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## India's First Indigenous Hydrogen Fuel Cell Ferry

### Why in News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first indigenously built hydrogen fuel cell ferry boat in virtual mode.

### More About the News

- The vessel has been built at the Cochin Shipyard. The pilot vessel is a 24-metre catamaran which can carry 50 passengers. It also has a fully air-conditioned space for passengers.
- It will make urban mobility smooth and easy, according to a release issued by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL).
- The launch of the vessel was part of a major programme organized in Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu to mark the laying of the foundation stone for a Rs 17300 crore project in the district.
- The vessel built at the CSL underscores the pioneering step for embracing clean energy solutions and aligning with the nation's net zero commitments.
- The hydrogen fuel vessel has fully home grown technology and it can be replicated

in other parts of the country for urban mobility application.

## Ganga Pollution in Bihar

### Why in the News?

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has warned that it will order the personal appearance of the Chief Secretary of Bihar if the state fails to submit within six weeks, information that the panel has sought on the state of pollution in the river Ganga.
- The NGT was hearing a matter related to the prevention and control of pollution in the part of the river that falls in Bihar.
- According to the report submitted by the Bihar Government on February 17th 2024, 20 out of the state's 38 districts had submitted incomplete and partially incorrect data.

### More About NGT

- The National Green Tribunal, established in 2010, as per the National Green Tribunal Act is a specialized judicial body equipped with expertise solely for the purpose of adjudicating environmental cases in the country.
- Recognising that most environment cases involve multi-disciplinary issues which are better addressed in a specialized forum, the Tribunal was set up as per recommendations of the Supreme Court, Law Commission and India's international law obligations to develop national laws on environment and implement them effectively.
- The Tribunal is tasked with providing an effective and expeditious remedy in cases relating to environmental protection, conservation of forests and other natural



resources and enforcement of any legal right relating to the environment. The Tribunal's orders are binding and it has power to grant relief in the form of compensation and damages to affected persons.

- The Tribunal has a presence in five zones—North, Central, East, South and West. The Principal Bench is situated in the North Zone, headquartered in Delhi.
- The Tribunal is headed by the Chairperson who sits in the Principal Bench and has at least ten but not more than twenty judicial members and at least ten but not more than twenty expert members.
- The Tribunal has jurisdiction over all civil cases involving a substantial question relating to the environment and the question. Additionally, any person aggrieved by an order/direction of any of the Appellate Authorities under the legislations mentioned above can also challenge them before the National Green Tribunal.

### Auroville celebrates 56th Founding Anniversary

#### Why in the News?

- Auroville celebrated its 56th founding anniversary with the traditional dawn fire communion at the amphitheater adjacent to the Matrimandir on 28th February 2024.
- For the Auroville Community, it marked an occasion to step into a new year with renewed commitment and dedication to the founding idea of the universal township founded by The Mother, spiritual associate of Sri Aurobindo, on February 28th, 1968 as a place where men and women of all countries live in peace and progressive harmony.

#### More About the News

- Auroville was founded by the Mother, the spiritual collaborator of the Indian sage, Sri Aurobindo. The task of giving a concrete form to Sri Aurobindo's vision was entrusted

to the Mother. The creation of a new world, a new humanity, a new society expressing and embodying the new consciousness is the work she has undertaken.

- It was the Mother who organized the growing group of followers around Sri Aurobindo into the Sri Aurobindo Ashram from November 1926 onwards, and who in 1952, after his passing in 1950, created the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education to fulfil his wish to provide a new kind of education for Indian youth.



- In 1968 she founded the international township project of Auroville as a yet wider field for practical attempts to implement Sri Aurobindo's vision of new forms of individual and collective life, preparing the way towards a brighter future for the whole earth.
- Both Sri Aurobindo and The Mother worked all their lives for the manifestation of a mode of consciousness beyond mind, which Sri Aurobindo named "Supermind" or "The Supramental".
- Aravind Ghose, born in Calcutta on 15th August 1872, lived 78 years. He passed from this life in Pondicherry, on 5th December, 1950.
- Wholly educated in England along with his two brothers, he was given an entirely Western education by their Anglophile father. After primary schooling at a convent in Darjeeling, they were taken to England to live with a clergyman's family in Manchester.
- The great originality of Sri Aurobindo is to have fused the modern scientific concept of

evolution with the perennial gnostic experience of an all-pervading divine consciousness supporting all phenomenal existence. His synthesis was not a philosophic construct, but a realization stemming from direct spiritual experience.

### Mission LiFE : Environmental Sustainability and Just Transition in Coal Sector

#### Why in the News?

- The Ministry of Coal is integrating the principles of Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), launched by the Prime Minister, into the coal sector to promote environmental sustainability by placing individual action at the forefront of climate change mitigation.



#### More About the News

- In the Coal Sector, apart from implementing sustainable and environmentally friendly initiatives under the guidance of the Ministry of Coal, Coal/Lignite PSUs are actively organizing programs aligned with the Mission LiFE to promote sustainable and eco-friendly and sustainable lifestyles among employees and coal-dependent communities.
- The goal is to cultivate a community of individuals dedicated to pro-planet values. These endeavors involve creating awareness campaigns focused on waste reduction principles, including Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, and Recycle (5R).
- As part of the People-Centric Greening

Initiative – Bio-reclamation/Plantation, Coal/Lignite PSUs have been consistently and dedicatedly working towards sustainable environmental practices.

- Their primary focus is on reducing the carbon footprint associated with coal mining through extensive plantation programs featuring native species, including fruit-bearing plants.
- The aim is to benefit local communities by fostering environmental sustainability. By employing advanced techniques such as high-tech cultivation, bamboo plantations, seed ball plantation, grassing, and the Miyawaki method in suitable command areas.

#### Mission LiFE

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the presence of U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, launched 'Mission LiFE' (Lifestyle For Environment), a new initiative for sustainable and healthy lifestyle at the Statue of Unity in Gujarat in October 2022.
- Mission Lifestyle for Environment recognises that Indian culture and living traditions are inherently sustainable. The importance of conserving our precious natural resources and living in harmony with nature are emphasized in our ancient scriptures.
- Mission LiFE seeks to channel the efforts of individuals and communities into a global mass movement of positive behavioural change.
- Mission LiFe is a global initiative by India to help the world in its fight against climate change and lead to a sustainable way of life to achieve the sustainable development goals set by the U.N.

### Cabinet approves PM-Surya Ghar

#### Why in the News?

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana with a total outlay of Rs.75,021 crore for installing

rooftop solar and providing free electricity up to 300 units every month for One Crore households. The Prime Minister had launched the scheme on 13th February, 2024.

**The major highlights of the scheme include:**

- (i) The scheme provides a CFA of 60% of system cost for 2 kW systems and 40% of additional system cost for systems between 2 to 3 kW capacity. The CFA will be capped at 3 kW. At current benchmark prices, this will mean Rs 30,000 subsidy for 1 kW system, Rs 60,000 for 2 kW systems and Rs 78,000 for 3 kW systems or higher.
- (ii) The households will apply for subsidies through the National Portal and will be able to select a suitable vendor for installing rooftop solar. The National Portal will assist the households in their decision-making process by providing relevant information such as appropriate system sizes, benefits calculator, vendor rating etc.
- (iii) Households will be able to access collateral-free low-interest loan products of around 7% at present for installation of residential RTS systems up to 3 kW.
- (iv) A Model Solar Village will be developed in each district of the country to act as a role model for adoption of rooftop solar in rural areas.
- (v) Urban Local Bodies and Panchayati Raj Institutions shall also benefit from incentives for promoting RTS installations in their areas.
- (vi) The scheme provides a component for payment security for renewable energy service company (RESCO) based models as well as a fund for innovative projects in RTS.

**Outcome and Impact**

- Through this scheme, the households will be able to save electricity bills as well as earn additional income through sale of surplus power to DISCOMs. A 3 kW system will be able to generate more than 300 units a month on an average for a household.
- The proposed scheme will result in addition of 30 GW of solar capacity through rooftop solar in the residential sector, generating 1000 BUs of electricity and resulting in reduction of 720 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions over the 25-year lifetime of rooftop systems.
- It is estimated that the scheme will create around 17 lakh direct jobs in manufacturing, logistics, supply chain, sales, installation, O&M and other services.
- The Government has launched a massive campaign since the launch of the scheme for raising awareness and generating applications from interested households. Households can register themselves on <https://pmsuryaghar.gov.in> to avail benefits under the scheme.

