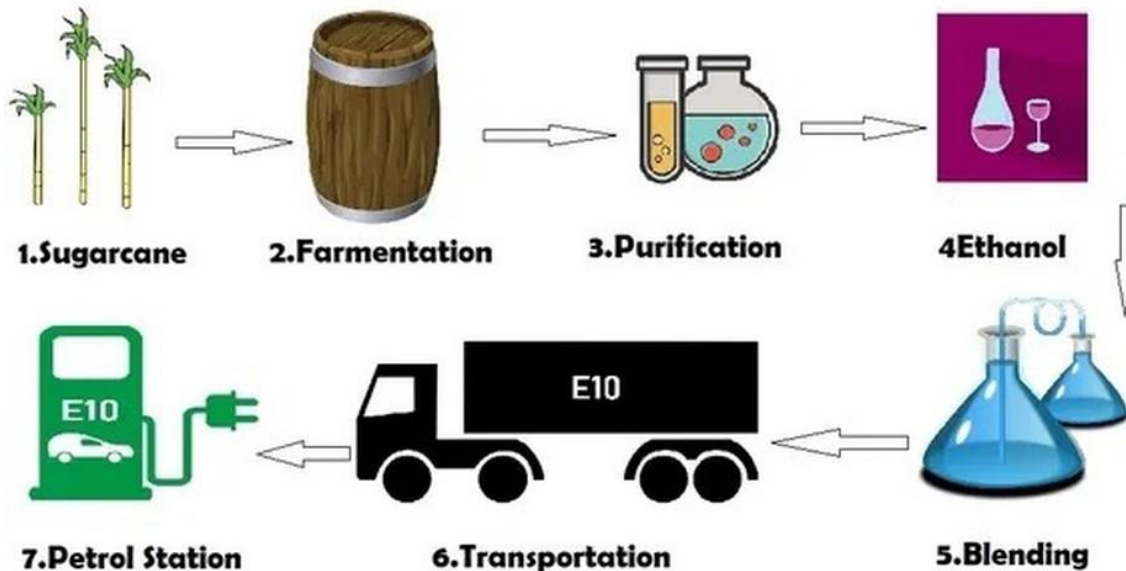


## Current Affairs:20.07.2021

### ETHANOL BLENDING

#### Steps in Production of Ethanol as a Vehicle Fuel



**Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas informed Lok Sabha about Ethanol Blending.**

#### About:

The Notified National Policy on Biofuels – 2018, provided an indicative target of blending 20% ethanol in petrol by 2030. Ethanol Blending has Improved from 1.53% during Ethanol Supply Year 2013-14 to 7.93% ongoing ESY 2020-21. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has published a Notification dated June 02, 2021, wherein, it has been stated that OMCs shall sell ethanol blended petrol with percentage of ethanol upto 20% as per BIS Specifications in the whole of India and Union Territories and shall come into effect from April 01, 2023. E-100 pilot projects has been launched at Pune city by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) on June 05, 2021.

### GREEN NATIONAL HIGHWAY CORRIDOR PROJECT



**Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways informed Rajya Sabha about the status of Green National Highway Corridor Project.**

#### About:

The Government had signed loan agreement with the World Bank to develop Green National Highway Corridors

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(GNHCP). The project includes Upgradation of about 781 km length of various National Highways passing through the states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Out of total length of 781 km, work on 287.96 km having Civil Cost of Rs. 1664.44 cr. has been awarded. The schedule date of completion is December, 2025.

## SHEKATKAR COMMITTEE



**Raksha Mantri informed Rajya Sabha about the status of Implementation of CoE Recommendations Related to Defence Reforms.**

### About:

The Committee of Experts (CoE) constituted by the Ministry of Defence under the chairmanship of Lt Gen (Retd) DB Shekatkar to recommend measures to enhance combat compatibility and rebalance defence expenditure of the armed forces, submitted its report in December 2016. The Report was taken up by the Ministry of Defence to frame key action points and roadmap for implementation.

**Measures recommended by the Committee and taken up for the implementation include:**

- Optimisation of Signals Establishments to include Radio Monitoring Companies, Corps Air Support Signal Regiments, Air Formation Signal Regiments, Composite Signal Regiments and merger for Corps Operating and Engineering Signal Regiments. Restructuring of repair echelons in the Army to include Base Workshops, Advance Base Workshops and Static/Station Workshops in the field Army.
- Redeployment of Ordnance echelons to include Vehicle Depots, Ordnance Depots and Central Ordnance Depots apart from streamlining inventory control mechanisms.
- Better utilisation of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport Units.
- Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.
- Enhancement in standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
- Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.

## INDIAN INSTITUTE OF HERITAGE



**The government has decided to set up the 'Indian Institute of Heritage' at Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar.**

### About:

The Institute is being set up as Deemed to be University by integrating Institute of Archaeology (Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology), School of Archival Studies under National Archives of India, New Delhi, the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property (NRLC), Lucknow, National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology (NMICHM) and Academic Wing of

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Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi. These shall become various schools of Institute.



Indian Institute of Heritage will be a world-class university that would focus on the conservation and research in India's rich tangible heritage, while offering research, development and dissemination of knowledge associated with heritage.

## Draft anti-trafficking Bill: .

The [Trafficking in Persons \(Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation\) Bill, 2021](#), is likely to be tabled in the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament.

### Highlights of the Bill:

The bill proposes stringent punishments for offenders, including hefty fines and seizing of their properties.

1. The Bill also extends beyond the protection of women and children as victims to now **include transgenders as well as any person who may be a victim of trafficking**.
2. The draft also does away with the provision that a victim necessarily needs to be transported from one place to another to be defined as a victim.
3. **Exploitation has been defined to include**, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation including pornography, any act of physical exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or forced removal of organs etc.

### What are the constitutional & legislative provisions related to Trafficking in India?

1. Trafficking in Human Beings or Persons is prohibited under the Constitution of India under **Article 23 (1)**.
2. The **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA)** is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.
3. **Criminal Law (amendment) Act 2013** has come into force wherein **Section 370 of the Indian Penal Code has been substituted with Section 370 and 370A IPC** which provide for comprehensive measures to counter the menace of human trafficking.

### Mekedatu dam project:

The Centre has given its assurance that Karnataka will not be allowed to carry out any construction on [the Mekedatu dam project](#) on the Cauvery river until its Detailed Project Report (DPR) is approved by **the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)**.



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**Background:** Also, there are differences between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the proposed project.

**Where is it located?** Mekedatu, meaning **goat's leap**, is a deep gorge **situated at the confluence of the rivers Cauvery and its tributary Arkavathi.**

**Issues surrounding Mekedatu project:**

The project aims **to store and supply water for drinking purposes for the Bengaluru city.** Around **400 megawatts (MW) of power** is also proposed to be generated through the project.

However, **Tamil Nadu** objected saying that the project would affect the flow of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu also argues that **the project is against the final order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT)** in which the SC held that no state can claim exclusive ownership or assert rights to deprive other states of the waters of inter-state rivers.

## What is Israeli spyware Pegasus?

The continued use of spyware Pegasus, which an Israeli company sells to governments worldwide, has been confirmed with fresh reports. Like the phones it targets, Pegasus has been apparently updated and now comes with new surveillance capabilities.

**What is Pegasus?**

It is a spyware tool developed by an Israeli firm, the NSO Group.

Spyware spy on people through their phones.

- Pegasus works by sending an exploit link, and if the target user clicks on the link, the malware or the code that allows the surveillance is installed on the user's phone.
- Once Pegasus is installed, the attacker has complete access to the target user's phone.

**What can Pegasus do?**

- Pegasus can “send back the target's private data, including passwords, contact lists, calendar events, text messages, and live voice calls from popular mobile messaging apps”.
- The target's phone camera and microphone can be turned on to capture all activity in the phone's vicinity, expanding the scope of the surveillance.