



News Analysis (12 May, 2020)

 drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/12-05-2020/print

SC Refuses to Restore 4G Services in J&K

Why in News

Recently, the Supreme Court **refused to restore 4G services in Jammu & Kashmir** and ordered **setting up of a high-powered committee** to look into the contentions raised by petitioners against limited 2G services in the Union Territory.

- In August 2019, the Central government had suspended all modes of communications in the wake of **revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, granted under Article 370**. Eventually, services were partially restored, with internet speed restricted to 2G.
- A plea was filed by 'Foundation for Media Professionals' for restoration of high-speed internet in Jammu and Kashmir in view of the **Covid-19** situation.

Key Points

- **Balance of Human Rights and National Security:** The Court ruled that the special circumstances occur in the Union Territory which requires **delicate balancing of national security concerns and human rights**.
- **Reference to the Previous Judgement:** The bench also referred to its earlier decision in the **Anuradha Bhasin case (2020)** wherein it ordered **review of restrictions placed in J&K** in the wake of abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

- **Constitution of Special Committee:**

- The bench ordered the constitution of a Special Committee, headed by the Union Home Secretary, **to determine the necessity of the continuation of limiting mobile Internet to 2G speed in the region.**
- The committee is expected to suggest the **alternatives regarding limiting the restrictions** to those areas where it is necessary and the **possible ways of allowing faster Internet (3G or 4G)** on a trial basis over certain geographical areas.

Need of 4G and National Security

- **Need of 4G in the wake of Covid-19 Pandemic:**

- **Health:** 4G services are necessary to provide access to the medical fraternity including patients to access latest information, advisories, and guidelines.
- **Education:** The petition also argued that the schools across the country have shifted to online classes in view of the lockdown but lack of the 4G internet puts J&K students at a disadvantage.
- **Trade and Business :** The lower internet service speed has also affected businesses dependent on the online mode.

- **National Security Concerns:**

- An issue of infiltration of outside sources through the borders and destabilizing the integrity of the nation was raised during the hearing.
- Even the J&K administration stated that high-speed internet will enable the spread of fake news/rumours and transfer of heavy data files (audio/video files) will become prevalent and may be utilised by terror outfits for incitement as also in planning attacks.

Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India (2020)

- **Fundamental Rights Under Article 19 :**

- The judgement declared that the **freedom of speech and expression** and the **freedom to practice any profession** or carry on any trade, business or occupation **over the medium of Internet enjoys constitutional protection under Article 19(1)(a) and Article 19(1)(g)** respectively.
- It also ruled that such freedom is **not absolute**, the restrictions imposed on it should be in consonance with the mandate under **Article 19(2) and Article 19(6) of the Constitution.**

- **Territorial Extent of Internet Suspensions:**

It had also directed authorities to pass internet suspension orders with respect to **only those areas, where there is absolute necessity of such restrictions to be imposed.**

- **Constitution of Review Committee:**

- The Court also directed the government **to constitute a review committee** to review orders **leading to suspension and shutting down of Internet, mobile and fixed line telecommunication services.**
 - All orders leading to suspension and shutting down of Internet, mobile and fixed line telecommunication services are issued under **Rule 2 (2) of the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services [Public Emergency or Public Service] Rules, 2017.**
 - These are the rules to be followed if the government intends to temporarily suspend telecom services in any part of the country.
 - These rules have been framed by the government on the basis of the powers conferred by **section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.**
- The Review Committee shall consist of **State as well as Central level officials** as the issue involved affects not only the UT of Jammu and Kashmir but also the whole country.

Source:IE

Use of TB Drugs on Crops

Why in News

Recently, the Registration Committee (RC) under the **Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee (CIBRC)** has recommended to ban the use of **antibiotics streptomycin and tetracycline.**

Key Points

- The RC recommended to **ban antibiotics streptomycin and tetracycline with immediate effect** on crops where **other options are available** for bacterial disease control.
- Where **no alternatives** are available, use of these antibiotics should be **phased out by 2022-end.** Till then, the antibiotics could be used on crops strictly as per the label claim i.e. streptomycin sulphate (9%) and tetracycline hydrochloride (1%).
- The RC acknowledged that diseases in crops can be managed by using **integrated pest management** and other practices.

- **Issues Involved:**

- **Rampant Misuse:** Although streptomycin use is allowed for eight crops by the CIBRC, it was found to be used on many more crops in practice.
- **Antibiotic Resistance:** Exposure to antibiotics can lead to development of **antibiotic resistance** in humans and animals.
- **Benefits of Streptomycin:**
 - It has important use for previously treated **tuberculosis (TB)** patients.
 - It is also used in multidrug-resistant TB patients and in certain cases of TB meningitis (brain TB).
 - The **World Health Organization (WHO)** recognises streptomycin as a critically important medicine for human use.

Integrated Pest Management

- It is an **ecosystem-based strategy** that focuses on **long-term prevention of pests or their damage** through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties.
- Pesticides are used only after monitoring and according to established guidelines. **Treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism.**
- Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner **that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.**

Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee

- The Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee (CIBRC) was set up by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** in the year 1970 to regulate the import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of **insecticides**.
- The insecticides are regulated under **Insecticides Act, 1968 and Insecticides Rules, 1971.**
- The **Central Insecticides Board (CIB)** advises the Central Government and State Governments on technical matters arising out of the administration of Insecticides Act and to carry out the other functions assigned to the Board by or under Insecticides rules.
- To **import or manufacture** any insecticide, registration is required at the **Registration Committee.**

Source: DTE

Atal Pension Yojana

Why in News

The flagship social security scheme of the Government of India - '**Atal Pension Yojana' (APY)** - has completed five years of implementation and garnered over 2.2 crore subscribers.

Key Points

- **Target Segment:** The scheme was **launched on 9th May, 2015**, with the objective of creating a universal social security system for all Indians, especially **the poor, the under-privileged and the workers in the unorganised sector**.
- **Administered By:** **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority** through National Pension System (NPS).
- **Eligibility:** Any **citizen of India** can join the APY scheme. The age of the subscriber should be between **18-40 years**. The contribution levels would vary and would be low if a subscriber joins early and increases if she joins late.
- **Benefits:**
 - It provides a minimum guaranteed pension ranging from **Rs 1000 to Rs 5000 on attaining 60 years of age**.
 - The amount of pension is guaranteed for lifetime to the spouse on death of the subscriber.
 - In the event of death of both the subscriber and the spouse, the entire pension corpus is paid to the nominee.
- **Tax Benefits:** Contributions to the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) are eligible for tax benefits similar to the National Pension System (NPS).
- **Analysis:**
 - The scheme has been implemented comprehensively across the country covering all states and Union Territories with male to female subscription ratio of 57:43.
 - However, only 5% of the eligible population has been covered under APY till date.

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority

- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is the **statutory Authority** established by an enactment of the Parliament, to regulate, promote and ensure orderly growth of the **National Pension System (NPS)**.
- It works under the Department of Financial Services under the **Ministry of Finance**.

National Pension System

- NPS is a government-sponsored pension scheme. It was launched in 2004 for government employees.

- Now, any individual citizen of India (**both resident and non-resident**) in the age group of **18-65** can join NPS.

Source: PIB

Ultraviolet Light and Viruses

Why in News

As nations begin relaxing restrictions, scientists are studying the use of **ultraviolet germicidal irradiation** (UVGI) to detect the virus in public places and disinfect contaminated public spaces to stop the transmission of the virus.

Key Points

Ultraviolet Light:

- UV light from the sun has **shorter wavelengths** than visible light so it is **not visible to the naked eye**.
- UV radiation's full spectrum is **sourced from the sun** and can be **classified into UV-A, UV-B and UV-C** rays according to their wavelength.
- They differ in their biological activity and the extent to which they can penetrate the skin.
 - The **shorter the wavelength**, the **more harmful** the UV radiation.
 - However, **shorter wavelength** UV radiation is **less able to penetrate** the skin.
- Research shows that UV light kills cells and increased exposure can cause cells to become **carcinogenic** (cancerous) and increases the risk of getting **cancer**.

Classification of UV Radiation

- **UV-C:**
 - **Short-wavelength.**
 - Most harmful but are completely absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere and does not reach the Earth's surface.

- **UV-B:**
 - **Medium-wavelength.**
 - Biologically active but cannot penetrate beyond the superficial skin layers.
 - Responsible for delayed tanning and burning.
 - Enhances skin ageing and significantly promotes the development of skin cancer.
 - Exposure to UV-B rays can cause DNA and cellular damage in living organisms.
 - Most solar UVB is filtered by the atmosphere.
- **UV-A:**
 - Relatively **long-wavelength.**
 - Accounts for approximately 95% of the UV radiation reaching the Earth's surface.
 - Penetrate into the deeper layers of the skin and is responsible for the immediate tanning.
 - Enhances the development of skin cancers.
- **UVGI Working Method:**
 - **UVGI replicates UV wavelengths** and uses its **destructive properties to target pathogens.**
 - It disinfects contaminated spaces, air and water and helps in preventing certain infectious diseases from spreading.
 - According to the **US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC)**, UVGI is a **promising method for disinfection.**
 - In 2005, the CDC revised its guidelines for using UVGI with regards to the spread of **tuberculosis** (TB) in hospital settings.
 - The guidelines intended to eliminate the spread of infection to healthcare workers from patients or others with unsuspected or undiagnosed infection.
 - Scientists advise that **fixtures containing UVGI lamps** can be mounted on the walls or suspended from the ceilings.
 - Such fixtures will shine light on the upper interior surface of a room and trap pathogens.
 - Installing a fan in such spaces can further draw the air upward, which will increase the speed with which the UVGI can destroy pathogens.
 - UVGI lamps can also be installed in **room corners**, in **air ducts of ventilation systems** or portable or fixed **air cleaners.**
 - UVGI fixtures are and should be installed above people's heads because their **short wavelengths can irritate the skin and eyes.**

- **Effectiveness:**
 - According to research papers, UVGI is **most effective in preventing infections** which are mainly spread through **smaller droplets** and **not by direct contact or larger respiratory droplets**.
 - The **efficacy** of UVGI depends on several factors, such as:
 - Sensitivity of microorganisms to UVGI.
 - Dose/ intensity of UVGI required to kill pathogens.
 - Humidity and weather conditions.
 - Air circulation in a room.

It should be such that the air from below the room, where the pathogen is generated reaches the upper-portions of the room, where the UVGI can trap and kill the pathogen.
 - However, using **UVGI on a mass-scale** in public spaces like schools, universities, restaurants and cinema halls is **not a very cost-effective way** for disease prevention.
- **DRDO's Latest UV Developments:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has recently developed **automated contactless UV-C devices** namely DRUVS (Defence Research Ultraviolet Sanitiser) and NOTESCLEAR.

Other Measures

- Apart from using modern technology to combat viruses, it has been suggested to bring **behavioural changes** like **social distancing** and **wearing masks**.
- Few countries have considered issuing **immunity passports** or **risk-free certificates**.
 - Such certificates are based on the idea that the **natural immunity** a person develops to any infection will protect them from contracting the disease again.
 - **Once infected** with a viral pathogen, the **body's innate immune response kicks in** and **slows the spread** of the virus.
 - This response is **followed by an adaptive response**, wherein the **body makes antibodies**, which bind to the virus and help eliminate it.
 - If this response is strong enough, it might prevent reinfection from the same pathogen.
 - However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned against using immunity passports because there is, yet, no proof of immunity from the reinfection of **Covid-19**.

Even if there is an immunity, its **duration is not known**.

Source: IE

Ordinance to Check APMCs: Gujarat

Why in News

Recently, **Gujarat's state government** has cleared the **Gujarat Agricultural Produce Markets (Amendment) Ordinance 2020**.

It has ended the monopoly of state-run **Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs)** and has allowed private entities to set up their own market committees or sub-market yards.

Key Highlights of the Ordinance

- **Restrictions on Jurisdiction:** The ordinance restricts the jurisdiction of APMCs to the **physical boundaries of their respective marketing yards** and they can **levy cess only on those transactions**, happening within the boundary walls of their marketing yard.
 - Earlier, an APMC had **jurisdiction** over an **entire or more than one taluka**.
 - Farmers and traders of a particular taluka had to **compulsorily sell their produce to their respective APMCs**.
 - Apart from that, APMCs **levied a cess on any transaction** that happened **within the marketing yard** of the APMC or **outside** it.
- **Opportunity to Private Markets:** The ordinance permits for setting up of private markets.
 - **Privately-owned old storages or warehouses** can be **converted** into a sub-market yard or a private market that can compete with the APMCs.
 - **Farmers can also set up** private markets themselves.
 - To **save the smaller APMCs** from the negative competition from private markets and a fair play, the state government plans to bring a **rule that will not allow the setting up of a private market within a five-kilometre radius of an existing APMC**.
 - Also to protect them, the government will **collect 20% cess from private players** and **reroute 14% of it back to the APMCs**.
- **Unified Single Trading Licence:** The ordinance provides traders with one unified single trading licence through which they can **participate in trading activities anywhere in the state**.
 - It will allow multiple traders to attract the farmers depending on the quality of their produce and offer competitive prices **without the restriction of place and area jurisdiction**.
 - For that, amendments allow **setting up of portals for e-markets**.
- **Expansion in Grievance Redressal:** The **director of an APMC** and the **Gujarat State Agriculture marketing board** will also start taking **care of the grievance redressal** which was solely managed by the APMC till now.

- **Expected Benefits to the Farmers:** Permission to private entities will lead to **competition** and will **offer the best possible remuneration to farmers** for their produce.
 - Till now, **APMCs** used to **form a cartel and decide on what prices to offer** to farmers.
 - Farmers will not be bound to sell only to one particular APMC and can **choose the one with the best deal** in their favour.
- **Viewpoint of APMCs**
 - **APMCs have not welcomed** the decision because **it ends their monopoly** and **allows private players** to enter.
 - The ordinance will also **affect revenues** because no cess will be collected on transactions outside the physical boundaries of marketing yards.

For example, last year, of the ₹2.5 crore earned as market fees, ₹1.5 crore came from transactions that were conducted outside the marketing yard.

With the new ordinance in place, this **revenue will be lost**.

Agricultural Produce Market Committee

- It is a **statutory market committee** constituted by a **State Government** in respect of trade in certain notified **agricultural or horticultural or livestock products**, under the **Agricultural Produce Market Committee Act** issued by that state government.

Agriculture is a state subject.
- **Objectives:**
 - Ensure transparency in pricing systems and transactions taking place in the market area.
 - Provide market-led extension services to farmers.
 - Ensure payment for agricultural produce sold by farmers on the same day.
 - Promote agricultural processing including activities for value addition in agricultural produce.
 - Setup and promote public private partnership in the management of agricultural markets, etc.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, formulated a **model law** on agricultural marketing, **State Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2003** and requested the state governments to suitably amend their respective APMC Acts.
- Union **Budgets** of 2014-15 and 2015-16 had **suggested the creation of a National Agricultural Market** (NAM) following which **e-NAM** was launched on 14th April 2016 as a **pan-India electronic trade portal to link APMCs across the States**.

Source: IE

Rajasthan's Krishak Kalyan Fees

Why in News

Recently, the Rajasthan government has levied **2% Krishak Kalyan fees** on agricultural produce brought or bought or sold in mandis.

- The 2% fees collected will be deposited in the **Krishak Kalyan Kosh** — dedicated to **the welfare of farmers in the state**.
- However, farmer outfits are apprehensive that people at agricultural mandis will pass on the burden of the increased cost to farmers, already reeling by the lockdown imposed due to the coronavirus.

Key Points

- **Krishak Kalyan Kosh:**
 - The Rajasthan government had announced the creation of the Krishak Kalyan Kosh for the purpose of **ensuring fair price for farmer's produce** and to strive towards **"ease of doing farming"** in 2019.
 - Through an ordinance, the government stated that the market committee shall collect Krishak Kalyan fee from the licensees in the prescribed manner on the agricultural produce brought or bought or sold by them in the market area (mandi) at such rate as may be specified by the state government.
 - As per the government, the fee will **not be a burden on the people associated with the mandis nor the farmers**.
- **Need for Krishak Kalyan Fees:**
 - The government has stated that it **needs a steady source of revenue** for the Krishak Kalyan Kosh as the **financial resources are limited** and bank loans taken for the same purpose also need to be repaid by the government.
 - The government had taken loan to pay the state share of insurance premium under the **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**, which resulted in farmers receiving insurance claims worth Rs 2,200 in the past 20-25 days even amidst the coronavirus crisis.
- **Implications**
 - The levied fees is an addition to the existing **mandi cess of 1.6%** on the produce. Thus the total fees will turn out to be 3.6%, which is much higher than other states.
 - The increased cess will **encourage black marketing** as many farmers would try to **sell their produce outside the mandi mechanism**.
 - The prices farmers are getting for their produce in mandis are already **much lower than the Minimum Support Price (MSP)**.
 - Further, farmers may receive lesser prices for their agricultural produce due to the introduction of Krishi Kalyan fee.

Mandis Under e-NAM Increased

According to the recent data, the number of connected mandis, or wholesale markets under e-NAM has increased upto 65%.

This increase is because of transport disruptions and social distancing requirements which have made physical mandi trade more difficult in recent times.

Key Points

- After the launch of e-NAM in 2016, its progress was slow because,
 - Many States did not amend their **Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Acts**.
 - Most **farmers were not part of the cooperatives** that would help aggregate the bulk quantity of produce needed to attract online buyers.
 - Most **mandis did not possess the infrastructure** to make the most of the platform.
- The Central Government recognised the potential of e-NAM in overcoming some of the hurdles of the lockdown, and **introduced some important new features in April, 2020:**
 - A trading module allowing **Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)** to trade produce directly from their collection centres without bringing it to mandis.
 - A **warehouse-based trading module**.
 - A **logistics module** offering users trackable transport facilities through aggregators with access to 11 lakh trucks.
- On 1st May 2020, Agriculture Ministry had launched **integration of 200 e-NAM mandis from 7 States** including 1 new state of Karnataka being added on e-NAM.
- Now the total mandis under e-NAM has reached a total of around 950 across India from about 550 before lockdown.

e-NAM

- The National Agricultural Market (e-NAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal.
- It was launched in April 2016 with the **objective of integrating the existing Mandis to “One Nation One Market”** for agricultural commodities in India.

- It **networks the existing APMC mandis** to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities and has a **vision**:
 - To promote uniformity in agriculture marketing by streamlining procedures across the integrated markets.
 - Removing information asymmetry between buyers and sellers and promoting real time price discovery based on actual demand and supply.
- It provides for contactless remote bidding and mobile-based anytime payment for which traders do not need to either visit mandis or banks for the same.
- **Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)** is the lead agency for implementing e-NAM.

It functions under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare

Source: TH

Helpline “Bharosa”

Why In News

To relieve the distress of the student community during the **Covid-19 pandemic**, the Government has launched **Central University of Odisha Helpline “Bharosa”**.

Key Points

- **Aim:** To provide Cognitive Emotional Rehabilitation Services to all University Students of Odisha.
- **Need:** Social distancing and self-isolation because of Covid-19, has led to decline in social interactions which further impact mental and physical health. It is being called the **‘social recession’** i.e. a collapse in our social contacts.
- **Benefit:** This app would provide mental and psychological assistance to the students.

Mental Health

- Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

- **Other Related Initiatives:**

- The Government of India has launched the **National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in 1982**, keeping in view the heavy burden of mental illness in the community, and the absolute inadequacy of mental health care infrastructure in the country to deal with it.
- The Supreme Court has held healthcare to be a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution. The Constitution incorporates provisions guaranteeing everyone's right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees protection of life and personal liberty to every citizen.
- In July 2018, Delhi Government launched a happiness curriculum for schools.
- Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focuses on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

Mental Health Care Act, 2017

- **Right to make an Advance Directive**, wherein patients can state on how to be treated or not to be treated for the illness during a mental health situation.
- **Right to appoint a Nominated Representative:** A person shall have the right to appoint a nominated representative to take on his/her behalf, all health related decisions like:
 - Right to access mental health care,
 - Right to free & quality services,
 - Right to get free medicines,
 - Right to community living,
 - Right to protection from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment,
 - Right to live in an environment, safe and hygienic, having basic amenities,
 - Right to legal, aid
 - No Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) without anesthesia
- This act brought changes in Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (which criminalized attempted suicide). **Attempt to commit suicide not an offence.**
- Now, a person who attempts to commit suicide will be presumed to be “suffering from severe stress” and shall not be subjected to any investigation or prosecution.

Source- PIB

International Nurses Day

Why in News

The International Nurses Day is annually observed on **May 12**.

May 12 was chosen for celebrating the day as it is the **birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale**, the foundational philosopher of modern nursing.

Key Points

- **2020 Theme:** Nursing the World to Health
- **Importance:** The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has designated **2020 as The Year of the Nurse and the Midwife**.
- **Need:** Nurses account for more than half of all the world's health workers. It will encourage the entire nurse community and the public to celebrate the day as well as would provide necessary information and resources to raise the profile of the nursing profession.
- **Significance:**
 - Nurses are at the forefront of fighting epidemics and pandemics providing high quality and respectful treatment and care.
 - The **Covid-19** pandemic is a stark reminder of the vital role nurses play. Without nurses and other health workers, it is not possible to win the battle against outbreaks, and achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals** or **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.
- **Suggestions provided by the WHO and Others:**
 - To provide occupational safety and health of nurses and all health workers, including access to personal protective equipment so that they can safely provide care and reduce infections in health care settings.
 - Nurses and all health care workers should have access to mental health support, timely pay, sick leave and insurance.
 - They should be provided with access to the knowledge and guidance required to respond to all health needs, including outbreaks.
 - Nurses should be given the financial support and other resources required to respond to future outbreaks.
- **Step Taken by the Indian Government:**
 - The **Indian Nursing Council** is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that establishes uniform standards of training for nurses, midwives and health visitors.
 - The Government has announced **Rs. 50 lakh insurance cover per person** (part of the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana**) for frontline health workers involved in managing the Covid-19 outbreak.
 - The Government has also passed an **ordinance for the protection of healthcare workers** battling Covid-19 on the frontline.
 - Recently, the Supreme Court directed the government to ensure the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), to all health workers, including doctors, nurses, ward boys, other medical and paramedical professionals.

Gandhi Peace Prize

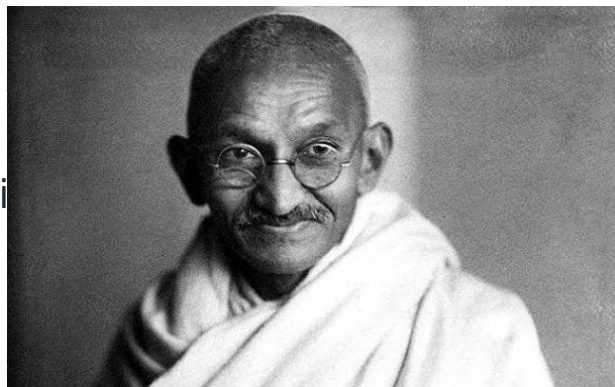
Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Culture extended the nomination period for the Gandhi Peace Prize** from 30th April to 15th June 2020, due to the **lockdown** in the wake of the **Covid-19**.

Key Points

- The **annual award** was instituted by the Government of India in **1995** during the commemoration of the **125th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi** for those involved in **social, economic and political transformation** through **non-violence**.
- The award carries an amount of **₹1 crore**, a **Citation in a scroll**, a **plaque** as well as an **exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item**.
- The prize can be given to individuals, associations, institutions or organizations.
 - It can be **divided between two persons/institutions** who are considered by the jury to be equally deserving of recognition in a given year
 - It is **open to all persons** regardless of nationality, creed, race or sex.
- The prize is **not awarded posthumously**.
- In **January 2019**, Gandhi Peace Prize was **awarded for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018**.

Mahatma Gandhi



- **Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi** was born on **2nd October, 1869**, at **Porbandar in Gujarat** and died on **30th January, 1948**, at **Gandhi Smriti, New Delhi**.
- He was **assassinated by Nathuram Godse** in the Birla House during his evening prayers.
- He was a **lawyer, politician, social activist, writer** and became the **leader of the nationalist movement** against the British rule of India.
- He is considered the **Father of the Nation**.
- **Rabindranath Tagore** is said to have given him the title of **Mahatma**.
- **Gandhi and his ideologies** played an important role in liberating India from the British.

- **Gandhi's Works:**

- **Journals:** Young India, Navajivan, Harijan, Harijan Bandhu, Indian Opinion I and II, etc.
- **Books:** Hind Swaraj, Satyagraha in South Africa, The Story of My Experiments with Truth (**autobiography**), etc.
- **Foundations:** Natal Indian Congress (South Africa, 1894), Phoenix Settlement (South Africa, 1904), Satyagraha Ashram (Ahmedabad, 1915), Harijan Sevak Sangh (1932), Sevagram Ashram (Wardha, 1936), etc.

Source: PIB

A Study on Sal Forest Tortoise

Why in News

A recent study by ecologists in the Wildlife Institute of India (Dehradun), finds that over **90% of the potential distribution of the Sal forest tortoise falls outside the current protected area's network.**

Key Points

- The study covers parts of **India with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.**
- The Study found that in **northeast India**, the representation of the sal forest tortoise in protected areas (such as reserves, sanctuaries, etc.) is **least.**
- The study also found that **29% of the predicted distribution of the species falls within high occurrence fire zones.**
 - The species experience **jhum fire in northeast India**, which is a suitable habitat for the species.
 - Such an intervention may not only directly kill the animals but result in loss of habitat.
- According to the IUCN, the population of the species may have fallen by about **80% in the last three generations (90 years).**

Sal Forest Tortoise



- Sal Forest Tortoise is also known as the **elongated tortoise (Indotestudo elongata)**.
- **Habitat:** It is widely distributed over **eastern as well as northern India and Southeast Asia**.
- **IUCN Red List:** Critically Endangered.
- **CITES:** Appendix II
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972:** Schedule IV
- **Threat:** Hunted for food, local use such as decorative masks and international wildlife trade.

Wildlife Institute of India

- Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is an autonomous institution under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
- It was established in **1982**.
- It is based in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**.
- It offers training programs, academic courses, and advisory in wildlife research and management.

Source:TH

BiPAP Ventilator “SwasthVayu”

Why in News

Recently, the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bangalore has developed **BiPAP ventilator** named **SwasthVayu, a non-invasive** (involves use of masks or similar device) **breathing support device**, for the use of non-critical non-ICU cases of **Covid-19**.

- BiPAP stands for Bilevel Positive Airway Pressure. It is a type of positive pressure ventilator.
- While using BiPAP, positive air pressure is received during breathing in and breathing out. But higher air pressure is received during breathing in.

Key Points

- SwasthVayu is connected with an **oxygen concentrator**, and will be ideal to **treat moderate or mid-stage severe Covid-19 patients** who do not require intubation and invasive ventilation.
- The ventilator is ideal for treating Covid-19 patients in wards, makeshift hospitals, dispensaries and homes in the current Indian Covid-19 scenario.
- The major advantage of this machine is that it is **simple to use** without any specialized nursing, cost effective, compact and configured with majority of indigenous components.
- The system has been **certified for safety and performance by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)**.

National Aerospace Laboratories

- National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) is a constituent of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, India, established in 1959.
- It is the **only government aerospace Research & Development laboratory** in the country's **civilian sector**.

Source: PIB
