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Success is born of action...

Topic 1: Biomedical park

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



Kerala will soon house one of the first medical device parks in the country, focusing on the high-risk medical device sector to provide full range of services for the medical devices industry like R&D support, testing, and evaluation.

- **MedSpark, the medical devices park envisaged as a joint initiative** of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC) is going to be established in the Life Science Park, Thiruvananthapuram.
- This medical device park will stand out with its emphasis on the **high-risk medical device sector involving medical implants and extracorporeal devices**, in which SCTIMST scores with its

knowledge.

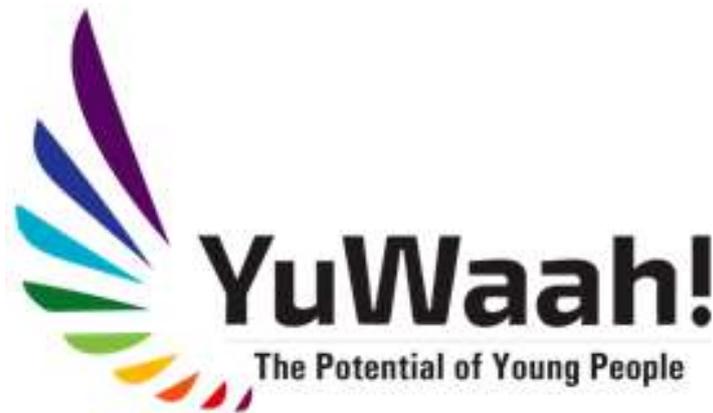
- The Medical Devices Park will **create an enabling support system for R&D, testing and evaluation of medical devices, manufacturing support, technology innovation, and knowledge dissemination**, all of which are the full range of services that the medical devices industry seeks.
- These services can be utilized by the medical device industries located within the MedSpark as well from other parts of India. This will benefit small and medium-sized medical devices industries, which dominate the medical devices sector.
- When completed, the MedSpark will have:
 - ✓ A **Medical Device Testing & Evaluation Centre** accredited to international agencies An **R&D Resource Centre for facilitating R&D in medical device domain**, the services of which would be shared by the entities within the Park
 - ✓ A **centralised Knowledge Centre for skill up-gradation** with facilities for conducting training and providing support on regulatory issues, clinical trials, etc.
 - ✓ A **Technology Business Incubation Centre** for promoting start-ups and early-stage companies
 - ✓ A **set of Modular Manufacturing Units for lease** by the industries coming to the park or land modules for setting up manufacturing units
- The business model for the MedSpark is self-sustaining in

which its operational expenses will be generated from its revenue streams.

- Funding from the state and central governments (both Kerala State and Central) through various schemes will meet the capital expenditure and deficit in income against expenses during the initial stages
- It is expected that the project would **provide direct employment to 1200 people**. Besides, employment generation up to 4000 – 5000 jobs through the supporting industries like OEM suppliers, service providers, and marketing/post marketing support activities.

Topic 2: YuWaah

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) have signed a “Statement of Intent to establish YuWaah, Generation Unlimited (GenU), a global multi-stakeholder platform in India.

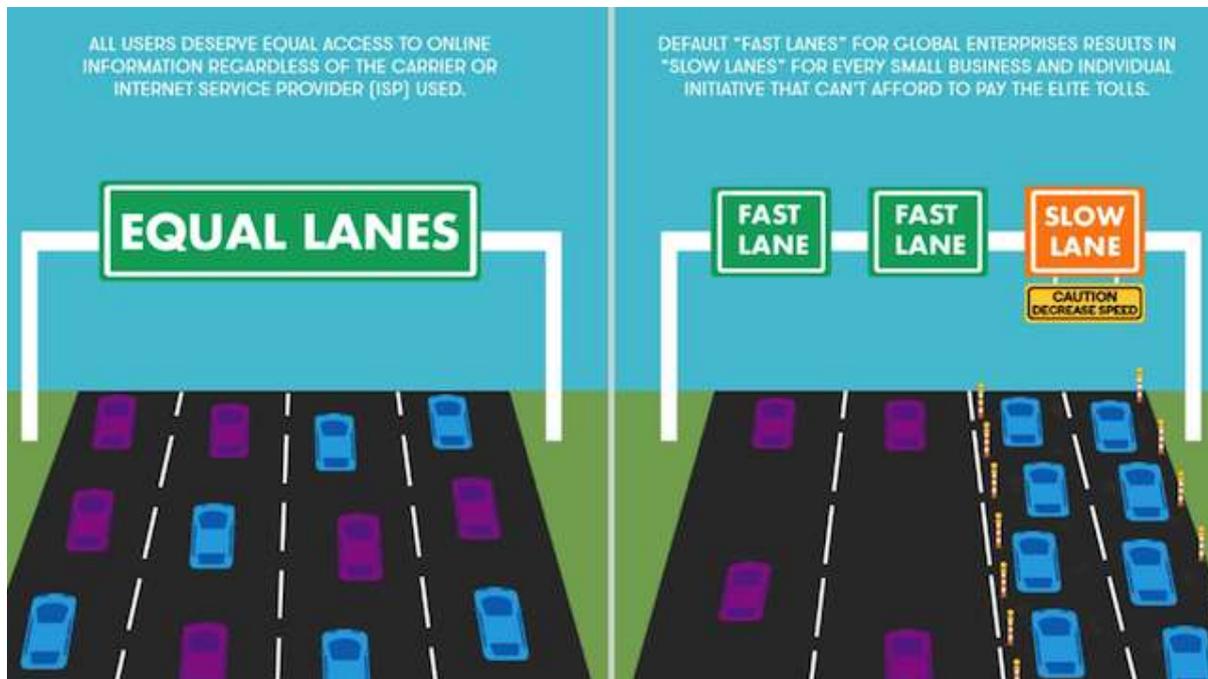
- As per the Statement of Intent, the objectives of this project are:
Support young people by providing entrepreneurship classes (online and offline) with successful entrepreneurs and experts, towards establishing entrepreneurial mindset among young people.
- **Upskilling of young people on 21st century skills, life skills, digital skills** through online and offline channels and support them through selflearning, for their productive lives and the future of work.
- **Create linkages with aspirational economic opportunities to connect young people with employment opportunities,**

including building pathways to connect them with jobs or self-employment. For this, innovative solutions and technology platforms will be engaged to take maximize the scale and reach.

- Providing **career guidance support to young people through career portal as well as through job-readiness and self-exploration sessions** to make young people career-ready.
- **The role of Department of Youth Affairs** in this project is to **provide relevant experts to participate on the YuWaah Technical Working Groups/ Task Forces.**

Topic 3: Net neutrality

Importance for Prelims: Economy



The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has suggested **the setting up of a multi-stakeholder body (MSB)** to ensure that internet service providers in the country adhere to the principles of net neutrality.

- The concept that **all data on the internet should be treated equally** by corporations, such as internet service providers, and governments, regardless of content, user, platform, application or device.
- Network neutrality **requires all Internet service providers (ISPs) to provide the same level of data access and speed to all traffic**, and that traffic to one service or website cannot be blocked or degraded.

- ISPs are also **not to create special arrangements with services or websites, in which companies providing them are given improved network access or speed.**

Topic 4: CDSCO and COVID drugs

Importance for Prelims: Government organisation



The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) will **only** approve Covid- 19 vaccines that meet parameters, such as their ability to show they can improve clinical outcomes by at least 50 per cent during human testing.

- The regulator is **trying to ensure the candidate approved for mass vaccination shows an improvement of at least 50 per cent over the status quo.**
- This means the number of people who develop symptoms, and are diagnosed by a doctor with Covid, should reduce by at least 50 per cent upon vaccination, as opposed to those who aren't vaccinated.

CDSCO

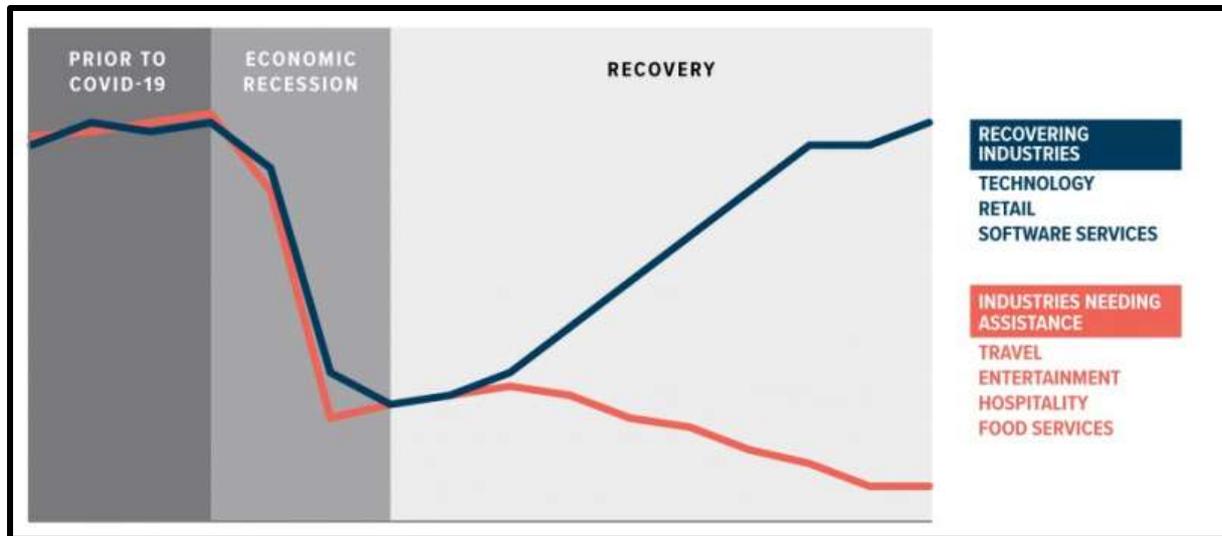
- CDSCO under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.
- The Drugs & Cosmetics Act,1940 and rules 1945 have entrusted

various responsibilities to central & state regulators for regulation of drugs & cosmetics.

- CDSCO is constantly thriving upon to bring out transparency, accountability and uniformity in its services in order to **ensure safety, efficacy and quality of the medical product manufactured, imported and distributed in the country.**
- Under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for approval of Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials, laying down the standards for Drugs, control over the quality of imported Drugs** in the country and coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice.
- **Drug Controller General of India** within CDSCO is **responsible for approval of licenses** of specified categories of Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera

Topic 5: K-shaped recession

Importance for Prelims: Economy



Since it became obvious the pandemic would create a recession, economists have debated the shape of it. **Joe Biden weighed in on the matter in a speech blaming President Trump for creating an unusual “K shape.**

- A K-shaped recovery occurs **when an economy recuperates unevenly, and there’s a separate trajectory for two segments of the society.**
- While the **financial markets recover and grow, the real economy, or the flow of goods and services, gets worse.**
- That’s worrying, because 84% of the stock market is owned by 10% of households.
- **While the market continued to rise even amid a global pandemic, GDP and employment rates fell.**
- These different paths follow the direction of the two spokes that

poke out from the vertical line on the “K.”

- The two prongs can also represent: **people with high and low wage levels**, those that have the ability to work from home and those who don't, and those who have liquid wealth assets to survive during the recession and those who don't.
- It's very much a split of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Topic 6: Laser Guided ATGM

Importance for Prelims: Science and tech



The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully **test fired a laser guided Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)** from the indigenous Arjun main battle tank.

- The missile employs a **tandem High-Explosive Anti-Tank [HEAT] warhead** to **neutralise armoured vehicles** which have **reactive armours**, which are specially-designed protective armours used in military vehicles.
- While the missile is currently being tested from the MBT Arjun, it has been **designed so that it can be fired from other platforms too.**
- The missile has the capability of engaging with the **target even if it is not in the line of sight.**
- Laser-guided ATGMs **lock and track the targets with the help of laser designation to ensure precision-hit accuracy.**
- Pune-based DRDO facilities – **Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE)** and the **High Energy**

Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) have developed the missile in collaboration with another DRDO laboratory, Instruments Research and Development Establishment (IRDE) in Dehradun.

- Over the last three years, the **DRDO has successfully conducted tests of Man Portable ATGM and also a ATGM system named Nag.**
- The indigenously developed low-weight, ‘fire and forget’ Man Portable Anti Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) in September last year. In February 2018, ATGM Nag was successfully tested in desert conditions.

Topic 7: National Rural Health Mission

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



As per Rural Health Statistics-2019, as on 31.03.2019, a total of 1,57,411 Sub-centres, 24,855 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and 5,335 Community Health Centres (CHCs) have been functional in the rural areas of the country.

- The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was **launched on 12th April 2005**, to provide **accessible, affordable and quality health care to the rural population**, especially the vulnerable groups.
- NRHM seeks to provide **equitable, affordable and quality health care to the rural population**, especially the vulnerable

groups.

- The thrust of the mission is on establishing a **fully functional, community owned, decentralized health delivery system with inter-sectoral convergence** at all levels, to ensure simultaneous action on a wide range of determinants of health such as water, sanitation, education, nutrition, social and gender equality.
- NRHM focuses on **Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Health and Adolescent (RMNCH+A) Services.**
- The emphasis here is on strategies for improving maternal and child health through a continuum of care and the life cycle approach. It recognises the inextricable linkages between adolescent health, family planning, maternal health and child survival.
- Moreover, the linking of community and facility-based care and strengthening referrals between various levels of health care system to create a continuous care pathway is also to be focussed.
- The key features in order to achieve the goals of the Mission include making the **public health delivery system fully functional and accountable to the community**, human resources management, community involvement, decentralization, rigorous monitoring & evaluation against standards, convergence of health and related programmes form

village level upwards, innovations and flexible financing and also interventions for improving the health indicators.

- At the National level, the **NHM has a Mission Steering Group (MSG) headed by the Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare** and an Empowered Programme Committee (EPC) headed by the Union Secretary for Health & FW. The EPC will implement the Mission under the overall guidance of the MSG.
- At the State level, the **Mission would function under the overall guidance of the State Health Mission headed by the Chief Minister of the State.**
- The functions under the Mission would be carried out through the State Health & Family Welfare Society

Topic 8: Plastic Parks

Importance for Prelims: Environment

Special **PLASTIC**
Industrial Zones
launched **Across**
INDIA

Testing /
R & D Facility

Dedicated
Recycling Area

Truck Terminal
& Parking Facilities

Guest Houses /
Hotels

Landscape Areas /
Buffer Zones

Industrial
Plots

Tool Rooms

Common
Facility Centre

**Activity initiated by AIPMA
in association with State Government**

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POWERING PROGRESS THROUGH PLASTICS
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Tax Holiday | Power & Finance Subsidy | Land Subsidy

* some of the above parks are under **development** stage

To consolidate and synergize the plastic processing industry Government is setting up Plastic Parks with state-of-the-art infrastructure informed by minister in Rajya sabha

- Under the scheme, Central Government **provides grant funding up to 50% of the project cost**, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 40 crore per project.
- The remaining project cost is to be funded by the State Government, beneficiary industries and by loan from financial institutions.
- Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has **approved setting up of 10 Plastic Parks in the country, out of which 6 parks have been given final approval** in the States of Assam, Madhya Pradesh (two parks), Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand. These 6 Plastic Parks are under various stages of implementation.
- Centre is also providing technical/consultancy services to the plastic industries in the field of plastics processing, testing, composites and mould manufacturing, design etc.

Topic 9: National GIS-Enabled Land Bank System

Importance for Prelims: Economy

Ease of Investment

INDIA LAUNCHES PORTAL ON LAND BANK

LAUNCH IN 6 STATES, others likely by year-end

One-stop repository to have plot info, satellite view of terrain

Heat maps on forests, other natural resources available

Info on 3,300 industrial parks, covering about 4.75 lakh hectare land

Government has integrated Industrial Information System (IIS) portal with the GIS System

- It will provide **updates on land availability and plot level information to investors** anywhere in the world on real time basis and help them make informed decisions.
- For the development of National Land Bank, Government **intends to solicit the details of industrial land with plot level information, connectivity thereto, basic facilities, other facilities available and contact details of authorities/developer of the park.**
- More than 3,300 industrial parks across 31 states/UTs covering about 4,75,000 hectare land have been mapped on the system. The information available includes forest, drainage; raw material heat maps (agricultural, horticulture, mineral layers); multiple layers of connectivity.

Topic 10: Carbon neutral

Importance for Prelims: Environment



China will aim to hit peak emissions before 2030 and for carbon neutrality by 2060, President Xi Jinping has announced.

- Carbon neutrality means **every ton of anthropogenic CO₂ emitted is compensated with an equivalent amount of CO₂ removed**, according to World Resources Institute.
- In order to **limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, carbon neutrality by mid-21st century is essential**. This target is also **laid down in the Paris agreement** signed by 195 countries, including the EU.
- Carbon sink is any system that absorbs more carbon than it emits.
- The main **natural carbon sinks are soil, forests and oceans**.
- To date, no artificial carbon sinks are able to remove carbon

from the atmosphere on the necessary scale to fight global warming.

- **The carbon stored in natural sinks such as forests is released into the atmosphere through forest fires, changes in land use or logging.**
- Another way to reduce emissions and to pursue carbon neutrality is to offset emissions made in one sector by reducing them somewhere else. This can be done through investment in **renewable energy, energy efficiency or other clean, low-carbon technologies.**

Topic 11: G4

Importance for Prelims: IR



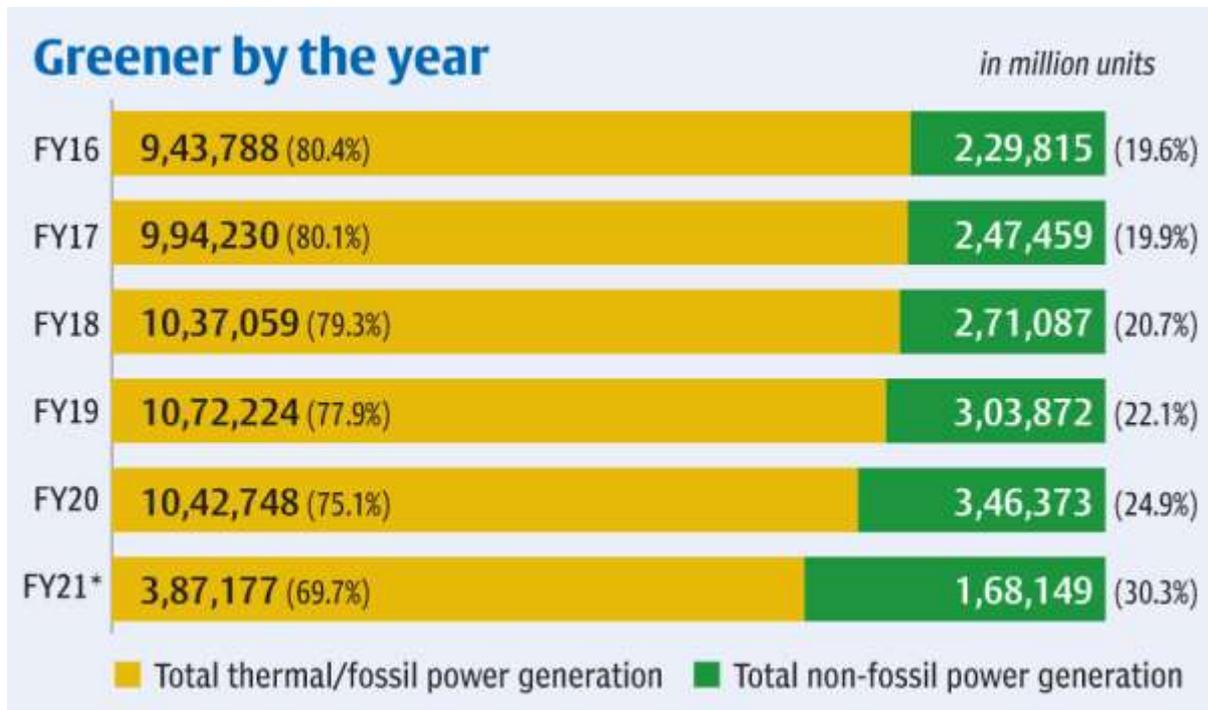
G4 countries call for urgent steps for reform of UN and Security Council

- The G4 nations **comprising Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan** are four countries which **support each other's bids for permanent seats** on the United Nations Security Council.
- G4's primary aim is the permanent member seats on the Security Council.
- Each of these four countries have figured among the elected non-permanent members of the council since the UN's establishment.
- Their economic and political influence has grown significantly in the last decades, reaching a scope comparable to the permanent members (P5).

- However, the **G4's bids are often opposed by the Uniting for Consensus movement**, and particularly their economic competitors or political rivals.

Topic 12: Renewable energy

Importance for Prelims: Environment



*up to August Source: Submission in Lok Sabha

The **share of clean energy in India's total power generation has risen rapidly** to 30 per cent already this fiscal compared to 24.9 per cent in FY20.

- The **share of generation from thermal plants in the country has been coming down** and that of **non-fossil power** (which includes renewables, hydro and nuclear) has been **increasing gradually** over the last five years due to a major policy thrust on the renewables sector.
- The share of clean energy in overall generation in India increased from 19.6 per cent in 2015-16 to 24.9 per cent in 2019-20, according to official data.

- The growth in share (of green energy) is the result of a gradual increase that has been taking place in the last few years as there has been **higher capacity addition in the renewable sector**.
- Secondly, the **cost of renewable energy has seen a progressive decline** over the years.
- The third reason is the ‘**must run status**’ to **procure power from this segment**. The ‘must run status’ of renewable and hydro power plants, which mandates uninterrupted power procurement by utilities, has supported the higher generation by these power sources despite the fall in consumption during the lockdown.
- **Three States — Karnataka (15,262 MW), Tamil Nadu (14,647 MW) and Gujarat (11,114 MW) — together account for about 46 per cent of India’s installed renewable capacity of 88,793 MW.**

Topic 13: Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



25th September, 2014 was declared the ‘AntyodayaDiwas’ in honour of PanditDeenDayalUpadhyaya’s 98th Birth Anniversary. It was the same day when the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) **revamped it’s existing skill development program called Aajeevika Skills as DeenDayalUpadhyayaGrameenKaushalyaYojana (DDU-GKY)**

- The **Ministry of Rural Development** implements DDU-GKY to drive this national agenda for inclusive growth, by **developing skills and productive capacity of the rural youth from poor families.**

Features:

- **Demand led skill training** at no cost to the rural poor
- **Mandatory coverage of socially disadvantaged groups** (SC/ST 50%; Minority 15%; Women 33%) Pioneers in providing incentives for job retention, career progression and foreign placements
- **Post-placement support**, migration support and alumni network
- Guaranteed Placement for at least 75% trained candidates
- Nurturing new training service providers and developing their skills
- **Greater emphasis on projects for poor rural youth** in Jammu and Kashmir (HIMAYAT), The North-East region and 27 Left-Wing Extremist (LWE) districts (ROSHINI)
- DDU-GKY follows a 3-tier implementation model. The DDU-GKY National Unit at MoRD functions as the policy-making, technical support and facilitation agency.
- The DDU-GKY State Missions provide implementation support; and the Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) implement the programme through skilling and placement projects.

Topic 14: National Biopharma Mission

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



Department of Biotechnology
Ministry of Science & Technology
Government of India



birac
ignite. innovate. incubate.
Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

National Biopharma Mission

INDUSTRY – ACADEMIA COLLABORATIVE MISSION
FOR
ACCELERATING EARLY DEVELOPMENT
FOR BIO-PHARMACEUTICALS

Innovate in India (i3)

Inviting Proposals in the areas of:

•Vaccines •Biotherapeutics •Medical Devices & Diagnostics

An Industry – Academia Collaborative Mission of Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India for Accelerating Early Development For Biopharmaceuticals; to be implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) – a Public Sector Undertaking of DBT.

The National Biopharma Mission is approved for implementation at a total cost of US\$ 250 million, which is 50% co-funded with World Bank Loan Assistance.

This Request for Proposals (RFPs) is to seek individual applications on either of the following:

FOCUS OF THE CALL

<p>1. Vaccines Support for accelerating development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel vaccine candidates for HPV, Dengue and Pneumococcal • Novel and complex vaccine candidates for other diseases of high burden and priority in India 	<p>2. Biotherapeutics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for development of biosimilars (therapeutic proteins and monoclonal antibodies) for cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes • Support for establishment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Process Development Laboratory ◇ CMC Facility ◇ GLP Validation Facility ◇ Cell Line Repository 	<p>3. Medical Devices & Diagnostics Support for accelerating development of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical medical device technologies for relevant product segments • Core technologies as platform technologies for priority products
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How to Apply:

Detailed Mission Document and RFPs can be seen at www.birac.nic.in/nationalbiopharmamission.php
Proposals to be submitted online. Please log on to www.birac.nic.in.
Last date for Submission **15th December, 2017**

For queries please contact: Head NBM, Email: technical.birac@gov.in

National Biopharma Mission is **supporting small and medium enterprises for biopharmaceutical product development**, enhancing industry academia inter linkages and providing opportunities to translate knowledge into products/technologies for vaccines, biotherapeutics, devices and diagnostics informed by minister in Loksabha.

- The National Biopharma Mission (NBM) is an **industry-Academia Collaborative Mission for accelerating biopharmaceutical development** in the country.
- Under this Mission the Government has launched **Innovate in India (i3) programme to create an enabling ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship** and indigenous manufacturing in the sector.
- The mission will be **implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)**.
- The mission was **approved in 2017** at a total cost of Rs 1500 crore and is **50% co-funded by World Bank loan**.
- It is managed through a dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU) at BIRAC.
- Together with National and International experts, the most promising projects are selected in response to open Request for Applications issued by the PMU.
- The **oversight to the mission activities is provided by the interministerial Steering Committee chaired by the**

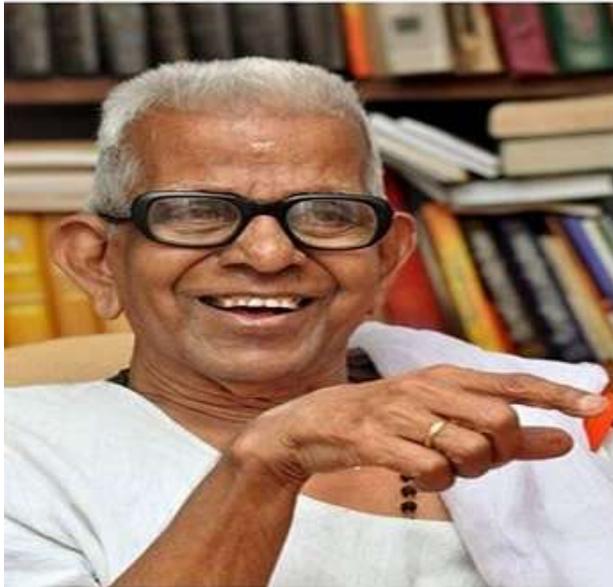
Secretary-DBT.

- The program is **promoting entrepreneurship by supporting small and medium enterprises for indigenous product development** (Novel Cell lines, indigenously developed Biologics, devices and Raw materials for Biologics manufacturing) and through establishment of shared facilities and Technology Transfer Offices.
- Innovation is being promoted in India for inclusiveness. This scientifically driven enterprise aims at developing an ecosystem for affordable product development and is focused on the following 4 verticals:
 - ✓ **Development of product leads** for Vaccines ,Biosimilars and Medical Devices that are relevant to the public health need by focussing on managed partnerships.
 - ✓ **Upgradation of shared infrastructure facilities** and establishing them as centres of product discovery/discovery validations and manufacturing.
 - ✓ **Develop human capital** by providing specific trainings to address the critical skills gap among the nascent biotech companies across the product development value chain in areas such as Product development, intellectual property registration, technology transfer and regulatory standards.
 - ✓ **Technology Transfer Offices:** To help enhance industry academia interlinkages and provide increased

opportunities for academia, innovators and entrepreneurs to translate knowledge into products and technologies, Technology Transfer Offices are being considered for funding under NBM.

Topic 15: Jnanpith award

Importance for Prelims: Arts and culture



Malayalam poet Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri wins 55th Jnanpith award

Thiruvananthapuram ,
Nov 29 : Celebrated
Malayalam poet
Akkitham Achuthan
Namboothiri, popularly
known as Akkitham,
has won the Jnanpith
Award 2019, becoming
the sixth literary
personality from Kerala
to achieve the honour.

Renowned Malayalam poet Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri was conferred the Jnanpith award

- Jnanpith Award is an **Indian literary award** presented annually by the BharatiyaJnanpith to an author for their “outstanding contribution towards literature”.
- **Instituted in 1961**, the award is bestowed **only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages** included in the **Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English**, with no posthumous conferral.

Topic 16: Drain of wealth

Importance for Prelims: History

Importance for Mains: History

Drain of Wealth Theory (Dadabhai Naoroji)



British charity organisation National Trust released a report on September 22 stating that many historical properties it manages have a colonial past and links to slavery. The report states that when the employees returned, they also flooded Britain with “associated objects, furnishing its homes, forging fashions, identities and cultural change”.

- **Dadabhai Naoroji was among the key proponents of the ‘Drain Theory’, disseminating it in his 1901 book ‘Poverty and Un-British Rule in India’.**
- **Naoroji argued that imperial Britain was draining away India’s wealth to itself through exploitative economic policies,**

including India's rule by foreigners the heavy financial burden of the British civil and military apparatus in India the exploitation of the country due to free trade non-Indians taking away the money that they earned in India the interest that India paid on its public debt held in Britain.

Topic 17: Vikram Sarabhai

Importance for Prelims: History

FATHER OF INDIAN SPACE PROGRAM
Dr. Vikram Sarabhai
(12 Aug 1919 – 30 Dec 1971)

Responsible for establishment of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). | Credited for the **First sounding rocket** launch in 1963.

With his dialogue with **NASA** in 1966, the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was launched in 1975-1976. | His project for fabrication & launch of Indian Satellite led 1st satellite, **Aryabhata**, to put in orbit in 1975.

Most well-known Institutions established by him:
 • IIM, Ahmedabad • Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre • Community Science Centre
 • Electronics Corporation of India Limited • Uranium Corporation of India Limited

Awarded **Padma Vibhushan** in 1972 (Posthumously).

"If we are to play a meaningful role nationally, we must be second to none in application of advanced technologies to the real problems of man & society."

@DDNational

President has addressed the valedictory function of Dr Vikram Sarabhai Birth Centenary Celebrations, being organized by the Department of Space and Department of Atomic Energy.

- Based on his persuasion, the Indian government agreed to set up the **Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR)** in 1962. Sarabhai was the first chairman of the committee.
- The INCOSPAR was restructured and renamed as Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 1969.
- Sarabhai **founded the Physical Research Laboratory in Ahmedabad** in the year 1947. The laboratory started its operation from RETREAT, Sarabhai's residence in Ahmedabad.

Its first topic of research was cosmic rays.

- He also set up **India's first rocket launch site in Thumba**, a small village near the Thiruvananthapuram airport in Kerala.
- Vikram Sarabhai was also responsible for bringing cable television to India. His constant contact with NASA paved a way for the establishment of Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975.
- Sarabhai was the **mastermind behind building India's first satellite, Aryabhata**.
- He was one of the founding members of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA).
- Vikram Sarabhai received the Padma Bhushan in 1966 for his contribution to India's progress. He was also awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1972, posthumously.

Topic 18: National medical commission

Importance for Prelims: Institution



Historic reform in the field of medical education has been effected by the Union Government with the **constitution of the National Medical Commission (NMC), along with four Autonomous Boards.**

- **NMC will subsume the Medical Council of India and will regulate medical education and practice in India.**
- Functions of the NMC include: (i) **laying down policies for regulating medical institutions** and medical professionals, (ii) **assessing the requirements of human resources** and infrastructure in healthcare, (iii) ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils with the regulations made under the Bill, and (iv) framing guidelines for determination of fee for up to 50% of the seats in the private medical institutions.

- The **NMC will consist of 25 members**, including: (i) Director Generals of the Directorate General of Health Services and the Indian Council of Medical Research, (ii) Director of any of the AIIMS, (iii) five members (part-time) to be elected by the registered medical practitioners, and (iv) six members appointed on rotational basis from amongst the nominees of the states in the Medical Advisory Council.
- **Four autonomous boards were set up under the supervision of the NMC.** Each board will consist of a President and four members (of which two members will be part-time), appointed by the central government (on the recommendation of a search committee).
- These bodies are:
 - ✓ **The Under-Graduate Medical Education Board (UGMEB) and**
 - ✓ **the Post-Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB):** These two bodies will be responsible for formulating standards, curriculum, guidelines for medical education, and granting recognition to medical qualifications at the under-graduate and post-graduate levels respectively.
 - ✓ **The Medical Assessment and Rating Board:** The Board will have the power to levy monetary penalties on institutions which fail to maintain the minimum standards

as laid down by the UGMEB and the PGMEB. It will also grant permissions for establishing new medical colleges, starting postgraduate courses, and increasing the number of seats in a medical college.

- ✓ **The Ethics and Medical Registration Board:** This Board will maintain a National Register of all the licensed medical practitioners in the country, and also regulate professional and medical conduct. Only those included in the Register will be allowed to practice as doctors. The Board will also maintain a register of all licensed community health providers in the country.

Topic 19: Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA)

Importance for Prelims: Polity/Geography

IN TROUBLED WATERS

➤ Karnataka plans two reservoirs at Makedatu across Cauvery, for which the state has floated global expressions of interest for feasibility study and **has made budgetary allocation of ₹25cr**

➤ The reservoirs will result in impounding the flow in the catchment areas, which in turn will affect agriculture and drinking water supply to many districts in Tamil Nadu

➤ TN's contention is that any **new scheme should be taken up only with the consent of the Cauvery Management Board**, which is yet to be set up by the Centre



The Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) meeting saw a sharp exchange of words between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the Makedatu dam project.

- **Central Government**, in exercise of the powers conferred by **section 4 of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956** had constituted the Cauvery
- Water Disputes Tribunal in 1990 to **adjudicate upon the water dispute** regarding the Inter-State river Cauvery and the river valley thereof among the States of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Union territory of Puducherry; The Tribunal investigated the matters referred to it and forwarded to the Central
- Government a report under sub-section (2) of section 5 of the

Act on 2007. **The party States filed special leave petitions in the Supreme Court against the said report.**

- Supreme Court converted the said special leave petitions into Civil Appeals.
- **Supreme Court pronounced its judgment** and directed the Central Government to **frame a scheme under section 6A of the Act to implement the Tribunal Award as modified**
- In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6A of the said Act, the **Central Government notified the Cauvery Water Management Scheme on 2018**, inter alia, constituting the ‘Cauvery Water Management Authority’ and the ‘Cauvery Water Regulation Committee’
- The Authority shall exercise such power and shall discharge such duty to **do any or all things necessary, sufficient and expedient for securing compliance and implementation of the Award** of the Tribunal as modified by the Hon’ble Supreme Court: (i) storage, apportionment, regulation and control of Cauvery waters; (ii) supervision of operation of reservoirs and with regulation of water releases therefrom with the assistance of Regulation Committee; (iii) regulated release by Karnataka, at the inter-State contact point presently identified as Billigundulu gauge and discharge station, located on the common border of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Topic 20: Lion-tailed macaque

Importance for Prelims: Environment



LION-TAILED MACAQUE

Macaca silenus

CONSERVATION STATUS: ENDANGERED

- Also known as *wanderoos*
- Found exclusively in the Western Ghats mountains of southwestern India in the upper canopy of tropical evergreen and monsoon forests
- One of the smaller macaque species, they are named *not* for their striking silver mane, but rather for their lion-like tail tufts
- Threatened by habitat fragmentation, hunting, and the pet trade
- Populations are declining



Lion-tailed macaque (*Macacasilenus*), a primate endemic to Western Ghats **continues to be in the ‘endangered’ category** in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

- The latest conservation status of the primate was updated in the IUCN database recently based on technical reports over the

years from a group of researchers

- As per the technical report, **the total wild population of the lion-tailed macaque (LTM) could be about 4,000 individuals consisting of less than 2,500 mature individuals**, made up of 47 isolated sub-populations in seven different locations in the three States.
- The population is **expected to suffer an estimated decline of over 20% in the next 25 years** due to varied reasons including hunting, road kills and habitat loss, it said.
- Though the conservation status of the LTM had improved from ‘endangered’ in the first assessment in 1990 to ‘vulnerable’ in 1994, its status has **remained endangered since 1996**.

Endangered species:

- Species are at a **very high risk of extinction** as a result of rapid population declines of 50 to more than 70% over the previous 10 years (or three generations), **a current population size of fewer than 250 individuals, or other factors**

Topic 21: Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in Madurai

Importance for Prelims: Arts and culture



Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple may have been reconstructed during early 13th century according to the inscriptions found at the temple, said archaeological expert

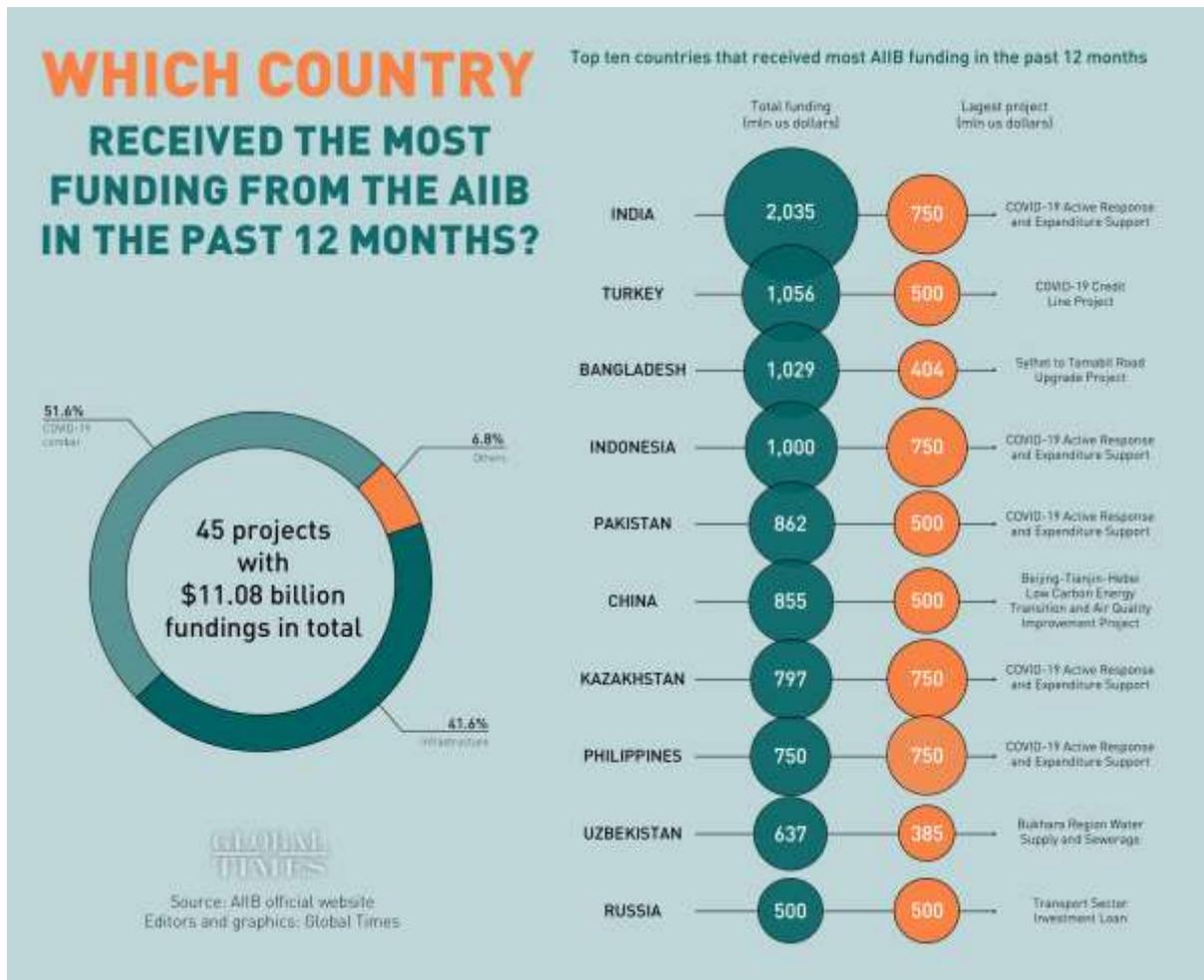
- The present structure of Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple in Madurai might have been **reconstructed during the rule of Jatavarman Kulasekara Pandya** (1190-1216 common era).
- This structure was damaged due to unknown reasons and was again **renovated in the 13th century during the period of Maravarman Sundarapandyan II**
- Temple might have been a simple structure, prior to the reconstruction during the Jatavarman Kulasekara Pandya period.
- **The temple has been renovated many times and extended with mandapams and halls during the Nayak rule.**
- Another important finding is that in **all the 13th century inscriptions belonging to Pandya period, the name of the presiding god** is mentioned as ‘Thiru Alavay Udaiya Nayanar’

and goddess was mentioned as ‘Thirukkamakkottam Udaiya Aludaiya Nacchiyar’.

- It was **during the Nayak period when the name ‘Chokkanatha’** for the presiding god was mentioned for the first time.
- The name of the goddess as ‘Meenakshi’ was mentioned on the engravings of a ‘pavaivilaku’ dated to 1752 CE.
- The present name of the goddess- **‘MeenakshiSundareswarar’** was first mentioned on the engravings on a Tiruvachi lamp stand dated to 1898 CE

Topic 22: AIIB

Importance for Prelims: IR



Out of the \$20 billion in loans issued by the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), about \$6 billion has gone to India.

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a **multilateral development bank** with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia.
- **Headquartered in Beijing**, it began operations in January 2016 and have now grown to 102 approved members worldwide.
- It invests in sustainable infrastructure and other productive

sectors in Asia and beyond.

- Membership in AIIB shall be open to members of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the Asian Development Bank.
- **China is the largest contributor to the Bank**, contributing USD 50 billion, half of the initial subscribed capital.
- **India is the second-largest shareholder, contributing USD 8.4 billion.**

Topic 23: POEM, Round tripping

Importance for Prelims: Economy

Importance for Mains: Economy



Round tripping of funds is made easier by digital transactions. India can stem tax erosion by using AI-driven tools

Round tripping

- Money leaves the country through various channels such as **inflated invoices, payments to shell companies overseas, the hawala route** and so on. After cooling its heels overseas for a while, this money returns in a freshly laundered form; thus completing a round-trip.
- How does the money return to India? It could be invested in offshore funds that in turn **invest in Indian assets**. The Global Depository Receipts (GDR) and Participatory Notes (P-Notes)

are some of the other routes that have been used in the past.

POEM:

- Round tripping of funds have become easier by digital transactions. The RBI is fighting a battle against problems created by round tripping of funds, involving money laundering by individuals with investments in overseas private equity venture capital or alternative investment funds coming back to India.

Round Tripping:

- In the context of black money, money leaves the country through various channels such as inflated invoices, payments to shell companies overseas, the hawala route and so on.
- After cooling its heels overseas for a while, this money returns in a freshly laundered form; thus completing a round-trip.

Externalisation

- It is a strategy of incorporating holding companies in offshore jurisdictions to enjoy certain benefits which the home country does not offer.
- The strategy is employed by companies to move their corporate structures away from the Indian tax and regulatory regimes.

POEM:

- To curb (only to some extent) the loss to the exchequer by the externalization of Indian businesses, the new concept of ‘place of effective management’ has been introduced.

- To determine the residential status of foreign companies, the Finance Act 2015 introduced the concept of place of effective management (POEM).
- POEM is defined as the place where the key management and commercial decisions that are necessary for the conduct of business of an entity as a whole are, in substance made.
- Under POEM rules, overseas subsidiaries are treated as domestic entities for tax purposes if they are controlled and managed from India.

Topic 24: Article 270 and history of cess

Importance for Prelims: Polity



The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its latest audit report of government accounts, has observed that the **Union government withheld in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) more than ₹1.1 lakh crore** out of the almost ₹2.75 lakh crore collected through various cesses in 2018-19.

- The Union government is empowered to raise revenue through a gamut of levies, including taxes (both direct and indirect), surcharges, fees and cess.
- While direct taxes, including income tax, and indirect taxes such as GST are taxes where the revenue received can be **spent by**

the government for any public purpose in any manner it deems appropriate for the nation's good, a **cess is a earmarked tax that is collected for a specific purpose** and ought to be spent only for that.

- **Every cess is collected after Parliament** has authorised its creation through an enabling legislation that specifies the purpose for which the funds are being raised.
- **Article 270 of the Constitution allows cess to be excluded from the purview of the divisible pool of taxes that the Union government must share with the States.**

History of cess

- **42 cesses have been levied** at various points in time since 1944. Post Independence, the cess taxes were linked **initially to the development of a particular industry**, including a salt cess and a tea cess in 1953.
- Subsequently, the introduction of a cess was motivated by the aim of ensuring labour welfare. Some cesses that exemplified this thrust were the iron ore mines labour welfare cess in 1961, the limestone and dolomite mines labour welfare cess of 1972 and the cine workers welfare cess introduced in 1981.
- The introduction of the GST in 2017 led to most cesses being done away with and as of August 2018, **there were only seven cesses that continued to be levied.**
- These were Cess on Exports, Cess on Crude Oil, Health and

Education Cess, Road and Infrastructure Cess, Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess, National Calamity Contingent Duty on Tobacco and Tobacco Products and the GST Compensation Cess.

- And in February, Finance Minister introduced a new cess — a Health Cess of 5% on imported medical devices — in the Finance Bill for 2020-2021.

Topic 25: Human challenge trial

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



In January, London will begin the world's first human challenge trial. Participants will be vaccinated with a candidate vaccine and then wilfully exposed to novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) a month or so later. Over 38,000 people from 166 countries have already volunteered to participate in such studies.

- Human challenge trials are **trials in which participants are intentionally challenged (whether or not they have been vaccinated) with an infectious disease organism.**
- This challenge organism may be **close to wild-type and pathogenic**, adapted and/or attenuated from wild-type with less or no pathogenicity, or genetically modified in some manner.
- Human challenge trials have been **performed safely in tens of**

thousands of people in the last 50 years and have helped accelerate the development of vaccines against typhoid and cholera. Such a study was also conducted for Zika virus.

- The yellow fever experiments conducted in the early 1900s helped prove that mosquitoes transmit the virus causing yellow fever. The human-challenge studies have generally been used for testing less deadly diseases such as influenza, dengue, typhoid, cholera and malaria.
- In May the WHO approved human challenge trials and NIH too is developing two viral strains through Colorado State University that can be used in human challenge trials.

Topic 26: Disinvestment

Importance for Prelims: Economy

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DISINVESTMENT

- Minority Disinvestment: A minority disinvestment is one such that, at the end of it, the government retains a majority stake in the company, typically greater than 51%, thus ensuring management control.
- Majority Disinvestment: A majority disinvestment is one in which the government, post disinvestment, retains a minority stake in the company i.e. it sells off a majority stake.
- Complete Privatisation: Complete privatisation is a form of majority disinvestment wherein 100% control of the company is passed on to a buyer.

The strategic sale of four public sector units to other public sector entities in 2018-19 by the Central government has been sharply criticised by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in an audit, tabled in Parliament.

- Disinvestment means **sale or liquidation of assets by the government**, usually Central and state public sector enterprises, projects, or other fixed assets.
- The government undertakes disinvestment **to reduce the fiscal burden on the exchequer, or to raise money for meeting**

specific needs, such as to bridge the revenue shortfall from other regular sources. In some cases, disinvestment may be done to privatise assets.

- However, **not all disinvestment is privatisation.**
- Some of the benefits of disinvestment are that it can be helpful in the long-term growth of the country; it allows the government and even the company to reduce debt. Disinvestment allows a larger share of PSU ownership in the open market, which in turn allows for the development of a strong capital market in India.
- There is a separate department under the Ministry of Finance which handles all disinvestment-related works for the government.
- On 10 December 1999, the Department of Disinvestment was set up as a separate department and later renamed as **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management.**
- **Disinvestment targets are set under each Union Budget**, and every year the targets change. The government takes the final decision on whether to raise the divestment target or not.
- As per the latest policy, **disinvestment now covers two types: (1) disinvestment through minority stake sale and (2) strategic disinvestment.**
- Public Sector Undertakings are the wealth of the Nation and to ensure this wealth rests in the hands of the people, promote public ownership of CPSEs; In the case of disinvestment

through minority stake (share) sale in listed CPSEs, the Government will retain majority shareholding, i.e. at least 51 per cent of the shareholding and management control of the Public Sector Undertakings; Strategic disinvestment by way of sale of substantial portion of Government shareholding in identified CPSEs up to 50 per cent or more, along with transfer of management control.

Topic 27: Health in India

Importance for Prelims: Economy

The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** has released the report of a survey titled **‘Health in India’**, whose main objective was to gather basic quantitative information on India’s health sector.

- The report is **based on information collected through NSS Schedule 25.0** (Household Social Consumption: Health) spread over the entire Indian Union.
- The survey defines ailment as any deviation from a person’s state of physical and mental well-being. The **‘Proportion of Persons who Responded as Ailing’, or PPRA**, in a 15-day period when they were approached by the surveyors, were registered as those suffering from ailments.
- The survey shows that **women remain more susceptible to suffering from ailments than men**. In rural India 6.1 per cent of males said that they were suffering from ailments, while 7.6 per cent of rural women said the same. While 8.2 per cent of urban males said that they were sick, 10 per cent urban females said the same.
- Around 7.5 percent of Indians reported that they were suffering from ailments, as per the survey. The difference in people suffering from ailments in rural and urban India was stark.
- While in rural India only 6.8 per cent said that they were

suffering from an ailment, this number in urban India was 9.1 per cent.

Topic 28: Sandalwood Spike Disease

Importance for Prelims: Environment



India's sandalwood trees are facing a serious threat with the return of the destructive Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD).

- It is caused by **phytoplasma (bacterial parasites of plant tissues)** which are transmitted by insect vectors.
- Sandal spike phytoplasma is a **pleomorphic microorganism and are the smallest organism capable of independent replication** (i.e. does not need a host). The pathogen is around 0.4 to 1.0 micrometer in diameter, has a cell membrane, ribosome and DNA.
- Natural population of sandalwood in Marayoor of Kerala and various reserve forests in Karnataka are heavily infected with

SSD for which there is no cure as of now.

- Presently, there is **no option but to cut down and remove the infected tree to prevent the spread of the disease.**
- SSD has been **one of the major causes for the decline in sandalwood production in the country for over a century.**

The disease was first reported in Kodagu in 1899

- The devastating impact in natural habitats resulted in **sandalwood being classified as “vulnerable” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature in 1998.**

Topic 29: JIMEX-20

Importance for Prelims: IR

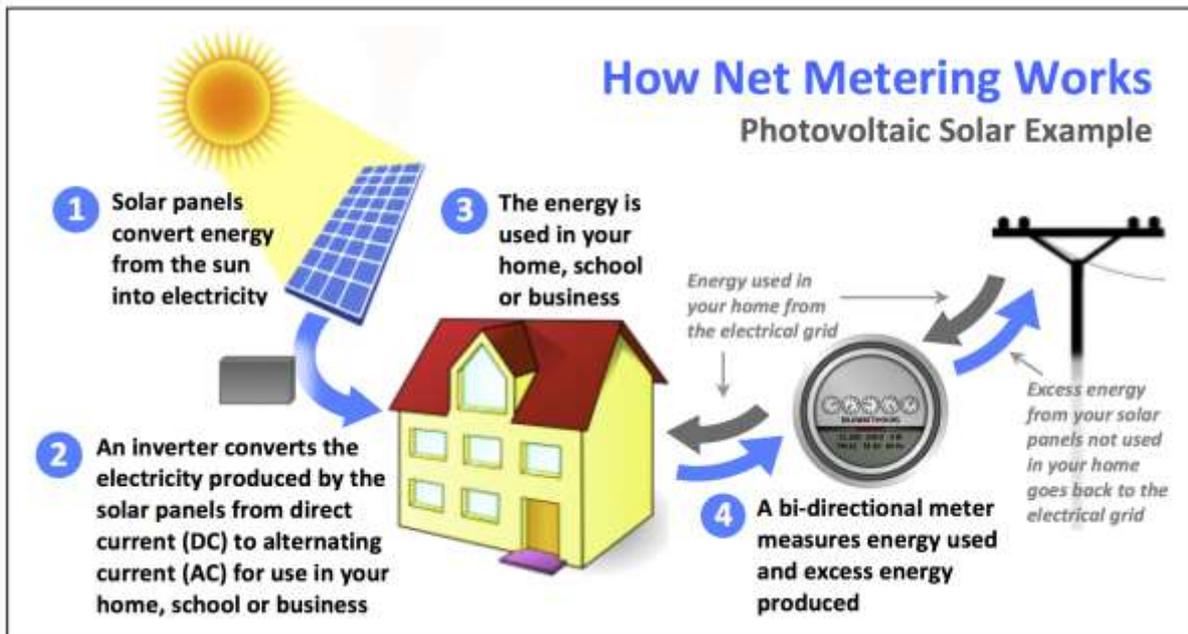


The 4th edition of the **biennial India and Japan naval exercise** is under way in the North Arabian Sea

- The maritime cooperation has significantly increased between the two sides with **focus on information sharing and Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)** in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and Indo-Pacific.
- JIMEX-20 will showcase **high degree of inter-operability and joint operational skills** through conduct of a multitude of advanced exercises, across the spectrum of maritime operations.
- Multi-faceted tactical exercises involving weapon firings, cross-deck helicopter operations and complex surface, anti-submarine and air warfare drills will consolidate coordination developed by the two navies, it said.

Topic 30: Net metering

Importance for Prelims: Schemes



States and Union Territories have adopted ‘net metering’ for Roof Top Solar projects

- Net Metering is a **system that gives solar energy owners credits for the power that they add to the grid.**
- When solar panels produce excess power, that power is sent to the grid. And this power can be ‘taken back’ when the solar plants are not functioning – example, during the night.
- When a unit of solar energy that has been ‘net metered’, the **bi-directional electricity meter will run backwards.** Customers are billed only for the ‘net’ energy used.

Topic 31: Food fortification

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



Food Safety and Standards
Authority of India

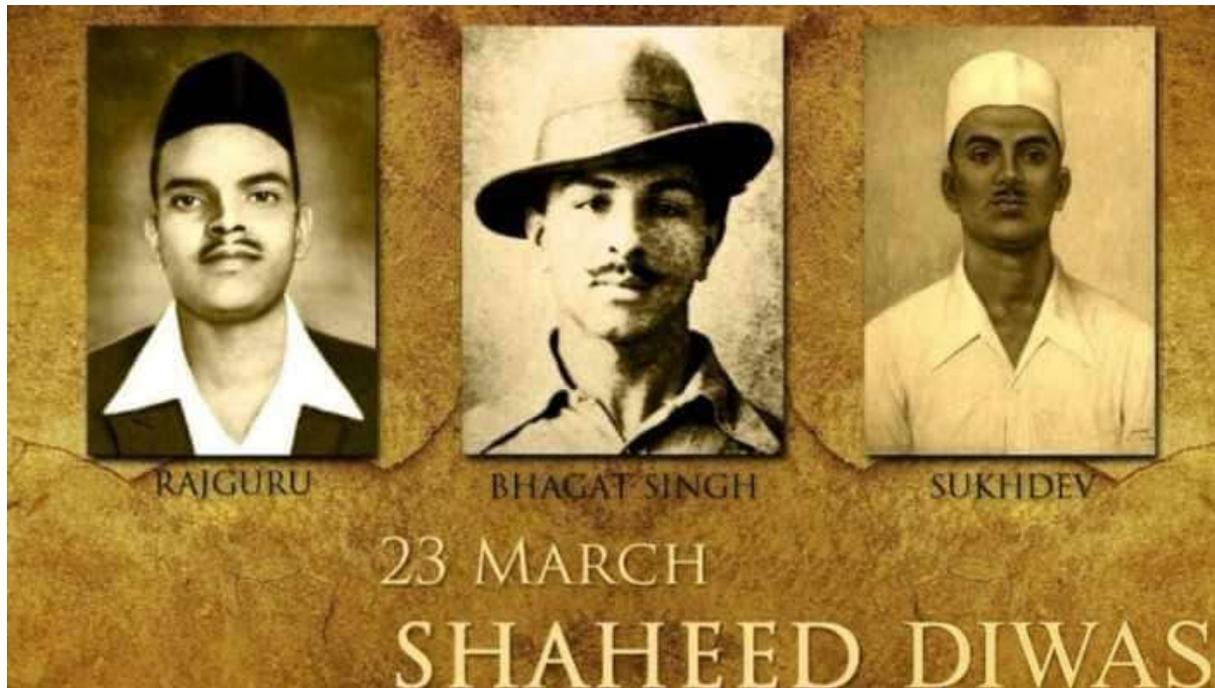
FSSAI considering to make fortification of edible oil with Vitamin A, D mandatory

- **Food fortification** – also known as **food enrichment** is when **nutrients are added to food at higher levels than what the original food provides.**
- This is done to **address micronutrient deficiencies** across populations, countries and regions.
- Governments working with industry, international agencies and NGOs have used this method to **help reduce and eliminate micronutrient deficiencies in their populations.**
- Fortification of centrally-processed staple foods is a simple, affordable and viable approach to reach large sections of a country's population with iron, folic acid, and other essential micronutrients.

- Adding micronutrients to common staple foods can significantly improve the nutritional quality of the food supply and improve public health with minimal risk.
- The foods most commonly fortified are **salt, wheat, corn, rice, bouillon cubes, soya sauce and other condiments.**

Topic 32: Bhagat Singh

Importance for Prelims: History



Prime Minister and Union Home Minister paid tributes to freedom fighter Bhagat Singh on his 113th birth anniversary.

- Bhagat Singh was born in Punjab, India (now Pakistan), on September 27, 1907, to a Sikh family deeply involved in political activities. He quit school at thirteen to devote his life to Indian independence.
- He became involved in **several violent demonstrations of political defiance and was arrested several times.**
- By the time Bhagat Singh was 13, he was well familiar with this family's revolutionary activities. His father was a supporter of Mahatma Gandhi, and **after Gandhi called for boycotting government-aided institutions, Singh left school and enrolled**

in the National College at Lahore, where he studied European revolutionary movements.

- In time, **he would become disenchanted with Gandhi's non-violent crusade**, believing that armed conflict was the only way to political freedom.
- In 1926, Bhagat Singh **founded the 'Naujawan Bharat Sabha (Youth Society of India)** and joined the **Hindustan Republican Association** (later known as Hindustan Socialist Republican Association), where he met several prominent revolutionaries.
- In 1928, the British government held the Simon Commission to discuss autonomy for the Indian people. Several Indian political organizations boycotted the event because the Commission had no Indian representatives.
- **In October, Bhagat Singh's comrade, Lala Lajpat Rai led a march in protest against the Commission.**
- To avenge death, **Bhagat Singh and two others plotted to kill the police superintendent**, but instead shot and killed police officer John P. Saunders.
- Singh and his fellow conspirators escaped arrest despite a massive search to apprehend them.
- In April 1929, **Bhagat Singh and an associate bombed the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi to protest implementation of the Public Safety Bill.** The bombs they

carried allegedly were not intended to kill but to scare (no one was killed, though there were some injuries). The bombers planned to get arrested and stand trial so they could further promote their cause.

- The actions of the young revolutionaries were soundly condemned by followers of Gandhi, but **Bhagat Singh was delighted to have a stage on which to promote his cause.** He offered no defense during the trial but disrupted the proceedings with rants of political dogma. He was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.
- Through further investigation, the police discovered the connection between Bhagat Singh and the murder of Officer Saunders and he was rearrested. While awaiting trial, he led a hunger strike in prison. Eventually, **Singh and his coconspirators were tried and sentenced to hang. He was executed on March 23, 1931.**

Topic 33: India Denmark green strategic partnership

Importance for Prelims: IR



India and Denmark elevated their relations to a “green strategic partnership” that will **focus on expanding economic ties, green growth and cooperation on global challenges** such as climate change.

- The new “green strategic partnership” will build on an **existing Joint Commission for Cooperation, created in 2009**, for cooperation in politics, economics and commerce, science and technology, energy, environment and education.
- It will also complement existing joint working groups on renewable energy, urban development, agriculture, innovation, shipping, labour mobility and digitisation.
- A **time-bound action plan would be drawn up with specific**

targets for the next few years. Danish companies with niche technologies and expertise have offered to help India in meeting its air pollution control targets, including in the key area of tackling the problem of burning crop stubble

- Two sides also agreed to hold regular consultations on climate change and renewable energy and to cooperate in water efficiency and water loss, with the Jal Shakti ministry and the Danish Environmental Protection Agency and Danish environment ministry being tasked to develop a work plan for 2021-23.

Topic 34: Himalayan Chandra Telescope

Importance for Prelims: Science and Technology



Himalayan Chandra Telescope celebrates 20th birthday

- The 2-m Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) at the Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO), **Saraswati, Digpa-ratsaRi, Hanle at an altitude of 4500 m (15000 ft) above msl** is operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bangalore.
- It is remotely operated using a dedicated satellite communication link from the Centre for Research & Education in Science & Technology (CREST), Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Hosakote, about 35 km northeast of Bangalore.
- The area of research covers a wide range of topics, **from solar system objects to cosmology.**
- Some of the thrust research areas are the study of solar system bodies like; comets, asteroids, the study of star formation

processes and young stellar objects, the study of open and globular clusters and variable stars in them, abundance analysis of elements in the atmosphere of evolved stars, star formation in external galaxies, Active Galactic Nuclei, stellar explosions like novae, supernovae, gamma-ray bursts and so on.

- The telescope has been used in many coordinated international campaigns to monitor stellar explosions, comets, and exoplanets, and has contributed significantly to these studies.

Topic 35: NIA

Importance for Prelims: Government organisation



The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sanctioned three additional branches of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to be located at Imphal, Chennai and Ranchi.

- NIA was constituted under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 as the aftermath of the Mumbai Terror attack of 2008.
- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) **acts as the Central Counter- Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.** The agency is authorised to investigate any terror-related matter across the country without special permission of the states.
- The National Investigation Agency aims to be a **thoroughly professional investigative agency matching the best international standards.**
- The NIA aims to set the standards of excellence in counter terrorism and other national security related investigations at the

national level by developing into a highly trained, partnership oriented workforce.

- NIA aims at creating deterrence for existing and potential terrorist groups/individuals. It aims to develop as a storehouse of all terrorist related information.

Topic 36: Arogyapath

Importance for Prelims: Initiative



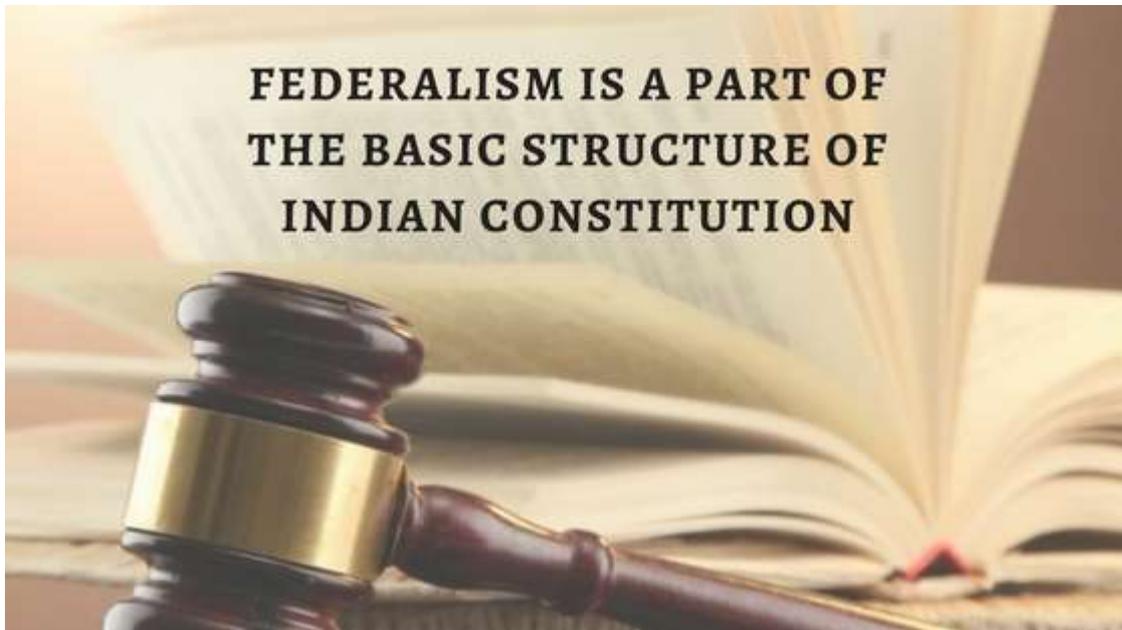
Union minister unveils ICMR's History Timeline and launches Vaccine Web portal, National Clinical Registry of COVID-19 and Mobile Stroke Unit

- Arogyapath, an integrated public platform that provides single-point availability of key healthcare goods can be helpful to customers in tackling a number of routinely experienced issues like dependence on limited suppliers, time-consuming processes to identify good quality products, limited access to suppliers who can supply standardized products at reasonable prices within desired timelines, lack of awareness about the latest product launches, etc.

- It also **helps manufacturers and suppliers to reach a wide network of customers efficiently, overcoming gaps in connectivity between them and potential demand centers** like nearby pathological laboratories, medical stores, hospitals, etc. It will also create opportunities for business expansion due to an expanded slate of buyers and visibility of new requirements for products.
- Over time, **analytics from this platform is expected to generate early signals to manufacturers on over capacity as well as on looming shortages.**
- This would help to reduce wastage of resources due to inefficient forecasting and excess manufacturing, generate awareness about the demand for new technologies.

Topic 37: Farm bills and federalism

Importance for Prelims: Polity



President gave assent to the farm Bills passed by Parliament last week. Amid protests by farmers' organisations across the country, **Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and Punjab have said they might not implement the new laws**, Kerala and Punjab have declared their intention to challenge them in the Supreme Court.

- Federalism essentially means both the **Centre and states have the freedom to operate in their allotted spheres of power**, in coordination with each other.
- The Seventh Schedule of the Constitution contains **three lists that distribute power between the Centre and states**.
- There are 97 subjects in the Union List, on which Parliament has exclusive power to legislate (Article 246); the State List has 66

items on which states alone can legislate; the Concurrent List has 47 subjects on which both the Centre and states can legislate, but in case of a conflict, the law made by Parliament prevails (Article 254).

- **Parliament can legislate on an item in the State List under certain specific circumstances laid down in the Constitution.**
- **As per Union of India v H.S.Dhillon (1972), constitutionality of parliamentary laws can be challenged only on two grounds — that the subject is in the State List, or that it violates fundamental rights.**
- Terms relating to agriculture occur at 15 places in the Seventh Schedule.
- **Entries 82, 86, 87, and 88 in the Union List mention taxes and duties on income and assets, specifically excluding those in respect of agriculture.**

In the State List, eight entries contain terms relating to agriculture:

- Entry 14 (agricultural education and research, pests, plant diseases); 18 (rights in or over land, land tenures, rents, transfer agricultural land, agricultural loans, etc.); 28 (markets and fairs); 30 (agricultural indebtedness); 45 (land revenue, land records, etc.); 46 (taxes on agricultural income); 47 (succession of agricultural land); and 48 (estate duty in respect of agricultural land).

- In the Concurrent List, **Entry 6 mentions transfer of property other than agricultural land; 7 is about various contracts not relating to agricultural land; and 41 deals with evacuee property, including agricultural land.**
- It is clear that the **Union List and Concurrent List put matters relating to agriculture outside Parliament's jurisdiction, and give state legislatures exclusive power.** No entry in respect of agriculture in the State List is subject to any entry in the Union or Concurrent Lists.
- **Entry 33 of the Concurrent List mentions trade and commerce, production, supply and distribution of domestic and imported products of an industry over which Parliament has control in the public interest; foodstuffs, including oilseeds and oils; cattle fodder; raw cotton and jute.**
- **The Centre could, therefore, argue that it is within its powers to pass laws on contract farming and intra- and inter-state trade, and prohibit states from imposing fees/cesses outside APMC areas.**