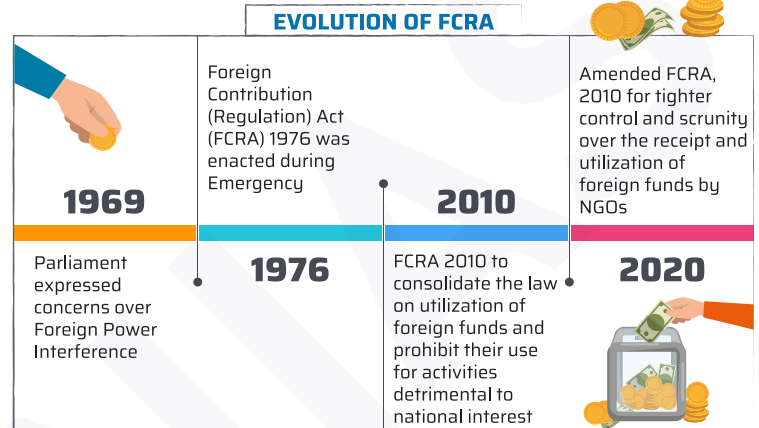


NEWS TODAY

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Extends the Validity of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act Registration of NGOs till June 30

- Validity extended of all FCRA registered NGOs whose renewal applications are still under consideration and whose validity expires before 30 June.
- **Key Provisions of FCRA**
 - ⊕ **Registration:** NGOs that want to receive foreign donations must register with the MHA. Registration is **valid for 5 years** and can be applied for **renewal**.
 - ◆ FCRA registrations are granted to individuals or associations with definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, and social programs.
 - ⊕ **Prohibited:** A candidate for election, editor or publisher of a newspaper, judges, government servants, etc are prohibited from receiving foreign donations.
 - ⊕ **Utilization of funds:** Organizations that receive foreign donations must use them for the purposes they were received and by the Act's regulations.
 - ⊕ **Reporting:** They are also required to file annual returns, and they must not transfer the funds to another NGO.
- **Significance of FCRA**
 - ⊕ **FCRA regulates foreign donations** and ensures that such contributions do not adversely affect internal security.
 - ⊕ **Streamline the process for NGOs and other organizations** to register and receive foreign donations.
 - ⊕ Ensure that foreign contribution is received from **legitimate sources** and **utilized for legitimate purposes** by any person.



Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) organises closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM)

- The event highlighted **the importance of millets** in achieving sustainable development goals and its emergence as a 'Global Superfood'.
 - ⊕ India had proposed to the United Nations to **declare the year 2023 as IYM**.
- **About Millets**
 - ⊕ Indian millets are a **group of nutritiously rich, drought tolerant** and mostly grown in the **arid and semi-arid regions of India**
 - ⊕ **Also known as "coarse cereals" or "cereals of the poor"** and are **nutritionally superior to wheat and rice**
 - ⊕ **India is the largest producer of millet, followed by Niger and China**
- **Significance**
 - ⊕ Highly adaptive to a **wide range of ecological conditions**
 - ⊕ **Millets has low Glycemic Index (GI)** thus helpful in the **prevention of diabetes**
 - ⊕ Good sources of minerals like **iron, zinc, and calcium** and are **gluten-free**
- **India's initiatives to promote millets**
 - ⊕ Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has implemented the **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry for Millet-based products (PLISMBP)** during 2022-23 to 2026-27.
 - ⊕ Millets are included under the **Poshan Abhiyan** of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
 - ⊕ An **Export Promotion Forum** dedicated to **promotion in the international market** has been set up.



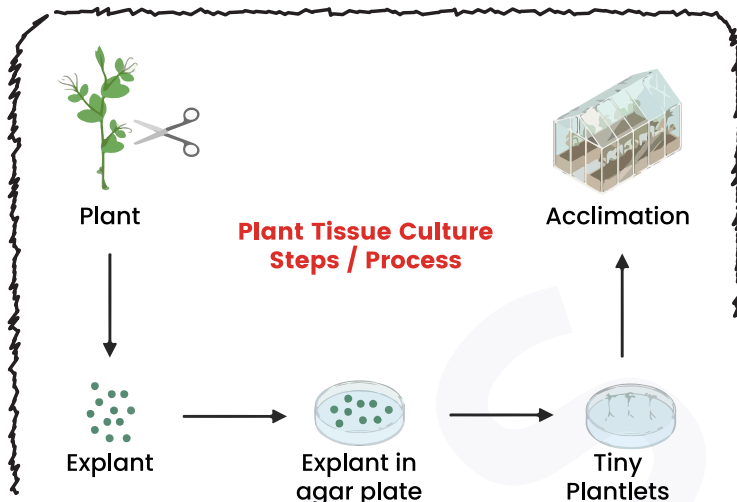
About FAO


Rome, Italy

- **Genesis:** Established in 1945
- It is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- **Members:** 195 members - 194 countries (Including India) and the European Union
- **Reports released by FAO**
 - The Impact of Disasters on Agriculture and Food Security
 - State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) Report 2023

Tissue culture lab to generate saplings of threatened or rare native Delhi trees

- It will be set up at the **Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The **species identified** are Hingot, Khair, Bistendu, Siri, Palash etc
- **About Plant Tissue Culture (PTC)**
 - ⊕ It refers to the cultivation of **undifferentiated plant cells, tissues or organs on synthetic media** under an aseptic environment and suitable controlled physical conditions.
 - ⊕ It is based upon the totipotency characteristic of a plant cell.
 - ◆ Totipotency is the ability of a vegetative cell to **divide and differentiate into any type of specialized cell**.
- **Types of PTC**
 - ⊕ **Organ Culture:** any part of the plant (root, stem, leaf, and flower) is used as an explant for culturing purposes.
 - ⊕ **Seed culture:** the explants are obtained from the plants that are already cultured and grown under in vitro conditions.
 - ⊕ **Embryo culture:** the embryo is isolated and cultured under in vitro conditions.
- **Applications of PTC:** to obtain disease-free plants, to obtain rapid multiplication of plants, Large-scale fabrication of artificial seeds, etc
- **Challenges with PTC:** Inadequate Infrastructure, lack of skilled manpower, lack of scientific knowledge about biotechnological principles, etc.



100 years of Vaikom Satyagraha

- It started in the princely state of **Travancore (now in Kerala)**, and marked a pivotal moment in temple entry movements across India.
- It was against the **exclusion of "lower caste" Hindus from accessing** the Vaikom Mahadeva temple and its surrounding roads.
- **Background:**
 - ⊕ The issue was **first highlighted** by Ezhava leader **T.K. Madhavan** in a 1917 editorial in his paper, **Deshabhimani**.
 - ⊕ In the **1923 Indian National Congress session in Kakinada**, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee passed a resolution to prioritize the anti-untouchability cause.
- **Course of Satyagraha:**
 - ⊕ The movement **advocated non-violent protests** to ensure equal access to public spaces for all castes.
 - ⊕ **Groups of three Satyagrahis**, representing different communities (Nair, Ezhava, and Pulaya), would peacefully approach the restricted areas.
 - ◆ The first group was led by **Kesava Menon**.
 - ⊕ **Key leaders:** T.K. Madhavan, K. Kelappan (also known as Kerala Gandhi), K.P. Kesava Menon, and George Joseph.
 - ⊕ **Mahatma Gandhi, C. Rajagopalachari, and E.V. Ramasamy (Periyar)** visited Vaikom to express their support.
- **Impact:**
 - ⊕ It **persisted for 603 days**, fostering **unity across caste lines**.
 - ⊕ **Three of the four roads** encircling the temples were **opened to all in 1925**.
 - ⊕ In **1936**, the Maharaja of Travancore issued a **Temple Entry Proclamation**, granting access to marginalized castes.

Other temple entry movements

- **Kalaram Temple Entry Movement (1930)** by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.
- **The Guruvayur satyagraha (1931)** by K. Kelappan.

Many countries yet to fully implement steps to prevent the misuse of virtual assets, says FATF

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had in February 2023 agreed on a **road map to strengthen the implementation of its standards on virtual assets and VASPs**.
- ⊕ Virtual assets (crypto assets) refer to **any digital representation of value that can be digitally traded, transferred or used for payment**. It **does not include digital representation of fiat currencies**.
- ⊕ Virtual assets are **largely unregulated**, and also have the potential to become worthless and are vulnerable to cyberattacks and scams.

FATF Standards to Virtual Assets

Countries	Virtual Assets service providers
need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understand the money laundering and terrorist financing risks the sector faces ➤ Licence or register virtual asset service providers ➤ Supervise the sector, in the same way it supervises other financial institutions 	need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement the same preventive measures as financial institutions, including customer due diligence, record keeping and reporting of suspicious transactions ➤ Obtain, hold and security transmit originator and beneficiary information when making transfers

- India, a member country, has taken several initiatives
 - ⊕ **conducted a supervisory inspection or included VASPs** in its current inspection plan;
 - ⊕ has taken **enforcement action or other supervisory action** against VASPs;
 - ⊕ has passed or **enacted the travel rule for VASPs**.

Drought Posing Risk to the Cardamom Sector

► About Cardamom

- ⊕ It is a monotype genus of plants found in the **tropical Indo-Malaya region** (native to the evergreen rainy forests of the Western Ghats).
- ⊕ **Mainly cultivated** in Kerala (58%), Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.
- ⊕ **Required climatic conditions:**
 - ◆ **Rainfall:** 1500-2500 mm.
 - ◆ **Temperature:** 15°C to 35°C .
 - ◆ **Height:** 600-1200 m above mean sea level.
 - ◆ **Soil:** acidic forest loamy soils.

► Challenges for cultivating cardamom

- ⊕ Highly climate-sensitive and location-specific crop.
- ⊕ The scope for area expansion is limited as grows at high altitudes.
- ⊕ High pest and disease incidence.

► According to the World Bank, India was the **second largest exporter of cardamom** in 2021, after Guatemala.

► Government initiatives to support Cardamom

- ⊕ Spices Board is encouraging farmers to **expand in non-traditional areas.**
 - ◆ The Board has also **formulated standard operational procedures** covering all aspects from production to marketing.
- ⊕ Development of infrastructure for **common processing facilities in Spices Parks, adoption of Hi-Tech in spice processing,** etc to boost export.

About Spice Board of India

- **Genesis:** constituted in 1987 under the Spices Board Act 1986.
- **Headquarter:** Cochin, Kerala
- **Role:** Autonomous body responsible for the export promotion of the 52 scheduled spices and development of Cardamom.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Also in News



Zero FIR

- A Zero FIR case filed against a former minister for allegedly making objectionable comments against the Telangana Chief Minister.
- **About Zero FIR**
 - ⊕ It refers to an FIR that is registered **irrespective of the area where the offense is committed.**
 - ⊕ Once registered, it is transferred to the **appropriate police station for investigation.**
 - ⊕ **No regular FIR number is provided initially,** the relevant police station registers a new FIR for investigation.
 - ⊕ The provision for Zero FIR is **under Section 154 of the CrPC 1973, based on the Justice Verma Committee's recommendation** established after the 2012 Nirbhaya case.



Extended Fund Facility

- The IMF Board increased the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement to \$8 billion for Egypt.
- **About EFF**
 - ⊕ It provides **financial assistance to countries facing serious medium-term balance of payments problems** because of structural weaknesses.
 - ⊕ It offers **longer program engagement** and a **longer repayment period.**
 - ⊕ EFF **Support comprehensive programs** with a focus on policies needed to correct structural imbalances over an extended period.
 - ⊕ All member countries facing actual or potential external financing needs are eligible under it.



International Network for Terrestrial Research and Monitoring in the Arctic (INTERACT)

➤ **About INTERACT**

- ⊕ It is a project of large **network of research stations** focused on the Arctic and surrounding regions.
 - ◆ Research stations spread across various countries including northern Europe, Russia, US, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Scotland.
- ⊕ The project is **funded by the EU**.
- ⊕ **Objective:** Build capacity for **identifying, understanding, predicting and responding to diverse environmental changes** throughout the wide environmental and land-use envelopes of the Arctic.



Butterfly cicada

➤ **A new species of cicada discovered in Meghalaya**

➤ **About Cicada**

- ⊕ It belongs to **genus Becquartina** and marks the **first-ever record of this genus in the country**
- ⊕ The species in this genus are often called **"Butterfly cicadas"** because of their **colourful wings**.
- ⊕ The **present discovery extends the distributional range of the genus Becquartina from Southeast Asia into Northeast India**.
 - ◆ It **increases the total number of known Becquartina species to seven**.



Hypersonic Missile

➤ Russian President confirmed that the 3M22 Zircon hypersonic missile had been used in battle.

➤ **Hypersonic Missile**

- ⊕ Missile that can **travel at Mach-5 or faster, or at least five times the speed of sound**.
- ⊕ They fly at **lower altitudes than ballistic missiles**, making them harder to track.
- ⊕ Their **extreme speed and manoeuvrability make them very difficult to defend against**.
- ⊕ **Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGV) and Hypersonic Cruise Missiles** are two types of hypersonic weapons systems.



Swell Waves

➤ The Swell Waves **inundated coastal Areas of Kerala**.

➤ **About Swell waves**

- ⊕ It is a series of **mechanical or surface gravity waves generated by distant weather systems** that propagate thousands of miles across oceans and seas.
- ⊕ These waves can propagate in directions that **differ from the direction of the wind**.
- ⊕ It takes place without any **noticeable advance change in local winds or coastal environment**
- ⊕ They are locally known as **Kallakadal**.



Braille signage

➤ The Election Department of Puducherry will provide **Braille signage in English and Tamil in Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** in all 967 polling stations.

- ⊕ It will enable **visually impaired or blind voters to participate independently** and confidentially in the electoral process.
- ⊕ However, if the elector desires, he/she will still be **allowed to bring a companion as provided in Rule 49N of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961**.
- ⊕ Braille signage is a type of sign that includes braille, a **tactile writing system used by blind and visually impaired people**.



Cyber Slavery

➤ Over 3 months, the **Indian Embassy rescued 75 Indians** trapped in cyber-slavery in Cambodia.

➤ **About Cyber-slavery**

- ⊕ It is a **modern form of human trafficking** that exploits people in the digital world.
- ⊕ Victims are lured with employment opportunities and forced to **work as online scammers**.
- ⊕ It is emerging as a form of **organized crime of unprecedented severity and scale**.

Personality in News



Shyamji Krishna Varma (1857- 1930)

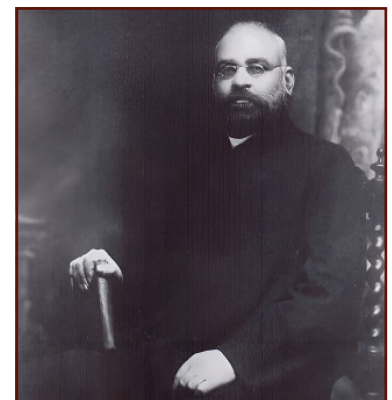
➤ Prime Minister paid homage to revolutionary freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma on his **Punya Tithi**.

➤ **About Shyamji Krishna Varma (1857- 1930)**

➤ **Contributions**

- ⊕ Born in modern-day Gujarat, he founded **Indian Home Rule Society, India House in London** to carry out anti-British activities.
- ⊕ Propagated the cause of India's independence through his writings in his publication journal called **"Indian Sociologist"**.
- ⊕ In 1905, he was barred from practicing law by Inner Temple (a professional associations for barristers in London) following charges of sedition for writing against colonial government.

➤ **Values:** patriotism and selfless service.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI