



RACE IAS

Daily current affairs

11 May 2022

What is victory day?

Context:

Every year, Russia celebrates **Victory Day** on May 9 to commemorate the Soviet Union's victory over Germany's Nazi forces in World War II.

What is Victory Day?

Victory Day marks the end of World War II and the victory of the Allied Forces in 1945.

Adolf Hitler had shot himself on April 30. On May 7, German troops surrendered, which was formally accepted the next day, and came into effect on May 9.

- In most European countries, it is celebrated on May 8, and is called the Victory in Europe Day.

Why does Russia not celebrate Victory Day on the same date?

This is because the instrument of surrender signed on May 7 stipulated that all hostilities would cease at 23:01 Berlin Time on May 8 and, as time in Moscow was an hour ahead, this would push the ceasefire into May 9.

1. An initial document was signed in Reims, France on May 7.
2. But, Russia argued that some German troops considered the Reims instrument a surrender to the Western allies only and that fighting continued in eastern Europe, especially in Prague.
3. Therefore, Soviet Union demanded another signing.
4. A second surrender ceremony then took place in a manor on the outskirts of Berlin late on May 8, when it was already May 9 in Moscow.
5. Both texts stipulated that forces under German control were to cease operations at 11:01pm Berlin Time.



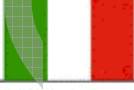





Therefore, in the eyes of the Soviet Union, the head of Germany's armed forces surrendered personally to Joseph Stalin's representative on May 9 and the instrument of surrender was signed in the early hours of that day.

Relevance of the day this year:

In this year's speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin described the "denazification" of Ukraine as one of the main aims of his "special military operation" in the country.

- The choice of words followed by the Kremlin is similar to USSR's stand against Nazism in World War II.
- The parallels drawn with the Second World War are one of the major reasons why speculations around Russia's actions on Victory Day 2022 keep growing.

Major Countries Involved in World War II

Axis Powers	Allied Powers
Germany 	United States 
Italy 	France 
Japan 	Great Britain 
	Soviet Union 
	Canada 

Sources: the Hindu.

Cyclone Asani:

Context:

Asani is a cyclonic storm originating in the Bay of Bengal which would hit the Easter Coastal Plains of India, mainly the regions of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

Cyclone Asani - Facts:

- Who named it? Sri Lanka. asani means wrath in sinhalese.
- Formed in Bay of Bengal.
- Asani will be the first cyclonic storm of the season.
- What would be the name of the next cyclone? The cyclone that will form after Asani will be called Sitrang, a name given by Thailand.

What are tropical cyclones? How are they named?

India Meteorological Department Tropical Cyclone Intensity Scale	
Category	Sustained winds (3-min average)
Super Cyclonic Storm	>120 kt >222 km/h
Very Severe Cyclonic Storm	64–119 kt 118–221 km/h
Severe Cyclonic Storm	48–63 kt 88–117 km/h
Cyclonic Storm	34–47 kt 62–87 km/h
Deep Depression	28–33 kt 52–61 km/h
Depression	≤27 kt ≤51 km/h

Naming of Cyclones:

Cyclones are named by the regional specialised meteorological centres (RSMCs) and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs) in every ocean basin across the world.

- There are six RSMCs in the world that also includes the India Meteorological Department (IMD), and a total of five TCWCs.
- As an RSMC, the IMD names the cyclones which develop over the north Indian Ocean, including the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, after following a standard procedure.
- The IMD is also mandated to issue advisories to 12 other countries in the region on the development of cyclones and storms.

- These include Bangladesh, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Significance of naming:

It helps the scientific community, the media and disaster managers to create awareness of the development, for rapidly disseminating warnings to increase community preparedness and remove confusion where there are multiple cyclonic systems over a region.

Most recent list:

- The most recent list released in 2020 has 169 names, including 13 names each from 13 countries. Earlier, eight countries had given 64 names.
- Names from India that have been used include Gati (speed), Megh (cloud), Akash (sky).

Annexure-I

New list of tropical cyclone names adopted by WMO/ESCAP Panel Member Countries in April 2020 for naming of tropical cyclones over North Indian Ocean including Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea
(To be used after the name 'Amphan' from the previous list is utilised)

WMO/ESCAP Panel Member countries	Column 1		Column 2		Column 3		Column 4	
	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'	Name	Pron'
Bangladesh	Nisarga	Nisarga	Biparjoy	Biporjoy	Arnab	Ornab	Upakul	Upokul
India	Gati	Gati	Tej	Tej	Murasu	Murasu	Aag	Aag
Iran	Nivar	Nivar	Hamoon	Hamoon	Akvan	Akvan	Sepand	Sepand
Maldives	Burevi	Burevi	Midhili	Midhili	Kaani	Kaani	Odi	Odi
Myanmar	Tauktae	Tau'Te	Michaung	Migjaum	Ngamann	Ngaman	Kyarthit	Kjathi
Oman	Yaas	Yass	Remal	Re-Mal	Sail	Sail	Naseem	Naseem
Pakistan	Gulab	Gul-Aab	Asna	As-Na	Sahab	Sa-Hab	Afshan	Af-Shan
Qatar	Shaheen	Shaheen	Dana	Dana	Lulu	Lulu	Mouj	Mouj
Saudi Arabia	Jawad	Jowad	Fengal	Feinjal	Ghazeer	Razeer	Asif	Aasif
Sri Lanka	Asani	Asani	Shakhti	Shakhti	Gigum	Gigum	Gagana	Gagana
Thailand	Sitrang	Si-Trang	Montha	Mon-Tha	Thianytot	Thian-Yot	Bulan	Bu-Lan
United Arab Emirates	Mandous	Man-Dous	Senyar	Sen-Yaar	Afoor	Aa-Foor	Nahhaam	Nah-Haam
Yemen	Mocha	Mokha	Ditwah	Ditwah	Diksam	Diksam	Sira	Sira

Sources: the Hindu.

Delhi's new startup policy:

Context:

Delhi Cabinet has passed an ambitious Delhi Startup Policy.

Highlights and components of the policy:

- Entrepreneurship classes and a “Business Blasters Program” would be introduced at the college level, and the Delhi Government would support college students working on business ideas in every possible way.
- Delhi government will help startups get collateral-free loans which will be interest-free for a year.
- Delhi government will empanel CAs, lawyers and experts to aid startups for free; their service charges will be borne by the government.
- Students building startups while studying in Delhi government colleges will be able to seek 1-2 years of leave.

Implementation:

Three committees will be set up for the implementation and governance of the policy:

1. The Startup Policy Monitoring Committee: It will be headed by the Finance Minister of the Delhi Government. It will have members from educational institutions and the private sector.
2. Startup Task Force.
3. A Nodal Agency.

Idea behind the startup policy:

- The state government intends to encourage, facilitate and support 15,000 startups by 2030 under the Delhi Startup Policy.
- The project aims at creating entrepreneurs and business leaders out of the Delhi youth.

Delhi as a startup hub:

Delhi, in 2022, overtook Bengaluru to become the startup capital of India.

- According to Economic Survey 2021-22, over 5,000 recognised startups were added in Delhi between April 2019 and December 2021, while 4,514 startups were added in Bengaluru.

WHAT MAKES DELHI AN ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION

Over 5,000 startups added between April 2019 and December 2021 (As per Economic Survey)

- Industry department coordinates with **30 different Delhi agencies** for giving approvals to new business
- **460 compliances** amended or modified in the last 5 years
- **31 days** is the max limit for giving electricity connections, best in Asia
- **150 services** under doorstep delivery scheme
- **'Inspector Raj'** removed from taxation department
- **Good infrastructure:** Delhi Metro, free ride for women in buses
- **Reliable 24x7 electricity**
- **Focus on green technology;** this attracts energy-related startups
- **Entrepreneurship-based** school curriculum, Delhi Skills and Entrepreneurship University, and Business Blasters programme to produce young entrepreneurs



DELHI STARTUP POLICY IN OFFING

Focus areas

➤ Artificial intelligence and robotics	➤ Renewable energy and clean technology
➤ Automation and technical innovation	➤ Industrial revolution 4.0 technologies
➤ Cyber security	➤ Creative ideas pertaining to agriculture, e-commerce, healthcare, logistics and transportation, rural innovation, e-governance
➤ Big data education	
➤ Solid waste management	
➤ Urban infrastructure planning and environment	

Sources: Indian Express.

Low wheat procurement - causes and effects:

Context:

Wheat procurement by government agencies is set to dip to a 15-year low in the current marketing season, from an all-time high scale last year.

Numbers:

- Likely procurement this time: The 18.5 million tonnes (mt).
- This would be the first time that wheat procured from the new crop (18.5 mt) is less than the public stocks at the start of the marketing season (19 mt).
- This is also a 15-year-low. This is the lowest since the 11.1 mt bought in 2007-08.

WHEAT PROCUREMENT & OFFTAKE (LAKH TONNES)

	STOCKS (OPENING BALANCE AS OF APRIL 1)	PROCUREMENT (APRIL-JUNE)	OFFTAKE (APRIL-MARCH)
2005-06	40.66	147.87	167.08
2006-07	20.09	92.26	118.75
2007-08	47.03	111.28	122.47
2008-09	58.03	226.89	148.85
2009-10	134.29	253.82	223.84
2010-11	161.25	225.13	230.67
2011-12	153.64	283.34	242.67
2012-13	199.52	382.15	332.42
2013-14	242.07	250.72	306.15
2014-15	178.34	281.31	271.59
2015-16	172.21	280.88	315.73
2016-17	145.38	229.61	292.47
2017-18	80.59	308.24	253
2018-19	132.31	357.95	316.47
2019-20	169.92	341.32	271.89
2020-21	247	389.92	363.9
2021-22	273.04	433.44	505.55
2022-23	189.9	185.00*	

* Likely

Source: Food Corporation of India

Why is there low wheat procurement this year?

- Rise in export demand: Mainly fuelled by Russia - Ukraine war. The war has led to skyrocketing prices and a further increase in demand for Indian grain. Farmers find it more profitable to export now.
- Lower production: The sudden spike in temperatures from the second half of March – when the crop was in the grain-filling stage, with the kernels still accumulating starch, protein and other dry matter – has taken a toll on yields.

Impact on availability:

- This would affect the minimum operational stock-cum-strategic reserve of government agencies.

- This would also affect the public distribution system, midday meals and other regular welfare schemes.

Will farmers benefit?

Farmers will certainly benefit from the scenario as they are being offered a price above the MSP. Amid the Russia-Ukraine crisis, new markets in countries like Israel, Egypt, Tanzania and Mozambique have opened up for India.

- However, on the other hand, if private traders continue to buy above MSP, eventually that could stoke inflation.

About Wheat:

- This is the second most important cereal crop in India after rice.
- Wheat is a rabi crop that requires a cool growing season and bright sunshine at the time of ripening.
- Temperature: Between 10-15°C (Sowing time) and 21-26°C (Ripening & Harvesting) with bright sunlight.
- Rainfall: Around 75-100 cm.
- Soil Type: Well-drained fertile loamy and clayey loamy (Ganga-Satluj plains and black soil region of the Deccan).

Factors leading to increase in Wheat cultivation in India:

- Success of the Green Revolution contributed to the growth of Rabi crops, especially wheat.
- Macro Management Mode of Agriculture, National Food Security Mission and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana are few government initiatives to support wheat cultivation.

Sources: Indian Express.

Direct seeding of rice

Context:

Recently, the Punjab government announced Rs 1,500 incentive per acre for farmers opting for Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR).

Background:

Last year, 18% (5.62 lakh hectares) of the total rice area in the state was under DSR against the government target of bringing 10 lakh hectares under it.

Need for:

In 2021-22, 31.45 lakh hectares (over 3.1 million hectares) was under paddy and basmati, including 26.60 under non-basmati rice and 4.85 lakh hectares under basmati. The figure was 31.49 lakh hectares in 2020-21 and 31.42 lakh hectares in 2019-20.

- Around 3,600 litres to 4,125 litres of water is required to grow one kg rice depending upon the paddy variety.
- Therefore, the DSR technique is receiving a push from the government side as it is a water saving technique.
 - DSR technique can help save 15% to 20% water. In some cases, water saving can reach 22% to 23%.

What is Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR)?

Here, the pre-germinated seeds are directly drilled into the field by a tractor-powered machine.

There is no nursery preparation or transplantation involved in this method. Farmers have to only level their land and give one pre-sowing irrigation.

How is it different from conventional methods?

In transplanting paddy, farmers prepare nurseries where the paddy seeds are first sown and raised into young plants.

The nursery seed bed is 5-10% of the area to be transplanted. These seedlings are then uprooted and replanted 25-35 days later in the puddled field.

Advantage of DSR:

Water savings. The first irrigation (apart from the pre-sowing rauni) under DSR is necessary only 21 days after sowing. This is unlike in transplanted paddy, where watering has to be done practically daily to ensure submerged/flooded conditions in the first three weeks.

Less Labour. About three labourers are required to transplant one acre of paddy at almost Rs 2,400 per acre.

The cost of herbicides under DSR will not exceed Rs 2,000 per acre.

Reduce methane emissions due to a shorter flooding period and decreased soil disturbance compared to transplanting rice seedlings.

Limitations:

- Non-availability of herbicides.
- The seed requirement for DSR is also high, 8-10 kg/acre, compared to 4-5 kg/acre in transplanting.
- Further, laser land levelling is compulsory in DSR. This is not so in transplanting.
- The sowing needs to be done timely so that the plants have come out properly before the monsoon rains arrive.

Sources: Indian Express.

Anna Jarvis:

Anna Jarvis (May 1, 1864 - November 24, 1948) was an American activist who founded Mother's Day to honour her and "all mothers" in 1908.

- While the dates vary every year, it is largely celebrated on the second Sunday of the month of May every year.
- Because of her tireless efforts, most US states began honouring Mother's Day as a regional holiday by the year of 1911, and West Virginia, Jarvis' home state, was the first to do so in the year of 1910.



Powai cycling track project:

In a setback to the Mumbai civic body, the Bombay High Court has allowed PILs challenging the construction of a cycling and jogging track around Powai Lake and said the cycle track was illegal.

About Powai Lake:

- Recognised as a wetland, the man-made Powai Lake in the eastern suburbs of Mumbai was constructed in 1891.
- As its water was declared unfit for drinking, it is being used for industrial purposes.
- In 2021, the BMC proposed constructing a 10-km cycling track around Powai Lake as a part of its plan to have cycling tracks across the city.

Opposition to the project:

- The track would be in violation of the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules.
- It will have a negative impact on the habitat of the Indian marsh crocodiles found in the lake.
- The project will open up space for development around the lake.



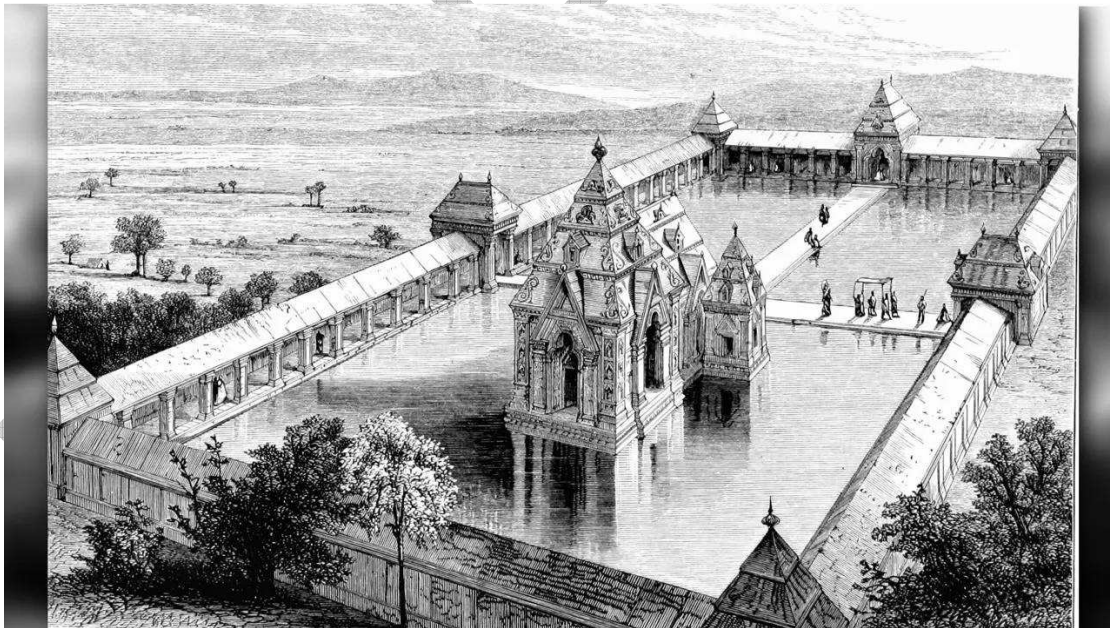
Martand Sun Temple:

A controversy has erupted over a puja ceremony attended by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at the premises of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)-protected Martand Sun temple in Anantnag, with the ASI claiming that it was in violation of rules.

- ASI argues that as per Ancient Monument Protection Act (ASI) rules, a prior permission was supposed to be sought.

About the temple:

- The eighth-century Martand Temple is one of the oldest sun temples in India and a symbol of invaluable ancient spiritual heritage.
- Built by Lalitaditya Muktapida in the 8th Century AD, the Martand Sun Temple is said to have been an excellent specimen of Kashmiri architecture and one of the holiest shrines for the Kashmiri Pandits.
- The temple was destroyed by Sikandar Shah Miri in the 14th Century AD and the ruins are now marked as a “site of national importance” by the Archaeological Survey of India.



Pantanal wetland:

- The world's largest wetland, known as the Pantanal, in South America is at risk of collapse.

- This is due to a series of local and seemingly minor decisions that fail to account for their cumulative impact on one of Earth's most biodiverse ecosystems.
- It is also the world's largest flooded grasslands.
- It is fed through the Paraguay River and tributaries.
- It is designated a National Heritage by the Brazilian Constitution and a restricted-use region whose use should be ecologically sustainable.

PRAAPTI Portal:

- PRAAPTI stands for- Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators.
- The PRAAPTI portal was launched in May 2018 to bring transparency in power purchase transactions between generators and discoms.

Why in News?

According to the portal, total outstanding dues of electricity distribution companies to power producers rose by 4.04 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1,21,765 crore (Rs 1.21 trillion) in May 2022.

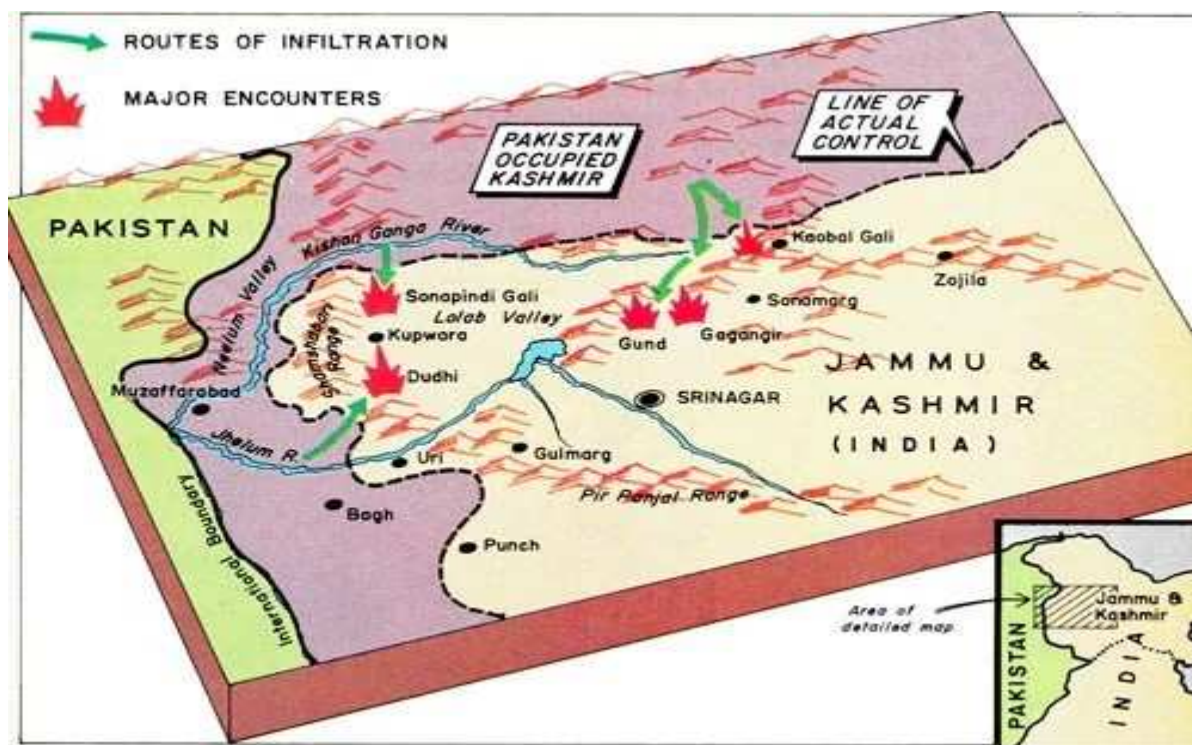
- DISCOMs owed a total of Rs 1,17,026 crore to power generation firms in May 2021.

Operation Dudhi:

The paramilitary Assam Rifles recently felicitated the surviving soldiers of Operation Dudhi, marked in the country's defence history as India's most successful counter-insurgency operation more than 30 years ago.

What is Operation Dudhi?

A team of 15 soldiers of the Assam Rifles' 7th Battalion led by Naib Subedar Padam Bahadur Chhetri had on May 5, 1991, gunned down 72 Pakistan-trained extremists and captured 13 others at 14,000 ft in Jammu & Kashmir.



Centre says will re-examine sedition law, requests SC to defer hearing:

Context:

The Centre has said it will re-examine and reconsider the rationality of the sedition law and requested the Supreme Court to defer the exercise adjudicating its constitutional validity.

- The affidavit filed by the Centre was in response to a batch of petitions challenging the constitutionality of the sedition law.

SC restrains HCs from proceeding with IT Rules:

Context:

The Supreme Court has restrained the high courts from proceeding with the petitions pertaining to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) and the Cable TV Networks (Amendment) Rules 2021.

- A number of digital media publishers like Live Law, and The Leaflet apart from bodies like Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA), Indian

Broadcasting and Digital Foundation (IBDF), and News Broadcasters and Digital Association (NBDA) have challenged the IT Rules.

SC-appointed committee inspects Mullaperiyar dam:

Context:

A five-member committee including two technical experts from Tamil Nadu and Kerala inspected the Mullaperiyar reservoir.

- The committee is led by Central Water Commission (Dam Safety Organisation) Chief Engineer Gulshan Raj.
- As per the recent Supreme Court directive, the committee would monitor and maintain the dam until the National Dam Safety Authority was established.