** The language must have early texts with a recorded history spanning **1500-2000** years.

- **Valuable Literary Heritage:** It should possess a rich body of ancient literature/texts valued by generations.
- **Original Literary Tradition:** The literary tradition must be original, not borrowed from other speech communities.
- **Distinctiveness:** There should be a clear distinction from its modern forms, with no break in continuity between the classical language and its later forms or offshoots.

CURRENT CLASSICAL LANGUAGES IN INDIA

- As of now, **six languages** have been given classical status in India: **Tamil** (2004), **Sanskrit** (2005), **Telugu** and **Kannada** (2008), **Malayalam** (2013), and **Odia** (2014). These languages are listed in the **Eighth Schedule** of the **Indian Constitution**.

ABOUT BENGALI LANGUAGE

- Bengali, the **official language** of **West Bengal** and **Bangladesh**, stands as the **second most spoken** language in **India** and the **seventh globally**.
- It is an **Indo-Aryan language** native to the Bengal region in South Asia.
- The script of Bengali, derived from the ancient **Indian Brahmi script**, is written from **left to right**.

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (ICJ)



CONTEXT

- **South Africa** has charged **Israel** with committing acts of **genocide** against **Palestinians** at the **International Court of Justice**.



ABOUT ICJ

- **UN Principal Judicial Organ:** Established in **1945** as a **key judicial entity** of the **United Nations**.
- **Unique Location:** Only principal UN organ situated outside New York, located in **The Hague**, Netherlands.
- **Primary Function:** Resolves **international legal disputes** and offers **advisory opinions** in accordance with **international law**

- **Binding Judgments:** Decisions are **final** and **obligatory** for involved parties, albeit subject to **potential interpretation** or **revision**.
- **Judicial Composition:** Consists of **15 judges**, each elected for a **nine-year** term by the **UN General Assembly** and the **Security Council**.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Consider the Following With Context to International Court of Justice (ICJ)

1. The ICJ is the only international court that adjudicates general disputes between countries.
2. The International Court of Justice is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly.
3. Judges are Not Eligible for Re- Election.

Which of the above statements are Incorrect?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1, 2 and 3
- D. 3 Only

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