

**NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION,
EMPOWERMENT ETC****Mobile Science Exhibition**

Recently, the first-ever Mobile Science Exhibition (Science Explorer) for the Ladakh region was launched by the Ministry of Culture in Leh. Apart from this, 25 new Mobile Science Exhibition buses for Aspirational Districts of India were also launched.

Mobile Science Exhibitions

- Mobile Science Exhibitions (MSE) are basically science exhibitions on buses based on various themes of science and technology.
- It is an attempt of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) to communicate science in rural and remote areas.
 - The MSE or Museo-bus travels from school to school in rural areas and organize exhibitions there throughout the year.
 - Its mission is 'If the people cannot visit the museum, let the museum visit the people at their doorsteps',

The topics chosen for these exhibitions are:

- Measurement
- Machines in everyday life
- Food & Health
- Chemistry & Life with a focus on Water
- Energy
- Hygiene & Sanitation
- Space Science for Human Welfare

National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)

- In 1978, the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) was established as a central coordinating agency for national science museums.
- NCSM, an autonomous Science & Technology institution under the Ministry of Culture jointly with the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- NCSM is the world's largest network of science centres and museums that functions under a single administrative umbrella

Govt working on setting up nationwide 'AYUSH Grid'

The AYUSH Ministry is in the process of setting up a nationwide 'AYUSH Grid'.

AYUSH Grid: AYUSH Grid aims to connect all hospitals and research labs to record case histories so that a huge amount of evidence can be generated through data analytics about the efficacy of traditional medicine including Ayurveda.

AYUSH:

- AYUSH stands for Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy.
- These systems are based on traditional medical philosophies and represent a way of healthy living with established concepts on prevention of diseases and promotion of health.
- Benefits of AYUSH system:
 - AYUSH healthcare is generally cheap and affordable
 - It has lesser side effects.
 - It has proven to be effective in lifestyle diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

National AYUSH mission:

- National AYUSH mission was launched in 2014 by the government of India.
- The basic objective of mission is to promote (a)AYUSH medical systems through cost effective AYUSH services (b)strengthening of educational systems to impart quality AYUSH education (c)facilitate the enforcement of quality control of AYUSH drugs and (d)sustainable availability of AYUSH raw materials.

About Sowa-Rigpa:

- In 2015, Ministry of Ayush had also included Sowa Rigpa to the AYUSH system.

- Sowa Rigpa is a traditional Buddhist medicine practised in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas of West Bengal.
- An international centre to promote Sowa Rigpa is being built in Ladakh.

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY

Kaushalacharya Awards

Recently, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched Kaushalacharya Awards at Kaushalacharya Samadar 2019.

- Kaushalacharya Awards are launched in a bid to recognize the contribution made by skill trainers and to motivate more trainers to join the Skill India Mission.
- According to MSDE, it is estimated that India will need about 2.5 lakh trainers by 2022, across the skilling ecosystem.
- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has introduced several schemes like Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Scheme (SANKALP), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana (PM-YUVA) etc. to impart skills in India's youth.

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.

Postal Ballot Cover Extension

The Election Commission Of India has asked the Union Law Ministry to expand the ambit of postal ballots.

- The move seeks to extend the postal ballot cover to voters on duty which includes voters in the aviation sector, the shipping sector, trains, fire services, medical services, traffic, long-distance road transport corporation buses, the aged, the physically challenged, and the journalists covering elections.
- This will require an amendment to the Representation of the People's Act, 1951 (RP Act), and the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.

Postal Ballots System

- Ballot papers are distributed electronically to electors and are returned to the election officers via post.
- Currently, only the following voters are allowed to cast their votes through postal ballot:
- Service voters (armed forces, the armed police force of a state and government servants posted abroad),
- Voters on election duty, and
- Voters under preventive detention.
- The exception to the above-mentioned category of voters is provided under Section 60 of the RP Act, 1951.

Way Forward

- The recent approval by the government to allow registered NRI voters to appoint proxies so as to cast a vote on their behalf is a welcome step.
- In order to ensure that the process of issuing of postal ballot happens in a controlled environment, the Election Commission has intended to provide the facility in specific centres on specific days, duly supervised by elections officials.
- This will help to eliminate the chances of undue influence and interference in the casting of the vote through postal ballot.
- In the case of the aged and physically-challenged voters, the postal ballot papers can be delivered to them at home and collected back then and there, in a controlled, safe and secure environment.
- In a true democracy, it is necessary to explore all avenues that can enable the exercise of the franchise to all eligible voters.

Institutions of Eminence (IoE) Scheme

Recently, the Ministry of Human Resource Development has declared 5 public Universities as Institutions of Eminence (IoE).

The institutes are:

- IIT Madras
- Banaras Hindu University
- IIT Kharagpur
- University of Delhi
- University of Hyderabad

Benefits of being included in Institutions of Eminence (IoEs) includes:

- Government Institutions to get additional funding upto 1000 Crore.
- Complete academic, administrative as well as financial autonomy.
- Exemption from government approvals for Academic collaborations with foreign higher educational institutions (in top 500)
- Freedom to hire personnel from industry
- Freedom to recruit faculty from outside India (limit of 25% of its faculty strength for public institution).
- Freedom to have own transparent merit based system for admission of students.
- Freedom to admit additionally foreign students on merit (maximum of 30% of the strength of admitted domestic students).
- Freedom to offer courses within a program as well as to offer degrees in newer areas.
- Freedom to have the flexibility of course structure.
- Flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus, with no UGC mandated curriculum structure.
- Freedom to offer online courses as part of their programmes (But not more than 20% of the programme)
- University Grants Commission (UGC) inspection shall not apply to Institutions of Eminence.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

Russia proposes joint development of submarines with India

Russia has offered India for joint design and development of advanced conventional diesel-electric submarines under Project 75I.

Project 75I

- The Project 75I-class submarine is a follow-on of the Project 75 Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
- Under this project, six new-generation conventional diesel-electric submarines will be constructed.
- They will have advanced Air-independent propulsion (AIP) systems to enable them to stay submerged for longer duration and substantially increase their operational range.
- They will also have a vertical launch system (VLS) to enable them to carry multiple Brahmos supersonic cruise missiles, making them capable of anti-surface and anti-ship warfare missions.
- Further, they will also feature advanced stealth capabilities such as a greater ability to suppress noise and acoustic signatures.

Digital Economy Report 2019

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has released the Digital Economy Report 2019.

About the report:

- The report outlines enormous potential gains from the increasingly interconnected global economy but calls for concerted global efforts to spread the wealth potential to the many people who currently reap little benefit from it.
- The report said that the United States and China create the vast majority of wealth in the digital economy as the two countries account for 75% of all patents related to blockchain technologies and as much as 90% per cent of the market capitalization value of the world's 70 largest digital platform companies.

- According to the report, India generated the ninth-highest e-commerce sales globally in 2017 by generating a total business of \$400 billion. The contribution of this to GDP was 15%.
- Further, the report has also said that the only way for developing countries to exercise effective economic ownership and control over the data generated in their territories was to push on mandatory data localisation.

UNCTAD:

- UNCTAD is a permanent intergovernmental body established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and part of the UN Secretariat.
- It was formed specifically to handle the problems of developing countries dealing with trade, investment and development issues.
- The various other reports published by UNCTAD are (a) World Economic Situation and Prospects Report (b) Trade and Development Report (c) World Investment Report (d) The Least Developed Countries Report, (e) Information and Economy Report (f) Technology and Innovation Report and (g) Commodities and Development Report.

ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT**National Conference on Cybercrime Investigation and Forensics**

Recently, the 1st National Conference on Cybercrime Investigation and Forensics was organised by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in New Delhi. The focus of the conference was to tackle cybercrime on a priority basis for the following reasons:

- India has a huge population and second-largest internet users in the world.
- Increasing the circulation of fake videos on social media.
- Digitization of Indian economy, with measures like Digital India, Government e-marketplace (GeM), Aadhar, etc.
- Post-Article 370 abrogation scenario and fight against terrorism.
- Cybercrime has become a global phenomenon.
- Also strengthening cybersecurity infrastructure will help in intelligence exchange, obtaining digital evidence from abroad, Admissibility of Electronic Evidence, etc.
- Centralised Technology Vertical (CTV) to be set up within CBI which will help law enforcing agencies in getting real-time information, in tackling complex financial crimes, like 2G scam, coal block irregularities, Ponzi schemes and capital market scams.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**Climate Change Affecting Banana Cultivation**

According to a recent study published in Nature Climate Change, 10 leading banana producer countries including India- the largest producer & consumer of banana could see a significant decline in crop yields due to climate change.

- The study also revealed that the 27 countries that account for 86% of the world's banana production, have seen an increased crop yield since 1961 due to the changing climate resulting in more favourable growing conditions.
- But climate change is eventually causing a negative impact in India.
- Being a tropical crop banana grows well under the following conditions:
 - Temperature: 15°C – 35°C
 - Rainfall: an average rainfall of 650-750 mm
 - Regional variation: Humid tropics to dry mild subtropics
 - Soil: Deep, rich loamy soil is most preferred for banana cultivation.
- Researchers across the globe are concerned about the impact of diseases like Fusarium Wilt on bananas, but the impacts of climate change on crop production have been largely ignored. It is imperative that we invest in preparing tropical agriculture for future climate change.
- Practical solutions to this problem are scattered across banana producing countries. This knowledge exchange needs to start now to counteract predicted yield losses due to climate change.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Why do we fall? So we can rise up again! Despite the hiccups, we must forge on our journey.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: What do you understand by Electronically transmitted Postal Ballot System? How is can help in the Electoral Process?

Ans: ETPBS is developed by Election Commission of India with the help of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), for the use of the Service Voters. It is a fully secured system, having two layers of security. Secrecy is maintained through the use of OTP and PIN and no duplication of casted Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot (ETPB) is possible due to the unique QR Code. Persons working in paramilitary forces and the military and government officials deployed in diplomatic missions outside India are classified as Service Voters.

Significance and benefits:

- This system enables the entitled service voters to cast their vote using an electronically received postal ballot from anywhere outside their constituency.
- The voters who make such a choice will be entitled for Postal Ballot delivered through Electronic Media for a particular election.
- The developed System is implemented inline with the existing Postal Ballot System. Postal Ballot will be transmitted through Electronic Means to the voters.
- It enables the voters to cast their vote on an electronically received postal ballot from their preferred location, which is outside their originally assigned voting constituency.
- This system would be an easier option of facilitating voting by the electors as the time constraint for dispatch of postal ballot has been addressed using this system.

Class of Electors who are eligible for ETPBS:

- Service Voters, other than those who opt for proxy voting (Classified Service Voters).
- The wife of a Service Voter who ordinarily resides with him.
- Overseas Voters.

Features:

- Service voters can avail this service from anywhere outside their constituency.
- System facilitates creation of service voter electoral roll data.
- Easy, Efficient and Hassle free.
- It is a secure system, having two layer security.
- OTP is required to download encrypted Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot file.
- Secrecy is maintained and no duplicate of casted ETPB is possible due to QR code.
- PIN is required to decrypt, print and deliver ETPB.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIR MCQS

1. With reference to Mobile Science Exhibition, consider the following statement:
 1. It is basically a science exhibition on buses based on various themes of science and technology.
 2. Recently it was launched in the Union Territory of J & K.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) **1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. Recently in news, the term Sowa Rigpa is the name of a
 - (a) **Medicine**
 - (b) Crop
 - (c) Tribe
 - (d) Plant
3. With reference to Kaushalacharya Awards 2019, consider the following statements:
 1. It aims to felicitate trainers from different sectors for exceptional contribution towards creating a future-ready and skilled workforce.
 2. It is an initiative of union Ministry of Human Resource Development.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) **1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. With reference to Institutions of Eminence (IoE). Consider the following statements:
 1. All Institutes that are declared as Institutions of Eminence will get additional funding up to Rs 1000 crore from the government.
 2. The IoE will be entitled to academic, administrative as well as financial autonomy.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) **2 only**
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following institutions have been awarded the status of Institute of Eminence recently?
 1. IIT-Madras
 2. IIT-Kharagpur
 3. Delhi University
 4. IIT-HyderabadSelect the correct answer using codes given below
 - (a) **1, 2 and 3**
 - (b) 2, 3 and 4
 - (c) 1, 2, 3 and 4
 - (d) 1, 3 and 4
6. With reference to the Central Bureau of Investigation(CBI), consider the following statements:
 1. It is attached office under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
 2. Central Vigilance Commission is the sole supervisory body of CBI.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) **Neither 1 nor 2**
7. Digital Economy 2019 report is published by which of the following agencies?
 - (a) WTO
 - (b) IMF
 - (c) WB
 - (d) **UNCTAD**