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News Analysis (31 May, 2019)

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World No Tobacco Day

Every year, on 31st May, the World Health Organization (WHO) and global partners celebrate World No Tobacco Day (WNTD). The annual campaign is an opportunity to raise awareness on the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco use and second-hand smoke exposure, and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form.

Focus of WNTD

The focus of World No Tobacco Day 2019 is on "Tobacco and Lung Health." The campaign will increase awareness on:

- Negative impact that tobacco has on people's lung health, from cancer to chronic respiratory disease,
- The fundamental role lungs play for the health and well-being

Functions of lungs

In addition to gas exchange, respiratory system performs other roles important to breathing. These include:

- Bringing air to the proper body temperature and moisturizing it to the right humidity level.
- Protecting the body from harmful substances through coughing, sneezing, filtering or swallowing them.
- Supporting sense of smell.

Disease caused by tobacco use

- Lung Cancer
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)

- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Asthma
- Reproductive Effects in Women
- Premature, Low Birth-Weight Babies
- Diabetes
- Blindness, Cataracts and Age-Related Macular Degeneration
- Vulnerability to over 10 types of cancer, including colon, cervix, liver, stomach and pancreatic Cancer

Chemicals in tobacco

Tobacco smoke is made up of thousands of chemicals, including at least 70 known to cause cancer.

Some of the chemicals found in tobacco smoke include:

- Nicotine (the addictive drug that produces the effect people are looking for and one of the harshest chemicals in tobacco smoke)
- Hydrogen cyanide
- Formaldehyde
- Lead
- Arsenic
- Ammonia
- Radioactive elements, such as uranium
- Benzene
- Carbon monoxide
- Nitrosamines
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)

WHO award for Rajasthan Health Department in tobacco check

The World Health Organization has selected the Rajasthan government's Medical & Health Department for its award this year in recognition of its achievements in the field of tobacco control.

The Medical & Health Department launched several campaigns against tobacco consumption at places such as schools, colleges, police stations and government offices during 2018-19.

Status of tobacco uses in India

India-Kyrgyzstan

The President of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbay Jeenbekov, who holds the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, was the guest at the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister of India. India is likely to extend a \$ 100 million line of credit to Kyrgyzstan to enable the transfer of defence equipment.

The Central Asian Republic has shared a request for defence equipment from India, taking the strategic relationship beyond the current level of bilateral exercises and the construction of a joint mountain warfare training centre in the city of Balykchy (Kyrgyzstan).

Bilateral Relations

- **India enjoys strong bilateral ties with Kyrgyzstan since 1991** when the country was declared an independent nation.
- India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic ties with independent Kyrgyzstan in 1992.

- Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, the two countries have signed several framework agreements, including on Culture, Trade and Economic Cooperation, Civil Aviation, Investment Promotion and Protection, Avoidance of Double Taxation, Consular Convention etc.
- **In 2011, the joint 'Khanjar' series of exercises was started.**
- The commercial trade between India and Kyrgyzstan was \$24.98 million in 2016-17. Indian exports to Kyrgyzstan in that fiscal year stood at \$22.66 million while Kyrgyzstan's exports to India stood at \$2.32 million.
 - Apparel and clothing, leather goods, drugs and pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, and tea are some of the important items from our export basket to Kyrgyzstan.
 - Kyrgyz exports to India includes raw hides, metalliferous ores and metal scrap.
- Indian diaspora in Kyrgyzstan- about 9,000 Indian students are studying medicine in various medical institutions in the country. Also, there are many businessmen living in Kyrgyzstan who are involved in trade and several other services there.
- **The Kyrgyz leaderships have been largely supportive of India's stand on Kashmir. They also support India's bid for a permanent seat at the UNSC and India's role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).**
- Recent initiatives by India to fast-track the construction, operationalisation, simplification and streamlining of procedures for transport over the **International North-South Transport Corridor as well as construction of the Chabahar sea-port and its hinterland will go a long way in improving connectivity between the two countries.**

Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia

- Kyrgyzstan is a **country in Central Asia** which is bounded by Kazakhstan on the northwest and north, by China on the east and south, and by Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on the south and west. The capital is **Bishkek**.
 - Kyrgyzstan shares the Fergana valley with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. **The valley is home to several terrorist groups like Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Hizb-ut-Tahtir (HuT) and others which can cause instability.** They are prone to increasingly indulge in violent acts if Taliban expands its presence from beyond the borders of Afghanistan.
 - The Central Asia region (CAR) is **rich in minerals, especially hydrocarbons.**
 - India as an extended neighbour of CAR has major geostrategic and economic interests in this region.
 - The future prospects for cooperation between Central Asia and India in the field of **energy security** seem to be very important. **Peace and stability in CAR and Afghanistan seems to be the most crucial factor for India's security.**
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Water Conservation: Traditional Approach

According to experts, **traditional knowledge of water conservation** is the only sustainable way to counter the dangers of National Water Emergency.

India with its rich culture and heritage in terms of images, rituals, traditional knowledge to conserve water, cultural practices and metaphors on water wisdom can suffice the efforts of water conservation in a traditional way by using cultural images on water, ancient practices and work by water warriors to affirm the value of traditional heritage on water wisdom.

Traditional ways of water conservation

Women's Role: In ancient times, women were considered as the gatekeepers of water ecologies and were responsible for:

- **Building water bodies like** step-wells, tanks and even ponds such as the world heritage site of Queens Step-well (Rani Ki Vav) in Patan, Gujarat, and the Rani and Padam Sagar in Jodhpur, Tank Nagamandala in Karnataka.
- **Cleaning and Maintenance** of water bodies
- **Performance of dances and songs like:**
 - Girja Devi singing the story of a woman making her way to fetch water.
 - Tales of Vidyadhari Bai of Varanasi practising to capture in her voice the friction of the rope against the stone wall of the well.
 - Songs like "Ganga Geet" in Uttarakhand.
 - Bhawai dance of Rajasthan.

Performance of water rituals like:

- Worship of water body.
- Jal yatras on Bhagwat pooja.
- Jal yagya etc.

Sacred aspect: of water bodies can utilised for cleaning and maintenance water bodies.

- Like in **Uttarakhand** it is believed that the **water spirit (masaan)** is present in all irrigation channels and he needs to be mollified to protect the crops.
- **Rajasthan's pre-monsoon ritual** called **Lasipa** ensures gathering, cleaning, and desilting of all water bodies by all villagers.
- During fertility festivals of **Gangaur and Akkha Teej**, women come together to clean lakes and tanks.

Tribal Practices: Irrigation of the paddy fields in the entire **Ziro valley** (where the main source of water for households and irrigation is from a single small river and some spring wells) is carried out through a network of irrigation canals.

Heritage knowledge: On irrigation is also practised in the remote cold desert of Spiti.

The **Khuls (channels)** are designed to carry long distances the water from glaciers to villages. On reaching a village the water falls in a central tank and the use is regulated by the community.

Traditional water knowledge

- **Rain water harvesting** such as building tanks.
- **Rejwani** system where water percolates through sand, settles on the gypsum layer, and is brought for use by a complex capillary system called **Beri**.
- **Patali pani** which are the deep aquifers that is determined by geological formation.

Community ownership: Traditionally, the water management was a community responsibility.

- **Neeruganti in Karnataka** was a person who controlled and managed distribution of water.
 - System of water ownership is still prevalent in **Spiti and Arunachal** and few desert areas.
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AIIMS to Set up Multiple Sclerosis Clinic

First multiple sclerosis clinic will be opened at AIIMS, for better diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

- Although disease is deemed to be more prevalent in the West, but the number of cases is on the rise in India.
- Young adults in the age group of **20-40 years**, specially **females** are most vulnerable to Multiple sclerosis.
- In India, there is a great need for increased awareness, large-scale epidemiological studies, dedicated MS clinics, optimum rehabilitation services.

About Multiple Sclerosis

- MS is an **immune-mediated disease** in which the body's **immune system** **mistakenly attacks myelin** (fatty substance that surrounds and insulates the nerve fibers), nerve fibers, and the specialized cells that make myelin in the central nervous system.
- It affects the **central nervous system**, especially the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves.

Symptoms: Since symptoms are common, people don't often recognise the disease early and often takes many years for someone to be diagnosed, as it is impossible to determine a specific cause or trigger.

- Muscle weakness and Numbness
- Bladder problems: A person may have difficulty emptying their bladder or need to urinate frequently or suddenly
- Loss of bladder control is an early sign of MS
- Bowel problems
- Fatigue, Dizziness
- Damaged nerve fibers in the spinal cord
- Blurred or double Vision problem
- Emotional changes and depression, Cognitive loss

Causes: The exact cause of the disease is unknown and it could be a combination of:

- Genetic factors: Susceptibility may pass down in the genes.
- Smoking and Stress
- Vitamin D and B12 deficiency
- Environmental factors: Poor hygiene possibly develops protective immunity. This might explain the higher frequency of MS in the Parsi population of India who have higher standards of hygiene and better sanitary conditions at home.

Diagnosis: Can be diagnosed with **blood tests and MRI**.

Treatment: MS doesn't require any surgical treatment and can be cured through drugs and medicines.

Summer Ragas

The world still remembers ragas for spring but has forgotten summer ragas. **A raga is defined as a collection of musical notes which are arranged in a particular order and scale with specific melodic movements.** In **northern India**, ragas are classified according to such characteristics as **mood, season** and **time**; in **southern India**, ragas are grouped by the **technical traits of their scales**.

Ragas associated with Indian summer (grishma) season

- **Raga Marwa:** It is sung during the late afternoon hours up to sunset.
- **Raga Sarang:** It, in all its forms, is another raga associated with the heat, to be sung when the heat of the day is at its peak. Its melody particularly remain oriented to the summer season.

- **The dhruvad style "Haveli Sangeet".**

Dhrupad

- The word Dhrupad is derived from **Dhruva**, the steadfast **evening star** that moves through the galaxy, and **Pada** meaning **poetry**.
- It is a form of devotional music that traces its **origin to the ancient text of Samveda**.
- Though a highly developed classical art with elaborate aesthetics, it is also **primarily a form of worship**, in which offerings are made to the divine through sound or Nada.
- One significant characteristic of Dhrupad is the **emphasis on maintaining the purity of the Raga**.

Haveli Sangeet

- **Haveli Sangeet is temple music practiced by the Vaishnavites of Nathdwara in Rajasthan.**
Nathdwara is the main seat of the Vaishnava devotional cult which created a rich historical tradition of temple-based music.
- **'Haveli' here is referred to a palace that the deity chooses to live in.**
- **In comparison to Dhrupad, Haveli Sangeet**, as it is known in Rajasthan and Gujarat, claimed **superior resilience** as it was believed that **Lord Krishna himself was the very audience for its performances**.
- In this music practice, the very essence of the song revolves around Krishna Bhakti and is sung in the form of Kirtans, Bhajans and Bhava Nritya.
- Known to incorporate a fusion of classical and folk music, the dominant style of singing is still Dhrupad and Dhamar (a taal).
- The temples of Radha Vallabh at **Vrindavan**, Krishna at **Nandgaon**, Shri Radha Rani at **Barsana**, and Sri Nathji at **Nathdwara** are all known to reverberate with **Haveli Sangeet**.
- In Gujarat, one school of thought holds that **Indian classical music has its origins in the Haveli Sangeet of Vallabha Acharya, a pioneer in this genre**.

Vallabhacharya

- It is a school of Hinduism **prominent among the merchant class of northern and western India**.
- Its members are **worshippers of Krishna and followers of the Pushtimarg** (Way of Flourishing) group, **founded by the 16th century teacher Vallabha** and his son Vitthala (also known as Gosainji).
- The Vallabhacharya sect is renowned for the degree of devotion paid to its gurus (spiritual leaders), who are considered earthly embodiments of the god.
- The main temple of the sect is at Nathdwara, in Rajasthan state, where there is a

distinctive image of the Lord Krishna called Shri-Nathaji.

Election Commission Recommendations

The nine working groups set up by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to suggest improvements in specific areas, based on their experience during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, had submitted a total of 337 recommendations, of which 300 have been disposed of so far.

Recommendations

On Candidates

- Drafting of legal provisions to **disqualify candidates for offences with a minimum of five years' punishment on framing of charges, rather than on conviction.**
 - Currently, under **Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act (RPA)**, any **person convicted** and sentenced to imprisonment for the listed offences **is disqualified** from the date of conviction and remains disqualified for a further period of six years after his release.
 - Listed offences include import or export of prohibited goods, adulteration of food drugs, practice of untouchability, terrorist acts, corruption etc.
- The punishment for filing false affidavits be increased from six months to more than two years and that **candidates found guilty of corruption, disloyalty and heinous crimes be permanently disqualified.**
- A candidate contesting a different election should resign from the current seat.

On Election Process

- With respect to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), a working group had suggested amendments **empowering the Commission to issue notice to a party for necessary corrections in its manifesto.**
 - It also suggested for the **setting up of courts to adjudicate electoral offences** and disallowing the use of government designations for the purposes of political publicity.
- In order to constrict the duration of the election process, under the community legal demographic profiling and election time zones system, factors like weather, examination schedules and festivals should be mapped in each State to facilitate the scheduling of polls.
- Standardisation of Electors' Photo Identity Card numbers, setting up of fast-track courts for speedy resolution of expenditure-related matters.

On Political Parties

A major recommendation is for **drafting a comprehensive bill that deals with registration, recognition and funding of political parties.**

- The number of members required for the registration of a party should be increased from 100 to 1,000.
 - Parties that do not field any candidate in elections should be de-registered.
 - Legal provisions should be drawn to regulate funding.
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Important Facts For Prelims (31st May 2019)

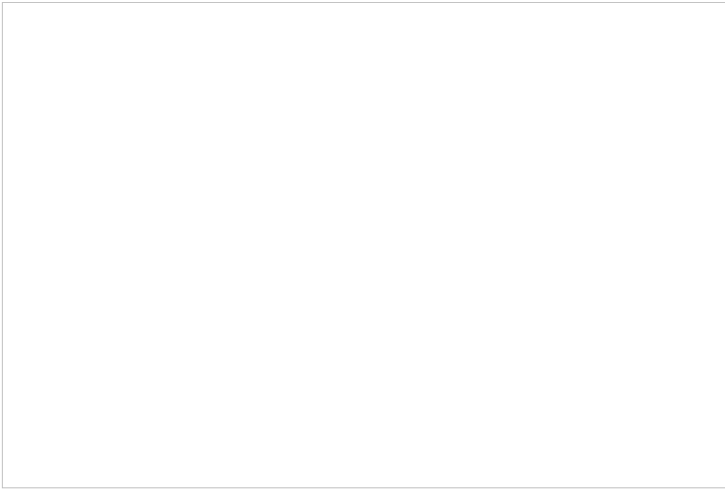
NGTS-4b

Astronomers have discovered a rogue **exoplanet** with its own atmosphere in the **Neptunian Desert.**

- NGTS-4b, nick-named '**The Forbidden Planet**' is smaller than Neptune but three times the size of Earth.
 - The exoplanet has a mass of 20 Earth masses, a radius 20 per cent smaller than Neptune, and temperature of 1000 degrees Celsius.
 - It orbits around the star in only 1.3 days — the equivalent of Earth's orbit around the Sun of one year.
 - It is the first exoplanet of its kind to have been found in the Neptunian Desert.
- **Neptunian Desert:** is the region close to stars where no Neptune-sized planets are found.
 - This area receives strong irradiation from the star. The planets do not retain their gaseous atmosphere as they evaporate leaving just a rocky core.
 - It is believed that the planet may have moved into the Neptunian Desert recently, in the last one million years. It was very big and the atmosphere is still evaporating.
 - This planet must be tough, it is right in the zone where we expected Neptune-sized planets could not survive.
- **Exoplanet Planets:** orbit around other stars in outer space. Exoplanets are very hard to see directly with telescopes. They are hidden by the bright glare of the stars they orbit.

Kalbelia Dance

- Kalbelia dances are an expression of the Kalbelia community's traditional way of life.



- **Location:** The largest number of the population of Kalbelias is in Pali district, then Ajmer, Chittorgarh and Udaipur district.
- **Nomadic life:** Once professional **snake handlers**, Kalbelia today evoke their former occupation in music and dance that is evolving in new and creative ways.
They live a nomadic life and belong to the scheduled tribes.
- **Instruments:** Women in flowing black skirts dance and swirl, replicating the movements of a serpent, while men accompany them on the "**khanjari**" instrument and the "**poongi**", a woodwind instrument traditionally played to capture snakes.
 - The dancers wear **traditional tattoo designs**, jewellery and garments richly embroidered with small mirrors and silver thread.
 - Kalbelia songs disseminate **mythological knowledge** through stories, while special traditional dances are performed during Holi, the festival of colours.
- The songs also demonstrate the **poetic acumen** of the Kalbelia, who are reputed to compose lyrics spontaneously and improvise songs during performances.
 - Transmitted from generation to generation, the songs and dances form part of an **oral tradition** for which no texts or training manuals exist.
 - Song and dance are a matter of pride for the Kalbelia community and a marker of their identity at a time when their traditional travelling lifestyle and role in rural society are diminishing.
- They demonstrate their community's attempt to revitalize its cultural heritage and adapt it to changing socioeconomic conditions.

Wellbeing Budget

- **New Zealand** became the first country to unveil its "**wellbeing**" budget.
 - Factors, such as life expectancy, education levels, air quality and "a sense of belonging" were included in the budget.
 - There will be increased spending on mental health, indigenous welfare and child poverty in a budget.
- Many other nations have adopted similar concepts but the New Zealand attempt is being touted as the first time it has been at the core of a government's spending

decisions.

- The idea of wellbeing budget is 2nd such innovative step after, the Himalayan kingdom of **Bhutan** first floated the idea of **prioritising happiness over growth** in the early 1970s and introduced a **Gross National Happiness Index in 2008**.
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