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DefConnect 2024- Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) Scheme

Why in News?

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launched Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme to promote innovations in critical and strategic defence technologies, during DefConnect 2024 in New Delhi on March 04, 2024.



More About Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) Scheme

- Under the scheme, start-ups are eligible to receive grant-in-aid of up to Rs 25 crore for their research, development, and innovation endeavours in defence technology. The scheme will nurture the innovation of youth, and help the country leap forward in the field of technology.
 - The ADITI scheme worth Rs 750 crore for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 falls under the iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) framework of Department of Defence Production (DDP), Ministry of Defence.
- It aims to develop about 30 deep-tech critical and strategic technologies in the proposed timeframe. It also envisages to create a 'Technology Watch Tool' to bridge the gap between the expectations and requirements of the modern Armed Forces and the capabilities of the defence innovation ecosystem.
 - The launch of the ADITI Scheme, DISC 11, and other initiatives during DefConnect 2024 underscores the Government's unwavering commitment to promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance in defence production. These initiatives are poised to accelerate India's journey towards becoming a global leader in defence technology and innovation, ensuring the nation's security and sovereignty in the years to come.
 - DefConnect 2024 witnessed the launch of a rolling iDEX internship program, aimed at nurturing young talent and providing them with hands-on experience and mentorship in defence innovation. This initiative seeks to groom the next generation of innovators and equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute effectively to the defence innovation ecosystem.
 - These start-ups represented cutting-edge technologies and innovations, offering solutions to enhance defence capabilities, strengthen national security, and safeguard national interests. The showcase underscored the immense potential of the Indian innovation ecosystem in contributing to defence technology.

MH 60R 'Seahawks' to be commissioned into the Indian Navy as the INAs 334 Squadron

Why in the News?

- The Indian Navy will commission the newly inducted MH 60R Seahawk (a maritime variant of the Blackhawk helicopter) multi-role helicopter on 06 Mar 2024 at INS Garuda, Kochi marking a pivotal moment in India's Defence modernization journey. The Seahawks squadron will be commissioned in the Indian Navy as INAS 334. The helicopters are a part of the 24-aircraft FMS contract signed with the US government in Feb 2020.



More About the News

- The Indian Navy is set to witness a significant surge in its maritime prowess with the induction of the Seahawks. The helicopter is designed for anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), search and rescue (SAR), medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) and vertical replenishment (VERTREP).
- The helicopter has been rigorously tested in Indian Reference Atmosphere (IRA) conditions and is fully integrated into the Fleet. The advanced weapons, sensors and avionics suite make the Seahawks ideal for the Indian Navy's maritime security needs, offering enhanced capabilities for both conventional as well as asymmetric threats.
- The MH 60R helicopter would enhance India's blue-water capabilities, extending

the operational reach of the Navy and supporting sustained naval operations across spectrums and over vast maritime domains.

- The Seahawk's deployment in the IOR would strengthen the Indian Navy's maritime presence, dissuading potential threats and ensuring a secure and safe environment in this strategically crucial region.
- The commissioning of the Seahawks underscores Indian Navy's steadfast dedication to fortifying maritime security, aligning seamlessly with the Government of India's visionary goal of ensuring Security And Growth for All in the Region.

World Wildlife Day celebrated at Okhla Bird Sanctuary focusing on Mission LIFE

Why in the News?

- World Wildlife Fund (WWF) under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change today celebrated World Wildlife Day, 2024, by organising various activities at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, one of the places blessed with a rich biodiversity focusing Mission LIFE.

More About the News

- World Wildlife Day (WWD) is celebrated every year on 3 March to celebrate wild animals and plants. Every year, we recognize the unique roles and contributions of wildlife to people and the planet.
- The theme for this year is Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation.
- World Wildlife Day 2024 is a platform for intergenerational exchange and youth



empowerment through art, presentations and conversations on the opportunities ahead for our shared sustainable future in digital wildlife conservation.

- This day offered a jumping off point for exploring what digital innovations are available now, what intersectional discrepancies we are facing and how we want our digital connectivity to evolve for all people and planet.
- Technological innovation has made research, communication, tracking, DNA analysis and many other aspects of wildlife conservation easier, more efficient and accurate.



- We are in the midst of a global digital revolution that is breaking down barriers to people-centered digital governance and to equal opportunities for all to unleash the power of digital transformation. The 'digital divide' is slowly narrowing, with better connectivity and Internet access reaching 66 per cent of our global population.
- World Wildlife Day 2024 is a platform for intergenerational exchange and youth empowerment through art, presentations and conversations on the opportunities ahead for our shared sustainable future in digital wildlife conservation.
- WWD2024 offers a jumping off point for exploring what digital innovations are available now, what intersectional discrepancies we are facing and how we want our digital connectivity to evolve for all people and planet.

- World Wildlife Day is for connecting people with the natural world and inspiring continued learning and action for animals and plants beyond the day.

India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in Stainless Steel Sector

Why in the News?

- Union Minister for Steel and Civil Aviation, Sh. Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, on 4 March, 2024 virtually inaugurated India's 1st Green Hydrogen Plant in Stainless Steel Sector located at Jindal Stainless Limited, Hisar.

More About the News

- Union Minister of Steel highlighted India's commitment to a green and sustainable future, emphasizing the need for responsible economic progress in the post-COVID era. "As the world strives to recover from the pandemic's aftermath, India is steadfast in its resolve to contribute to global environmental goals".
- It will be the world's first off-grid Green Hydrogen plant for the stainless steel industry and the world's first Green Hydrogen plant with rooftop & floating solar. This project is also a state-of-the-art green hydrogen facility with a target to reduce carbon emissions considerably by around 2,700 Metric Tonnes per annum and 54,000 tons of CO2 emissions over next two decades.
- The country is making significant strides in tackling climate change with initiatives like the Panchamrit (five-fold strategy to fight climate change) and Mission LiFE (a worldwide effort dedicated to supporting eco-friendly lifestyle and protecting the environment), showcasing a holistic approach to development that balances both nature and human prosperity.
- National Green Hydrogen Mission transforming India's Steel Industry
- The National Green Hydrogen Mission

(NGHM), launched last year (in 2023) with an outlay of around Rs 20,000 crore with an aim to make India a Global Hub for production, usage and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives.

- The Mission is also supporting pilot projects in the steel sector with a budget of around Rs 500 crore until FY 2029-30.
- Allocation of 11% additional outlay for infrastructure development in this year's Interim Union Budget also reflects the importance the government attaches to sectors crucial for growth.

India - Malaysia Bilateral Maritime Exercise Samudra Laksamana

Why in the News?

- Exercise Samudra Laksamana has commenced from 28 Feb - 02 Mar 24 at/off Visakhapatnam. Indian Naval Ship Kiltan and Royal Malaysian Ship KD Lekir are participating in the 3rd edition of this exercise which has harbour professional interactions followed by the operational phase at sea.

More About the News

- The exercise aims to strengthen ties and improve coordination between the Indian and Royal Malaysian Navy.
- At harbour, crew of both ships will have various professional interactions, Subject Matter Expert Exchange on topics of mutual interest, sports fixtures, and other interactions. These interactions are aimed to enhance knowledge base, share best practices and further cooperation on maritime aspects.
- This is the 3rd Edition of this exercise which includes harbor professional interactions followed by the operational phase at sea.
- The exercise will involve a harbor phase featuring professional interactions, Subject Matter Expert Exchange on topics of mutual interest, social events, interactions with locals, and various sports activities.

- The other Exercise between India and Malaysia is Exercise Harimau Shakti, which aims to enhance cooperation and interoperability in counter-terrorism and jungle warfare.

National Youth Parliament Festival, 2024

Why in the News?

- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports will organize the inaugural of the finals of the National Youth Parliament Festival, 2024 on 5th March 2024 and the Valedictory Function on 6th March 2024 in the Central Hall of the Parliament, New Delhi.

More About the News

- The National Youth Parliament is being organized this year based on the theme of 'Young Voices: Engage and Empower for Nation's Transformation'.
- The National Youth Parliament Festival, 2024 has been organized from 9th February 2024 to 6th March 2024 across the country. This Youth Parliament has been organized at three levels covering 785 Districts of the country.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports through Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS) has been organizing Youth Parliament viz. District Youth Parliament, State Youth Parliament and National Youth Parliament.
- These Youth Parliaments are aimed at strengthening the roots of democracy; inculcate healthy habits of discipline, tolerance of the view of others and to enable youths to know about practices and procedures of the Parliament.
- Youth Parliaments also helps in building awareness on the importance of an active citizenry and promote youth engagement and participation. It promotes leadership qualities among youth and enable them to realize their full potential and in the process, to contribute to the nation building.
- Taking inspiration from the idea of Prime Minister, 1st National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF)-2019 was organized from 12th January to 27th February 2019 at District, State and National Level.