

**10 MARCH 2019****OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT, 1923****Why in News?**

- Recently Attorney General KK Venugopal told the Supreme Court that the government could invoke the Official Secrets Acts against the The Hindu newspaper, which had published to the documents pertaining to the purchase of Rafale jets.

**About Official Secrets Act, 1923:**

- •The Official Secrets Act is a British era legislation enacted in 1923 to suppress spying of the British Government.
- •This act clearly states that actions which involve helping an enemy state against India are strongly condemned.
- •It also states that one cannot approach, inspect, or even pass over a prohibited government site or area.
- •Punishments under the act range from three to fourteen years imprisonment.
- •This act is controversial to the modern RTI act, 2005.
- •In the clause 6 of OSA, information from any governmental office is considered official information, hence it can be used to override Right to Information Act, 2005 requests. This has drawn harsh criticism.
- •The Union Home Ministry in 2017 agreed to amend the OSA to make it more transparent and in line with the Right to Information Act, 2005.

**INDIAN SUNDERBANS****Why in News?**

- Recently Indian side of the Sunderbans has received the prestigious “Wetlands of International Importance” tag under the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands.

**About the development:**

- •This makes it the largest protected wetland in the country.
- •The Bangladesh part of the Sunderbans had received the Ramsar tag way back in 1992.
- •The state government believes the Ramsar tag will help promote the Sunderbans as an eco-tourism hotspot.
- •It is home to many rare and critically endangered species like the northern river terrapin, the Irrawaddy dolphin and fishing cat.

**INDIA COOLING ACTION PLAN****Why in News?**

- It was released by Union minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

**About the plan:**

The thrust of the India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP) is to look for

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synergies in actions for securing both environmental and socio-economic benefits.

The India Cooling Action seeks to

- (i) reduce cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25% by 2037-38
  - (ii) reduce refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by 2037-38
  - (iii) Reduce cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by 2037-38
  - (iv) recognize “cooling and related areas” as a thrust area of research under the national S&T Programme
  - (v) training and certification of 100,000 servicing sector technicians by 2022-23, synergizing with Skill India Mission.
- These actions will have significant climate benefits.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY RATINGS

### Why in News?

- The Ministry of Power has announced that two more electrical appliances microwave ovens and washing machines will now be assigned star ratings based on their energy efficiency metrics.
- Star Rating of Appliances provides a basic sense of how energy efficient each product is. Higher the rating, higher is the efficiency of the appliance. The rating of appliances in India is undertaken by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

### About Bureau of Energy Efficiency

- It is a statutory body set up under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency assists the government in developing policies and strategies with a thrust on self-regulation and market principles with the primary objective of reducing the energy intensity of the Indian economy.

## IT CORRIDOR IN CHINA

### Why in News?

- Recently India has launched its third IT corridor in China that will facilitate partnerships between Indian and Chinese companies.

### About the IT corridors:

- The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) entered into a partnership with China’s Xuzhou city from Jiangsu Province in China to help develop the IT corridor.
- The IT industry body has already launched such corridors at Dalian and Guiyang cities to cash in on the burgeoning Chinese IT industry market.
- The signing of the “China-India (Xuzhou) IT Corridor Project” is an important measure for the Indian software and service industry associations to enter the Chinese market and seize the development opportunity of the Huaihai Economic Zone”.

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## MARAYUR JAGGERY

### Why in News?

- The Marayoor jaggery, the traditional and handmade product from Idukki district, has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag from central government.

### About Geographical Indication Tag:

- GI tag is name or sign used on certain products which correspond to specific geographical location or origin.
- It is used for agricultural, natural and manufactured goods having special quality and established reputation.
- The purpose of GI tag enables stakeholders to authenticate their production while earning a premium and derive an improved livelihood.
- The registration of GI is valid for 10 years after which it needs to be renewed. Violation of GI tags is punishable offence under law.
- At international level, GI is governed by WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- In India, GI tag Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection Act), 1999 governs it.
- This Act is administered by Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks, who is also Registrar of Geographical Indications and is based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

## PRELIMS TIT BITS

### BELLE II

- It is a particle physics experiment designed to study the properties of the sub-atomic particles.
- Belle II is the successor to the Belle experiment, and is currently being commissioned at Japan.

### SOHAE FACILITY

- Sohae rocket launching facility is in North Korea.
- Earlier North Korean premier Kim Jong Un vowed to destroy this facility.
- However after the failure of 2nd round of talks between US President Donald Trump and North Korean Kim Jong Un in Vietnam capital Hanoi, it seems North Korea started renovating this site.

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