15.8.23

1) Remittances to India by NRIs: As per the latest data from the Ministry of Finance, remittances to India by NRIs grew by 26% in FY23.

* India continues to be the top recipient of remittances globally for the last several years.
* Remittances usually refer to payments made from one person to another person, with both individuals located in different countries.
* Top sources of inward remittances to India: US, UAE, UK, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia.
* Significance:
  + Major boost to the current account.
  + More stable and tend to be counter-cyclical to counter the financial crisis

2) National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS): Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MoSDE) launched Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in NAPS.

* NAPS was launched in 2016 (MoSDE) to promote Apprenticeship in the country by providing financial incentives, technology and advocacy support.
* Components of NAPS are:
  + 25% of prescribed stipend (up to Rs. 1500/- pm) per apprentice is reimbursed to establishments (especially MSMEs).
  + Sharing of basic training cost up to Rs. 7,500 per apprentice.
* Note: National Apprenticeship Training Scheme NATS is implemented by MoE

3) National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC): NCERT has established a 19-member NSTC to shape the curriculum and educational materials for students in grades 3rd to 12th.

* About NSTC
  + It is tasked to ensure alignment of the school syllabus, textbooks, teaching, and learning materials with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF).
  + It will be assisted by ‘Curricular Area Groups’ (CAGs) consisting of subject experts to develop textbooks
* Earlier NCF for School Education, 2023, recommended major restructuring of school education viz.
  + board examination twice a year, semester system for class 12,
  + freedom for students to choose interdisciplinary subjects.

4) Metagenome sequencing: Metagenomic sequencing is a method of analyzing the genetic material of microbial communities directly from environmental or clinical samples.

* Use
  + It can reveal microorganisms’ diversity, interactions, and functions in their original habitats.
  + help detect pathogens and monitor viral outbreaks.
  + Assist in ruling out viral infections in some individuals and link their symptoms to pesticide poisoning instead

Places in news:

1) Nagzira tiger reserve:

* Location: Bhandara and Gondia districts of Maharashtra.
* It is a part of Navegaon Nagzira National Park.
* Flora: Dry deciduous, Moist deciduous and Bamboo forests. Teak, bamboo, tendu, and mahua (dominant tree species)
* Fauna: Tigers, leopards, sloth bears, gaur (Indian bison), sambar deer, spotted deer, wild boar, and langur.
* Water Bodies: Navegaon Lake, Nagzira Lake, and the Itiadoh Dam

2) Gwadar Port: Gwadar Port is situated in southwestern Balochistan province of Pakistan.

* It is an important part of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
* Gwadar port is located on Arabian Sea, close to the entrance of the Persian Gulf