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Chandrayaan-2 mission

- India is aiming to be the 4th country to land on the lunar surface after the USA, Russia and China.
- ISRO will launch Chandrayaan-2, its second spacecraft to the moon on July 15, 2019.
- **Chandrayaan-1** was designed to just orbit the Moon and make observations, while **Chandrayaan-2** is created to land on the Moon.
- This mission is aimed at landing a rover near the **unexplored South Pole**.
- According to ISRO, there is a possibility of the presence of water in permanently shadowed areas around it.
- South Pole region also has craters that are cold traps and contain a fossil record of the early Solar System.
- Chandrayaan 2, has three important components — the Orbiter, the Lander 'Vikram', and Rover 'Pragyan'.
- The Chandrayaan will be tucked into the **GSLV Mk-III** rocket.
- It is also called as '**Baahubali**', the country's heaviest and most powerful rocket to date.
- It is a three-stage heavy-lift launch vehicle developed by ISRO.
- The vehicle has two solid strap-ons, a core liquid booster and a cryogenic upper stage.
- This mission will help us to better understand the origin and evolution of the moon.
- Studies of lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, and signatures of water ice are the prime objectives.
- The orbiter has 8 instruments fitted into it and 7 of them are India's.
- NASA has one payload onboard called the Laser Retroreflector Array (LRA).
- The '**Terrain Mapping Camera-2**' (TMC-2) will map the lunar surface and help to prepare 3D maps of it.
- The '**Miniature Synthetic Aperture Radar**' (Mini SAR) will also map the surface of water-ice in the South Pole and thickness of the lunar dust on the surface.
- The '**Dual Frequency Radio Science**' (DFRS) will study the density of the

electrons in the moon's ionosphere.

- The orbiter has a high-resolution camera (**OHRC**) that ensures that the lander makes a safe touchdown on the lunar surface by taking 3D images of the landing site.
- The '**Solar X-ray Monitor**' (**XSM**) measures the intensity of the solar rays and the outer most part of the atmosphere or its corona.
- **CLASS** (Chandrayaan 2 Large Area Soft X-ray Spectrometer) measures the light absorbed by the Moon and will check for different metals that are present in its spectrum.
- Thermo-physical property of the lunar surface and seismic activities will also be measured.
- The orbiter will continue to orbit the Moon for a year, at an altitude of 100 kilometres.
- The Rover which is 6-wheeled, AI-powered and the Lander are designed to work for only 14 days (1 lunar day).

Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)

- It is a fee charged by a bank to a merchant for payment processing services from customers on debit and credit card transactions.
- It is also referred to as the '**Transaction Discount Rate**' or TDR.
- To give a push to digital payments adoption, government has proposed no charge or merchant discount rate for companies with over Rs 50 cr turnover accepting payments digitally
- The MDR will instead be borne by supporting banks and the Reserve Bank of India.
- Necessary amendments are being made in the Income Tax Act and the Payments and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 to give effect to these provisions.
- Contrary to public perception, the MDR has not been made zero.
- The FM's decision has just shifted its incidence on to the RBI and banks.
- So many payments providers apprehend that the banks will find a way of passing on the costs to them.
- In turn, this will negatively impact the health of a sector that needs nurturing.

Great Indian bustard

- The Environment Ministry initiated a project to save the 'Great Indian bustard'.
- With just 130 great Indian bustards left in the country, this project focuses on their conservation and protection.
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

- Through 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', government provides funds to states & Union Territories under the component 'Species Recovery Programme'.
- The fund is for conservation and protection of 21 critically endangered species, including the Great Indian Bustard.
- The ministry has also initiated 'Habitat Improvement and Conservation Breeding of Great Indian Bustard' - An Integrated Approach.
- The important objective of this is to, build up captive population of great Indian bustard and to release the chicks in the wild for increasing the population.
- Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra are the important range states involved in this programme.
- Currently, there are two centres for breeding and hatching, in Jaisalmer and in Kota, both in Rajasthan.
- **Key Facts** about Great Indian bustard,
 - i. **Schedule I** of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
 - ii. **Appendix I** of CITES
 - iii. **Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List
 - iv. **Habitat** - Found in the Indian-subcontinent
- **Threats** -
 1. Agriculture & aquaculture
 2. Energy production & mining
 3. Transportation & service corridors
 4. Human intrusions & disturbance
 5. Invasive and other problematic species and diseases
- However, the government does not recognise noise pollution as a cause of danger to the bird.

LaQshya

- "LaQshya" (Labour room Quality improvement Initiative) is to improve quality of care in labour room and maternity operation theatres in public health facilities.
- It's under the 'Ministry of Health and Family Welfare'.
- It aims to give qualitative care to the pregnant mother in the Labour Room to minimize the risks associated with childbirth.
- **Objectives**-
 1. To reduce maternal and newborn mortality & morbidity due to hemorrhage, retained placenta, preterm, obstructed labour, newborn

- sepsis, etc.
2. To improve Quality of care during the delivery and immediate post-partum care, stabilization of complications and ensure timely referrals, and enable an effective two-way follow-up system.
 3. To enhance satisfaction of beneficiaries visiting the health facilities and provide Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) to all pregnant women attending the public health facilities.
- The healthcare facilities identified for the implementation of LaQshya program are -
 - I. Government medical college hospitals.
 - II. District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities.
 - III. Designated FRUs and high case load CHCs with over 100 deliveries/month (60 in hills and desert areas)
 - It also plans to conduct quality certification of labour rooms and provide facilities to achieve the outlined targets.

Source: Indian Express, PIB, The Hindu



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