

## UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 29-06-2024

### European Council

*Prime Minister congratulates H.E Antonio Costa on being elected as President of the European Council recently.*

- The European Council is the European Union (EU) institution that defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union.
- It represents the highest level of political cooperation between EU countries.
- **Treaty of Maastricht** - Under the ***Treaty of Maastricht***, the European Council acquired a formal status and role to provide the impetus and general political guidelines for the EU.
- **Founded in** - 1974.
- **Headquarters** - Brussels, Belgium.
- **Members** - Heads of state or government of the ***27 EU member states***, the European Council President and the President of the European Commission.
- **Functions**
  - It decides on the EU's overall direction and political priorities but does not pass laws.
  - It deals with complex or sensitive issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels of intergovernmental cooperation.
  - It sets the EU's common foreign & security policy, taking into account EU strategic interests and defense implications.
  - It nominates and appoints candidates to certain high profile EU level roles, such as the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Commission.
- **Sessions** - The Council meets 4 times per year at least. It usually adopts 'conclusions' at its formal meetings. Conclusions set out the EU's position on key policy matters.
- The European Council mostly takes its decisions by consensus. This means that ***no member opposes*** the decision.
- However, in certain specific cases outlined in the EU treaties, it decides by taking a vote.

### References

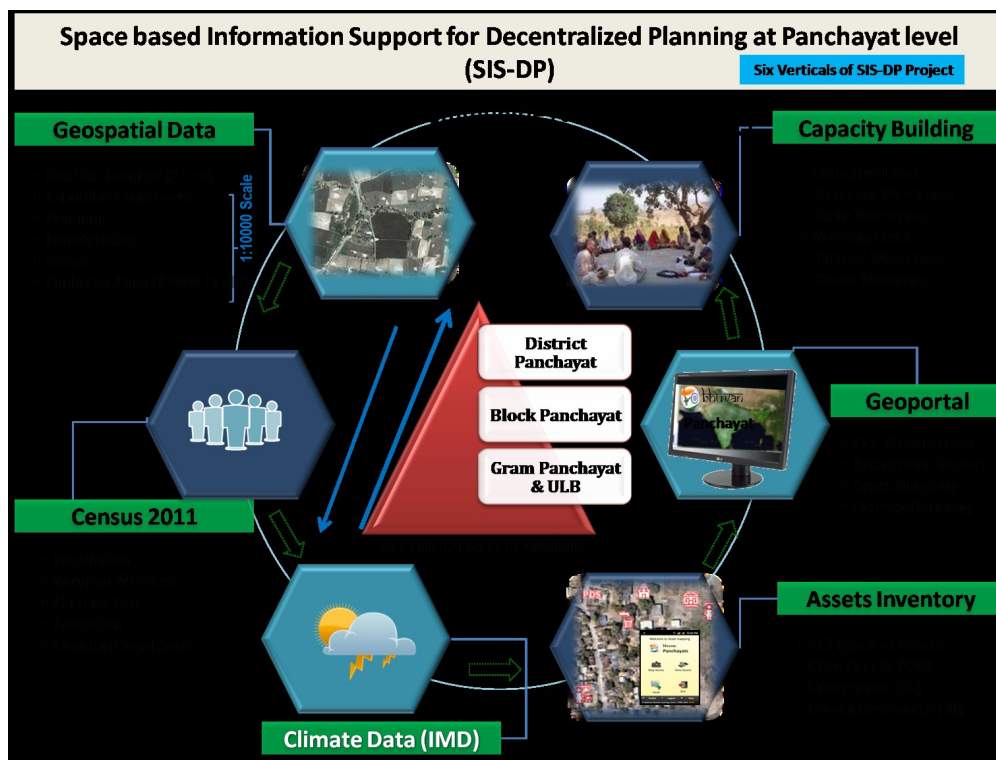
1. [Press Information Bureau | President of European Council](#)
2. [Consilium Europa | European Council](#)

### Bhuvan Panchayat portal & National Database for Emergency Management

*Union Minister launches 2 Geoportals, “Bhuvan Panchayat (4.0)” portal and “National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM 5.0)” recently.*

## Bhuvan Panchayat Portal (Space based Information Support for Decentralised Planning at Panchayat level (SIS-DP))

- It is a national initiative of preparing basic spatial layers useful in planning process at grass root levels.
- **Formulated by** - National Remote Sensing Centre, ISRO.
- **Implemented by** - In partnership with State Remote Sensing Application Centers in the country.
- **Aim** - Empowering Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the Stakeholders with Space-based Information Support for Decentralized Planning and Governance.
- The project's main deliverables include
  - **Satellite images** - 2.5 m resolution satellite images of the entire country.
  - **Thematic maps** - 1:10K scale thematic maps on natural resources and infrastructure, such as land cover and settlements.
  - **Resource inventories** - Inventories of resources like water sources, road networks, drainage, and rail networks.



- These deliverables are useful for planning, development, implementation, and monitoring activities at the Panchayat or Village level.
- The project also integrates data from stakeholder departments into the spatial layer in a GIS environment.

## National Database for Emergency Management

- It is to provide space-based inputs on natural disasters and aid in disaster risk reduction in India as well as neighboring countries.
- **Developed by** - National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), ISRO.
- **Ministry** - Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- NDEM acts as a geo-portal with the amalgamation of DSS tools and services of

disaster forecasting organisations with value addition.

- NDEM will also act as a ***Disaster Recovery and Data Provider node*** for the Integrated Control Room for Emergency Response (ICR-ER) being established by MHA, New Delhi.

## Reference

[Press Information Bureau | Bhuvan Panchayat portal and NDEM](#)

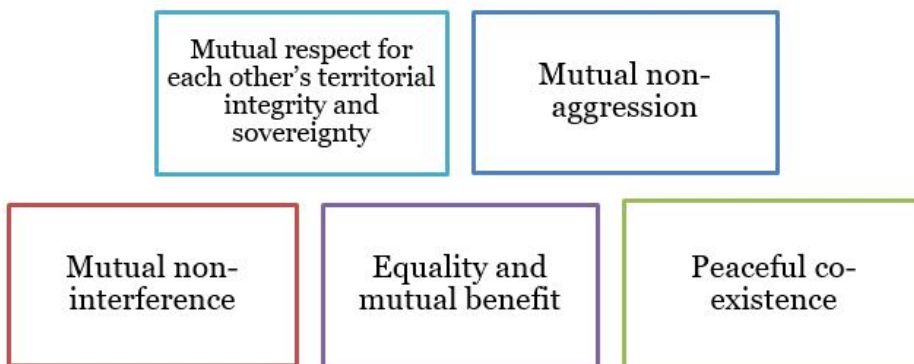
## Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence

*China is celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, first propounded in the Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954.*

- China calls the Five Principles is known in India as ***Panchsheel agreement.***
- The word Panchsheel traces its origin to the Buddhist concept of Pancasila.
  - **5 moral vows of Buddhism** - Abstinence from murder, theft, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxicants.

## Panchsheel - The Five Principles

- The Panchsheel Agreement, formally known as The Agreement on Trade and Intercourse with Tibet Region is signed between ***India and China.***
- **Signed on** - April 29, 1954.
- **5 principles**



- The agreement aimed to enhance trade and cooperation between the 2 countries, establishing each country's trade centres in major cities of the other, and laid out a framework for trade.
- The agreement also listed important religious pilgrimages, provisions for pilgrims, and acceptable routes and passes available to them.
- Importantly, India for the **1<sup>st</sup> time recognized Tibet** as the Tibet Region of China.
- **Badung Conference** - In 1955, the Five Principles would feature prominently at the first African-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia.
- 29 countries of Asia and Africa took part in the Bandung Conference and signed a 10-

point declaration that co-opted the Five Principles or Panchsheel.

- The Bandung Conference is the precursor to the ***Non-Aligned Movement***.

*The Non-Aligned Movement is a forum of 120 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.*

## Reference

[The Indian Express | China's Five Principles of foreign policy](#)

## **Steriphopus wangala**

*A newly discovered Spider named after Wangala festival of Meghalaya recently.*

- The new spider species discovered recently in West Garo Hills district of ***Meghalaya***.
- **Family** - Palp-Footed Spider.
  - Palp-footed spiders, also known as Palpimanidae, are a family of ground-dwelling spiders with large front legs and distinctive features useful for field identification.
- **Genus** - Steriphopus
  - This discovery added the total number of species in this genus to 5 globally, with 2 found in India.



**Wangala Festival**



- Wangala, also known as the "Festival of the Hundred Drums", is a harvest festival celebrated in ***India and Bangladesh***.
- The Wangala Festival marks the end of the agricultural season.
- It is celebrated by the ***Garo tribe*** that honors Saljong, the Sun-God of fertility.
- The highlight of Wangala is the rhythmic beat of a hundred drums. The main soundtrack is provided by the ***Nagra drum***.
- These drums are a big part of Garo culture, and they are traditionally made out of tree trunks.
- The ***Wangala dance*** is the centrepiece of the festival. The dance is characterised by dancers moving to the rhythmic drumming.



## References

1. [East Mojo | Steriphopus wangala](#)
2. [Meghalaya Government | Wangala Festival](#)

## Motor Neuron Diseases (MNDs)

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual conference on MND 'Awareness, Care and Management' at Nimhans held recently in Bengaluru, stated that symptomatic and supportive treatments help manage the condition better.*

- MNDs are a group of progressive neurological diseases that destroy ***motor neurons***, cells controlling skeletal muscular activities like walking, breathing, speaking and swallowing.
- In MND, these neurons degenerate and die. This causes the muscles to become weaker and weaker. This eventually leads to ***paralysis***.
- The MND disease group includes:

- Lou Gehrig's disease, also known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Progressive muscular atrophy (PMA)
- Progressive bulbar palsy (PBP)
- Primary lateral sclerosis (PLS)
- Kennedy's disease, also known as spinal and bulbar muscular atrophy (SBMA)
- **Affecting age** - MND is an **uncommon** disease. The average age that people are diagnosed with MND is **58 years**.
- **Symptoms** - Usually start on one side of the body before spreading that include
  - Weakness in their hands and grip,
  - Slurred speech
  - Weakness in their legs, and a tendency to trip
  - Weakness of their shoulder, making lifting difficult
  - Cramps and muscles twitching
- **Treatment** - There's **no cure** for motor neurone disease, but treatment can help reduce the impact the symptoms have on your life.

## Reference

[Deccan Herald | Motor Neuron Disease](#)

