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1. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Programme

- **Prelims** - Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Programme
- **Mains** - GS 2 - Social Justice

Why in the news?

- The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme has completed 50 years since its launch as a pilot in Karnataka

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Programme

- **Launch:** ICDS is India's flagship early childhood development programme, launched in 1975 under the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD).
- **Aim:** Aimed at holistic development of children under 6 years, pregnant and lactating mothers, and adolescent girls through Anganwadi Centres (AWCs).
- **Objectives**
 - Improve nutritional and health status of children (0–6 years).
 - Lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical, and social development.
 - Reduce child mortality, morbidity, malnutrition, and school dropouts.
 - Enhance the capability of mothers to handle health and nutrition needs of their children.
- **Funding:** Centrally sponsored scheme
- **Service Provided**
 - **Supplementary Nutrition:** 500 kcal/12-15g protein daily for 6 months-3 years; 700 kcal/20g for 3-6 years; Take-Home Rations (THR) or hot cooked meals.
 - **Health Services:** Immunization, health check-ups, Vitamin A/IFA supplementation, referral for ailments, and growth monitoring using WHO standards.
 - **Pre-school Education:** Play-way method for cognitive, motor, and social skills development.
 - **Nutrition/Health Education:** For women on hygiene, family planning, and child-rearing.



- **Implementation**: Implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) via Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Helpers, with convergence under Poshan 2.0 (Umbrella ICDS scheme since 2021-22).
- **Achievements**
 - Covers 8 crore beneficiaries; reduced stunting (NFHS-5); improved birth weights, immunization, mental/social development (AP/Karnataka studies).
 - World's largest ECCE network; aligns with SDG 2, NEP 2020
- **Challenges**
 - Poor infrastructure (30% AWCs lack toilets), undernutrition (35.5% stunted), low AWW pay/workload, uneven quality/targeting.
 - Centralised approach limits community engagement; gaps in poorest states.



2. Assam Accord (1985)

- **Prelims** - Assam Accord (1985)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Internal Security

Why in the news?

- The Assam government and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) have reached a consensus on "most recommendations" of a panel to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord of 1985.

Assam Accord (1985)

- **What is it?**
 - The Assam Accord was signed on 15th August 1985 between the Government of India, All Assam Students' Union (AASU), and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) to end the six-year-long Assam agitation (1979-1985).
 - The agitation primarily concerned illegal immigration from Bangladesh and the protection of Assamese identity.
- **Key Provisions**
 - Cut-off Dates for Citizenship:
 - ★ Persons who entered Assam before 1 January 1966 were to be granted full citizenship rights.
 - ★ Those who came between 1 January 1966 and 24 March 1971 would be allowed to stay after registering as foreigners for 10 years.
 - ★ Immigrants who entered after 24 March 1971 were to be detected, deleted from electoral rolls, and deported.
 - Clause 5 is the heart of the Accord, detailing detection, deletion, and deportation of foreigners in accordance with law.
 - Clause 6 promises constitutional, legislative, and administrative safeguards to protect, preserve, and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity, and heritage of the Assamese people.
 - Clause 7 outlines a commitment from the government towards rapid economic development of Assam, focusing on education, industry, and infrastructure.



- The Accord also mandated the sealing and fencing of the India-Bangladesh border to prevent further illegal immigration.
- It addressed issues like prevention of land encroachments by unauthorized persons and restricting acquisition of immovable property by foreigners.
- **Significance**
 - It brought an end to violent protests and created a legal framework to address the illegal immigration issue in Assam while protecting Assamese cultural and social identity.
 - It shifted the power to issue citizenship certificates exclusively to the central government and laid down mechanisms for the detection and deportation of illegal immigrants.
- **Challenges**
 - Implementation of the Accord has faced delays, especially in finalizing the National Register of Citizens (NRC), controversies over changes in the Citizenship Act, and demands for full implementation of Clause 6 safeguards.



3. Exercise AUSINDEX - 2025

- **Prelims** -Exercise AUSINDEX - 2025
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

Why in the news?

- Indian Navy's INS Sahyadri participated in Exercise AUSINDEX - 2025 held in the Northern Pacific Ocean.

Exercise AUSINDEX - 2025

- **What is it?**: Exercise AUSINDEX 2025 is a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy, conducted since 2015.
- **Aim**: To enhance interoperability, maritime cooperation, and strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Objectives**
 - Boost joint operational capabilities through anti-submarine warfare (ASW), gunnery drills, advanced flying operations, and maritime manoeuvres.
 - Strengthen defence ties, reaffirm commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, aligning with India's SAGAR vision.
 - Deepen strategic partnership amid shared concerns over regional security.
- **Key Activities**
 - Anti-submarine warfare exercises and gunnery practices involving warships and aircraft.
 - Advanced flying operations and joint maritime manoeuvres for real-world contingency response.
- **Other Exercise Between India and Australia**: AUSTRALIND (Army), Pitch Black (Air), Malabar, and Quad naval drills.



4. Ethiopia's Afar Depression

- Prelims - Ethiopia's Afar Depression
- Mains - GS 1 - Geography

Why in the news?

- A long-dormant volcano named Hayli Gubbi in Ethiopia erupted after 12,000 years which is located in the Ethiopia's Afar Depression.

Ethiopia's Afar Depression

- **Other Name**: Danakil Depression or Afar Triangle.
- **Location**: Located in northeastern Ethiopia, extending into Djibouti and Eritrea.
- **Fact**: One of the lowest, hottest, and most tectonically active regions on Earth.
- **Geomorphological Setting**
 - Located at the triple junction where three tectonic plates meet: African (Nubian) Plate, Somali Plate and Arabian Plate.
 - Elevation: ~125 meters below sea level at its lowest point.
 - Known For
 - ★ Volcanoes (Erta Ale)
 - ★ Hydrothermal fields (Dallol)
 - ★ Salt flats and rift valleys
 - ★ Active rifting & seafloor spreading on land
 - Part of : East African Rift Valley



5. NJAC and Collegium System

- Prelims - NJAC and Collegium System
- Mains - GS 2 - Polity

Why in the news?

- Chief Justice of India orally said the court would consider a plea seeking to revive the National Judicial Appointments Commission and bring an end to the Collegium system of judicial appointments to the constitutional courts of the country.

National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC)

- **Formation:** The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was established through the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014, to replace the collegium system for appointing judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts in India.
- **Aim:** It aimed to create a more transparent and broad-based mechanism involving the executive, judiciary, and eminent persons.
- **Composition:**
 - Chief Justice of India (chairperson),
 - Two senior-most Supreme Court judges,
 - Union Law Minister, and two eminent persons nominated by a committee comprising the Prime Minister, CJI, and Leader of Opposition (or leader of largest opposition party).
 - Eminent persons were to represent diverse fields, ensuring no more than one from brother/sister of CJI, Union Minister, or SC judge.
- **Functions**
 - Recommend appointments of CJI, SC judges, High Court Chief Justices, and other judges based on ability, merit, and integrity.
 - Recommend transfers of High Court judges considering administrative needs.
 - Regulate procedures, collect background information from stakeholders, and establish transparent criteria/timelines

Collegium System

- **What is it?:** It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the judge's cases in the Supreme Court.



- **Head of Collegium**

- The SC collegium is headed by the CJI (Chief Justice of India) and comprises four other senior judges of the court.
- A High Court collegium is led by the incumbent Chief Justice and two other senior judges of that court.
- Judges of the higher judiciary are appointed only through the collegium system and the government has a role only after names have been decided by the collegium.

- **Evolution of Collegium System**

- **First Judges Case (1981)**

- ★ It declared that the “primacy” of the CJI’s (Chief Justice of India) recommendation on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for “cogent reasons.”
- ★ The ruling gave the Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments for the next 12 years.

- **Second Judges Case (1993)**

- ★ SC introduced the Collegium system, holding that “consultation” really meant “concurrence”.
- ★ It added that it was not the CJI’s individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC.

- **Third Judges Case (1998)**

- ★ SC on the President's reference (Article 143) expanded the Collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.



6. Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)

- **Prelims** - Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- Union Government launched Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) with an allocation of ₹7,280 crore.

Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)


- **Aims:** To establish India's first integrated REPM production ecosystem with 6,000 MTPA capacity across five units.
- **Target:** It targets self-reliance in critical magnets used in EVs, renewables, defence, aerospace, and electronics, reducing import dependence (currently 100% for 4,000-5,000 TPA consumption).
- **Objectives**
 - Develop end-to-end value chain: rare earth oxide to metal, alloy, and sintered magnets, addressing gaps in advanced processing.
 - Create secure supply chains for strategic sectors, support Net Zero 2070, and position India as a global REPM player amid doubling demand by 2030.
 - Attract private investment (expected 3x outlay) via incentives, fostering jobs and high-tech manufacturing
- **Features**
 - **Capacity Allocation:** Five manufacturers selected via global competitive bidding; each up to 1,200 MTPA.
 - **Incentives:** ₹6,450 crore sales-linked over five years; ₹750 crore capital subsidy (30% CAPEX support); two-year setup + five-year incentives.
 - **Implementation:** Managed by a nodal agency under competitive procedure; focuses on environmental standards and full-stack facilities.
- **Significance:** REPMs are vital for EV motors, wind turbines, and defence; scheme aligns with semiconductor/critical minerals missions, challenging China's 90% dominance. It boosts Atmanirbhar Bharat, industrial growth, and export potential.



7. Guinea-Bissau

- **Prelims** - Location of Guinea-Bissau
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

Guinea-Bissau




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Why in the news?

- Soldiers in Guinea-Bissau have seized control of the country and demanded that elections be annulled.

Guinea-Bissau

- **Location:** West Africa
- **Capital:** Bissau
- **Border Countries:** Senegal and Guinea
- **Bordering Waterbodies:** Atlantic Ocean
- **Climate:** Tropical Climate
- **Associated International Grouping:** African Union (AU), ECOWAS.



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