Prelim Bits 29-07-2019

Iconic Tourist Sites

- Union government is planning to develop 17 “Iconic Tourist Sites” in the country into world-class tourist destinations and to serve as a model for other tourism sites.
- The initiative is aimed at enhancing India’s soft power.
- The Sites which are planned to be developed under this plan are

1. Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh),
2. Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra),
3. Humayun’s Tomb, Red Fort and Qutub Minar (Delhi),
4. Colva (Goa),
5. Amer Fort (Rajasthan),
6. Somnath and Dholavira (Gujarat),
7. Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh),
8. Hampi (Karnataka),
9. Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu),
10. Kaziranga (Assam),
11. Kumarakom (Kerala)
12. Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

- Under this plan government is looking at overall development from the tourism point of view in and around these sites which includes roads and infrastructure, hotels and lodges, connectivity and access.
- As such, several ministries, from Railways to Civil Aviation, will be involved, while the Tourism Ministry will be the nodal agency.

Adopt a Heritage Scheme (Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan)

- In 2017, Ministry of Tourism launched the “Adopt a Heritage:” a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and State/UTs Governments.
- The Project aims to develop synergy among all partners to effectively promote “responsible tourism”.
- It aims to involve public sector companies, private sector companies and corporate citizens/individuals to take up the responsibility for making our

heritage and tourism more sustainable through development, operation and maintenance of world-class tourist infrastructure and amenities at ASI/ State heritage sites and other important tourist sites in India.

- They would become 'Monument Mitras' through the innovative concept of "Vision Bidding", where the agency with the best vision for the heritage site will be given an opportunity to associate pride with their CSR activities.
- They would also get limited visibility on the premises and the Incredible India website.
- The project envisages limited 'access' to non-core areas and 'no handing over of monuments' are involved.
- So far the Red Fort and Gandikota Fort in Andhra Pradesh was adopted by the Dalmia Group, while the Qutub Minar and the Ajanta Caves were adopted by Yatra Online.

Cryptocurrency

- A virtual currency is a digital representation of value that can be digitally traded and functions as

1. A medium of exchange.
2. A unit of account
3. A store of value.

- But, unlike fiat currency like the rupee, it is not legal tender and does not have the backing of a government.
- A cryptocurrency is a subset of virtual currencies, and is decentralized, and protected by cryptography.

Distributed Ledger Technologies

- Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) refers to technologies that involve the use of independent computers (also referred to as nodes) to record, share, and synchronize transactions in their respective electronic ledgers.
- Keeping such distributed ledgers obviates the need for keeping the data centralized, as is done in a traditional ledger and all virtual currencies use DLT.

- A transaction under DLT essentially refers to the transfer of "value" from one to another.
- This "value" could be any record of ownership of assets money, security, land titles or the record of specific information such as information about one's identity or health information, etc. That is why DLT has applications

in several fields.

- Blockchain is a specific kind of DLT that came to prominence after Bitcoin, a cryptocurrency that used it, became popular.
- Cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin use codes to encrypt transactions and stack them up in blocks, creating Block chains.
- It is the use of codes that differentiates cryptocurrencies from other virtual currencies.
- RBI Act has the enabling provisions to permit the central government to approve a “Central Bank Digital Currency” (CBDC) as legal tender in India.

Deepfakes

- Deepfake is a combination of “deep learning” and “fake”.
- It is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) software that superimposes a digital composite on to an existing video (or audio).
- Deep fake seemingly creates real fakes and deceptive videos, which makes differentiating fake from real even more cumbersome and complex.
- Fake celebrity footages, propaganda videos or revenge porn are all outcomes of the deep fake technology.

Source: Indian Express, PIB, IDSA

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