News: **Atal Tinkering Lab Marathon** is being organised by the **Atal Tinkering Labs of Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the NITI Aayog** in an effort to identify India’s best student innovators.

**Prelims focus:** AIM, ATL and their important features.

**Mains focus:** Various initiatives to promote innovation and their significance.

**Key facts:**

- It is a six-month-long nationwide challenge across six different thematic areas, namely, clean energy, water resources, waste management, healthcare, smart mobility and agriculture-tech.
- This is open to all students under the age of 18 years.
- Students of top 30 innovations will be trained on business and entrepreneurship skills, including intellectual property, effective communication, making an elevator pitch, etc.

**About ATLs?**

With a vision to **‘Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators’**, Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.

**Objective:** The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

**Financial Support:** AIM will provide grant-in-aid that includes a one-time establishment cost of Rs. 10 lakh and operational expenses of Rs. 10 lakh for a maximum period of 5 years to each ATL.

**Eligibility:** Schools (minimum Grade VI – X) managed by Government, local body or private trusts/society can set up ATL.

**Significance of ATLs:**

- Atal Tinkering Labs have evolved as epicentres for imparting these ‘skills of the future’ through practical applications based on self-learning.
- Bridging a crucial social divide, Atal Tinkering Labs provide equal opportunity to all children across the spectrum by working at the grassroot level, introducing children to the world of innovation and tinkering.