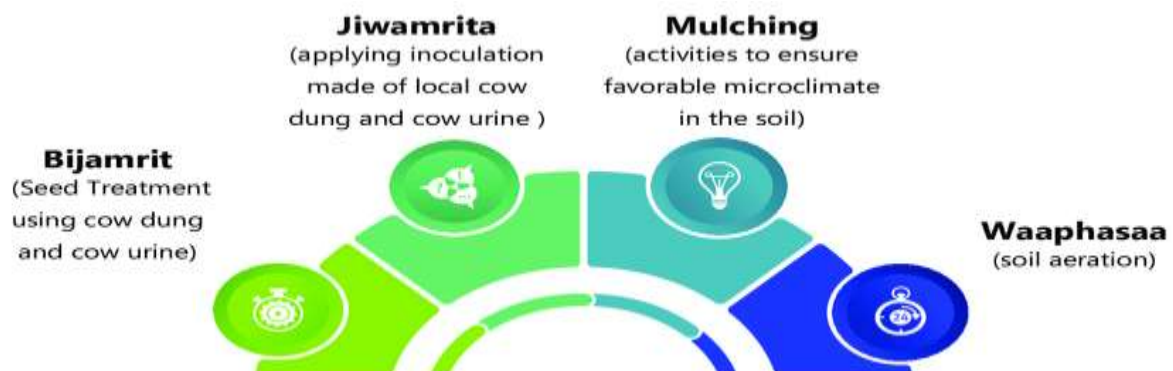


Current Affairs of the Day

Time to correct wrong farming practices before problems worsen, says PM

1. It is time to correct wrong farming practises before the problems of the agriculture sector become even worse, according to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
2. Virtually addressing a conclave on natural farming in Gujarat, Mr Modi urged farmers to replace the chemical fertilizers and pesticides that spurred the Green Revolution with concoctions made with the dung and urine of indigenous cows, advocating a “completely science-based” shift from chemistry labs to nature’s laboratory.
3. He said small and marginal farmers, who owned less than two acres and made up 80% of the country’s farming population, stood to benefit the most from natural farming techniques as they were currently forced to spend large sums on expensive fertilizers.
4. Calling for a mass movement to promote natural farming, he said reducing the import bill on artificial fertilizers was an essential step to achieve the goal of an Atmanirbhar Bharat or a self-reliant India.
5. This comes at a time when farmers in parts of the country have been complaining of fertilizer shortages during the critical winter sowing season.
6. While it is still awaiting any large-scale scientific study to assess the long-term impact of such techniques on productivity, farm income and food security, the Ministry says the experience of lakhs of farmers has showcased the method’s success.

CASE STUDY: ZBNF





THE HINDU
17.12.2021 Friday



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FOUR PILLARS OF ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING

FIRST WHEEL 1	Bijamrita (Seed treatment)	
SECOND WHEEL 2	Jiwamrita (No fertilizers No Pesticides)	
THIRD WHEEL 3	Mulching (Soil, straw & live)	
THIRD WHEEL 4	Waaphasa (Soil moisture)	

States Implementing Zero Budget Natural Farming

HARYANA

80 acres in Gurukul district Kurukshetra

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Across the state under the "Prakritik Kheti Khushal Kisan" scheme

PUNJAB

1,000 acres

ANDHRA PRADESH

Across all 13 districts, covering 5.01 lakh acres

KARNATAKA

Implemented in 10 agro-climatic zones

KERALA

Plans to take-up ZBNF

Source: Answer to a question in Lok Sabha

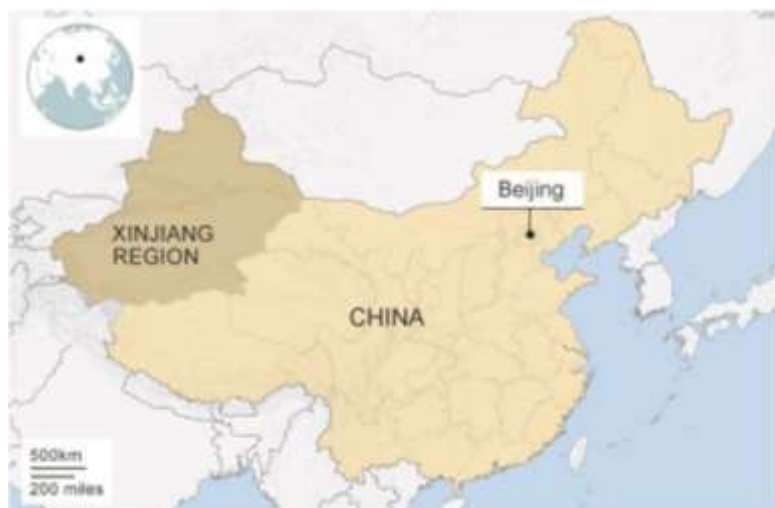
Cabinet nod to raise girls' marriage age to 21

1. The Centre has decided to raise the legal age of marriage of women from 18 to 21 years and is likely to move legislative amendments in the ongoing winter session of Parliament.
2. The Union Cabinet cleared a proposal to bring uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women, adding that a Bill to amend the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006, will be introduced during this session.
3. The proposed Bill may also contain amendments to various personal laws relating to the marriage of various communities to ensure a uniform age of marriage.



The U.S. imposes sanctions against China over the abuse of Uighurs

1. The Biden administration said it is imposing new sanctions on several Chinese biotech and surveillance companies and government entities for actions in Xinjiang province, the latest step against Beijing over human rights abuses of Uighur Muslims.



2. The Commerce Department is targeting China's Academy of Military Medical Sciences and its 11 research institutes that focus on using biotechnology to support the Chinese military.



THE HINDU
17.12.2021 Friday



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3. The move will bar American companies from selling components to entities without a licence.
4. The U.S. intelligence has established that Beijing has set up a high tech surveillance system across Xinjiang that uses biometric facial recognition and has collected DNA samples from all residents, aged 12 to 65.
5. Meanwhile, the Senate gave approval to a Bill barring all imports from China's Xinjiang region unless businesses can prove they were produced without forced labour.



Record 488 journalists jailed, 46 killed in 2021, says RSF

1. There are currently 488 media professionals imprisoned around the world, the highest number since Reporters Without Borders began counting more than 25 years ago, the NGO announced.
2. By contrast, the number killed this year — 46 — was the lowest since it began issuing annual tallies, due to the relative stabilisation of conflicts in West Asia.



THE HINDU
17.12.2021 Friday



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3. China once again has the highest number of imprisoned journalists at 127, said RSF. The most dangerous countries were once again Mexico and Afghanistan, with seven and six journalist deaths respectively, followed by Yemen and India with four apiece.
4. The number of detained scribes has risen by some 20% over the past year, largely due to crackdowns on the media in Myanmar, Belarus and Hong Kong. RSF said it had also never seen so many female journalists detained, with the overall number of 60 representing a third more than 2020.

MCQs	<p>Q. Green Box, Blue Box, Amber Box is linked to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Carbon sequestration types b. Types of systems dealing with transboundary movement of hazardous chemicals c. Subsidy support systems to agriculture under WTO framework d. Types of Hydrogen energy
MAINS DAWP	<p>Q. Discuss the need for marriage age parity between boys and girls.</p>